



# Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

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**Meeting Date:** September 24, 2015  
**Meeting Location:** RMAE Administration School Building - Spanish Classroom  
**Document Revision:** Final  
**Document Approval:** November 12, 2015

### **BOD Members in Attendance:**

Alan Scheik, President, Parent Representative  
Brad Giles, Vice President, Parent Representative  
Jeff Courtney, Treasurer, Parent Representative  
Ned Parker, Secretary, Parent Representative  
Kim Egan, Parent Representative  
Dan Hock, Parent Representative  
Tim Lane, Parent Representative  
David Graham, Community Representative  
Cherie Mazurek, Teacher Representative  
Roberta Harrell, Director (non-voting)

### **BOD Members on Conference Call:**

### **BOD Members Absent:**

### **Others in Attendance:**

Russ Arnold, S Harrell, Kerry Briddle, Jen Richards, Catherine Ross, Robert Ross, Rosanne Jalbert, Rachel Saylor, Elizabeth Reimers, Sylvia Geiger, Amy Law, Kathleen Simpson, Patricia Foley, Yesim Peddy, Brad Lippert, Amber Lippert, Jeff Emery, Liesl Parker, John Morrill, Laurie Morrill, Mitch Goldenberg, Alison Goldenberg, Jennifer Crosbie, Dwight Koch, Owen Ellis, Laurie Scheik, Stephanie Seybold, Tom Seybold, Jamie Price, Mary Beth Price, Jessica Lessig, Laurie Shields, Weston Genender, Jeff Genender, Nachi Genender, Maddie Genender, Ben Gonzales, Laurel Hyslop, Julie Ann Courim

Meeting called to order at 6:34 p.m. by President Alan Scheik

- A Quorum was reached with those present and on the phone
- Meeting notification requirements were met
- The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance
- The RMAE Vision and Mission Statements were read aloud

### **Public Comment:**

- John Morrill – Has spoken with teachers, letters last year asking for Board members to talk to them, almost no Board interaction in follow-up. One teacher left for pay cut, one left with no job, wanted out that badly. Teachers pressured by the Director that speaking out is bad. Some parents referred to as “the usual suspects.” Coffee with Alan, conveyed history of middle school, lessons learned. Focus on retaining students, working together.
  - Dr. Harrell stated that she has never told teachers to not respond.
- Alison Goldenberg – Thanked SAC and Board for serious investigation of scheduling issue. October 1 could be “school pride day.” Student count becomes money, benefit to students. Complaints and disagreements are being addressed by the Board and administration. Holding kids out of October count hurts the education without solving problems.
- Jamie Price – Board interaction is the heart of information exchange and process change. Perspective on school direction – two years ago: crisis, declining enrollment, bad financials. Board set strategic plan and 5 year budget to be “best in class.” Moved back and then, after arrival of Dr. Harrell, moved significantly forward. Trust and faith in Dr. Harrell.

- Maddie Genender – (K-8 alumni, Jr at EHS) Comment on STEM, current focus on technology is good for some, diversity of curriculum is still very important for the variety of enrolled students. Advanced middle school math electives fast-track students in high school and may force them to take online or community college courses to fulfill their high school graduation minimum credits.

Board responses:

- Delayed until after SAC presentation

### Committee Reports

SAC – Laurel Hyslop reported

- Laurel stepped through the MS Schedule Review presentation, attached.
- Overview
  - SAC team investigated through interviews and surveys the changes to the Middle School schedule. We spoke with:
    - Administrative and SPED staff
    - Middle School (MS) and Elementary School (ES) core teachers
    - MS and ES specials teachers (except PE and Tech teacher)
    - MS parents (6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade)
    - Local neighborhood schools
  - Investigation discovered that MS scheduling changes impact all areas of the school.
- UIP MS Goals Review
  - PR & Marketing of RMAE MS
  - MS Math Performance
  - Increase STEM at RMAE
- UIP ES Goals Review
  - Increase STEM at RMAE
  - Systemic Writing Program
  - ES Math Performance
- Current vs. Past
  - Why the changes?
  - More parents dissatisfied with current schedule than past
- MS Scheduling Comparisons
  - RMAE has lost core instructional time, now between EMS and D'Evelyn
  - RMAE has lost significant Spanish instructional time, lost or adjusted art and music
  - Elective + Study Hall should be compared as a combined category
- Core MS Scheduling Differences
  - RMAE has increased passing periods, lunch (accommodates clubs), and electives
  - Electives formalized and focused
- Schedule Impact on MS
  - Spanish
    - Most parents dissatisfied with amount of Spanish instruction
    - May add additional class period for 8<sup>th</sup> grade catch-up
  - Study Hall Issues
    - Initially, students may have been placed in more than one study hall per day. Some students selected study hall as first choice. This is being resolved.
    - Core and Specials teachers supervise; local schools use aids.
  - Electives at Different Times of the Day
    - Splits SPED services across two periods
  - Core Subjects Taught at Different Times for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade
    - Confusing, English/History taught Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons

- Less time spent in Core instruction (particularly in Math/Science for 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)
  - Concerns about covering core knowledge material in reduced class time
- Increase in Electives to increase STEM and Math Performance
  - Parents like variety of electives, too early to be sure of quality of electives
  - “Instructional electives” may be graded (spot for grade in Infinite Campus); grading of electives would increase workload of teachers
- Impact on MS
  - Elongated lunch period: More club time but also more free/unproductive time
  - Mixed opinions, waiting to see this in action
- Other Issues Needing Review for MS
  - MS Coordinator/MS Aide distinction
  - Planning Time: Teachers have adequate individual planning time, but lose team planning to align Core Knowledge curriculum
  - Utilization of space: Commons used for small classes, loss of hang-out/meeting area
- Elementary School (ES) Changes
  - Art, Music, PE reduced from 2 to 1 times per week from 1st through 5<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Spanish decrease from 2 to 1 times per week in 4th and 5<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Spanish was added once a week for 1st through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- Potential Reasons for Change
  - Impact from the MS schedule
  - Reduce teaching time of Specials teachers
    - Most are part-time
  - Increase time with Core Teachers
- Impact on ES Students
  - SPED
    - Many right brain learners (art and music), PE provides beneficial break in day
  - ES teachers
    - Students lacking physical movement between topics, may be underserving curriculum, lack of planning time
  - Specials Teachers
    - State PE minimums, may be underserving curriculum
  - Parity with local schools
    - Local schools rolling calendar lessens impact of frequent Monday/Friday holidays
  - Positives
    - Increased Spanish at young age
    - Integrating books with music
- Communication Impact
  - Parents not happy with implementation and communication of new schedule
    - Liked elective choices and MS teachers
  - Teachers and staff feel lack of collaboration with administration
- Direct Impact on Goals
  - Family retention
    - 63% of parents are happy with the current curriculum vs 96% last year & 86% previous year.
    - 44% of parents are happy with the current direction vs 84% last year and 74% previous year.
      - Mid-September 2015 (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, current MS)
      - Late February 2014 & March 2013 (5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students entering MS)
- Communication
  - Communication strategy, rebuild trust
  - Teacher collaboration, mutual decision making
  - Ombudsmen, facilitator (Nora Flood, Russ Arnold)

