

September, 2020

Akron Education Association

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AEA briefs

THE AKRON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION IS A UNION OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS ADVOCATING FOR SHARED LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. WE ARE COMMITTED TO USING OUR VOICES TO MAKE EDUCATING ALL CHILDREN A PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITY. OUR BELIEF IS TO PUT CHILDREN AT THE CENTER OF EDUCATION. WE ENDEAVOR TO WORK TOGETHER WITH PARENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS AND SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION.

Dear Colleagues,

I must say that I really struggled putting this issue of AEA Briefs together. One moment wondering how we could possibly put all the information you need into one issue and the next moment, with constantly changing information and decisions, wondering how we would have any solid information to share at all. It certainly has been quite the ride we have all been on since March and, as everyone knows, the ride is not yet over!

If there is any takeaway I wish to express to you at this moment, it is my hope that you all understand how incredibly appreciative and humbled I am watching the dedication, resilience and determination you have all shown towards your profession and the tasks at hand as we move forward. While I have never doubted and always recognized these attributes in all of you in the past, our members have truly set the bar high through the upheaval of what we understood our "normal" to be. Moving to remote teaching and learning overnight, creating rigorous lessons and opportunities for our students, working tirelessly through the summer attending professional development and preparing for the opening of the school year or volunteering to sit on endless committee meetings were all accomplished by you with grace, spirit and perseverance.

Have we stumbled along the way? Of course. Will we continue to have challenges we must overcome? No doubt. Decisions regarding recommendations to the Board by our reopening committees and the final decisions by the APS Board are not easily made. There is no one decision which everyone will agree upon. I will say, however, that these difficult decisions are made with the safety and well-being of all of our members, students, staff and families as a top priority. We can and will certainly rise to any challenges we face with the same commitment we have always shared with our students and families.

As I have always said, a union's strength is the understanding of all of our members that we work together with all voices to support, encourage and speak as one. And that, my union sisters and brothers, is what we have done and will continue to do, for the good of our members, students, families and community.



Pat

Pat Shipe, President

NEW CONTRACT

We have had many questions regarding when the new contract will be posted. We certainly understand and share the frustration of our members regarding the length of time it has been taking to provide a finalized version of the contract.

Once a contract is ratified, both parties must then proof the draft. As we have an Entire Agreement Clause (14.06), the parties must then review and agree to any Memorandums of Understandings which were signed in-term and which may need to be included in the contract.

While the impact of the pandemic certainly slowed this normal process, we assure you that the completed contract will be posted on the AEA website in the very near future.

In the meantime, should you have any questions regarding the current contract, please see your AEA Building Representative or call this office. Thank you.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

At this time while teaching and learning are being conducted using the Connected Learning remote model, please make certain that you communicate with parents a minimum of once per week.

Members are able to determine the mode of communication which works best for both the teacher and the parent.

BUILDING SAFETY GUIDELINES

It is our belief that all staff working from any APS buildings are doing their utmost to follow the district's safety guidelines. We are also aware how easy it can be to fall into a comfort zone and forget to follow safety precautions when it is necessary to move about the building.

Please stay mindful any time it is necessary for more than one person to be within your office or classroom, or if it is necessary to be outside of your office or classroom, to follow social distancing and face mask requirements.

In addition, should you see any safety concerns within the building, or anyone not following safety guidelines, please contact your building administrator at once. It is the responsibility of the building administrator to address any such matters or concerns with the appropriate person.

PLC 6-HOUR OPTION

While the second semester PLC 6-hour option has been eliminated, the first semester option is still available. Completion of this option eliminates required attendance at the January in-service day.

Because of the 2020/2021 late start, only one PLC meeting during the month of September must be conducted outside of the contractual workday. To fulfill the remainder of the 6-hour option requirements during the months of October and November, two PLC meetings must be held within the contractual workday and two PLC meetings must be held outside of the contractual workday.

In addition, while PLC teams should make an attempt to collaborate with administrators in order to schedule the outside the workday meetings, it is not mandatory for an administrator to attend these meetings. Should you have any questions regarding these meetings, please see your AEA Building Representative or call this office.

OHIO TEACHER EVALUATION SYSTEM OTES 2.0

Beginning with the 2020/2021 school year, Akron Public Schools will be converting to the new Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES 2.0).

Currently, all administrators and evaluators either have been or are being trained.

Training teams will be conducting staff training sessions in the near future at all buildings. Should you have a question regarding when your building will be trained, please contact your building administrator for more information.

