

**From:** Merklein, Trip [CO]  
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**Subject:** Welcome Back/ "Flex" Work Days

Welcome Back SVVEA Members -

As our profession continues to face profound changes, I trust we all return to a new school year rested and ready to take on the familiar challenges, as well as some new ones. Recognizing our core purpose, SVVEA shall *Take the Lead for Student Success*. Through our collective efforts we endeavor to accomplish this through empowering members to strengthen SVVEA and the District in a variety of ways.

We begin our second year with the **Collaborative Decision Making** language of **Master Agreement Article 39** in place. (See page 35 of the [Master Agreement](#).) To paraphrase its purpose, the District and the Association agree that collaboration is *"necessary for effective professional practice and enhancement of the learning environment . . . [to] ensure that all stakeholders have a voice and will support decisions."*

**This language empowers teachers to ask both "How will a decision be made?" as well as "How was a decision made?" and to have a voice in determining or understanding the rationale behind the answers.**

**Perhaps needing immediate attention in your building beginning this school year is a decision regarding the new language (in revised Article 8) to determine which of the five (5) Work Days will be designated as two (2) building "FLEX DAYS" when teachers are not expected to remain at school (and the use of such days shall be directed by the teacher). This language was proposed by the District and its original intent is 2 full days. The decision for designating the 2 "flex days", and whether either will be divided into half-days, should be made using a collaborative process. It's become apparent there is some uncertainty about this new language, and SVVEA and District leadership share accountability for that, but resolving this is straightforward and begins with asking your building administrator one of the questions above. There should be consensus for the answer.**

Change has the potential to be confusing. Information clarifying the Article 8 changes to Late Start/PLC days and the 2 hours per month (September through May) of professional development will be provided in the coming days. Find [revisions to Article 8 Teacher Hours and Loads](#) on our SVVEA website [svvea.org](http://svvea.org).

Also coming soon, in the spirit of collaboration and empowerment: the link between SVVEA and the District's emphasis on the "new" 3R's – Results, Relationships and Revenue – will be described (re: the August 1<sup>st</sup> HR Information Notice email), and another "R" will be added.

With increasing class sizes and a continuing tight budget, this promises to be a demanding year, but also one full of opportunities. Stay tuned for how you can help SVVEA *Take the Lead for Student Success* in the St. Vrain Valley.

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