



The Next Steps for Philadelphia Schools

The hopes of the future for the children
and families in Philadelphia

A Report by Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth
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"There is growing consensus among educators on left and right about what distinguishes the best public schools, leading to a higher graduation rate, more successful college experiences and greater safety and health. Schools for low-income kids are more successful when they are small, when parents and teachers are together by choice, when there is a strong and coherent approach to schooling and when the adults in charge have a lot of authority to make important decisions. And all of this can happen inside the public sector..."

- Deborah W. Meier, Principal
Mission Hill School, Boston MA.

*More than 208,000 children attend Philadelphia public schools.**

*About 26,000 employees including 13,000
teachers work for the School District.*

*In more than 260 school buildings are many of the hopes
of the future of the City and its families.*

During the first summer of the new century, the State's largest city faces a possible take-over of its schools, a significant and structural budget deficit, a large teacher- shortage, and a national political convention. It is summer in Philadelphia. It is also the time when the teachers' union and the schools must agree on a contract.

In recent years, Philadelphia has been in the eye of the storm of educational change. Inadequacy of funding and middle class flight to the suburbs have exacerbated long held tensions between key stakeholders, management and labor in the school district. While criticisms of the system in Philadelphia have been similar to those found in many communities, complaints have included disappointment in the achievement levels of the students, in the environment and safety in the schools, and in the rigidity of the system. Comments reflecting need for more choices and more say in schools as well as antagonism and confusion about "downtown" decision-making often are heard expressed by both teachers and parents. At the same time, there has been improvement in student achievement with about 40% of the students showing educational progress on standardized tests.

Ironically, as the need for quality public education grows, the public's faith in public education, historically our most universal institution has become increasingly fragile. Polls show that the public believes that serious, fundamental change in our education system is necessary. (Roper, 1997 and 1999, *Gallup Organization*). But there is little consensus about the ways the changes should be shaped, or through what process and by what stakeholders. As public schools lose more students to charter and non-public efforts and as the need to attract and maintain public school teachers grows, the need to rethink ways to improve our schools becomes more pressing.

As Philadelphia began to undergo contract negotiations, PCCY commissioned a survey of some contracts in other cities which appear to strengthen efforts to place decision-making more in the hands of key participants, particularly teachers, at the local level. We are aware there is no one-way, no easy formula to figure out how best to make different decisions. But we believe that part of the disaffection people are expressing about public schools in general in this community comes from a feeling of inadequacy in affecting their children's schools in particular. We suggest that clarifying and localizing more decision-making might assuage this issue. Our findings place more power over decisions in the hands of teachers, other faculty and parents on committees at the school level.

Our contract survey only scratches the surface of the day-by-day creativity and risk-taking of many communities joining together to increase the opportunities for children. These efforts are being made throughout the country - in large and small districts, in affluent and low-income districts, in under-funded and well-funded districts. This overview of some contract reforms in other communities is not exhaustive, nor prescriptive; it is just one way of thinking about the changes that might be considered and what role, if any, the contract might play in improving public education in Philadelphia.

** This excludes the number of Philadelphia students attending charter schools.*



The Thin Contract - Think Globally, Act Locally

Across the nation, teachers, school administrators and community members are uniting to try new ways to work together to improve the future of their communities by improving their schools. There is renewed interest in limiting the contract's district-wide issue negotiations and moving to a more localized approach to maximize the participation of teachers and school communities in decisions. This move away from the "one-size fits all" method enables the contract to determine wages, hours and broad working conditions and allows the actual decision-making to be conducted at the school level with the most affected participants, teachers, faculty and parents, working together. This model uses principles of site-based management as part of the contract process. Sandra Feldman of the American Federation of Teachers has been a leading proponent of the so called "Thin Contract", which encompasses the notion that teachers and administrators agree on the district's mission and the broad terms of the contract including wages and hours and then establishes joint committees and a local or school process through which other decisions are to be made.

Variances for Flexibility

Some contracts now include procedures, which outline how a local school community can receive waivers or exceptions from district requirements such as length of school day, extra-curricula activities, meetings etc. Many districts use a specific variance procedure to support changes desired at the local level. In general, these changes are only undertaken with the approval of the majority of the faculty and are developed through a joint local committee-generally with a majority of teachers. Boston, Columbus Ohio, Rochester, Miami and Minneapolis have contracts that facilitate local flexibility in this manner. These districts as well as others, such as that of Pittsburgh, allow the possibility of flexibility in the length of the workday, week or year.

Changes in Teacher Recruitment and Assignment

Once qualifications and compensation are agreed upon district-wide, there can be variety in the ways that staff vacancies are filled. Since these issues, school-based teacher choice and teacher selection, are often mentioned as desired by both teachers and parents, we focused on them. We found that in an atmosphere where trust and mutuality were achieved, changes in teacher recruitment, selection and assignment could be undertaken at the local school level with school committees composed of teachers, the principal and parent representatives making joint decisions. In Boston, New York, Seattle, Milwaukee and Cincinnati, the contract provides for some of these critical decisions to be made by local school committees rather than by central committees.

Varied Compensation

Alternative or varied compensation schedules have found their way into several districts' contracts with Denver and Douglas County Colorado undertaking the broadest steps and others, even those in our neighboring communities, beginning to explore different steps or rewards for outstanding improvement, incentives or gain sharing. These explorations have the participation of both labor and management, although final decision making and impact are unknown.

Professional Development

Locally grown professional development initiatives, jointly designed by teachers and administrators often include career ladders, use of lead teachers, mentoring by exceptional, experienced teachers and even the development of leadership academies or professional development centers. The idea of using the central offices as resources for professional development but having the specific designs worked on and chosen at the local level appears to be a trend aligned with the philosophy of the “thin contract.” Rochester, Miami, Toledo, New York, Minneapolis, and Pittsburgh provide examples of this approach with its increased capacity to align teachers’ needs with professional development resources.

Parent Roles

Finally, we found that parents could have official, respected roles in the development of school decisions by participating in joint committees with voices on hiring, staff assignments, length of school day, design of professional development programs and in several instances in the peer review system. Thus Boston, New York, Milwaukee and Seattle among others provided for parent participation in these critical ways. Many of these efforts were focused at the school level.

Conclusion

These are examples of how other cities’ efforts maximize the participation of teachers and the school community in decision-making, to move decision-making closer to those who have the most at stake in the decision.

If the school is the focal point of the education of our children, then we believe it must be possible for the school community, particularly the faculty of the school, to have more of a voice in the policies and practices which shape the experience of children, teachers and parents in their communities. In large systems, the impulse toward more decision-making at the local level, to make stakeholders feel more involved in a school than a system, is strong.

Like any other reforms, these are not perfect and will have the most impact when an atmosphere of trust, mutuality and agreement about mission exists. We have a while to go in this City to achieve that atmosphere but the press of time and the needs of kids and the City can’t wait. It is time to seize this time as a new day - for the contract to help build on our hopes not fears, to rebuild our faith and trust in the possibilities of public education in Philadelphia.

