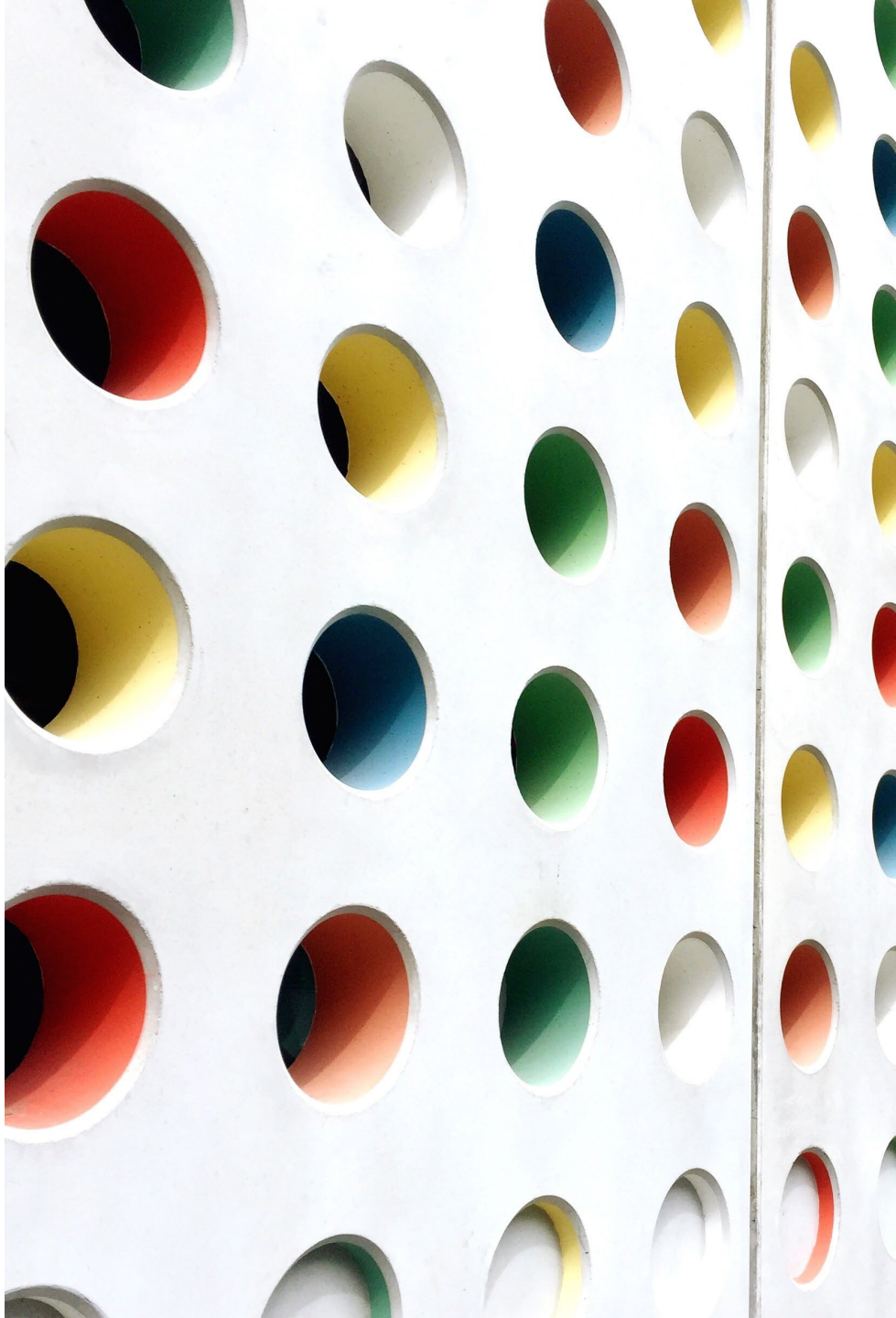
Reimagining Middle Schools

BELLEVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT

2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

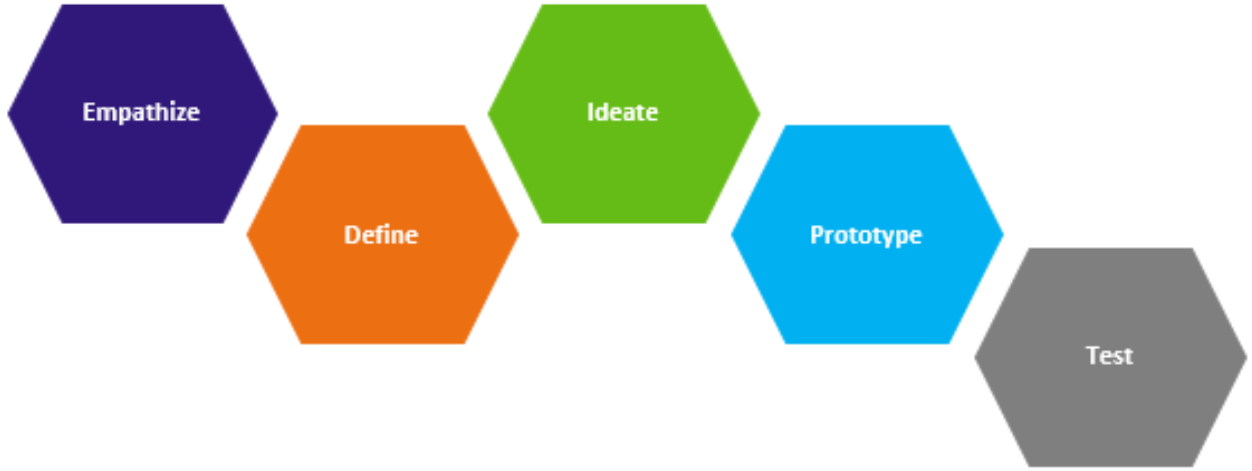
FAMILY OUTREACH VISITS MARCH 2023



Contents

- Project Overview
- Key Points
- High-Level Timeline
- Understanding the Opportunities
- Explore Solutions
- Reflect and Test on the Four Big Ideas
- Gather Feedback

Project Overview



Why reimagine middle schools?

