

SCHOOL CONFIGURATION ANALYSIS MATRIX

Comments Submitted by BISD Administrators
February 2013

CURRENT CONFIGURATION: Elementary (K-4), Intermediate (5-6), Middle (7-8),
High School ((9-12), Options (K-12)

Educational Programs & Implications	
PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a transition step in subject classes, teams, and electives between elementary and middle school. • Electives like band available for 5th and 6th grade during school day. • Focus can be placed on unique social and emotional needs of pre-teens. • 5/6 intermediate school successfully prepares kids for Woodward MS • Strong 5th & 6th Science • Easier to provide advanced courses since most Gr. 5-6 students are all in one school (7th grade math in 6th grade) • Horizontal/vertical alignments for highly capable program 5th/6th • “Leaving Our Island” curriculum available to all Gr. 6 students • Library available as resource for classes outside of specialist rotation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional transition created between elementary and high school (i.e. BISD has most students attending 4 different schools between K and Gr. 12) • Both intermediate school and middle school only have students for 2 years (2 schools w/2 grade bands, 50% of each school is transitioning to another school each year) • Much greater likelihood of needing to move special education programs back and forth from Woodward to Sakai • More difficult to have continuity in curriculum (i.e. Common Core Standards are K-5, 6-8, 9-12) • Instructional materials adopted for Gr. 5 often have different publishers from Gr. 6 (i.e. there is a lack of continuity between Gr. 5 and 6 curriculum materials) • More frequent transitions for special education students, which can create a challenge

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K-5 Configuration: Elementary (K-5), Middle (6-8), High School ((9-12), Options (K-12)

Educational Programs & Implications	
PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer transitions for special education students • Specialist impacts – would allow most specialists to serve just 1 school for better continuity/consistency in Gr. K-5 • Gr. 6-8 also provides opportunities for more differentiation – opportunities for acceleration • Curriculum alignment is better for K-5 (better than K-6 or current configuration) • Most curriculum is designed K-5, 6-8; it would be easier to deliver professional development if grades were configured to match and school schedules could also match • Economy of scale – can more efficiently staff/operate schools • Having 6th grade in middle school would help special ed - fewer transitions, greater opportunity for continuity of program • Provides opportunities for older students (Gr. 5) to provide modeling for younger kids (Gr. K-4) • Special ed self-contained programs deal with low incident populations. Year-to-year variability can be significant as “bubbles” come and go. More grade bands per building reduces the impact of those bubbles so kid numbers become more consistent and so do staff. This would reduce the likelihood to repeatedly dismantle and reassemble programs from building to building. Stable staff and programs perform much better than programs that frequently change. • Doesn't require dramatic changes for elementary schools – students in Gr. 4 would remain at their current schools for 1 more year • 6th grade students would have access to more varied electives • May benefit science/math programs – greater consistency • Common Core alignment (Gr. K-5, Gr. 6-8, Gr. 9-12) • Fewer specialists would need to travel between elementary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes it more difficult to deliver special programs for Gr. 5-6 that are designed to serve all students in district at each grade (e.g. Leaving Our Island) • May lose 5th grade band – or change to before/after school • K-5 and Gr. 6-8 schools would not be able to focus as much attention on social/emotional needs of 5th and 6th grade students • Loses gradual transition to middle school • Middle school size increases significantly • 5th grade science may not be as strong • 6th grade in middle school might present social or emotional challenges for some Gr. 6 students

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K-6 Configuration: Elementary (K-6), Middle (7-8), High School ((9-12), Options (K-12)

Educational Programs & Implications	
PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle school remains at current size (@525-550) • Opportunity to keep Gr. 6 kids younger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational trends moving away from K-6 configuration (most schools in WA State and across US have moved to K-5 elementary, Gr. 6-8 middle school) • Program challenges could become more pronounced if Woodward has fewer students (i.e. could be harder to have full-time elective teachers) • K-6 elementary schools would be much larger (would require significant facility changes for K-6 schools) • Harder for Gr. 6 students to access 7th or 8th grade curriculum • Elementary schools would have to make significant adjustments to address needs of 6th grade students • Acceleration much more difficult at upper levels in a Gr. K-6 model • Gr. 5 and 6 band would be more difficult to deliver during school day – might lose program or need to move before/after school • Mixing of early adolescents (5/6) with younger students • Impacts stability of special education programs by continuing to have 2-year middle school • Science labs would need to be added to elementary schools to offer similar curriculum in Gr. 6 • Professional development problematic, since Gr. 6 curriculum and instructional materials are usually aligned with Gr. 7-8 – not K-5 • Creates greater disconnect between 6th and middle school • Common Core is K-5, 6-8, 9-12 and a K-6 configuration doesn't match • A 2-year middle school means special education students spend short amount of time at that level • K-8 is a better model than K-6