

The Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle School Education

Report to the School Committee

June 3, 2008

CPS
Cambridge Public Schools



**Cambridge Public Schools
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Cambridge, MA 02141**

The Blue Ribbon Commission

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The Blue Ribbon Commission

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I. Introduction

Goal

The goal of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle Schools is to research the issues as a joint project between the School Committee and Superintendent. Furthermore, we seek to educate the entire School Committee and public on the challenges that exist within the current state of our middle schools and to further research the issue of structure. The debate took on the issue of researching the strengths and weaknesses of the current middle schools in an effort to gain an understanding of the challenges the district faces. An additional charge of the Commission was to visit and research middle schools within CPS and in surrounding communities to view how programs were positively or adversely affected by school structure, i.e.: K-8, 7-12, or 6-8 school models.

Rationale for convening the commission

Superintendent Dr. Fowler Finn and the Cambridge School Committee heard concerns from a growing number of parents and staff regarding pressing issues with the middle school. Some of the concerns were about academic rigor, about varying degrees of student preparedness for CRLS from the elementary schools, about behavior, and about the need for additional opportunities for extra-curricula activities, teacher isolation, and the need for coordinated professional development and common planning time.

The School Committee commissioned a market research study on what was working and not working in the CPS. The issue of middle schools was raised several times from focus groups including middle school parents and parents from primary grade students. During the past several elementary school graduations, the lack of racial/ethnic diversity at several middle schools became evident.

In the past decade programs, such as the Intensive Studies Program at the Kennedy-Longfellow School and later at the Peabody School, have been sustained with some popularity among families. Other programs, such as the School of the Future and Follow Through extended through sixth grade with their varied strengths and weaknesses and fed into a combined middle school program. The result was a fragmented approach to middle grades efforts, absent of a systematic, cohesive middle school approach.

In 2007, the Superintendent created a Middle School Task Force of educators to analyze the issues at hand. The School Committee dedicated a Round Table discussion in April of 2007 to middle school issues. The Superintendent and staff reported preliminary issues that have been discussed as part of the Task Force and listed a number of initiatives to help improve academics within the current middle schools. The work of the Task Force was limited to the scope of the current K-8 structure as well as the current configuration of schools that currently existed. The School Committee and Superintendent agreed for the need of a joint effort between the School Committee, the Superintendent and school staff to study all of the issues that may be impacting the quality of middle schools. The School Committee announced the formation of a Blue Ribbon

Commission on Middle Schools in the Fall of 2007 to study district configuration, and/or grade structure of the Cambridge Public Schools and alternative existing approaches to middle grade education. *Grade structure* is defined as organization of grades, i.e. K-8 models, 6-98 models, and 7-12 models. *Configuration* is defined as the location of programs, the number of schools, and other policies that affect student demographics.

Organization and Activity

Membership: The Blue Ribbon Middle School Commission was co-chaired by School Committee Member Joseph G. Grassi and Superintendent of Schools Thomas Fowler-Finn and was comprised of 25 core members representing a cross section of School Committee Members, Central Office Administrators, Curriculum Leaders, Principals and Assistant Principals as well as middle school teachers. Educational expertise was also provided by the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Subcommittees: Three subcommittees were formed to address different area of the report, including current state of middle schools, visitations, and strengths and weaknesses of the current K-8 system.

Meetings & Visitations: Meetings of the Commission were held monthly from September of 2007 through May of 2008. Each of the subcommittees met separately to work out details of subcommittee reports.

Visitations of other schools and districts: There were multiple site visits to a number of school systems to review the structure of different public, private, and charter schools. Included in this research were visits to K-8 schools, 6-12 schools, and stand alone 6-8 middle schools.

Public Input: The Commission went to great lengths to gather input from the public. These efforts included well advertised meetings and solicitation of personal testimony as well as written comments from those in attendance at the following forums:

Key Communicators meeting (Nov 14, 2007)
City-Wide School Council meeting (Nov. 15, 2007)
City-Wide parents meeting (Dec. 6, 2007)
(See appendix for written comments.)

Blue Ribbon Commission Report Development: Each of the three subcommittees produced a report of their findings. These reports are the foundation for the final report of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle Schools. Drafts were circulated and reviewed by the full Commission.

Next steps: Superintendent and staff will develop several options of specific recommendations to be presented to the School Committee for further discussion and action.

II. Current State of the CPS Middle School Structure

Subcommittee: Kathy Greeley, Tim Groves, Aida Ramos, Nancy Tauber

Guiding Principles Adopted

In Spring of 2007, based on current research on effective middle school programs, five guiding principles for our schools were endorsed by the Middle School Task Force (an ad hoc group that met to identify key challenges) and the principals. These are:

- **Principle #1:** Provide a curriculum that is:
 - Rigorous with high expectations for all students
 - Developmentally responsive and relevant to students' lives
 - Integrated and exploratory
 - Based on MA Curriculum Frameworks & CPS Learning Expectations
 - Consistent across the schools
 - Guided by clearly articulated student proficiencies
 - Informed by assessment
- **Principle #2:** Use research-based instructional practices designed to prepare all students to achieve high standards.
- **Principle #3:** Staff the middle grades with teachers who are expert in adolescent development, academic content and best teaching practices and are committed to knowing the whole child. Support teachers through the development of professional communities in which they work collaboratively toward student achievement and growth.
- **Principle #4:** Provide a safe and respectful school environment, free from bullying, in which healthy relationships and communication are fostered in order to improve academic performance and develop caring and competent citizens.
- **Principle #5:** Work in partnership with families and communities to support student learning and development.

Schools were asked to conduct an informal self-assessment based on these principles.

Structures

The Cambridge Public Schools are organized on the K-8 model. Middle school programs tend to look very different across the city in structure, staffing patterns, schedules, and instructional practices. In some schools, middle school begins at grade 6, where students begin rotating to discipline-specific classes (English Language Arts (ELA), Math, Science, and Social Studies). In a couple of schools, the 6th grade is team-taught by two teachers, one Math/Science and one ELA/Social Studies. In other schools, the middle school comprises just the 7th and 8th grade. In these schools, students rotate between Math, Science, and Humanities (an integration of ELA

and Social Studies). School sizes also vary dramatically. For example, one school has a total of 50 students in grades 6-8; another has 165 students in the same grade span. Teacher-student ratios also differ, e.g. one school has 7th grade sections of 12 students each while another has 24 students in each class. Two schools (Kennedy-Longfellow and Peabody) have Intensive Studies Programs (ISP) in which accelerated classes are offered to students. In addition, some schools host self-contained special education classes at the middle grades level. There are several different offerings related to bilingual education. Amigos is a school-wide two-way Spanish bilingual program; King Open has a separate two-way Portuguese strand (Òla); Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. has an integrated school-wide Chinese program (Ni Hao); and Tobin houses the Sheltered English Immersion class for 7th and 8th grade for the district.

Student groupings also differ from school to school. In most schools, students travel with the same “homeroom” for the whole day. In a few schools, however, students mix groupings during the day. All schools are on a semester marking system and participate in city-wide assessments that take place three times per year in Math, ELA, and Science. However, report cards differ from school to school. Some schools use a simple computerized system, like the CRLS report card, and others have more extensive narrative reports. Plans are currently underway to finalize a baseline reporting system for the district. In addition, some schools use portfolios and hold evening portfolio sessions with families and students. By the end of next year, all schools will be expected to adopt a portfolio system. Presently, five schools conduct 8th grade portfolio review panels as part of a graduation requirement. Finally, EdLine, an online site that gives families and students easy access to class assignments, activities, and other school information, is being implemented in all middle schools. A pilot group of teachers was trained in January, and other teachers are receiving training this spring. By September 2008, all middle schools will be using EdLine.

