

Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Rockville, Maryland

October 24, 2018

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools  
Subject: Teacher Planning Time (09-24-18-18-03-B)

During the Kirwan Commission discussion, Board members requested the following information:

**Question B**

Ms. Ortman-Fouse requested additional information regarding the statement Dr. Smith made that MCPS teachers have more planning and collaboration time with colleagues than teachers in many other school systems.

**Response**

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) maintains a database that includes policy and contract information for 148 school districts nationwide. The average scheduled teacher workday across the districts in the NCTQ database is seven and one-half hours. Although the majority of a teacher's workday involves instructing students, an important aspect of a teacher's day is planning time. According to a July 2016 *Washington Post* article, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) elementary school teachers received the greatest amount of planning time of the 148 school districts included in the NCTQ database.

The average amount of elementary school teacher planning time nationwide is 45 minutes per day. In accordance with the Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) contract for school years 2018–2020, MCPS elementary school teachers receive 3 hours and 45 minutes weekly for individual planning. At the elementary level, art, music, and physical education teachers receive at least 4 hours and 15 minutes of this time per week during the student day, with a minimum of 10 minutes for preparation between classes, or at least 4 hours and 45 minutes of this time per week during the student day, with a minimum of 5 minutes for preparation between classes. Secondary teachers across most districts, including MCPS, are allotted one planning period per day out of a seven-class-period day.

Many districts do not specify collaborative planning time; however, MCPS allows 16 hours (2 professional days) in the school year calendar for collaborative planning, in addition to individual planning time, for elementary and secondary teachers. MCPS teachers also have one full professional day at the end of the first, second, and third grading periods and one half-day during each of the first and second semesters for grading, planning, working collaboratively with colleagues, and/or activities related to professional learning. In addition, MCPS teachers have at least 2 days scheduled prior to the arrival of students each fall, during which no other meetings can be scheduled, to prepare classrooms and materials.

Teachers in MCPS have at least the minimum amount of individual planning time as cited in the NCTQ database for schools nationwide, 45 minutes per day. On average, MCPS teachers have an additional 64 hours of planning time not provided by most districts that may be used for collaborative and individual planning time beyond the 3 hours and 45 minutes of weekly individual planning time.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Kimberly A. Statham, deputy superintendent of school support and improvement, Office of School Support and Improvement, at 240-740-3100 or Dr. Arronza M. LaBatt, executive director, Office of School Support and Improvement, at 240-740-3100.

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