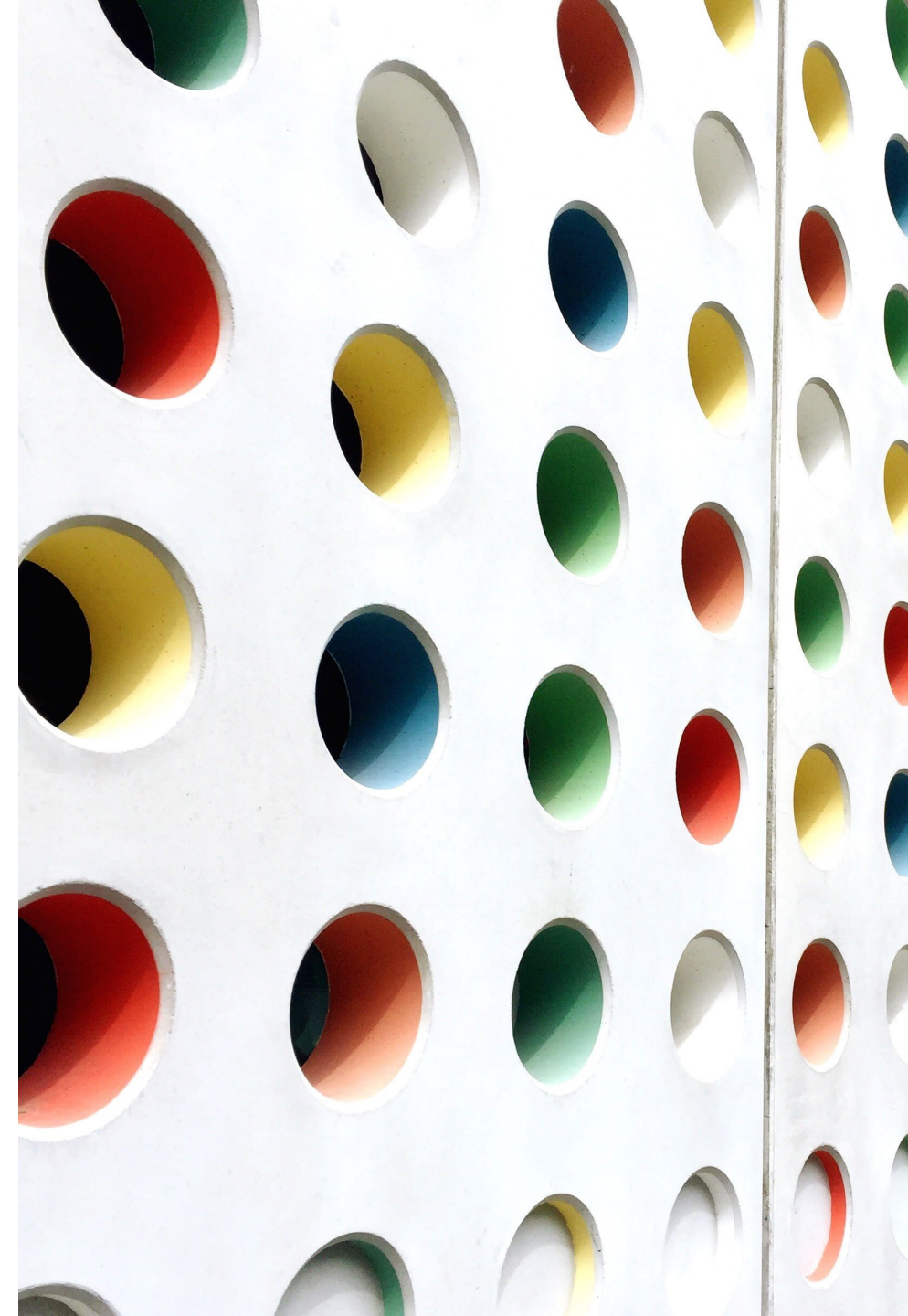# Reimagining Middle Schools
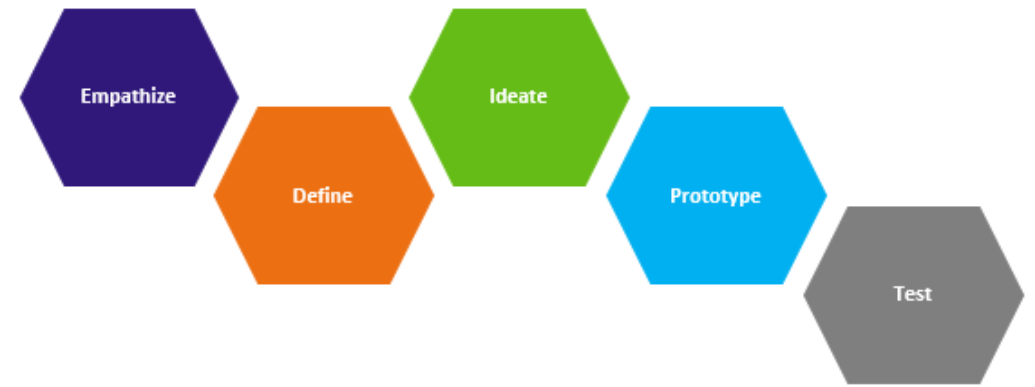
BELLEVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT

2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

FAMILY OUTREACH VISITS MARCH 2023

Project Overview

Why reimagine middle schools?
- To create middle schools that offer developmentally responsive, student-centered education.

