In mid-June 2016, the District ratified a three-year contract agreement with the teachers’ association. The agreement addresses the need for consistent collaboration time and additional student contact days. Beginning in August 2017, students have a weekly 90-minute Wednesday early release so teachers have consistent and sustainable time for collaboration. In addition, the agreement builds in more student contact days by gradually adding nine student days over three years. More full weeks of school will increase the continuity of instruction for students.

- **2016-2017:** Add 2 student contact days
- **2017-2018:** Convert 4 staff development days to student contact days
- **2018-2019:** Add 3 student contact days

The District’s Strategic Plan, developed with broad community involvement and support, identified teacher collaboration as the key strategy for ensuring individual student growth. Collaboration is an ongoing process of small teams of teachers working together to know each student’s strengths and challenges, and to meet students’ specific learning needs, while strengthening the teacher’s own teaching practices. Collaboration time gives teachers a more comprehensive view of the child and increases teacher effectiveness, making it essential for student success.

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, students will be released 90 minutes early on Wednesdays to allow teachers time for collaboration.

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

1. **My school already has collaboration time. Why is more needed?**
   Over the past several years, schools were able to provide some time for collaboration, primarily by using substitutes to release teams of teachers. These practices were inconsistent and difficult to sustain. Having consistent time across all schools provides opportunities for inter-school collaboration and professional development, as well as reducing inequities related to some students receiving differing amounts of time for PE or music to create time for collaboration.

2. **Don’t teachers already have individual planning time? Why can’t collaboration occur during the time they already have?**
   The teachers’ contract provides for daily lesson preparation time. The former contract did not provide any time for collaboration with peers.
TEACHER COLLABORATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Frequently Asked Questions

3. **Was a late start considered?**
   Late start creates more challenges for families of elementary students and for transporting students to Special Education programs. Implementing an afternoon early release maintains the stability of transporting Special Education students and Supervisory Aide assignments.

4. **Why was Wednesday selected?**
   Wednesday is a peak day for after school athletics and activities. An early release on this day allows the District to transport a significant number of these trips originating at 2:45 p.m. or later which we currently have to outsource.

5. **How will the time be used?**
   The time will allow teachers to collaborate with colleagues and to participate in professional development. Examples of collaborative work with colleagues include analyzing student data, creating and scoring assessments, ensuring consistent expectations and practices across grade level teams and content areas. Teachers will also be able to participate in timely and relevant professional development reducing the use of substitutes. With the exception of when there is a fifth Wednesday in a month, the time will not be used for individual planning.

6. **Will my child benefit?**
   Providing teachers with time for professional development and time to collaborate with peers on each student’s progress increases the effectiveness of your child’s teachers. Providing teacher training during non-student contact time reduces reliance on substitutes and increases the continuity of instruction for students. Aside from the instructional benefits, secondary students will have more opportunities for internships, job shadows and homework completion. The ability to calibrate student work and collaborate with peers will provide students with greater instructional consistency from classroom to classroom and across grade levels. Students will also have more uninterrupted weeks in school.

7. **Do other school districts have release time for teachers?**
   Most school districts in the metro area have some form of late start or early release for collaboration and professional development. These include Portland, Hillsboro, Forest Grove, Sherwood, Oregon City, Canby, Tigard Tualatin, David Douglas and West Linn Wilsonville, to name a few. This is a common practice for schools across the nation.

8. **How do the number of student contact days compare to neighboring districts?**
   The national average is 180 student days, and the majority of Oregon school districts have less. Beaverton currently has 175 days. Adding nine more days will provide Beaverton students with more days of instruction than any of our neighboring districts.
9. **What are the changes to the original 2016-2017 calendar?**
   - Schools were open November 23, the day before Thanksgiving, and are closed on the revised calendar.
   - A grading/staff development day was January 30 and is February 3 on the revised calendar.
   - Seniors’ last day was June 2 and is June 7 on the revised calendar.
   - Students’ last day was June 16 and is June 21 on the revised calendar.

10. **Why are two days being added to June instead of August next year?**
   There was not adequate time to notify parents and staff of the change if the days were added to August 2016. These two days may be moved to August in future years.

11. **How will future calendars be developed?**
   As is current practice, a calendar committee, with parent representation, will develop multiple calendar options. Staff and community will be surveyed regarding their preferred calendars, and this information will be presented to the Superintendent who will make the final decision.

12. **Will school eventually begin before Labor Day?**
   From an instructional perspective, this is best for students taking high-stakes exams later in the year such as Smarter Balanced, Advanced Placement, etc. Several calendar options will be presented to staff and parents through a survey similar to what has occurred in the past.

13. **What input will parents have on the implementation of Early Release?**
   Parent focus groups will be conducted in July to advise the District on challenges that will need to be addressed prior to the implementation of Early Release. Parents will also be able to submit questions and suggestions at Community_Involvement@beaverton.k12.or.us. Additional input may be collected through parent surveys.

14. **Will the District have to increase class size to cover the cost of the additional days?**
   Part of the agreement with BEA is to maintain reasonable class sizes. If there is insufficient revenue to add days and we cannot identify mutually acceptable options, the Early Release will be discontinued and we will revert to the current 175 student days.

15. **Is there more instructional time with these changes?**
   There is no significant increase to the number of instructional minutes, depending on the year. However, continuity of instruction is increased due to more full weeks for students.

16. **Do teachers support these changes?**
   The three-year contract was overwhelmingly approved by 82% of teachers.
17. What still needs to be done prior to implementation?

The District will use the upcoming year to determine final dismissal schedules, impact to schedules for athletics/activities/finals week/specials, effectiveness measures and calendars for future years. Information will be communicated to parents through a variety of methods, including this site.