When fully considered, public education is a concept of great, indeed breathtaking grandeur. When done poorly, it diminishes us all. When done well, it is a work of art, of science, of passion and aspiration that has hugely to do with who we - as individuals and as a nation - will become.

- Raymond F. Bacchetti



A Closer Look

The thin contract

This new kind of contract negotiation changes the scope of negotiations. Instead of creating a document that narrowly guides the working conditions, salary and benefits terms of employment between teachers and the district, this new document both enlarges and narrows the scope of the contract issues. Teacher and district representatives make agreements about what they share and agree to do together rather than haggle over their differences. They spell out a mission statement for the district, a philosophy of education and their mutual commitment to improving education. In some districts this document is being called “the trust agreement” and may have legal standing for as long as ten years. Parents and community may be part of this trust agreement and also spell out their responsibility and accountability to the education enterprise as well. The agreements that spell out how the parties will seek to implement the mission of the contract are often in separate documents, and negotiated at different times. Often the contract establishes joint committees that will work together to spell the details of each aspect of the mission.

Sandra Feldman, AFT President referred to just such a kind of agreement in her address to the QUEST Conference in July 1999, when she described “the thin contract,” a streamlined district level contract which defines the parameters of salaries, benefits and conditions. Such a contract might, according to Feldman leave a great deal of flexibility for school-level decision-making.

“This contract would ensure fidelity for high academic standards, would provide the means and resources for kids to meet them, but would give professionals at the school level the authority and flexibility to adopt programs, strategies and schedules that work for their students.

In short, it would be an enforceable educational compact in which teachers are given the training, resources and flexibility to do their job and in turn would take responsibility for applying their knowledge and skill to bring the best practices to bear for their students.

I propose that we build on the new relationships already developing in some of our locals, where teachers’ unions and school boards are not merely representatives of employees and their employers - important as these roles are - but colleagues who respect the knowledge, skills and perspectives each brings to ensuring that children have the best possible education in the best possible schools.

*- Sandra Feldman, President
American Federation of Teachers
1999*



The Professional Development Center

In many districts where education reform is taking root, the process begins with the establishment of a professional development center. This is most often a physical space set aside for this purpose, a place for teachers to interact with each other, as well as with district personnel, parents, and business community members. These centers are places where joint committees work, where fertile connections between university education faculty and those laboring in the education trenches are made. These centers yield three important outcomes:

- First, education stakeholders come together in these centers for the common purpose of education reform and learn to work together in a more cooperative, effective and relaxed fashion. These interactions lay the groundwork for holding the relationships together during the often-stormy process of deep structural reform in the school district.
- Second, these centers are sources of authentic professional development. They provide a place where teachers can develop and share their professional wisdom, where teachers and parents can learn from one another.
- Third, these centers serve as places where local site-management teams learn the skills they need to grapple with issues important to their sites make consensus decisions and forge compromises that all parties to the school community can embrace. Furthermore, these centers house networks of site-management teams where information and experience can be shared between them.

Examples of Districts with Professional Development Centers

- Toledo, OH

A professional development school is in the works - a joint venture of the Toledo public school district and the University of Toledo's College of Education and Allied Professions. The school will serve as a pre-service program for UT undergraduates majoring in education, an opportunity for continuing education for Toledo public school teachers and administrators, and a laboratory for innovative teaching and school governance methods.

- Cincinnati, OH

The University of Cincinnati has dedicated \$2 million to support a professional development school, staffed by lead teachers from their Careers in Teaching program who will also have adjunct teaching positions at the University. Programs at this school will encompass the final phase of training for intern teachers in the Careers in Teaching program. The school will link up with a high school in the district and will guarantee employment to any of the programs graduates.

- Los Angeles, CA

The union, the school district and UCLA have teamed up to work on a professional development center. The center is planned to have several tracks or academies, such as the Academy for Integrating Standards, Curricula and Assessments and the Professional Growth Program, which will help teachers seeking national board certification.

- Loveland, CO

The union and district jointly conduct week long summer seminars where teachers have the time and resources to develop curriculum with their colleagues.

- Delaware

Delaware is in the process of establishing a statewide Delaware Professional Development Center for Schools. Funded by a grant from the Maryland Bank NA Education Fund to the Delaware State Education Association, the center has hired a director and is currently conducting a needs assessment.

- Pittsburgh, PA

The Schenley High School Center in Pittsburgh is often credited with playing a major role in improving the education environment and results. The Center, created in 1983, symbolized a commitment to professional development.



Choice of Work Assignment and Seniority

A school system is an organic entity. New teachers begin careers. Older teachers retire. Teachers change the grade level and specialty of their work. Schools and enrollment also change. As education improves and schools develop diverse teaching styles, tailored to neighborhood needs, districts begin to require teachers with a variety of different instructional techniques and classroom management styles. This diversification means that students have the opportunity to learn in ways that are best suited to them. However, this diversification also means that teachers and administrators need to match with their school's philosophical and academic approach. In achieving this match, transfers and reassignments are inevitable. Every district needs a fair process to match teachers and work assignments.

More and more districts are discovering the need for shifts in teacher hiring and work assignment procedures. In the past, teacher work assignments and hiring selection in public schools was guided by concerns for seniority rights. Seniority is defined as the continuous length of service in a district, school, or subject area. Often teachers with the highest degree of seniority are granted preference in teacher transfers, work assignments, and hiring procedures, while those at the bottom of the seniority ladder are first to be displaced or given limited work options. With the onset of a growing desire for greater teacher-administrator collaborations and consensual relations however, changes within the seniority structure are beginning to take place.

Reforms in seniority preference often go hand in hand with movements toward site-based management and greater autonomy at the school level. Unions and districts are beginning to see the need for greater teacher, parent, and student involvement in the selection of candidates to fill school vacancies. In general, reforms involving shifts in a seniority structure focus on the establishment of on-site interview committees to select qualified applicants. In many contract provisions, teachers make up the majority of members on the interview committees and play a significant role in determining the criteria for teacher selection. Beyond these common provisions, reforms involving seniority and choice of work assignment range from district to district.

While some contracts specifically state that teacher selection may be made without regard to seniority, other contracts provide for on-site interviews and teacher input in decision-making but maintain that certain positions must be filled based on seniority. Other districts, recognizing the need to provide greater site-based involvement in teacher assignment and hiring, but unwilling to abandon seniority ranking all together, have found a way to combine these two seemingly clashing objectives.

