



## Office of Instructional Services

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Education Members

CC: Sue Zurvalec

FROM: Catherine Cost, Ed.D, Instructional Services

RE: 5/6 Visioning Work Group Update

DATE: May 24, 2011

#### **Background:**

When school began there were issues that all schools were experiencing (e.g., arrival/dismissal, recess procedures, resources in many places). At the upper elementary schools, the school leaders addressed many of these concerns, yet others still existed.

To support teachers with curricular materials, departmental leader positions were created in math, ELA, science and social studies for both 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Although this helped, the teachers and administrators still experienced a number of frustrations. Executive directors Jon Manier and Mark Wilson spent a period of two weeks at Warner and Power to observe and see first-hand the challenges the teachers were experiencing. With the help of additional subs, concerns such as disorganized resources were resolved. Other measures, such as additional training for noon-aides provided support for students at recess. Issues that continued to surface were related to the rigidity of the schedule and the fact teams of teachers were finding it extremely challenging to address the needs of the students on their teams.

#### **Task:**

The issues that continued to persist in the Upper Elementary schools were related to the scheduling and teaming. A 5/6 Work Group was created, in order to bring together teachers and support staff to problem solve why the 5/6 schools were running into barriers during the course of their day. Their task was to review the upper elementary (grades 5/6) teaching philosophy and to analyze the implementation of the schedule in terms of what was working and what still needed work. The group was to make recommendations to Instructional Leaders: Catherine Cost, Kris Gekiere, Michele Harmala, Naomi Khalil, Jon Manier, Mark Wilson and Steve Vercellino.

It was also decided that an outside facilitator would facilitate these meetings. For emotionally charged and complex tasks, an outside perspective can better assist a group

in moving forward. After consulting with numerous individuals, Dr. Sandi Laham was chosen to facilitate the 5/6 Work Group. Dr. Laham has done other work within the district and was familiar with the structure and the difficult decision that had recently been made.

**Members:**

Volunteers were asked to participate on the 5/6 Work Group. So many volunteers expressed interest in being a part of the solution, the 5/6 Work Group could not accommodate everyone and 34 individuals were selected. It was also important to have a balance from each school as well as a variety of backgrounds and strengths. In the end, the following people committed to being a member of the 5/6 Work Group:

Amy Anderson	Warner Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 5
Dina Ascenzo	Warner Upper Elementary	Support Staff
Wendy Blachford	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 5
Kathy Boyd	Dunckel Middle School	Assistant Principal
Karen Butler	Lanigan Elementary School	Teacher
Theresa Davis	Power Upper Elementary	Support Staff
Jeannette Doyle	Warner Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 6
Jackie Drake	Warner Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 6
Ericka Ebel	Power Upper Elementary	Guidance Counselor
Blakely Elenbaas	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Resource
Michelle Harris	Maxfield Training Center	ELA Coordinator
Dave Hebert	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 5
Bob Kovar	Power Upper Elementary	Principal
Jennie Lichtenauer	Warner Upper Elementary	Teacher - Art
Hatty Ligon	Warner Upper Elementary	Teacher – Resource Rm.
Jon Mainer	Instructional Services	Executive Director
Kim Marquette	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher Consultant
Eric Newton	Maxfield Training Center	Math Coordinator
Karen Quigley	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – World Lang
Tera Shamey	Warner Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 5
Chris Suliman	Warner Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 5
Marc Szalka	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 6
Brian Toth	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 5
Sandy Vargo	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Music
Jon Vondrasek	Dunckel Middle School	Teacher - Science
Lori Wainwright	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Physical Ed
Mark Watson	Warner Upper Elementary	Principal
Deb Wilson	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 5
Mark Wilson	Instructional Services	Executive Director
Rob Wilson	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher - Music
Ninoska Wiltse	East Middle School	Teacher – Grade 7/8
David Workman	Farmington Education Association	President
Erin Young	Power Upper Elementary	Teacher – Grade 6
Julie Zorn	Warner Upper Elementary	Social Worker

**Procedures:**

Six meetings were arranged to address this issue. Meeting one focused on forming the group, reviewing the charge to the work group and outlining the tasks for the work group. Meetings two and three focused on gathering information on the current state and identifying what works and what needs work. Meetings four and five focused on analysis of this information and development of consensus on recommendations with regard to how to move (what) forward. A sixth meeting was listed in case more time was needed.

