

Middle School Restructuring

Ann Arbor Public Schools



The Goals of Middle School Restructuring

• Maintain High Student Academic Achievement

• Maintain a Variety of Educational & Activity Options

• Maintain or Lower Class Size

Through...

• Rigorous Curriculum

• Rich Exploratories

• Relationships Between Students & Teachers

Why Restructure Our Middle Schools?

The Ann Arbor Public Schools is faced with the on-going task of addressing budget deficits, as all school districts in the state struggle with the realities of state funding limitations. AAPS faces a deficit of approximately \$11 million dollars over the next two years. In order to address the projected deficit, we need to examine how we can reduce costs in all areas of the district. As we look to reduce costs we must make sure we do so in a comprehensive manner to ensure that we maintain outstanding programs for our students in AAPS.

Part of this process includes an assessment of our middle school programs. The middle school experience for Ann Arbor students has always been one that focuses on the ever-evolving adolescent years by providing students with the

ability to further develop and prepare in core academic areas while exploring a variety of curriculum areas as they prepare for high school.

Currently our middle school programs have the highest per pupil instructional costs of any level. We hope to be able to reduce costs in the middle school programs by \$2–2.3 million dollars. While reducing costs is always difficult, as we look at our middle school program we are also looking for ways to improve the educational experience for our students. We are optimistic that we can accomplish our goals.

Status Report - Middle School Restructuring

The committee meetings have begun. Superintendent Todd Roberts charged the committee with their tasks and goals. Parameters including timeline, contractual issues, and state requirements were all discussed and debated.

The committee identified the essential characteristics of an exiting 8th grader, which will be used as a vital reference point through the planning process. Some of these characteristics include:

- Speaking effectively
- Reading proficiency at or above grade level
- Organizational skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Understand and use technology
- Love of learning...

The committee also identified essential classes every student must take as well as classes that are important for some students. These classes will be incorporated into the final plan.

The committee has begun looking at a variety of scheduling models including semesters, trimesters and block scheduling. All scheduling models are still being examined.

The committee will continue to discuss:

- Length of class time
- Required classes
- Elective classes
- Extra curricular classes
- Athletics
- Support staff models
- Planning periods

The committee has also identified the need for strong relationships between students and teachers and that this guiding principal flows through every middle school class and activity.

This is the first newsletter on Middle School Restructuring. As the committee continues the work, additional newsletters will be distributed.

Ann Arbor Public Schools

MIDDLE SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING

Middle School Restructuring Updates

Can be found at:

www.a2schools.org

We welcome your
comments. Connect to
the committee via the
AAPS website.

Timeline

The committee began meeting last week and will continue to meet through January to develop the recommendations, which will be presented to the Superintendent and Board of Education.

October – November, 2006	Establish planning process for Restructuring Middle School Program
November 29, 2006	Staff meetings at Middle Schools on the Middle School Restructuring timeline and process
Nov 30, 2006 - Jan 11, 2007	Middle School Restructuring Committee meetings
January 17, 2007	-Board of Education Study Session -Present draft of Middle School Restructuring Plan to Middle School Staff
Week of January 22, 2007	Parent Meetings at Middle Schools
February 7, 2007	Present Middle School Restructuring Recommendation to Board of Education (1 st briefing)
February 14, 2007	Present Middle School Restructuring Recommendation to Board of Education (2 nd briefing)

The committee combines the talents of district teachers, administrators and parents. The committee follows an agreed set of norms as they work through the process of developing the recommendations for the Middle School Restructuring. The teachers on the committee represent a variety of disciplines including counseling, physical education, core academic subjects, foreign language, music, art, technology.

Teachers

Pat Bantle – Ann Arbor Open
Greta Barfield – Scarlett
Eula Eaddy – Clague
Tracy Grant – Slauson
Joan Grissing – Scarlett
Soon Hotaling – Clague
Cary Kocher – Forsythe
Angela Newing - Forsythe
Tom Pachera – Forsythe
Mary Pedley – Tappan
Claudia Siewert – Tappan
Greg Sipp – Tappan
Jon Strite – Slauson
Alex Vinter – Scarlett
Cherry Westerman – Slauson
Alan Loeb – AAEA
Linda Carter – Ex officio
Paul Morrison – Ex officio

Dr. Janet Schwamb – Forsythe
Bob Galardi - AAPS
Joyce Hunter – AAPS

Parents

Cindi Masini – Tappan
Bill Shea – Clague
Amy Shepherd – PAC
Violetta Viviano – Scarlett
Terry Collins – Slauson
Joyce Hansel – Forsythe
Barb Byers - PAC

Co-Chairs

Rick Weiler – Tappan
Gary Court - Tappan

Administration

Dr. Benjamin P. Edmondson – Scarlett
Michael Hecker – Clague
Pat Rose – Slauson