

What Impact Would Projected Budget Reductions Have at OMS?

Elimination of the Cluster/Team Model:

- A reduction in core teachers will not allow us to maintain the cluster model.
- This change will eliminate cluster meeting time, which provides teachers with a common time to discuss students' progress and to meet with parents.
- Common planning time, which is integral to maintaining a consistent and coherent curriculum, will be eliminated.
- Without cluster meeting time, it will be a more difficult to keep track of students' behavioral and academic progress. Some students are more likely to fall between the cracks.

Larger Class Sizes:

- Class sizes will average of 35 students per class.
- Some science labs will not be conducted when large class sizes compromise safety.
- Large class sizes will make it more difficult to differentiate instruction. Assessments will consist of more multiple-choice questions.
- Teachers will need more time to return corrected writing assignments and assessments.
- The schedule will likely need to change, possibly to a 6X6 model.
- There will be a reduction in project-based instruction.

Elimination of Specials:

- Reductions in specials will increase the number of directed studies students will have each week. Students may have up to 5 directed studies per week.
- Specials will have an average of 40 students per class.
- Band, Chorus and Orchestra could be removed from the daily schedule and be held before and after school if it is not possible to schedule in a 6X6 model.
- Foreign language could be reduced to 2 times per week.
- Specials will likely be scheduled only 2 times per cycle.

Changes in Student Learning Experience:

- Students will have less one-on-one time with the teachers.
- Students will have more traditional forms of assessment.

- Students will have fewer writing assessments that will be corrected.
- Teachers will not get to know their students as well.
- There will be fewer opportunities for small group instruction.
- The lack of common planning time will reduce intervention for struggling students.
- The lack of common planning time will reduce the opportunity for teachers to analyze the results of common assessments to improve teaching and learning.
- There will be less hands-on learning and laboratory experiments.
- Turn-around time on test, quizzes and written assignments will be greatly increased.
- Math and reading support will be drastically reduced.

Social-Emotional Impact:

- Reduction in counseling will make it difficult to identify and work with struggling students.
- Counselor response to parental needs will be limited.
- Team approach to address student needs will be limited.
- Developmental guidance curriculum will be greatly reduced.
- World of Difference Program could be eliminated or significantly reduced.
- Opportunities for intervention and acceleration will be significantly curtailed.
- Student behavior will not be monitored as closely, which could increase unsafe student behavior.
- Counselors will only be able to do crisis counseling.

In Summary:

A successful middle school experience leads to a successful high school experience. The reductions that are possible next year will weaken the foundation education Ottoson Middle School staff, students, parents and community members have worked extremely hard to preserve. By making these reductions, we are doing a great disservice to our students. These reductions will make it more difficult for Arlington students to compete with students from surrounding districts in the years ahead. It is imperative that we take a proactive approach to ensure the best possible education for the children of Arlington. The better we prepare our children, the better citizens and community members we will have. The education middle school students receive today creates the foundation and opportunities for their future education and adult work.