Curriculum

While there are structural differences, there are some key commonalities in the Cambridge middle school programs. All students engage in Connected Mathematics Program 2 (CMP2), a rigorous math curriculum. The Science Department has developed a common curriculum for grades 6, 7, and 8. In four schools, Literacy Coaches are working with teachers in grades 6, 7, and 8. All students have at least one World Language offered (some schools have two). In most schools, students take language twice a week in 6th grade and three times a week in 7th and 8th grade. All students take Art once a week, and Physical Education and Music are given twice a week. All 8th grade students are offered sex education course called Know Your Body, and this year Physical Education teachers are being trained to also teach Health. (For further details about curriculum, see the Cambridge Curriculum Overview documents @ www.cpsd.us)

Providing a safe and respectful school environment (Guiding Principle #4) is foundational to a quality middle school. This year, teachers from seven middle school programs attended a week-long summer institute in Developmental Design (DD). DD is an approach “to meet the unique social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of young adolescents.” It offers teachers an array of strategies that address ways to build healthy and respectful relationships. While some schools involved their whole staff in the training, others had a handful of teachers attending. Nearly all the schools that participated in the DD training begin their day with a morning meeting called the Circle of Power and Respect (CPR). This summer, CPS is hosting a second stage of Developmental Design training for all those teachers who attended last summer and is offering the introductory training to new participants.

Teacher Responsibilities

In some schools, especially those with only one class at each grade level, teachers may teach three different grade levels. Curriculum content is challenging which can make preparation for three different grade levels difficult. There are also differences in terms of both teacher:student ratio and number of periods taught each day. Some teachers teach five periods a day, some teach three. Teachers meet for team meetings during the school day 1-2 times per week depending on the school. In addition, teachers are expected to attend five 2-hour district-wide departmental meetings during the school year. These are held after school. Middle school teachers also meet in their departments for one day in August (the week before school opens).

After-School Opportunities

While there are after-school opportunities for middle school students in the city, they are somewhat limited. Furthermore, it seems as if students' participation in these activities decline as they get older. For example, 28% of 6th graders self-report that they participate in a 5-day/week after-school program, but only 14% of 8th graders do. Many of the after-school programs are offered through the Department of Human Services, but all schools provide some services and there are some city-wide activities. The city-wide activities include an all-city chorus, band, orchestra, a drama club, and intramural sports in basketball and volleyball. Recently, the Media Arts Studio has begun to offer an 8-week course for middle school students (offered three times a year) and a new dance club is being piloted this spring. The Science Department is piloting a middle school marine science program in collaboration with CRLS. If a school does offer after-school clubs of some kind, it is usually on the initiative of one of the teachers. One school (Kennedy-Longfellow) is experimenting with extensive after-school clubs with several offerings to middle school students that have been supported through stipends from the school. The Gately Youth Center, in partnership with the Peabody School, has been piloting an after-school program specifically for 6th-8th graders, which includes homework support and a range of extracurricular activities. This project serves primarily Peabody middle school students, but also includes some students from other schools in the city. All schools offer some kind of after-school assistance to students. Some have an open Homework Center and others have more targeted support for students in need. Two schools (Fletcher-Maynard and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.) have Extended Learning Time so all students stay until 4:00 p.m.

Summary

The Cambridge Public Schools have undergone many positive changes in the past few years. The successful restructuring of CRLS has revealed the importance of a focus on our middle school programs. As we continue to move forward with the work of improving our middle schools, we recognize that the work will need to include a common vision, clear standards, and equity in resources and programs in order to ensure that all our students attend an excellent middle school program.

2007-08 Overview of Middle School Structures

SCHOOLS	Grade Structure	# of Students	White / Nonwhite ratio	Paid / Free & Red. Lunch Ratio	# of classrooms per grade	**Group	***Humanities	****Team Meetings	*****Extended Learning Time
Amigos	6 7 8	27 25 21	27%/73%	50%/50%	2-6 th 2-7 th 1-8 th	HR		2x	
Baldwin	6* 7 8 SC	38 34 46 8	35%/65%	69%/31%	2-6 th 2-7 th 2-8 th 1 SC 7/8	HR		2x	
Cambridgeport	7 8	41 22	29%/71%	57%/43%	2-7 th 2-8 th	Mix	x	1x	
Fletcher-Maynard	6 7 8	17 16 17	15%/85%	51%/49%	1-6 th 1-7 th 1-8 th	HR	x	2x	x
Graham & Parks	7 8	45 40	59%/41%	73%/27%	2-7 th 2-8 th	Mix	x	2x	
Kennedy-Longfellow	6 7 8 SC	37 63 65	41%/59%	43%/57%	1 Reg 6 th 1 ISP-6 th 1 SC-5/6 1 Reg-7 th 2 ISP 7 th 1 SC 7 th 1 Reg 8 th 2 ISP 8 th 1 SC 8 th	HR	x	1x	
King Open	7 8 Ola	36 41 20	45%/55%	48%/52%	2-7 th 2-8 th 1 Ola	Mix	x	1x 75m.	
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	6 7 8	19 19 15	21%/79%	44%/56%	1-6 th 1-7 th 1-8 th 1 SC 7/8	HR	x	2x	x
Morse	6* 7 8	27 24 28	22%/78%	45%/55%	2-6 th , 2-7 th , 2-8 1 SC 6-8	HR		1x	
Peabody	6 7 8	48 46 40	36%/64%	47%/53%	2 Reg 6 th 1 ISP 6 th 2 Reg 7 th 1 ISP 7 th 2 Reg 8 th	HR		1x	
Tobin	7 8 SEI	21 21 20	21%/79%	44%/56%	1-7 th , 1-8 th 1 SEI	HR	x	2x	
MS District Avg.			34%/66%	53%/47%					

SC = Self-contained classroom, SEI = Sheltered English Immersion, Ola=2-way Portuguese bilingual program,

*6th grade is team-taught (Math/Science and ELA/Social Studies),

**Students travel in homeroom or mixed groups,

***Humanities represents the integrated teaching of ELA &SS – In other schools ELA &SS are taught as separate courses.

****Team meetings during school day (generally 45-50 min.),

*****Extended Learning Time schools run from 8:00 a.m. –4:00 p.m.

2007-08 Overview of Middle School Program Offerings

SCHOOLS	Portfolio Conf.	8 th Gr. Reviews	AVID	Advisory or CPR	Electives	Commun. Service	Student Gov't.	HW Center	Aft.-School Clubs	Develop. Design	Youth Center Partnership
Amigos				X		X	X	X	X	X	
Baldwin				X		X	X	X	X	X	
Cambridgeport	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	
Fletcher-Maynard		X	X		X			X	X		
Graham and Parks	X	X				X	X	X			
Kennedy-Longfellow			X		X		X	X	X	X	
King Open	X				X	X		X	X		
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	X	X		X	X					X	
Morse		X		X				X	X	X	
Peabody			X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Tobin				X					X	X	

Glossary:

- **Portfolio Conferences:** Students present a portfolio of their work to their parents and others during Parent Conference Nights.
- **8th Grade Review Panels:** Graduating 8th graders must present a selection of their work to a panel that includes teachers, parents, and others from the community.
- **AVID:** AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a national program that targets students with the potential to go to a 4-year college, but need extra support to do the high level work required. It is a voluntary program.
- **CPR/Advisory:** CPR (Circle of Power and Respect) is a structured morning meeting in which students learn a variety of social skills and build a sense of community.
- **Electives:** Students choose to sign up for classes that run during the school day that can range from Science Olympiad to woodworking to drama.
- **Community Service:** Students are expected to develop some kind of project that involves volunteering in their community.
- **Student Government:** Most student governments are elected and hold meetings either during the school day at lunch or recess; some meet after school.
- **Homework Center:** Additional help offered before or after school to students.
- **After-school clubs:** These free clubs are open to any student who wants to stay after school, e.g. chess, cooking, journalism.
- **Developmental Design:** DD is a program that links the social and academic curricula with a focus on providing a safe and respectful school environment. An * indicates that at least some staff at the school have been trained starting in 2007.
- **Youth Center Partnership:** This partnership between the school and the Gately Youth Center has developed programming specifically for 6th-8th graders.

III. Strengths and Challenges of the Present CPS Middle School Structure

Subcommittee: Elaine Koury, Maryann MacDonald, Vincent Mili, Timothy O'Connor, Chris Rettig, Chris Saheed, Julie Ward

The K-8 structure of CPS middle grades presents both strengths and challenges to the district. During the 2006-07 school year, the Middle School Task Force convened to identify researched-based elements of effective middle schools and begin to address strengths and challenges of our present program. An important outcome of the work of the Middle School Task Force was the development of five *Guiding Principles of Effective Middle Schools*. These Guiding Principles informed the work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force and provide a framework by which the district can assess its present structure.

