

Finding **TIME** to Teach & Learn

Reimagining how we “do school” at UMS

Rationale for Change

*The prescribed constructivist approach, Common Core, technology, increased curricular demands, and our momentum toward becoming a high functioning PLC are leading us to challenge the entrenched methods of the past 100 years. **Could the traditional schedule actually limit student's learning and hinder school climate?***

Rationale for Change

Students, teachers and parents expressed curriculum overload, fast pace and lack of flexible time for academic support and collaboration within our current school day to be an academic and climate issue.

History

- March 2011; Schedule committee forms
- September 2012; Made student centered changes to current traditional schedule
- Dec. 2012 – Jan. 2013; Collected feedback from staff, students and parents.
- March 2013; Workshop with MHS teachers
- May 2013; Visit to JP Case
- Researched alternative schedules – went back to stakeholder groups and decided on A/B Block

Schedule Committee Findings

We want to **preserve...**

- Collaborative time
- Teaming
- Strong core academics
- Flex for social/emotional and physical learning
- World class visual & performing arts program
- Rich variety of elective courses
- Advisory

Schedule Committee Findings

We need...

- Academic support for all during the school day (Intervention and Enrichment period)
- Longer class periods – to allow for deeper, student centered lessons
- Smaller classes / Less students
- More time focused on literacy/common core
- More time for H/PE - to meet required minimum
- More opportunity for SPED to take elective classes
- Revise cycle and elective courses to eliminate redundancy, **allow more student choice**, support 21st Century and CCCS
- Flexible professional and collaborative time

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Comparing Types of Block Schedules

4 x 4

- 4 semester long classes meeting every day

Rotating Chop

- 6 to 8 classes meeting 3 to 4 days per week all year

Modified Block

- Combination of block and traditional periods

A/B Block

- 8 courses total, meet every other day. 4 classes per day.

Benefits for Students

the most important considerations...

- New Intervention and Enrichment period
- Additional instructional period
- Deeper understanding of content
- More time available for academic support (BSI) / resource
- Stress reduction
- Avoid curriculum overload
 - Focus on less subjects each day
 - Staggered due dates for homework and assessments
- Stronger student: teacher relationships
- More opportunity to take choice electives
- Easier transition *from* elementary and *to* MHS
- They will just like school better!

Benefits for Instruction

- Extended, uninterrupted class period allows teachers to use *best practice*; accounting for various learning styles, and providing more time to deeply explore issues as per CCCS
- Conducive to infusion of technology
- Allows for ubiquitous system of intervention and enrichment
- More professional time to meet growing curricular demands, planning , and providing feedback for students & parents
- Flexible collaborative time for better planning
- Teachers see less students each day (*hard to “love” 125 students every day*) - leads to stronger student: teacher relationships

Benefits for Parents

- More opportunity to conference w/ teachers
- Alternating day schedule allows for better communication between class meetings
- “Family time” increases with reduction of daily course load and increased academic support *at school*
- Children will like school better!

Benefits for Professional Learning Community

The 4 questions that focus our work as a PLC:

1. What do we want students to learn?
2. What are the best methods to teach it?
3. How do we know if they have learnt it?
4. What do we do if they have not? What do we do if they have?

FLEX

30 minutes/day

OPTIONS:

- Interventions for those identified (as needed)
- Enrichment (for all)
- Recreation
- Team/Advisory activities
- Assembly programs
- Everyone gets what they need

Sample Student Schedule (8)

HR 8:08-8:13	A Day	B Day
Block 1: 8:13-9:35	LA	Math
Block 2: 9:38– 11:00	Band Elective	Robotics Elective
Lunch/ Flex (8):		
11:03-12:03 Block 3: 12:06-1:28	SS	Science
Block 4: 1:31- 2:55	French	H/PE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •82 minute classes •30 minute lunch •30 minute flex 	<i>For grade 7 Block 3 begins at 11:03 followed by lunch/flex at 12:28</i>	

Sample Student Schedule (7)

HR 8:08-8:13	A Day	B Day
Block 1: 8:13-9:35	LA	Math
Block 2: 9:38– 11:00	H/PE	Cycle Art
Block 3: 11:03-12:25	Science	SS
Lunch/ Flex : 12:28- 1:28		
Block 4: 1:31- 2:55	Band Elective	French

- 82 minute classes
- 30 minute lunch
- 30 minute flex

New Cycle / Elective Structure

- Cycle classes are taken by ALL grade 7 students and rotate each quarter.
- Electives are chosen and run for a semester. Music electives run full year.

- 7th grade = $\frac{1}{4}$ cycles + 2 semester electives
- 8th grade = 4 semester electives
- 1 Music Course = 2 electives

Turn and Talk

3 - 2 - 1

Share 3 things you have learned so far

Share 2 questions you have

Share 1 benefit you are most excited about

The Challenge

“The success or failure of any block schedule will be determined largely by the ability of teachers to harness the potential of the block and improve instruction.”