Examples of Contract Language on Choice of Work Assignment and Seniority

- Boston, MA

Under the contract, the School Site Council is responsible for the management of all matters that relate to school operation, including the hiring of new staff, transfers from other schools in the district, and staff assignment of teacher and non-teaching duties. A subcommittee of the School Site Council consisting of two teachers, one parent, and the principal make final staffing decisions based on interviews. Seniority does not play a role in transfer teacher placement. The contract specifically states those staffing decisions involving the voluntary transfer of a teacher within the district may be made without regard to teacher seniority. (BTU Agreement Article 3 Sec.2, 3) It must be noted that parents play a role in these decisions as well.

- Seattle, WA

The contract language states that the hiring of teachers will be qualifications-based. This article effectively puts an end to seniority-based hiring by allowing schools to fill vacancy positions with teachers who fit the school's philosophy and teaching approach, regardless of their number of years in the district. Under the contract, hiring teams made up of teachers, with the possible involvement of principals, parents, and/or other staff appropriate to the selection process will screen applicants and conduct interviews to fill vacant positions. While specific hiring processes and selection criteria are not spelled out in the contract, Article VIII does state that an ideal hiring process would be based on a consensus of the principal and staff.

- New York, NY

The public schools may choose to participate in site-based management and a site-based transfer and staffing plan. Under the transfer and staffing plan, schools must develop personnel committees to establish criteria and guidelines for filling vacancies, and to conduct interviews and select teachers to fill vacancies. The personnel committee must include staff members, the local union chapter leader, the principal, and parents selected by the school's parent committee. Although the personnel committee must select the most qualified applicant, they do not have to choose the most experienced applicant according to seniority. Article 18 of the contract states that the committee may select a less experienced applicant if the applicant possesses extraordinary qualifications. This assessment is based on the committee's evaluation and judgment.

Each year schools are given the option to choose site-based management and the site-based transfer and staffing plan. In this way, whether or not a school maintains seniority or qualifications-based hiring is in the hands of the faculty and staff. (UFT Contract Article 18 Sec. F.) Again it is important to note that parents are included in the process here as well.

- Milwaukee, WI

Under the teacher contract, schools may choose to fill full-time teacher vacancies that are known by March 15 of the previous year through a site-based interview process instead of through seniority transfers. For a school to participate in site-based interviews, 51% of the teachers of staff must vote in favor of the site-based option. Giving teachers the power to choose interviews over seniority hiring creates a teacher-driven reform where those who are most affected by the change in policy will decide whether or not their schools will participate.

Once a school has decided to conduct interviews to fill a teacher vacancy, a school interview team is formed where a majority of the team must be teachers and must also include an on-site administrator and at least one parent. Selection of a candidate is based on a consensus of the group or a majority vote if a consensus cannot be met. If a teacher is not selected through the interview process, then schools may select a new hire teacher from a pool of qualified applicants, as long as the selection of a new hire will not result in the layoff of any present MPS teacher. Furthermore, a school may fill only 50% of the remaining positions with new hires. The other 50% of vacancies, which are not filled by the interview process, are filled according to seniority.

The 1999-2000 Milwaukee teacher contract has expanded the use of interview options if a school falls under one of these four categories: existing "innovative" school, instrumentality charter school, reconstituted school, or a school meeting educational plan standards. These schools may choose to fill all full-time teacher vacancies through a school interview process. (1999-2000 MTEA Contract Part V Sec. P, Q). As indicated earlier, parents are represented participants in the process.

- Cincinnati, OH

In the public schools, the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) in each school plays an active role in teacher work assignments. The ILT includes the principal, two parent representatives, two non-teaching staff members, the union representative, lead teachers, and other elected teacher representatives. In team-based schools, teams submit recommendations to fill teacher vacancies to the ILT for approval. Interview teams made up of the principal, lead teacher in the team with a vacancy, and other teachers who may contribute to the selection process are also established to help in the selection of applicants. However, under the Cincinnati contract, if more than one teacher who applies for a transfer is properly qualified to fill a vacancy, seniority will still control the choice of applicant. (Cincinnati Contract Article 250 Sec. E, F; Article 220 Sec. 4,5)



**Deciding how the
work gets done**

Flexibility

In districts where there has been significant progress toward site-based management, flexibility is, out of necessity a hallmark of program development. One major reason for school-based programs is to allow for experimentation and innovation. The Minneapolis contract, in its preamble states, “*The backgrounds and skills of staff, students, parents and administrators vary widely, as do the dynamics of groups. There is no one best way to organize a school, a classroom, or any educational activity. Each school should have as much flexibility as possible to work out, with stakeholder involvement and within the district’s strategic direction and improvement agenda, its own strategies for governance and education.*”

That said, it is very difficult for school district contracts to reflect flexibility as contracts, in and of themselves, tend to create rules and uniformity. Within the limits of laws, regulations and funding requirements, many districts are looking to increased flexibility at the school level.

There are a variety of districts that use waivers to secure increased flexibility. If the specific needs of a school’s educational plan require variance from some particular contractual agreement, then a waiver may be justified on those educational grounds. The final decision as to whether or not to grant a waiver is made by a joint labor/management panel in all the cases we studied. Variances commonly cover aspects of school operations such as schedules, rosters, class size, prep time, professional development, budgets, etc. Generally, they cannot contravene collective bargaining agreements about core contract issues such as salary, due process rights, benefits or union jurisdiction.

Additionally, some contracts we examined contained language about job-sharing. This level of flexibility about time and job description is recognized with various clauses about circumstances under which jobs can be shared and how payment, benefits and seniority right are handled.

Examples of Contract Language On Flexibility

Below is a sample of the attempts that districts have made to navigate a path between the certainties and assurances of uniform requirements and procedures and the impulse toward openness and experimentation.

- Columbus, OH

One way the Columbus Reform Panel (an equal representation, joint labor/management committee) facilitates the district’s move toward education reform is by ruling, via a majority vote, on requests for variances that are submitted by school-based shared-decision-making cabinets. The contract states, “The parties reaffirm their support for innovative programs developed cooperatively by individual school staffs. The Reform Panel will continue to assist school in removing barriers to school reform through careful consideration of variances from State Law, Board policy, contract provision and administrative practice.”

The panel has the authority to grant and cancel variances to the Agreement and can require school cabinets to reapply when their variances expire. Variances from the contract also require the approval of the Superintendent and the Association President. The Panel is charged with the responsibility of creating forms and procedures for applying for variances, including a provision that in the school applying for the variance, two-thirds of the teachers in the building must support the application.

In addition, the Panel has a subcommittee that looks at applications for variances in the light of state-mandated Competency-based Education law. The Reform Panel and its variances will continue to hold authority beyond the length of the current Agreement. The Panel and its variances can be terminated when either party issues a written thirty day notice of its desire to terminate the panel. All variances in effect at the time of termination are canceled and have thirty days for an orderly transition period.