AEA MEMBERSHIP

Because the district is currently following the remote teaching model, all AEA membership forms will be mailed directly to our members' homes. Please follow the instructions accompanying these membership forms to complete. Return all completed forms to the AEA office in the enclosed, addressed envelope. Should you have any questions, please see your AEA Building Representative or call this office at 330-434-2181. Thank you.



STAY SAFE EVERYONE!

HIGH SCHOOL 90-DAY PLANS

It has been brought to our attention that some CCAA Academy administrators are developing Academy 90-Day plans with separate goals and requirements which are Academy specific.

Please be aware that every APS building is to have **ONE** SIP 90-day plan. Individual academies may not develop a separate document, nor may they require academy team members to follow any directives outside of the building 90-day plans.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding your building's 90-day plan, or if you are being required to follow a different and/or additional plan, please contact your AEA Building Representative or call this office at 330-434-2181.

ELEMENTARY TEACHER NON-NEGOTIABLE EXPECTATIONS

It is the Association's position that leadership in the Office of Elementary Education and the Office of Curriculum and Instruction continue to place unrealistic non-negotiable expectations on our elementary staff with regard to deadlines for the administration, recording and number of assessments, particularly during the beginning of this school year. Teachers are expected to administer, score and report the Oral Reading Record (ORR) assessments, the district writing assessment, complete I-Ready testing, prepare for interims, teach the 11 days of rituals and routines and continue to deliver daily instruction. All of this is to occur no later than the end of September. (Deadline for ORRs, only, has been extended to 10/5/20).

While the Association continues to believe that all of our professional educators are absolute superstars and work well beyond their contractual workday on a regular basis, it is still inexplicable to us that when questioned about these highly overreaching deadlines this Administration continues to adopt the stance that we must all just "make it work."

Perhaps we are finally reaching the point when educators should complete everything they are able to complete within the contractual workday, leaving the remainder for the next day. While we know that our teachers are wired to go above and beyond for the good of their students, and will continue to expand their workday well beyond the contractual limits, it is interesting to wonder how all of these demands would be met if members began to end their workday on time. How would the district "get it done" without the many extra non-contractual work hours which they are insisting on now?

ELEMENTARY STUDENT GRADES

Those primary teachers utilizing grading systems outside of the letter grade (A,B,C,D,F) system are only required to post student progress at the end of the grading period. You are not required to post O, S, U progress markings on a weekly basis.

TECHNOLOGY FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS

Currently, the district is working on a plan to provide those educational assistants in need of tech devices with a chrome book as soon as possible. All students and educators will be furnished with a device first, after which a plan will be put in place to address those ed assistants assigned to high needs units. Should you have an assistant in need of a device, please see your building administrator.

TUTOR WORKWEEK

If you are a tutor who has been working a four day 24-hour workweek, you are not required to now spread your workweek over five days. If you wish to work a fifth day, you may do so as a district substitute at a substitute’s daily rate. You also are not required to commit to a fifth day on an on-going basis. You may, however, schedule an on-going fifth day on a strictly voluntary basis.

SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM RATIOS

All secondary academic classes, core elective, art, general music, health or foreign language classes shall not exceed the 33% sped/ratio per period. Should you require an adjustment to your class roster, please see your AEA Building Representative.

STUDENT UNIFORM POLICY

Just as a reminder...the Akron Board of Education voted to suspend its student uniform policy for the 2020/2021 school year. Students in grades K-8 are not required to attend either remote instruction or in-person classes wearing school uniforms. Students are, however, required to wear appropriate clothing during school instruction. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this change, please see your AEA building Representative or call this office.

WELLNESS PROGRAM

For the 2020/2021 school year, all those members already enrolled in the district Wellness Program or Paladina will automatically be re-enrolled in their respective program and will not be required to participate in the annual screening process.

For members who did not participate in the Wellness Program or Paladina last year, there will be a limited on-site opportunity to complete the screening. Details and date will be available soon.

If you are not able to schedule an appointment for this on-site visit you are still able to complete the screening through LabCorp, your own physician or, for those wishing to participate in Paladina, you may complete the screening through their locations. Please remember, however, that you are not required to be a member of Paladina in order to join the Wellness Program and receive the discounted monthly healthcare premium rate. To receive the discounted rates, you must be a member of the Wellness Program **OR** Paladina.