- Next Steps
  - SAC continuing evaluation of schedule changes
  - SAC to participate in some form of committee
- Robert clarified that electives will be graded pass/fail, allows electives to be considered as instructional time.
- Sylvia Geiger gave update on Spanish since SAC meeting on 9-15-15
  - Considering adding third 8<sup>th</sup> grade class, combined class in commons (38 students), light & review
  - Considering using 7<sup>th</sup> grade students to assist with 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes
  - Rob Ross recommended Spanish language software and games in commons/study hall
  - Laurie Morrill notes that a combined class is a short-term solution and not practical if MS retention increases and common class expands toward 50 students.
  - Will reach out to EHS teachers and alumni to gage high school preparedness for Spanish 2.
- Alan described plans and process to correct
  - Has talked with many parents to see history of MS, passion for it, perspective
  - Director's coffee, parent turnout
  - Praised Dr. Harrell's response and fixes to current scheduling issues

Board responses:

- Roberta Harrell – Changes with best intention of meeting UIP goals, implementation is never easy, teachers responded well, working through scheduling issues, many result from trying to accommodate student's first choice. Parent compliments on diversity and challenge of electives. Give time to work out kinks. Longer lunch and Clubs provide expanded opportunities and topics.
- Tim Lane:
  - Questioned Laurel on total time per week, apparent decrease in study hall. Laurel: look at combined study hall and electives; loss of Spanish becomes an increase in MS electives (might be a study hall).
  - Questioned Laurel on equalization of classes across sections and days of week (ie. holiday Monday may impact core classes for section 7A more than 7B). Laurel: schedule not adjusted for day of week (local schools use revolving specials schedule to address this), each core taught more than once per week, so adequate coverage is provided.
  - As parent rep, audience should indicate if he is representing their opinions/concerns. Asked Roberta who worked on the schedule development over the summer, staff comments in SAC survey did not show staff involvement.
    - Dr. Harrell – we have talked about this over and over, can't go back, she has apologized, decisions needed to be made quickly, no advisory team at end of last year, SAC did not meet over summer, could have been done better but best that she could at the time.
    - Alan – He and Dr. Harrell have apologized, unless you have other motives move forward, collect comments from rest of Board
  - Electives and parent feedback on them seems positive; STEM provides range of classes; however, RMAE charter, history and appeal is Core Knowledge.
- Dan Hock – Wants to move forward, impressive work by SAC, swift action by Alan and Roberta, Core Knowledge focused, positive going forward.
- Ned Parker – Very good work by SAC, represents 9-15 (nine days old in a very fast changing environment), proposed a follow-up survey to look for resolution and calming attitudes. Stories of study halls with 30+ students, watch for violations of fire code, assure that each student has a desk and chair. School day electives taken by those students who can fit it in their schedule, not necessarily by those who want it. When Band was after school, could offer beginner, intermediate, advanced; now only one band, potential conflict with required Spanish. Lunch clubs touted as open to all, but Student Council only open to those elected (real world lesson in popularity contests), no volunteers, club of selection. How/why do we allow 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders into Student Council? Diluting governing? Lunch schedule conflict? All Stars has potential to be by invite only or to not allow additional members after first quarter. Favor additional Spanish in upper grades to reinforce learning. Cautioned Board on future action as, several years ago, we got into a bad situation by mandating the Director implement a certain academic course of action; Board-Director relationship necessitates that we respect Dr. Harrell as the educational and management leader of the school.

- Jeff Courtney – From RMAE Policy Manual:
  - 2.12 (c). The Board is a legislative body; it adopts policies to guide the school. The Board is not a managerial unit; it does not specifically manage the day-to-day affairs of the school.
  - 2.12 (d). The Board hires and evaluates the Director who is the chief executive officer of the school.
  - 2.12 (e). Board members recognize the Director as an education and management professional.Jeff thanked SAC for doing due diligence in informing us of the scheduling issue and now asks SAC to work with Dr. Harrell and her advisory committee to move forward. The Board should not make any legislative motions on this issue.
- Cherie Mazurek – Thanked SAC, thanked them for allowing people to be heard, sometimes more important than any specific solution. Thanked Alan for his meetings. Likes Spanish in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, good personal experience with early Spanish for her son (now 9<sup>th</sup> grade). Hopes for more Spanish for middle school. Parent participation at meetings is critical, be heard, listen.
- David Graham – No comment
- Roberta Harrell – Opened student government to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, considered opening to elementary, bring school together. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> role will be limited.
- Ben Gonzales – (student council Commissioner) Council is large, best as only elected members, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> likely to participate only every other week. Can't comment about (President) Weston's leadership plans. Excited, thanked Board for giving the students a voice.
  - Cherie asked if student council could present to each class room each month, good student-to-student interaction.
- Kim Egan – Board SAC rep, will continue work to examine if RMAE is living up to our charter and UIP goals. Need to celebrate that enrollment is high and that students will benefit from increased revenue. Direct effect on classrooms, trying to increase technology budget to get new computers to teachers; current situation not good enough.
- Brad Giles – Participation was helpful and productive. Unfair to expect that Dr. Harrell could implement this over the summer without SAC support, Board should not micro-manage on such issues. Recognize that this is an effort to make the school better. Need a plan moving forward. Reprimanded Tim for negative comments.
  - Keep SAC on issue; Board, Advisory Team, Student Council to help.
  - By Thanksgiving, have recommendations for future scheduling and electives process.
- SAC only meets once a month, subcommittee may need to meet more frequently to meet time line.
  - Roberta will work through with Advisory Team, report to SAC.
  - SAC needs more, faster interaction to meet time line, how do we streamline. Appoint a SAC member to sit on Advisory Team.
  - Thanksgiving target allows for Board review/action and school implementation before second semester.
- Summary: Dr. Harrell will work with Advisory Team and SAC rep to refine implementation of scheduling and electives, SAC will monitor and continue to evaluate, present recommendations to Board by Thanksgiving time line. No Board vote required, no Board member disagreement.