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

What does this project include?

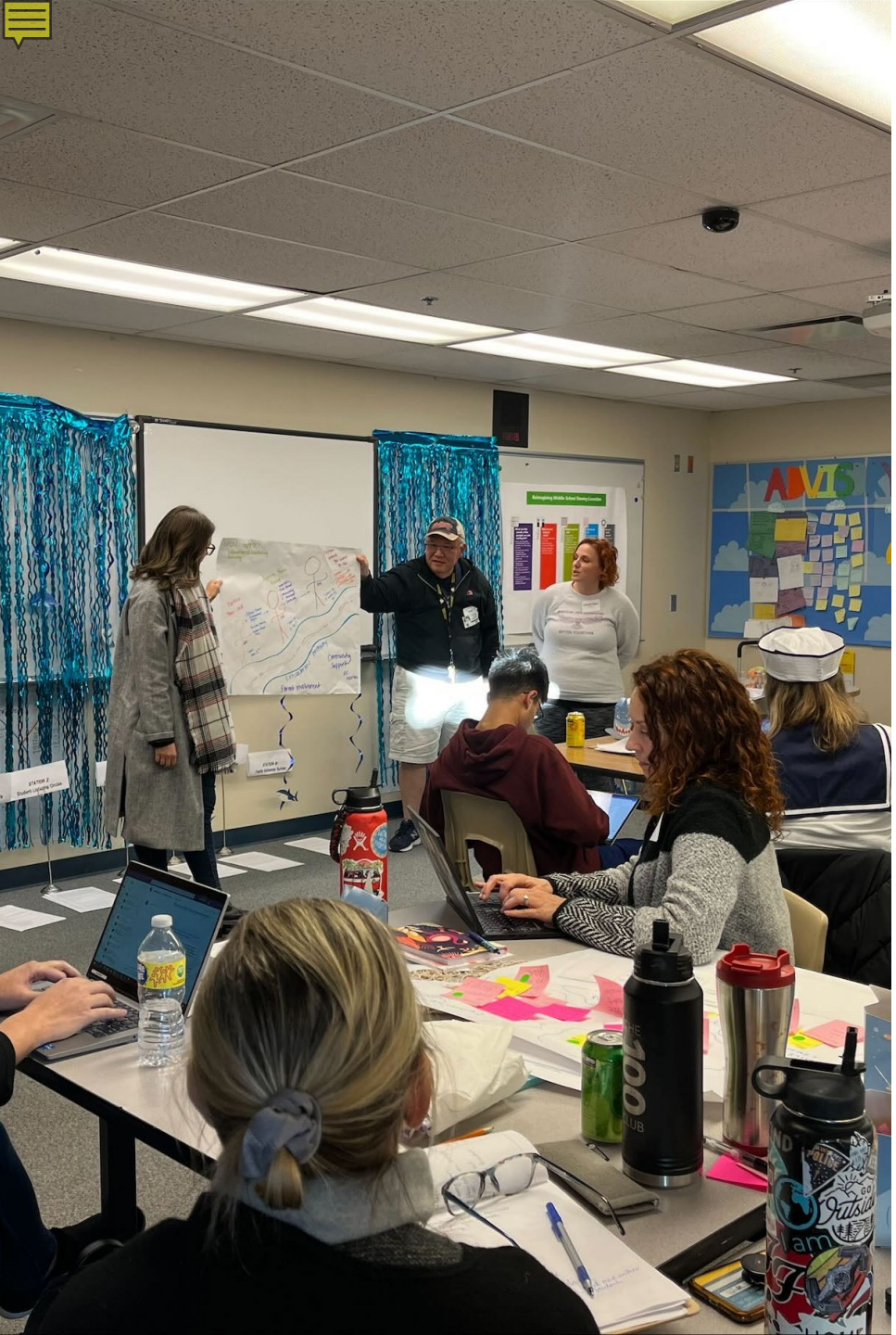
- To make recommendations to Executive Team that includes both a proposed middle school model and an implementation plan.

Who is on the RMS Team?

- 32 members representing all five comprehensive middle schools and made up of staff, families, and students

