



Welcome to the Edina Middle Level Study Task Force Meeting

Larry Leebens



Charge Statement

- Develop recommendations for 21st century middle level education (1) providing personalized learning experiences, (2) maximizing available resources and (3) ensuring success and preparation for high school and beyond for all learners-socially, emotionally and academically.

Why the study now?

- Disparities in achievement exists when comparing demographic groups.
- This is a chance for the school district to continue looking at integral parts of the system and new ways to bring new levels of success to all students.
- A chance to celebrate the successes of middle level education in Edina.

Work Timeline

- Preparation and Planning (Oct. and Nov.)
- Defining the Current Reality (Nov. and Dec.)
- Researching Possibilities (Jan.-March)
- Defining the Recommendation and Implementation Plan (March- May)
- Implement the Plan (short and long term)
June 15 and on
- Assess, review and revise the plan

Task Force Membership

- 6 middle level teachers
- 2 middle school principals
- 4 parents
- 1 high school administrator
- 1 elementary administrator
- 1 consultant
- Advisory: Communications, Finance and Transportation

Task Force Member Roles

Roles and responsibilities

Speak from your experience and expertise/Speak your own truth

Use systems thinking

Communicate in a timely manner

Be open to new learning

Look for areas of agreement

Support the decisions of the group

Attend whenever possible

How we will do our work?

- Open communication/transparent process
- Opportunities for input, feedback, insights
- Consider the needs of all stakeholders including students, staff, parents, board and community.
- Collaboration and consensus building
- How can we be successfully connected to the staff at both middle level schools?

My role and responsibilities

***Provide task force leadership**

***Share my experience and expertise**

***Ensure that our final recommendations align with the purpose and support student learning**

***Communicate to key stakeholders**

Ground Rules

Ground Rules

- a. I will be here on time so we can start and finish on time.
 - b. When I am absent, I will be responsible for getting the information.
 - c. I agree to focus my attention on our work with minimal distractions (side conversations, cell phones, computer work, etc.)
 - d. I agree to be open, honest and respectful with my team members
in an effort to continuously build trust.
 - e. I will seek clarification if I don't understand or agree
 - f. I agree to bring curiosity rather than judgment to our work.
 - g. I will error on the side of student learning.
- * Use Courageous Conversation Agreements

Decision Making Framework

- A. Shared Reality
 - B. Creating Options
 - C. Choice Making
 - D. Implementation
 - E. Refinement

How we will do our work.

- Open communication/transparent process
- Opportunities for input, feedback, insights
- Consider the needs of all stakeholders including students, staff, parents, board and community.
- Collaboration and consensus building
- How can we continue to be successfully connected to the staff at both middle level schools?

Worst Outcomes

- With your team, please use the following process to write the response to the following question.
 - Identify someone to record responses on paper
 - In a round robin fashion, give your response.
 - Someone writes when the recorder is responding.
 - Go around until all responses have been given.
 - Do not respond to or comment on another person's response.
- What are the worst outcomes if we are unable to accomplish the given charge?

Best Outcomes

- With your team, please use the following process to write the response to the following question.
 - Identify someone to record responses on paper
 - In a round robin fashion, give your response.
 - Someone writes when the recorder is responding.
 - Go around until all responses have been given.
 - Do not respond to or comment on another person's response.
- What are the best outcomes if we accomplish the given charge?



Feedback on the Study Process



Creating a learning team

- Creating a learning team
 - Move to one of the “Enemies” that interests you.
 - Share why it is of interest to someone near you.
 - When given the signal from Larry, turn the sign over to the other side and attach it to the wall.
 - What are your thoughts now?

Enemies of Learning

- a. Our inability to admit we don't know
- b. The desire for clarity all of the time
- c. Lack of priority for learning...I don't have time
- d. Inability to learn
- e. Ignoring the emotional dimension of learning
- f. Confusing learning with acquiring new information
- g. Not giving permission to others to teach us
- h. Lack of trust
- i. Addiction to answers
- j. Confusing opinion with knowing

Turning “Enemies into Friends”

- a. Our inability to admit or not see what we don't know
- (Give permission to be able to say “I don't know.” Develop the cognitive ability to know when you don't know.)
- b. The desire for clarity all of the time
- (Ability to be fuzzy, be in questions)
- c. Lack of priority for learning...I don't have time
- (Learning is a priority)
- d. Inability to learn (Be able to unlearn in order to relearn)
- e. Ignoring the emotional dimension of learning
- (Acknowledge the role of emotional learning)
- f. Confusing learning with acquiring new information (Acknowledge difference between learning and information gathering)
- g. Not giving permission to others to teach us
- (Give permission to teach me)
- h. Lack of trust (Trust)
- i. Addiction to answers (Being open to process of learning as well as the results.)
- J. Confuse opinions and knowing (Knowing the difference between opinion and knowing)

Creating the story about middle level learning...

- Create the shared reality
 - Demographics
 - Data including stakeholder opinions
 - Current programming

We are painting a picture that describes the current reality and then begin to describe what we believe to be the emerging reality.

What is changing in the middle school learning environment?

- Expectations
- Relationships
- Knowledge and skills needed
- Language and behaviors
- Mission, vision and values
- Products
- Services

Other questions

- What are the new issues, problems and situations that are arising?
- What are the facts and perceptions that currently exist?
- What are the trends, influences, implications that are evolving?
- What are the current and arising stakeholder needs and wants?

Next Steps

- Communication Statement
- Advisory Group
 - Stay after each meeting for 15-30 minutes
 - Feedback on meeting, ideas for next meeting
 - 1 middle school principal, 1 teacher, 1 parent, Larry and Jenni
- Assignment for December
 - Dates:
 - Dec. 16 7-10:30
 - January 25 3-6
 - February 25 12:30-3:30
 - March 11 8-3
 - April 15 3-5
 - May 20 (if needed) 8-3

Closure

- On an index card...
 - What worked for you today?
 - What can we do to support your work in the next meeting?