

MAPLE RUN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (MRUSD)

2019-2020 EARLY RELEASE FACT SHEET

WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY “PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FACULTY”?

Professional development (PD) provides the training, resources, and practice to ensure that our educators offer the highest quality of instruction, assessment, and curriculum for our students. While the value of professional learning is of great importance in the Maple Run community, it is also a requirement according to the Vermont Agency of Education. As found in the Education Quality Standards, all Vermont schools must engage in “professional learning for all professional staff embedded into the school day” (2121.3).

HOW WILL EARLY RELEASE DAYS AFFECT THE SCHOOL CALENDAR?

The calendar will remain the same. The schedule on Fridays will change by releasing students one hour earlier than their regular school day.

WILL BUSES RUN ON EARLY RELEASE DAYS? IF SO, WHEN WILL THEY RUN?

Yes, Grand Avenue Transit will transport students home via their regular bus route. Dismissal times will be:

- St. Albans Town Educational Center - 2:35 p.m.
- St. Albans City School - 1:00 p.m. for PreK & K; 1:50 p.m. for 1 - 8
- Fairfield Center School - 2:05 p.m.
- High School buses will remain the same.

WHAT CHILDCARE OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE ON EARLY RELEASE DAYS?

We understand the difficulty and challenges that early release days may present to families. Parents who need support should reach out to their school to learn the options available. In addition, St. Albans Recreation is partnering with our schools and will start after-school programs earlier on Fridays to accommodate for any interested families. Here is the link to those programs:

https://stalbansvt.myrec.com/info/activities/program_details.aspx?ProgramID=29917

DO OTHER DISTRICTS IN VERMONT USE EARLY RELEASE/LATE START STRUCTURES TO PROVIDE MORE EFFECTIVE PD?

Yes, this is a common model and many school districts have moved to regular early release or late start days to provide more effective professional development. Many districts across the state provide weekly, monthly, or quarterly early release PD time. In Maple Run, BFA has had a late start for two days placed in their schedule for many years for the same purpose.

WHY THE ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TIME?

In today's education, teachers are expected to continually learn, apply, reflect, and re-adjust what they teach. We expect them to "chunk" learning in small doses for their students, ask students to apply that learning, constantly check for understanding, and make necessary instructional adjustments. This hour will help support teachers' ability to continually reflect and adjust their instruction based on student needs.

To ensure that future generations will have the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in this new world, educators and states are responding by making significant shifts in how we educate our students and structure their learning.

At Maple Run, we are in the middle of implementing some of these shifts. We ask our teachers to develop learning targets aligned with national standards that will include personalized instruction and explore flexible pathways for each student. This important work requires focus and continual reflection which is best done in regular sessions.

WHAT KINDS OF PD ARE FACULTY AND STAFF ENGAGED IN DURING EARLY RELEASE DAYS?

Teachers will be engaged in embedded, ongoing professional learning that is collaborative, reflective and responsive. In addition, they will now have time to review student assessment data and student work together to personalize the best learning experience for each child. This supports continuous growth of instructional practices and has a direct impact on student learning. Some of the work for this year includes:

Learning, collaborating and planning for:

- **Instructional Practices** - how and what is taught in the classroom
- **Learning Targets** - short term goals clearly stating what we expect students to know and be able to do at the end of the lesson(s)
- **Vertical Teams** - teachers at various grade levels who work together to help more students acquire the academic skills necessary for success
- **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support** - a framework in which data-based problem-solving and decision making are practiced across all levels of the educational system for supporting students
- **Personalization** - a process to ensure that every student's academic, emotional, and physical needs are understood and accommodated
- **Collaboration with other Teachers**
- **Reviewing and Analyzing Data**

Through current research and listening to our colleagues around the state, we know that having teachers collaboratively examine student work and plan instruction based on student evidence and data is one of the most powerful ways to improve student learning for all our children.