

To: ETA Representative Assembly

From: Kenyon Woods Parent/Teacher Conference Committee

Re: Request for site exception

Date: October 17, 2012

RATIONALE

The Parent-Teacher Conference Committee at Kenyon Woods Middle School is seeking a site exception for changing the format for parent teacher conferences effective this school year. Our rationale for making this change is to make parent/teacher conferences available to Kenyon Woods Middle School parents/guardians at a more accessible variety of hours, and easier to navigate.

CURRENT SITUATION BEING ADDRESSED

Currently the ETA agreement (15.22) stipulates that teachers must schedule at least two hours of conference time during the designated parent/ teacher conference day with the other three hours to be done either on the designated day or the evening prior to the designated parent/teacher conference day. These requirements put some conference times during a part of the day that many parents traditionally are at their jobs.

HOW THIS WILL ADDRESS THE CONCERNS

Kenyon Woods Middle School is requesting a change that makes the hours of conferences to 3:00-8:00 the evening prior to the regularly scheduled conference day. This schedule will all be during traditionally non-working hours for parents. In addition we will be creating a central location for conferences, utilizing the gymnasium and commons; seventh grade teachers will be in one location, while eighth grade will be located in the other. Those teachers who teach both grade levels will establish a table in one of the two areas; signage will be readily available to help parents locate all teachers. This format will allow parents to come to one area of the building without having to make appointments, with the ability to see all of their students' teachers in a short period of time. This format will also provide easier access to bilingual services for non-English speaking parents; our 7 Spanish speaking staff members will be able to meet with those families that require translation in a much easier fashion. This format will also eliminate the use of a great amount of paper previously spent for communicating with parents, appointment requests, and confirmations.

PROCESS FOR BUILDING CONSENSUS

The proposal for change originated from teachers during a brief discussion at our first school/department meeting this fall. The suggestion was made to form a parent/teacher conference committee that would discuss and determine the proposal. This committee

was made up of ETA members and the building principal. The proposal was presented to all staff in the committee minutes that were e-mailed to all teachers. SD members were charged with discussing the proposed change with their department members. In addition, information was shared at subsequent faculty meetings.

DISSENTING TEACHERS

Those teachers who voted ‘no’ to the exception will do all their hours following the current contract language. Special requests by parents for alternative conference times will be addressed on an individual basis, as they always are throughout the rest of the school year at Kenyon Woods.

MEASURE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Both parents and teachers will be surveyed to provide feedback on the effectiveness of this format, concerns, and changes that could be made, and if this should be our format for conferences in the future. This survey will be developed by our parent/teacher conference committee and available to parents in multiple formats, making it available to both parents who attended conferences and those who did not attend.

DISTRICT FEEDBACK

As PEL no longer exists, Dr. Johnson was contacted and has given her approval to go ahead with the site exception.

BALLOTING

The initial vote was sent to all building staff using Survey Monkey in early September. After review, the committee felt the vote needed to be repeated so that only the 61 certified staff would be polled. A paper ballot was created and put into each teacher’s mailbox approximately 2 weeks after the initial vote. Paper ballot results were:

- 27 voting for doing all conferences in 5 consecutive hours on Monday after the conclusion of Institute Day activities using the central location set-up
- 2 persons voted to use the central location but on the traditional Monday night/Tuesday morning schedule.
- No teachers voted to keep the previous student-lead conference format.
- 7 late ballots were received, all selecting the 5 consecutive hours on Monday after the conclusion of Institute Day activities using the central location set-up option.

After consultation with the ETA Board, and in order to capture a greater amount of feedback from the certified staff, a third vote was taken earlier this month on the SIP day and at a scheduled meeting of the entire faculty; faculty who were unable to attend either of these events were given until the end of the following day to vote. The number of alternatives on the ballot was reduced to 2, so to clarify the options. Results are as follows:

- 58 voted to do all conferences in 5 consecutive hours on Monday after the conclusion of Institute Day activities, using the central location set-up.
- 2 voted to retain the contractual schedule, but use the central location set-up.

Paper Ballot #1

Please return to Kathy Heikkinen by the end of the day, Tuesday, September 18th

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE

NEW FORMAT BALLOT

To enact this change 75% of all certified teaching staff at Kenyon Woods Middle School who cast a ballot must approve of this change through this process along with approval from the ETA and U-46 administration. Please mark your vote below.

☐ Yes, I agree to the change in format for our annual parent/teacher conferences that in ☐s uniform times and a centralized location

Conferences would be held on Monday afternoon, November 19th from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. (SIP Day activities would be held from 8 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Monday, November 19th)

☐ Yes, I agree to the change in format for our annual parent/teacher conferences that includes uniform times and a centralized location

Conferences would be held on Monday afternoon, November 19th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Tuesday, November 20th
(SIP Day activities would be held from 8 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Monday, November 19th)

☐ No, I do not agree with the proposed change and wish to keep our conference format as it stands now – Monday 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Tuesday 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. in our own rooms scheduling on our own

Paper Ballot #2

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE

NEW FORMAT BALLOT

To enact this change 75% of all the certified teaching staff @ Kenyon Woods Middle School who cast a ballot must approve of this change through this process along with approval from the ETA and U-46 administration.

Please mark your vote below.

☐ Yes, I agree to the change in format for our annual parent/teacher conferences that includes uniform times and a centralized location

Conferences would be held on Monday afternoon, November 19th from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.
(SIP Day activities would be held from 8 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Monday, November 19th)

☐ No, I do not agree to the proposed change in time for our annual parent/teacher conferences. I would prefer conferences on two days to be held in a centralized location.

Conferences would be held on Monday afternoon, November 19th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
And Tuesday November 20th 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
(SIP Day activities would be held from 8 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Monday, November 19th)