

Middle School Update

A SOURCE OF NEWS AND ARTICLES ON MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION

NMSA (NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION)

You are invited to access this very informative website where you have access to resources, publications, links and articles.

The website address is:
www.nmsa.org



How are we doing? What are we doing?

**DON'T
FORGET!**



April 18 – HPSS
Middle School Q&A
SBO & MTU hosting
Staff Dining Room @ 3:30

**Middle School Resource
Library at ESR** – contact
Kristi Johnston

**Middle School
Resources** will be
available at each school

WHAT IS A POD?

A POD is a group of same grade students which will be together for their core subjects.

A teacher will be teaching material from either English & Socials or Science & Math and in a few cases possibly both, to their POD.

POD teachers will also be teaching Digital Literacy, Organizational Skills, Health & Career Education and possibly French and/or Physical Education, depending on their individual strengths and background. Daily physical activities will be embedded in the Core Programs.

REPORT CARDS HOW WILL WE BE REPORTING TO PARENTS?

We will be using the BCeSIS format for reporting. It will look similar to the ones currently being used in secondary schools. There will be four formal and one informal reporting periods.

Middle Schools will also use student-led conferencing as a way of sharing growth in core subject areas.

WHAT IS MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT DOING TO SUPPORT STAFF DEVELOPMENT?

The Coffee House Chats are held once a month in Heritage Park's Staff Dining Room with specialty coffees and teas served by the Thistle Stop Café's student baristas. These informal sharing sessions are facilitated by the teachers who attended the National Middle School Conference in November. These sessions have been a wonderful opportunity for teachers to get together share strategies and learn new ideas. Topics that have been discussed so far:

- Strategies for Engaging Middle School Students... Teach me when I seem not to care
- Integrating Technology to Engage and Create Digitally Responsible Adolescents
- Teacher Teaming + Collaboration = Student Success

Upcoming Chats...

Monday, April 11 Secrets of the Middle School Brain... Why do they act that way?

Monday, May 30 21st Century Competencies. Inspiring a New Generation of Young Adolescents.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The following professional development opportunities were made available to Middle School Teachers:

Faye Brownlie & Leyton Schnellert

- Topics Discussed: Differentiated Instruction, Student Engagement, Teacher Collaboration, Thoughtful Inquiry

Ruth Sutton

- Enhancing Learning and Progression in the Middle Years

Diana Cruchley

- BraveHeart Writing 10 Secrets to Quality Writing

Carole Fullerton - Math & Literature Demonstration Lesson Series

- Gr. 7 & 8 Math Teachers

Adrienne Gear - Non Fiction Reading Power Demonstration Lesson Series

- Gr. 7 & 8 Teachers

Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities for 2011-2012 so far.....

Leyton Schnellert - Demonstration Lesson Series for Humanities and Science Teachers

Leyton will come to the district on 3 separate occasions for full day sessions. Each session will incorporate a demonstration lesson, debrief session and collaborative planning. Leyton is a former high school teacher who now teaches at SFU and consults with teachers throughout the province. His demonstration lessons will focus on topics such as differentiated instruction and thoughtful inquiry.

Carole Fullerton - Demonstration Lesson Series for Middle School Math Teachers

Carole is returning to the district to continue her work with Middle School Math teachers. These half day sessions will include a demonstration lesson with a debrief session afterwards. Carole's innovative approach to teaching math with picture books is powerful and this year's participants came away with many new ideas to help develop enduring understandings about math concepts.

Digital Literacy

This new course will be included as part of the Explorations rotation for grade 7 & 8 students. As part of the course, students will examine their roles and responsibilities in a digital world. Students will be taught how to use technology responsibly while they are in school and at home. Some of the topics that will be included are: Digital Etiquette, Digital Communication, and Digital Security.

National Middle School Conference

Opportunities will be made available for a number of Middle School Staff to attend the National conference in Louisville, KY. The opportunity will extend and deepen staff's understanding of the unique needs of this age group and demonstrate a wide variety of strategies to ensure all students are successful.

WHAT WILL THE SUPPORT LOOK LIKE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS?