What does this project include?
- To make recommendations to Executive Team that includes both a proposed middle school model and an implementation plan.

Who is on the RMS Team?
- 32 members representing all five comprehensive middle schools and various key stakeholders

How will the RMS team develop its proposal?
- Using an Equity-Centered Design Thinking process which engages a variety of diverse stakeholders who collectively define the opportunity and collaboratively design solutions.
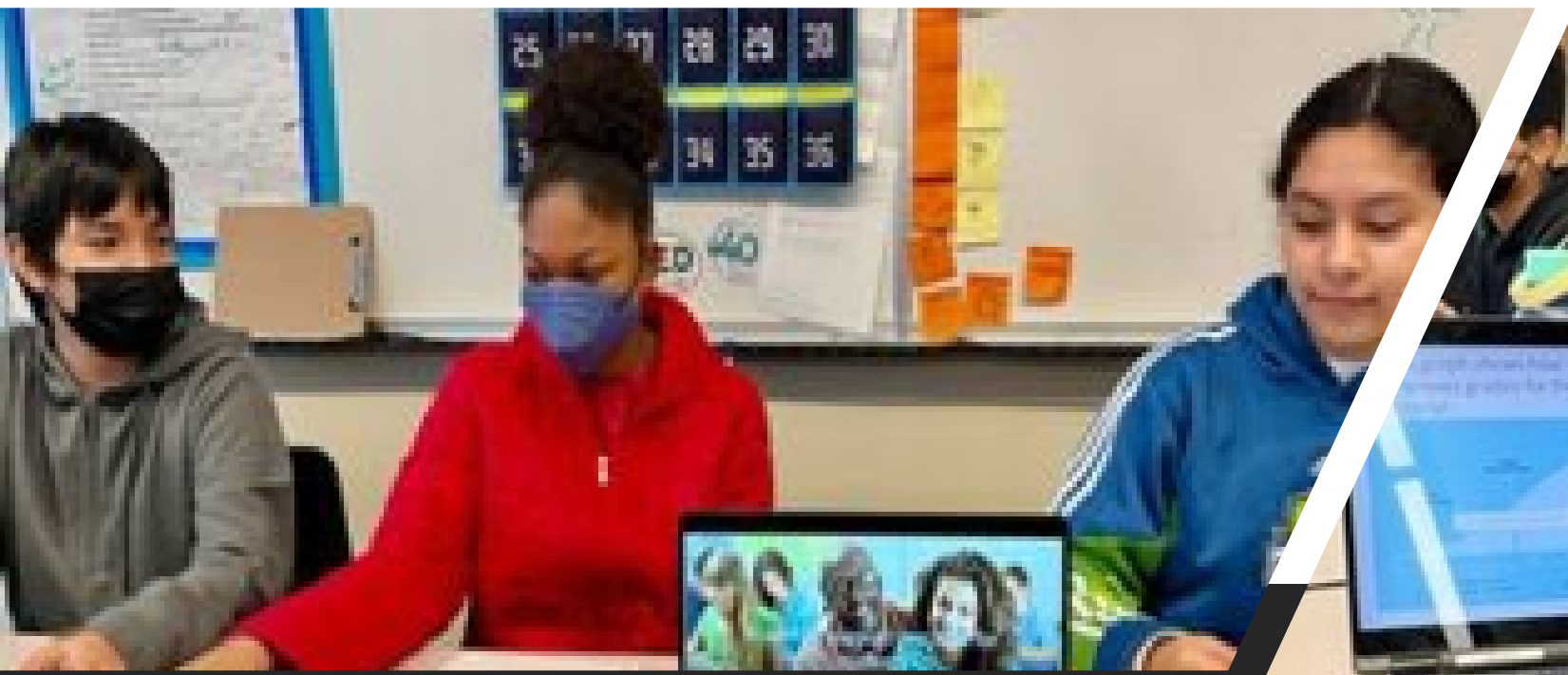
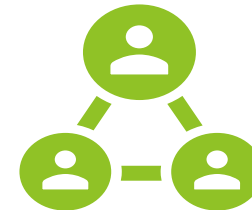# 4 Big Ideas To Redesign the Middle School Experience:

Project / Problem Based Learning (PBL)

Teacher Teams with Student Cohorts

Modified Block Schedule

Homeroom / Advisory

Want to learn how we landed on these 4 ideas?
Visit: https://bsd405.org/departments/teaching-and-learning/reimagining-middle-school-steering-committee/   or scan this code →

Feedback Process

Step 1: Listen to the presentation

Step 2: Write your feedback after each prototype

"I like…"   "I wish…"   "I wonder…"

- "**I Like…**" provides us with **positive feedback** about the prototype.

- "**I Wish…**" gives us ideas how the prototype can be **changed** or **improved**.

