



Mountain View
Whisman
School District

Considerations for a New Middle School Schedule

March 2024



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Middle School Needs and Philosophy

Middle School Philosophy

- When students feel connected at school, they do better in school
- Electives are important for students to explore new subjects, and feel connected to school
 - Many cite their electives as the reason they “like” school
 - We’re committed to every student having a minimum of one elective
- Middle school is an important time for students to learn coping and relationship skills before they move to high school
 - Adolescence can be hard, but we’re here to help!

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Current academic and SEL needs at MS

- Need to have increased time in students’ core classes
 - prepares students for high school
 - supports academic achievement for all
 - Provides for more in-depth, enriching activities that cement concepts
- Need to have consistent instructional minutes in all classes
 - Currently some classes have more minutes than others
- Need consistent time weekly for social-emotional learning
 - Pandemic has brought to forefront students’ need for mental health wellness and coping strategies
 - Examples: Behavioral issues, issues with mental health

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Possible Solution: New School Schedule

Scheduling Committee

- With needs in mind, teachers expressed concerns about the current schedule and a desire to support student needs
- A committee was formed in January mostly made up of MS teachers, plus
 - Principal from each middle school
 - 2 District Office administrators
- Result: Exploration of a proposed 7-period day schedule to take the place of the current 8-period cascading schedule

Scheduling Committee

A committee was formed to review middle school schedule options at the start of the 2024 calendar year

- 2 teachers from Crittenden
 - Megan Binn
 - Michael Newman
- 3 teachers from Graham
 - Rebecca Escobar
 - Edgar Gomez
 - Sheila Martinez
- 1 Site administrator from each Middle School
 - Heidi Galassi - Graham
 - Julie Thompson - Crittenden
- 2 Administrators from the District Office
 - Tara Vikjord
 - Swati Dagar
 - Karin Jinbo - Consulting member

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Why a New Schedule? Core Instructional Time

- The 7 period schedule allows students to have increased time in their core classes
 - prepare students for high school
 - support academic achievement for all
 - increase instructional time by more than 3 weeks
- Instructional minutes will be the same in all classes with the new schedule
 - Students who have ELA in period 2 should get the same instruction as the students in period 7
- The schedule allows for students to have a longer classes two days each week, providing for more in-depth, enriching activities
 - This longer class period also provides a smooth transition to high school

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Why a New Schedule? Advisory and Social Emotional Learning

- The weekly advisory period will allow students to receive social emotional lessons from school counselors
 - Behavior incidents have increased in middle school since the pandemic
 - Students need time to connect with a trusted adult and to learn about ways to manage stress and interactions
- The advisory period will also allow a dedicated time for students and teachers to connect, check-in, and support student needs throughout the year
 - High school's have an advisory period
 - Help foster skills important for success in high school and beyond such as managing stress, ability to collaborate, time management, etc. -

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Why a New Schedule?

- Increased break time from 13 to 15 minutes daily
 - Students need a bit more time to enjoy morning snack/breakfast
- Students who have ELD and Instructional Support will receive services in a slightly different way, strategically designed to meet their needs
- 7 period schedule allows for more flexibility in scheduling electives

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Comparison of Current and Proposed School Schedules

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Current schedule - 8 period cascading

- 201-209 instructional minutes/class weekly
- Every student has 1 elective, most have 2 and many have 3

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Proposed schedule - 7 period

- 232 instructional minutes per class each week
- Provides at least one choice elective for all students (and in many cases 2)
- Will reduce the number of electives for some students (students who currently have 3 electives will have 2)
 - Students will still be able to choose from a list of electives
 - Students are more likely to get one of their selected electives (top choices) with fewer being scheduled

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New Schedule Option

7 Period Day + Advisory 1x/week

Totals		Monday, Tuesday, Friday			Wednesday			Thursday		
1	229 min	1	8:25 - 9:13 AM	48 min	1	8:25 - 9:56 AM	85 min + 6 min	2	8:25 - 9:56 AM	85 min + 6 min
2	232 min	2	9:17 - 10:05 AM	48 min	Break	9:56 - 10:11 AM	15 min	Break	10:00 - 10:15 AM	15 min
3	232 min	Break	10:05 - 10:20 AM	15 min	3	10:15 - 11:40 AM	85 min	4	10:19 - 11:44 AM	85 min
4	232 min	3	10:24 - 11:12 AM	48 min	Lunch	11:40 - 12:20 PM	40 min	Lunch	11:48 - 12:28 PM	40 min
5	232 min	4	11:16 - 12:04 PM	48 min	5	12:24 - 1:49 PM	85 min	ADV	12:32 - 1:09 PM	37 min
6	232 min	Lunch	12:04 - 12:44 PM	40 min	7	1:53 - 3:20 PM	85 min + 2 min	6	1:13 - 2:28 AM	85 min
7	232 min	5	12:48 - 1:36 PM	48 min						
ADV	37 min	6	1:40 - 2:28 PM	48 min						
		7	2:32 - 3:20 PM	48 min						

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New Schedule Option

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows more instructional minutes per period• Fewer adjusted schedules due to Monday holidays• Longer block days allow for simulations/labs/projects• Helps ease into block schedule for high school• Advisory allows time for dedicated SEL while allowing more time for instruction in core subjects• Schedule allows teachers to start and end the week with their full group• Counselors can present consistent SEL lessons to all students during advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shorter daily periods on M,T,F• Two long back-to-back blocks on Wednesday. Would need to build in some sort of brain break• Some students will have fewer electives

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15

Summary

7 period schedule offers several significant benefits

- Additional instructional minutes add up to more than 3 weeks of additional core academic instructional time per year
- Mirrors high school schedule with advisory period and longer classes
- Offers important SEL instruction
- Students are more likely to get one of their selected electives (top choices)

Next Steps

- Currently collecting feedback:
 - Board of Trustees - March 14
 - Staff, Parents and Students - Week of March 18
- Next step: the committee will discuss the input and make further recommendations



Time for Input

Input

What are the things to consider as we work through the logistics of the presented option?

Additional input may be provided via the Google Form linked [here](#).

