

Middle School / Troy

Please provide class size / teacher load data similar to what you provided last year. (specific class sizes per period/class, not just averages, etc.)

<i>Grade</i>	<i>#of students</i>	<i>#of teachers</i>	<i>class size</i>	<i>teacher load</i>
5	101	5	20.2	101
6	127	6	21.1	105.5
7	124	7	17.7	88.5
8	121	7	17.2	85

The Middle School budget proposes to eliminate one classroom teacher, presumably due to decreased enrollment. On page 2 of the Middle School Project Budget handout (Cost Center Review), the first section lists the 2019/2020 student population by grade but then notes that the total of 478 is 47 fewer students than in 2019/2020. Does that mean the projection for 2020/2021 will be 47 fewer students (i.e 431)? I wasn't sure if the date was a typo.

Yes, that is a typo. The 20/21 enrollment will be 473 as of today (52 fewer students than 19/20)

The reduction in the classroom teacher count is likely due at least in part to the decrease in the incoming 5th grade population. Parents have reached out to the Board, letting us know that some they are concerned about the proposed reduction because the number of teachers/classrooms for the current 4th grade (incoming 5th grade) has not been ideal. Please give us your understanding of how the reduction of a classroom teacher for the Middle School will impact the incoming 5th grade class and the overall educational experience for the Middle School.

The 2019/20 5th grade class has 127 students and 6 classroom teachers for an average class size of 21.1.

The 2020/21 5th grade class has 101 students and 5 classroom teachers for an average class size of 20.2

The board guideline for class size is 20-24 for grades 5-12.

We believe the proposed 5th grade staffing levels will support all students as they transition to the middle school.

Enrollment for the middle school is predicted to decrease by 47 students. What flexibility do you have if significantly more students actually enroll next year? (Similar to what happened to the high school last year.)

We will have the ability to add students at each grade level with the proposed staffing levels while remaining within the boards recommended ranges.

Could you please share more about the expanded electives offered. Is this just for 8th grade or are all grades receiving these options. Is this impacting the budget?

Our elective programing is being offered at no additional cost to the district. Teachers have agreed to lead an elective course/activity in replacement of a WIN section. Electives can take place 1 or 2 days out of a 6 day rotation. Currently, 6th, 7th and 8th grade students have the option to take electives. Any student taking an elective must be in good academic and social standing. Students can be claimed from an elective by a teacher at any time.

You identify expanding experiential learning to grade 7. Is there any plan to also expand this across grade 8? Do you have any data on how the students in the experiential program are doing compared to other 8th grade students and to how they did in 7 th grade.

We developed an experiential learning team this year to meet the need for multiple academic pathways for students. Based on the success (student and parent feedback) we have decided to expand to the 7th grade next year. As we work to build capacity within our staff to offer additional experiential opportunities for all students, we are planning to have a thematic based team of students in 7th and 8th grade next year. This simply means the language arts, social studies and science teachers will work together to identify a common theme per trimester. This will allow students to guide their own learning at times because their learning will be connected across several content areas.

We are in the process of collecting data to compare the current 8th grade experiential students to their off-team peers. The best data at this point has been in the form of student, parent and community feedback. According to this feedback there is an increase in engagement, personal ownership for their learning,

reduction in stress level and overall better understanding of individual strengths and needs as learners.

Mindfulness is identified as an unaddressed need - could you expand in what that could look like in the middle school? What needs would be addressed. Are we sufficiently meeting those needs in other ways?

Mindfulness was a focus area for a third of our staff working as a cohort this year. CEEF provided funding that allowed a mindfulness instructor to work with 15 staff members focusing on benefits of consistent ongoing mindfulness practices. These teachers have brought mindfulness into their classrooms and approximately 200 students have practiced mindfulness.

The plan is to develop internal teacher leaders to educate the rest of the staff in the use of mindfulness techniques so more students will benefit. At this point we are not sure if anyone feels comfortable enough to take the lead role and if not what would be the cost to contract with an outside agency for additional training. We are meeting on Friday to explore options and develop the next steps.

Teachers and student report success with mindfulness and an immediate change in the energy level of students with an increased ability to focus. At a minimum, the current cohort of teachers will continue utilizing mindfulness with their students and share the benefits with their peer teachers. We have several staff that can help share the strategies to get started, however more training is needed to grow the practice.

