

Answers to Board Member Questions

Prior to the April 5, 2023, Regular Meeting

Item V.A: Consideration for Review and Approval of the 2023-2024 Calendar

Question

Can you break down the math a bit more? It says 182 days X 6.5 hours of Instruction = 1183 hours, but if some (30?) of those 182 days are Wednesdays and thus now 4.5 hour days to allow two hours of collaboration time for teachers, how do you get to 1183?

152 days X 6.5 hours = 988 hours

+

30 days X 4.5 hours = 135 hours

988+135 hours = 1123 hours

What am I missing?

A similar question: Why is 6.5 being used as the multiplier for elementary school? It is listed as "instruction hours" but elementary students are only in school for 6 hours. I believe this is causing some confusion among elementary staff and parents as it appears as though hours are actually being taken away with the early release days.

Related question: The version from the union is the same but with one additional line of text. It states that both students and staff will have a 7 hour day, including a 30 minute lunch. While this is currently true for staff, elementary students currently only have a 6 1/8 hour day including half hour lunch.

Response

Currently, elementary schools are required to have a minimum of 990 instructional hours and secondary a minimum of 1080 with no allowance for teacher PD and collaboration. Elementary schools are currently on a 5.5-hour instructional day, and secondary schools are on a 6.5-hour instructional day. As you can see, the greatest impact is for elementary schools that currently function on a 5.5 instructional day, as they will increase to a 6.5 instructional day.

With the Legislative passing of HB130 and its amendments, elementary and secondary schools now are both required to have a minimum of 1140 instructional hours. Of those 1140, 60 hours may be used for teacher PD and collaboration for elementary schools, and 30 of the 1140 for secondary schools.

All teachers are currently on a 7-hour contract day that is inclusive of a 30-minute duty-free lunch. This is problematic, as teachers and students start and end at the same time, which

poses the need for additional compensation for teachers to conduct before, lunch, and/or after school duty. Districts that go over 180 days will receive an additional multiplier for each day based on their total enrollment. We determined that additional funding, instructional time, and professional development and collaboration time were important to our district's goals, and so we added four days (two of which will give us additional funding in our SEG). We hope to use some of that money to help pay for teachers' duty time to ensure supervision and safety for our students during those off-contract times.

Breakdown of Proposed Calendar Instructional and PD/Collaboration Hours

152 days X 6.5 hours of Instruction = 988 hours

PLUS...

30 early-release Wednesdays x 4.5 hours = 135 hours

EQUALS...

182 instructional days (1123 TOTAL instructional hours)

Now let's take into consideration the teacher PD and collaboration time:

- Secondary PD/collaboration 1140-30 = minimum of 1110 instructional hours
- Elementary PD/collaboration 1140-60 = minimum of 1080 instructional hours

With our total instructional hours of 1123, we meet the minimums of 1080 (elementary) and 1110 (secondary).

Question

Considering that we have not yet started CBA negotiations, can we renegotiate the length of the school day and/or Preparation Time section of the agreement in order to embed more instruction in the school day?

Similar question: Why can't we renegotiate the working day in the CBA? It seems as though the 6.5 hours is causing undue barriers to what is best for students and families.

Response

Yes, we can. This calendar already increases instructional time. A major issue is that duty time is not included in the teacher contract. Ideally, teachers would begin 15 minutes before the school day to welcome kids onto campus, and 15 minutes after the school day to ensure safe departure of students before teachers leave. Right now, we have to compensate teachers, and they have to volunteer to participate in duty.

Question

Can we negotiate and/or determine how the additional PD/professional/Preparation time is used?

Response

Yes, but it has to be negotiated. Out of the 60 hours, we want to negotiate to allow for 20 of the hours to be used for district-led professional development, 20 hours for school-led professional development, and 20 hours for teacher collaboration. Right now, the District only has 13 hours, and teachers are allowed to use the two hours for personal planning and preparation.

Question

Can we make changes to the Instructional Council guidelines for determining use of PD time?

Response

Yes, but it has to be negotiated.

Question

What do we know about how the current early-release schools are using those hours and how it is benefiting students (or student outcomes)?

Response

Currently, the early-release schools are using those hours for teacher planning and preparation (per the negotiated contract). As stated above, we are planning to negotiate to allow for 20 of the hours in the proposed calendar to be used for district-led professional development, 20 hours for school-led professional development, and 20 hours for teacher collaboration/planning/prep.

Question

Does the new calendar have to be implemented this year (SY 23-24)? Or is there a grace period built into the legislation (now law) that allows school districts to implement the following school year?