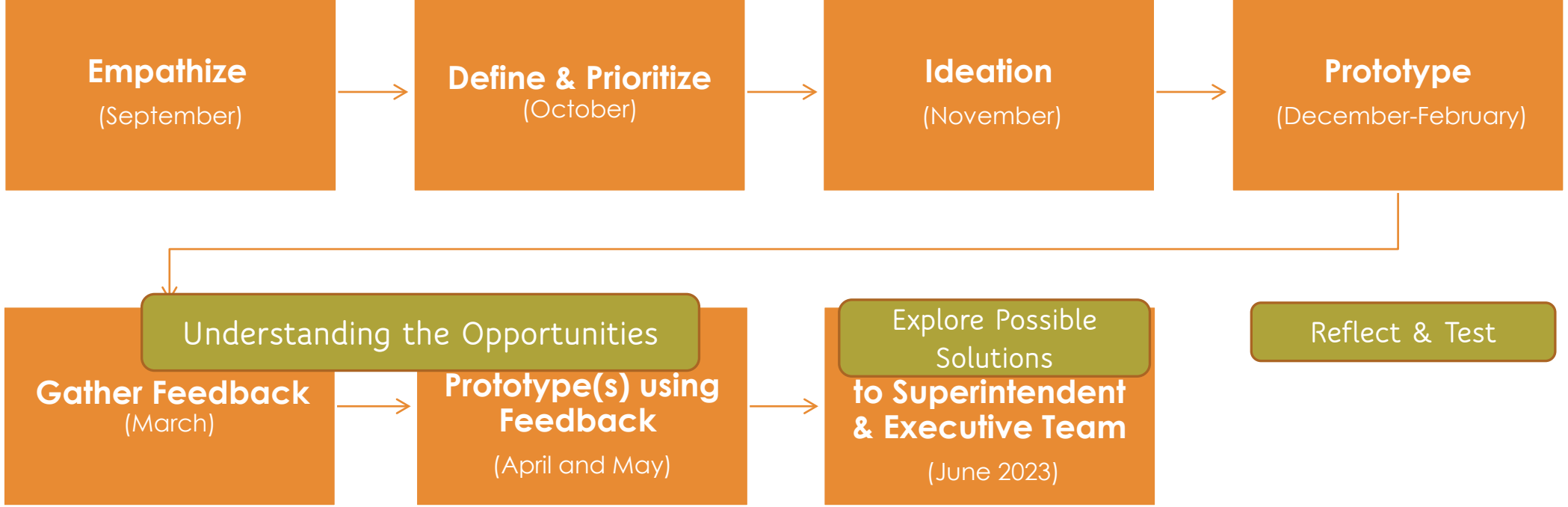
How will the RMS team develop its proposal?

- Using an Equity-Centered Design Thinking process which engages a variety of diverse stakeholders who collectively define the opportunity and collaboratively design solutions.



Key Points

- This is a **highly collaborative process**. We work for consensus at each step.
- Various, **diverse stakeholders of students, families, staff, and administrators** are co-designing together using multiple layers of input and feedback loops.
- We are reviewing and considering evidence-based research (*The Successful Middle School: This We Believe* - Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE), best practices, and other successful school models to inform our thinking.



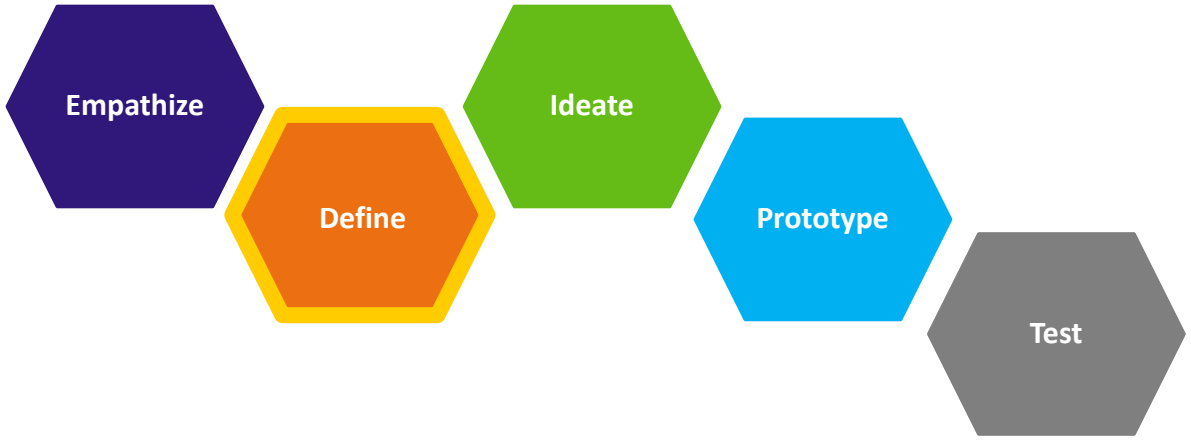
HIGH LEVEL TIMELINE

Implementation Planning (June-December 2023)

Implementation (September 2024)

Understanding the Opportunities

Stakeholder Engagement
↓
Identify Student Needs
↓
Define the Problem/Opportunity
↓
Craft the Vision



RMS Vision

Rooted in relationships

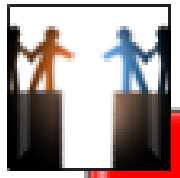
Meet students where they are

We will redesign the middle school experience to offer a **developmentally responsive, student-centered** education

Social interactions & social-emotional needs

Learning environment & academic interactions

Bridge between elementary and high school



Define

What are we trying to solve?

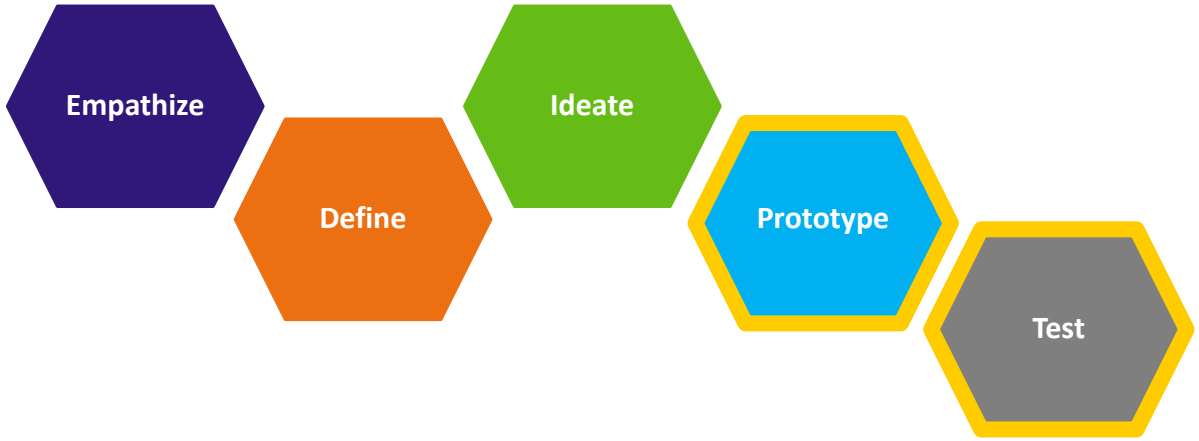
- What patterns did we see?
- What did they hear most often?
- What difficulties did the middle students have?