A further mechanism for flexibility in the Columbus contract provides for an ongoing amendment procedure. The President of the Association and the Superintendent may meet privately to discuss any mutually agreeable amendments desired. Their proposals may be referred to the Joint Negotiating Committee, and if they agree on the amendment, it will be submitted for ratification by the Board of Education and a policymaking body of the Association. (Article 1203 and 1300)

- Boston, MA

The governing philosophy of Boston, MA's school-based management and shared decision making program states that they believe that the school site is the best place for decisions to be made about the education of children in that school. "Accordingly, they agree that school sites should have as much flexibility as possible in managing their budgets and organizing their educational programs for maximum effectiveness, free of unnecessary restraints imposed by School Department policies or by this collective bargaining agreement." Within these program, the role of a School Site Council is to manage all matters that relate to the operations of the school, including among others, the design and scheduling of the instructional program and curriculum, and staff assignments including teaching and non-teaching duties.

A School Site Council may apply for a waiver from any provision of the Boston Agreement or any School Committee rule or regulation or Superintendent's policy so long as the Principal, the school's Parent Council, and 66 2/3% of bargaining unit members agree and approve. No waiver may alter a bargaining unit member salary, benefits, seniority rights (with regard to transfer, layoffs) due procedure/process rights, grievance rights or union jurisdiction, nor may a school waiver affect the operation of another school or incur costs to the district beyond those allocated by their approved budget. Issues which are considered appropriate areas for waivers to be considered include, among others: time and length of the school day and year; the amount of time a teacher spends teaching each week; class size; number, use and scheduling of planning and development and administrative periods; non teaching duties teachers are required to perform; and attendance policies.

Waiver requests should include the information about the alternative proposed and the educational needs motivating the proposed change. If a teacher at a school with such a waiver objects to the impact of that waiver on his/her job responsibilities, he/she has the opportunity to transfer to another position in the system without loss of seniority or benefits and the implementation of the waiver program must be delayed until such a transfer has been effected or the impact to which the teacher objects has been eliminated.

- Rochester, NY

The contract in Rochester, NY has several provisions allowing for flexibility. A multiparty group is mandated in Section 10.4 to help encourage the formation of smaller school units and schools-within-schools. This group may address issues such as scheduling, staffing, length of school day and year, interaction with community agencies, community service activities, relationship to existing school-based planning procedures, mandate relief, contract and policy waivers.

To achieve the maximum benefit from new school groups, the district and the union agree to work collaboratively to support the growth of schools free from district and union regulations, modeled after the Boston pilot schools. Those schools and school units that demonstrate progress in reaching the academic goals set in their school-based accountability plan will receive greater autonomy, flexibility, recognition and discretion in the use of resources. (Section 10.2, .4 and section 58 C)

- Miami, FL

The Miami, FL contract describes two initiatives toward greater school site flexibility. Section 14 declares that the district and the union agree to explore and implement alternative instructional program delivery systems which will permit schools to offer low enrollment classes, share expert teachers among schools, and/or reduce class size. Individual school, or school clusters may submit instructional technology proposals to be reviewed by the Computer Education Advisory Panel and appropriate region/district administration. This section also addresses the need to explore alternatives for dealing with projected student enrollment increases including year-round schooling options, and better use of facilities, staff community and business resources, by reviewing the Alternative Instructional Delivery System that exists within the district, under which Miami's innovative Satellite and Saturn schools came into existence, and make recommendations.

Section 44 mandates the Prototype School Experiment, which provides that proposals for schools and other experimental models can be submitted to a joint labor/management committee, which must include student achievement standards, timelines, accountability measures, as well as explanation of the schools approach to curriculum, instruction, assessment, staff development, school improvement and other elements of systemic change. Prototype schools may involve modifications of contractual work hours/days/year and teaching responsibilities. Further, if they involve the assumption of additional professional responsibilities and hours, they should reflect this with proposals for enhanced compensation.

Proposals chosen for implementation must be approved by a joint labor/management committee charged with this task and be approved by 90% of the teachers in the school. Transfer opportunities are afforded to personnel who prefer a more traditional assignment, without prejudice.

- Minneapolis, MN

The Minneapolis, MN contract preamble quoted in the introduction to this section lays the basis for *contractual flexibility* in the district. The scopes of authority for site decisions delegated by the board to the sites is ruled by several parameters including compliance with federal and state law, contract language, referendum requirements, and board of education policy unless a waiver has been received. Nevertheless, the union and the district agree that school sites should have as much flexibility as possible in managing their educational programs and be free of *unnecessary* restraints imposed by central office policies, state and federal policies, or by collective bargaining agreements.

Any waivers or variances needed to implement a given site's school improvement plan will be considered as part of the overall approval process for the plan as a whole and subject to the same criteria and agreements.



**Length of Day,
Week and Year**

The ability to determine the length of school day and school year and the schedule of classes is an important element of flexibility and a major way in which the schools can meet the unique needs of their own school community. For this reason, we include specific examples of jointly agreed time flexibility efforts here.

Year round schools and Saturday schools are examples of new uses of additional school time. Changes in length of class and prep periods and their placement in time have been proposed. Many different arrangements of increases and corresponding decreases in the length of school day and year have been tried. Schedules for students with special needs have been developed and additional days for school planning and professional development have been provided. Some contracts go so far as to state the obvious, that although a teacher's normal work day is a given number of hours, a longer day may occasionally be necessary.

Many of these changes have been negotiated into district contracts. In other cases, they have been proposed by a school-based management group; a principal and building committee combination or a district wide reform panel. Locally, Quakertown has a longer year for teachers than most others in Pennsylvania. In a number of instances, the schedule changes require an affirmative faculty vote, with the option for dissenting teachers to relocate without prejudice. In all these instances we studied, the changes are mutually agreed upon by labor and management, and in some cases, by parent and community representatives as well. One element that is common in all the cases we studied, is that in every instance, any innovative schedule proposal must be tied directly to an educational strategy to increase student achievement

Examples of Contract Language on Length of Day and Week and Year

- Boston, MA

Under the "Waivers" section (d) of the Boston contract: School Site Councils can change how the school day is scheduled (from length of class to administrative periods) and the amount of time a teacher spends teaching each week. These changes can be enacted as long as evidence is presented that shows the educational needs that will be met as a result of the change. Also, the proposed change must not incur any additional costs to the school department.

- Miami, FL

Section 12 of the Miami contract describes a Saturday School Program that offers students a chance to practice skills in a "relaxed, positive atmosphere" and teachers some freedom to try new teaching methods and materials. The principal selects the teachers in this program and there is flexibility in terms of the different teachers who might share responsibility for this program.

The contract leaves open the possibility that paraprofessionals (school security monitors) may be needed for this program and offers compensation guidelines. The contract also describes the terms for coverage for teacher absences and for general program administration and supervision.