*Financial* – No report

*Human Resources* – No report

*RMAE Foundation* – No report

*Marketing* – No report

*PTO* – No report

*Preschool* – No report

*Facilities* – No report

*Technology* – No report

*Director's Report* – No report

*President's Report* – No report

**Old Business**

- State of the School (agenda topics)
  - Alan has mapped out agenda for meeting, will email to all Board members
  - Ned wanted to review outline tonight to see direction and progress, preferably see slides, does not to be surprised by presentation next week.
    - Alan rejected this due to time constraints
  - Discussion with Julie Ann Courim about whether this was a violation of Sunshine law. Alan feels it is appropriate to send information to all Board members as long as all returned comments and edits are sent back only on an individual basis.

**New Business**

- No New Business addressed at this meeting

**Board Comment**

- None

**Action Items Arising from This Meeting:**

Item #	Subject	Responsible	Due Date	Status
1	Dr. Harrell will work with Advisory Team and SAC rep to refine implementation of scheduling and electives	Dr. Harrell		
2	SAC will monitor and continue to evaluate, present recommendations to Board by Thanksgiving time line	SAC		
3	Alan will email State of the School agenda to Board	Alan	9-27-15	
4				

**Action Items to be completed at the next Board meeting:**

- A. No new action items

**Next Meeting:** October 8, 2015

**Adjournment:** 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ned Parker  
Secretary



# MS Schedule Review

Presented by RMAE School Accountability Committee  
(SAC)

September 24, 2015



# Overview

- ▶ SAC team investigated through interviews and surveys the changes to the Middle School schedule. We spoke with:
  - ▶ Administrative and SPED staff
  - ▶ Middle School (MS) and Elementary School (ES) core teachers
  - ▶ MS and ES specials teachers (except PE and Tech teacher)
  - ▶ MS parents (6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - ▶ Local neighborhood schools
- ▶ Investigation discovered that MS scheduling changes impact all areas of the school.
  - ▶ While ES schedules are largely separate as they involve self-contained classrooms and Specials the seemingly small and sometimes large changes at the MS level create a ripple effect across the entire campus.
  - ▶ Uniqueness of K-8 school that utilizes same staff and facilities must be taken into account.





# UIP MS Goals Review

- ▶ PR & Marketing of RMAE MS
  - ▶ Student Success Stories
  - ▶ Work with Marketing Team
  - ▶ Build awareness within current parent community
  - ▶ Create MS narrative/story
- ▶ MS Math Performance
  - ▶ RMAE Math Resource and MS teachers work together to differentiate and meet individual student needs
  - ▶ Review option to update Math Connects
  - ▶ Identify Solution to meet the needs of higher level students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade
  - ▶ Engage in more Math Competitions
- ▶ Increase STEM at RMAE
  - ▶ STEM oriented MS Electives
  - ▶ Week of Code
  - ▶ New Tech Faculty Member
  - ▶ Warren Tech Program (coding, robotics)
  - ▶ Faculty Attend STEM Conference

\*see BOD meeting minutes 12/11/2014 & MS UIP Section IV Action Plans. For additional UIP reference see 3-year and 1-year UIP reports.



# UIP ES Goals Review

- ▶ Increase STEM at RMAE (see MS Goals)
- ▶ Systemic Writing Program
  - ▶ Review and select new writing program (teacher group working on this).
  - ▶ Conduct Staff Training
  - ▶ Conduct Parent Training
  - ▶ Understand PARCC writing requirements
  - ▶ Implement scoring rubric for teachers
  - ▶ Use teacher assessment to determine performance
- ▶ ES Math Performance
  - ▶ Increase Vertical Alignment between grades (McLeman)
  - ▶ Push more challenging curriculum down to lower grades
  - ▶ Increase differentiation in classroom (McLemon)
  - ▶ Determine if need to purchase current version of Math Connects

\*see BOD meeting minutes 12/11/2014 & ES UIP Section IV Action Plans. For additional UIP reference see 3-year and 1-year UIP reports.



