Ideas for Finding Collaboration Time

Purpose: *The information included in this checklist may be used for brainstorming or for discussion.*

	In Use Across the District	Available and In Use in Some Buildings	Bargaining Agreement Currently Prevents Use	Ideas to Consider	
<u>Early Release/Late Start</u>					
▪ Early outs (or late starts) scheduled weekly or every other week. When using early outs or late starts, make adjustments to the schedule by increasing instructional time to the other days of the week. Do not shorten instructional time experienced by the students. Be sure to inform the public about how time is used and the rationale for changing the schedule, including the benefits to students.					
▪ At high school level develop an early-release schedule that avoid cutting the same period each time students are released early, i.e. one week periods 1, 3, 5, 7 and next week periods 2, 4, 6, 8.					
▪ Stagger 1/2 day PD sessions with elementary schools scheduled on one day and secondary schools scheduled on a different day.					
▪ Build in 9 additional days (based on 37 weeks of school) with a very focused agenda by adding 1/2 hour one morning per week, one hour after school per week and one common planning time per week.					
▪ When district or school-based staff development sessions are scheduled, arrange for them to begin late or end early with the saved time being used for collaboration.					
▪ Experiment with a late arrival or early dismissal day. This time can occur once per week, once per month, or once per grading period. Typically, the school day is lengthened and the additional minutes are "banked" to provide release time.					
▪ Stay late after school once per month, but make it enjoyable by bringing snacks, flowers, music or other pleasant "atmosphere" items.					
<u>Modifying Schedules during Student Day</u>					
▪ Block scheduling provides more possibility of flexibility.					

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▪ Merge classes for assemblies/films/common activities with fewer adults supervising.					
▪ Schedule common planning time for learning teams or other appropriate groups.					
▪ All teachers at each grade level have one common planning time a week.					
▪ Schedule back-to-back sessions where teachers are released on a scheduled basis.					
▪ Interdisciplinary teams set time aside for PD and/or collaboration.					
▪ Make student lunch hour longer and build in collaborative teacher time					
▪ Have two classes team to release one teacher (e.g., two fourth grades, a third grade and a fifth grade).					
▪ Use other adults (e.g., principals, assistant principals, counselors, social workers, volunteers, psychologists, and supervisors) to help cover classes, ensuring to follow local policies on who can supervise students.					
▪ Treat collaboration as the equivalent of school committee responsibilities, especially if you are operating a pilot program. Time that others in school spend in committee meetings is spent working collaboratively.					
Time Beyond School Day/Week/Year					
▪ Collaboratively plan summer learning activities including PD.					
▪ Late afternoon potluck or pizza incentive.					
▪ Potluck breakfast—teachers come before school hours or during lunch					
Ideas for Support Resources to Generate Teacher Time					

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▪ Substitute teachers: Rotate several substitute teachers through the building					
▪ Substitute teacher has lesson for large group of students; paraprofessionals provide support in implementation of task.					
▪ Principals cover classes.					
▪ High school teachers cover for each other.					
▪ Link with colleges/universities to free up time.					
▪ Find "volunteer" substitutes -- retired teachers, members of social or civic organizations, teacher trainees from local universities.					
▪ Reduce other work to have time to meet -- for example, have students correct each others' work or create self-correcting materials.					
Efficient Use of Time and Resources					
▪ Discontinue practices no longer needed (e.g., spelling bees, showcases and time audits to determine amount being spent and number of students affected) and then use that time for collaboration.					
▪ Involve teachers in creating schedules - teachers are creative!					
▪ Use faculty meetings for collaboration and team training instead of information sharing.					
▪ Communicate in writing things that can be handled in memos, e-mails, etc. and redirect time for collaboration.					
▪ Use 1-2 prep times a week or use teacher shared planning time.					

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▪ Expect reading, e.g., professional articles to be read prior to meetings.					
▪ Use Web-based tools and training: interactive journal (could be e-mail), video classes that model the strategy being studied, videoconferencing, video stream and threaded discussions, (i.e. bulletin board). This needs to be carefully structured to include attributes of effective collaborative team meetings.					
▪ Videotape in the building to be used as demonstrations to be used in study groups.					
▪ Use instructionally relevant videotapes or other programs supervised by part of the staff to release the other part of the staff for planning.					
▪ Divide labor for instruction to save time.					
▪ Identify designated in-service days for district-/school-based teams to work on district learning goals/strategies or district/school plan actions, e.g., use first in-service day for district-wide messages on critical needs and designate subsequent days for school-based applications, incorporating the work of collaborative teams					
Incentives and Ways to Increase Motivation					
▪ Allow PD credit for learning related to district PD goals done on contract time.					
▪ Offer compensatory time/flex time.					
▪ Make time useful to teachers so they see value in time they are committing.					
▪ Provide bonus classroom supplies, software and technology.					
▪ Make sure teachers are aware that their input is routinely used to design the district and building plans.					