Meeting dates and times were as follows:

<b>Meeting #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
1	January 14, 2011	8:00 am – 11:00 am	MTC
2	January 28, 2011	1:00 pm – 4:30 pm	MTC
3	February 11, 2011	8:00 am – 11:00 am	MTC
4	March 3, 2011	1:00 pm – 4:30 pm	MTC
5	March 16, 2011	1:00 pm – 4:30 pm	MTC
6	April 15, 2011	1:00 pm – 4:30 pm	MTC

**Findings:**

Children and their learning, drive what teachers do and how they teach. **The intent:** to help students succeed and to assure access to and progress in the curriculum content; while developing, refining and enhancing skills in reading, writing, speaking, thinking and reasoning. Upper elementary students have left schools where a single teacher teaches all subjects in his or her class. They moved to schools with different teachers teaching different subjects with different students in each class. These students are in between; older than lower elementary students still learning the skills to learn and younger than the teenagers in middle school well on their way to learning specific content using skills to learn.

Schools serving students between the ages 9 ½ and 12 in many ways are like the students they serve: in between elementary and middle schools – and neither elementary nor middle school in nature. Like elementary schools, teachers are responsible for instructing a group of children in all subject areas. Like middle schools, teachers provide opportunities to develop skills in new areas such as instrumental music and world language. Staff in upper elementary schools must resist the temptation to treat students like lower elementary students – in other words, to treat them as young children – while at the same time, avoid pushing students to meet the behavioral and academic expectations found in middle and high schools. **The challenge:** to focus on the children as they are at this age, rather than design a school based on the model of the elementary schools they have left or the middle schools that will follow.

So what does that mean for upper elementary schools in Farmington? First and foremost, our upper elementary schools are student focused, providing supports for students to

successfully transition to and meet behavioral expectations at their new school. Second, teachers are configured into small teaching teams of two or three, each team responsible for the core instruction for all of the students assigned to their team. Teams make decisions about who teaches what/when for all content areas and use the shared planning time to design, develop, review and analyze strategies to maximize student learning. Third, students are assigned to teaching teams in such a way that those students with the most complex learning needs are assigned first. The end goal of teacher teams being responsible for core instruction and assigning students with the most complex needs first is the same: to maximize instructional time and minimize time lost to transitions. Fourth, specials are used to enhance learning and instruction, providing students with experiences in music, art, physical education and world language. Those specials do not drive the schedule; rather, they enhance the educational experience for the student while minimizing disruptions to the teaching teams.

Moving students between schools is a transition for the children and their parents. For most parents and students, the transition to upper elementary was the first major transition since kindergarten. Parents need to know what to expect and be assured that their concerns for their children – safety, basic needs, knowing their name – will be paramount at the school. Students need to know what to expect and that they will be safe, secure and know someone’s name. Both need to be supported in this transition process. Successful transition requires staff to implement coordinated and sustained activities to facilitate movement of the students and their parents between schools. Minimally that involves activities the spring prior to coming; activities immediately prior to the start of the school year, support to the students the first few weeks of the new school year, and follow up with both parents and students after being in the new school for a few months.

***Recommendation #1:*** *Movement from lower elementary to upper elementary schools be a well thought out, organized process including:*

- *Preparation of current 4<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents as to what to anticipate and how the school will support their child in getting ready for upper elementary school*
- *Orientation of incoming 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents prior to the start of school*
- *Follow-up with 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents to review the students success in transitioning from lower elementary to upper elementary*

Students ages 9 ½ to 12 must be taught how to behave at the upper elementary school. Traditionally, discipline practices have focused on reacting to specific student misbehavior. These practices are often ineffective, particularly in helping students know what to do instead. School-wide discipline systems that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching and support appropriate student behavior are effective alternatives to traditional discipline approaches. Known as positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS), school-wide PBIS create positive school environments where students are taught what is expected and reinforced for following those expectations.

Implementing a school-wide PBIS system at the upper elementary schools is key in developing the skills to work with and interact with the wide variety of different individuals – both students and staff – within the upper elementary school. Expectations for pro-social behaviors must be explicit, taught, practiced and reinforced by all adults in the school. The goal is multi-fold: to develop a positive culture, to connect students to this culture and to develop positive relationships with caring adults. PBIS requires support: for students in learning what is expected, practicing those behaviors and explicit feedback on meeting those expectations, for staff, support in using and evaluating the impact of this strategy.

