

The following information is a summary of the Middle School Schedule Committee meeting that took place on September 14, 2023. A summary of all meetings will be shared on the YCSD website.

September 14, 2023, Middle School Schedule Committee

The middle school committee meeting started with a welcome and introduction of the committee members. The committee is composed of 10 school-based staff, which includes principals, teachers, and counselors; 8 parents, 2 from each middle school; and 7 school board staff. Of the 25 members, 21 were present at the meeting.

The meeting agenda was reviewed first, which included the following items:

- Committee norms and purpose
- Background information
- Review of Student, Parent, and Teacher Focus Group and Survey Feedback Data
- Review of the decision analysis process
- Wrap up and next steps

Background Information

Information about the history and background of the current middle school schedule was shared.

- The current YCSD middle school schedule was implemented in 2009. Information was provided regarding the frequency and length of current block classes, distinguishing between classes that meet daily and those that meet every other day. In grade 6, all English and math classes meet daily. In grades 7 and 8, specific math classes (Foundations of Algebra 7, Pre-Algebra 7, and Pre-Algebra 8) continue to meet daily, while all other classes meet every other day. The average class duration, regardless of content, is 90 minutes. There is a 3–4-minute transition time between classes. Each class meets for approximately 140 clock hours, with some classes just meeting or falling slightly short of this high school credit requirement. To ensure all high school level courses meet the 140-hour requirement, students in these classes are asked to complete an additional number of blended learning instructional hours.
- In 2017 a committee convened to discuss the middle school schedule. The committee met over a two-year span. No changes were made to the schedule at that time. During the 2022-23 school year, a small team comprised of teachers and administrators met to reopen the discussion on the middle school schedule. The reason for reconvening included concerns regarding the instructional hours for high school credit-bearing courses at the middle school level and English course schedules on an A/B block rotation. It was recommended that the division conduct focus group meetings with students, teachers, and parent groups to gather additional feedback and determine if there was a need to have a more formal review of the middle schedule.
- Dr. Robert Sherlock, Associate Director of Secondary Instruction and Academic Programs, met with student and teacher focus groups in May 2023 and parent focus groups in June 2023 to solicit feedback regarding the middle school schedule. The following questions led these discussions:

- What are the strengths and barriers to the current middle school schedule?
- What is one change you would make to the current schedule?
- Provide feedback about the current 90-minute block period.
- Does the current schedule meet the academic needs of our students?

After each of the meetings, a survey was distributed to focus group members to solicit feedback on topics listed above.

Review of Student, Parent, and Teacher Focus Group and Survey Feedback Data

Committee members were provided with the survey results as well as a summary of the collected survey data from student, parent, and teacher focus groups to review and identify themes. The committee agreed that, based on the focus group survey data, further review of current and potential middle school schedules is needed. Additionally, the committee suggested gathering survey data from all YCSD middle school teachers, administrators, and families would be beneficial as the committee considers potential middle school schedules. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Review of the Decision Analysis Process

School division staff introduced a decision-making process commonly used in YCSD known as TregoED. TregoED is a systematic process for making a choice or decision. One of the first steps in this process is to establish a set of criteria to guide the decision-making process. In the upcoming meeting, committee members will begin developing these criteria and consider what feedback is needed from families and staff.

Next Meeting:

The next middle school schedule committee meeting is planned for October 12, 2023, from 4:00-6:00 PM. Committee members were asked to recommend three criteria that could be used in the decision analysis process. Additionally, members were asked to review [Va. Code 8VAC20-131-90](#) - *Instructional Program in Middle Schools* to gain a better understanding of the instructional requirements for middle schools in the state of Virginia.