

Proposed Roosevelt Middle School Schedule Revisions

Implementation Plan

For Board of Education Consideration – March 5, 2019

Background/Overview

To accommodate the enhanced rigor of the Illinois Learning Standards adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the District embarked upon a comprehensive review of curriculum and instructional practices in 2015. Guided by the District 90 Strategic Plan (2015-20), the overarching objective has been to ensure ongoing success for all students under the new standards and benchmarks. Middle school science, mathematics, and writing have completed curriculum review cycles over the last four years to reflect the more rigorous learning standards, as well as the need to improve pedagogy to reflect current “best practices” in instruction. The increased rigor of the recently adopted curricula has predicated a shift in teaching and learning, encouraging the use of classroom instructional strategies that are challenging to implement effectively within a traditional 40-minute instructional period.

In May 2018, Roosevelt Middle School administrators requested that faculty and staff members complete an extensive survey to garner input about their perspectives on scheduling priorities and needs. In August 2018, a team of Roosevelt Middle School administrators and staff members convened with an outside scheduling consultant to consider alternate approaches by which to improve the schedule of daily instruction. The primary impetus for this work was to accommodate the curricular and instructional shifts dictated by the new standards, with particular concern centered on the time presently available for math instruction. During this process, the Roosevelt Scheduling Team developed numerous schedule iterations, each presenting unique opportunities and challenges. In the fall of 2018, the school administration addressed the faculty and staff about the scheduling process at a Building Meeting in order to solicit feedback. Administrators subsequently met with staff members at key department/grade level meetings to answer questions and provide further explanation. Over the course of the fall, a core scheduling team continued to meet and consider potential modifications. The school administration provided a progress update for RMS staff regarding the project’s status again in late November. An initial draft of the proposed schedule was presented to the Board of Education in December 2018, and Board of Education Community Information/Input Meetings took place in January

and February to provide information and elicit feedback from members of the school community. The proposed RMS Schedule Revisions were also discussed at length during the February 19, 2019 Board of Education Meeting. In response to concerns shared by faculty members about the need for additional professional development, and the desire of numerous community members for further modifications to the proposed schedule, the District administration recommended that the Board consider delaying implementation of a new schedule until August 2020.

Primary Objectives

Supporting the needs of all students is the highest priority for District 90, and providing an optimal schedule is an interest shared by all stakeholder groups. This implementation plan has been drafted for the Board's consideration with three primary objectives:

- Outline the essential elements that will be necessary to facilitate a transition to an improved schedule
- Formalize the anticipated timeline for implementation, and
- Ensure that the foundational needs and interests of students, staff, families, and community members remain at the fore

Essential Transitional Elements

Refinements to Proposed Schedule Revisions

If the Board of Education elects to adopt the proposed Implementation Plan, the District will reconvene the Roosevelt Scheduling Team to revisit the foundational elements of the proposed Roosevelt Schedule Revisions. Roosevelt staff members will again be invited to join the Roosevelt Scheduling Team and play an active role in the forthcoming review process. The Team's charge will be to closely review the current iteration of the proposed schedule, seek potential changes that can improve the revised schedule's effectiveness and increase its appeal to the broader school community, and continue to prioritize the need for increased instructional time for mathematics. The Roosevelt Scheduling Team will re-engage with Elliott Merenbloom (scheduling consultant) to revisit discussion about the length of the proposed instructional periods and the best way to navigate around the limiting factors that are presently impeding a fully optimal solution.

Professional Development

To ensure that teachers are thoroughly prepared to implement the proposed schedule revisions, the targeted launch date has been extended until August 2020. This spring, the D90 Curriculum Office and the Roosevelt Middle School Instructional Specialists will coordinate meetings with content area teams that are transitioning to extended instructional blocks to develop collaborative professional development plans. Each plan will include professional development goals, outcomes, and resources required. District and school administrators are fully prepared to implement a professional development program to support any faculty members who will need pedagogical training to teach effectively within a longer instructional period. English/Language Arts, Math, and Science teachers have already received initial training towards these ends, with the English/Language Arts and Math teachers in the forefront. Because the Social Studies strand has not been on cycle for curriculum review, Social Studies teachers will receive the greatest degree of professional development specific to student-focused pedagogy.

