

R7 Board of Education Approves Two Year Calendar
Including Weekly Time for Structured Teacher Collaboration
Two Student Attendance Days Added to Each Year

New information regarding the Board of Education approved district calendars for 2012-13 and 2013-14 follows, as R-7 School District officials announced plans for no-cost structured student supervision on late-start Wednesdays. These calendars include weekly time for structured teacher collaboration with each Wednesday beginning one hour later, which for Sunset Valley equates to the tardy bell ringing at 10:00 AM.

On the late-start Wednesdays, buses will run one hour later than normal with all classes beginning one hour later. Teachers will report to work at their regular time and will work together to evaluate students' learning needs and develop strategies to meet these needs.

Since the two-year calendar was approved on November 17, R-7 staff members have continued to work to lower the price of the Wednesday only before-school student supervision. R-7 officials had stated that ongoing efforts were being made to lower, or even eliminate the costs.

Following continuing discussions with families and staff members, R-7 officials announced a no-cost program, beginning with the 2012-13 school year, on December 1. The school district will offer free structured supervision of students at all schools on Wednesdays, beginning 30 minutes before the school's regular start time. For example, a school that normally begins classes at 9:00 AM, which includes Sunset Valley, will begin classes at 10:00 AM on Wednesdays. This same school will provide a no-cost before-school program for students beginning at 8:30 AM on Wednesdays for up to 90 minutes. Lee's Summit R-7 will offer the student supervision 30 minutes before the normal start of school in an effort to better accommodate family schedules.

Families already enrolled in Kids Country for child care throughout the week will see no increase in fees as a result of the late-start Wednesdays.

To participate in the no-cost structured student supervision before-school program, families will be required to enroll their children in the Wednesday program in advance and also provide transportation to school on these days. On the late-start Wednesdays, school buses will run one hour late. More information about enrolling in the Wednesday before-school program will be available during second semester.

"We had hoped to continue to reduce or eliminate the cost of student supervision on the Wednesday mornings," said Dr. David McGehee, R-7 superintendent, "We have determined that by working with existing school staff members, we will be able to offer the 90 minutes of supervision at no cost."

The R-7 Collaboration-Calendar Team made the recommendation for the new calendar, emphasizing the value of weekly time for teachers to work on improving instruction and ultimately student success. During the weekly collaboration sessions, teachers will work together to review student data, evaluate student work, assess where

students are in the learning process and design targeted instruction to address the needs of each student. Team members added that the time would be different from teachers' planning periods, and they would not be completing other work-day tasks such as returning parent phone calls, attending staff meetings, grading papers or answering e-mails. In addition, team members stated that this time would be dedicated to strengthening targeted instruction for students, a foundation of the district's Professional Learning Communities initiative. Research has shown that regular collaboration among teachers improves instructional practices and academic performance by students.

This is the first time that the Board of Education has approved a two-year calendar, which had been a request from numerous parents for a number of years. The two-year calendar will be approved annually so that parents will always be able to plan well in advance for family activities such as vacations. The complete two-year calendar is posted at <http://www.leesummit.k12.mo.us/districtinfo/calendars.htm>.