The strengths and challenges of the present CPS program are outlined below with respect to these Guiding Principles. Challenges are separated into those that are affected by the present K-8 model and those that are not directly influenced by structure.

Principles 1 & 2

Academic Expectations

*Rigorous and Engaging Curriculum
Research-based Instructional Practices*

Strengths of Present Program

The academic strengths of the present program are based on alignment of CPS curricula with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, CPS Learning Expectations, and national standards. Within this framework, teachers work to provide engaging curricula that both challenge and support each student's needs. Ongoing evaluation and assessment are used to assess student progress and guide instruction. These strengths are independent of structure. Other strengths of the program include:

- Professional development and support for teachers in curriculum content and instructional practices by middle school coaches in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science
- Increased use of CPS assessments in ELA, Math, Science, and World Language by teachers to guide instruction
- Weekly Visual Art and Instrumental and Choral music instruction for middle grade students
- Development of 8th grade portfolios and other performance assessments that demonstrate students' understanding of the curriculum
- Implementation of the AVID (Achievement via Individual Determination) program in 3 schools (Fletcher-Maynard, Kennedy-Longfellow, Peabody)
- Implementation of the Literacy Collaborative (LC) across schools in K-5 and the introduction of LC at the middle school level at 4 schools (Cambridgeport, Fletcher-Maynard, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Peabody)
- Schools maintaining their unique identity and keeping creativity in the curriculum
- Opportunity for more integrated and engaging curriculum

Structural Challenges

- Difficulty for teachers to become proficient in and prepare to teach the content for 2 or 3 grade levels of a demanding curriculum in schools that have small numbers of students
- Isolation of content area teachers in all schools because of small numbers (e.g. most schools have only one middle school math or science teacher)
- Academic offerings and schedules driven by numbers and/or shared specialists
- Inefficiency/ inequity of teacher caseloads from school to school

Other Challenges

- Inconsistent agreement on philosophy, experiences, and preparation for high school
- Inconsistent teacher expectations re: common benchmarks for student proficiency across schools
- Inefficient communication between and among departments to assure excellence in instruction and programming in the middle grades
- Impact of ISP and local charter schools on middle grade programs in some schools affecting student numbers and diversity in grades 6-8
- School-based decisions that are not always in sync with district direction (e.g. humanities and ELA)
- Lack of interdisciplinary curriculum development

Principle 3

Staffing and Professional Development

Strengths of Present Program

CPS has hired many dedicated and talented middle school teachers and supports them with varied and ongoing professional development opportunities. Professional development is offered by both individual schools and the district, with mentoring opportunities for new teachers. Other strengths of the program include:

- Support from middle school coaches in developing strong professional communities among departments
- School-based cluster meetings that allow for consistent communication among staff
- Regular after-school department meetings for middle school teachers across schools (five 2-hour sessions per year) to discuss curriculum and assessment by content area
- Support for the Middle School Leadership Team with Team Leaders from each school who meet monthly to discuss middle school issues, share best practices, and provide a communication link among schools and the district
- A redesigned New Teacher Induction Program that includes an increased focus on curriculum content as well as pedagogy
- Stable staffing in some schools, enabling them to build a strong sense of team
- Introduction of two 1:00-5:00 Professional Development meetings for middle school teachers in each core academic area
- Participation of special education teachers in district-wide professional development, hence more awareness of district initiatives and more support for regular education teachers

Structural Challenges

- Limited opportunities for teachers to collaborate with each other often and easily due to the small size of most middle grades
- Difficulty in structuring opportunities for Middle School Leadership Team and professional development opportunities due to 4 tier start/ dismissal times of elementary schools
- Variance of 6th grade configuration by school (some schools have self-contained 6th grade, others have semi-departmentalized and some have departmentalized) makes it difficult to schedule professional development for these teachers (including determining who is included in which training)
- Lack of inclusion of specialists (Special Education, English as a Second Language, Art, Music, PE, World Language) as members of the middle school team because of scheduling and the fact that specialists are often shared by schools

Other Challenges

- Coaches conducting professional development, writing district assessments, and supporting new teachers which takes away time working with individual teachers
- Lack of middle school coaches in some content areas (e.g. social studies)
- Lack of development of teacher leadership for middle grade clusters to ensure that meetings are used well and focused on student achievement
- Varied expertise in middle school education and leadership in schools
- Turnover in middle school teachers which undermines ongoing professional development and consistent instructional practices
- Lack of sufficient amounts of time during the school day for middle school teachers within schools to meet
- Lack of diversity of staff, including race and gender
- Need for continued improvement of New Teacher Induction Program that takes into account different teacher needs between Years 1 and 2

Principle 4

Safe and Respectful School Culture

Strengths of Present Program

The present K-8 structure offers an opportunity for students and their families to know each other well over time. Teachers and administrators recognize that a strong social curriculum must be coupled with the academic curriculum in order to ensure high quality instruction within a respectful school culture. The district has begun to implement *Developmental Design*, a social curriculum specifically designed for middle school students and has supported other programs and policies targeted at ensuring safe and respectful school climates in all schools. Other strengths of the K-8 program include:

- The establishment of a nurturing environment in small schools where teachers truly know all of their students well
- The ability of each school to develop a school climate approach that can be implemented from pre-K through 8th grade
- Students remaining in a consistent community at a significant stage of their development
- Opportunities for upper and lower grade collaboration as study buddies and other kinds of role models
- Community building as a result of well established school identity and pride over time

- Class cohorts that have a history in each school enabling lower grade teachers to be accessible to foster continued relationships with students and their families
- The development of district anti-bullying, internet safety and other safety policies as well as resources and assistance for teachers and administrators
- Use of the Effective School Battery, given every other year, to gather data on school culture that informs School Improvement Plans
- Partial mainstreaming of special education students from substantially separate classes into academic classes such as math and science which helps build a stronger, unified community

Structural Challenges

- Middle school attrition rates that lead to small peer groups in some schools and social isolation for some students

Other Challenges

- Difficulty including specialists in trainings because of scheduling and traveling
- Lack of time for teacher teams to develop a common, coordinated approach to discipline issues and a shared “ownership” of students and their issues
- Lack of a coherent guidance/ counseling program to support the specific academic and social needs of young adolescents
- Health education is inconsistently taught due to scheduling challenges.

Principle 5

Strong Connections to Families and Community

Strengths of Present Program

One of the K-8 model’s strengths is that it enables teachers and administrators to know students and their families well over time providing opportunities to create strong working relationships. In addition to family partnerships, Cambridge has a wealth of resources within the community that provides opportunities for collaboration. Other strengths of the program include:

- Strong school communities that have developed through connections with families over a long period of time
- Portfolio conferences that connect parents to academic work, as well as exhibitions of student work and student performances
- High rate of parent volunteers
- Family Liaisons within each school
- Support for CPS-AS (After School) Partnership Director
- Establishment of Complementary Learning Leadership Committee
- Pilot Middle School Partnership and L.I.N.K. (Learning the Individual Needs of Kids) Project (located at Gately-Peabody campus)
- Some district-wide after school opportunities, including All City Band /Chorus/ Drama, Media Production Program, and Marine Science (held at CRLS) for middle grade students

Structural Challenges

- Limited extracurricular and enrichment activities, including sports, for middle school students within schools (partially due to competition for space with primary grade child care programs in individual school buildings)

- Difficulty in structuring citywide after school opportunities for middle school students due to 4 tier start/ dismissal times of elementary schools

Other Challenges

- Shift to departmentalized classes requires parents to communicate with multiple teachers
- Understanding better ways to involve middle school parents in school-based activities
- Language and cultural barriers
- Need to develop and coordinate stronger community partnerships

Middle School to High School Transition

Strengths of Present Program

Regardless of structure there are issues of transition that need to be addressed in a K-8 school district with students moving from grade 8 to high school. CPS recognizes this important transition and has put structures and procedures in place to support students and their families, which include:

- Eighth grade visits/ tours to CRLS (established 2007) that have received positive feedback from students, teachers and families
- Inclusion of elementary principals and teachers in CRLS tours which enable them to better respond to questions from families
- Improved informational packets with timelines sent to families each fall
- Annual sharing of information re: incoming freshmen between middle and high school teachers
- CRLS mentors put into place for incoming freshmen
- Registration located in middle schools so CRLS counselors are able to meet with students and grade 8 teachers
- Small Learning Community assignments in the spring
- New summer transition program (*Rise Up*) for incoming freshmen (Summer 2008)

Challenges

- Scheduling of sessions to share information about individual students
- Establishment of common benchmarks for student proficiency between middle and high school
- Communication between middle and high school
- Limited opportunities for middle and high school teachers to meet to bridge curriculum and instruction
- Need to work on the social bridge between elementary and high school so middle school students are better prepared to be independent and accountable
- Lack of alignment between middle school and high school special education services
- Inconsistency of student preparation from eleven different middle school programs

Summary of Structural Challenges of the Present CPS Middle School Structure

In reviewing the present K-8 model the Blue Ribbon Task Force Sub-committee on structures identified a number of strengths and challenges with respect to the Guiding Principles. The challenges that are most greatly affected by the present K-8 structure include the following:

Academic Expectations

- Difficulty for teachers to become proficient in and prepare to teach the content for 2 or 3 grade levels of a demanding curriculum in schools that have small numbers of students
- Isolation of content area teachers in all schools because of small numbers
- Academic offerings and schedules that are driven by numbers
- Inefficiency/ inequity of teacher caseloads between schools and subject areas

Staffing and Professional Development

- Limited opportunities for teachers to collaborate with each other often and easily due to the small size of most middle grades
- Difficulty in structuring opportunities for Middle School Leadership Team and professional development opportunities due to 4 tier start/ dismissal times of elementary schools
- Variance of 6th grade configuration by school making it difficult to schedule professional development
- Lack of inclusion of specialists (Special Education, English as a Second Language, Art, Music, PE, World Languages) as members of the middle school team because of scheduling and the fact that specialists are often shared by schools

Safe and Respectful School Culture

- Small peer groups in some schools that can lead to social isolation for some students
- Lack of a coherent guidance/ counseling program to support the specific academic and social needs of young adolescents

Strong Connections to Families and Community

- Limited extracurricular and enrichment activities for middle school students
- Difficulty in structuring after school opportunities for middle school students due to 4 tier start/ dismissal times of elementary schools

IV. An Examination of Alternative Middle School Options/Models

Subcommittee: Lawrence Blondin, Wendell Bourne, Mary Cazabon, Lucy Chen, Kate Conway, Richard Harding, Jack Haverty, Janice Jackson, Peg Legendre, Nancy McLaughlin, Luc Schuster, Carolyn Turk, Barbara Van Sickle

Curriculum

The members of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle School Education visited a number of middle schools with various curricular offerings. During the visits we observed and inquired about the middle school curricula being implemented. We used the Middle School Task Force's (MSTF) guiding principles for quality curricula to provide us with a point of comparison.

The MSTF defines quality curricula as:

- Rigorous with high expectations for all students
- Developmentally responsive & relevant to students' lives
- Integrated & exploratory
- Based on MA Curriculum Frameworks & CPS Learning Expectations
- Consistent across the schools
- Guided by clearly articulated student proficiencies
- Informed by assessment

Most of the schools that we visited engaged their students in curricula that are rigorous. Some of the schools like Buckingham, Brown and Nichols and the Boston Latin School have defined rigor as *high school level* course work. These courses may or may not be developmentally appropriate and relevant to middle schoolers as defined in the MSLT's guiding principles. These schools accept only students who have received the highest entrance test scores. Once accepted, students for whom the curriculum is not compatible often go elsewhere.

Schools like University Park in Worcester and the Community Charter School of Cambridge offer only college prep level courses to their students. The University Park School defines rigor by asking students to complete two hours of additional work per week in each subject area. Teachers get to know students well by using on-going assessment and by implementing a standards-based curriculum. Older high school students (11th and 12th graders) are encouraged to take courses at Clark University. They may audit up to 12 credits at Clark. Unfortunately, a high percentage of the students who attend Clark University upon graduation from University Park drop out.

The Community Charter School of Cambridge provides supports for students to keep up with the high demands, including a Learning Lab for Special Education students and a 7-Up Class to support students academically.

The Brookline Public Schools K-8 District experiences many of the same challenges as does the Cambridge Public Schools District. In Brookline, the inconsistency of varying start and ending times, like those in Cambridge, has complicated their smooth implementation of district-wide programming and efforts to align their curriculum. To improve this situation, the Brookline Public Schools District has agreed to a consistent start and ending time across the city.

The district distinguishes between middle school and elementary school in its K-8 configurations across the city by including 7th and 8th grades into the middle school programming and grade 6 is included with the elementary school component of the educational structure.

In Brookline, 7th and 8th graders are offered intensive math and English for the last 45 minutes of the day and then extend these sessions into the afterschool. There is an Enrichment/Challenge Support Specialist (ECS) assigned to each K-8 school in Brookline. Their assignment is based on the number of students in the school. Their job is to provide both outside resources and small group support to students to assure high quality instruction.

In an attempt to align their middle school curriculum to the state standards, Brookline Public Schools has undertaken an effort to write their own standards-based periodic assessments in each of the subject areas for grades K-8. It is work that very much resembles our own CPS periodic assessments. The teachers and administrators take great pride in this work.

One school that we visited, the Rafael Hernandez, a two-way immersion school in Boston, has implemented many of the same curricula as we in Cambridge have and they have met with success using these programs. They use the Connected Math Program in grades 6-8, the Investigations Program in grades K-5 and the Building Blocks Program in Pre-K. This is the same math sequence that Cambridge uses. The Hernandez made AYP in math and their grade 8 scores ranked 25th in the state. They made AYP in math for their subgroup of Free and Reduced Lunch students who represent 76% of their whole school population.

The Hernandez implements Literacy Collaborative in grades K-3 and a balanced literacy approach in the upper grades. Last year all of the students in grades 6-8 passed the ELA MCAS. Their 7th grade scores were ranked 4th in the state and 8th grade scores were ranked 13th. As a whole school, as well as for LEP and F/R Lunch students, the Hernandez has not made AYP in ELA. As a two-way immersion school, this school services a population that is 83% Hispanic.

The Hernandez also implements the History and Geography Alive programs. Cambridge has begun to train middle school teachers in the Geography Alive Program and it has been well received.

Both the Coolidge Middle School in Reading and the middle school in Weston house their students in separate grades 6-8 settings. They both provide what they've determined to be rigorous curricula with high expectations for their students. Housing middle school teachers and students together in larger middle schools allows teachers to schedule common times to collaborate and to write high level curricula. It also provides many elective opportunities for students to meet with peers who have common interests. Teachers in both settings have common planning times to meet with their middle school teams as well as to attend curriculum meetings where they meet with subject area colleagues. Housing many middle schoolers together allows these schools to schedule long blocks of time for teaching and also provides opportunities for both challenge and support classes during elective periods. Some of the electives that the Coolidge School in Reading offers are: Art Gallery, Drama, Egg Babies, 20+ Club, WebCrew, Wellness, Math team, Music, Peer Leaders, Science Team, Advisory, Middle School Jazz Band, Choral Groups, Virtual High School (for a small number of eighth graders taking Algebra II).

Teacher Responsibilities and Opportunities

While a total of nine schools were visited, four out of the nine schools share similar demographics with Cambridge schools. What follows, however, represents a summary of findings gathered from all the visits.

Some of the responsibilities and **professional development and other collaborative opportunities** we found to be part of the teachers' experience were:

- Teachers meet regularly with their peers and curriculum leaders. (Inter-disciplinary and departmental groupings.)
- Common planning time is built into the school day.
- Professional development strategies such as “Critical Friends,” “Categorical ESL Trainings for mainstream teachers,” early dismissals once a week and/or one a month, with the time used for collaborative work.
- Regularly scheduled meetings with high school and middle school faculties twice per year.

