




Middle School

Reimagined:
A Three Year Plan



Middle School Philosophy

Mr. Greg Van Nest, Assistant Superintendent of Innovation & Operations



The Successful Middle School: This We Believe

Essential Attributes

AMLE affirms that an education for young adolescents must be:

Responsive

Using the distinctive nature and identities of young adolescents as the foundation upon which all decisions about school are made.

Challenging

Cultivating high expectations and advancing learning for every member of the school community.

Empowering

Facilitating environments in which students take responsibility for their own learning and contribute positively to the world around them.

Equitable

Providing socially just learning opportunities and environments for every student.

Engaging

Fostering a learning atmosphere that is relevant, participatory, and motivating for all learners.



From **The Successful Middle School: This We Believe**, published by the Association for Middle Level Education. Build your own professional development plan with the Successful Middle School program.

Visit amle.org/sms

Characteristics

Successful middle schools exhibit the following 18 characteristics:



Culture and Community

- Educators respect and value young adolescents.
- The school environment is welcoming, inclusive, and affirming for all.
- Every student's academic and personal development is guided by an adult advocate.
- School safety is addressed proactively, justly, and thoughtfully.
- Comprehensive counseling and support services meet the needs of young adolescents.
- The school engages families as valued partners.
- The school collaborates with community and business partners.



Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Educators are specifically prepared to teach young adolescents and possess a depth of understanding in the content areas they teach.
- Curriculum is challenging, exploratory, integrative, and diverse.
- Health, wellness, and social-emotional competence are supported in curricula, school-wide programs, and related policies.
- Instruction fosters learning that is active, purposeful, and democratic.
- Varied and ongoing assessments advance learning as well as measure it.



Leadership and Organization

- A shared vision developed by all stakeholders guides every decision.
- Policies and practices are student-centered, unbiased, and fairly implemented.
- Leaders are committed to and knowledgeable about young adolescents, equitable practices, and educational research.
- Leaders demonstrate courage and collaboration.
- Professional learning for all staff is relevant, long term, and job embedded.
- Organizational structures foster purposeful learning and meaningful relationships.



Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Curriculum
 - A **relevant** curriculum enables "students to pursue answers to questions they have about themselves, content, and the world"
 - A **challenging** curriculum targets state and national standards, actively engages young adolescents in substantive issues, and provides them "with opportunities to contribute and take ownership of their own education"
 - An **integrative** curriculum focuses on coherent ideas and concepts irrespective of arbitrary subject boundaries and enables students to see connections and real-world applications. Integrative learning opportunities
 - An **exploratory** curriculum directly reflects the curious, adventuresome nature of young adolescents.
- Instruction
- Assessment



Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Curriculum
- Instruction
 - **Learning approaches** meet the needs and characteristics of young adolescents and provide the foundation for selecting learning and teaching strategies, just as they do for designing curriculum.
 - **Learning experiences** bring curriculum to life.
 - **Learning environments** create a safe and engaging space for all students.
- Assessment
 - A continuous, authentic, and appropriate assessment program provides many evidences of students' progress in meeting their **curricular goals** or objectives. Assessment strategies should **honor the learning characteristics of young adolescents** and increasingly de-emphasize competitive comparisons with other students.



Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Classroom teachers should

1. Establish **learner-centered classrooms** that encourage and honor student voice.
2. **Develop standards-based curricula** that integrate subject area disciplines along with students' concerns and questions.
3. Design instruction to meet the **diverse needs of every student**.
4. Measure student progress and development with a variety of **authentic assessments**.
5. Guide students in **discovering their aptitudes** and interests.
6. Participate in professional learning that promotes and supports developmentally responsive practices.

School leaders should

1. Lead in creating a **shared vision focused on the needs of young adolescent students**.
2. Establish ongoing, **school-based professional development** that deals with teachers' identified needs.
3. Provide **organizational structures** that enable teachers and students to develop collaboratively relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory curricula.
4. Expect teachers to use a variety of **student-centered instructional approaches** that meet the individual needs of students.
5. Hold teachers accountable for using multiple and varied assessments that measure continuous student progress.