Section 14 of the Miami contract focuses on Alternative Instructional Program Delivery Systems, which includes the possibility of year-round schooling options. Section 42 refers to job sharing, which involves two permanent teachers who split the responsibilities of one full-time teaching position 50%/50%. The rationale for this type of arrangement is that it opens possibilities for teachers to gain additional professional experiences. There is a Job Sharing Oversight committee that monitors the implementation of this program and there are specific eligibility requirements that teachers must meet (including a minimum of five creditable salary years).

Teachers may choose their own partner or choose from a list of interested applicants. There are a total of three pages of details to this arrangement, including: compensation, special circumstances, suggested job sharing model schedules and communication suggestions.

- Columbus, OH

The Reform Panel cites that the “most frequent waivers are granted for altering school schedules and for restructuring the curriculum.” In the Memorandum of Agreement the Reform Panel is also the entity that will consider proposals and may ultimately recommend additional school days for teacher in-service days.

- Cincinnati, OH

Article 204 of the Cincinnati contract addresses length of school day. Under this clause new innovative programs and schedules may be put into effect as long as no teacher exceeds the regular contract year and the school staff approve of the new program (by secret ballot). Beginning in August 1994, the Board of Education and Federation of Teachers agreed to amend the collective bargaining agreement to allow for a year-round academic school year pilot program. The new year-round school is closed for two weeks before the beginning of the next school year and during winter break. The school is in session during spring break and is closed on July 4th. The school year is divided into four 9-week-long instructional quarters followed by three-week intercessions. Total number of workdays for teachers will not exceed 232 days.

Section 220 of the contract states that a teacher’s workday will be no more than 420 consecutive minutes per day, including 30 minutes for a duty-free lunch period. Sub-section (g) lists the daily schedule for high school non-vocational teachers depending on whether the school is organized on a seven 50-minute class schedule, a six 55-minute class schedule, or an eight class period schedule. High schools have the option to adopt a completely different schedule of classes as long as the schedule is recommended by principal (or ILT) and approved by a 2/3 vote of the entire faculty. The proposed schedule must be presented to the faculty at least five working days before the vote.

- Rochester, N.Y.

In section 33 of the Rochester contract, the Association Building Committee and the Principal of each school are to work together to explore flexible schedules for individual students with special needs. The proposed schedules may vary the length of the school day and is subject to the approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

- Pittsburgh, PA

A Memorandum of Understanding (drafted by the Pittsburgh Professionalism and Education Partnership) includes an extended high school day (3 or 4 days a week) in order to provide greater flexibility in the scheduling and taking of elective courses.



Professional Development

In this environment of continually rising levels of expectation for the accomplishment of students and of schools, there is increasing focus on elevating the level of professional development of teachers. Programs designed by teachers, parents, community members, business partners and university-level education trainers as well as the usual district administrators are developing in many places.

The range of professional development programs include: career ladder development, the creation of lead teachers in schools, joint university practicum's, externs and resident programs, the Quest conferences among many other innovations. Virtually all efforts include additional compensation, the provision of resources and release time.

Examples of Contract Language on Innovative Professional Development

- Cincinnati, OH

As a spur to professional improvement, the Cincinnati, OH contract contains a career ladder provision with a four-stage progression, with more than \$1 million in funding a year. The Careers in Teaching Panel, a three-year term, six members, joint labor/management committee has co-conveners from the district and the union.

The Panel oversees the program, manages the budget, assesses and selects Lead Teachers, but does not assign them to positions. The program sees new teachers from the Intern and Resident level through to the Career and Lead level. At the Career level, a teacher in Cincinnati is a permanent, tenured teacher. They are provided with professional development through a variety of joint programs run by the Education Initiatives Panel. The Teachers Professional Development Fund encourages professional growth through participation in professional organizations, conferences, continuing education, professional learning sabbaticals, and similar activities and makes these things possible by allocating money from the Conference/Convention Fund (\$175,000 annually) and the Summer Professional Development Opportunities Fund (\$150,000). Teachers awarded grants for activities by these Funds then help to pass along the expertise they have gained by publishing reports and giving presentations about what they learned. Career level teachers also participate in the Curriculum Council run under the agencies of the EIP.

Curriculum Councils work with the Department of Quality Instruction to develop high quality, classroom friendly curriculum, assessment instruments and practices, and to select textbooks and teaching materials. A pool of 100 release time days is available to Councils for their services. Special training is also available to Career level teachers who accept assignment to multi-age classes. Career level teachers are also allowed up to four days a year on which students are released early to pursue approved professional development activities. Because of their experience, knowledge and expertise, Career Teachers are among those who get priority consideration for opportunities such as summer school, sabbatical leave, and vacancies in night school and home instruction.

After six years practicing in the district, a teacher may apply to become a Lead Teacher. Lead Teachers are considered to be the highest quality teachers in the district and as such they are called upon to share their expertise with others. The primary and most important role of a Lead Teachers is to provide quality instruction to students.

- Rochester, N.Y.

Rochester has a similar investment in professional development. The district is fully involved with innovative school restructuring and recognizes the need for non-class time for committee work and professional development. Teachers who complete certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching are reimbursed by the district for the cost of application fees, and NBPTS certification opens the door for other opportunities in the district. The structure for professional development in Rochester is the Career in Teaching Plan.

The CIT plan is directed by a Joint Governing Panel of 12 members, six appointed by the union and six appointed by the Superintendent, with chair duties rotating between the two parties and requires a quorum of seven to conduct business. The Panel's responsibilities include: program and policy development and implementation, defining the various levels of professional growth, coordinating and evaluating activities of the CIT Plan, including soliciting ideas about new roles for Lead Teachers Furthermore the Panel will evaluate, select and review 250 Lead Teachers, including negotiating the levels of additional compensation they shall receive.

- Miami, FL

Miami has several programs under their professional development umbrella which have been directed to reflect current research, professional development standards and reflect the priorities of district goals and school improvement plans. The Dade Academy for Teaching Arts (DATA) has a release-time, nine-week program for teacher externs to improve both the content knowledge and instructional skills and to broaden their professional perspectives. DATA also has resident teachers who, in addition to their classroom responsibilities, conduct seminars, function as extern mentors and contribute toward the development of the DATA program.

DATA Resident Teachers receive an annual salary supplement. DATA is run by a six person, equal representation joint labor/management panel that selects Externs and Residents as well as other personnel needed to maintain the program, and develops and maintains the DATA manual.

The Educational Issues Forum is a district-funded program to which schools can submit proposals for efforts to provide teachers with opportunities for meaningful discussion of professional issues, including speakers, and release time for faculty to plan and give presentations. The District provides staff and technical support to enable teacher participation in institutes and research organizations that focus on education reform and professional development, marketing activities to promote the professionalization of teaching, the planning and holding of an annual QUEST conference with local institutions of higher learning, and teacher/parent/student involvement in national interactive teleconferences on education reform.