Identified Problems/Opportunities by the RMS Committee Members

1. **Not enough meaningful connection to/with peers and adults**
2. **Irrelevant instruction and use of time**
3. **The school day and classes not typically structured in a way that empower students and promotes their ownership of learning**
4. **There is no bridge to 5th grade students to transition to middle school.**
5. **There is a disconnect between the skills being taught and the skills needed to succeed in the future.**
6. **Every action, there a reaction. Every decision may affect many people; unintended consequences of decisions.**
7. **Sense of meaningful engagement and student voice**
8. **Students need break time! (Only lunch)**
9. **Student lack interactive learning environments**
10. **Sense of belonging**

Reflect & Test

Stakeholder Engagement
↓
Identify Student Needs
↓
Define the Problem/Opportunity
↓
Craft the Vision
↓
Develop Brainstorming Prompts
↓
Consider Constraints and AMLE Attributes
↓
Generate Ideas
↓
Solicit Input and Visit Schools



Listening Campaign #2

- We are currently in the **PROTOTYPING** phase of this process
  - Prototypes are **"scrappy"**, in-progress representations of our current thinking – not finalized
  - Goal is to get stakeholder feedback
- RMS Steering Committee will use your feedback to refine the prototypes

4 Big Ideas To Redesign the Middle School Experience:

Project / Problem Based Learning (PBL)

Teacher Teams with Student Cohorts

Scheduling

Homeroom / Advisory

Feedback Process

After this presentation, we invite you to share your feedback on the four prototypes in one of two ways:

- Physical posters with written feedback envelopes

OR

- Online survey

“I like…” “I wish…” “I wonder…”

- “**I Like…**” provides **positive feedback** about the prototype.
- “**I Wish…**” offers ideas on how the prototype can be **changed** or **improved**.
- **“I Wonder…**” invites you to share **your questions** and **new ideas** that could be explored as we revise the prototypes.

PROTOTYPE

GETTING FEEDBACK

Source: https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/test-your-prototypes-how-to-gather-feedback-and-maximise-learning

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 as active learners → stronger motivation, increased engagement and deeper understanding of content

Problem Based Learning

From Teacher Centered → To Student Centered

? — Inquiry Based

— Meaningful - Real World Problems (Local + Global)

— Individual + Grou Projects

First Year -

- Every class in PBL design phase pilots at least one unit of PBL
- Every teacher will be engaged in learning about PBL
- All Students will begin experiencing PBL

— Schools assess what worked - what didn't - what is needed to progress

— Year 2 Builds on these Learnings -

Student PBL

Active Learner → From multiple Sources/ Community Contributers

Leader/Self Directed Team Member

Benefits:
- Deeper Understanding -
- Greater Engagement
- Stronger Motivation

Skills: Inquiry, Presenting, Critical Thinking; Collaborating, Growth mindset, Multiple Perspectives

Teacher PBL

Learning Facilitator

Leads/Participates Extensive P.D.

Community Members Engaged in Classroom

Teacher Collaboration (Interdisciplinary)

Benefits:
- Better Student Behavior
- Teacher learning and growth
- Equity - Nc
- Differentiation
- Community of learning and growth

Prototype #2:

Teacher Teams with Student Cohorts

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

Currently…

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.

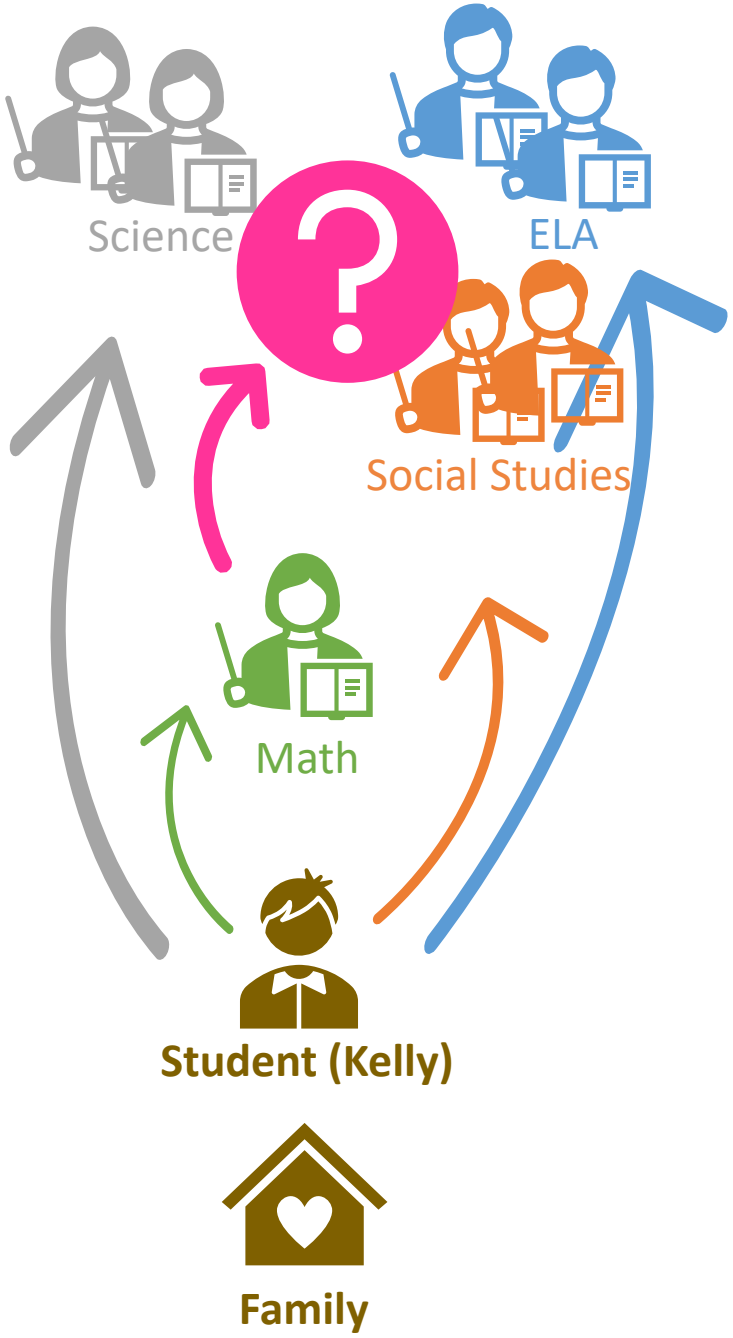
Wait…what does this mean?