As always, the Health Risk Assessment form will be completed on-line. The above listed appointment options are for blood-draws only.

Should you have any questions, please contact the district Health Benefits Department at 330-761-2935. I



Your Union At Work For You



SIP TEAM WALKTHROUGHS

AEA filed a grievance on behalf of all Buchtel AEA members regarding the Buchtel Administration's utilization of SIP Team members to conduct classroom walkthroughs. These SIP teacher members were instructed to walkthrough classrooms to collect data and report on whether components of the SIP 90-day plan were being displayed. In addition, teachers were being asked to produce their lesson plans for these SIP Team members. More concerning was an OTES evaluation checklist form being utilized during these walkthroughs.

The Board agreed that these incidents were a violation to the Agreement (3.05.S, 3.05.T, 3.09.A, Appendix C-1). As of this time, the building has discontinued the practice of using SIP teachers to conduct walkthroughs, stopped using an OTES checklist during walkthroughs, agreed only OTES evaluators will conduct evaluative walkthroughs using the approved contractual form and acknowledged that the building administration accept either a hard copy or digital version of lesson plans, but not require both.

Please be aware that members are not to conduct classroom walkthroughs. Only administrators may walkthrough a classroom as outlined in the Agreement. In addition, instructional strategies may be developed by the SIP Team (3.05.S) based on the results of student assessments listed in the Agreement. Any strategy which falls outside of these parameters, or includes components or mandates which conflict with any provisions of the Agreement, must request a waiver before implementation.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this grievance, please see your AEA Building Representative or call this office.

3-WEEK SHUFFLE

The contractual window for the Board to make, 3.11.C Fall Assignments, Reassignment or Transfers Due to Enrollment Changes, has closed. The Administration has informed AEA that there will be no reassignments at this time.

While there may be a need for some changes within a building due to 2020/2021 enrollment numbers, we will work with the district tat that time to address those needs.

JOB VACANCIES

The Association filed a grievance on behalf of all members when the administration failed to fill several vacancies and chose to place several members into those vacancies on an "interim" basis, without the required posting and interviewing process taking place. These members were told that they could "try out" the job and, if they ultimately decided they were not a good fit in the interim position, the member was then promised a return to their old position.

As you are aware, when vacancies occur during the school year, procedures for the filling of such vacancies are outlined in 3.12 of the CBA.

In addition, the administration may not negotiate independent "deals" with members in a direct manner, while ignoring the legal representation of the Association.

The Board agreed that the process which they followed was in violation of the Agreement. Those involved were placed in permanent positions and the Board agreed that, in the future, they would follow the procedures outlined in 3.12.

Should you have any questions, or witness and similar situations occurring in your building, please notify your AEA building Representative or call this office.



Your Union At Work For You



INFORMAL CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGHS

A grievance was filed on behalf of Buchtel AEA members. The building administration was conducting "informal walkthroughs" utilizing evaluative forms which were to "inform the summative OTES evaluation" of the teacher.

3.09.A states, "a maximum of four (4) OTES walkthroughs may take place annually, not to exceed fifteen (15) minutes per walkthrough.

Non-OTES walkthroughs are not used for evaluation purposes."

In addition, any evaluative walkthroughs (4) must be conducted using the contractual "Classroom Walkthrough Form" located in Appendix C-1 of the Agreement.

The Board acknowledged that this practice violated the referenced sections of the CBA and agreed to discontinue the practice. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this issue, please see your AEA Building Representative or contact this office.

HIGH SCHOOL STAFF MEETINGS

AEA filed a grievance on behalf of all Buchtel AEA members after the building administrators required members to attend separate Academy Team meetings instead of the contractual monthly staff meeting.

All contractually required meetings are listed in 3.18 "Staff and Other Meetings" of the Agreement. Monthly staff meetings are to be held with the entire staff. Times and procedural exceptions may be referenced in 3.18.A.

The Board agreed to follow the terms and conditions of 3.18 and the grievance was withdrawn.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding how your building handles monthly staff meetings, please contact your AEA Building Representative or this office.

CERTIFIED LIBRARIANS

A grievance has been filed on behalf of all certified librarians in the district. Section 6.02 states, "All Akron public school secondary libraries shall be supervised by certificated librarians. Secondary Library vacancies that cannot be filled by a certificated librarian through the normal transfer process or through the interview process may be filled by a licensed teacher selected through the posting and interview process."