Proposed Modifications to GRMS

Dr. Michael Parent, Glen Rock Middle/High School Principal

What are We Reimagining at Glen Rock Middle School?

- **Bell Schedule**
 - Classroom Use and Staffing
 - Benefits of Rotating Drop for students
- **Course Scope & Sequence**
 - Language Arts
 - Math
 - World Language (model program)
- **Electives**
 - Current, Relevant and Engaging
 - Exploratory but also progression to high school
 - Provide Students Choice
- **Meeting the needs of our students**
 - Teams
 - Multi-Tiered Support Systems



Three Year Implementation

YEAR 1 ('21- '22)

- **Rotating Drop Bell Schedule**
- **Writers' Workshop (gr 7)**
 - Provide ICS and Adapted sections
- **Exploratory World Language** for all grade 6 students
- **Teams**
 - Develop a shared and understood philosophy
 - Identify Team Leaders
 - Professional Development through AMLE
- **Electives Design** of Phase 1 MS electives

YEAR 2 ('22- '23)

- Implement New Teams
- Implementation of Phase 1 middle school electives
- Implement additional 6-8 math pathway as an option
- **Electives Design** of Phase 2
- Evaluate and design high school electives

YEAR 3 ('23- '24)

- Implement new High School electives
- Implementation of Phase 2 middle school electives



Reimagined Schedule

Dr. Michael Parent, Glen Rock Middle/High School Principal

Schedule Research



- **Brown (2001)** – Teachers report longer class periods allowed for a wider variety of instructional strategies that were more consistent with students needs.
- **George and Alexander (1993)** – Noted that interdisciplinary teams in a flexible schedule is the basic organizational framework of the exemplary middle level school.
- **Arhar & Irvin (1985)** – concluded that longer class periods can permit greater personalization of instruction and thereby permit greater depth of understanding of students and their needs.
- **Canady & Rettig (1995)** – In a longer class period, teachers have the opportunity to use more effective teaching strategies (cooperative learning, exploration, inquiry, case-study, simulations)
- **Williamson (1998)** – teachers and students report that the schedule changes their perception of one another and the content area,



A Common Middle School Schedule

Watchung Middle School

Mt. Pleasant Middle School

The Hun School of Princeton

Chatham Middle School

Madison Junior High

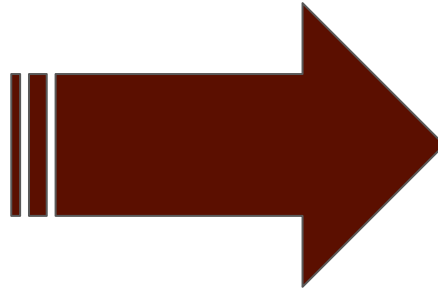
Scotch Plains

West Essex

The Schedule

Current: 2020-2021

- 9 period day
- 45 minute classes
- A 22 minute lunch
- A 22 minute study lunch/recess
- Required “electives” rotation - limited flexibility
- A grade 8 study hall (SIT)



Proposed: 2021-2022

- 8 instructional periods
 - 6 period day
 - 2 “dropped” periods daily
- 58 minute classes
- Middle School Lunch period

Sample Rotating Drop Schedule

Glen Rock Middle School

| Time | Day 4 | Day 3 | Day 2 | Day 1 |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 7:50-8:48 | Period 4 | Period 3 | Period 2 | Period 1 |
| 8:52-9:50 | Period 1 | Period 4 | Period 3 | Period 2 |
| 9:54-10:52 | Period 2 | Period 1 | Period 4 | Period 3 |
| 10:56-11:54 | Period 8 | Period 7 | Period 6 | Period 5 |
| 11:54-12:50 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 12:54-1:52 | Period 5 | Period 8 | Period 7 | Period 6 |
| 1:56-2:54 | Period 6 | Period 5 | Period 8 | Period 7 |

- Portion of Lunch period can be used for Teams, Clubs, Class Meetings, Groups, Class Activities
- Same start and end time for the middle school and high school
- School day is shortened by 13 minutes