***Recommendation #2:*** *All students be supported in learning and getting along with each other through the implementation of a school-wide PBIS approach. The intent of the PBIS approach is to connect students to the school and build relationships with caring adults. As part of the PBIS approach include the following:*

- *Explicit expectations with regard to what students are to do (positive expectations)*
- *Explicit strategies to teach students the expectations including such activities as assemblies and lessons to teach the expectations*
- *Opportunities for students to practice behaviors that fit the expectations*
- *Explicit, frequent and consistent strategies to provide feedback on meeting those expectations*
- *Support for teachers in implementing this strategy*

Small teacher teams responsible for several groups of students are an interim step between the learning environments of lower elementary and that at middle school. These small teacher teams differ from the elementary experience where a single teacher is responsible for differentiating instruction and curriculum for a class of students. Further, they differ from the middle school structure where teachers are responsible for teaching different groups of students within a specific content area. Upper elementary teacher teams involve two or three general education teachers who take responsibility for the social, emotional and instructional needs of their combined classes. Each teaching team determines how best to organize and instruct all of their assigned students in the core content areas. Having a team of two or three teachers responsible for the core instruction of two or three classes of students gives the team greater insight into the unique needs of each of their students and how each student learns.

The work group agreed that teams of two or three appeared to work best for students in grades five and six. Ultimately, the size of the teacher team has more to do with how the team members work together to design, deliver and evaluate instruction for the students assigned to them. A definition of an effective or quality teaching team for upper elementary schools is needed.

***Recommendation #3:*** *A work group be formed to review and develop a definition of quality teaching teams identifying:*

- *Quality teaching teams elements*
- *Effective teaching teams elements*

- *Impact of these elements on the size or number of team members*
- *During 2011-12, teaching teams be two or three general educators in size*

Teaching teams are responsible for the delivery of instruction in all core content areas. They arrange themselves – and the content – to maximize student learning across all students assigned to their team. This may result in the team deciding that one teacher takes the lead on a core content area for all students or all team members sharing responsibility for the core content area or some arrangement in between. What is key, however is this: the teaching team makes the decision – and takes the responsibility for assuring – that the students on their team receive the core content and develop the skills within that content. Team decision-making extends further with teachers making decisions with regard to breaks, bathroom and recess.

**Recommendation #4:** *Teaching teams be responsible for the delivery of instruction in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies with all subjects taught by the teachers on that team with the exception of specials and accelerated math. Teacher teams must determine how to best arrange themselves to maximize learning for all students on their team. Teaching teams make the decision as to who teaches what when and take responsibility for assuring that all of the students assigned to their team are acquiring that content. These arrangements may result in:*

- *One member of the team taking the lead for a particular content area for all students*
- *Members of the team sharing responsibility for the content area,*
- *Teachers integrating curricular content,*
- *Teachers adjusting who teaches what based on topics, curricular expertise and/or preference*

*Further, teacher teams are responsible for determining when, and if, students need breaks, recess time, and bathroom time.*

In the course of our dialogues regarding upper elementary core content instruction, the 2010-11 strategy for mathematics instruction of moving students to different teachers for instruction based on their level of math advancement was discussed. The current practice for math instruction runs counter to having teacher teams be responsible for core instruction to all students on their assigned team. The current math curriculum and materials support differentiation, that is, supporting students with different levels of math proficiency with varying types of instruction, practice, and enhancement within the math lesson. Differentiation of instruction supports students who have an affinity for math, who are learning math at a typical rate and those for whom math appears to be a challenge. Separating students into groups with math affinity, typical or normal math and math challenged runs counter to the instructional strategies advocated by the materials purchased to support the math curriculum. Further, separating or tracking students acerbates differences between students as opposed to closing the gap between learners.

**Recommendation #5:** *Given that FPS has a policy to accelerate students one or more grade levels in math, we recommend that decisions with regard to acceleration in math*

*be made solely by following the process and using the criteria to determine if child is eligible for accelerate. Further, we recommend that differentiation within a grade level of mathematics instruction occur within the teaching team and that the moving students into different groups for advanced math no longer be used at upper elementary.*

Given the responsibility of these small teacher teams for the delivery of instruction in all core content areas, it is essential that movement in and out of the team be thoughtful, organized and minimizes time lost to transition between places. This becomes particularly important in the scheduling of specials or specials classes. All students on a teaching team should move at the same time, but not necessarily to the same specials class. Further, all teaching teams should not move at the same time. Having all students on the teaching team move at the same time created common planning time for teachers on the team. This common planning time is key in the design, delivery, evaluation and analysis of instruction. Not moving all students at the same time reduces the number of students moving from place to place at any one time, thereby reducing confusion and noise in the hallways.