Teachers are involved in a system wide school by school program to upgrade faculty workrooms and lounges as well as help in the initial planning for new educational buildings (in conjunction with professional architects) to provide a teacher perspective on instructional use building and to ensure that teachers have access to appropriate space where they can do individual professional work and confer collegially

- Miami, FL

Miami's Teacher Education Center provides teachers with opportunities for involvement in curriculum development, experimental programs, joint programs with universities and in-service education programs to improve the effectiveness of teachers. There is a representative who facilitates TEC services at each school site and a Teacher Director to coordinate the program.

The district also maintains an incentive program for teachers to acquire National Board certification. They give a one-time \$5000 stipend for teachers who get certified and provide other professional advancement rewards. Also, a joint labor/management task force looks at ways to promote certification to teachers in the district. The Miami contract includes several mechanisms that facilitate and reward professional development.

- Toledo, OH

Toledo has the Professional Development School, which has been established as an analogue to a "teaching hospital." It is an ongoing school, in a typical urban environment, a demonstration school where new techniques can be pioneered, tested and taught to teachers in the district. Run jointly by the district, the union and University of Toledo, it gives teachers a chance to have an effective voice in how teachers are prepared for a career in the classroom, and gives administrators a chance to try new ideas and develop more collaborative relationship with teachers.

The PDS chooses faculty and staff through a joint committee through a process that includes examination of resumes, portfolios, essays and peer review. In general, Toledo relies on joint committees to establish, implement and evaluate all its professional development programs, including the professional development committee, the curriculum development committee, the staff development control board, etc. The Toledo contract states "The Federation shall be consulted before any new educational programs are initiated or adopted." An extended appendix lays out clear-cut steps to implement this understanding so that professional development and curriculum reform will be sure to benefit from the teachers perspective before it is set into motion.

- New York, N.Y.

New York benefits from a P-credit program overseen by a six member, equal representation, joint labor/management committee that will develop and rationalize professional development training in the district and NY's system of translating this training into eligibility for "second differential" additional compensation. The goals for this committee are to make such offerings available to all staff at no or modest cost through union auspices. (1995-2000 Agreement between the UFT and the NY B of E - Article 8. H)

- Boston, MA

In Boston, there are two contract structures of note relating to professional development. The Professional Development Committee, a joint, equal representation, a labor/management committee of eight is empowered to develop recommendations and implementation plans for professional development with regard to topics such as improving system-wide access and training of teaches in computers, improving teacher access to phones for communications with parents, development of a teacher learning center with appropriate and a career development ladder for paraprofessionals to attain teaching certificates, a business exchange program, peer teaching and co-counseling, and technical assistance to teachers seeking outside grants for creative approaches to teaching.

The range of content possibilities for such professional development is identified in the contract as strategies for increasing parent involvement, dealing with children who act out, and ways of appropriately serving the increasingly multicultural students of Boston. The contract also contains language on a Career in Teaching ladder with four levels - Intern, Provisional, Permanent and Lead teachers. A twelve member, equal representation, joint labor/management Panel with a rotating chair develops, implements and evaluates the CIT program, develops criteria for Lead Teacher eligibility and defines Lead Teacher responsibilities.

- Columbus, OH

The contract includes a Professional Leave Committee established by a memorandum of agreement in 1986 that the district funds with \$175,000 a year. The committee grants leaves for professional study or travel for either one semester or one year based on written proposals about the study to be pursued, including a full college course load or its equivalent, and the way in which this leave will improve classroom instruction. (Columbus Teachers' Agreement - 702.04 and .16)

- Minneapolis, MN

The school district and union have embedded professional development into many aspects of their operation. Minneapolis runs a career ladder-type program with all the inherent implications for professional development. Staff development in the district is guided by a Strategic Direction for Staff Development, the National Staff Development Council Standards and the Minneapolis Public School Standards, specifying among *many* other criteria that staff development should take place at the job site, as part of a teacher's ongoing work day, be consciously designed as part of ongoing school planning and be evaluated in terms of increased student achievement.

There is a district Staff Development Advisory Committee, with a majority of classroom teachers and the inclusion of educational assistants, administrators, principals, other district staff, parents and community members. The Committee works with the district office of Teacher and Instructional services to prepare a district-wide staff development plan, support school-level staff development teams, set standards for Exemplary Staff Development Grants to schools, evaluate grant proposals and award grants, allocate staff development funds to schools across the district and prepare an annual report. Site staff development committees are mandated in every school and should consist of a majority of classroom teachers and be representative of the site community.

A pilot program to develop a Professional Development Center on site, to promote "continuous, site-based, job-embedded professional development to enrich the skills of staff, parents and the community and to provide a forum for reflecting on educational reforms, teaching practice, student needs and family/community involvement is being developed.

The Minneapolis contract expresses the value of staff development explicitly by stipulating that "the purpose of all release days, with the exception of parent-teacher conferences, shall be for staff development," both for student release times and teacher release times. The most recent contract allows for four additional professional development days for all licensed teachers. Staff development hourly pay or stipends are available to teachers who participate beyond normal working hours.

- Pittsburgh, PA

Pittsburgh's professional development program has several facets. The Pittsburgh contract has a number of declarations of committee to joint development and implementation of professional development structures and programs. The Memorandum of Understanding entitled, "Ongoing Professional Activities Jointly Supported By The Parties" expresses this sentiment and binds the union to continue its Educational Research and Dissemination program - a well-attended series they run under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Article 36 stipulates the professional leave policy, allowing teachers to apply for professional leave days to attend these Federation sponsored workshops. Another Memorandum of Understanding, entitled "Education/Teacher Professionalism/Peer-Involvement Joint School District-PFT-Teacher Project declares the commitment of the union and the board to explore and maintain: an expanded professional role for teachers in designing and implementing staff development and in-service programs, a career ladder for continuing escalation of professional responsibilities without having to leave the classroom, and increased professional interaction between classroom teachers.

This commitment is reflected in Pittsburgh's Instructional Teacher Leader Program. In addition, they work and are compensated for one week each summer for the purpose of interaction, planning and reviewing activities. A third venue where the union and the district work together on staff development is the Teacher Professionalism Project. This project is carried out by a permanent joint committee to look at a wide range of issues that are broadly defined as professional, educational or personnel/administrative-union/management, MA has a simple system of peer review whereby teachers who are designated as Teachers-in-Charge, Teacher-Leaders or Lead Teachers may evaluate members of the bargaining unit at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee. These teachers are recommended to the Superintendent by means of an election and appointed by the Superintendent for a renewable term of three years.



In an effort to reward outstanding performance and to develop more of a culture of accountability, some school districts and teacher unions are introducing new ideas for teacher compensation. While the routine salary schedules are usually still present, other systems have been developed that overlay and interlock with the basic schedule. In the cases we saw, alternative compensation plans were not for the purpose of punishing teachers, nor to save money.

