

CHANGES IN THE MIDDLE:
STRENGTHENING THE
PRESENT IN PREPARATION
FOR THE FUTURE

Milford Board of Education
April 27, 2009

Middle School as The Bridge

- Repairs made with the intent to address district initiatives of Rigor, Engagement, and Consistency
- Must not only repair the bridge, but its approaches
- Systemic K – 12 repairs
 - Instructional Plan – optimal learning environments
 - Curriculum Standards – equity for all
 - Assessment System - no students left behind
 - Collaboration – professionals improving practice

Why Change?

- Strengthen the academic learning for our students
- Consistency of program
- Improvement to the High School program
- Response to Intervention
- Middle Schools have not had any significant changes since 6th grade was enrolled in the fall of 1994.

Why Change?

- Flat, or declining, standardized test scores from grade 3 to grade 8
- 98 8th grade graduates left Milford Public Schools for private or state schools in 2008
- Up to 56% of 9th graders earning a D or F in either first or second marking period
- 60% of 9th graders earning a D or F on midterm exams
- Despite staff hard work, subgroups within 2 of our 3 middle schools have not made AYP

Process of Planning Change

- Staff Survey, November, 2008

 - Daily Team Meetings

 - Flex Periods for extra help, etc.

 - Fewer Periods in a day

 - Attention paid to class sizes

 - Longer lunch period

Process of Planning Change

- Student Survey, December, 2008

Recess

Extended Lunches

More choices in World Language

Lengthen transition times

Study Hall

Process of Planning Change

- Parent Surveys, December, 2008

 - A study strategies class

 - Longer lunch periods

 - Flex periods

 - More physical activity

 - No pullouts for the arts.

Process of Planning Change

- Site visits to Spotlight Schools, Winter, 2009
 - John Wallace M.S., Newington, CT
 - Nathan Hale M.S., Norwalk, CT
 - Shelton Intermediate School, Shelton, CT
 - DePaolo M.S., Southington, CT
 - Bethel M.S., Bethel, CT
 - East Lyme M.S., East Lyme, CT

What Did Not Make the Cut?

- Flex periods – student support will be given during the day as needs justify. We do not have the time, or need, to have flex times for the majority of students.
- Study Halls – unstructured time, not what our students need.
- Study Strategies classes – rather than teach study strategies as a separate class, they will be incorporated into all classes. Applying the strategies to their work will increase use.

What Did Not Make the Cut?

- Longer Transition Times – increase chances for student behavior issues. We have reduced transition times with more time spent in classes.
- Recess – we have increased Physical Education class time.
- World Language Choices – every 6th grade student receives Spanish and instructional time has increased for 7th and 8th grade Spanish. More choices will depend on changes in high schools as well.

What Will Change

- 8 period days will be 7 period days
 - 49 minutes of instructional time = 20 more hours of instruction per year per discipline
- 4 Marking periods will be 3 Trimesters
- Reduced number of transitions in the day
- 22 Minute Lunch will now be 30 minutes
- FTE from elementary schools will move to middle and high schools with no impact on elementary class size.

What Will Change

- Team Meeting Time for all teachers
- Team Planning Periods aligned by grades, collaboration now possible by discipline
- 5 person teams in all grades, all schools
 - Grade 6: Math, Social Studies, Science, English
(double period)
 - Grades 7 and 8: Math, Social Studies, Science, English, World Language
- Lower class sizes

What Will Change

Grade 6 Schedule

<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Day 3</u>	<u>Day 4</u>	<u>Day 5</u>
Math	Math	Math	Math	Back
SS	SS	SS	SS	to
Science	Science	Science	Science	Day 1
English	English	English	English	
English	English	English	English	
Phys.Ed	Phys.Ed	Music	Music	
Art	Health	Spanish	Spanish	

What Will Change

Grade 7&8 Schedule

<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Day 3</u>	<u>Day 4</u>	<u>Day 5</u>
Math	Math	Math	Math	Back
SS	SS	SS	SS	to
Science	Science	Science	Science	Day 1
English	English	English	English	
Spanish	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish	
Phys.Ed	Phys.Ed	Music	Music	
Art	Art	Art	Art (trimesters*)	

*other 2 trimesters will be in Tech Ed and Health

What Will Change

- Preparing students for the demands of high school and post-high school
 - World Languages
 - Technical Education
- Students who need extra Language Arts will continue to get extra Language Arts
 - Not enrolled in grade 7 and 8 World Language
 - May miss Art/Health/Technical Education

What Will Change

- More Physical Education classes, 90 days per year per grade
- No pull out for band or chorus
- Strings program will have to be after school on Tuesday and Thursdays
- After school help on Tuesdays and Thursdays, prior to after school activities

What Will Change

- 8th grade midterms and final exams will mirror High School schedule, 2 hours in length, 2 per day.
- Integrated 5th to 6th grade and 8th to 9th grade transition program with teacher collaboration on student placement.
- Expectations for student work, strategies, will be K – 12.
- Research projects integrated into grades 6, 7, and 8 curriculum.

What Will Change

- District professional development: integrating reading and writing strategies and skills into science, social studies, and math classes.
- Curriculum revisions
 - More student writing opportunities
 - Common tasks and assessments
 - 6 to 12 Continuum

What Will Change

- High School graduation credits awarded for middle school course completions
- Collaborative meeting time between MS and HS staff
- Grading policy changes
 - ▣ Homework
 - ▣ Assignment weighting

When?

**Coming
Fall, 2009**