**Recommendation #6:** *Movement in and out of the teaching be thoughtful, organized and minimize time lost to transition between places. All students within a team should move at the same time but not necessarily to the same place; and not all teams should move at the same time.*

**Recommendation #7:** *Teacher teams have common planning time and are physically located as close as possible within the school.*

The configuration of specials classes presented a particular challenge in the first year of upper elementary implementation. Part of that challenge may have been a function of how students were assigned to classes, part due to moving students to different teachers for different levels of math, part due to the way students choose types of music, part due to the way world language was configured. The intent of the specials classes are multi-fold: to provide students with a rich music experience, to explore potential world language options – both culturally and linguistically, to have the opportunity to engage in physical education activities, to explore and develop artistic ability. Further, specials classes provide planning time for teachers.

The 5/6 Work Group recognizes the challenge of scheduling specials classes. Given the complexity of issues at play in designing a schedule, we recommend that the instructional leadership team along with the principals of the two upper elementary schools review and consider one of the following four potential options for scheduling specials classes: 1) current specials schedule, 2) current schedule with world language taught as a concentrated block, 3) music alternating with a quarterly rotation of physical education, physical education, art and world language, and 4) music every other day, physical education twice weekly and art/world language as every other day options for a semester.

The work group recognizes that the schedule for specials classes interacts with required time for core instruction, staffing and contractual requirements for release time. We

present these options for consideration by the Instructional Leadership Team and the upper elementary building principals as they determine which option best aligns with the overall spirit of the recommendations made by the work group and works within district and state parameters.

***Recommendation #8:*** *Scheduling of specials classes be determined by the Instructional Leaders and 5/6 building principals with that schedule being thoughtful, organized and with the least amount of time lost to transition between places. Given the shift to teacher team directed instruction, scheduling of specials classes can be time based as opposed to period based. Recognizing the scheduling of specials classes interacts with necessary instructional time, contractual arrangements for teacher release time and the district fiscal realities, we recommend that scheduling of specials classes be based on one of the four scheduling options:*

- *Option One: Same schedule as 2010-11 with 50-minute specials classes.*
- *Option Two: Fifty minute specials classes in music (90 contacts), physical education (60 contacts) and art (30 contacts) follow the same rotation as 2010-11 and world language be offered as a six week option, that is, meeting daily for six weeks.*
- *Option Three: Fifty minute specials classes in music (vocal and instrumental) follow the same rotation as 2010-11 or a total of 90 days (and 90 contacts) and physical education, art and world language rotate the remaining 90 days, dividing the rotations into four 'blocks': two physical education (45 contacts) and one each for art (approximately 22 contacts) and world language (approximately 22 contacts). Specials classes in music would alternate every other day with specials classes in physical education, art and world language.*
- *Option Four: Specials classes in music (vocal and instrumental) follow the same rotation as in 2010-11 or a total of 90 days for forty-five minutes per day. Physical education offered two days per week for forty-five minutes. Specials class in art offered every other day for forty-five minutes for one semester (45 contacts) and world language offered every other day for forty-five minutes for one semester (45 contacts).*

***Recommendation #9:*** *Students be scheduled or placed on teaching teams by those students with the most complex needs scheduled first. A variety of factors must be considered in that assignment. Those factors include:*

- *Special education services*
- *Need for interventions*
- *Choice of vocal or instrumental music*
- *Preference for band vs. orchestra*
- *Gender*
- *For incoming 5<sup>th</sup> graders, 20% of the students on one's team from the same sending school*

Placing students into classes or scheduling interacts with a variety of different factors. These factors include special education programs (i.e., resource support) and services (i.e., ancillary services such as speech and language, social work) and interventions

directly impacting student performance within the curriculum. Other factors include student preference for vocal or instrumental music as well as the type of instrument preferred. Traditionally, classes are formed so they are equivalent numbers of boys and girls. Given that students are coming to the upper elementary from several different schools, having some classmates from their previous school can help in the transition process. What is clear from our conversations is that students with the most complex needs must be scheduled first.

