

Welcome Back Teachers!



We thank you for your feedback and input during the 2016-17 school year regarding teacher workload and working conditions. Here's an update on some of the changes that were made in response to your feedback. Our goal was to find opportunities to make teacher workload more manageable and efficient without compromising our ultimate goal of student learning.

We realize this is a work in process -- a marathon and not a sprint. We look forward to your continued feedback and partnership on this journey, and have provided a brief overview of some of the ways we have responded thus far.

FEEDBACK	STEPS TAKEN
Unequal raises	The proposed budget was modified and the board approved the revised plan which offered an equal raise of 2.5 percent for all SPS employees.
Too many assessments	Some changes have been made for next year to our assessment program. While teachers won't see dramatic change in such a short time, we have reduced the number of assessments for the 2017-18 school year and are allowing more flexibility in the way benchmarks are used.
Duplicating effort– too many forms	In elementary school, we consolidated the placement form and the retention form and most of the individual student information automatically populates in the form.
Resources	Concerns were shared particularly related to science resources. Moving forward consumable science resources that are required for labs will be purchased at the division level. Each content area has also purchased additional resources for schools based on the needs of each school.
STAR Points	Teachers can now earn STAR points for PD during work hours.
Lesson plans are too long, tedious and time-consuming.	We will offer planbook.com subscriptions to teachers to help make lesson planning more efficient and less time-consuming. This is an optional resource for teachers. Also schools have much more flexibility in their application of the VDOE lesson plan alignment rubric. This is not required for every lesson, but is required for formal observations and for use on a differentiated basis (determined by the school administrator based on individual teacher and/or school based professional development needs and goals).
Duplicating effort—having to retype information from curriculum guides and other resources.	Moving forward teachers may reference the curriculum framework. There is no need to retype information that we have already provided to them.
Too many grades required	Modifications have been made to the grading regulations. For example, the number of grades required in the 4th quarter were decreased at all levels due to SOL testing and the compressed timeline for submitting grades. Other modifications were made based on teacher feedback at each grade level.
Lack of substitute teachers	Each school will be assigned priority subs who will report to their schools on a daily basis. Additionally, the AESOP sub database has been updated.