# Current vs. Past

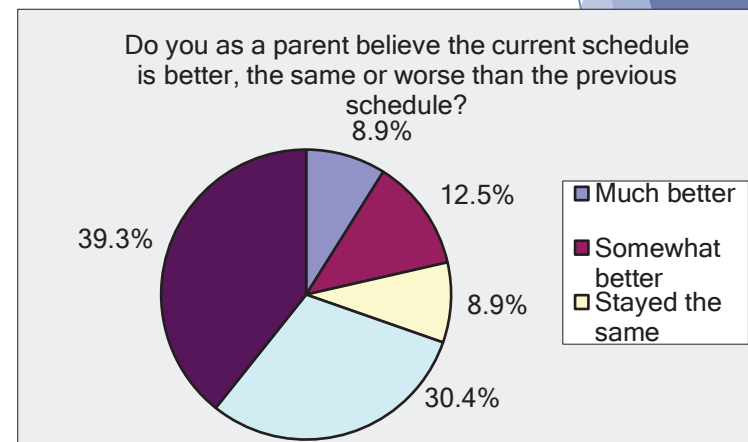
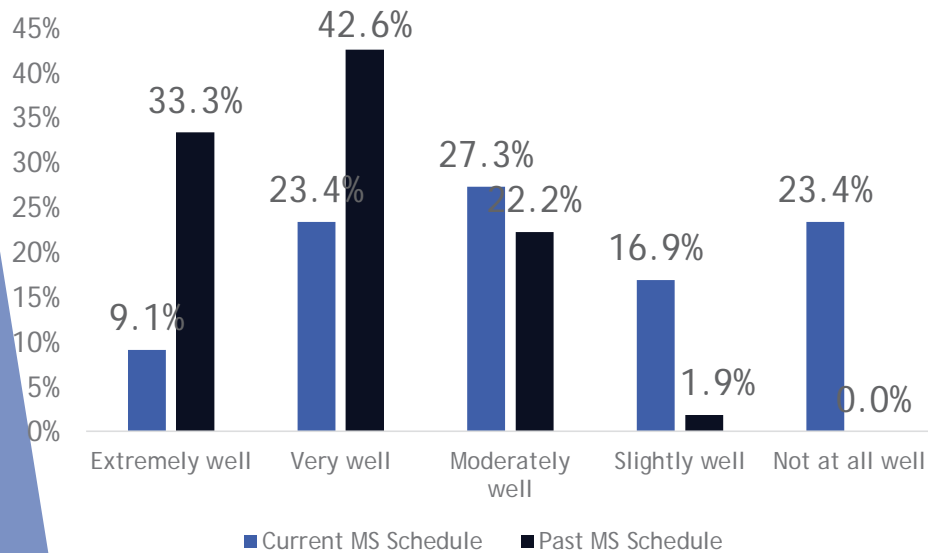
- ▶ Why the Changes?
  - ▶ To align with UIP goals
    - ▶ Allow for more STEM electives
    - ▶ Increase variety of Electives given
    - ▶ Allow for clubs (which could be more STEM oriented) during elongated lunch period.
  - ▶ Give lengthier lunch period to teachers for planning and eating (only required to teach one club per week)
  - ▶ Create a more consistent timing of periods (50 minutes)
  
- ▶ Scheduling in MS is always difficult and the glitches that happened this year are not any different than glitches we've had in the past.
- ▶ Changing the schedule at this point would be difficult. Schedules for Spring will be created in the Fall to work out glitches and to give plenty of time for communication and learning of schedule.

\*see Director FAQs, Dyann Bartlett Summary



# Current vs. Past

- ▶ Eighty-three parents\* completed the special MS Scheduling Survey. Many parent and teacher comments wondered if the past schedule could have accomplished the changes desired.
  - ▶ **One-third** of parents believe the current schedule works well for their students while **76%** of parents believe last year's schedule worked well.
  - ▶ **Twenty-one percent** of parents believe the new schedule is somewhat to much better while **70%** believe it is somewhat to much worse.



\*see Parent Survey, similar to Annual parent survey, both parents in a family could complete the survey. 10 families had students in at least two grades. Therefore, information is based on a per parent report, rather than a per student report.



# MS Scheduling Comparisons (per week minute comparisons)

	RMAE 2014-2015 MS Schedule 7th/8th (min per day)	RMAE 2015-2016 MS Schedule 7th/8th (min per day)	RMAE 2014-2015 MS Schedule 6th (min per day)	RMAE 2015-2016 MS Schedule 6th (min per day)	EMS 2015-2016 MS Schedule (min per day)	D'Evelyn 2015-2016 MS Schedule (7th/8th only) (min per day)
Passing Periods	135	170	125	150	140	175
Lunch	150	250	150	250	150	200
Advise	75	50	75	50	145	0
Core Knowledge	1065	1030	1150	1050	1200	1000
Spanish (Foreign Lang)	165	100	150	50	0	0
Study Hall	165	50	135	50	0	200
Art	110	100	100	100	0	0
Music	110	100	90	100	0	0
Elective	275	400	275	450	440	500
Total Time Elapsed	2250	2250	2250	2250	2075	2075

\*MS Schedule Comparison to previous schedule and area Middle Schools, based on bell schedules may not take into account time given to blocked classes when passing period not used. Study Hall in 2015-2016 reflects one per week while other study halls would be located in Elective time frame. EMS 7<sup>th</sup> graders do have study hall every day.



# MS Scheduling Comparisons (per day minute comparisons)

	RMAE 2014-2015 MS Schedule 7th/8th (min per day)	RMAE 2015-2016 MS Schedule 7th/8th (min per day)	RMAE 2014-2015 MS Schedule 6th (min per day)	RMAE 2015-2016 MS Schedule 6th (min per day)	EMS 2015-2016 MS Schedule (min per day)	D'Evelyn 2015-2016 MS Schedule (7th/8th only) (min per day)
Passing Periods	27	34	25	30	28	35
Lunch	30	50	30	50	30	40
Advise	15	10	15	10	29	0
Core Subjects	213	206	230	210	240	200
Spanish (Foreign Lang)	33	20	30	10	0	0
Study Hall	33	10	27	10	0	40
Art	22	20	20	20	0	0
Music	22	20	18	20	0	0
Elective	55	80	55	90	88	100
<b>Total Time Elapsed</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>415</b>

\*MS Schedule Comparison to previous schedule and area Middle Schools, based on bell schedules may not take into account time given to blocked classes when passing period not used. Study Hall in 2015-2016 reflects one per week while other study halls would be located in Elective time frame. EMS 7<sup>th</sup> graders do have study hall every day.



# Core MS Scheduling Differences

- ▶ Key difference is loss of instructional time for increased lunch period to allow for Clubs.