Over the course of our meetings, we identified a number of issues important to the successful operation of our upper elementary schools that require more study and review. Specifically, we identified development of an upper elementary report, utilization of specialized staff (i.e., special education teachers, ancillary staff, and interventionists) and the previously discussed, what constitutes quality or effective teaching teams as key. This is not to say that other issues do not exist, rather, that these issues need the attention of work groups to review best practices, discuss options and make recommendations.

**Recommendation #10:** *A work group be formed to review and consider the upper elementary report card and make recommendations to assure that the upper elementary report is:*

- *Parent friendly, helping parents to understand the formative and summative performance of their child*
- *Teacher friendly, facilitating recording of student summative performance*
- *Electronic*
- *Accessible by parents and teachers*
- *Clear as to how grades are determined and what impact AIP has on grades*

**Recommendation #11:** *A work group is formed to review, consider and recommend how to best use specialized staff at the 5/6 buildings such that the use of that staff is consistent with the principles articulated in this report. Things to consider as part of those discussions include*

- *How to integrate specialized services within upper elementary including services to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), students in need of interventions, ELL,*
- *Analysis the impact of attaching special education teachers to teaching teams*
- *The amount of available specialized staff, how that time is scheduled to support students in the upper elementary schools*

The members of the 5/6 Work Group thanks the district for the opportunity to review and discuss issues related to the implementation of the upper elementary school concept and to make recommendations to move forward. Having invested our time, energy and ideas into these discussions and recommendations, we request that this work group be reconvened prior to the end of the 2010-11 school to hear the responses to these recommendations. Further, we suggest that this work group be informed with regard to implementation issues related to these recommendations.

**Recommendation #12:** *That the 5/6 Work Group reconvene prior to the end of the 2010-11 school year to hear back on the status of these recommendations and that the work group continue to be informed of the actions taken as a function of these recommendations*

**Approval of Recommendations:**

The Instructional Leaders met with Dr. Laham and reviewed the work of the 5/6 Work Group. They approved recommendations #1 – 4, 6 - 7, and 9 - 12. Recommendations #7 (math) and #8 (schedule) needed more time to review. It was also decided that the recommended new work groups (#3, #11) be established in October, 2011 and finish their work by December, 2011. A date of May 26, 2011 was established for the 5/6 Work Group to meet again.

**Recommendation #5**

A group of teachers (upper elementary, middle and high school) began meeting to address the issue of differentiation within a grade level of mathematics instruction occur. A group of parents will also be convened in order to obtain their feedback with regard to this recommendation. A target date of June 10, 2011 has been set to bring this recommendation to the Instructional Leaders, so that any necessary PD or scheduling of students can be addressed before school ends.

**Recommendation #8**

This read: “Scheduling of specials classes be determined by the Instructional Leaders and 5/6 building principals; with that schedule being thoughtful, organized and with the least amount of time lost to transition between places. Given the shift to teacher team directed instruction, scheduling of specials classes can be time based as opposed to period based. Recognizing that scheduling of specials classes interacts with necessary instructional time, contractual arrangements for teacher release time and the district fiscal realities; we recommend that scheduling of specials classes be based on one of the four scheduling options:

- a. Option A: Same schedule as 2010-11 with 50-minute specials classes.
- b. Option B: 50-minute classes in music (90 contacts), physical education (60 contacts) and art (30 contacts) follow the same rotation as 2010-11 and world language be offered in a six week segment; in other words, meeting daily for six weeks.
- c. Option C: Fifty minute classes in music (band, orchestra and general music) follow the same rotation as 2010-11 or a total of 90 days (and 90 contacts) and physical education, art and world language rotate the remaining 90 days, dividing the rotations into four ‘blocks’: two physical education (45 contacts) and one each for art (approximately 23 contacts) and world language (approximately 23 contacts). Specials classes in music would alternate every

- d. Option D: Classes in music (band, orchestra and general music) follow the same rotation as in 2010-11 or a total of 90 days for forty-five minutes per day. Physical education offered two days per week for forty-five minutes. Specials class in art offered every other day for forty-five minutes for one semester (45 contacts) and world language offered every other day for forty-five minutes for one semester (45 contacts).”