Recently, after interviewing numerous certified job candidates for a librarian vacancy, the Board filled the position with a non-certified applicant. It is the Association's position that the Board had numerous opportunities to fill the vacancy with a well-qualified certified candidate and simply chose not to follow the language with 6.02.

The Association has filed a grievance and requested a Level II conference. As always, AEA is more than eager to settle contract disputes short of arbitration. We are currently awaiting the District's reply and will update you regarding the status of this grievance in future publications.

Listed below are the elementary, middle school and high school remote models which were developed by the joint restart committees and approved by the Board. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the model which was implemented at your building, please see your AEA Building Representative or contact this office.

Connected Learning Elementary Schedule

Elementary teachers will provide 120 minutes daily of direct instruction to students. Teachers teaching special subjects will deliver direct instruction in 30-minute intervals with every student having art, music, and physical education and LRC once per week. K-5(6 East) teachers will have the support of the LRC technician to establish Keyboarding Without Tears LRC lessons (30 min/week). Teachers will collaborate with their LRC techs and building administrators to determine the best way to accomplish this keyboarding practice time. During the time special instruction is delivered, the special subject teacher is the teacher of record and is responsible for the direct instruction of the students.

Elementary (K-6) Connected Learning Model	
Teacher SAMPLE Schedule	
Time/Amount of Time	
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Collaborative Team Time
15 minutes	Homeroom/class meeting
45 minutes	Teacher Planning (one/weekly PLC meeting)
60 minutes	Reading instruction 20 minutes read aloud with mini lesson 20 minutes small group guided reading 20 minutes small group guided reading
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	30 minutes lunch/30 minutes collaboration
15 minutes	Tech time for parents & students
60 minutes	Math instruction 30 minutes core 30 minutes small group & centers
60 minutes	Office hours
3:15 p.m.	End of the day

Connected Learning Middle School Schedule

The collaborative team for middle schools was charged with designing a remote learning schedule that continued to use the 8 or 9 period day as the foundation so that as the school year progressed, middle schools would have the flexibility to move to a blended or face to face model without disruption. To solidify that foundation and to meet the expectation of shorter, more targeted lessons in an on-line environment, middle school schedules were split over two days. Teachers will provide direct instruction to the students they would typically have in class on the even periods (2,4,6,8) on one day, and then provide direct instruction to the students they would typically have in class on the odd periods (1,3,5,7,9). Middle Schools that have a 9 period day will use the flex period at 2:00 to provide direct instruction to the students who are scheduled into the 9th-period class. This middle school instructional delivery model will continue to rotate daily during the first 9 weeks of remote learning.

Middle School (6-8) Connected Learning Model		
Teacher SAMPLE Schedule		
Times	Odd Periods	Even Periods
8:00 - 9:00	Collaboration or Planning	Collaboration or Planning
9:00 -9:50	Period 1	Period 2
10:00 - 10:50	Period 3	Period 4
10:50 - 11:00	Student Support Time	Student Support Time
11:00 - 12:00	Lunch	Lunch
12:00 - 12:50	Period 5	Period 6
1:00—1:50	Period 7	Period 8
2:00 - 2:50	Flex Period/Office Hours	Flex Period/Office Hours
2:55 - 3:20	Teacher Office Hours	Teacher Office Hours

Connected Learning High School Schedule

High School schedules will remain on an A/B day structure during remote learning. Teachers will provide direct instruction during the established time for the courses they are teaching and provided additional support for students during student support time. To support the implementation of Integrated Teaching and Learning (ITL), time is built into the daily schedule for academies to continue their work to develop integrated teaching and learning lessons, units, or projects.

High School Connected Learning Model		
Teacher Sample Schedule		
Times	A Day	B Day
8:00 - 8:45	Collaborative Team Time	Collaborative Team Time
8:45 - 9:00	Student Support Time	Student Support Time
9:00 - 9:50	Period 1-2 (Block 1)	Period 1-2 (Block 1)
10:00 - 10:50	Period 3-4 (Block 2)	Period 3-4 (Block 2)
10:50 - 11:15	Student Support Time	Student Support Time
11:15 - 12:00	Staff Lunch	Staff Lunch
12:00 - 12:50	Period 5-7 (Block 3)	Period 5-7 (Block 3)
1:00 - 1:50	Period 8-9 (Block 4)	Period 8-9 (Block 4)
2:00 - 2:45	Collaborative Team Time: Academy Themed Projects (ITL)	Collaborative Team Time: Academy Themed Projects (ITL)