

Attachment 1

Summary of Impact: Implementation of 2004-05 Middle School Report Recommendations

We have worked hard to reach a consensus agreement about the ways that as a Division we can continue to improve the delivery of services, create systems of equitable access to high quality education for all students and maximize shared resources. Any systemic change necessarily carries with it some growing pains in making the transition but together we remain confident that ultimately it is our students whom will benefit. The long list of assumptions provided to the board in December outlines the belief systems about middle school and articulates best practices.

We all are committed to establishing the recommendation for double-blocking students in practical and standard level English and math because it guarantees equal access to a complete and rigorous middle school curriculum in those areas. This is essential for assuring an equal opportunity for academic success regardless of the middle school attended. We also recognize and value the importance of a strong exploratory program that offers opportunities for students to delve into experiences that may drive both career choices as well as fuel lifelong interests and avocations. We believe that the recommendations brought forward represent a balance among requirements and opportunities that increase program consistency across our middle schools. At the same time, we value the flexibility maintained within the report for individual school staff to work together and with stakeholders to implement report recommendations. This report provides a roadmap for what we need to do. Our site-based school improvement planning will provide direction as to how we implement most effectively and efficiently at each school.

Because each school represents variance in size, current schedules, program offerings, and degree of implementation of certain programs the implications cited below vary by school.

The Middle School Principals

Burley Middle School

Implementing recommendations in this report is projected to:

- result in no changes in sixth grade,
- add a semester of Spanish or French exploratory course in 7th grade resulting in a potential reduction in time available for either other exploratory courses offered daily as yearlong courses (band /strings) or physical education,
- create a scheduling conflict that will need to be resolved so that standard level students who wish to take world languages for credit can do so. Currently, advanced/honors students take world languages and languages arts every other day but standard level students will be required to take a daily double-blocked language arts class.

Henley Middle School

Implications for implementing recommendations in the report

Transitioning to a four-block schedule is projected to:

- result in all students making fewer transitions during the school day which increases time spent in the classes they take and less time in hallways,
- allow teachers expanded planning time to plan and develop lessons together and individually,
- result in higher levels of achievement for students who need extra time to learn the specified language arts and mathematics content SOL objectives with the same level of rigor as advanced/honors classes are taught,
- demand that professional development be provided for teachers to adjust their teaching strategies, planning, and instructional activities to longer class periods with students,
- reduce the number of core content sections in the daily schedule (shorter periods equal more sections, longer periods equal fewer sections),
- require more fulltime teacher equivalencies (FTEs) be assigned to mathematics and language arts content because of daily double blocking for standard and practical classes in these areas. This has implications for meeting highly qualified endorsement requirements,
- reduce the amount of time available for students in band and physical education so that students can take the world languages semester course (7th) and credit course (8th),
- likely increase class sizes in some content classes.

Implementing other recommendations in the report is projected to:

- allow for continuation of broad exploratory options while assisting all students to meet exploratory requirements by collapsing these into three strands,
- support the world languages semester course currently offered to Henley students in 7th grade,
- result in improved reading comprehension and an enriched vocabulary through the addition of a morphology strand to the language arts curriculum.

Jouett Middle School

Implications for implementing recommendations in the report

Transitioning to a four-block schedule is projected to:

- shift the schedule from a seven to eight period schedule. A partial block schedule with some double blocking is already in use,
- necessitate allocation of additional staffing FTEs to language arts and mathematics double blocked classes,

- require staff development so that teachers reassigned to teach different content and in blocked classes are prepared to effectively instruct students,
- increase student achievement as a result of increased time in language arts or math instruction. Currently, additional time to support intervention needs is scheduled but the time is disconnected from classroom instructional time. The extended periods will provide a longer and connected instructional block, clearly a more effective instructional approach,
- cause a change in the practice of scheduling students to participate in classes at AHS. Staff will need to move across schools rather than students (this presents some difficulties but will be feasible),
- decrease the number of exploratory classes typically scheduled for standard and practical level students,
- result in students who take world languages and band or strings to have greater difficulty scheduling additional exploratory courses unless in advanced/honors math and English.

Implementing other recommendations in the report is projected to:

- result in additional staffing being needed to implement the world languages recommendations and to maintain an array of exploratory offerings across all grade levels as the double-blocking is implemented.

Sutherland Middle School

Implementing recommendations in this report is projected to:

- result in additional world languages staffing being needed,
- add a semester world languages exploratory in 7th grade that will decrease student participation in other exploratory offerings. It is anticipated that enrollment decreases will occur in career and technical education resulting in staffing reductions in this area,

Walton Middle School

Implementing recommendations in this report is projected to:

- result in additional world languages staffing being needed,
- add a world languages offering in 7th grade that will likely result in decreased time spent in other yearlong exploratory classes such as band or physical education,
- require participation in physical education that will likely result in 8th grade students being limited to band or world languages unless scheduling adjustments can be made. Currently, students in 8th grade who take world languages for credit do not take physical education.