In accordance with the recommendation of the Work Group, members of the Instructional Leaders met with the principals of the upper elementary schools. In considering each of the schedules, the principals and Instructional Leaders asked how the schedule addressed the following essential questions:

1. Does the schedule allow for students to stay on their assigned teaching team for all content instruction?
2. Does the schedule enable us to schedule “complex” student schedules without losing the flexibility of teaching teams to manipulate/alter their daily schedule to benefit learners?
3. Does the schedule support having teaching teams share a common planning time or, said differently, do all students within a teaching team attend “specials” at the same time?
4. Does the way in which we schedule all of the specials (art, music, physical education and world language) fit within an instructional model that makes sense in terms of student learning and student retention of information?
5. How does the schedule impact instructional time (both hours/minutes as well as total number of contacts) in each of the following areas:
  - a. Instructional Core Classes
  - b. Art
  - c. Music
  - d. Physical Education
  - e. World Language
6. Does the schedule impact class size in any content area?

Each of the four schedules was reviewed, and the strengths and challenges of each were identified. After doing this, it was apparent none of the schedules met the objectives the Work Group’s criteria. A fifth schedule was created in order to more-adequately meet the objectives set forth from the Work Group.

This schedule was shared with the Work Group and is currently being examined by Power and Warner teachers. While no decision has been reached, a target date of May 31, 2011 has been established to bring this recommendation to the Instructional Leaders.

**Option #1, Current Schedule:**

Presently, students have music (band, orchestra or general music) every other day, for 50 minutes each session. For two trimesters, students attend physical education (50 minutes each session) on the days they don't have music and they attend art (50 minutes each session) during the last trimester, on the days they don't have music. World language is taught once a week, for 40 minutes.

In a two week period, it may look like:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Music	PE*	Music, World Language	PE	Music
PE	Music	PE, World Language	Music	PE

\* = PE for two trimesters, art for one trimester

The total number of contacts (times a class are held) and total number of minutes are listed below:

50 minute classes

	<b># contacts/year</b>	<b># minutes/year</b>
Art	30	1500
Music	90	4500
Physical Education	60	3000
World Language	36 (40 min)	1440

**Strengths**

- It is familiar to staff and students
- Cost neutral

**Challenges**

- The effectiveness of World Language instruction has been questioned as it is taught once a week, for the entire year.
- Flexibility of the schedule is limited by World Language being an additional special, once a week.

**Option #2:** Fifty minute classes in art (30 contacts) music (90 contacts) and physical education (60 contacts) follow the same rotation as 2010-11 and world language be offered as a six week option; in other words, meeting daily for six weeks, for 50 minutes each session. This would translate to:

50 minute classes

	<b># contacts/year</b>	<b># minutes/year</b>
Art	30	1500
Music	90	4500
Physical Education	60	3000
World Language	30	1500

Strengths

- Students would be exposed more frequently to the World Language curriculum, during a six week period.
- Cost neutral
- When compared to the present schedule, World Language has 300 minutes more instructional time

Challenges

- Flexibility of the schedule is limited by World Language being an additional special, every day for six weeks. For example, if a team of 3 teachers share students, each of those teachers may have a different World Language 6 week session.
- There is some question as to the retention rate if there is a large gap between when a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student has World Language and when that student may have it in 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- When compared to our present schedule, 300 minutes of core instructional time is lost.

**Option #3:** Fifty minute classes in music (band, orchestra and general music) follow the same rotation as 2010-11 or a total of 90 days (and 90 contacts) and physical education, art and world language rotate the remaining 90 days; dividing the rotations into four ‘blocks’: two physical education (44 contacts) and one each for art (approximately 23 contacts) and world language (approximately 23 contacts). Specials classes in music would alternate every other day with specials classes in physical education, art and world language.

In a two week period, it may look like:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Music	PE*	Music	PE	Music
PE	Music	PE	Music	PE

\* = PE for half the year, art for a quarter and World Language for a quarter

50 minute classes

	<b># contacts/year</b>	<b># minutes/year</b>
Art	23	1150
Music	90	4500
Physical Education	44	2200
World Language	23	1150

Strengths

- Creates flexibility as a teacher will have one special each day
- When compared to our present schedule, 1440 minutes of core instructional time is gained
- Cost neutral

- Has the potential to create lower class sizes in electives. This would be true if 6 classrooms were scheduled into a specialist “block” that contained 7 specialist options: three music classes, art, world language and two PE classes.
- Fewer transitions in the school day, as students only transition to the specialist block and lunch/recess.

