

Explain changes in your academic program describing how you will enhance your focus on student achievement and track your success toward that focus.

- 1) *Through common formative assessments (assessments are being developed by our faculty at this time) and continued development of professional learning communities, we will ascertain student's achievement levels and base instruction on student needs. We will provide struggling students with opportunities (Saturday School, guided study, etc.) for extended learning time.*
- 2) *By examining data derived from common assessments, we will target sub groups for intervention and provide additional support or advanced learning opportunities as needed.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing the academic program you are planning because of this grade configuration change.

- 1) *We will consider possible schedule changes (extended time for numeracy and literacy and pull out tutoring for students performing below grade level) to best accommodate all students, but plan to continue with our current academic program which provides students with the standard PSD curriculum and a wide variety of elective classes to which 6<sup>th</sup> graders will now have access.*
- 2) *Enhance literacy by partnering Read 180 as remediation and the current 6<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum including Open Court and Springboard.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing the extracurricular offerings you are planning because of this grade configuration change.

- 1) *In order for 6<sup>th</sup> graders to become involved in the Boltz climate and culture will, we will continue to offer our current extracurricular opportunities to all students (MathCounts, Science Olympiad, Student Leadership Team, Web Club, athletics and intramurals) and add offerings based on student interest.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing the athletic programs you are planning which are occasioned by this grade configuration change.

- 1) *The athletic program will continue for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders and intramurals offerings will be available for 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Intramural offerings will be driven by student interest and our ability to find sponsors and facilities.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing proactive steps you are taking on your own and with your elementary school feeders to ensure that there is a smooth academic transition (excellent curricular articulation and no drop in academic achievement) for the then 5<sup>th</sup> graders as they transition to 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

- 1) *Our administrators will meet with feeder elementary administrators to gain knowledge which will enable our school to facilitate a smooth transition for incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders.*
- 2) *Using available standardized testing information, content area teachers and administrators will meet to evaluate areas of weakness that may need to be addressed in order to avoid a drop in academic achievement.*
- 3) *During the visits to feeder elementary schools, open dialog with parents will provide timely and ongoing information relative to students' academic transition at Boltz.*
- 4) *One of the objectives of our current PLC (Professional Learning Community) teams is to work collaboratively with 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to develop curriculum and identify scope and sequence in each of the core courses.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing proactive steps you are taking with your elementary school feeders to ensure that the then 5<sup>th</sup> graders are prepared emotionally and developmentally for the transition to sixth grade.

- 1) *The WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) program, which welcomes incoming students and provides in-depth orientation, is in place at Boltz and will be utilized during the transition. Our counselors and student WEB leaders will work closely with the incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders to ensure a successful transition.*
- 2) *Guided Study class (on every block day) will give each student close contact with one staff member who monitors their progress and provides one-on-one support.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing proactive steps you are taking on your own and with your high school feeder to ensure that there is a smooth academic transition (excellent curricular articulation and no drop in academic achievement) for the then 8<sup>th</sup> graders as they transition to 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

- 1) *Content area teacher meetings, counselor meetings and feeder school meetings are being held on a regular basis to ensure that there will be a smooth academic transition for our 8<sup>th</sup> graders moving onto 9<sup>th</sup> grade at the high school.*
- 2) *One of the objectives of our current PLC teams is to work collaboratively with 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to develop curriculum and identify scope and sequence in each of the core courses.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing how you will proactively address the expectations of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade parents around school and parent/teacher communication and involvement that are often different in elementary school from middle school.

- 1) *Formal parent-teacher conferences will be put in place. Teachers are always happy to schedule meetings or correspond with parents at their request via a variety of methods.*
- 2) *School newsletters, our website, PIV, teacher bulletins, and PhoneMaster messages will all be used as a means of communication.*
- 3) *Our volunteer coordinator will provide information for parents to help them get involved and they will be encouraged to attend monthly School Improvement Team meetings.*
- 4) *Administrators will send a monthly email update to parents and podcasts will be available.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing what counseling services will be provided at each grade level (content and ratio). What special steps are you taking for the first year transition for registration and other counseling services when 66% of your students will be new to school?

- 1) *Counselors will divide students by alphabet and provide support to those students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade through graduation. By utilizing the Discovery model, guided study (adult advocacy), academic tutoring and Saturday school we will provide all students with counseling in academics, social emotional and behavioral areas.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing how are you implementing the recommendations of the middle school study team in your school.

- 1) *We will be adjusting our schedule and class offering in accordance with research done by the middle school study team. These strategies include:*
  - *Additional time for Language Arts and Math*
  - *Exploration of electives built into students schedules*
  - *Student to student mentoring (through guided study)*
  - *Adult/student mentoring (through guided study)*
  - *Grade level teaming*

Explain changes in your academic program describing how you will ensure that the appropriate resources are available in the media center to meet the needs of the 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

- 1) *We have an award winning media center and the staff is currently adding to our collection by purchasing books and materials geared toward 6<sup>th</sup> graders as well as moving along media utilized by our current 9<sup>th</sup> graders.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing proactive steps you are taking to ensure/maintain/reshape the school culture/atmosphere/morale in the face of the changes that will be happening at your school.

- 1) *We will maintain and continue our philosophy of "Where Everyone Belongs" by offering a safe, welcoming and educationally sound atmosphere. The WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) program welcomes incoming students and provides in-depth orientation.*
- 2) *The need for an increase of instructional time for literacy and numeracy and the scheduling/staff implications are being discussed at School Improvement Team Meetings (the equivalent of PTO). All stakeholders are being included in the decision making process in the above named venues.*
- 3) *We have communicated our plan to department leaders who meet with their department to relay information.*
- 4) *We will have additional staff meetings in order to pool best thinking toward grade configuration changes.*
- 5) *We will also have a transition team representing different stake holder groups.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing how you will ensure the level and types of interaction between the 6<sup>th</sup> graders and the older kids.

- 1) *The WEB program is in place at Boltz which is a support and leadership driven club. The WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) program welcomes incoming students and provides in-depth orientation.*
- 2) *The principal will attend PTO meetings at the feeder elementary schools and information will be available on our website and updated frequently. Our newsletter will be sent to each elementary electronically to be added to their website and/or sent to families via student weekly folders (sometimes referred to as "Friday Folders").*
- 3) *Students have the opportunity to interact with members of other grades in some academic and elective classes as well as social events.*

Explain changes in your academic program describing what staff development will be conducted to assure staff and parents understand the unique characteristics of middle school children.

- 1) *We plan to conduct staff development for staff and parents on the unique characteristics of 6<sup>th</sup> graders.*
- 2) *The most appropriate staff development topics will be generated through our transition team specifically under the direction of transitioning 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers from feeder schools.*
- 3) *Counselors will offer additional meetings to acclimate 6<sup>th</sup> graders and their parents.*
- 4) *All teachers will be attending the National Middle School Conference in Denver, October 30-Nov. 1, 2008.*
- 5) *One of the objectives of our current PLC teams is to work collaboratively with 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to increase understanding of the needs of 6<sup>th</sup> graders.*