Example:

Ms. Smith teaches math…she teaches a student named **Kelly**. Ms. Smith is concerned about Kelly's academic behavior.

In our current model, Ms. Smith has **no consistent connection** to Kelly's other teachers and doesn't know how Kelly is learning in other classes.

Students & Families have to connect with **multiple teachers**.

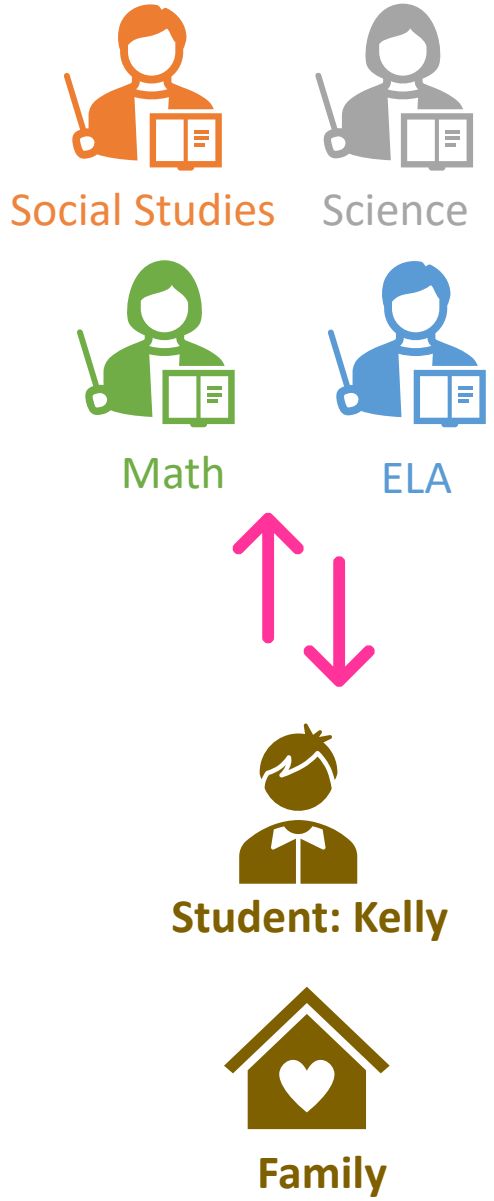


In a **COHORT** Model…

Ms. Smith collaborates consistently with Kelly's **3 core teachers** and has comprehensive understanding of what Kelly is experiencing.

In addition, Kelly's parents can communicate with **one** core teacher knowing that there is a **team** behind their child.

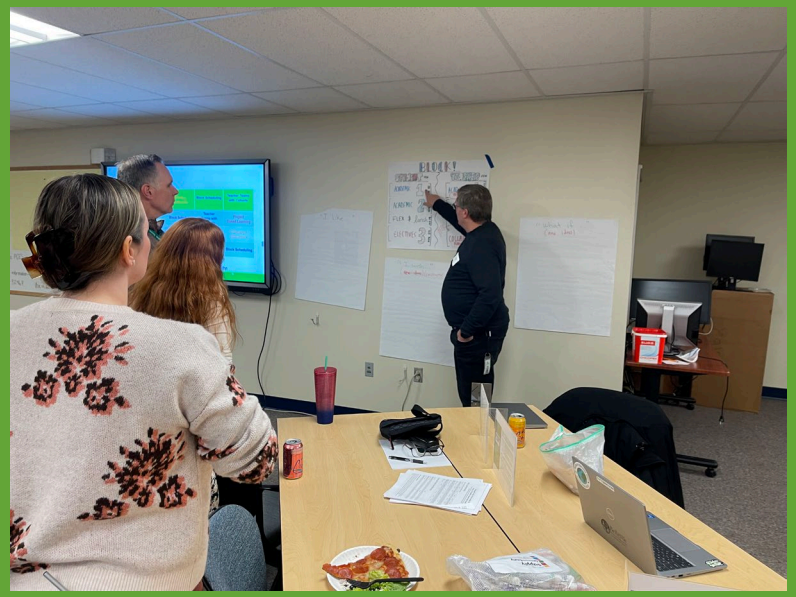
Kids will notice that their core class teachers will be **connecting** around curriculum, routines and structures and how to support each and every student.



Prototype #3:

Scheduling

Scheduling



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.

