

"COMMUNITY BLOCK" PRESENTATION

Michael E. McAllister, Principal
Presentation to Belmont School Committee
Tuesday, 11/12/2019 @ 7:00pm

INTRODUCTION

- During our October observation, John asked if I could present
- *Brief* outline, including history

WHAT IS A "COMMUNITY BLOCK"?

- Not an entirely new concept
 - Often called an "advisory"
- Central to the "middle school" philosophy
- Was in place at Chenery as far back as 2006-2009

HISTORY

- What is your elevator pitch?
 - “Making a big school feel small through SEL and advisory” (T.L.)

HISTORY (2016-2017)

- Training on SEL
- Training on Advisory

HISTORY (2017-2018)

- Analysis of our current schedule (Pros/Cons)
- Analysis of SEL survey data
 - Question #1: *I feel connected to at least one teacher in the building*
 - Question #2: *A teacher would know if I was having a bad day*
- Polled teachers and students
 - “We just need time to breathe”
 - “Time for something other than straight academics”
 - “Get to know each other”
- Analyze the research
 - Carnegie Council, Brown University, Marzano et. al.
- Proposed schedule
 - Try it? Try again?
- Summer workshop: Concept of “Team Day” was born

HISTORY (2018-2019)

- Advisory trainings with Rachel Poliner
- Team Day “pilot”
- PLT on Scheduling, Part II
- Re-looked at data and saw gains
- Pitched new schedule

HISTORY (2019-2020)

- Community Block pilot
 - On Wednesdays
 - 33 minute classes
 - 45 minute “Community Block” @ 9:45-10:30am
 - Balance between giving teachers structure and freedom (Welcoming ritual, Celebration/Appreciation, “Main Meal”, Closing ritual)

INITIAL RESULTS...

- Students not pulled “off team”; more teachers added to the team
- Classrooms look different and feel different
- School-wide break
- Less hallway traffic, fewer bathroom breaks
- New ideas that we could never have thought of on our own
- We will be including it in our mid-year team structure interviews
- We will be looking at the data once again