Response

The K-12 Plus Program, which was signed into law on March 16, requires that the additional hours be added in the 2023-2024 school year, as does the state budget.

Question

Can you please share the data that supports a later start time for high school students? It is referenced in discussions but has not been shared yet.

Response

- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4824552/>
- <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/AskAREL/Response/14>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/features/schools-start-too-early.html>
- <https://www.washington.edu/news/2018/12/12/high-school-start-times-study/>
- <https://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/162769>
- https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2109.html
- <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0031721716681770>

Question

What is APS doing to partner in a highly organized manner with community, city, county, state entities to address before and after school care for elementary and middle school students?

Similar question: Who is spearheading the coordination of childcare before and afterschool for elementary schools? Who will spearhead the effort to coordinate middle school activities? This is a high risk population of great concern to all.

Response

We have already had two meetings with the City of Albuquerque to plan after school programming at middle and elementary school sites. Many of our schools already have programs in place, so we are looking at filling in the gaps for schools that may need additional programming support.

Question

How will we address the following circumstances in Middle Schools? Having the students leave early will negatively affect their engagement in clubs, arts, and sports. As a drama teacher I see that students will not be able to wait for me to be available for rehearsal after my PD time on Wednesdays, nor will most of my students be able to return to school for rehearsals. I know this will also affect the various sports teams and clubs.

Similar question: If middle schools are released early for the purpose of teachers collaborating, then clubs will be affected, i.e. drama, music, sports. What is our response to this? As administration and as a Board?

Response

We are looking to provide after school programming so students have a place to do homework, get tutoring support, etc. until rehearsal begins.

Question

Does this mean that the school day will be one hour longer for students? (If yes, we cannot have staff and students start and end the day at the same time. Who will do before and after school duty? It also means that teachers lose before and after school prep time.)

Response

The school day will be longer for elementary school students. We agree that it creates a difficult predicament, as we have to rely on teachers and staff volunteering to get paid for before and after school duty to ensure safe transitions for students, but to extend the teacher day would have to be negotiated with the union.

Question

Will APS employees' compensation be adjusted to account for the extra days?

Response

Yes. All school site staff will be compensated for the additional four days.

Question

So we're going to add an additional week in blazing August to put more strain on the A/C systems? How will APS address capital needs to avoid sweltering classrooms in August and September?

Similar question: Are ALL school HVAC units going to be in working order?

Response

We have upgraded cooling systems on a number of schools as seen on the operations dashboard [APS Facilities Dashboard](#). However, evaporative cooling, even when upgraded, operates best with less than 10% humidity and can cool a room approximately 15 degrees when running efficiently. We will continue to service and replace units, but there are times during monsoon season when units are operating as designed. Approximately 20% of our buses have A/C and as new buses are replaced with older buses they are replaced with buses with A/C.

Question

Desert Willow Family School is very concerned that APS is going to force our 4 day/week program to become a 5 day/week program with the new legislation requirements. I don't understand this. I read the bill and thought it took into account 4 day a week programs, that they would increase as much as is required for a four day program. Our school is one of the highest performing in APS and this change to 5 day a week would be a huge detriment to our program and students. It would kill the program essentially. Any info you can give me, I would be so appreciative!

Response

They may continue on a 4-day school week as long as they meet the required minimum instructional hours.

Question

My only question for Wednesday's agenda that I have, and it is one that I have received from several constituents, is about the start date for this year. They have already made travel plans and wonder if this year's start date could be pushed back for this year only so that they have more lead time for planning in the future.

I understand their concerns and understand the bind we are in for making it all work, but would appreciate it being addressed. It just helps if they feel heard and considered.

Response

If we push back the start date, then our school year end date will have to be pushed to June. The calendar committee and other feedback reflected that they wanted the school year to end in May. As any other excused absence, families who are traveling during this time will have to work closely with their students' schools and teachers to make up any missed assignments.

Question

Are we voting on start times on Wednesday, as well? Or is it just the calendar? Last I heard, we were waiting for transportation to work it out.

Response

The administration hopes to go over the new start and end times as part of Wednesday's presentation on the calendar. They don't need board approval.

Question

As to the differences in the CNM & CCHS calendar: What are the CCHS students doing when CNM is not in session & CCHS is in session & what happens to the CCHS students when CNM is in session & CCHS is not, are the CCHS students missing their CNM classes, are they missing out on any instruction at CNM?

