



Mishawaka Schools to Implement Wednesday Late Start Model for Professional Learning Communities

On Tuesday, May 9th, the School City of Mishawaka School Board of Trustees approved a plan to provide dedicated staff development time targeted at increased student learning through teacher collaboration. SCM is dedicated to researching and exploring the unique needs of our students. Education is a field that continues to change rapidly and we are dedicated to our staff furthering their commitment to the education of each of our students by meeting the challenges of today's educational environment. Supporting this commitment includes providing the time for staff to work in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) each week, at a regularly scheduled time, to collect, review and utilize student data to more effectively serve our students' academic and behavioral needs.

Each Wednesday of the school year, **starting August 23rd**, School City of Mishawaka will utilize a "Late Start" model where staff will be engaged in PLCs for one hour before the start of the student day. This "Late Start" schedule will **NOT** impact the start of the Elementary School Day. Mishawaka High School will begin the student day at **8:35 a.m.** and John Young Middle School will begin the student day at **8:45 a.m.** on Wednesday Late Start PLC days. Reminders and schedules will be reflected on the district and school websites. (MishawakaSchools.com)

Attached you will find an FAQ to answer some of the most common questions you may have about this Late Start PLC model. If you have further questions please contact Sarah Hickles, Director of Student Learning and Innovation, at (574) 254-4558 or hickles@mishawaka.k12.in.us.



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Frequently Asked Questions:

- 1. What is a Professional Learning Community (PLC)?*

A PLC is a group of educators who are committed to working together to help each child to be more successful in school. PLCs measure their effectiveness on the basis of student results, rather than intentions or good ideas. PLCs monitor data, take action, and continually adjust to meet student needs.
- 2. Why are Mishawaka Schools implementing a Late Start model?*

The Late Start Model is a part of the district's plan to implement Professional Learning Communities in every school. By dedicating time for collaboration, a focus on data informed decision making, and best instructional practices our entire team of educators can work collectively to provide an educational experience that meets the needs of all learners with a greater level of impact on student achievement and success.
- 3. Why not schedule this PLC time during the summer or after school?*

Scheduling PLCs or Professional Development time for teachers outside of the contractual hours would increase costs incurred by the district. Using the contractual time makes the process of professional learning a "job embedded" expectation and in a cost effective manner.
- 4. Don't teachers already have planning time?*

Yes, but teachers need that time to prepare lessons, grade student assessments, communicate and meet with parents and students, and work toward school goals. We don't want to jeopardize the great work already taking place, but rather to add to this work a collaborative time for focused professional learning and growth that benefits instruction and student learning.
- 5. Will my child still be offered breakfast on late start days?*

Breakfast operations will continue as normal for elementary schools. JYMS breakfast will be served at 8:25 a.m. and MHS breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m.
- 6. How will the Late Start PLC time help my child?*

Our staff will work collaboratively during PLC time to refine their teaching strategies to engage and empower all learners by reviewing data and research to improve instructional and intervention practices.
- 7. What if there is a two-hour delay on a Late Start PLC day?*

In the event of inclement weather or other circumstances that would require a two-hour delay on a Wednesday, the Late Start PLC time will be cancelled and the district will run the two-hour delay schedule.
- 8. What is the rationale for selecting a delayed start instead of an early release?*

A delayed start allows for more focused, undistracted collaboration time before the hustle and bustle of the day begins. It eliminates unsupervised after-school time during which students are waiting for athletics/activities and permits full participation of coaches and after-school activity sponsors.