

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT REGARDING MIDDLE SCHOOL ADVISORY AND  
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-TEACHER CONNECTION TIME

The Agreement satisfies the parties' negotiations concerning Advisory as identified in the Side Letter (p. 75) of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2016. This Agreement supersedes completely the parties' AITE Advisory MOA (p.90), and only supersedes provision #3 of the Middle Schools MOA (p. 79). The parties agree to the following:

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**OBJECTIVE**

Middle school is a time of rapid change for developing adolescents. Advisories give students a time and place where their non-academic needs can be addressed. Advisory will provide guidance and the monitoring that benefit young adolescents. When students are able to make a connection outside formal instructional time with at least one caring adult, academic and personal outcomes can improve.

Some goals of advisory:

- Develop relationships to support student growth
- Help each student to access the academic and social options the school provides.

**CONTENT AND MATERIALS**

The advisory time shall include broad themes identified by the Advisory Committee that are structured around marking periods and must be addressed during the year. Teachers shall have the discretion to utilize the time as they deem appropriate provided the themes are addressed. The Advisory Committee will develop a scope and sequence of themes for each grade level. Themes may include but are not limited to college and career readiness, bullying, internet safety, progress reports, time management, and personal safety. There will be no lesson plans. Prepared activities, resources, and information to support the themes shall be made available to teachers and used at their discretion.

**FREQUENCY/STRUCTURE**

Advisory time will be twenty-four minutes after homeroom on Tuesdays and Thursdays. To create advisory, schools shall take four minutes from each of the six periods on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Rogers will maintain its current advisory. Any changes must be negotiated by the parties. Scofield may maintain its current advisory; however, it must assign staff as delineated below. If Scofield chooses not to maintain its current advisory, it must adhere to this MOA.

## GROUPING

- All certified staff will have an advisory cohort, except those identified below. Each cohort will be heterogeneously grouped by grade level and students will be equally distributed among staff with a goal of no more than 16 students per cohort but in no case more than 18.
- To meet the distribution goal above, Special Education teachers may be paired together and assigned a cohort or may be assigned a self-contained advisory cohort if an IEP requires.
- Guidance Counselors, psychologists, speech and language pathologists, and social workers will be assigned to work with a specific number of advisory cohorts to provide assistance to the teachers assigned to advisory. They will also present information and provide advice to students concerning academic, career, and personal/social areas of development, e.g., Naviance.
- Teachers who teach only one grade level will receive cohorts specific to their grade level each year. The goal for all others is to be allowed to keep their cohorts for three years.

There may be students who would benefit from alternative strategies during advisory. These students will be referred to the appropriate guidance counselor or other student support staff members to provide alternative strategies. With approval by the principal or designee, these students may participate in advisory under the auspices of social workers, psychologists, speech and language pathologists, and guidance counselors.

## STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Students are required to attend and participate in all advisory sessions. Teachers shall be responsible for taking attendance. Participation (PA) and non-participation (NPA) will be recorded by the teacher on a quarterly basis. Students receiving an NPA will not be eligible for the honor roll.

## TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

- Teachers facilitate discussions on relevant themes.
- Teachers provide students with a safe, non-judgmental environment.
- Teachers help students to discuss and possibly solve immediate concerns or problems.
- Teachers help students set goals and review goals periodically.

## DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

There will be a district-wide Middle School Advisory Committee (AC) comprised of one central office administrator, as well as three teachers and one administrator from each of the five middle schools, for a total of 15 teachers and 3 school administrators. The AC will identify the themes and optional activities for each grade level and the scope and sequence of grade level themes and optional activities. The AC will also develop orientation PD for the start of the school year. The district and SEA will mutually create the teacher posting for this committee by April 28, 2014. The SEA will select the teacher members by May 12, 2014. The parties anticipate that the work of the AC will require approximately ten hours, and such work shall be completed by July 1, 2014. If the committee is not able to complete

its work by the July 1, 2014 date, then the Board of Education will exercise its authority to make these decisions. The AC members will be compensated at the curriculum revision rate consistent with the collective bargaining agreement.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PD shall consist of orientation for all staff on the design of the advisory time and strategies as well as training for staff to become competent and confident advisory time facilitators. This training shall be provided prior to implementation and before the start of the 2014-2015 school year for students.

#### FEEDBACK

Brief teacher and student surveys, developed jointly by SEA and the district, shall be administered no later than May 1 of each school year to gather feedback. The SEA and the Board will jointly review the survey feedback. Any changes will be mutually agreed upon by the parties.

#### ADVISORY COVERAGE

No teacher with an advisory cohort will receive students from another cohort to provide coverage. When the advisory teacher is not available, a principal may assign a guidance counselor, speech and language pathologist, social worker or psychologist to provide coverage.