Sample Rotating Drop Schedule

Glen Rock Middle School Math Teacher

Schedule:

Period 1: Math 6
 Period 2: Math 6
 Period 3: Prep
 Period 4: Math 6
 Period 5: Prep
 Period 6: Math 6
 Period 7: Math 6
 Period 8: Prep

| Day | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 7:50 - 8:48 | Period 4: Math 6 | Period 3: Prep | Period 2: Math 6 | Period 1: Math 6 |
| 8:52 - 9:50 | Period 1: Math 6 | Period 4: Math 6 | Period 3: Prep | Period 2: Math 6 |
| 9:54 - 10:52 | Period 2: Math 6 | Period 1: Math 6 | Period 4: Math 6 | Period 3: Prep |
| 10:56-11:54 | Period 8: Prep | Period 7: Math 6 | Period 6: Math 6 | Period 5: Prep |
| 11:54-12:50 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 12:54 -1:52 | Period 5: Prep | Period 8: Prep | Period 7: Math 6 | Period 6: Math 6 |
| 1:56 -2:54 | Period 6: Math 6 | Period 5: Prep | Period 8: Prep | Period 7: Math 6 |

Instructional Time

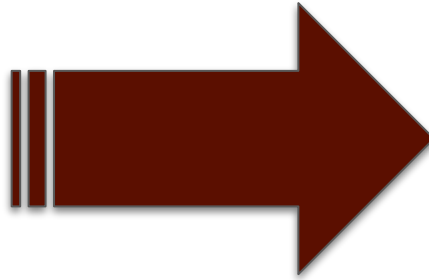
| | Minutes per class | Days per week | Minutes per week | Instructional Days | Hours per year |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Traditional (Current) | 45 | 5 | 225 | 180 | 135 |
| Rotating Drop (Proposed) | 58 | 3 or 4 | 203 (average) | 135 | 130.5 |
| Change | +13 | -1 or -2 | -22 (average) | -45 | -4.5 |

- Longer class periods allow for deeper dive into curriculum and sessions.
- There is an insignificant difference in number of hours that a student will be engaged in the curriculum

6th Grade Courses

Current: 2020-2021

1. Block
2. Block
3. Block
4. Math 6
5. Integrated Science 6
6. Electives Cycle
7. PE, Computers, Health
(Quarterly Rotation)
8. World
Language/Learning
Strategies



Proposed: 2021-2022

1. Reader's Workshop 6
2. Writer's Workshop 6
3. Social Studies 6
4. Math 6
5. Integrated Science 6
6. Electives or Learning
Strategies
7. PE
8. World Language
Exploratory (4 quarterly)

Sample Rotating Drop Schedule

Glen Rock Middle School : Grade 6

Classes

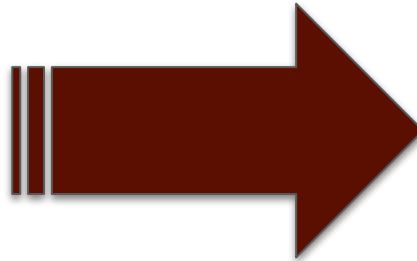
1. Reader's Workshop
2. Social Studies
3. Phys. Ed / Health
4. Science
5. Language
6. Math
7. Writer's Workshop
8. Electives or Learning Strategies

| Day | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 7:50 - 8:48 | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health | Period 2 Social Studies | Period 1 Reader's Workshop |
| 8:52 - 9:50 | Period 1 Reader's Workshop | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health | Period 2 Social Studies |
| 9:54 - 10:52 | Period 2 Social Studies | Period 1 Reader's Workshop | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health |
| 10:56-11:54 | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Writer's Workshop | Period 6 Math | Period 5 Languages |
| 11:54-12:50 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 12:54 -1:52 | Period 5 Languages | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Writer's Workshop | Period 6 Math |
| 1:56 -2:54 | Period 6 Math | Period 5 Languages | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Writer's Workshop |