Some districts establish dual or tripartite pay scales that have traditional longevity steps as one track. Another dimension of pay scales typically involves increments for participation in additional activities of a school-wide, or district-wide nature, such as school activity leadership, site management responsibility or district joint committees. Pay scales may also reflect compensation for skills development, either individually or as a group, that is directly tied to education reform plans to improve student achievement. (Longevity, extra duty and educational or experience increments.) The more controversial aspect of alternative compensation plans revolve around a teacher's evaluation. Teachers receiving excellent evaluations may receive incentive pay, while those who receive unsatisfactory evaluations or who are participating in intervention programs may not receive increases until they have improved their evaluations. Where these provisions exist, they are part of collectively bargained agreements and as such are arrived at by mutual consent of the union and the administration.

An innovative pilot program called Gainsharing seeks to reward teachers for increases in productivity that yield savings to the district while maintaining or increasing the level of educational service. Any funds saved are to be redistributed to teachers in a manner determined by a joint labor/management committee established for that purpose.

Examples of Contract Language on Alternative Compensation

- Douglas County, Co

Douglas County has made an early attempt to develop a performance pay plan for teachers. Their report stressed that the process of developing the plan was equally or more important than the results of their joint deliberations. The committee's goal, as mandated by the previously negotiated contract was to cooperatively redesign the general teacher compensation plan, to provide bonus incentives for responsibilities were traditionally not compensated, and reward teachers who participated in group incentive plans that directly impacted student performance in order to attract, retain and motivate highly qualified teachers, reward professional growth and assure teacher buy-in to the plan. The Douglas County committee credited its success, among other things to their ability to avoid three false premises that often drive performance-based compensation plans: 1) you cannot successfully develop performance based pay plans on the basis of punishing teachers. 2) you cannot look to such a plan as a means of saving money, and 3) performance based pay plans are not a quick fix for the ills that afflict particular school districts or public education as a whole.

They ended up with a salary schedule with dual divisions. All teachers are paid a base salary computed in accordance with normal salary scales, computed by formula (with longevity steps for teachers who receive satisfactory evaluations), as they had been before. In addition, a second completely separate system of salary bonus incentives are available to teachers who participate voluntarily. By doing so, teachers can augment their salary, but under no circumstances do they risk losing salary. In addition to their base pay, teachers may earn increments if they take on duties relating to school activities, site based management responsibility, district management responsibility (including curriculum committees).

They can also earn additional compensation for what is known as the Knowledge Level Advancement, whereby teachers are given credit for approved university or in-service courses. Another venue for performance-based pay is the Outstanding Teacher increment. A teacher who applies for this increment must demonstrate how performance meets the criteria laid out in the *Performance Pay Plan for Teachers*, whose criteria are drawn from the National Board Certification process, via portfolio development. The teacher's principal makes the assessment as to whether or not the teacher has made a successful case. If so, the teacher is awarded a \$1000 bonus and principal decisions may be appealed to a joint review board. A Skill Block bonus is available to teachers who complete in service training and demonstrate classroom expertise in practical and/or innovative skills that the district deems to be central to the fulfillment of its strategic goals.

The last category of performance-based pay outlined by the Douglas County contract is the Group Incentive, designed to encourage cooperative efforts within schools. Groups of teachers develop a school improvement plan and submit it to the Group Incentive Board (a joint labor/management committee, with a majority of teachers and a community member). If the GIB approves the plan, the group then resubmits their application when the project is completed with evidence of its successful conclusion and impact on students. If the GIB concurs they can issue a group bonus.

(1997-1998 contract between Douglas County Federation of Teachers Local No 2265 AFL-CIO and Douglas County School District for the Period from June 1997 through June 2000 - Article XIV A - F)

- Denver, CO

Denver established a joint committee of teachers, administrators and community members to explore options relative to pay for performance, merit pay and incentive pay. The Denver contract stipulates a salary schedule subject to longevity increments, educational increments and experience steps, in addition to extra duty compensation. Teachers who have received an unsatisfactory performance appraisal and who are part of the remediation plan may not receive an experience increment or COLA. When remediation is successfully completed the teacher returns to the appropriate step with the correct longevity at current rate. The district also operates a Teacher Education Trust Fund, the interest from which is available to teachers to further their education, consistent with school district objectives. The Fund is operated by equal representation, joint labor/management committee.

(Agreement between Denver Classroom Teachers Association and School District No. 1 in the City and County of Denver, CO - Article 31 and 32)

- Cincinnati, OH

Cincinnati established a School Incentive Award in addition to its career ladder, National Board Certification and training increments. Under the training increment, teachers who complete 100 hours of required or in service instruction receive compensation of \$750. Thereafter they will increase by another \$250 for each completed block of 100 additional completed hours. The Incentive Compensation Award is contingent on the receipt of grant or other outside funds for this purpose. This Award will go equally to all members of the bargaining unit in a school that qualifies for the award by improving student achievement.

(Cincinnati Federation of Teachers Collective Bargaining Agreement 1997-1999 - Section 700)

- Minneapolis, MN

A Memorandum of Understanding on Continuous Improvement Compensation in Minneapolis outlines the work of the Teacher Compensation Committee, a 15-member committee with seven union and seven district representatives and a neutral third party facilitator. This committee is charged with the responsibility for continually developing Continuous Improvement Compensation plans that are directly linked to student achievement through aligning compensation with the district's core beliefs and District Improvement Agenda, attracting retaining and motivating the highest quality teachers and rewarding their professional growth, acquisition of new skills and leadership. In particular the Compensation Plan should encourage and reward aspects of teacher performance not traditionally recognized under a single-cell salary schedule.

On the other side of the coin, Section 65 mandates that any member of the bargaining unit who has reached the "professional" or "lead" teacher level and whose evaluation is rated as "exceeds expectations" will receive an incentive of \$1,500 if the teacher also participates in any of the district level programs targeted to increase student achievement, including NBPTS certification, achievement of dual certificates if one of the two is in reading, accepting assignment to an intervention school, teaching in the Professional Development Academy, accepting assignment as a school-based Lead Teacher or assuming leadership responsibilities in early intervention programs in elementary schools for students whose academic or behavior problems (including English language difficulty) cause them to be at risk of being evaluated for a classification of disabled.

The union president and the district superintendent are charged to review and make any necessary changes to this incentive program after one year to ensure that it is meeting its express purpose of improving student achievement and continues to be affordable.

- Miami, FL

Miami has two investigational panels studying alternative compensation plans. Mandating Excellence and Rewarding Initiative in Teaching (MERIT) is a joint labor/management effort to develop a vertical career compensation ladder. (Section 6 C) In order to meet the intent of Florida state law, the union and the district establish a joint ad hoc committee to make recommendations for the development and implementation of a performance-based compensation model. (Section 47) The results of both these investigations will be reported to the Superintendent and the Executive Vice President of the union. There are a variety of other school districts exploring methods of providing performance incentives for performance.