With regard to **school climate** the following highlights were observed:

- Seventh graders attend a summer session (ranging from 5 days to 3 weeks) to help prepare them for the school community and academic expectations.
- Clear and common behavioral expectations consistently enforced by all teachers.
- Community building structures such as, Community meetings and Developmental Design.

With regard to **internal organization and transitions**:

- In the larger middle schools, grade groupings were broken down into clusters or houses in order to create smaller, more intimate communities within the school, while still maintaining a singular school identity.
- There was special attention paid to the transitions between middle school and high school, involving incoming students, teachers, guidance counselors, and parents.

Summary

Our visits to various local middle schools have highlighted for us some of the effective strategies, structures and supports that constitute effective middle school curricula. There are however, some criteria that influence student outcomes that are not directly related to the curricula. A school's ability to choose entrants and to influence their tenure at the school has an enormous impact on student outcomes. Demographics may also determine which curricula are most effective. A school with high percentages of students who receive free lunch or who are not native English speakers may be most successful when implementing curricula that focus on standards, frequent assessment and long periods of time dedicated to the teaching of ELA and Math. Schools that house their middle school students and teachers in a middle school building may have an ease of delivering high level, interesting and engaging curriculum and instruction that smaller schools don't have, but may lose the opportunities for personalization that a small school can offer to students who are at risk. It behooves us as we move forward in the process of improving our middle schools to be mindful of the effective practices as they apply to curriculum and instruction that best meet the needs of our students, teachers and families.

V. Summary of Parent Responses from All 3 Forums

Summary of Parent Responses on Middle School (from Parent Forum, Key Communicators and School Council meetings)

1. How can we better meet the academic and social needs of our middle school students?
 - Ensure academic excellence (engaging, relevant, challenging)****
 - Pay attention to social curriculum (e.g. Developmental Design) and social/emotional needs of students both in academics and afterschool**
 - Hire excellent teachers and pay attention to diversity
 - Provide opportunities for students to mingle across the city, during and/or in after-school programs*****
 - Maintain freedom for teachers to develop curriculum
2. How can we better prepare our middle school students for high school?
 - Provide more rigorous academics and exhibitions of their work**
 - Offer leadership opportunities
 - Provide more after-school learning and connection to community***
 - Increase the size of cohorts in some schools
 - Look at organizational skills and how students begin and end day
3. When you select a middle school, what criteria are most important to you?
 - Rigorous and engaging academics*****
 - Strong community and emphasis on social responsibility***
 - Strong teachers****
 - Good peer group
 - Positive social experiences
 - Extra-curricular activities
4. What factors might most influence your decision to leave your school at the middle school level?
 - Not enough academic rigor***
 - Child is having difficulty
 - Cohort of students not right***
 - Bullying
5. What is it schools can do to promote more parent participation at the middle school level?
 - Mandate parent involvement
 - Require school-home folders
 - Interactive website
 - Provide child care with evening events/meetings*
 - Outreach to middle school parents for CRLS events
 - Find ways for parents to be involved in school tasks/events (e.g. tutoring, library resource person, finding speakers, etc.)

Please Note: (a) Asterisks [*] indicate the frequency of the response
(b) The full text of all responses can be found on the CPS website; <http://www.cpsd.us>

Top 3 Issues:

- Rich and challenging academics
- Attention to social development and community-building
- Opportunities for enrichment (in and after school) and expanding peer group

How parent responses connect to our 5 guiding principles:

Guiding Principle #1: Rigorous and engaging curriculum:

Parents repeatedly talked about how they want their children to feel challenged, engaged, and excited about what they are learning. They want them to feel intellectually challenged and learn how to become independent learners. They want the curriculum to be relevant, integrated and hands-on. They want students to have opportunities to present their work in multiple ways.

Guiding Principle #2: Developmentally-responsive instruction:

Parents want teachers to differentiate instruction so all students are being challenged at their level and to teach to multiple intelligences. They want students to have opportunities to engage in project-based learning and to express their creativity and to have fun.

Guiding Principle #3: Quality staffing and professional development:

Parents want teachers who understand and love working with young adolescents. They want teachers who are willing to address the social and emotional as well as the academic needs of their students.

Guiding Principle #4: Safe and respectful school environment:

Having a safe and supportive environment is key to parents. While some parents expressed concern about the size of their child's cohort, they all wanted attention to building a sense of community, positive peer relationships, and learning life skills such as tolerance, the ability to make good choices, self-control and discipline.

Guiding Principle #5: Strong partnerships with families and communities:

Parents are eager to stay involved with their children's education and want opportunities to both meet with teachers and contribute to the school. They also want to see a strong connection to community resources.

VI. The Future of the CPS Middle School Structure (*Next Steps*)

The Blue Ribbon Commission presents its findings to the Cambridge School Committee and the Cambridge public.

The Blue Ribbon Commission also recommends that:

1. The School Committee directs the Superintendent to develop specific recommendations on the structure of the middle schools. Any recommendation to the School Committee should present a number of options for consideration.
2. The recommendations to be considered are not limited to keeping the K-8 model, creating a 6-8 middle school or middle schools, creating a 6-12 model, or creating a system that is a hybrid model that may consist of combinations of any of the options.
3. The Superintendent review projected enrollment in all the recommended models. This review should consider if the current or future number of schools can support a successful middle school program.
4. The Superintendent convene members of the Blue Ribbon Commission and convene members of the administration and faculty representative of middle level education to solicit ideas and concepts on the middle school.
5. The Superintendent develop a process to include public participation to include school councils, parents and community.
6. The School Committee create a School Committee Sub-Committee on Middle Schools to assist the Superintendent with the process of reaching out to the public.
7. The Superintendent present options at a School Committee roundtable discussion in October of 2008.
8. The Superintendent present recommendations to the School Committee by the first meeting in December of 2008.

Appendix 1

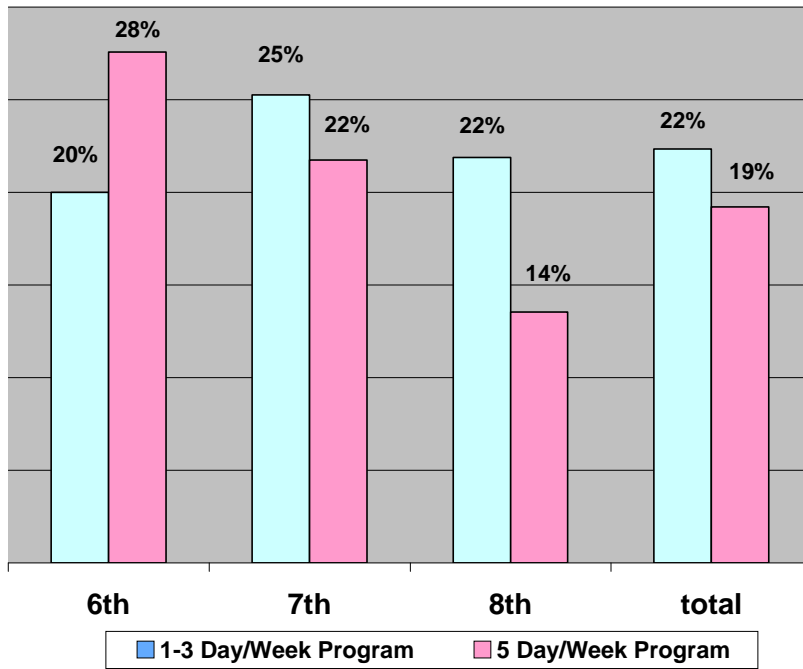
Cambridge Public Schools & Afterschool Partnership Survey of 6th, 7th, & 8th grade students

Cambridge, Winter 2007-2008 – Teachers on the CPS Middle School Leadership Team agreed to administer the “Afterschool Survey & Information Form” to their 6th, 7th and 8th grade students. In total, 734 surveys were completed and returned the office of the Cambridge Public School & Afterschool Partnership. A summary of these students’ responses are captured in the attached charts.