Topic	Past Schedule	Current Schedule
<b>Periods</b>	6 periods of various times (1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> 1 hour 55 minutes; 3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> 2 hours; 5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> 1 hour 45 min), blocked and unblocked	7 periods at 50 minutes each, core (S/M and LA/SS) can be blocked
<b>Lunch</b>	30 minutes	50 minutes (spent in free time or lunch clubs)
<b>Number of Elective &amp; Special Slots</b>	15	15
<b>Electives</b>	Non-instructional time, all at the same time prior to lunch (50 minutes); PE occurred at this time, one day a week per grade	Instructional time, at different times (3 <sup>rd</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> period); this increases instructional time from 355 min to 400 min
<b>Elective Types</b>	More club like, could be student led (lesson plans, approved subject)	More formal, focus on STEM and other art/music/drama and physical activity
<b>Clubs</b>	Club and Electives interchangeable, so no real clubs were available	Allows for voluntary clubs during lunch
<b>Married Blocks</b>	Science/Math (5 days) LA/Social Studies (5 days) Art/Music (2 days) Spanish/Study Hall (3 days)	Science/Math (5 days) LA/Social Studies (5 days) Art/Music (2 days)

\*see Elective Review, 2014-2015 Condensed Version of MS Schedule, 2014-2015 Bell Schedule, 2015-2016 Condensed Version of MS 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade schedule, 2015-2016 Bell Schedule. MS Schedule Comparison to previous schedule and area Middle Schools, Dyann Bartlett Summary,



# Core Scheduling Differences

Topic	Past Schedule	Current Schedule
<b>Time spent with Core (Science(S)/Math (M), Language Arts(LA)/ Social Studies (SS))</b>	Extra time (15 min each day for 8 <sup>th</sup> graders in M/S); while half of 6 <sup>th</sup> graders received the extra time in M/S and other half in LA/SS. 7 <sup>th</sup> graders had extra Art/Music, Spanish/Study Hall and bit more LA/SS.	Extra time that was spent in the first half of day in 1 <sup>st</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup> period now given to extended lunch time.
<b>MS Special Events</b>	Single elective time slot was used for special events (speakers, student council speeches, etc.)	Instructional time must be used for these extras since not one time of the day that students all have an elective.
<b>Study Hall Differences</b>	3 a week Set (Extra given during Pre Lunch Electives for those in Need)	Varied, Students allowed to sign up for Study Hall as Elective, some receiving more than one a day or more than 3 a week.
<b>Spanish Instruction Differences</b>	3 a week Set and "married" with study hall	Twice a week for 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade and once for 6 <sup>th</sup> grade
<b>Times of Core Subject Instruction</b>	All at set times in blocks	6 <sup>th</sup> grade, all at set times 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> grade have classes at different times (For example, 7A in 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> period have M/S on Mon, SS/LA on Tue, M block on Wed, S block on R and SS/LA on Fri).

\*see Elective Review, 2014-2015 Condensed Version of MS Schedule, 2014-2015 Bell Schedule, 2015-2016 Condensed Version of MS 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade schedule, 2015-2016 Bell Schedule. MS Schedule Comparison to previous schedule and area Middle Schools, Dyann Bartlett Summary

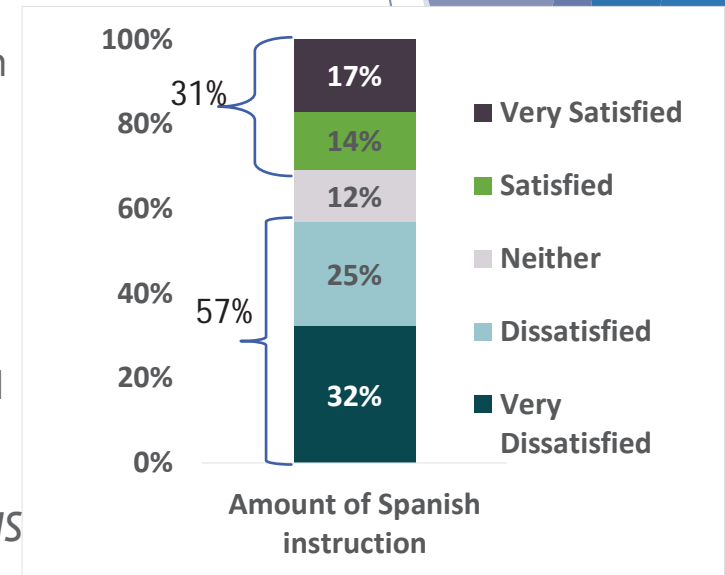




# Schedule Impact on MS

## ▶ Spanish Instruction

- ▶ With reduced instruction each week and the need for a new instructor (based on both student and parent feedback in 2014/2015 annual student and parent survey) will students meet the RMAE goal of Spanish II in high school?
- ▶ This reduction is most difficult for SPED students who need increased repetition. Spanish teacher did indicate that more is always better for all students.
- ▶ MS Parents are extremely displeased with the reduction in Spanish. 57% are dissatisfied. Many placed this as the number one area that they would like to see changed.
- ▶ *Senora Geiger (new Spanish Instructor) greatest concern is 8<sup>th</sup> graders. She will be speaking with EHS Spanish teacher to understand Spanish II requirements.*
- ▶ *Examining the possibility of increasing Spanish with 8<sup>th</sup> graders in particular with continued evaluation of 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade needs.*



\*see Parent Survey, SPED review



# Schedule Impact on MS

## ▶ Study Hall Issues

- ▶ Number of glitches happened in which students received more than one study hall a day and more than one study hall a week.
- ▶ Students were choosing Study Hall as a first choice elective even though they would be receiving Study Hall no matter what.
- ▶ Now that Study Hall and Spanish are not “married” it adds a layer of confusion around when study halls happen.
- ▶ SPED students use of Study Hall should be examined closely as greater non-productive time can be an issue.
- ▶ In the beginning of the year, Study Hall kids were shuffled from one class to the next when there was no space and as indicated no one overseeing Study Hall.
- ▶ MS Core and Special Teaches now teach study hall. *Who can watch over Study Hall (teacher/aide). Local schools use Aides.*
- ▶ *Should no student have more than 3 study halls a week (unless required based on needs) and no more than one a day. If so these should be fixed within the first days of instruction.*
- ▶ *Other parameters should be considered to make this process easier.*

\*see Parent Survey, SPED review, Dyann Bartlett summary, MS Teacher Survey



# Schedule Impact on MS

## ▶ Electives at Different Times of the Day

- ▶ SPED serviced all MS students at the same time each day (in the 50 minute non-instructional Elective block); students must now be serviced across two 50 minute blocks (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> period) which increases the time SPED faculty need to be in MS. This reduces the amount of time they can spend in the ES providing services.
- ▶ In addition, SPED students had access to Core teachers during the elective time as SPED staff set up their tutorials when the Core Teacher was in planning time.
- ▶ Accommodating Special MS Events: Decided last year that any MS special events would happen during the Elective period to not take away from instructional time. Although 3<sup>rd</sup> period is the least amount of core instructional time it could take away from Spanish and PE.
- ▶ *Could all Electives all be placed at one time period of the day (i.e., 3<sup>rd</sup> period) to allow for the above issues?*
- ▶ *Did the increase from part-time to full-time SPED staff help with SPED issues or was this increase needed to meet the needs we already had.*

