What is the "Quality Time Analysis Tool"?

This tool helps schools determine how time is spent across a typical week and across a whole year. It is designed to enable schools to identify as accurately as possible the proportion of time spent in three broad categories: Academics, Non-Core Academics and Other. More important than the specific data the tool generates is the *process* required to complete the instrument. It is the process of categorizing time usage and taking a hard look at how time is spent that should lead educators to consider modifications to policies and practices that optimize time.

How does the tool work?

The tool begins by requiring users to input their total time, both in aggregate (total allocated time) and by broad category (weekly allocated time). Once the allocated time is entered, the tool requires users to determine how time in both a typical week and throughout the year might actually be used for a different purpose than how it was originally allocated. After determining these uses of time, the tool will automatically calculate *actual* time allocations in a typical week and across the year.

What data do I need to input?

Users should input data in the cells which are underlined. All other cells are "locked" and will calculate automatically. A number of cells in the tool have notes, indicated by a red triangle in the upper right-hand corner of the cell, with descriptions of the use for that cell.

How do we input data for Section 1: "Calculating Total Allocated School Time"?

This category is the most straightforward portion of the tool. Users simply input data in the relevant cells in the gray box. First, enter the start and stop time for the standard day (cells D5, D6). For these cells, be sure to use 24-hour clock time (e.g., 2:30 pm=14:30). Unless schools have at least one early release day per

week, the cells asking for Early Release Day times should be skipped, entering a "5" in the number of standard days cell (cell D8).

If a school does feature an early release day of at least once per week, input the start and stop time for the early release day (cells D10, D11) and the number of release days per week (D13). (The total of standard days and release days should add to "5".)

Finally, enter the number of school days in the year (D16). The tool will then automatically calculate the number of allocated minutes per week (G15) and hours per year (G17).

How do we input data for Section 2: "Calculating Weekly Allocated School Time"?

This section is to identify how the standard weekly schedule is distributed among the three broad categories for allocated time: Academics, including academic support (cells C23 – C28 and C30– C33); Non-core Academics, including social and emotional programming (cells G23 – G28 and G30 – G 32); and Other, which essentially includes any allocated time not designated to the other two categories (cells K22 – K27). Users should enter the allocated *weekly minutes* for each of these classes and other activities. The tool will automatically calculate weekly minutes in: total academic time (C22), academic support minutes (C29), enrichment (G22) and social-emotional activities (G29).

There may be need for some judgment calls by schools as to how time use should be categorized. For example, should "homeroom" be accounted for in the Other category or in the Non-Core Academic category? The answer will depend on what takes place during homeroom period and school personnel must come to agreement on how to characterize the time spent.

The key to this step is to ensure that all the classes and activities recorded in this section together add up exactly to the total weekly allocated time (cell G15). The "tracker," situated above Section 2, should read "0" *after* completing Section 2. If the total does not read "0", there is a discrepancy between the total minutes in the school week (cell G15) and the weekly distributed across the three categories.

How do we input data for Section 3: "Estimating Weekly Non-Purposed Time"?

The "estimated weekly non-purposed time" is intended to capture those minutes during the typical week when time may be spent in class or another activity that

diverges from its intended purpose. (Cells C42 – C44 and G42 – G44). For example, when classes are interrupted to discipline students or to accommodate a public address announcement, these are minutes when essentially no instruction is taking place and should, thus, be accounted for in the Other category, rather than Academic or Non-Core Academic categories.

Completing this category will necessarily require investigation and a fair degree of estimation. Ultimately users need to recognize that there is no perfect way to account in general terms for those times during regular classroom operations when the students, as a group, are not engaged in direct learning simply because the quantity of minutes is highly variable from class to class and day to day. Instead, it is the act of gathering data to learn when and how often those moments occur across a typical day and week that will lead school personnel to think more deeply about how they are using each allocated minute they have available.

As for how to collect the data, the Classroom Time Use tool is the best place to start to capture some hard data on how many minutes within individual classrooms are spent in one of the three categories listed in the QTA tool (i.e., "in-class transitions," "misc. interruptions," and "p.a. announcements"). Schools should conduct a number of Classroom Time Use analyses (in both Academic and Non-core Academic classes and activities) and then input averages in the relevant cells.

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Note that this tool assumes that when time is not used for its intended purpose, the minutes automatically shift to the Other category and, thus, there is no need to account for this separately in the Other column.

How do we input data for Section 4: "Estimating Annual Redirected Time"?

This type of time includes those days and hours during the year which are not part of the weekly schedule, but which, nonetheless, must be accounted for because they take away time from weekly scheduled classes and activities. In fact, the tool assumes that these times are automatically redirected away from Academic time and towards either Non-Core Academics or Other (Cells G52 – G53 and K51 – K55). Thus, there is no need to calculate an annual value for the Academic category.

Like in the "non-purposed" time estimates, these estimates will almost certainly be imprecise and mask variations from grade to grade (or student to student). Again, however, it is the exercise of accounting for these times throughout the year that might push administrators and faculty to think more deeply about how the school (sometimes unintentionally) ends up taking time away from

Academics and redistributing it to Non-Core Academics or Other. This deeper understanding might then lead school personnel to reconsider how to alter the redistribution as it is currently taking place.

What analysis does the tool provide in Section 5?

After all the data are inputted in the proper cells, the tool will automatically calculate the number of weekly minutes in the three broad categories and the percentage of each. (The percentages are relative to each other, meaning that they should add up to 100.) It will also calculate the total annual hours in the three broad categories and the percentage of each. Schools then use this information to determine if changes should be made to how time is spent.