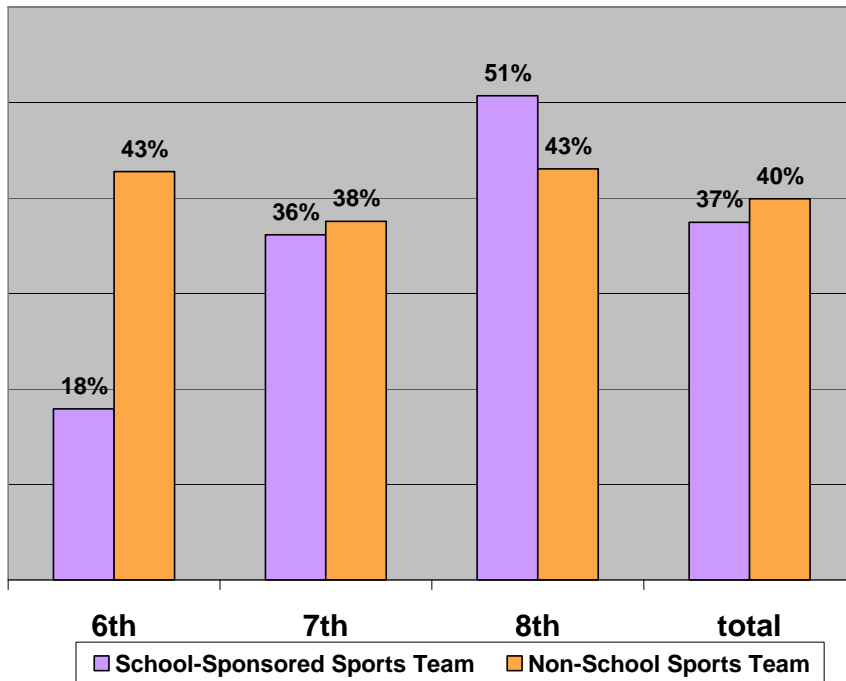
Also, some highlights and important messages gleaned from this data are as follows:

- In total, 19% of 6-8 graders self-reported that they participate in a 5 day/week afterschool program, and 22% reported that they participate in a 1-3 day/week program.
- There is more participation in 5-day/week programs by 6th graders and participation declines for both 7th and 8th graders respectively: 5 day/week program participation level – 6th graders: 28%; 7th graders: 22%; 8th graders: 14%.
- Participation in 1-3 day/week programs is more consistent across the middle grades – 6th graders: 20%; 7th graders: 25%; 8th graders: 22%.
- Approximately 40% of 6th-8th graders self-report that they participate on some type of sports team.
- Approximately 30% of 7th-8th graders self-report that they attend academic/homework support afterschool sessions located in their schools – 7th graders: 26%; 8th graders: 31%.
- CPS middle grade students also report their participation in wide variety of other afterschool activities. Among 6th-8th graders completing the survey, 34% take music, art, dance or some other type of specialized class; 17% participate in an organized club or project, 17% have an after school job and 12% volunteer after school.
- Almost 75% of 6th-8th grades self-report that they often simply go home after school – 6th graders: 62%; 7th graders: 72%; 8th graders: 80%.
- Consistently, about 38% of 6th-8th grades self-report that they take care of at least one family member after school – 6th graders: 39%; 7th graders: 37%; 8th graders: 38%.
- More than half (56%) of 6th-8th grades self-report that after school they “hang out with friends or have nowhere to go/be,” – 6th graders: 41%; 7th graders: 53%; 8th graders: 67%.

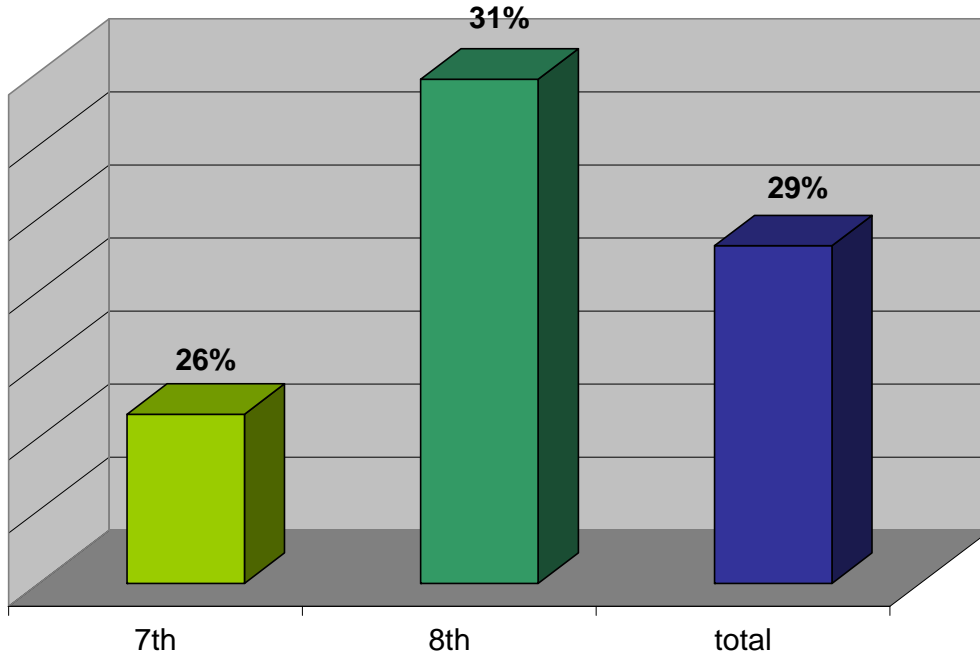
Percentage of CPS Middle Grade Students Self-Reporting their Enrollment in an Afterschool Program



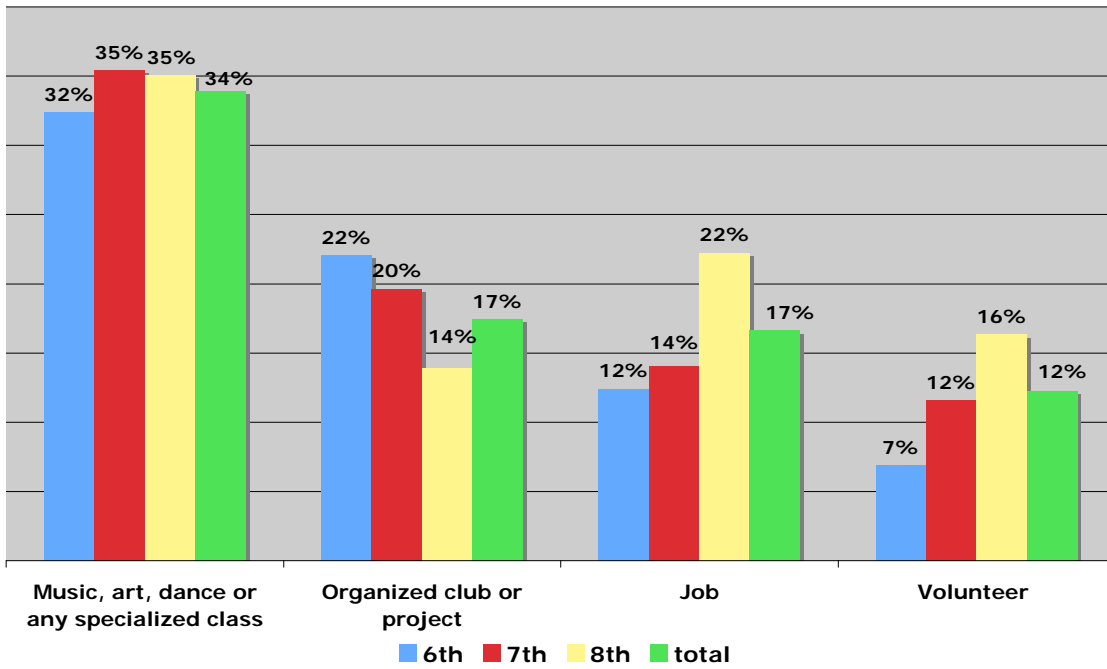
Percentage of CPS Middle Grade Students Self-Reporting their Participation on a Sports Team