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH UNIQUE NEEDS

Case Manager for Grades 7-9 students with special needs – two Learning Support Teachers, Vice-Principal

- All students with a Ministry designation (except students with a behaviour designation)

Case Manager for Grades 7-9 students with behaviour challenges – Middle School Counsellor

- All students with a Ministry behaviour designation
- The case manager oversees the Individual Education Plan (IEP) of all students to facilitate consistency, quality and currency.
- The case manager ensures the goals and objectives reflect the student's Ministry category.
- The case manager ensures additional supports are delivered to meet the student's individual needs.
- The case manager completes an annual review for all students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

Aboriginal students in Middle School will continue to be supported by Aboriginal Liaison Workers at the three sites. There will be a team approach to provide academic and cultural support to Aboriginal students attending Middle School. Please contact the Liaison Worker at your school for more information.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES WILL THERE BE FOR ELEMENTARY STAFF, STUDENTS AND PARENTS TO TALK WITH AND/OR VISIT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL SITE?

TRANSITION DATES

HPSS

To visit feeder schools: ESR April 19 AM / Windebank April 20 AM / Hillside April 20 PM / ESR June 7 AM / Windebank June 8 AM / Hillside June 8 PM

Feeder Schools to visit HPSS: Windebank May 17 AM / Hillside May 18 AM / ESR May 19 AM

Parent Meetings for all HPSS feeder schools will be held May 31 7:00 - 8:00 PM in the HPSS Cafeteria

MSS

To visit feeder schools: M Central May 2 10:20 - 11:20 / C Morrison May 3 10:20 - 11:20 / 11:00 - 2:00 / Silverdale May 4 10:20 - 11:20 / W Heights May 9 10:20 - 11:20 / Cherry Hill May 9 1:00 - 2:00

Parent Meetings

May 18 (Gr. 8) 6:30 - 8:00 PM June 8 (Gr. 7) 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Other Events MSS Hosting: BBQ/Orientation/Wkshps for Gr 8: April 15 11:20 - 2:25 / BBQ/Orientation/Wkshps for Gr 7: April 29 11:20 - 2:25

HSS

Feeder Schools to visit HSS: May 3: A McMahon, Cherry Hill, Hatzic Elementary / May 4: C Morrison, Deroche, Dewdney, Durieu, ESR, Hillside, M Central, Silverdale, West Heights & Windebank.

Parent Meetings

May 18 @ 7:00 PM – HSS Cafeteria

Student Services staff will visit: Heritage Park, May 16 AM / Hatzic Secondary, May 17 AM / Mission Secondary, May 19 AM

Aboriginal staff will visit: HPSS, May 31 (D. Kelly) / HSS, June 10 (C. Gawthorne & T. Ramsay) / MSS, June (Elder Dinner) (F Croteau, E. Jurgens)

WHAT IS RESEARCH TEACHING US?



Relationships for Learning

- Teams
- Structured opportunities
- Safe, supportive environment
- Adult advocate

Effective schools for young adolescents organize relationships for learning. Teachers work in teams to design instructional activities and structure opportunities to develop positive, healthy relationships through advisory groups, lunch gatherings, or other formats. Everyone in the school participates in maintaining a safe, supportive environment, and every student has at least one adult who knows, supports, and advocates for that young person.

Research

- 3700 original studies
- 300 studies each year

Research informs good decisions about middle level practices. More than 3700 original studies specific to middle grades education were conducted between 1991 and 2002. Each study relied on systematic collection and analysis of empirical data. This body of research, an average of more than 300 studies each year, affirms that middle level education is a distinct level of schooling, and clarifies the need for specific middle level practices.

- **Major finding: Implementation affects achievement**
- **Student achievement improves when teachers**
 - Work in teams
 - Plan together
 - Have specific preparation

As an overview, CPRD found that the more completely the recommendations for middle grades school were implemented in a school, the stronger the positive impact on student learning and achievement.

They discovered, for example, that achievement scores are higher for students in school where teachers work as teams to develop integrated curriculum, plan for instruction, and make sure they know each of their students.

This achievement increases as teachers have dedicated, sustained and regular time to plan together.

And finally, teachers who have had preparation and training that specifically addresses how to teach young adolescents engage more frequently in best practices which, in turn, affect achievement.

NOTE: The above information has been taken from the NMSA website: - you are invited to view the entire presentation with audio narration (17 minutes)

Fundamentals for Student Success in the Middle Grades

This presentation tool is a free resource appropriate for advocacy work with school boards, parent/family groups, school staff, and community members. The presentation is a 17-minute overview of the characteristics of young adolescents, the national recommendations for their education, and current research on middle level education. *Fundamentals for Student Success in the Middle Grades* can be viewed in its entirety, or in segments.