

# District Middle Schools: A Master Schedule to Improve Achievement, Climate and Operations

Brooke Wagner, XXXXXX Middle School  
EDLD 655 University of Oregon March 10, 2009

## Introduction - District Improvement Goal

A Master Schedule to Improve Achievement, Climate and Operations at 4 of the 5 middle schools in district X is my district improvement goal. A building's master schedule is the essential first step in creating an educational atmosphere of learning and success. If the building blocks and structure are in place for a middle school, achievement, school safety and intense learning for students will follow. The middle school chosen for the pilot was not achieving educationally, especially with comparative schools that match our demographics. They consistently have been rated Satisfactory by the State of Oregon and have yet to achieve AYP by the federal government. The discipline data also was through the roof, they were averaging 7.30 behavioral referrals a day. When researching methods to Improve Achievement, Climate and Operations at the middle school level, many options in addition to a master schedule redesign exist. They include:

Options for Improved Achievement, Climate and Operations	Implications for Options
Increasing Planning time with weekly Late Starts or Early release	Staff have one hour a week to collaborate and plan curriculum
Once a month Professional Development Day for collaboration and planning	Staff use one day a month to plan curriculum and collaborate
School-wide implementation of Positive Behavior Support Plans for staff and students	Decrease negative behaviors in building and have school-wide commitment to positive behavior choices
Move from a Two Semester grading period to a Trimester grading system	Increase teacher instructional time with three grading periods. Students have more opportunity to take classes

## Pilot Master Schedule

This past year, the pilot middle school implemented a new master schedule based on using flexible blocks of time at all three grade levels. The blocks of time include Core Instruction (Language Arts, Social Studies, Math and Science), Related Arts (various choices for electives) and Flex (additional support for extension or remediation).

## Pilot Master Schedule Continued

Pilot Middle School  
2008 - 2009 Class Schedule

6 <sup>th</sup> Grade			
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Periods	8:20 a.m. - 9:50 a.m.	Related Arts/Electives	
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Periods	9:55 a.m. - 11:47 a.m.	Core Classes	
5 <sup>th</sup> Period	11:52 a.m. - 12:37 p.m.	Flex	
Lunch	12:37 p.m. - 1:07 p.m.	Lunch	
6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Periods	1:12 p.m. - 3:05 p.m.	Core Classes	

7 <sup>th</sup> Grade			
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Periods	8:20 a.m. - 10:12 a.m.	Core Classes	
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Periods	10:17 a.m. - 11:47 a.m.	Related Arts/Electives	
Lunch	11:47 a.m. - 12:37 p.m.	Lunch	
5 <sup>th</sup> Period	12:37 p.m. - 1:08 p.m.	Flex	
6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Periods	1:13 p.m. - 3:05 p.m.	Core Classes	

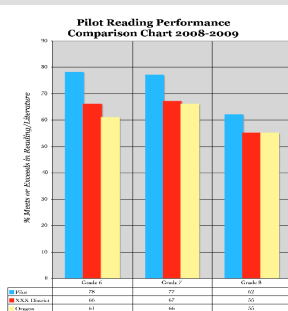
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade			
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Periods	8:20 a.m. - 10:12 a.m.	Core Classes	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Period	10:17 a.m. - 11:02 a.m.	Flex	
Lunch	11:02 a.m. - 11:32 a.m.	Lunch	
4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Periods	11:37 a.m. - 1:29 p.m.	Core Classes	
6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Periods	1:34 p.m. - 3:05 p.m.	Related Arts/Electives	

Core Courses - Language Arts, Social Studies, Reading, Science and Math  
Flex: Electives - Reading & Math support classes, Core class academic extension, Adv. Leadership, Road 100, Industrial Tech, ELL & another choice  
Related Arts/Electives: Enrichment - PE (enrichment), Band, Choir, Orchestra, FACS, Art, Drama, Computers, Additional PE, Industrial Tech & ELL

Revised 4/2/08

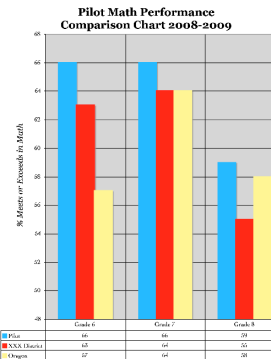
## Evidence of Improvement

With the implementation of a new Middle School Master Schedule, the pilot middle school was looking for indicators that show it is working on increasing achievement, school safety and a positive learning environment. Initial data is very supportive of all three of these areas at the pilot middle school.

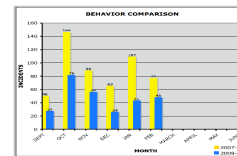


source: OAKS online, 3/8/09

## Evidence of Improvement Continued



source: OAKS online, 3/8/09



## Timeline and Implementation

With the initial pilot Middle School halfway through year one of implementation, three of the four remaining middle schools in the district have begun planning for implementation of the Flex Master Schedule designed for middle schools. Initial data involving the pilot middle school was shared at the school board school improvement goal session in November of 2008. Since that presentation, there have been numerous planning sessions with administration and staff with the involved schools. The implementation timeline includes the conception from the pilot middle school in the summer of 2007 through fall of 2009 implementation of three additional middle schools.

## Timeline and Implementation Continued

### Implementation Timeline

August 2007	Staff reading of Chapter 6 - Turning Points 2000 "Dream it - Create it" Staff Activity Map the Road to Change - Staff Activity Revision of Behavior Discipline Model
December 2007	Share various Master Schedule versions to increase climate, operations and achievement
February 2008	Budget/Staffing released - pilot school negatively affected due to boundary change for middle schools
March 2008	Propose Flexible Master Schedule to staff and parents Consensus voting on schedule with stakeholders Proposal to district office to change Master schedule Request gap staffing to ensure success of implementation of new master schedule
April 2008	Plan, revise and tweak Master Schedule for school Forecast classes for fall of 2008 and plan for curriculum
May 2008	Communicate with Parents and Students about new schedule
August 2008	Tweaked and finalized master schedule - logistics
November 2008	Present to School Board - School Improvement Goal sessions
December 2008	Separate planning meetings with three additional middle schools Initial sharing with staff for additional middle schools
January 2009	Assistant principals meet and plan 2 days regarding schedule Work Session with School board to update on implementation process
February 2009	Work Sessions with administration to review implementation plans of three middle schools Work session with district personnel on scheduling update
March 2009	Initial staffing and budget consideration are shared Administrative planning sessions to review progress Consensus voting with staff on new master schedule
April 2009	Communicate with Parents and Students about new schedule Forecast classes for fall of 2008 and plan for curriculum

## Projected Outcomes

Anticipated projected outcomes from this district improvement goal are directly linked to the outcomes the pilot middle school is currently experiencing. Initial data from State testing points to an increase in achievement with the first round in the area of Reading and Math. Specifically nearly 80% of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders have already met or exceeded in Reading. The behavior data points to a drop of approximately 45% of referrals in this school year compared to last year by months. So an increase in achievement, school safety and learning are taking place in the initial 6 months of the pilot middle school.

## Sources

Davis, Gayle A. & Jackson, Anthony W. "Organizing Relationships for Learning" *Turning Points 2000. Educating Adolescents in the 21st Century.* Teachers College Press, New York, NY, 2000. 121-144  
Denney, Bill "Are we Really Going Anywhere?" *Keep the Fire Burning.* 2004. 81-92  
Fielding, Lynn, Kerr, Nancy & Rosier, Paul "Proportional Increases in Direct Instructional Time" *Annual Growth for all Students. Catch-up Growth for those who are behind.* Foundation Press, Kennewick, WA. 2008. 37-53