

Meeting the Needs of All Learners

MVMMS - September 2009



Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School continues to strive to meet the expectation of academic excellence for all which has been, and will continue to be, an evolving process.

As we look for solutions to meeting the needs of all middle school students, we remain sensitive to the fact that learning profiles of our middle school students change and develop very rapidly and at different rates. Recognizing that middle school students differ in readiness, interest, and learning profiles, this year we are expanding an instructional model that incorporates more differentiated

instruction, cluster grouping, and flexible grouping, particularly in mathematics and English language arts classes, to improve the engagement and achievement of students at *all* levels.

How will this look at the Middle School level?

We pride ourselves on the fact that our teachers are very knowledgeable about the tenets of skillful teaching. While we know there are many methods involved in effective instruction, we are focusing on making sure that we are incorporating the following into our instructional methods and models for the upcoming year:

Differentiated Instruction- The goal of differentiated instruction is to meet the needs of a broad range of students in a classroom and means that assignments in a class are not all the same for all learners. Therefore, the teacher provides a variety of activities through which students can learn.

Cluster Grouping- The goal of cluster grouping is to place gifted students with similar abilities together so that teachers can tailor instruction and curriculum to meet the specific needs of students in that group. Students have been and will continue to be assessed and placed in groups or "clusters" with peers who have similar abilities and skills.

Flexible Grouping- Flexible grouping means teachers will be spending time with small groups providing focused instruction. Flexible grouping is a model where all students are placed in instructional groups that are not static. Groups are based on each student's performance, ability level, and need. Flexible grouping can enable teachers to spend more time providing focused instruction to a narrower range of students. Some students will demonstrate they have mastered certain skills and concepts, other students will show that they still need help with particular skills. Increased focused instruction promotes higher student achievement. The flexibility to move students from one group to another is an essential component that keeps students engaged and challenged. Ongoing assessments will be used to guide teachers as they move students through flexible groups.

All three approaches together mean that teachers will be able to focus their teaching in more effective ways so that all students get what they need.

In addition, if a student is ready for an accelerated Math or ELA class, it may be possible to move a student vertically for that subject so that he/she can receive instruction with upper grade-level students.

Parents can get more information at the **Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School Curriculum Open House** on **September 24, 2009** from **6:30 – 8:30 p.m.** The teachers will be explaining their curriculum and instructional models.

A **District-wide Parent Information Session** on "Meeting the Needs of All Learners" will be held on **Thursday, October 8, 2009** at **7:00 p.m.** at Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School.

Parents can also go to the Melrose Public Schools website and click on the presentation "Meeting the Needs of All Learners, Including the Academically Advanced and Gifted" at [http://www.melroseschools.com/MSC All Learners Presentation June 23 09.pdf](http://www.melroseschools.com/MSC%20All%20Learners%20Presentation%20June%2023%2009.pdf).

Additionally, parents may contact Pat Muxie, Melrose Public Schools Curriculum Director, at pmuxie@melrose.mec.edu or at 781-462-3257.

Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School appreciates your feedback on how we are providing instruction to our students. An online survey is planned for later this fall to collect comments from parents, and the results will be shared in January, 2010. Please take the time to give us your valuable input so that we may determine what changes need to be made. We appreciate your continued support for middle-level education and the expectation of academic excellence for all.

Posted by Principal Brow - 09/02/09

