***Larkin High School***

***RATIONALE***

The SIP Committee (PLC Leaders) at Larkin High School is seeking a site exception to continue our work in PLC groups. The volume of work that is required in order to implement common assessments and the Common Core State Standards, including standards based grading, can only be accomplished through coordinated time for teachers to collaborate and develop quality instructional programs for the students of Larkin High School. Larkin High School has been fully engaged in the PLC process since 2011. These teams throughout the building provide the leadership structure and joint decision making process for all activities in the building. These PLC’s are structure by which SIP work is completed in our school. All teachers currently participate at some level in a coordinated calendar that provides for: 2 monthly SIP Steering Committee (PLC Advisory) meetings that take place within the school day; 1 monthly SIP Committee (PLC Leaders) meeting for which teachers receive a stipend; 1 monthly early dismissal day for collaboration time; and 1 optional monthly PLC Plus meeting that the teachers arrange on their own schedules if desired if they want more collaborative minutes. Teachers are assigned to their PLC’s based on their majority teaching assignment. Teachers have flexibility to meet with other teams for joint work or curriculum alignment as needed. The staff at Larkin High School is requesting to maintain this same schedule for the coming school year. All collaboration times are purely teacher driven through their elected PLC Leader within each major course area.

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***CURRENT SITUATION BEING ADDRESSED***

As listed above, our current situation (calendar) includes one early dismissal date per month throughout the school year. This process began in 2011 through an agreement with teachers in the building in an effort to provide teachers with release time for curriculum development and planning. Teachers elected PLC leaders to direct this effort as well as be our SIP team. SD (School Department) at that time agreed to vary the composition of our SIP team to allow for the variation in number of members that might result from each elected PLC leader being a member of the SIP team. Teachers are currently assigned to a PLC group based on their majority teaching assignment. Teachers that have split assignments can elect to meet with a different PLC group as desired. Permission was granted through Greg Walker to have one early dismissal date per month for teacher collaboration. The stipulation that was given was that students must be supervised during this time and there cannot be a disruption in the community as a result. Buses were not rescheduled to pick up at the earlier time. Students are released at 2:00, but unstructured supervision in various common areas is provided for students who want to stay. The SIP team agreed that all teachers would supervise one time per year during an early release date. Like all supervisions, this supervision will be revisited each spring by SD as needed.

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

Due to the great amount of change that is currently required in education, the only possible way to implement such change with fidelity is through coordinated teacher collaboration time. Early Dismissal dates have provided a great deal of release time in the effort to collaborate and coordinate our efforts towards positive change in the building for the students. The staff would like to guarantee that there is time for collaboration while still safely supervising the students, but at the same time, not cause an excessive interruption in the instructional minutes within the calendar. Thus the proposal is that we maintain our current calendared schedule for collaboration.

***ADDRESSING NEEDS OF TEACHERS***

**Traveling ETA Members**: Teachers who are assigned to multiple buildings can attend these meetings at the teacher’s discretion. Teachers with an end of day assignment at another building do not participate in our PLC’s unless they choose to do so.

**Part -time ETA Members:** part-time ETA members participate at their discretion. If their work hours do not normally go until the last period of the day, these teachers would not be asked to return, but would be asked to communicate about decisions made within the PLC at their earliest convenience.

**ETA Members with unique assignments:** Counselors have their own PLC group and leader. Social Workers, Psychologists, Nurses are not required to participate, but may attach themselves to the group of their choice. The librarian is not assigned to a particular PLC but attends meetings of various groups when research skills and standards are on their agenda.

**ETA Classroom Teachers** **with solitary assignments:** these teachers normally collaborate with the departmental group as a whole. Departmental goals are usually generic enough that they can be related to any teacher with a solitary assignment.

Member groups that participate in the PLC process are expected to complete the one additional supervision; groups that are not required to participate are do no complete the additional supervision.

**Alternatives for dissenters:** These teachers will write and present to the building principal a plan explaining how they will use the 55 minutes of time each month the building is setting aside for collaboration.

***AREA OF ETA CONTRACT IMPACTED***

**Supervision:** Our plan for supervision falls within contract requirements and does not need an exception. Supervision of students by teachers during PLC meeting times is necessary. Each teacher signs up for one supervision assignment in a common area: the commons, library, gyms, and a computer lab. If the teacher is absent the day they are assigned supervision, this expectation will be part of Sub Plan or it is covered by an administrator. The number of students who stay in the building during this time is about 30-40%, depending on the time of year. The contractual supervision requirements of 8.21 shall not exceed an average of 30 minutes per day. In a 178 student attendance day year, the amount of minutes of supervision may not exceed 5340. In high school, the supervision assignment is one 50 minute period per day. With the longer semester, including snow days, being at most 95 days, those total supervision minutes of 4750 are still well enough below the limit to add 55 more. Since supervision is planned jointly using SD, any issues surrounding this supervision or changes to the assignments will be addressed with other supervision assignments in a spring SD meeting each year.

**Collaborative Minutes:** Section 6.5 Teacher Collaborative Time is impacted by our proposal. We are seeking an exception to require that 55 minutes of a teacher’s monthly collaborative time be used in our PLC process; this process is a second meeting beyond the one meeting per month mandated by the contract. These meetings will take place during regular school hours because of student early release. The work product of these meetings can be minutes, curriculum products, data collection and analysis, or a reflection of discussion about instructional practices. The product is determined by each individual PLC. These all form the basis of our SIP planning, thus evidence of the work completed will be required to be posted on a common document held on the S drive. Thus, our site exception asks teachers to waive their right to:

* use all their 240 minutes in 30 minute increments as they choose (minus any faculty meeting minutes)
* attend only one meeting in a month
* complete collaborative minutes with only the time reporting form as paperwork

**Required Student Attendance minutes:** students are required to attend 300 minutes per day to constitute a full day of instruction. The PLC schedule calls for a start time of 7:40 AM and a release time of 2:00 PM. This schedule provides 301 minutes to all students on the day thus meeting the requirements for a full day of instruction.

***PROCESS FOR BUILDING CONSENSUS and DECISION MAKING PROCESS***

Teacher request and their definite need for collaboration time have been the driving force for this calendar request since 2011. This process has become the norm for our students and staff and is a part of our culture. In January and February, the need for a site exception to continue our work was presented to both the SIP Steering Committee and SIP Team. All groups were asked to discuss the preferences for continuing our work throughout their common meetings. At the March meeting of the SIP Team, a poll was taken as to what the discussions had been in the PLC groups. After this test poll, an actual vote occurred which rejected an early release time of 2 times per month (71% voted yes for 2 times per month, short of the 75% required.)

Staff voted again on a proposal that is the same as our current calendar of one early release period per month. Staff voted on the following question over the course of three days on May 2-6. The ballot read:

Should Larkin seek a site exception to implement a once monthly PLC early release day?

 Seeking this site exception impacts your right to:

* use all 240 minutes in 30 minute increments as you choose (minus any faculty meeting minutes),
  + The exception would mean that 50 of those minutes would be required to be used in PLCs
* attend only one meeting in a month
  + The PLCs are a second meeting
* complete collaborative minutes with only the time reporting form as paperwork
  + There is an expectation of work produced during PLC time that PLC leaders share out at their meetings

79 ETA members voted. 71 voted yes, 8 voted no, for a total of 90% of the faculty voters approving the site exception.

***MEASURE OF EFFECTIVENESS***

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 PLC time in the future. This survey will be developed by both SD and the SIP Team.