Response

Students take courses both at CCHS and CNM during every semester so they have a full schedule. When CNM is on break, typically so is CCHS. During the month of August, CNM is ending their summer session so there is a break between when summer ends and fall begins. During August 14-25, students will attend CCHS only with their HS credit courses until their CNM classes are added, completing their schedule starting August 28th. CCHS students also take up to 6 credit hours over the summer months.

Additional Comments

Parents & staff in my district overwhelmingly rejected adding more days to the school year, so in keeping with the promised partnership between parents & schools, being respectful of parents' wishes & validating parents' thoughts as to what's best for their children I'd recommend that we only go to the mandated 1140 hours and remove the 13 hours that has Elementary & Middle School at 1153. We can delay the start of school by 2 days and instead, begin school on August 8th, which aligns more with our previous starting date. This is concerning to many families who have already scheduled their 2023 summer plans. Why are we choosing to go above what the state in their infinite wisdom are mandating, when we know most families across our district have voted many times over not to add more time? New Mexico has a rather low labor participation rate, correct? So perhaps it's because there are those families that want to spend time with their own children, so APS should let them! Why then are we going above the mandated 1140 hours as if 13 more hours will contribute significantly to improved academic outcomes? It is recommended that we also reduce the hours at the high school level & allow them to start school on August 8th as well.

Item V.B: Update on Right-Sizing Discussion Group

Questions/Comments

This effort to make Taft MS a dual language magnet sets a very socially and culturally divisive precedent for the district. It reflects an effort to avoid engaging and tailoring the programs and facilities at Washington MS and Truman MS. This decision contradicts our commitment to Goals and Guardrails committed to equitable distribution of resources. It also has the unfortunate appearance of APS supporting and recruiting parents who wish to avoid the Hispanic and mostly working class/working poor population at Washington MS and Truman MS . Both have dual language programs that we could advance to another level to benefit all children. I recognize that Coronado ES has a unique 90/10 Spanish/English immersion program. The easy solution is to create a more tailored (rigorous?) curricula and environment... one absent of the population that Washington and Truman MS have. The challenge before us is creating schools that integrate our best programs for the benefit of all student populations and abilities. I have worked at those sorts of schools.

If this decision goes through as it stands, then APS and the board must figure out how Washington and Truman will be compensated. Will each get an infusion of capital and program investments equal to those made at Taft MS?

What would that investment look like?

Response

The board isn't being asked to make a decision regarding Taft Middle School at this time, however here is some information that was shared with the Right-Sizing discussion group:

From 2018-2022, 110 students have left the district after 5th grade from Coronado Elementary school. For reference, 194 5th graders have left Corrales. Of the remaining 5th graders moving onto 6th grade:

- 24 went to Jefferson
- 25 went to Truman
- 5 went to Washington

Just a reminder, all of these middle schools are zoned schools with neighborhood boundaries. Any family outside of the neighborhood zone would need to submit a transfer for 6th grade. Coronado is a non-boundary school meaning there are no students automatically zoned for the school, all students submit for transfer. Due to this non-boundary/boundary matter, Coronado does not have an automatic feeder school for middle school. All families need to either attend their neighborhood middle school or submit a transfer for another school. Bilingual programs vary in the model used at schools – Coronado is an 80/20 program and intended for students to enter in kindergarten to progress cognitively in the 80/20 program through the years. We do have bilingual programming at several middle schools in the district, although the actual model may vary.

The middle schools with bilingual programs are:

- Cleveland
- Ernie Pyle
- Harrison
- Hayes
- Jefferson
- Jimmy Carter
- John Adams
- McKinley
- Polk
- Taft
- Truman
- Van Buren
- Washington
- Wilson

Item V.C: Consideration for Approval of Boundary Changes for La Luz and MacArthur Elementary Schools

Questions and Answers

Could we have a before and after map of the boundary changes, please? The proposed map is included but not the map of current boundaries. A map will be provided at Wednesday's meeting.

- The maps will be shared with the board ahead of Wednesday's meeting.

How many community meetings did La Luz and MacArthur Elementary Schools have prior to the boundary change decision? How many communications were sent out for input regarding the boundary change?

- Since consolidation has a rubric that is used in order to determine which schools are to be considered, the communication comes in the form of discussing why the school was being considered. The staff was made aware of the right sizing committee and the Board task force first in January, and again last Tuesday, March 28th. We have a comprehensive communication plan moving forward that would start Thursday morning after the meeting and will continue until all students are registered at their new school for next year. Families will have APS Liaisons.
- Garnering community input ahead of a boundary change is not part of the protocol that has been used this year. This type of communication may cause undue stress with hypothetical answers and scenarios. Communication will take place and began taking place after the Board task force met on Monday, March 27th as part of an evolution of Right Sizing the district and looking to efficiently use our resources well.