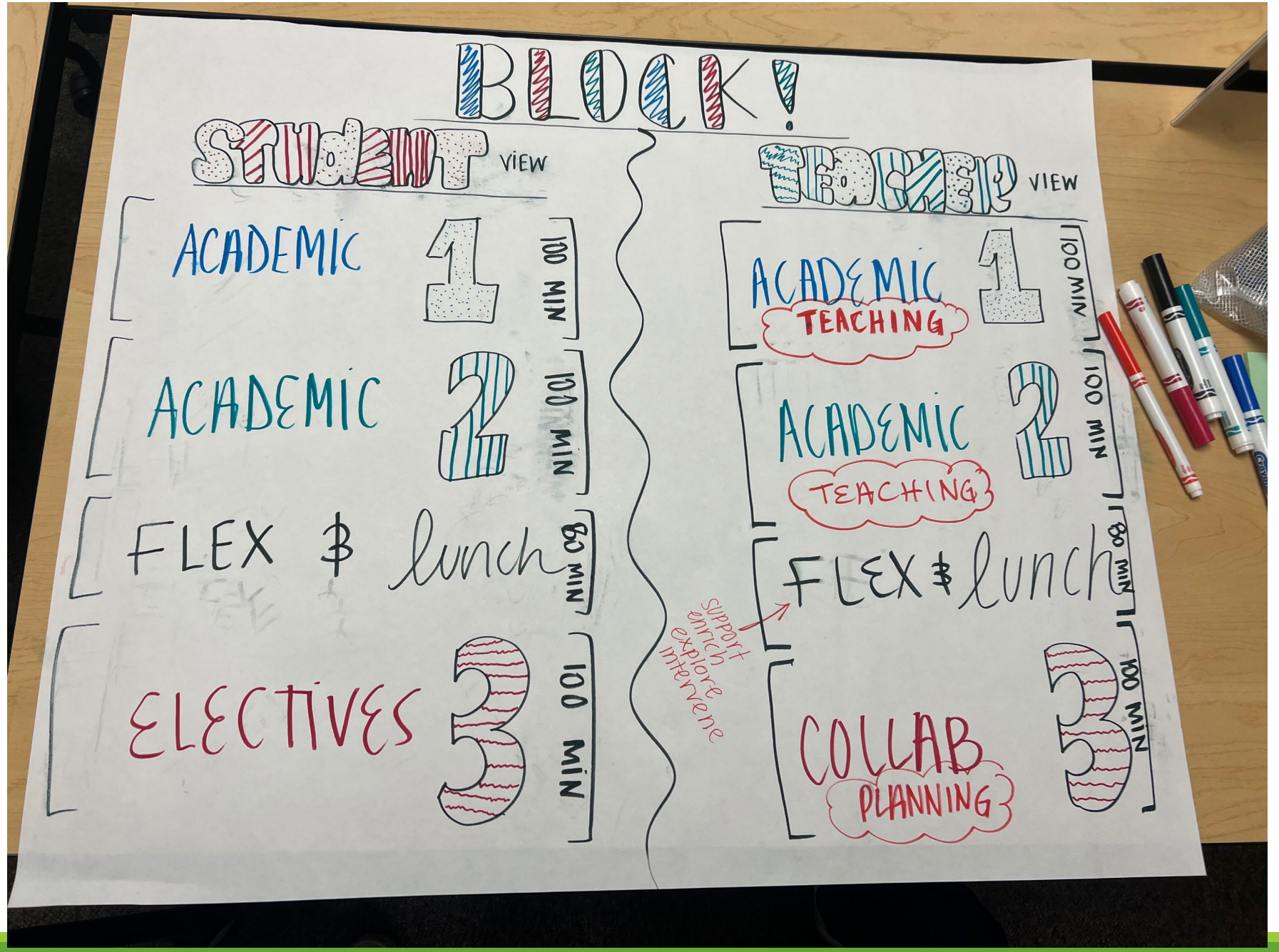
Why

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

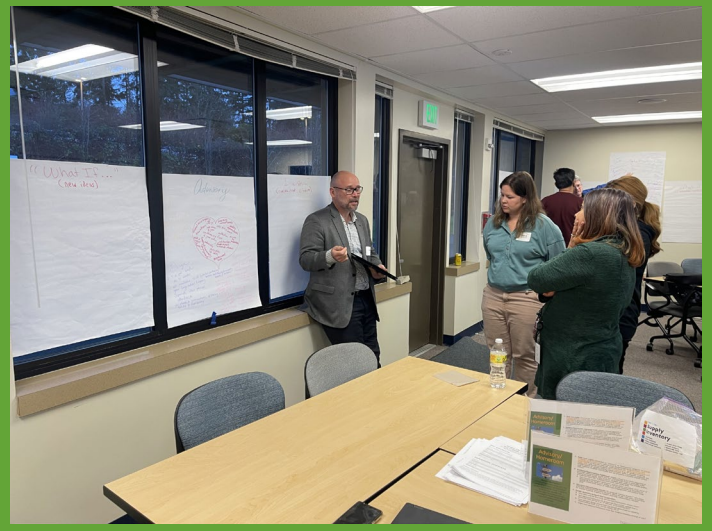
Monday/Tuesday		Wednesday BLOCK		Thursday BLOCK		Friday	
Period	**Time**	**Period**	**Time**	**Period**	**Time**	**Period**	**Time**
1	50 minutes	2	90 minutes	1	90 minutes	1	50 minutes
2	50 minutes	4	90 minutes	3	90 minutes	2	50 minutes
3	50 minutes	6	90 minutes	5a (Flex)	90 minutes 2nd Lunch – 30 minutes	3	50 minutes
4	50 minutes			5b (Flex)	90 minutes 1st Lunch – 30 minutes	4	50 minutes
5a (Flex)	50 minutes 2nd Lunch – 30 minutes			7	90 minutes	5a (Flex)	50 minutes 2nd Lunch –30 minutes
5b (Flex)	50 minutes 1st Lunch – 30 minutes					5b (Flex)	50 minutes 1st Lunch – 30 minutes
6	50 minutes					6	50 minutes
7	50 minutes					7	50 minutes


BLOCK!
STUDENT VIEW
ACADEMIC 1
100 MIN
ACADEMIC 2
100 MIN
FLEX $ lunch
80 MIN
ELECTIVES 3
100 MIN
TEACHER VIEW
ACADEMIC 1
TEACHING
100 MIN
ACADEMIC 2
TEACHING
100 MIN
FLEX $ lunch
80 MIN
support
enrich
explore
intervene
COLLAB 3
PLANNING
100 MIN

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 Feature

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

27 Advisory

What could we achieve if...

