

RMS (Reimagining Middle Schools) Committee

Steering Meeting Minutes

April 6, 2023

Inclusive Welcome –

Steering Committee members were asked to sit with their prototype group from 2/2. We had four groups representing the big 4 ideas: advisory/homeroom, project-based learning, teacher teams with student cohorts and longer classes/block schedule.

Objective of the day was reviewed: we REFINE our PROTOTYPES using:

- Staff, student and family prototype feedback summaries
- Critical Criteria “draft”
- Innovated School Visit presentations

Community Agreements and Parking Lot feedback from last meeting were reviewed.

Content:

Anna reminded the Committee of our Project Goal, specifically “recommendations will be based on authentic and extensive input and feedback from our students, families and staff...” She shared this comment received from a student during our Listening Campaign #2: “I like that you people wanna make our school better. I also like the way you guys care about our opinions and want us to give opinions to make the school better.”

The Big Idea: Stakeholder feedback provides us, as an RMS Steering Committee, with a **window into people’s minds**.

It helps us answer the question, “**How is our community reacting to our ideas for reimagining middle school?**” We want feedback (positive, negative, neutral/mixed), because it helps us understand and respond to stakeholders’ questions, concerns, suggestions, and levels of enthusiasm, belief in, and support for this work.

IF we understand stakeholders’ most critical questions, concerns, and suggestions, we will THEN be able to address/build on them and **strengthen our recommendations**. This will also set the future “RMS Implementation Team” up for success in their work next year (2023-24).

We grounded our work in the Opportunities we identified early in the Design Thinking process (see image).



The remaining time was spent having teams examine and discuss the data summary statements and refine their prototypes. The last 15 minutes of the meeting, teams shared a summary statement of the refinements for the rest of the team.

Teacher Teams with Student Cohorts

Team focused on addressing misconceptions that were identified from the Listening Campaign #2 data summary. The refinements will concentrate on addressing the need/opportunity #9: *“There is no bridge to 5th grade students to transition to middle school”* by refining to focus teaming with the 6th grade band. The team also wants to call out how certain programs/supports (e.g., IEP, 504, MLL) could benefit from the prototype.

Advisory/Homeroom

Team wants to address teacher work-load in refinements as well as providing tools in implementation. Ideas include: allowing schools to be flexible and responsive in lesson materials to timely events (both local, regional and global), involve students in creating materials and potentially co-teaching with adults, and inviting parents in the process. Another aspect to include in refinement is professional development and FTE to support implementation.

Problem/Project Based Learning

Team wants to address misconceptions raised in feedback. This includes ensuring that all project would be grounded in standards. Students could be working in teams, but would be evaluated in learning individually. Also, refinement would make sure to call out that this shift to PBL could change over time (versus all at once). Potential example: students will experience a PBL exercise ___ times a year. Workload needs to be addressed (e.g., push work to developers with teachers versus asking teacher to make this up on their own). Another aspect of refinement to include is how this prototype could support programs such as MLL, and students receiving services through an IEP or 504.

Scheduling

The Team will clarify “flex time” - shifting title to “Enrichment Time” which would replace tutorial and be moved to during the school day. The Enrichment Time could be quarterly or semester based and would include student choice and assigned interventions and supports. Based on the feedback, and what opportunities/problems this prototype could address, the Team refined from a 2-day a week model to a 4-day model. This prototype could support the Advisory/Homeroom prototype (potential for combining).

Optimistic Closing Circle prompt: one word describing what you are looking forward to over Spring Break.

Nuts & Bolts:

Next meeting: April 20th at ESC 200 4:30-6:00

Review Critical Criteria drafts

Continue to refine and begin drafting recommendations