

Middle School Schedule Update

June, 2019

Why look at the middle school schedule?

- Does the schedule support fulfillment of the FPS' Learning Principles and the expectations of recently adopted curriculum?
- Is our schedule properly preparing students for fulfillment of the Vision of the Graduate and current graduation requirements?
- How can our schedule increase opportunities for students to engage in additional curricular opportunities?
- How can we include a variety of intervention and acceleration programs into the school day?
- What length of instructional period will best meet the needs of current learning standards, activities and objectives?

FPS Learning Principles

The Students and Teachers of the Fairfield Public Schools believe that:

- Learning involves teachers and students who are passionate learners.
- Learning celebrates the belief that all learners are capable of success and growth.
- Learning explores the creation of meaning and the extension of knowledge through its application to relatable real world conditions.
- Learning encourages academic and social risk taking and open communication in a safe community.
- Learning inspires self-assessment, reflection, and continuous adjustment and adaptation.

When learners develop this mindset of belief in their own capacity and in the significance and value of their work, then they are more able to overcome challenges, solve problems, thrive and celebrate growth.

Curriculum Changes since 2009

Common Core ELA	2009
Common Core Mathematics	2009
College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Social Studies	2013
Next Generation Science Standards	2013
National Core Arts Standards	2014

FPS Identified Transfer Skills

Comprehend and engage with a diverse variety of texts in order to become independent, critical thinkers and informed practitioners.

Design and revise research questions and identify credible resources to expand knowledge and understanding of a topic of interest or issue using print and digital sources.

Synthesize information from a variety of primary and secondary sources to develop an understanding of multiple perspectives as they apply to issues.

Design a product to communicate to an intended audience with a purpose and deliberate message, using domain specific language, vocabulary, and processes with precision and clarity.

Engage in argument based on substantiated evidence that presents and responds to counterclaims in a way that considers and respects diverse perspectives.

Use strategies and appropriate tools to self-monitor and make sense of problems, persevere, reflect and refine to find solutions.

Collaborate with others to enhance collective ideas in a productive, respectful way in order to plan and complete an investigation, inquiry, process or product.

Schedule Review Process

- Gathered information from Team Liaisons, September, 2018
- Reviewed 12 middle school schedules and the FPS high school schedule
- Developed common questions for research
- Interviewed FPS high school students for feedback on their schedule
- Interviewed 6 sites by phone, visited two sites for more information (Shelton and North Branford)
- Site visits included 8 teachers and 2 administrators
- Held Community Conversation March, 2019
- Conducted parent survey May, 2019

Core Commitments (1)

- Maintain the team model
- Provide time for interventions and enrichment opportunities
- Provide professional development to support any change in the instructional block
- Improve the pace of the day, fewer transitions
- Longer instructional opportunities

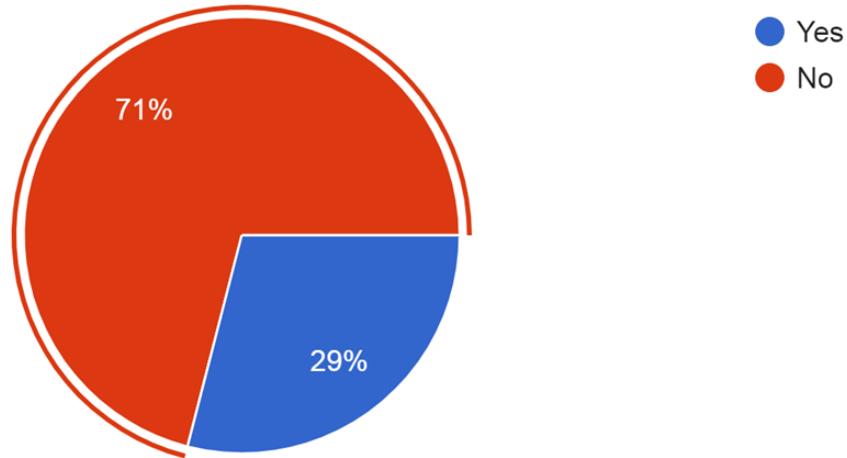
Core Commitments (2)

- Base decisions in neuroscience and educational research
- Equity to accessibility in all subjects
- Lunch by grade level
- Commit to existing contractual language
- Maintain opportunity for teachers to collaborate
- Commitment to a home base for all students

Parent Survey

Do you believe the middle school schedule should have longer learning periods than the current 45 minutes?