7th Grade Courses

Current: 2020-2021

1. English Fundamentals 7
2. Writer's Workshop 7
3. Social Studies 7
4. Pre-Algebra 7
5. Integrated Science 7
6. PE, Computers, Health
(Quarterly Rotation)
7. Electives Cycle
8. World Language or
Learning Strategies



Proposed: 2021-2022

1. Reader's Workshop 7
2. Writer's Workshop 7*
3. Social Studies 7
4. Pre-Algebra 7
5. Integrated Science 7
6. PE/Health
7. Electives/Learning
Strategies
8. World Language

*Adding ICS and Adapted options

Sample Rotating Drop Schedule

Glen Rock Middle School : Grade 7

Classes

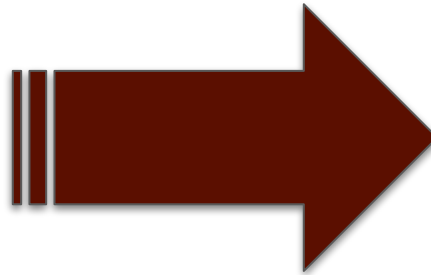
1. Reader's Workshop
2. Social Studies
3. Phys. Ed / Health
4. Science
5. Language
6. Math
7. Writer's Workshop
8. Electives or Learning Strategies

| Day | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 7:50 - 8:48 | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health | Period 2 Social Studies | Period 1 Reader's Workshop |
| 8:52 - 9:50 | Period 1 Reader's Workshop | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health | Period 2 Social Studies |
| 9:54 - 10:52 | Period 2 Social Studies | Period 1 Reader's Workshop | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health |
| 10:56-11:54 | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Writer's Workshop | Period 6 Math | Period 5 Languages |
| 11:54-12:50 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 12:54 -1:52 | Period 5 Languages | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Writer's Workshop | Period 6 Math |
| 1:56 -2:54 | Period 6 Math | Period 5 Languages | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Writer's Workshop |

8th Grade Courses

Current: 2020-2021

1. English Fundamentals 8
2. Social Studies 8
3. Algebra 8
4. Integrated Science 8
5. PE, SIT, Health (Quarterly Rotation)
6. Electives (Semester)
7. Pre-Engineering 8 and Elective (Semester)
8. World Language or Learning Strategies



Proposed: 2021-2022

1. English Fundamentals 8
2. Social Studies 8
3. Algebra 8
4. Integrated Science 8
5. PE/Health
6. Electives
7. Electives/Learning Strategies
8. World Language

Sample Rotating Drop Schedule

Glen Rock Middle School : Grade 8

Classes

1. English Language Arts
2. Social Studies
3. Phys. Ed / Health
4. Science
5. Language
6. Math
7. Electives
8. Electives or Learning Strategies

| Day | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7:50 - 8:48 | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health | Period 2 Social Studies | Period 1 English Language Arts |
| 8:52 - 9:50 | Period 1 English Language Arts | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health | Period 2 Social Studies |
| 9:54 - 10:52 | Period 2 Social Studies | Period 1 English Language Arts | Period 4 Science | Period 3 PE/Health |
| 10:56-11:54 | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Electives | Period 6 Math | Period 5 Languages |
| 11:54-12:50 | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch | Lunch |
| 12:54 -1:52 | Period 5 Languages | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Electives | Period 6 Math |
| 1:56 -2:54 | Period 6 Math | Period 5 Languages | Period 8 Electives | Period 7 Electives |



