

To: ETA Board of Directors
From: Streamwood High School
RE: Request for site exception
Date: February 2016

A. Rationale:

Streamwood High School is seeking a site exception for the 2016-2017 school year. Our proposal is to forsake a fall open house (the contractual Parent-Teacher Meeting and School programs in 28.7 of the contract) and standardize Parent/Teacher Conference hours on October 27 and 28 (section 15.22 of the contract). Should the site exemption pass, exact hours (total of 7 hours with a minimum of 2 hours on 10/28) will be determined by staff ballot.

Through this site exemption, Streamwood High School seeks to

- Maximize teacher availability
- Increase ease of parent access for conferences
- Maximize use of teacher time, as SHS' open house has been poorly attended.

* Note 10/27-10/28 are the days U-46 currently has designated as Parent/Teacher conferences on the 2016-2017 draft calendar. Should these dates change, SHS assumes the site exemption allowing for standardized conference hours would still be in effect on any new dates designated for conferences.

Current Situation Being Addressed:

15.22 Parent Conferences

The Parent/Teacher conference day session may be five (5) hours or two (2) hours anytime during the normal school business conference day with the understanding that, comparable time for conferences for the remaining three (3) hours may be done in the following manner:

- (a) Conferences held the prior evening between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.; unless*
- (b) An alternative school-wide evening conference is designated during the conference week through the determination of the School/Department Committee, provided that the conferences are held between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.*

In the event that the preceding language requires a legislative waiver, the language will not become effective until the waiver is granted.

28.7 Parent-Teacher Meetings and School Programs

Each school may have a maximum of one (1) formally arranged parent-teacher meeting during the school year at which staff attendance is required. Additional meetings and/or school programs may be held, but staff attendance shall be strictly voluntary.

The prior model had SHS running a poorly attended open house (as a contractually required School Program, per 28.7) for two hours and conferences where five additional hours were spread by staff over a two day period (per 15.22). This exemption still will effectively combine parent teacher conferences and the school program under the same designation: conferences. Furthermore, the

exemption standardize time staff is available, utilize staff time more effectively through no open house, and increase staff availability to the Streamwood High School community.

B. How will this improve student learning

Through Streamwood High School Staff being more accessible to parents at consistent times through the course of Parent/Teacher Conferences, Streamwood will

- Increase family communication about student learning
- Increase student accountability to the home
- Facilitate a more professional and accessible reputation in the Streamwood community

C. How this will address the concerns:

Streamwood has found that the Fall Open House is poorly attended. Additionally, Streamwood has found that parents have encountered challenges meeting with all of a students' teachers due to many varied schedules of teacher determined attendance over a two day period. Standardizing times will allow Streamwood HS to:

- Better promote the conferences to increase attendance
- Simplify administration (setting up times) of conferences, potentially allowing for an online portal
- Increase availability for parents.

D. How results will be measured

We will see how many parents set up conference times, and poll staff via Google and parents via an exit survey to measure satisfaction

E. Voting of the bargaining unit

A secret ballot vote of the bargaining unit personnel will be taken. A minimum of 75% of those who cast a ballot must support the change.

Ballots:

Ballots will be available to ETA members at Streamwood High School on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, February 3rd, 4th, and 5th. Paper ballots will be created; they will be anonymous and collected via the SIP, SD, and ETA members. The vote was to in favor of the site exception.

F. Identification of sections of the contract being waved

- **15.22 Parent Conferences**
 - *The Parent/Teacher conference day session may be five (5) hours or two (2) hours **anytime during the normal school business conference day***
- **28.7 Parent-Teacher Meetings and School Programs (pg. 97 of ETA Agreement)**
 - *Each school may have a maximum of one (1) formally arranged parent-teacher meeting during the school year at which staff attendance is required. Additional meetings and/or school programs may be held, but staff attendance shall be strictly voluntary.*

G. Process For Building Consensus:

Ongoing discussion amongst School Department and with administration has continually pointed to:

- Disappointment in turnout for Open House

- Disappointment in turn-out for Conferences.
- Inconsistency of teacher availability
- Difficulty of scheduling for staff
- Many positives from two years ago when a similar site exemption was put in place where staff met with parents in our cafeteria and gymnasium
- The sense that two years ago, the challenges with location prompted a denial of site exemption
- The sense that perhaps staff would be in favor of standardizing times, while not ruling on location.