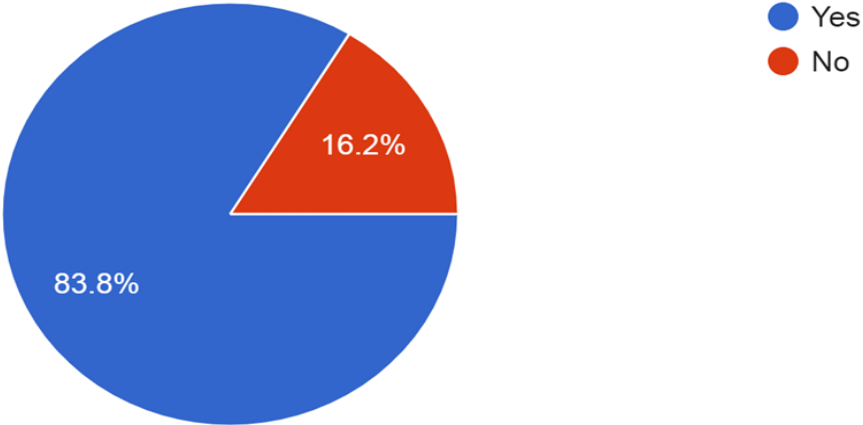
1,386 responses



Parent Survey

Should the middle school schedule include a dedicated time to support students' needs for intervention and/or enrichment?

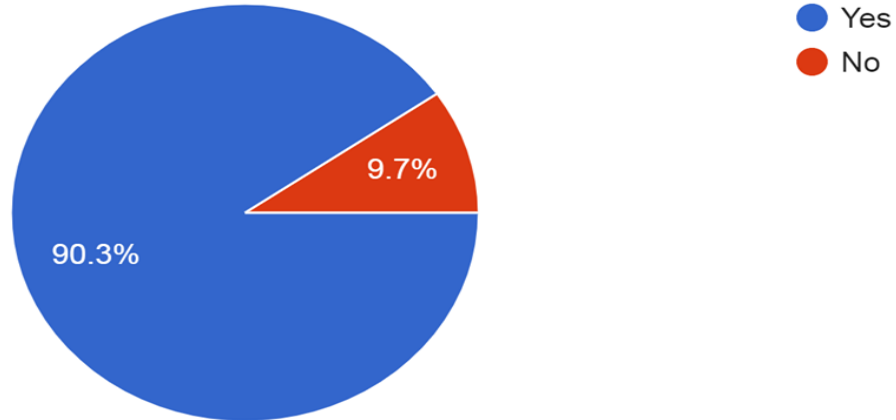
1,385 responses



Parent Survey

Should students have choice of their electives?

1,397 responses



Community Input - Benefits of the Current Schedule

- TEAM Grouping → Counselors, teachers moving up with kids
- Homeroom starts the time/flex period
- Consistency of schedule by week/5 days
- Lunch with peers
- Unified arts gives variety/exposure
- World Language

Community Input - Instructional Time

- Longer instructional periods
- Recess/Need for fresh air
- Reduce pace/decrease in anxiety by focusing on fewer subjects per day
- Remain mindful of what is appropriate for the age level

Community Input - Need for Interventions and Enrichment

- Provide intervention and enrichment where students aren't pulled out of classes
- Add study skills/organizational/executive function skills/life skills
- More built in opportunities to focus on social/emotional
- Open Choice block

Community Input - Program Offering Needs

- Science – ability to do labs
- Band lesson pullout
- UA – Add stem class for 6th grade
- STEAM
- More hands-on learning
- Art opportunities throughout the year

Challenges

- How do we make desired changes and what elements of the current schedule and program do we retain?
- What will be the required and the elective courses?
- How do we adapt the proposals to current contracts?
- What are the budgetary impacts of proposed changes?
- How can a schedule support intervention offerings and the SRBI process?
- How can a schedule support enrichment opportunities?
- How does our schedule best support the social and emotional health of students?

Next steps

- Address community concerns on period length
- Provide professional learning for staff on teaching in longer periods
- Review programmatic changes and impacts
- Finalize schedule drafts
- Determine FTE and budget impacts
- Update Board of Education (November, 2019)

Thank you

Questions