

ITEM FOR INFORMATION**MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHEDULE****SUMMARY**

Since the current schedule for neighborhood middle schools was implemented in 2021, stakeholders in several groups have raised concerns about the schedule and its impact on student learning. Education Northwest was contracted to conduct a qualitative study of the current middle school schedule. Teaching & Learning staff and middle school principals considered the study's findings and recommendations to create proposals for the superintendent's consideration. In this presentation staff will provide information on the new middle school schedule that will be implemented in fall 2024.

BACKGROUND

In fall 2021 the schedule currently used at neighborhood middle schools was implemented, coinciding with the return to full-time, in person instruction. Significant shifts from the prior schedule included separation of Humanities into Language Arts and Social Science, common elective offerings and course length at all schools, math and science scheduled into 3 period blocks with intact cohorts, reducing the ability for interdisciplinary teaming, significantly increased student caseload for Language Arts and Social Science teachers, and significantly decreased student caseloads for Elective and PE/Health teachers.

During the 2021-2022 school year, stakeholders expressed concerns about the impact of the schedule. Concerns included class periods were too short for sustained learning, too many transitions, lack of ability for teaming and teacher collaboration, and potential impact on academic outcomes.

In December 2022, BSD contracted with Education Northwest to conduct a qualitative study that included a review of the research literature, staff surveys, and focus groups of students, parents/guardians, and staff. The study report was presented to the board in September.

Teaching & Learning staff partnered with middle school principals to develop a schedule that would center BSD's Equity Lens, incorporate suggestions from the Education Northwest study and focus on BSD's Strategic Plan. Top priorities included the ability to implement multi-tiered systems of support and team structure that provided time for intentional collaboration for teachers who share the same cohorts of students. The Equity Advisory Committee was consulted on these priorities. To evaluate the feasibility of the schedule, several assistant principals created mock class schedules for schools of varying size and with different programs. As one model began to surface as the best fit, consultations with others included the Multilingual, Human Resources, and Information Technology Departments to ensure that the new schedule not only aligned with the objectives of our strategic plan, but also met the requirements in our labor contracts and regulations from the Oregon Department of Education.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff will present information on the new middle school schedule for the 2024-25 school year. No action is needed.

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