



Academy for Urban School Leadership  
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## **Operational Flexibility**

While we operate autonomously, as a network of CPS schools, we adhere to CPS policies, the union contract, the academic calendar, and district mandates. While AUSL follows the CPS code of conduct, a close look at disciplinary procedures is necessary to ensure that all rules and regulations support student learning opportunities for all students. School-based employees are union members (if there is a union in the district). Additionally, AUSL network schools set their own curriculum, provide additional extracurricular resources, and set their own culture and climate.

AUSL values seizing all opportunities to maximize student learning opportunities. Creating additional time for student learning in the school day or after school is important for student growth. Using the schedule to create spaces for both adult and student learning are essential to school transformation.

As an organization, we ask a lot of our teachers. As many schools around the country, with the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in English/Language Arts and math, we all must raise the bar on what students must master. The real challenge for teachers is to emphasize new standards while teaching fewer topics, but in greater depth, and focusing more on hands-on learning and dynamic projects than direct instruction. For students to flourish, with the new rigorous standard teachers must plan creative assignments that necessitate students to demonstrate their understanding, use their knowledge and skills to solve problems, and complete real-world tasks.

The Common Core means that teachers must shift their practice and teach more advanced materials to their students in more successful ways. We believe the answer lies in greater teacher collaboration. Creating a schedule that allows for improve teacher proficiency around the student experience is imperative for greater student outcomes. The teacher's role as a coach/facilitator, must design student experiences to build specific skills, providing substantive feedback, and continually adjust lessons based on student understanding. Through professional development, teachers learn how to assess and give meaningful feedback and share what works with their peers. AUSL values a strong instructional focus that results in student having many post-secondary options. Course offerings must reflect a push for college.

Reference: North Chicago Community High School  
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