\*see Parent Survey, SPED review, MS Special Events letter



# Schedule Impact on MS

- ▶ **Core Subjects Taught at Different Times for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**
  - ▶ Extremely confusing to both students and teachers to know where students are suppose to be.
  - ▶ SPED students have increased difficulty with this type of schedule and reduces their level of preparedness as they forget to bring the correct material which results in the loss of valuable learning time.
  - ▶ *It is indicated that this is due to the fact that the Art and Music instruction can only occur on Tues & Fri due to part-time instructor schedule. This is the same times teachers were available in the past but because Spanish/ Study Hall are no longer married and electives happen across the three periods it may reflect different scheduling needs. How did it work in the past to make these consistent?*
  - ▶ *How can we make this simpler for students (and teachers)? That is, can we provide some consistency for the core classes? There is a need the creation of master schedule.*

\*see MS Schedule Comparison, SPED review



# Schedule Impact on MS

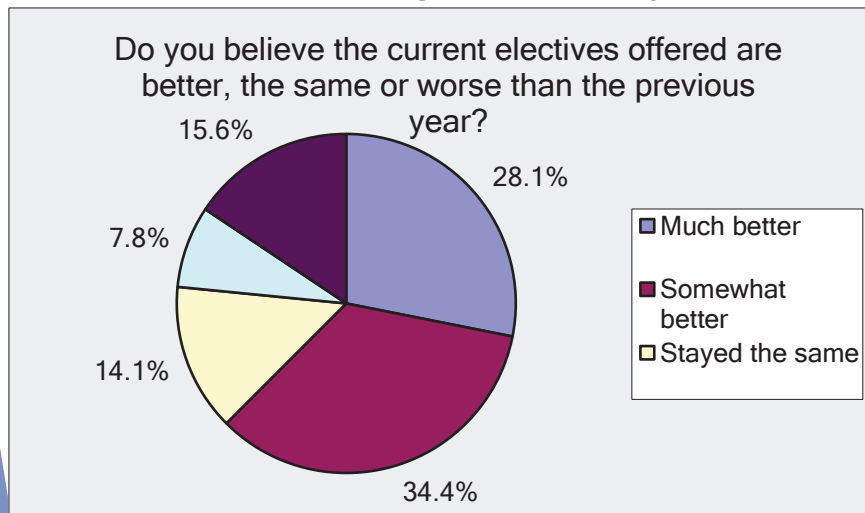
- ▶ **Less time spent in Core instruction (particularly in Math/Science for 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders)**
  - ▶ Increase of STEM oriented MS Electives with change over to more instructionally based electives (although all students do not have to take STEM electives)
    - ▶ Geometry, Triangles, Model Rocketry, Amazon Mission, Computers
  - ▶ MS teachers believe that they will be able to teach all Core Knowledge, however, there still may be issues in the blocking time allowed for labs and presentations.
  - ▶ SPED students lose this additional time that is helpful to increasing proficiency in this subjects.
  - ▶ *Need to evaluate if less overall time given to the Core subjects will impact grades and entry into high school courses.*
  - ▶ *And MS teachers would like to have continued review to make sure schedule allows for Core Knowledge.*

\*see MS teacher summary, SPED Summary, Elective Summary

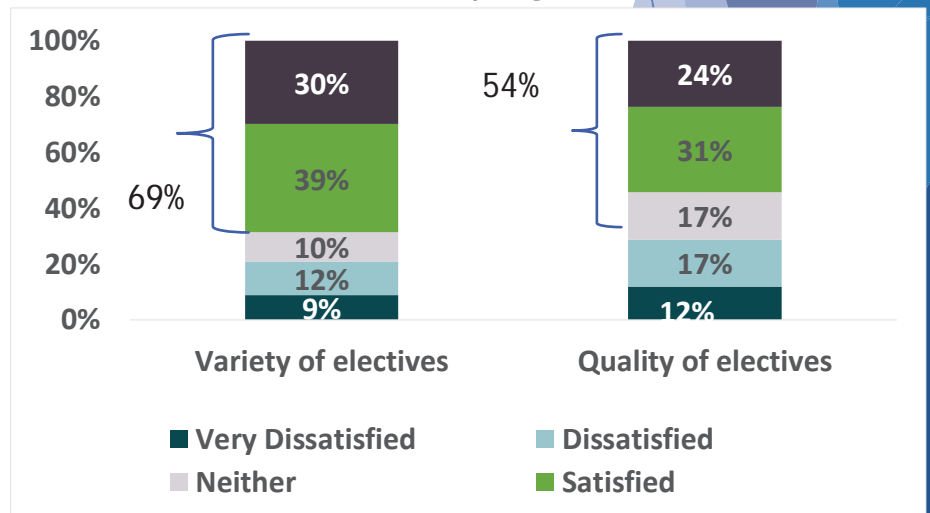


# Schedule Impact on MS

- ▶ Increase in Electives to increase STEM and Math Performance.
  - ▶ Parents appear satisfied with electives compared to the past. **Sixty-three percent** of parents believe the new electives are somewhat to much better. Over two-thirds of parents are satisfied with the variety of electives and over half with the quality.
  - ▶ Parent comments included many likes around new STEM electives and music instruction during the day. They hope that the caliber of the Electives remain high. Other parents were still wondering how their child’s elective is useful.
- ▶ Questions on how new “instructional electives” will be graded since there exists a spot for grade in Infinite Campus. Grading of electives would increase workload of teachers.
  - ▶ *This issue brought to Advisory Board and discussion with MS teachers in progress.*



