

JHS Updates 2018-19

At JHS we believe we can all get even better and are continuously improving. We have an amazing staff at JHS and it is with great gratitude that I reflect on how we are all growing together, because we can be even better. Below, I would like to highlight a few items that changed and some of the rationale behind them.

JHS Schedule - The small tweaks we made last year were successful, adding the Wednesday late start and adjusting minutes yielded results in our professional learning and curriculum development process. We have collected data throughout the year and it's clear that our teams are focused on answering the four corollary questions during that timeframe:

1. What do we want all kids to know and be able to do?
 - a. Many teams have a first draft of this completed and by December of 2018 each of our teams should have evaluated and prioritized their standards into a common scope and sequence for the course they have been working on.
2. How do we know if they have learned it?
 - a. Over the course of the year we studied quality standards based assessment practices, formative and summative assessment strategies. Teams developed common formative and common summative assessments. Teams worked on proficiency scales and rubrics for projects that support assessment and feedback on standards.
3. What do we do if they haven't learned it yet?
 - a. Teams developed lessons for re-teaching in large group, individually and in small groups
 - b. Teams developed and discussed instructional strategies that may reach more students
 - c. Teams adjusted current and future pacing, scope and sequence because of the data reviewed
4. What do we do if they have already mastered it?
 - a. Teams developed plans for reinforcing concepts through reciprocal teaching
 - b. Teams designed and created enrichment and extension lessons

While the schedule provided these opportunities we also wanted to further personalize and engage our students at JHS. To do this we studied structures that would give our students more flexibility, choice and voice and opportunity to explore their passions or receive help they need. We set out to address a few challenges by making another small change to our schedule. And addressing the following opportunities:

- Absent or students missing for activities
 - Make up work
- Remembering/consistent start/end times
- Communication and logistics with outside partners
- Enrichment options

Over a series of four subcommittee meetings from our Site Based Leadership team we studied models and the purpose of flex periods, proposed various solutions and came to consensus on a schedule that met our goals for the 18-19 schoolyear. We then began looking at technology solutions that could help us curate the list of choices and options for students during the flex period. We then presented this option to the staff and took this to the Site Based Leadership which voted unanimously to approve it.

Since Wednesday already had an alternate schedule we chose to implement the flex period between the two lunches on Wednesdays.

The addition of the flex period gives students opportunities for enrichment, connection to school and also to get what they need if they need additional support. The technology tool allows us to pair student requests with teacher offerings and take attendance. This also will be a tool we can utilize in assigning overtime sessions (coming at the usual start time Wednesdays) to students who are currently incomplete in a course. Our teachers have come up with some creative ideas for the enrichment time for students and I know as the year goes on we will see more ideas develop. Just a few to mention are: Media Literacy, Career Choices (presenters), Sports Officiating Basics, Mindfulness Training, Hippology and Horse Training, Robotics, Buying your first car, Transitioning from High School, Tips for traveling abroad..etc. Each teacher or a pair of teachers will host an enrichment opportunity for students, some being one or two sessions and some lasting longer. These will be content rich opportunities for students, to read, write, speak, listen, discuss and get engaged. We are also looking forward to the flexibility for students to choose to go see a teacher if they need additional support or to make up work due to absences. The scheduling software we selected for flex period is called flexi-sched <http://www.flexisched.net/>

JHS Internship- Last year six students successfully completed our seed program for the JHS Internship in areas such as: Economic Development, Automotive Technology, OBGYN, Photography, Speech Pathology and Nonprofit childcare management. This year we have eight students signed and are working to place them in extensive internships in Oncology, Wildlife Biology, Family Medicine, Industrial/Manufacturing Engineering, Anesthesiology, Business Management, and Agriculture Extension/Agribusiness. In addition to our seminar topics we also will implement the Gallup Strengthsfinder to help students analyze their strengths and that of those around them to complement their workplace skills on teams. We are excited for our second cohort and would like to invite the board to attend our celebration of learning January 10th, 2019 at 5:30 in the JHS Media Center.

Microsoft TEALS We are now partnering with Microsoft TEALS on our introduction to programming course. With leadership from Michelle Reed we are utilizing portions of their curriculum and partnering with a computer programmer from the Microsoft campus in Fargo to provide occasional classroom enrichment and team teaching. Next year we hope to recruit sufficient students to request the addition of AP Computer Science Principles through the same program.

Mathematical Thinking and Design - A memorandum regarding this [request](#) has been submitted. Upon Board Approval this course will focus on hands-on opportunities for students to apply math concepts in real-world contexts. The Engineering Design Process will be utilized in engaging students in creating projects, products, and presentations. Students will gain a better understanding of how math concepts apply in the world around them and the course will help students use mathematical thinking and develop 21st Century Skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, decision making, and creativity.

Sources of Strength Through community funding and support JHS has developed and trained a group of student peer leaders in a program called sources of strength. The mission of this diverse group is to continue to improve culture by developing campaigns and activities around spreading messages of hope, strength and resilience.

Vocational Rehabilitation Grant Under the leadership of Rhoda Young JHS has again been awarded a grant to support the extension of activities for students on Individualized Education Plans to gain workplace readiness skills training and experiences. This program will expand our current site based work experiences, further develop workplace readiness training opportunities and continue placing students in job shadowing and hands on worksite experiences.

Choice Ready and Innovation Waivers JHS Staff has been engaged in brainstorming processes around continues growth with the ESSA choice ready framework. This will enhance our ability to create future plans and think of creative solutions that may require an innovation waiver. Our site based team is eager to begin a long term planning process upon the completion of a district strategic plan to align our system to support the needs of the district and community.

We are very grateful for the support of the Jamestown Administration and the Jamestown Public Schools Board. We have many opportunities for continued professional growth in the areas of Project Based Learning, Standards based education and assessment, Increasing Academic Literacy and resources to continue advancing towards our mission of learning for all. We appreciate the encouragement as we continue to build upon our excellent foundation and align our system to support the needs, and passions of our future citizens.