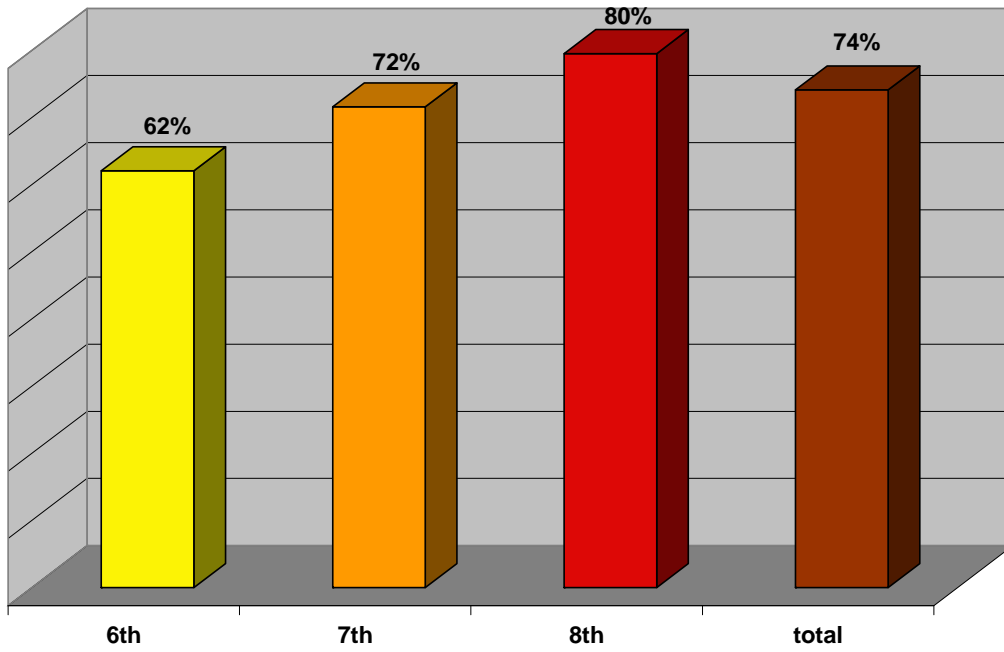
Percentage of CPS Middle Grade Students who Self-Report that They Attend Academic/Homework Support Afterschool Sessions Located in Their School



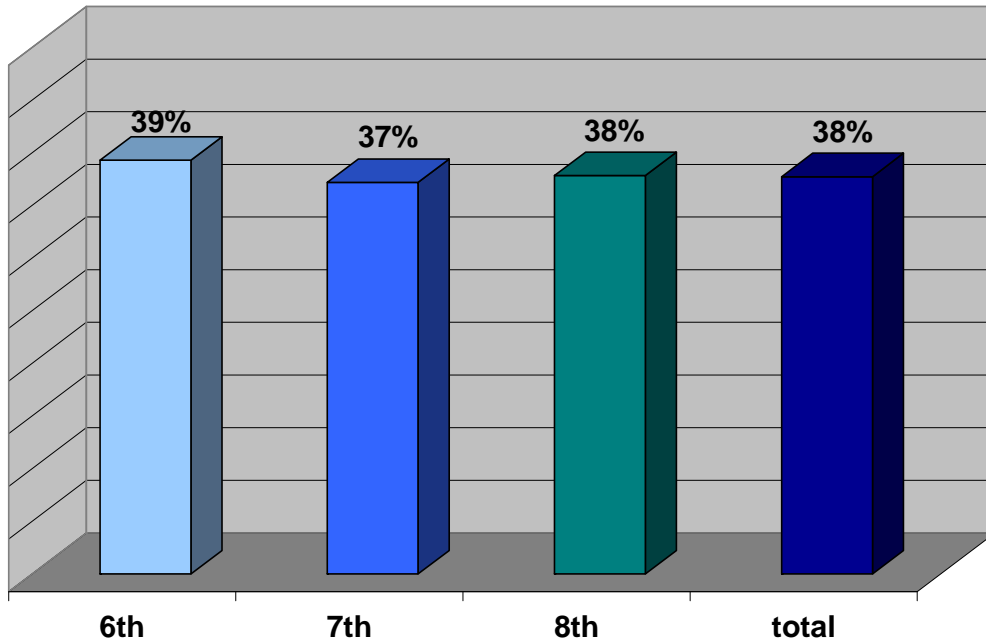
Percentage of CPS Middle Grade Students Self-Reporting their Participation in a Range of Afterschool Activities



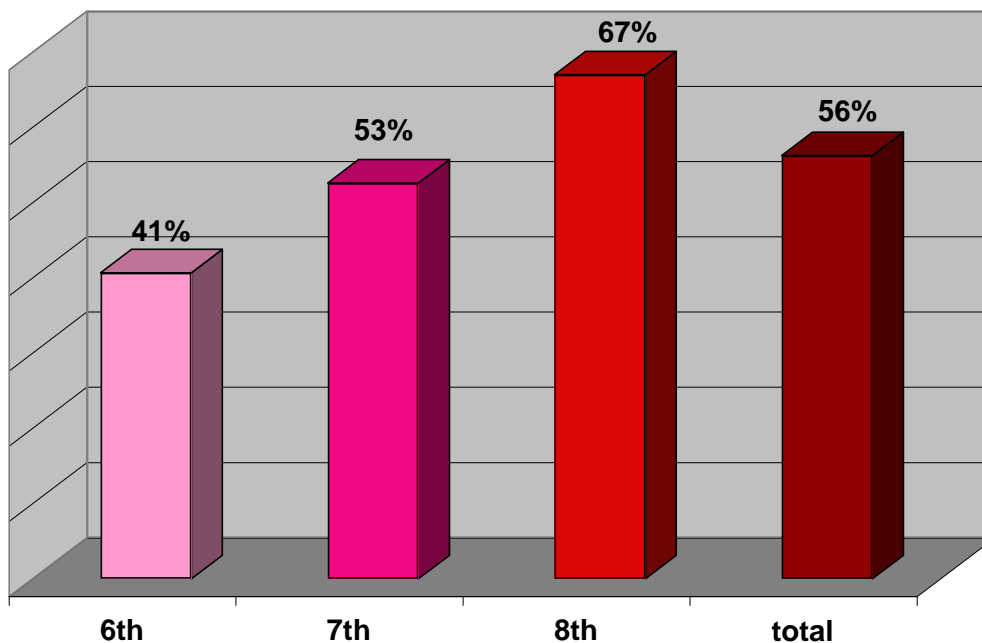
Percentage of CPS Middle Grade Students Who Self-Report They Go Home Afterschool



Percentage of CPS Middle Grade Students who Self-Report that They Take Care of a Family Member(s) Afterschool



Percentage of CPS Middle Grade Students who Self-Report that After School they "Hang out with friends or Have Nowhere to Be and/or Go"



Summary of Students' Responses to Open-Ended Questions

- The most requested programming was for school-based soccer teams; dance and cheerleading were also frequent suggestions.
- Many students expressed interest in employment opportunities.
- Many students requested programming in areas that their classmates were already participating.
- Many students talked about the need for reduced fees and inexpensive equipment.
- Robotics, graphic design, boxing, skateboarding, and wrestling were a few of the non-traditional after school activities proposed by students.

