



Date: May 8, 2019

To: Board of School Trustees

From: Dr. A. Dean Speicher, Superintendent and Sarah Hickle, Director of Student Learning & Innovation

Re: SCM Grade Level Study Report Update On Selected Options and Recommendations

Pre-K – 5 OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Option A SCM leaves sixth grade in each elementary building, with a focus on transitions and a vision for the future with includes a second middle school option.

Recommendation 1: SCM Senior Leadership recommends Option A.

Update; ACHIEVED

Recommendation 2: An additional Pre-K classroom is recommended for implementation at LaSalle for the 2018 – 2019 school year.

Update; ACHIEVED

Recommendation 3: SCM elementary schools will be encouraged to “team” their fifth and sixth grade classroom configuration in core content areas beginning in the 2018 – 2019 school year. It is believed that this reconfiguration will further assist students in their transition to John Young Middle School.

Update; IN PROGRESS

All elementary buildings implemented a fifth-sixth grade rotation for the school year 2018-19. Each building level team is in the process of analyzing progress monitoring data and making design revisions for the 2019-20.

6 - 8 OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Option C Same as Option A in Pre-K – 5.

Recommendation 1: SCM Senior Leadership recommends Option C. Senior Leadership recommends the following items for approval by the Board of School Trustees:

1. To execute educational programming and staffing for new TCU Innovation Lab at John Young for the 2018 – 2019 school year. Two

additional FTE's are required. **Update; ACHIEVED**

2. The option for a second middle school grades six to eight to be considered in the next five year planning period. One area of the plan that needs immediate attention is the search for available land on which to place the proposed middle school. The Superintendent requests School Board authority to begin the land search and purchase process.
3. It may be necessary to engage the expertise and service of a certified commercial realtor to assist in land procurement. We request authorization to engage a qualified commercial realtor.
4. If in the future, a second middle school is not developed, the land owned by School City of Mishawaka can be sold. Land is a valuable commodity within the boundaries of School City of Mishawaka
Update; Senior Leadership has been researching two parcels of land (50 to 75 acres) in the strategic geographical area identified for a potential new middle school. Discussions will continue with the owners of these two parcels.

Recommendation 2: See Pre-K 5 Recommendation 3.

Recommendation 3: This recommendation should be coupled with the future decision on a second middle school. In the next three years (2018 – 2020) the goal should be to totally upgrade all yellow buses (7 in number).
Update; Three new yellow buses were purchased in summer of 2018 with funds from the 5M revenue bonds. This goal appears to be very achievable.

9 -13 OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Option B SCM adds a “Focus on Transitions at Mishawaka High School”.

Recommendation 1: SCM Senior Leadership recommends Option B. The most important part of this recommendation is that SCM execute a plan for incoming ninth grade students that provides “teaming” of SLC’s (Smaller Learning Communities) for students. This will also adjust the roles of some teachers and provide additional support for this important cohort of Mishawaka students. This will be implemented for the 2018 – 2019 school year. This approach is timely with the new Indiana Accountability Plan that uses ninth grade student success as a key metric.

Other supporting components of the ninth grade Initiative include:

1. Formation of the Smaller Learning Communities for students will require organizing teachers and support staff into interdisciplinary teams to focus on the success of each individual student, addressing the needs of the “Whole Child” beyond academics.
2. A structured social/emotional curriculum to be delivered during the Advisory Period by one or more of their SLC teachers with which they have a strong relationship and connection.

3. A structured soft skills program for students delivered during Advisory Period by one of their SLC teachers that leads to self-motivating and self-regulating patterns of behavior.
4. An assessment process needs to be developed collaboratively by MHS Building Leadership and SCM Senior Leadership to measure pre-determined success metrics for MHS freshmen.

Update; IN PROGRESS

A 9th grade administrative support team was implemented for school year 2019-20 consisting of a Dean, Counselor, and Transition Coordinator. Teachers and students were scheduled into smaller learning communities allowing teachers to collaboratively focus on supporting the transition of a smaller group of freshman students. The 9th grade administrative team worked with teachers to provide programming and supports for students in high need areas a successful transition from middle school to high school. This team also coordinated with JYMS for all incoming 2019-20 freshmen scheduling this spring. This team will continue their efforts to build up the 9th grade Smaller Learning Communities and transition supports for the upcoming 2019-20 school year including the identification of measurable objectives and progress monitoring for program evaluation.

Recommendation 2: Senior and Building Leadership will align MHS curriculum courses with state-mandated career pathways and will develop locally created pathways as needed in 2018 – 2019 for implementation in 2019 – 2020. Other components of this recommendation include:

1. Leveraging of established community partnerships.
2. A Strategic Plan for increasing community involvement and business partnerships.
3. Completing program and course audits for each career pathway which focus on filling gaps and providing engaging and relevant courses for pathways in high demand.
4. Creating meaningful student experiences that provide relevant hands-on learning opportunities in each career pathway.

Update; ACHIEVED

Recommendation 3: The “Grade 13” initiative has caused both confusion and much discussion. The Superintendent’s recommendation is two-fold:

1. Design a “Grade 13” or Real World Career Readiness Program – Transitions from School to the Workplace and seek School Board approval during the 2018 – 2019 school year.
2. Implement “Grade 13” or A Real World Career Readiness Plan with the first cohort of Mishawaka High School students during the 2019 – 2020 school year.

Update; POSTPONED

We look forward to advancing this initiative through collaboration on the Lily Regional Cities Project. These collaborative efforts will focus on transforming our region to be an economic leader in next-generation manufacturing, entrepreneurship, applied analytics and

technology. This work will position our students, post-graduation, to have broad opportunities for training, work based learning and careers in tomorrow's jobs.

As Superintendent of the School City of Mishawaka, it is my privilege to make these recommendations on behalf of the Work Group members who developed this excellent body of work. The outcomes produced by these Work Groups contributes immensely to the Strategic Vision of the School City of Mishawaka. Mishawaka students and the community are beneficiaries once again!