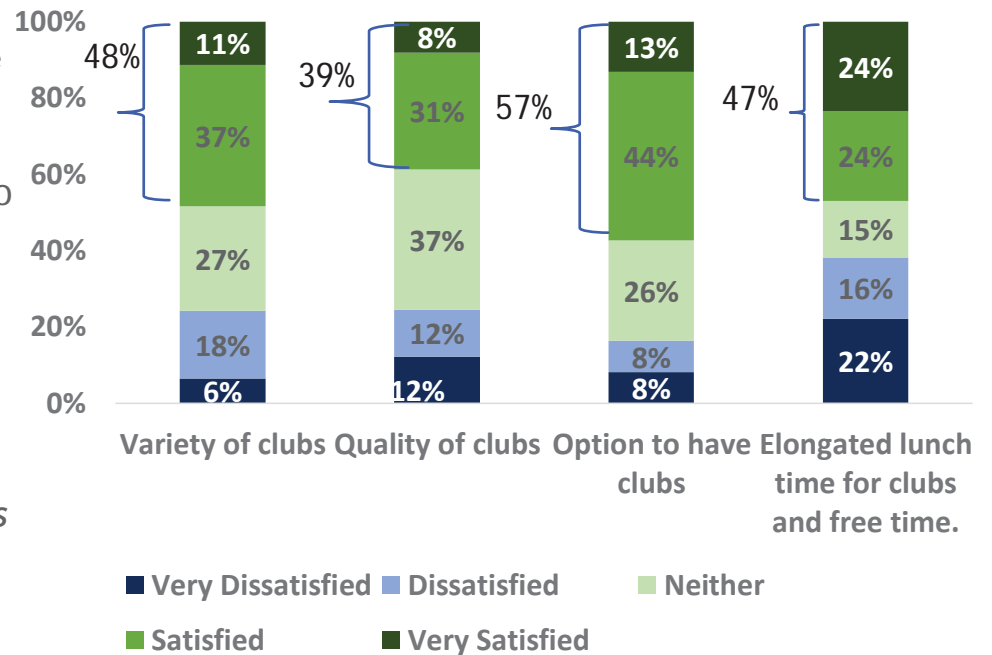
\*see Parent Survey





# Impact on MS

- ▶ **Elongated lunch period: More club time but also more free/unproductive time.**
  - ▶ How will free time at lunch be managed by aide when students don't pick clubs? What is the rain/snow contingency: will non club kids just go "watch a movie". Where will they go if all space is utilized?
  - ▶ SPED students have difficult time with making good decisions about productivity during free time.
  - ▶ However, it allows for more clubs in addition to Electives increasing the number of opportunities for students.
  - ▶ Many parents like the concept/option of the clubs (57%) although have a difficult time commenting on quality. They also like the longer lunch but many wondered if it was too long. Just less than half of parents are satisfied with the lengthened lunch period.
  - ▶ *Will students just choose free-time and socializing over clubs? Can parameters be placed around club involvement?*
  - ▶ *Communication of options, quality and types of clubs are necessary to students and parents.*
  - ▶ *Can there be parent led clubs?*



\*see Parent Survey, SPED review, Director FAQ, MS Teacher Summary



## Other Issues Needing Review for MS

- ▶ **MS Coordinator/MS Aide distinction:** How does the aide help and pick up the coordinator duties from the past? How do teachers access Aide (weekly meetings)?
- ▶ **Planning Time:** While individual planning time is adequate, the cohesive/team planning availability that helps new teachers and aligns CK curriculum is necessary.
- ▶ **Utilization of space:** Small classes using the commons while larger classes (study hall) are in small spaces. MS Students lose Commons space. No place to hang-out or to have MS meetings.

\*see MS Teacher Summary, Parent Survey





# Elementary School (ES) Changes

- ▶ A number of changes were made to the ES schedule as well.
  - ▶ Art, Music, PE reduced from 2 to 1 times per week from 1st through 5th grade. Spanish decrease from 2 to 1 times per week in 4th and 5th grade.
  - ▶ Overall, on average, contact hours for art and music for K-5 decreased by 49%). From ~3000 contact hours to ~ 1500.
  - ▶ Spanish was added once a week for 1st through 3rd grade.

Number Courses Past	Spanish	Art	Music	PE	Tech
K	0	2	2	2	2
1	0	4	4	4	2
2	0	4	4	4	2
3	0	4	4	4	2
4	4	4	4	4	2
5	4	4	4	4	2
6	6	4	4	4	0
7	6	4	4	4	0
8	6	4	4	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>12</b>

Number Courses Current	Spanish	Art	Music	PE	Tech
K	0	2	2	2	2
1	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
3	2	2	2	2	2
4	2	2	2	2	2
5	2	2	2	2	2
6	2	4	4	4	2
7	4	4	4	4	0
8	4	4	4	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>

\*see Elective Summary, Specials Teachers Summary



# Reasons for Change

## ▶ Potential Reasons

- ▶ Impact from the MS schedule:
  - ▶ ES Specials teachers teaching MS elective courses.
  - ▶ Classroom availability: Art, Music classes being used for MS electives
- ▶ Reduce teaching time of Specials teachers (an overload of classes taught by part-time teachers).
  - ▶ Special teachers mentioned that the current schedule was not as overwhelming and still allowed all Core instruction to be conducted. The old schedule was very hectic.
- ▶ Increase time with Core Teachers: indicated that Core ES teachers not covering all Core Knowledge Subjects.

\*see Elective Summary and Special Teacher review



# Impact on ES Students

- ▶ SPED
  - ▶ Many are right brain learners and these students learn better through visual arts and music.
  - ▶ Loss of PE for these students can be detrimental to overall learning in Core classes.
- ▶ ES teachers
  - ▶ Many students have difficulty when not moving from one topic to the next. Extended periods of time in one classroom without breaks is "difficult to manage and not developmentally appropriate"
  - ▶ Is this consistent with CK emphasis on art/music as integral part of curriculum?
  - ▶ Missed planning periods for ES teachers. ES teachers used Specials time for this planning.
  - ▶ Fewer days in Specials results in students missing core Specials due to holiday schedule

\*see SPED Summary, ES Summary



# Impact on ES Students

- ▶ Specials Teachers
  - ▶ PE mandates must be kept in mind: average of 30 minutes of physical activity per day is mandated by state
  - ▶ Can all of Core Knowledge be taught? Many special teachers believe it can be
  - ▶ Will ES Core teachers be required to teach more Core in the classes adding to ES Core teacher workload
- ▶ Parity with local schools.
  - ▶ Both Wilmot and Bergan's work on a 2-day rotating schedule for Art, Music, PE. (AABBCC). Each special is not offered twice every week but at least two of them are.