Challenges

- PE, Art and World Language have fewer contacts/year.
- When compared to the present schedule, art has 400 minutes less instructional time, PE has 750 minutes less instructional time, World Language has 340 minutes less instructional time
- Has the potential to create higher class sizes in electives. This would be true if 8 classrooms were scheduled into a specialist “block” that contained 7 specialist options: three music classes, art, world language and two PE classes.

**Option #4:** Specials classes in music (band, orchestra and general music) follow the same rotation as in 2010-11 or a total of 90 days for forty-five minutes per day. Physical education offered two days per week for forty-five minutes, outside of the “regular” specialist “block.” Art is offered every other day for forty-five minutes for one semester (45 contacts) and world language offered every other day for forty-five minutes for one semester (45 contacts).

In a two week period, it may look like:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Music	Art*	Music, PE	Art	Music, PE
Art	Music	Art, PE	Music	Art, PE

\* = art for a semester, World Language for a semester

45 minute classes

	<b># contacts/year</b>	<b># minutes/year</b>
Art	45	2025
Music	90	4050
Physical Education	72	3240
World Language	45	2025

Strengths

- When compared to the present schedule, art has 525 minutes more instructional time, PE has 240 minutes more instructional time, World Language has 585 minutes more instructional time
- Provides for an effective delivery of World Language (every other day for a semester)

Challenges

- When compared to the present schedule, music has 450 minutes less instructional time.

- Requires additional staffing in art and world language.
- A few sections of art must be taught in a regular classroom or cafeteria.
- Creates less flexibility for teams of teachers, as two days a week, each teacher will have an additional special during the day. At the extreme, in a three person team, all three teachers may have different PE times, which may eliminate the ability for teachers to share students across classrooms for significant portions of the day/week.
- When compared to the present schedule, 900 minutes of core instructional time is lost.

**Option #5:** This was proposed as a hybrid. It includes classes in music (band, orchestra and general music) following the same rotation as in 2010-11 or a total of 90 days for fifty minutes per day. For one trimester, students attend physical education (50 minutes each session) on the days they don't have music and they attend art (50 minutes each session) during the second term and then World Language (50 minute session) during the last trimester, on the days they don't have music. In addition, students would meet with a PE teacher about once a week for 25 minutes during recess.

In a two week period, it may look like:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Music	Art*	Music	Art, PE at recess	Music
Art	Music	Art	Music, PE at recess	Art

\* = art for a trimester, PE for a trimester, World Language for a trimester

50 minute classes

	<b># contacts/year</b>	<b># minutes/year</b>
Art	30	1500
Music	90	4500
Physical Education	30 + 36 recess contacts x 25 min	2400
World Language	30	1500

### Strengths

- Creates flexibility as a teacher will have one special each day. Each team will likely have the same specialist block. Therefore, the only times that students are not with their core team are lunch/recess and the specialist block.
- Cost neutral
- When compared to the present schedule, World Language has 60 minutes more instructional time
- When compared to the present schedule, 1200 minutes of core instructional time is gained.
- The number of students who attend recess is reduced by approximately 50 students for each recess period, which will allow for more access to equipment and better supervision.

- There is a reduced amount to transitions in the school day, as students only transition to the specialist block and lunch/recess.

### Challenges

- When compared to the present schedule, PE has 600 minutes less instructional time
- Weekly, students lose about 25 minutes of unstructured play that happens during recess.
- There may be a gap between when a student has World Language in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and when the same student has World Language in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. It is unclear on how this will impact the retention of knowledge.

### **Next Steps and Communication Plan**

- School and Community relations will assist in communicating the approved recommendations. This will go out to our current 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade families, as well as all other members of the community
- Parent meetings at both Power and Warner will be held to ask, “What did we miss?”
- Ongoing meetings during the course of next year are being discussed. These would include parents of both 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students and focus on what is going well and what still needs to be revisited.
- Plans are in place for the transition of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students to the upper elementary schools. Counselors have visited each elementary school, 4<sup>th</sup> grade visits to both Power and Warner have begun and the principals of Power and Warner have addressed many elementary PTA’s. Transition cards (forms with information regarding IEP’s, interventions done to date, 504’s and other academic/social/emotional information) are being completed and will be used to assign students to teams.
- The upper elementary leaders are collecting feedback from teachers regarding who they would like to team with. These decisions will be made and announced before the end of the school year.