Appendix 2

Intensive Studies Program (ISP) Applicant Summary SY:05/06 – 08/09

SY 05/06															
	Amigos	Baldwin	Cport	Flet/May	G & P	Hagg.	K/Lo	King	K-O	Morse	Peab.	Tobin	Private	Totals	
Males	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	1	0	4	2	6	0	18	
Females	0	0	1	0	0	0	10	0	0	3	5	1	0	20	
Total	0	0	2	0	0	0	14	1	0	7	7	7	0	38	

SY 06/07															
	Amigos	Baldwin	Cport	Flet/May	G & P	Hagg.	K/Lo	King	K-O	Morse	Peab.	Tobin	Private	Totals	
Males	0	5	1	0	0	1	7	0	0	2	7	1	1	25	
Females	0	0	3	0	0	1	9	3	0	5	4	1	0	26	
Total	0	5	4	0	0	2	16	3	0	7	11	2	1	51	

SY 07/08															
	Amigos	Baldwin	Cport	Flet/May	G & P	Hagg.	K/Lo	King	K-O	Morse	Peab.	Tobin	Private	Totals	
Males	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	3	9	2	0	20	
Females	0	5	1	0	2	2	4	0	0	3	5	1	0	23	
Total	1	6	1	0	2	2	7	1	0	6	14	3	0	43	

SY 08/09															
	Amigos	Baldwin	Cport	Flet/May	G & P	Hagg.	K/Lo	King	K-O	Morse	Peab.	Tobin	Private	Totals	
Males		1	0	2	0	2	7	0	1	5	11	3	1	33	
Females		1	3	1	3	2	7	0	0	1	11	2	0	31	
Total		2	3	3	3	4	14	0	1	6	22	5	1	64	

Appendix 3

Cambridge MCAS Results; 2005-2007 Comparison of Composite Performance Index (CPI) with State * CPS Grades 6,7,8

6th Grade ELA

	2005	2006	2007	CHANGE 05-07	CHANGE 06-07
CPS		81.0	84.5		+3.5
STATE		84.9	86.4		+1.5

6th Grade Math

	2005	2006	2007	CHANGE 05-07	CHANGE 06-07
CPS	62.7	66.5	70.9	+8.2	+4.4
STATE	71.1	70.5	75.5	+4.4	+5.0

7th Grade ELA

	2005	2006	2007	CHANGE 05-07	CHANGE 06-07
CPS	82.8	79.8	88.0	+5.2	+8.2
STATE	86.3	84.6	86.9	+0.6	+2.3

7th Grade Math

	2005	2006	2007	CHANGE 05-07	CHANGE 06-07
CPS		58.6	67.5		+8.9
STATE		66.6	70.4		+3.8

8th Grade ELA

	2005	2006	2007	CHANGE 05-07	CHANGE 06-07
CPS		85.7	85.8		+0.1
STATE		88.3	89.5		+1.2

8th Grade Math

	2005	2006	2007	CHANGE 05-07	CHANGE 06-07
CPS	60.1	62.6	62.2	+2.1	-0.4
STATE	64.7	66.3	70.2	+5.5	+3.9

8th Grade Science

	2005	2006	2007	CHANGE 05-07	CHANGE 06-07
CPS	57.4	63.1	59.3	+1.9	-3.8
STATE	64.9	65.6	65.9	+1.0	+0.3

* The CPI is an index based on 100 points that measures a school/district's performance toward proficiency on MCAS. Further information on individual schools and student subgroups can be found on the Massachusetts DOE website www.doe.mass.edu under district and school profiles.

NOTE: CPS data from DOE MCAS reports 10-04-07 includes students in special education outplacements in grades 3-8. The public release of Composite Proficiency Index (CPI) data from the state began in 2005.

Middle School Task Force Recommendations

*Summary of Feedback and Agreements from the Principals' Meetings
May 25th and June 6th 2007.*

- A calendar will be jointly developed by the Principals/ AP and Coordinators that includes professional development offerings for both school based and district based PD in June and throughout the school year. Planning will begin in January for June PD so that teachers will receive advance notice and administrators will be able to coordinate initiatives.
A district professional development calendar is being developed and will be posted on CPS First Class by the opening of school.
- The Middle School Professional Development Day will be held each year on the Wednesday of the week that teachers return to school.
This year the Middle School Professional Development Day is scheduled for August 29th.
- Middle School meetings (10 hours after school) will continue next year. There will be additional PD for teachers including visitation of classrooms.
Middle School and Department meetings will continue for the 2007-08 school year. There will be one joint meeting with high school teachers. Additional professional development days will be posted on the district professional development calendar.
- One release day will be allocated to Middle School teachers coming together across the district.
The October release day (October 17th) has been designated for Middle School/ Department meetings.
- Principals and Curriculum Coordinators should share professional development priorities. Suggestion that this format be used in January for PD planning for June.
Administrators shared professional development priorities during the August 22nd principal/ coordinator meeting. A similar process will be planned for January.
- All special educators should attend content PD. Recommendation that sessions be held for special educators to address differentiation. In addition, special education model in middle grades should be reviewed.
Special educators will attend district professional development in ELA and Mathematics during the 2007-08 school year. Specific sessions for special educators to address differentiation will be discussed and planned with the Office of Special Education and the Curriculum Departments. Review of the special education model for middle grades will be conducted by the new Executive Director for Special Education, Dr. Aida Ramos.
- Establish a District Middle School Leadership Team. Each school will identify and stipend a team leader.
Principals have agreed to identify a stipended Middle School Team Leader/Representative. Team Leaders will meet as a district Middle School Leadership Team once a month for a two hour meeting.
- Agreement on convening Out of School Time Task Force to continue and deepen the work that has already begun.
Khari Milner has been hired to oversee the Cambridge Public School and Afterschool Partnership and will work with administrators, teachers, students, families, and community agencies on broadening this work

Appendix 5

Cambridge Public Schools Middle School Teacher Certification SY 2007-2008

Executive Summary

- CPS currently employs 56 middle school core subject teachers district-wide in the subjects Math, Science, Humanities, Language Arts, and Social Studies.
- The percentages of subject area certified middle school teachers in Cambridge are significantly higher than national averages¹.
- 96% of all CPS core subject middle school teachers are fully certified in the area taught, and 100% are certified in at least one academic area.
- *CPS Middle School Teacher Certification by Subject Area:*

Math

100% of middle school Math teachers are fully certified (12 of 12)

Math/Science

100% of middle school Math/Science teachers are fully certified (2 of 2)

Language Arts

100% of middle school Language Arts teachers are fully certified (8.5 of 8.5)

Social Studies

100% of middle school Social Studies are fully certified (7 of 7)

Science

96% of Science teachers (13 of 13.5) are fully certified.

One (1) teacher who is certified in Reading is assigned to teach both Literacy & Science during SY 07-08.

Humanities

88% of Humanities teaches (11.5 of 13) are fully certified.

Under DOE regulations, teachers may satisfy Humanities certification requirements in one of two ways: (a) Hold Middle School Humanities certification, or, (b) Hold both Language Arts and Social Studies or History certification gained by taking the MTEL. Two (2) CPS Humanities teachers are certified in History, but not Language Arts, and one (1) Humanities teacher is certified in Language Arts, but not Social Studies or History.

Only 3 (4%) of CPS middle school core subject teachers are teaching outside of certification area, and in each of these instances the teacher is partially certified for the position.

¹ National Center for Education Statistics, Education Statistics Quarterly, Vol. 3, Issue 4: Qualifications of the Public School Teacher Workforce: Prevalence of Out-of-Field Teaching 1987-88 to 1999-2000.
http://nces.ed.gov/programs/quarterly/Vol_4/4_3/2.asp

(Note: Massachusetts statistics on middle school teacher certification rates are not available.)

Cambridge Public Schools
Middle School
Teacher Attrition

Executive Summary

- Attrition among middle school teachers in Cambridge over the past two years has averaged 18%.
- The rate of middle school teacher attrition in Cambridge declined by approximately 50% from SY 05-06 to SY 06-07 (from 13 to 7).
- Analysis indicates the following overall middle school teacher *retention* trends:

<i>Middle School Teacher Retention Trends:</i>	<i>No. of CPS Schools</i>
90% - 100%	4
80% - 89%	2
75% - 79%	4
Under 75%	1

- Middle school teacher attrition by subject area during SY 05-06 and SY 06-07 combined was as follows:

Math (8)
Social Studies (5)
Language Arts (3)
Humanities (2)
Science (2)

- Reasons for middle school teacher attrition during SY 05/06 and 06/07 are as follows:

Non-renewal of teacher contracts for performance based reasons (7)
Teacher resignations (7)
Retirement (5)
Transfer/Promotion (1)

- In CPS, the majority of teacher resignations are related to family or other personal reasons, and in a lesser number of instances, for career or educational advancement. Teacher resignations in CPS tend to occur within the first five years of employment, or at the 10-15 year stage.