\*see SPED Summary, ES Teacher Summary



# Impact on ES Students

- ▶ *Spanish teacher believes that increase of Spanish in lower grades will be better overall as these students move through the system. ES teachers felt positive about this change. But how does it impact 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders who have not received this instruction and now only receive instruction once a week.*
- ▶ *Special Teachers believed they could cover Core Knowledge but how does it impact marketing when not on par with local schools as well as help students who need that break in their day.*
- ▶ *Ms. Bloom is utilizing the library instruction time to focus on Music Core for books on composers but how else can the library time help with specials time and Core teacher curriculum maps.*
- ▶ *Are there creative solutions to regain one more art/music (perhaps rotating). Can there be parent-led art or reading specials to allow students and teachers more breaks.*
- ▶ *How to make Special Teachers less overwhelmed but provide for appropriate amount of art/music/PE/Spanish? Do we need to increase to full-time or have more part-time instructors.*
- ▶ *How do we help are most vulnerable students? SPED*

*\*see SPED Summary, ES Teacher Summary, Special Teacher Summary*



# Communication Impact

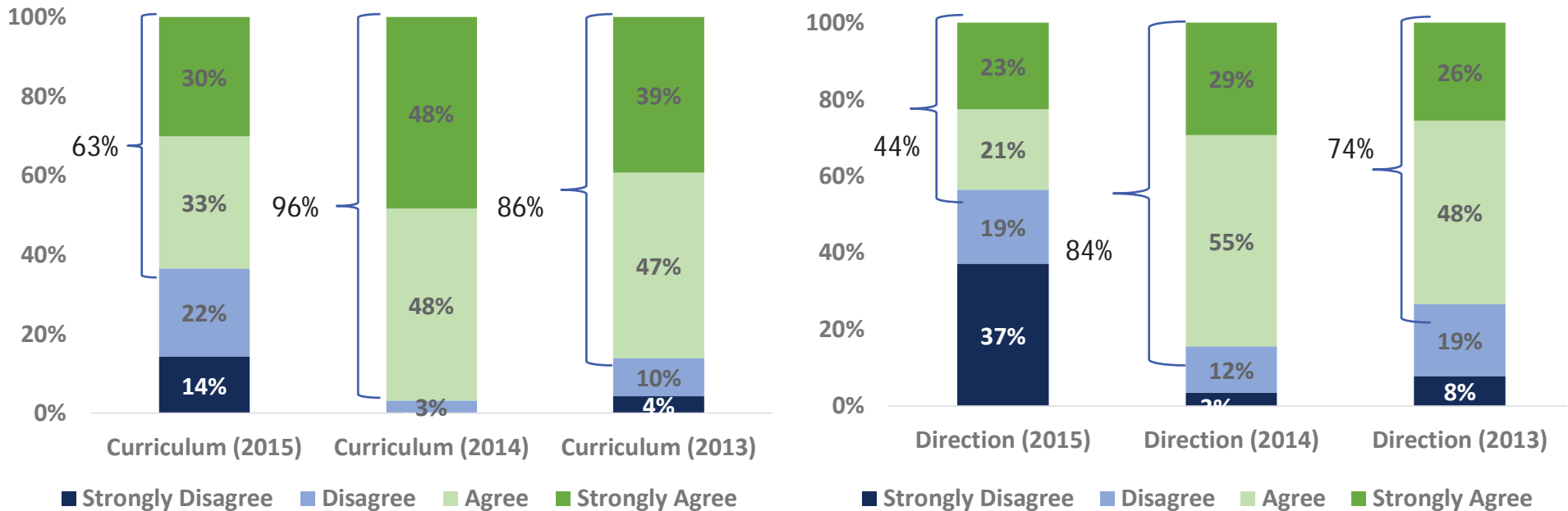
- ▶ Parents mentioned that they were not happy with implementation and communication of the new schedule. Many comments praised the MS teachers.
- ▶ Teachers and staff are feeling that they are not being included as collaborators and experts in their field.
- ▶ This lack of communication, maybe more so than the changes themselves, has led to a lack of trust among parents, teachers, and staff.
- ▶ *The first step in gaining back trust was this full review by the School Accountability Committee (SAC)*

\*see MS Teacher Summary, ES Teacher Summary, Parent Survey



# Direct Impact on Goals

- ▶ Lack of communication has a direct impact on retention of our RMAE families.
  - ▶ **Sixty-three percent** of parents are happy with the current curriculum compared to 96% last year and 86% the previous year.
  - ▶ **Forty-four percent** of parents are happy with the current direction compared to 84% last year and 74% the previous year.



\*see Parent Survey,

I am happy with the current curriculum of the school for my child(ren) to continue to attend RMAE for the foreseeable future.

I am happy with the current direction of the school for my child(ren) to continue to attend RMAE for the foreseeable future.



# Communication

- ▶ How do we move forward to provide a cohesive communication strategy? Even reversals in our ideas need to be communicated effectively.
- ▶ Many teachers across ES and MS found that lack of collaboration, consulting and communication difficult. They all want to get on board with changes but want to have a role in the process. They indicated that:
  - ▶ Lack of mutual decision making into changing schedules have impacted teaching ability
  - ▶ The necessity of the Director to make decisions and change is understood however a collaborative approach to change should be developed.
- ▶ Nora Flood (discussed by teachers and parents) as a moderator or some other ombudsman/advocate to help where tension exists.
- ▶ Make Relational Trust an explicit goal among the RMAE community (teacher/staff/administration/parents).  
<http://www.couragerenewal.org/leadingtogether>

\*see MS Teacher Summary, ES Teacher Summary, Parent Survey, Relational Trust





## Other Next Steps

- ▶ SAC continues to evaluate the effectiveness of the changes.
- ▶ SAC provides input and helps in implementation and communication of any changes being made in the future relating to administrative, curriculum and schedule changes. This can take the form in one of three ways.
  - ▶ Special BOD Committee
  - ▶ Special SAC Task Force
  - ▶ SAC members sit on already created Advisory Team