Since engaging students in learning is an educator's most critical task, much of the professional development will be centered on instituting high-engagement instructional practices. It is a universally accepted fact that District 90 teachers are highly adaptive, flexible, and willing to embark on continuous improvement efforts of their own accord. For this reason, the planned professional development approach will allow teachers to identify independent learning goals that can be linked to the established District 90 Educator Appraisal System. This goal-setting component will also provide the option for teachers to self-monitor their progress toward competency. Targeted professional development will be vital to ensure effective implementation of the longer instructional period. The administration is confident that a robust sequence of professional development, consisting of both full faculty and department-based training, will be most successful over the course of the next 18 months. The "Anticipated Timeline for Implementation" chart below outlines the specifics of the plan in greater detail.

Communication

District 90 is committed to providing ongoing communication to all stakeholders regarding the Roosevelt schedule transition. Updates will be provided to the Board of Education, staff, and community while the review process is under way, and when the revised iteration of the proposed schedule is complete. The proposed schedule will then be presented to the Board of Education for consideration and approval before final implementation would occur. Discussions about the proposed schedule's evolution will occur at public Board of Education and Committee of the

Whole Meetings in the coming year. The agendas for these meetings will be posted, online information packets made available in advance, and interested community members will continue to be notified about the meetings and encouraged to attend in advance, as in the past. The District will continue to upload audio recordings of all Board of Education and Committee of the Whole Meetings to the District website for individuals who may not be able to attend in person, and post electronic versions of all public presentations made to the community about the topic.

Staffing

The eventual schedule change will require a careful review of staffing allocations to support the needs of our students. District 90 will make every effort to seek responsible staffing efficiencies while also maintaining appropriate class sizes to ensure high quality instruction. One of the benefits of the proposed schedule is that it allows teachers to take advantage of extended instructional time while having responsibility for fewer students over the course of the school day. This provides teachers with the opportunity to build stronger relationships, improved classroom community, and heightened sense of belonging for students. Final staffing allocations that will be needed to support any schedule revisions will be presented to the Board of Education for their consideration no later than March 2020.

Anticipated Implementation Timeline

Time Frame	Action/Objective	Outcome
Spring 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with department chairs to identify professional development needs, considering feedback from faculty and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed collaborative professional development plan for 2019-20 school year, designed in partnership with school staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconvene and expand membership of Roosevelt Scheduling Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation of teachers across grade levels and content areas established
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule additional work session(s) with consultant Elliot Merenbloom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule reviewed for possible modifications and refinements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit Summer Curriculum Work Proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritized professional development plan goals and outcomes
Summer 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with Elliot Merenbloom and the Roosevelt Scheduling Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed schedule reviewed; modifications/refinements identified

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support content area summer work goals, as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented progress toward professional development goals and outcomes
Fall 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present refined schedule to Roosevelt staff; elicit feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback and suggestions from faculty and staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Board of Education on any refinements or revisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Education feedback and direction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present proposed schedule and refinements to Board of Education for final consideration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved Roosevelt schedule modifications, planned for implementation in August '20
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate needs for middle school Social Studies curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social studies curriculum review conducted
Winter 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine staffing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing recommendation provided to Board of Education for consideration
Spring 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine social studies resource/training needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vetted resource recommendation for Board of Education adoption

The Final Imperative: Aligning Needs and Interests

As District 90 strives to pursue the goal of continuous improvement, it is important that the foundational needs and interests of students, staff, families, and community members remain at the fore. Yet, varying perspectives about how resources should be allocated - including time - are all but inevitable. The way that various stakeholders consider proposed changes to the middle school schedule is no different. It is clear that the manner in which District 90 plans to allocate the limited time that is available for instruction must be consistent with our mission, vision, and core values. Otherwise, we risk misalignment with our intended outcomes. For this reason, it is essential that the final schedule modifications be rooted not only in educational “best practices,” but also in the strategic aspirations that the District has clearly established to ensure that our collective needs and interests are thoughtfully balanced and carefully considered.