An adult advisor met regularly during the school day with a group of students to provide academic and social-emotional mentorship and support, to create personalization within the school, and to facilitate a small peer community of learners?

Responsive!
Challenging!
Empowering!
Equitable!
Engaging!

We could:

- **Provide dedicated time for Social Emotional Learning.**
- **Closely monitor students' academic progress.**
- **Have a point of contact for small groups of families.**
- **Teach study skills and provide executive functioning support.**
- **Help students strategize about classes and teachers, set academic goals, and belong to a group of peers striving for success.**
- **Support student led conferences**

28 Advisory Structure and Routine

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

Routines and Cadence:

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

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

29 Additional Opportunities

- Supports student led conferences
- Embed service projects
- Fits well with team-based schedules, block schedules, and project-based learning
- 6th grade advisory groups could be based upon WEB orientation groups

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Homeroom / Advisory

To Learn More About RMS…

Bellevue School District

About Schools Programs Services Departments Get Involved Help

Home → Departments → Teaching & Learning →

Reimagining Middle School Steering Committee

Purpose

The Reimagining Middle School (RMS) Committee was developed to make suggestions for a **new, "reimagined" middle school model** that is based on research, co-designed with stakeholders, and includes:

- A more engaging and relevant academic program
- The integration of SEL instruction and relationship-building into the school day
- MTSS tiers/system of supports
- Global competency principles
- Equitable grading practices
- Smoother school-level transitions for students and families

The RMS Committee's **implementation plan** will be based on research and stakeholder engagement and that phase in the changes over time and through a thoughtful, well-defined, realistic piloting and evaluation process.

Why is this important?

Students, in partnership with staff, families, and the larger Bellevue community, will imagine a new kind of middle school where young people engage in innovative, personalized learning experiences both in and out of school, in order to capitalize on and build their cognitive and social emotional capabilities.

- **Covid-19-** The Covid-19 pandemic has challenged almost every aspect of how we think about education and pushed us to think about how we can better serve our students, particularly those who have been traditionally marginalized.
- **Global Issues:** A time in history when our world is dealing with enormous challenges and at a time when the opportunities created by those challenges have never been greater. Our students are the ones who will bring solutions to environmental concerns, global warming, conservation of natural resources, racial and gender inequalities, role of technology and development of alternative energy sources, etc.
- **Child Development:** Early adolescence is defined generally as ages 11 to 15 and grades six to nine. These students experience significant biological, cognitive, and social-emotional changes during this period of their lives. Research on positive youth development outlines how middle schools can help young people navigate the changes of early adolescence and build on their innate strengths to become confident, purposeful, healthy, thriving adults and members of society.
- **Identity and Social:** During the middle school years, our students will be navigating these challenges of adolescence while also continuing to grow in to their identities. It is important that we support all of our students in feeling empowered in their identities, through experiencing sense of belonging in their school communities.

The middle school years represent an opportunity for young people to find their voice, discover and develop their interests, and develop longstanding relationships. This effort will imagine a new kind of middle school where young people engage in innovative, personalized learning experiences, both in and out of school, to capitalize on and build their cognitive and social emotional capabilities. We have an opportunity to improve the school culture, build more trusting relationships with students, and empower them to take greater ownership of their learning.

Together, we can create a dynamic and powerful force to advance new ways of thinking about how our BSD students will reimagine their middle school experience!

Reimagining Middle School – Frequently Asked Questions

Membership

Level 1: This team will be committed to the process of Reimagining Middle School

- Participating in the meetings
- Gathering other perspectives and reporting back to school
- Being the champion of the work
- Commitment to the whole process
- Being a team player

Level 2: This team will provide feedback as work progresses.

- Join some of the meetings
- Assist in gathering other perspectives and reporting back
- Provide feedback and new ideas
- Gathering data/information

Term

Members serve one-year terms from September 2022 to June 2023

One to two meetings per month on Thursdays.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Reimagining Middle School (RMS) Committee is:

- Charged with providing input and recommendations to the Superintendent.
- Encouraged to communicate and share their work and thinking with their own networks.
- Invited to identify members who can pro-actively liaise with other groups to foster communication and collaboration.
- Asked to commit time to reading and preparation in between meetings.

The Reimagining Middle School (RMS) Committee is not charged with implementing changes in the district, including determining or executing procedural or policy changes.

The chair or co-chairs will provide periodic updates to the Board of Directors as directed by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent will consider the Committee's input and recommendations.

2022-2023 Steering Committee Members

Parents/Guardians:

- Wen LaCasse, Tillicum Parent
- Courtney Baxtron, Odle Parent
- Valeri Makam, Tyee Parent
- Anissa Bashey, Highland Parent
- Gaurav Malhotr, Chinook Parent

Students:

- Sahaj, Odle Student
- Hasini, Odle Student
- Diego, Tillicum Student
- Noelle, Tillicum Student
- Mishra, High School Student

Teachers:

- Kim Hay, Tillicum Special Education Teacher
- Dan Sakaue, Advanced Learning Odle Teacher
- Gabe Adams, Tyee Teacher
- Mathew Wright, High School Teacher
- Tori Knight, Drama Highland Teacher
- Scott Gregorich, Science Chinook Teacher

Administrators:

- Devonia Bryant, Tillicum Principal
- Danielle S Virata, Odle Assistant Principal
- Susan Thomas, Principal
- James Peterson, Chinook Principal

Staff:

- Kalena Crafton, Odle Literacy Coach
- Jessi Cassidy, Tyee Paraeducator
- Mariela Stockdale, Highland Graduation Success Coach
- Susie Challancin, Chinook ITCL

Central Office:

- Melisa Macias, Teaching and Learning Director
- Wendy Powell, Social Emotional Curriculum Developer
- Anna Van Windekens, Research Scientist
- Nellie Pogosian, Dual and Multilanguage Curriculum Developer
- Tom Duenwald, Director of Educational Technology
- Regen Lorden, BEA Vice-president
- Gargi Trichel, Communication & Engagement Specialist

Meeting Schedule

All meetings will be scheduled 4:30-6:00 p.m.

