

Hello parent/guardians,

Liberty School District is excited to share with you a great opportunity for our staff, that will benefit students, beginning the 2017-18 school year by having Professional Learning Communities every Wednesday.

**What is PLC?** PLC stands for Professional Learning Communities. It is an opportunity for staff, teachers and student support staff to talk collaboratively about student's academic progress, behavior, social-emotional issues, and anything else that can get in the way of a student learning. The goal is to provide intervention and support immediately BEFORE it gets out of hand. PLCs is a framework for providing systematic interventions to students who are struggling to receive **additional time and support** for learning in a timely and directive manner. PLC is also a time to set up **enrichment and rigorous learning opportunities** for those students who are ready, eager, and capable of taking on more learning.

PLCs must be done on a consistent basis in order to have the greatest impact on student achievement. There is plenty of research available about PLCs, and how to set up PLC meeting times in the most efficient manner. *Best practice* is to provide PLC during the school day, otherwise it will not happen. Teachers and paras are pulled in many directions before and after school with IEP and 504 meetings, along with leadership, math, English Language Arts, science and faculty meetings. Top-rated schools in Illinois have PLC scheduled during the school day, which likely contributes to why they are a top performing school. Many researchers have stated the most effective way to ensure that PLC occurs is to implement regularly-scheduled meetings. The professional development opportunity provided to school leaders of Liberty through the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) has an entire unit on PLC because it is that important to the success of a school.

Therefore, next year, Liberty School District is scheduling PLCs every Wednesday, which means **school will be dismissed at 2:00 p.m. every Wednesday**. Busses will be running one hour early. For those student athletes who have no ride back and forth to school, there will be a homework lab available for them to stay and complete assignments before sports practice. Also, the school district has reached out to one of the area churches to see if they would be interested in providing daycare from 2:00- 3:00. They are looking into it. Also, The YMCA has been invited to explore daycare opportunities and fitness/aerobic classes at Liberty School. All teaching staff and student support staff will meet one hour each week to discuss students and how to help them, look at data, and how to provide articulation within subject areas K-12 grade. There are several areas that have gaps that we know need to be addressed. This is Liberty School District's attempt to take the district to a higher level in student achievement.

Now, one might be concerned with the amount of instructional time that will be lost. In comparison to this year, it ends up being 33 hours. However, if you look at that in comparison to 176 student attendance days, taking a half hour out for lunch, it is 2.9% of the total time or roughly 3%. However, by giving up the 3%, we will be **maximizing the 97%** we have, getting more for our students in the long run. What a great opportunity for the students of Liberty School!

We are letting you know now so you can make the appropriate arrangements for your child next year. Thanks for supporting us in this move to make Liberty even greater!!!!