

May 8, 2018

Letter of Intent for Cape Elizabeth Schools

One of the primary goals of The Cape Elizabeth School System is to guarantee that all students graduate from high school with the skills necessary to be productive citizens.

In order for teachers to be successful in the classroom to help meet this goal, they need consistent and sufficient planning time to ensure optimal student learning and to address remediation for those students who are not yet proficient.

During the 2017 negotiations for the current teacher contract, the School Board learned that the teachers at Pond Cove Elementary School were woefully behind in planning time in comparison to comparable school districts. This fact jeopardizes their ability to be effective in the classroom. During the 2017-2018 school year, resources and staff were increased at Pond Cove so that teachers had more time to plan. Additionally, the Board and the Cape Elizabeth Education Association agreed during bargaining to include a side letter that stated: "The Cape Elizabeth Education Association and the School Board recognize the importance of planning time in supporting student learning. The School Board will develop a policy providing for teacher planning time in the schools which will be presented for Board action by March 31, 2018. The Board acknowledges its obligation to afford the Association the opportunity to meet and consult with the Board with respect to the development of the policy and any changes thereto, and to negotiate the impact of the policy and any changes thereto on mandatory subjects of bargaining." From the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, the Board, the superintendent and the Association worked in good faith to come up with a policy that is satisfactory to all parties involved.

Because the Board's 2017-18 budget provided the necessary staff and resources, teachers at Pond Cove now have the planning time that helps guide their instruction to optimize student learning. Two components were key in making this happen. First, five regular educational technicians were hired to assist in response to intervention and to share duties with teachers. Second, during the 2017-18 school year, two lunch aides were hired. Both of these actions were instrumental in affording teachers the planning time they need to be successful.

In lieu of a specific policy, the Board instead recognizes both instruction and planning time as vital to student learning and encourages building administrators and teachers to work collaboratively to build a schedule that provides an optimal balance of each of these vital components. Furthermore, since planning time is a priority, the Board recognizes the importance of maintaining, at a minimum, a level of staffing and resources that is proportional to the current levels (2017-2018 school year) to help facilitate teacher planning time.

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CEEA President

Date

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Chairperson of School Board

Date