

To: ETA Board

From: SHS Parent Teacher Conference Committee

Re: Request for site exception

Date: April 25, 2013

### ***RATIONALE***

The Parent-Teacher Conference Committee at Streamwood High School is seeking a site exception for changing the format for parent teacher conferences effective the 2013-2014 school years. Streamwood HS would eliminate the 2 hour conference time during the normal school day and replace it with five (5) hours from 4pm to 9pm on the evening conferences are already scheduled and a 2 hour workday the next. Our rationale is to make parent/teacher conferences more convenient and accessible for Streamwood High School parents/guardians, resulting in an increase in parent involvement. Increasing parental involvement and contact is shown to have a positive effect on student learning. Additionally the increase in parent involvement will address one of the areas noted as weak in our school accreditation report.

### ***CURRENT SITUATION BEING ADDRESSED***

Currently the ETA agreement (**15.22 Parent Conferences**) 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. At SHS, parents make appointments with their students' teachers during Open House. This means that a parent might have to come to SHS twice on two different days to see all their students' teachers. Teachers are then responsible for arranging for translators as needed.

### ***HOW THIS WILL ADDRESS THE CONCERNS***

Streamwood High School is requesting a change that does not alter the dates for conferences, but instead makes the hours uniform for all teaching staff as well as having the conferences in a central location. Additionally, we would abolish our annual back to school night and add these two hours to our parent/teacher conference schedule.\* This format will allow parents to come to one location during one block of time without having to make appointments, with the ability to see all of their students' teachers. This format will also provide easier access to bilingual services for non-English speaking parents as translators will be available for the duration of the evening. It will also eliminate the use of a huge amount of paper for communicating with parents, appointment requests, and confirmations.

***\*If the proposal does not pass Back to School Night will be reinstated***

## ***PROCESS FOR BUILDING CONSENSUS***

The proposal for change originated from teachers, and some administrators, who had experienced this type of parent-teacher conference with their children's non-U-46 schools. 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 two administrators. This committee met twice last year and after the proposal was tabled by Central Office administration it was agreed to meet early in the 2012-2013 school year with a revised plan. The proposal was first placed on the agenda for the first School Department Committee held on Tuesday, February 19, 2013 where those members had an opportunity to clarify concerns and to ask questions. The next step was a brief presentation made by Ms. Cabrera during the ETA portion of the first all staff meeting held on Tuesday, March 12, 2013. The Parent/Teacher Conference Committee met on Tuesday, March 19, 2013 to discuss final revisions, put together a ballot and a presentation that was presented to all staff prior to the vote that occurred April 9-11. This presentation included a sample ballot. Additionally, Ms. Cabrera and Mrs. Kasper held an open informational meeting before school to answer questions and concerns.

## ***DISSENTING TEACHERS***

Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the Associate Principal. The main objection was the lack of privacy and access to Infinite Campus. For those teachers who request a more private location, various classrooms will be available near the gymnasium. Additionally, computer labs would be open for parents to print grades and missing assignments.

## ***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.

## ***VOTING AND RESULTS***

Voting was held for three days April 9, 10, and 11. The extended time of 4 pm to 9 pm (instead of 5 pm to 9 pm) was part of the building consensus and ballot. Out of the 124 ETA staff members at Streamwood High School, 109 members voted. Of the 109 ballots, there were 104 yes votes for the proposed site exception and 5 dissents.