- August 17, 2022 – BSD WISC
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- September 8, 2022 – Highland Middle School
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- September 20, 2022 – Chinook Middle School
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- October 3, 2022 – Tillicum Middle School
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- October 20, 2022 – Tyee Middle School
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- November 1, 2022 – Odle Middle School
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- November 17, 2022 – Big Picture School
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- December 12, 2022 – Chinook Middle School
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- January 12, 2023 – Tillicum Middle School
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- February 2, 2023 – BSD WISC
  - Meeting Summary (PDF)
  - Meeting Presentation (PDF)
  - Meeting Pictures (PDF)
- February 16, 2023 – Odle Middle School
- March 9, 2023 – Highland Middle School
- March 23, 2023 – Chinook Middle School
- April 6, 2023 – Tillicum Middle School
- May 4, 2023 – Tyee Middle School
- May 18, 2023 – Odle Middle School
- June 1, 2023 – Highland Middle School

Extensive Stakeholder Engagement

The work of the committee will be augmented by one-on-one interviews and focus groups with other stakeholders and constituents. Findings from these intake sessions will be shared with the committee during the course of their regularly scheduled meetings.

Stakeholder Updates

Reimagine Middle School Stakeholder Update November 2022 (PDF)

Reimagine Middle School Stakeholder Update January 2023 (PDF)

Contact Us

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns at RMS@bsd405.org

https://bsd405.org/departments/teaching-and-learning/reimagining-middle-school-steering-committee/

Another Opportunity for Others to Learn…

Date: March 20th

Time: 7:00 to 7:45 PM

Location: TEAMS

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

Click here to join the meeting

Meeting ID: 287 040 912 277

Passcode: 7w2pRE

Download Teams | Join on the web

Or call in (audio only)

+1 206-800-4133,,803758351# United States, Seattle

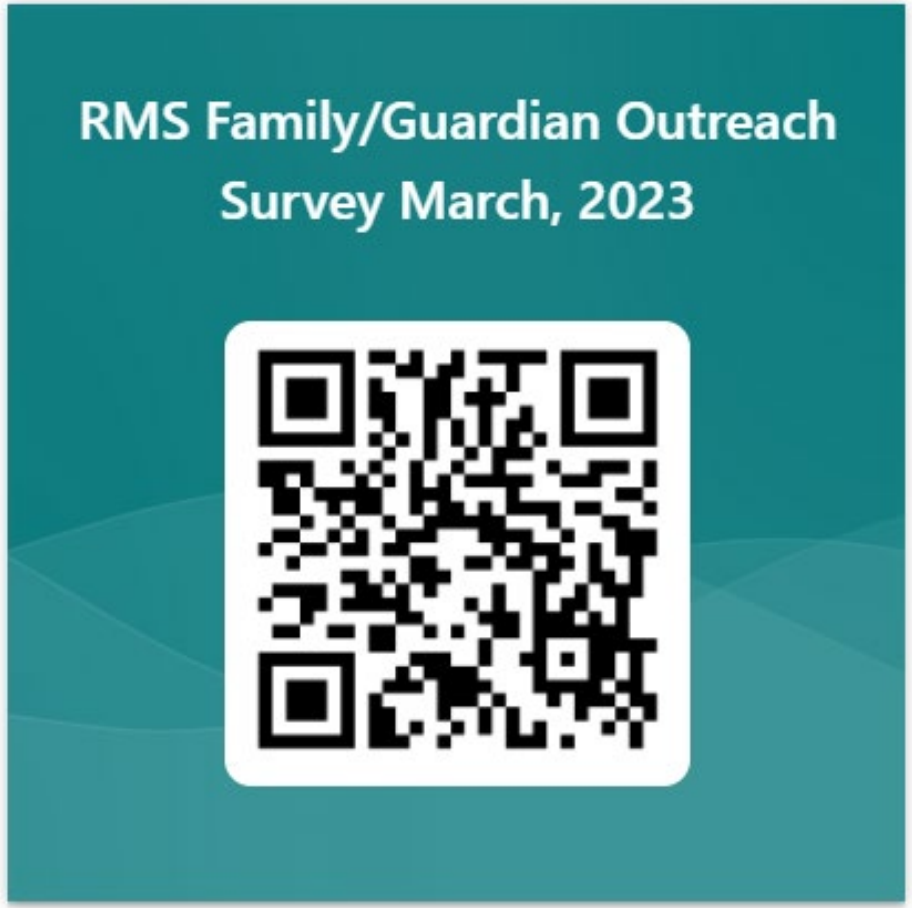
Phone Conference ID: 803 758 351#

Find a local number | Reset PIN

Learn More | Meeting options

Prototype Feedback

- “**I Like…**” provides **positive feedback** about the prototype.
- “**I Wish…**” offers ideas how the prototype can be **changed** or **improved**.
- **“I Wonder…**” invites **your questions** and **new ideas** that could be explored as we revise the prototypes.



https://forms.office.com/r/rDf7tEPRPr

Survey closes March 20 at 10:00 PM