

TIMELY TOPICS

GUARDING YOUR TIME

There is an old saying, “Give an inch and they’ll take a mile.”

With the number of mandates increasing by the day, it is imperative that you **GUARD YOUR TIME!**

CLASSROOM TEACHERS

State law guarantees classroom teachers 450 minutes of planning time and protects this time. More importantly, several Commissioner’s decisions have clearly defined certain activities that are prohibited during the minimum amount of planning and preparation time.

Guard your time! Know the law! Protect the planning time you are guaranteed!

Law

“Each classroom teacher is entitled to at least 450 minutes within each two-week period for instructional preparation, including parent-teacher conferences, evaluating students’ work, and planning. A planning and preparation period under this section may not be less than 45 minutes within the instructional day. During a planning and preparation period, a classroom teacher may not be required to participate in any other activity.”

Texas Education Code - EDUC § 21.404. Planning and Preparation Time

Commissioner Decisions

The Commissioner of Education has ruled that requiring teachers to attend in-services during the planning and preparation period is a violation of Texas Education Code.

Strater v. Houston I.S.D., 1986

The Commissioner of Education has ruled that required meetings with administration during the duty-free planning and preparation period violates Texas Education Code.

Gonzales v. South San Antonio I.S.D., 2007

The Commissioner of Education has ruled that requiring attendance at group planning sessions during the planning and preparation period violates Texas Education Code.

Chaffin v. Los Fresnos I.S.D., 1991

NOT DURING Your 450 Minutes!

DEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS

DATA MEETINGS

PLC MEETINGS

TEAM MEETINGS

FACULTY MEETINGS

CONFERENCES W/ ADMINISTRATION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING

AT-WILL EMPLOYEES

The national Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is the law that protects employees from overtime abuse and ensures that eligible employees are paid for all the work they perform. Employees covered by the FLSA (bus drivers, cafeteria staff, teacher assistants, secretaries, and other similar employees) must receive overtime compensation for any hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

Overtime vs. Compensatory Time

Check your local school district’s policies because many school districts opt to provide compensatory time rather than overtime pay. Comp time can be accrued and used in place of your state personal leave or local sick leave. However, most districts state that comp time not used by a specific time will be converted to overtime pay.

DO NOT Work Off the Clock

UEA’s best advice is never to work off the clock. You deserve to be paid for all the hours you work. Supervisors should never pressure you to work off the clock, and you should not take work home or “clock out” and continue to work.

Make sure you always get approval from your supervisor before you do overtime work.