Scope & Sequence

Mrs. Shari Krapels, *Supervisor of Language Arts*

Ms. Michelle Della Fortuna, *Supervisor of Mathematics*

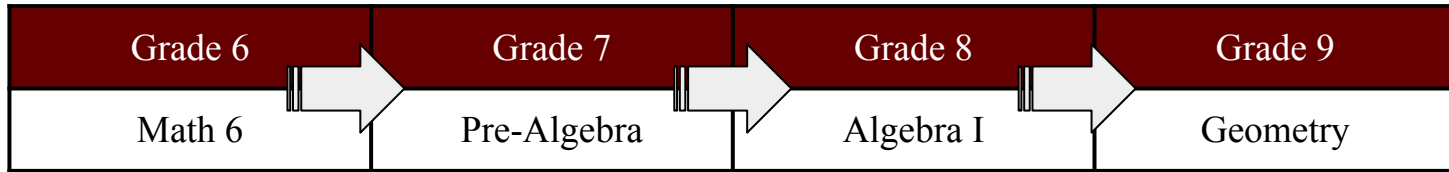


Modification to The 6th Grade Block

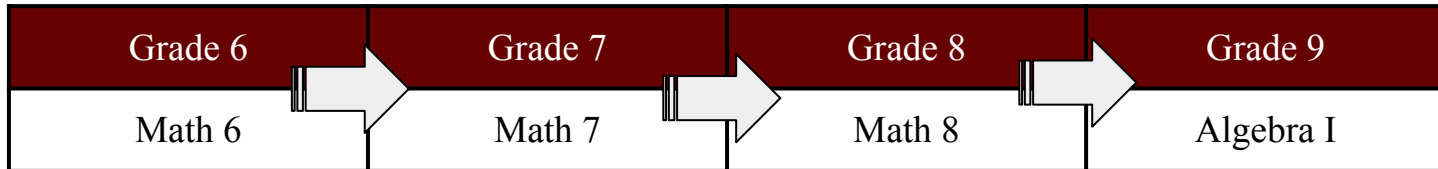
- Rarticulate the “Block” with three, independent courses
 - Reader’s Workshop
 - Writer’s Workshop
 - Social Studies (articulate with 7th and 8th)
- 6th grade team will continue to have common planning time, to allow continued collaboration between “block” teachers
- Teachers will now have the opportunity to specialize in their content and maintain our commitment to literacy
- All supports (ICS, Adapted) will remain in place
- To support the shift, reading and writing teachers will receive additional PD on the Reader’s/Writer’s Workshop model, as well as paid time to work on developing the curriculum
- Social Studies PD

Middle School Mathematics Pathways

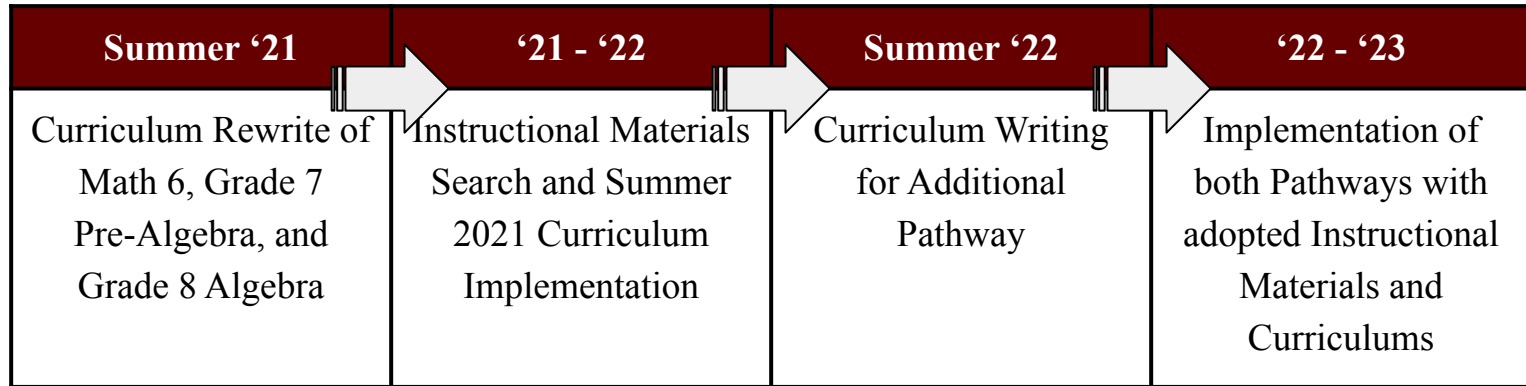
Current



Additional (Implemented in '22 - '23)



Mathematics Curriculum Timeline





Reimagined Teams

*Dr. Michael Parent, Glen Rock Middle/High
School Principal*



What Are Teams Intended To Do?