Parents Gaining a Voice and a Seat at the Table

Working as partners with a common mission, parents are exploring ways to help improve their children's education. In districts across the country, parents are stepping up to the plate to help schools find teachers that best fit the philosophy and needs of their schools. As part of teams with teachers, administrators and other non-teaching staff, they are helping to set the criteria by which prospective teachers will be assessed. In some cases they are also involved in the interview and hiring process as well.

Parents and Choice of Work Assignment For Teachers

- Boston, MA

A subcommittee of the School Site Council consisting of two teachers one parent and the principal make final staffing decisions based on interviews.

- Seattle, WA

Hiring teams made up of teachers, principal, parents and other staff appropriate to the selection process screen applicants and conduct interviews to fill vacant positions on a consensus basis.

- New York, NY

The site-based management transfer and staffing plan calls for each school to develop a personnel committee to establish criteria and guidelines for filling vacancies, to conduct interviews and select teachers to fill vacancies. The personnel committee must include staff members, the local union chapter leader, the principal and parents selected by the school's parent committee.

- Milwaukee, WI

A school that has chosen (by a 51% vote of faculty) to select full-time teachers through a site-based interview process forms an interview team with a majority of teachers as well as an on-site administrator and at least one parent. This interview team selects candidates based on consensus or a majority vote if consensus cannot be met.

- Cincinnati, OH

Public schools benefit from the presence of an Instructional Leadership team (ILT) that plays an active role in teacher work assignments. The ILT includes the principal, two parent representatives, two non-teaching staff members, the union representative, lead teachers in the school and other elected teacher representatives.

Parents and Contract Language on Flexibility

Waivers and variances are a common way for schools to secure the wiggle room necessary to experiment with innovative school management ideas. Waivers allow an educational unit (from a school-within-a-school to a district region or cluster) to sidestep certain provisions of a negotiated agreement, for specific educational reasons, and with specific consent of all those affected by the change. Issues considered appropriate areas for waivers include time and length of school day of school day, arrangement and length of classroom periods, class size, attendance policies, number, use and scheduling of teacher prep, professional development and administrative periods and such. One typical example of parent involvement in seeking and administering waivers happens in Boston, MA where waiver request is only accepted if it has received affirmative approval from the school principal, the school parent council and just a little over 66% of the bargaining unit members. If any one of these parties, including the parent council, does not assent, the waiver cannot be granted.

Parents and Contract Language on Professional Development

In addition to participation in the Professional Development Centers discussed above, education reform calls for a continued role for parents in teacher professional development. Learning the skills of productive teacher-parent communication is an important aspect of all the new teacher mentoring and veteran teacher intervention programs we studied. Setting professional time aside for fruitful parent teacher interactions is also a common part of innovative professional development schemes. Some districts have created structural places for parents to discuss education reform and the shape of their district's professional development efforts. In districts with career ladders, parent input is a necessary component of a teacher movement along the career ladder.

- Rochester, NY

The school district has shortened the instructional day every Wednesday by 45 minutes to provide time for a variety of professional development, school and district management activities. One important component of these professional duties outside the classroom is the requirement to use this time as necessary for home/parent contact. The Rochester contract also specifies that any application for Lead Teacher status in the Careers-in-Teaching program must be accompanied by evidence of input from parents as to the applicant's fitness to become Lead Teacher.

- Miami, FL

The contract has a special provision for release time and technical support for teachers and parents to participate together in interactive national teleconferences on education reform.

- Boston, MA

The Professional Development Committee in Boston is charged with the responsibility of improving teacher access to phones for communication with parents. Teachers are eligible for professional development leave, from afternoon workshops to educational sabbaticals for a range of targeted educational goals. Prominent among these educational goals to be pursued is the identification and improvement of strategies for increasing parental involvement in schools and in the district.

- Minneapolis, MN

The contract establishes a district-wide Staff Development Advisory Committee with mandated parent involvement. Additionally, Minneapolis has a pilot program for on-site Professional Development Centers that enrich the skills of all the parties to the school's site-based management, including parents so that they will become better able to face the challenges of school management and coordination. The Centers are a physical space where the whole community can come together to reflect on educational reforms and family involvement.

Parents and Contract Language About Peer Review

- Minneapolis, MA

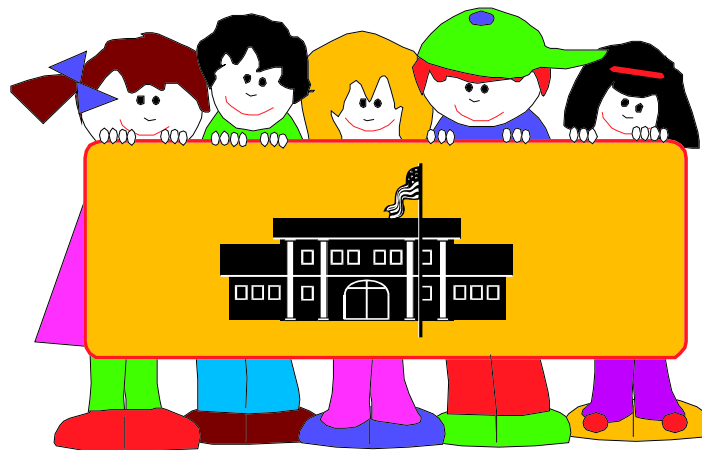
The school district has a unit-wide peer review system called the Professional Development Process (PDP). The system is governed by a district PDP coordinating committee with parents among the teachers, principals, union representatives, students, central office administration and community members who are mandated to be part of the committee.

- Rochester, NY

A parent survey is developed each year by a joint labor/management committee canvassing questions of home involvement and parent-teacher communications and other aspects of a child's progress. Parent surveys may be used in teacher evaluation proceedings.

Many districts are coming together to make
their schools more schools than systems.

We urge the Philadelphia stakeholders to put more decisions
where the teachers, kids and parents are!



About Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth

Founded in 1980, PCCY serves as the region's leading child advocacy organization working to improve the lives and life chances of the region's children. Through thoughtful and informed advocacy, community education, targeted service projects and budget and policy analysis, PCCY seeks to watch out and speak out for the children in our region.

PCCY undertakes specific and focused projects in several areas affecting the healthy growth and development of children, including after-school, child care, public education, child health and child welfare. PCCY's ongoing presence as a watchdog and advocate for the region's children informs all of its efforts.

Research for this report was conducted by Robert Brand and Debra Zubow of Solutions for Progress

For

Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth
Seven Benjamin Franklin Parkway
Philadelphia, Pa 19103
215-563-5848
Fax: 215-563-9442
E-Mail: ppccy@aol.com
Web Site: www.ppccy.org

Sissy Rogers, President

Debra Weiner, Phil Gordon, Raisa Williams, Carol Pate, Wendy Wolf - Education Committee of PCCY

Shelly D. Yanoff, Executive Director

Steven E. Fynes, Information and Events Coordinator

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