

72% Reduction in D's and F's. Is Wednesday Worth It?

In the summer of 2021, all current staff members were trained in a process called the Masonic Model Student Assistance Program. The intent of the training was to provide a structure for professional collaboration that would allow us to better meet the needs of our students with respect to behavior, academics, health concerns and attendance. The first year of implementation was the 21-22 school year. At that time, we knew that we would need to make adjustments to the process that would help with the “fit” of the structure in the context of our school and that this



was a new process for our staff, so a learning curve was to be expected. One of the hallmarks of our implementation is that we have set aside time on Wednesday afternoon specifically for collaboration that benefits our students. Had the district attempted to implement the plan without specific time earmarked for collaboration, we knew that

the many before and after school obligations of many staff members would prevent the program from being implemented consistently. In the 22-23 school year, we have continued to adjust the program based on feedback from staff. In a recent staff survey, we collected attitudinal data from certified staff regarding the programming as well as the necessity of having specific time set aside to allow for all professional staff to participate.

- ◆ 92% of certified staff agree or strongly agree with the following statement: The time spent in Student Support Teams translates into tangible, supportive change for students.
- ◆ 92% of certified staff agree or strongly agree with the following statement: The Student Support Teams time and process allow me to meaningfully collaborate with colleagues.
- ◆ 92% of certified staff agree or strongly agree with the following statement: The scheduled early release time, earmarked for SST on Wednesday is necessary for the implementation of the program.
- ◆ 100% of certified staff agree or strongly agree with the following statement: The Student Support Teams model has helped students in our district to be more successful.

Quantitative data also supports the assertion that this program is having a significant positive impact on our students. It may be important to note that another supportive intervention put in place for high school and some middle school kids who are at risk of failure is the REACH program. We know that the collective impact of these two programs may be responsible for some of the improved student performance. Quantitative data was collected with respect to the

number of students earning grades of “D” and “F” for quarter grades in the middle and high school for the year before implementation (20-21) and the two years since implementation of the program. See the data in the following table.

Impact of Wednesday Early Dismissal Time

	MS Quarter grades “D”	MS Quarter grades “F”	HS Quarter Grades “D”	HS Quarter Grades “F”
2020-2021 SY (no GSST)	158	13	143	31
2021-2022 SY (first year of SST implementation)	110	6	127	26
2022-2023 SY (second year of SST implementation, in first two quarters)	19	5	32	9
2022-2023 SY Data extrapolated to 4 quarters	38	10	64	18

We knew that we would need to make adjustments to the structure of the program as we worked with it. As with any program, there can be an implementation dip, where the initial results are not as promising as overall expectations would lead us to believe. Year two data indicates that some of the changes to the programming and our familiarity with the process has increased the effectiveness of the program. The 2022-2023 totals are extrapolated based on Q1 and Q2 data. If the trend continues, by the end of year two of implementation, we will have reduced the number of “D” grades in the middle school by 75%. In the high school, the reduction in students earning “D” grades has been 55%. Failing grades in the HS have decreased by nearly 42%. A more modest reduction in failures at the middle school of 23% is also noted. **Overall, we have reduced the number of D's and F's in the middle school by 72% and in the high school by 53% since the 20-21 school year.**

Is Wednesday worth it? The time our staff has earmarked for collaboration for the benefit of our kids definitely makes a difference!