- A collective approach to oversight of curriculum, student achievement, and cohort performance
- A collective and collaborative effort to provide programs for student growth and health
- Data for administrators and other teams to consider when developing policy or programs



Our Current Teams

We have not continued to invest in training for Teams.

- Team meetings are not universally normed
- There is currently no mechanism for teams to have influence on school decisions, curriculum, or programs.
- Teams do not have access to real student data

Teams Moving Forward

1

Adopt methods and protocols from the **Association for Middle Level Education**

2

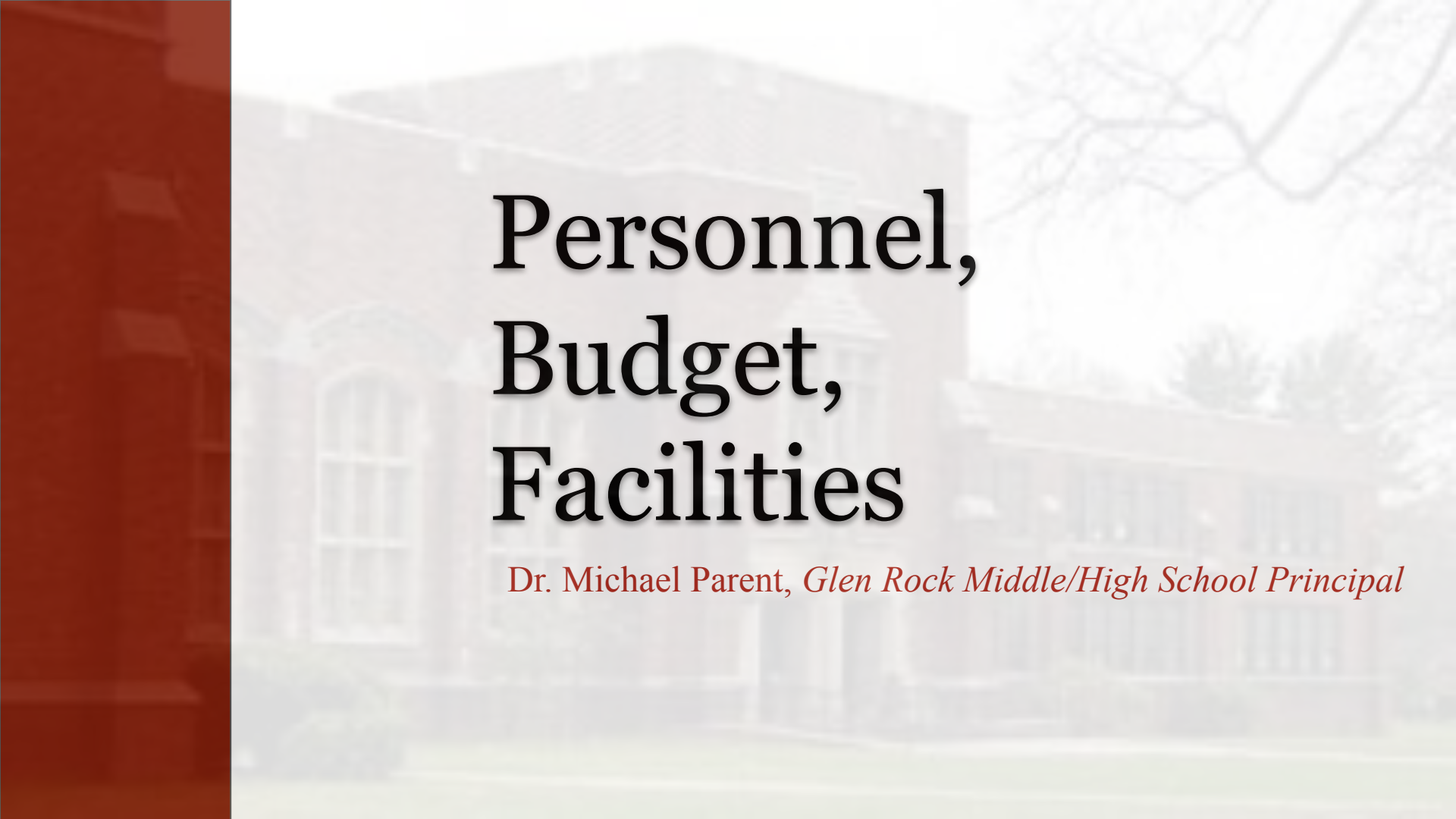
Create and cultivate **cross-curricular teams** that have focus and provide real feedback. We will also include CST and School Counselors on each team.