Through collaborative discussion, this site exemption was put forward with printed details (see attached) distributed at a January staff meeting for discussion, prior to detailing the final exemption language

Text distributed at January 2016 staff meeting:

SD Site Exemption relating to P/T Conferences

By voting “Yes” I am electing for Streamwood High School to forgo a fall Open House in favor of seven (7) standardized hours for parent teacher conference between a Thursday evening and Friday morning in October 2016 (current U-46 Draft Calendar has these as October 27 & 28).

Notes:

- These exact hours of the conferences will be determined by a future vote. There will still need to be a total of 7 hours over the Thursday and the Friday.
- The goal of this site exemption is for all staff to be present in the school for the same 7 hours on the Thursday and Friday to better serve our community.
- Staff will individually determine where in the building they will be available to meet with parents. This site exemption carries no expectation that staff will be in the gym, cafeteria, or other determined location. Conference locations will remain at individual staffs’ discretion.
- Staff will tell administration where they are planning to hold their conferences. Administration will provide a master list of locations to parents.
- Necessary staff absences (i.e. attending your own child’s conference) will be addressed with individual divisionals as needed.
- Administration is investigating the possibility of an online conference sign up for parents.
- This motion will pass with 75% of ballots cast being in favor of the motion.

Full ballot, revised by SD, SIP over month of January, then distributed at February 2 Staff Meeting and voted upon February 3, 4, and 5:

Parent Teacher Conference Site Exception Ballot

Original Contract Language:

15.22 Parent Conferences

The Parent/Teacher conference day session may be five (5) hours or two (2) hours anytime during the normal school business conference day with the understanding that, comparable time for conferences for the remaining three (3) hours may be done in the following manner:

- (a) Conferences held the prior evening between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.; unless
- (b) An alternative school-wide evening conference is designated during the conference week through the determination of the School Department Committee, provided that the conferences are held between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

28.7 Parent-Teacher Meetings and School Programs

Each school may have a maximum of one (1) formally arranged parent-teacher meeting during the school year at which staff attendance is required. Additional meetings and/or school programs may be held, but staff attendance shall be strictly voluntary.

Revised Language:

Staff and administration will forsake the one formally arranged parent teacher meeting [28.7] (which SHS has used as the Fall Open House) and standardize Parent/Teacher Conference hours so all staff will be in the building at the same times on October 27 and 28. Should the site exemption pass, exact hours (total of 7 hours, minimum of 2 hours on 10/28) will be determined by staff ballot.

Supporting Detail:

- The figure of seven (7) hours is in alignment with other district high schools.
- A prior SHS Site Exemption was turned down by ETA when it attempted to specify five (5) combined hours for conferences and open house.
- The model of approving an exemption regarding conferences then determining hours by staff ballot mirrors Bartlett and Elgin High School processes.
- The goal of this site exemption is for all staff to be present in the school for the same seven (7) hours on the Thursday and Friday to better serve our community.
- ISBE mandates two (2) hours of conferences on the second day for the day to count for teacher attendance.
- Staff will individually determine where in the building they will be available to meet with parents. This site exemption carries no expectation that staff will be in the gym, cafeteria, or other determined location. Conference locations will remain at individual staffs' discretion.
- Staff will tell administration where they are planning to hold their conferences. Administration will provide a master list of locations to parents.
- Necessary staff absences (i.e. attending one's own child's conference) will be addressed with individual divisionals as needed.
- Administration is investigating the possibility of an online conference sign up for parents.
- This motion will pass with 75% of ballots cast being in favor of the motion.

_____ **I vote YES to approve the site exception to eliminate a school program (28.7) and standardize times for Parent Teacher conferences (15.22). This means that I understand that this alters the contract (as stated above).**

_____ **I vote NO to altering the contract regarding Parent Conferences (15.22) and School Programs (28.7).**

H. Dissenting Teachers

If a member is amongst the dissenting numbers he/she will meet and discuss a plan with their divisional.