I have an email saying that teachers and community were taken by surprise when La Luz was closed and leased out to another organization, especially after investments had been made for pre-school accommodations at La Luz. How was the community engaged on this topic?

- As far as preschool accommodations at La Luz, the building received some additional furniture last school year that is sitting unused. That furniture will move where it is needed to accommodate students. The furniture was purchased centrally, not by the school.

When will this lessee be given access to the building? We received complaints that someone gave permission to the organization to come in during school hours to plan for remodeling? It felt inconsiderate and insensitive of the staff's emotional turmoil at this time.

- Nobody has been given access or permission for remodeling. The lessee will be given access to the building based on the conditions of the agreement, most likely to occur in July.

Item V.E. Consideration for Approval of Boundary Changes for Janet Kahn School of Integrated Arts Magnet, Bellehaven, and Apache Elementary Schools

Comment

I'm concerned with our ability to honor our goals and guardrails as they relate to equitable distribution of resources and equitable access to high quality instruction, especially for those further from the center of opportunity.

Questions and Answers

How will we ensure that neighborhood children have access to this magnet school? What percentage of neighborhood children currently attend JK?

- Of the 324 students attending Janet Kahn, 106 live outside the boundary – about 33 percent. So roughly 70 percent of students live within the current boundaries of JK. ALL students who live within the current JK boundaries through 2028 will have first choice to attend JK. This will ensure that the neighborhood children have access. In 2028 a study will be done to see if any adjustments need to be made to the enrollment declaration.

How will Grant and Kennedy MS be affected?

- The effect will be minimal. Currently, Grant had eight students attend Janet Kahn last year; Kennedy had 3.

Additional Boundary Questions

(We didn't have time to answer these questions in time for the Q&As to be sent to board members and posted, but they were shared with staff.)

- Agenda item V. C: What does the community think of these boundary changes?
- Agenda item V. D: Are these the exact same boundaries that are currently in place for Corrales Elementary School?
- Agenda item V. E: What are the community's thoughts on these changes? Have any superstops been decided yet, and if not, what will be the decision making process as to where these superstops will be, and who ultimately will make that decision?

Charter School Questions/Comments

(We didn't have time to answer these questions in time for the Q&As to be sent to board members and posted, but they were shared with staff.)

Item V.F. Consideration of the Approval of the Contract and Performance Framework for Albuquerque Talent Development Academy

- As to the Performance Framework C – "the chartering authority shall approve the quality & rigor of such proposed indicators." Are they of quality & rigor?
- D. How is poverty status calculated?
- Explain proposed academic goals, and as it pertains to said goals what will be considered, 'satisfactory academic performance' as it relates to the contract performance framework? What could merit revocation of the charter?
- Please give specific indicators that could warrant revocation.
- On page 1 of Albuquerque Talent's Academic Performance Indicators it says, "total growth across all ranges meets or succeeds the aggregate growth rate" What does "succeeds the aggregate growth rate" mean?

Item V.H: Consideration of the Approval of the Contract and Performance Framework for Montessori of the Rio Grande

- Who created the common rubric to measure "proficiency on content, writing, presentation, & self-reflection on the final project?"
- In not using the state's standard based assessment to measure writing proficiency, are there clear academic outcomes being measured?

Item V.I: Consideration for the Approval of the Charter Renewal for a Term of Five Years for El Camino Real Academy

- So does the decision & order handed down say we, the board, were arbitrary & capricious?
- Had we not tabled the El Camino Real renewal & instead voted at the Dec. 2022 meeting with our list of concerns, including but not limited to, poor academic performance, concerns of financial viability etc., would we be in this situation of being forced by PED to renew a charter that isn't doing right by its students? Or alternatively had a vote been scheduled prior to January 1st, with proper findings of fact & conclusions of law could we be in a different position than we are today?
- The majority board vote was to not renew, as our concern, first and foremost, should be the students and improving student outcomes, should that be our primary concern?
- Is it possible Camino Real students could continue suffering poor academic outcomes? Who ultimately is being harmed?
- Why was this charter recommended for renewal? Was it because they checked all the boxes and filled out the renewal application appropriately and as such it had nothing to do with how the students were performing academically?
- Can we appeal to district court?
- Can Camino Real voluntarily rescind their renewal application?

Item V.J: Consideration of the Approval of the Amendment to the Contract for East Mountain High School

- There may need to be a few edits to the mission statement: The word 'a' should be added before the word diverse and did you mean "problems solving" or 'problem solving'?