

Nathaniel Rochester Community School

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Dear NRCS Families and Community,

As we begin a new school year together, I'm writing to tell you about an exciting opportunity for our students, families and staff. Our school has been selected by to join a new, multi-state initiative called the TIME Collaborative. The TIME Collaborative supports schools and districts in creating a better and stronger school day and year with more learning time.

This fall, we are formed a planning team that will lead the work to explore what a redesigned school day and/or year could look like for our school community. We will consider what aspects of our current school day can be enhanced with more time, such as improving our literacy and math programs and providing more enrichment options such as athletics, music, health programs, and the arts. With more time teachers would be able to engage students in hands-on projects to deepen their learning. We will also consider how to accelerate the learning of students who are already doing well and better support those who are struggling.

Our commitment is to develop a plan to increase learning time by at least 300 hours annually for all students, and then see if that plan will work for our students, families, teachers, and our school community. An essential part of our planning process is meeting the needs of our students and families. During the next several months, we will communicate regularly with you as we create a plan to expand learning time. Through large and small group meetings, newsletters, and via our website we will update you regularly and seek your input as we consider the options ahead. After considering all of our options, we will decide in the Spring 2013 whether or not it makes sense to proceed with an expanded school day for next school year (2013-2014).

In joining the TIME Collaborative, NRCS will work alongside other schools from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Colorado, and Tennessee to figure out how to build a better school day with more time. We will be working with district leaders here in the RCSD and getting support from the Connecticut State Department of Education and the National Center on Time & Learning. If you would like to get more information, learn about the research supporting more learning time, or see videos of schools that have added learning time, you can go to the National Center's website at www.timeandlearning.org.

I will be in touch with more information as planning gets underway here at our school. I hope that you will support this process by sharing your ideas, concerns, and visions for how we can all build a better school day with more learning time. Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions.

Respectfully,
Connie M. Wehner- Principal