Canady & Rettig (1995)

The Change

47 Minutes vs. 82 Minutes

Day 1

Entice.....10-15 min
Enlighten.....15-20 min
Engage: Shared Practice10-20 min

Day 2

Entice.....10-15 min
Engage: Shared Practice15-20 min
Engage: Independent
Practice OR
Extend: Closure/ Reflection.....10-20 min

Day 1

Entice.....10-15 min
Explain the objective/activate their thinking

Enlighten.....15-20min
Introduction of new concept or skill. Teacher Modeling.

Engage: Shared practice.....20-30min
Small groups work collectively on task to practice skill or
concept presented

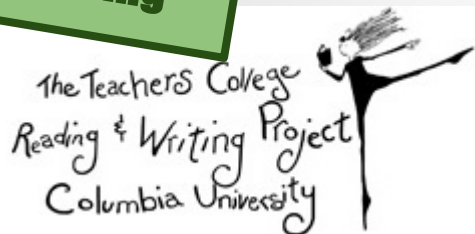
Engage: Individual Practice/Application.20-30min
Opportunity for students to clarify progress on tasks

Extend: Closure/ Reflection.....10-15 min
What did I learn/ How did I learn it? / How will I use it?

The Solution

Professional Development

Training



**PLC & Faculty Mtgs
In Service**



MOCK BLOCK



Site Visits



Workshops



Spring 2013 to Present

Reflections

January Mock Block

Part 1:
Teaching & Learning in the Block

Part 2:
FLEX Opportunities

MTSD Middle Level Experience

- Middle School: LMS & UMS Grades 5-8
- What do we want the MTSD middle school curricular experience to look like?
- What does the research say?
- What content standards must w
MTSD curriculum during the middle school experience?



Association for Middle Level Education
formerly National Middle School Association

New and/or Revised Cycle and Elective Courses at UMS

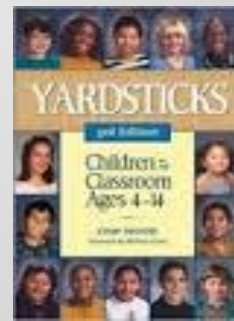
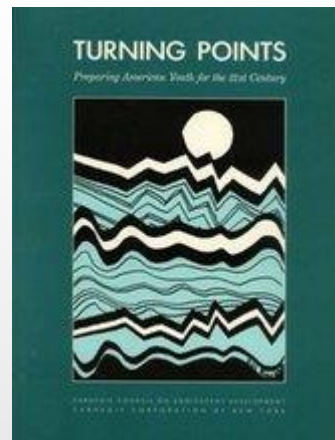
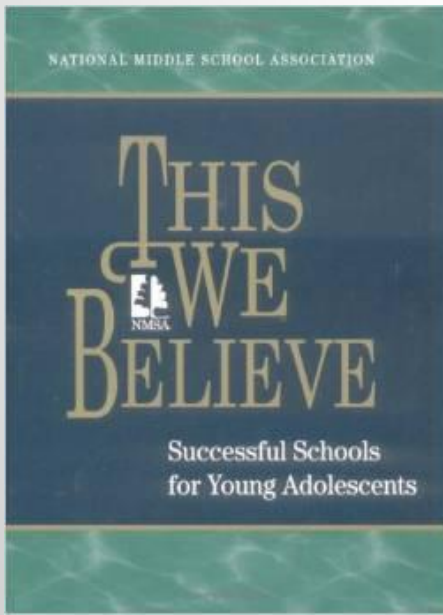
- VPA Cycle and Elective Courses
- STEM & STEAM designations in the UMS POS
- Web Design & Coding
- Broadcast Journalism (formerly TV Production)
- Mass Media and Communication (formerly Public Speaking)
- College and Career Readiness
- Active Citizenship 7 & 8

Research to Support



Research and cumulative empirical evidence in the *landmark* position papers and research literature; *This We Believe* (Assoc. for Middle Level Education),

Turning Points (Center for Collaborative Education), and *Yardsticks* (Wood, C.) confirm that block scheduling leads to improved climate, increased academic achievement and better overall development for middle level students.



Research to Support

- “Middle school schedules must allow for teacher collaborations, flexibility, and longer blocks for learning to accommodate in depth inquiry and varied instructional strategies.” (Turning Points, *Transforming Middle Schools*)
- “Opportunities provided by block scheduling allow students to experience a wide variety of innovative instruction not possible in a traditional schedule.” (Queen & Isenhauer 1998)
- “Block scheduling improves school climate leading to increased opportunities for learning and levels of achievement” (Assoc. for Supervision & Curriculum Development)
- MHS raised test scores since moving to A/B Block



This We Believe...

Block scheduling reflects our school vision. As a PLC we prioritize curriculum, collaboration and climate - leading to improved learning for ALL students.

Block scheduling will allow us to add our “wants”, “preserve what we value”, and better implement best practice to maintain the highest academic achievement.

Block scheduling will create a less pressured, more comfortable atmosphere in our school, making UMS a place where children are excited to learn and teachers are inspired to teach.

Questions???

Visit Block Schedule page on the UMS website for FAQ