- "**I Wonder…**" this opens possibilities for sharing **your questions** and **new ideas** to be explored in revisions of the prototypes.

Prototype #1:

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

What

- Project Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching method in which student learn by actively engaging in local and global issues and personally meaningful projects

Why

- Student-centered and focused on "21st Century Learning"

Key Features

- Students work on a project for an extended period of time

- Interactive, collaborative, empowering

- From teacher centered to student centered

- Individual and group projects

- Students' active learners→ stronger motivation, increased engagement and deeper understanding of content

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Prototype #2:

Teacher Teams with Student Cohorts

Where we are now – Our current challenges...

Students

- There is no clear transition from elementary to secondary.

- Students must navigate up to seven systems (routines, expectations, rules, workload expectations, homework, grading, etc.)

- Students occasionally get mixed messages with academic skills (e.g., different reading and writing expectations in each class)

Teachers

- Teachers try to support students on their own without knowing how students are doing in other classes.
- Teachers communicate with parents and families without knowing who else has reached out and what was discussed.

- There are few connections between core subject areas.

- It is a challenge to be consistent with behavioral, academic and social-emotional supports.

Teacher Teams with Student Cohorts

What

Adults and students are grouped into smaller communities (e.g., teams, houses, cohorts)

Why

To promote a strong sense of community and instructional coherence

Key Features

- Smaller communities characterized by stable, close, and mutually respectful relationships

- Enhanced teaching and learning via a set of educators collaborating frequently and effectively on instruction, assessment, and student well-being

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Prototype #3:

Scheduling

Modified Block Schedule

What

A **modified block schedule** is defined by student attending all 7 classes on Mon/Tues/Fri *for 50 minutes* each, and attending periods 2, 4, and 6 on Wednesday and periods 1, 3, 5, and 7 on Thursdays *for 90 minutes* each.

Why

Deepen student learning by increasing the time spent in classes and reducing interruptions and stress.

Key Features

- Fewer classes and transitions, two days per week.

- Promote deeper teacher-student relationships

- Allow teachers to individualize instruction and support for fewer students

- More flexible use of time

- Increase teacher collaboration

- Aligns with the current High School schedule

Sources: The Edvocate; NEA

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Prototype #4:

Homeroom/Advisory

Homeroom/ Advisory
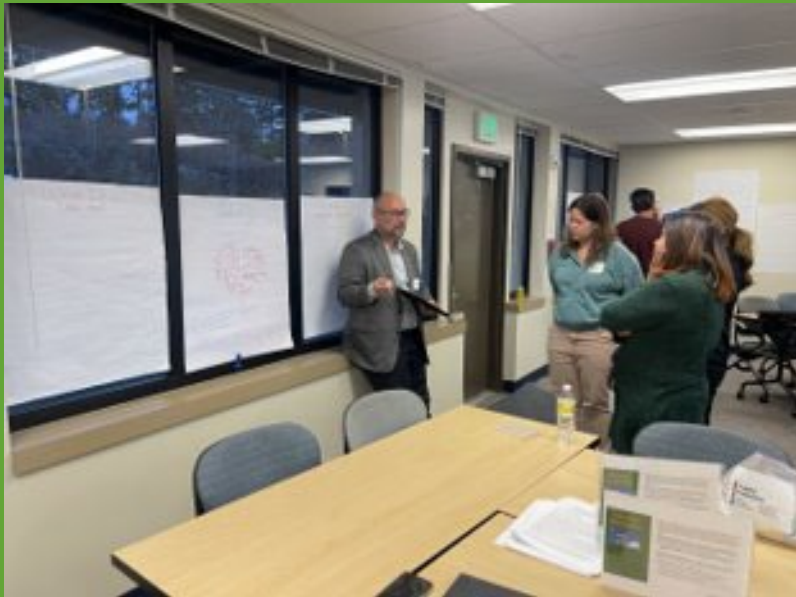
What
Homeroom/ Advisory programs are designed to create a strong support system that students need to develop academically, socially, and emotionally

Why
To create a designated time and place for students to receive academic and social-emotional mentorship and support. To create community within the school

Key Features
- Help students navigate and explore the middle grades
- Explicitly teach SEL, study skills, bullying prevention,
- Have a point of contact for small groups of families
- Supports Student Led Conferences
- Help students strategize about classes and teachers, set & moniotor academic goals, and belong to a group of peers striving for success

Sources: Friends' Central School; EducationWeek

Advisory Structure and Routine

Routines and Cadence:
- **Daily: Check-In**
- **Monday: Goal Setting/Study Skills**
- **Tuesday: SEL Lesson**
- **Thursday: Homework Support**
- **Friday: Choice Activities/Game Day**

Structure:
- **4 days per week (M, T, Th, F)**
- **35 minutes per session**
- **Periods 1-7 reduced from 50 mins to 45 min**
- **After 1st period**
- **All teachers facilitate an advisory**
  - **15-18 students per advisory**
- **Cohort Looping**

Period 1
Advisory
Period 2
Period 3
Period 4
Period 5
Period 6
Period 7

*This schedule is proposed within our current school structure. It would align better paired within the other RMS prototypes

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