3

Appoint **Team Leaders** that will collaborate and work with the district administration.

4

Assistant Principal helps to lead teams.



Personnel, Budget, Facilities

Dr. Michael Parent, Glen Rock Middle/High School Principal



Personnel Implications

- One additional Language Arts Teacher
- Balancing elective enrollment
- Adding a music teacher

Budgetary Implications

- Investment in professional learning for Teams and Teaching in the extended block

Facilities Implications

- There is a net gain of classrooms that will allow us to more strategically place classes which will maximize enrollment and the ability to fulfill student requests.
- Aligning the MS and HS schedules would allow for much greater flexibility in course section placement.



Reimagined Electives

Mr. Paul Cusack, *Supervisor of Instructional and Educational Technology*



Middle School Electives

- Stir student curiosity
- Align to high school programs
- Allow for student choices
- Provide diverse offerings from a variety of different areas of study
- Not be required classes

Current “Electives” Model

6th and 7th Grade

- Quarterly Courses
- Required Exploratory Program
- 1 Elective Slot per year
- Assigned electives:
 - Drama
 - Visual Arts
 - Music
 - Family & Consumer Science
- Computer Fundamentals
 - Quarterly for 2020-21
 - Rotates with PE/Health

8th Grade

- Semester Courses
- Rank Top 3 Choices
- 4 Semester Elective Slots
 - Pre-Engineering (required)
 - 3 choice electives
- Offerings:
 - Drama
 - Desktop Publishing
 - Vocal Music
 - General Music
 - Visual Arts
 - Home Economics
 - SIT (Structured Individual Time)

Potential Middle School Electives

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------|--|
| STEM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronics Engineering • Robotics Engineering • Engineering and Innovation • Digital Design • Introduction to Web Design • Explorations in Computer Programming | Language Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic Novel • Mythology • Shakespeare • Mystery and Suspense • Journalism • Cartoons, Comics, Graphic Novels • Movies & Books • Stories Through Music |
| Performing Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Choir • Music Theory • World Music • Dance • Vocal Music ** • General Music ** • Drama ** | Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Astronomy • Forensics • Science & Technology • Anatomy |
| Visual Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art 6 ** • Art 7 ** • Visual Arts - 2D • Visual Arts - 3D • Multimedia Production | Social Studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Government • Historical Fiction • American History in the Media (Hamilton, historical dramas, etc.) • Contemporary Issues |
| Humanities and Career | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baking • World Cuisines • Culinary Arts • Basic Economics and Investing | | |

** Existing Middle School Elective

Reimagined Middle School Electives Timeline

Summer '21

- Evaluate existing electives
- Evaluate elective selection process for each grade level
- Revise existing 8th grade Pre-Engineering curriculum

'21 - '22

Select and Design Phase 1 electives and instructional material search

Summer '22

- Curriculum Writing for Phase 1 electives
- Professional Development

'22 - '23

- Implementation of Phase 1 electives with adopted Instructional Materials and Curriculums
- Select and Design Phase 2 electives and instructional material search

Summer '23

- Curriculum Writing for Phase 2 electives
- Professional Development

'23 - '24

Implementation of Phase 2 electives with adopted Instructional Materials and Curriculums



Next Steps

Mr. Greg Van Nest, *Assistant Superintendent of Innovation & Operations*

Next Steps

