

DISTRICT Q&A ABOUT INTEGRATED ELA

Q: Has the Middle School schedule been altered for the 2016-17 school year?

A: Yes. The start and end time for teachers now will be 7:35 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The students will be in school from 7:45 a.m. until 2:50 p.m.

Q: What does the ELA Integration mean?

A: Accommodating an English Language Arts (ELA) Integration combines our current English and Reading curricula into a single ELA course of study, as recommended by the New Jersey Department of Education. In addition, there will be a more intensive integration of ELA within all other courses of study. This is considered a best practice by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Q: How is the increase in instructional time being delivered?

A: Under the new schedule, all eight periods will be 50 minutes in length. Our new ELA integrated course of study will include six 50-minute periods of ELA per week – for a total of 300 minutes per week.

Q: Will the new Middle School schedule have an impact on our afterschool Digits Math program?

A: No. The Digits Math program (which runs Monday through Thursday for one hour after school) will continue in the same format.

Q: How will the new Middle School schedule impact our Exploratory Arts and Music Programs?

A: All programs will continue to be delivered with an additional eight minutes of instruction per day.

Q: How does the Washington Township middle school schedule compare with other area school districts?

A: Many South Jersey middle schools have extended-time bell schedules (i.e. 50 minutes or more per period) such as the one that Washington Township is implementing. Many high-achieving area school districts have successfully integrated their English and reading courses into a combined ELA course. These same high-achieving districts also successfully integrate ELA into all other content areas, as recommended by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Q: What are the other advantages in moving to a new middle school schedule?

A: The new middle school schedule allows for increased opportunities for technology infusion, differentiated instruction, and inquiry-based and cooperative learning for students. The new middle school schedule will reduce the non-instructional transition time between periods and allow us to provide increased opportunities for academic interventions and support for struggling learners.

Q: What are some other advantages of the new middle school schedule?

A: Among other advantages, increased class time provides an environment that will foster more meaningful teacher/student relationships.