

Site Readiness Plan for Grade Configuration Changes

Rationale for Readiness Plans:

The new grade configuration represents a significant change in the organization of our schools and, for middle school particularly, in some of the philosophical underpinnings with which we engage in teaching and learning. Parents and students will have questions about safety and potential missed or added opportunities. For some staff, there is the potential for changing buildings or grade levels, raises questions about how the "newcomers" will be integrated into the environment and deal with the "loss" of those moving. In short, many questions and concerns as well as potential great new opportunities exist for our students and our district.

The site readiness plans are one way to help document our plans for all of the affected communities. This will help understand the extensive efforts that we are undertaking to ensure that the grade configuration change is successful and ultimately that the students are safe and have continued and perhaps expanded excellent academic and extra-curricular opportunities.

The questions in the plan represent a higher level consolidation of more than 140 questions we received from the public and staff. In answering the questions, you should explain how the grade configuration change is affecting your school particularly - what will be different, what are opportunities for improvement, how is the school dealing with the added or reduced number of students and staff, what do your various stakeholders need to learn to positively utilize the change process. In addition to the specific questions in the plan, you can add additional information that you think the stakeholders should know that is unique to your school or that we simply missed addressing.

The site readiness plans are not the tool or vehicle to communicate with your stakeholders. Use the plans and other information at staff meetings, SIT meetings, newsletters, websites, special meetings, and other ways. Use those that make sense for you to communicate information beyond the readiness plans.

We also acknowledge and honor the fact that there is a lot of behind the scenes work that is going on and will go on through 2009 and beyond to make this transition successful. A great deal of detailed information associated with the transition does not need to be communicated to the parents, community, or the district. It is just part of the excellent job that you all are doing day to day; there is no reason to change that.

Bottom line, the stakeholders and the public want to have high confidence that we are going to make the grade configuration change successful for the students and the district. All the communication we undertake collectively and individually can help build that confidence. The readiness plan is one important communication tool and we appreciate you taking the time to use it. Thank you!

District Grade Configuration Implementation Committee

January 8, 2008

Site Readiness Plan Overview:

In creating the template for this document, the **DGCIC considered broad areas that might be affected by the changes or that might otherwise require documentation by each site, including:**

- communication with staff, parents, and the community at large
- general transition planning
- staffing levels
- professional development
- curriculum and academic achievement
- student developmental levels and safety
- scheduling
- athletics and extra-curricular areas
- school capacity and school of choice

These broad categories are reflected in multiple ways in many of the questions that follow.

In addition to considering the broad categories above, the Committee solicited from staff, parents, and the community specific questions, issues, concerns, and suggestions that need to be addressed to ensure a successful implementation of the grade configuration change. Those that the Committee felt needed to be addressed in whole or in part at the site level are listed in an appendix to this readiness plan (i.e., Site Issues Appendix). Each question in the readiness plan references the specific items in the Site Issues Appendix (SIA) which drove the inclusion of that question in the plan. This will allow you to more fully understand and answer some of the underlying issues as you fill out the plan.

Site Readiness Processing:

The DGCIC advises believes it is important that the site team advises to the principal who will be responsible for developing plans that will be submitted to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent for approval. The DGCIC expectation is that the site team be integrally involved in the discussion of the plan and offered the opportunity to submit draft ideas and input to the principal. A representative from the site team must sign off, indicating that it was discussed with them. It is highly desirable that the staff and the SIT be involved in all stages of the development of the plan. **It is also important for each school to host information and/or input sessions for the broader school community prior to the final plan being approved.**

Site Readiness Timelines:

The **draft of this plan is due** to the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools or the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools by **April 30, 2008, and a final is due by November 1, 6 2008.**

January 8, 2008

Level, Feeder and District Readiness Planning:

Middle School Committee:

The Middle School Study Committee made its recommendation to the District Grade Configuration Implementation Committee on December 10, 2007 and the DGCIC reviewed the recommendation and forwarded a final recommendation to the Superintendent. By January 28, 2008, the essential components are communicated out in draft format to internal and external stakeholders for input. The DGCIC will review the input, make necessary adjustments and forward a final recommendation to the Superintendent.

Human Resource Committee:

The Human Resource Committee has developed a plan approved by the Superintendent and meetings with potentially affected staff are underway.

Feeder Plans:

Feeder Principals have been meeting to address feeder issues including grade alignment by feeder systems since August of 2007. **Feeder system principals will develop final responses to feeder issues no later than November 1, 2008**, with priority given to addressing those issues which must be resolved sooner in support of site plan development.

Note: Feeder Grade Configuration Implementation Readiness Response to Issues will require approval from the appropriate level District Administrator.

Level Plans:

Level Principals have been meeting to address level specific issues since fall of 2007. **Level principals will develop final responses to level issues no later than November 1, 2008**, with priority given to addressing those issues which must be resolved sooner in support of site plan development.

Note: Level Readiness Response to Issues will require approval from the appropriate assistant superintendent.

District Plans:

Building and District Administrators have been meeting to address district specific issues since fall of 2007. District Administrators will develop final responses to district issues no later than November 1, 2008, with priority given to addressing those issues which must be resolved sooner in support of site plan development.

Note: District Grade Configuration Implementation Readiness Response to Issues will require approval from the Superintendent

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Budget:

The original recommendation to the School Board on April 6, 2007 identified needs for planning and staff development. The Cabinet identified a finite number of dollars from reserves that could be used on a one-time basis for these purposes. Any funds not used from these designated dollars will be placed back into district reserves. **The Readiness Plans will have a column dedicated to capturing these costs based on guide lines provided by the Assistant Superintendents.** A draft of the site readiness plan and budget approval by Assistant Superintendents is required prior to the release of funds.

In Conclusion:

We hope schools do not feel limited to the contents of the site readiness plans and we would encourage sites to think about **excellence in all dimensions of the grade implementation planning.**

January 8, 2008