#### HIGH SCHOOL

##### OBJECTIVE

To establish a period of time for teachers and students to develop connections that positively impact students.

##### CONTENT AND MATERIALS

Connection time shall include broad themes identified by the Connection Time Committee (CTC) that are structured around marking periods and must be addressed during the year. Teachers shall have the discretion to utilize the time as they deem appropriate provided the themes are addressed. The Committee will develop a scope and sequence of themes for each grade level. Themes may include but are not limited to college and career readiness, bullying, internet safety, progress reports, time management, and personal safety. There will be no lesson plans. Prepared activities, resources, and information to support the themes shall be made available to teachers and used at their discretion.

##### FREQUENCY/STRUCTURE

The connection time will be twenty-four minutes, on the same two designated letter days per cycle throughout each semester (e.g., A and D) after the second block, in addition to the allotted time for the Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence, and daily announcements. To create connection time, Westhill and Stamford High schools shall take four minutes from each of the six blocks per each designated day;

Connection time at AITE shall be held a maximum of once per week for a maximum of forty-four (44) minutes per week unless there is prior consultation and agreement with the SEA.

#### GROUPING

- All certified staff will have a cohort, except those noted below. Each cohort will be heterogeneously grouped by grade level and students will be equally distributed among staff with a goal of no more than 16 students per cohort but in no case more than 18.
- To meet the distribution goal above, Special Education teachers may be paired together and assigned a cohort or may be assigned a self-contained cohort if an IEP requires.
- Guidance Counselors, psychologists, speech and language pathologists, and social workers will be assigned to work with a specific number of connection time cohorts to provide assistance to the teachers assigned to connection time. They will also present information and provide advice to students concerning academic, career, and personal/social areas of development, e.g., Naviance.
- Teachers and students shall stay in the same cohort for 4 years.

There may be students who would benefit from alternative strategies during the student teacher connection time. These students will be referred to the appropriate guidance counselor or other student support staff members to provide alternative strategies. With approval by the principal or designee, these students may participate in connection time under the auspices of social workers, psychologists, speech and language pathologists, and guidance counselors.

#### STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY

The High School Program of Studies will reflect that participation in the connection time plan is a graduation requirement. Furthermore, changes to regulation 5135.2R will be made to reflect this graduation requirement. Teachers shall be responsible for recording students' attendance, and for each grading period, participation (PA), and non-participation (NPA). The details of this requirement beyond the information above will be developed by the high school CTC committee with final approval by the Board of Education.

#### TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

- Teachers facilitate discussions on relevant themes.
- Teachers provide students with a safe, non-judgmental environment.
- Teachers help students to discuss and possibly solve immediate concerns or problems.
- Teachers help students set goals and review goals periodically.

#### DISTRICT CONNECTION TIME COMMITTEE

There will be a district-wide High School Connection Time Committee (CTC) comprised of one central office administrator, as well as three teachers and one administrator from each of the three high

schools, for a total of 9 teachers, 3 school administrators, and one district administrator. The CTC will identify the themes and optional activities for each grade level and the scope and sequence of grade level themes and optional activities. The CTC will also develop connection time PD and details of the student accountability requirement for the start of the school year. The district and SEA will mutually create the teacher posting for this committee by April 28, 2014. The SEA shall select the teacher members by May 12, 2014. The parties anticipate that the work of the CTC will require a maximum of fifteen hours, and such work shall be completed by July 1, 2014. If the committee is not able to complete its work by the July 1, 2014 date, then the Board of Education will exercise its authority to make these decisions. The CTC members will be compensated at the curriculum revision rate consistent with the collective bargaining agreement.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

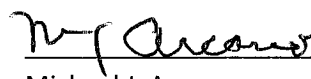
PD shall consist of orientation for all staff on the design of the connection time and strategies as well as training for staff to become competent and confident connection time facilitators. This training shall be provided prior to implementation and before the start of the 2014-2015 school year for students.

#### FEEDBACK

Brief teacher and student surveys, developed jointly by SEA and the district, shall be administered no later than May 1 of each school year to gather feedback. The SEA and the Board will jointly review the survey feedback. Any changes will be mutually agreed upon by the parties.

#### CONNECTION TIME COVERAGE

No teacher with a connection time cohort will receive students from another cohort to provide coverage. When the connection time teacher is not available, a principal may assign a guidance counselor, speech and language pathologist, social worker or psychologist to provide coverage.

 22 April 2014  
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Michael J. Arcano                      Date  
President, SEA

 4/22/14  
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Geoff Alswanger                      Date  
President, Board of Education