



2007 REFERENDUM FACT SHEET

Fact Sheet # 7: Information about plans for fifth and sixth grade

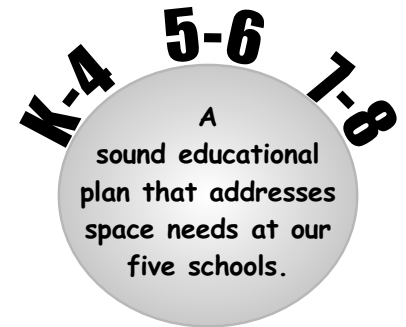
3/23/07

The April 17 \$40 million bond referendum would finance expansion, renovation and restructuring of our schools. **REFERENDUM FACT SHEET #7** examines the 5-6 experience at Hadley. **This and all previous FACT SHEETS are posted on www.d41.org/referendum.**

What will 5th and 6th grade look like in the future?

Our facilities proposal has an obvious impact in the 5th and 6th grades, and we've had a number of questions about the 5-6 experience. Some of these have been from parents who love their elementary school and who have been looking forward to the culminating experience of 5th grade. They want to know that 5th grade will continue to be a time of teamwork and leadership opportunities and that the culture and environment will be child-centered. They want reassurance that parent involvement will be welcomed. And they want evidence that academics and programs will be high quality and age appropriate. FACT SHEET #4 talked about the philosophy of middle-level education. Although we cannot provide all the details at this time, FACT SHEET #7 talks more specifically about the 5th and 6th grade experience, which will be more fully developed in collaboration with staff and other stakeholders after the referendum passes.

- Upon a successful referendum, we will work with staff, stakeholders, expert resources and professional associations to develop a middle-level educational plan aligned to academic, social and emotional standards. We will communicate to parents as the plan begins to take shape, and provide opportunities for feedback and input.
- We will provide our staff with appropriate professional development so that they are prepared to make the transition to a middle-level focus and ready to leverage the advantages of being together in grade-level teams.
- We'll build on the best of fifth grade today. We'll look for ways to enhance fifth grade and take advantage of the opportunities provided by having all fifth grade students and teachers together in a facility designed to meet their needs.
- We'll build on the best of sixth grade today. We'll take advantage of the affinities of fifth and sixth grade to help keep our sixth graders younger longer, and provide a more gradual transition to the junior high years.



District 41 is confident it can meet student and parent needs regardless of the grade structure.

We believe that the K-4, 5-6 and 7-8 model offers us a unique opportunity to focus on our young adolescents (ages 10-15) and to meld facility plans with program offerings.

We are committed to investing resources in our staff, in our children and in the change process itself. We know it takes time for new approaches to become valued traditions, and that we all will need to work together.

This information is intended to help communicate those aspects which we know will be part of the middle-level experience in fifth and sixth grades. Further development of the educational plan will be done in collaboration with stakeholders after referendum passage.

Please turn the page for diagrams of grades 5 & 6.



Some features of 5th grade

Academic

- A self-contained classroom with some teacher-teaming (like 5th has today)
- High expectations for every student
- Service learning opportunities
- Mentoring relationships with older students
- Longer instructional day (by 20 minutes)
- Enhanced Art, Music, PE, Band & Orchestra
- Access to Science labs, performance space

Social-Emotional

- Transition work with students, families and staff in 4th grade preparatory for 5th grade
- Students develop organizational skills that will support greater self-direction
- Grade/class leadership opportunities
- School identity, sense of belonging
- Soft transition to middle level; 5th grade physically at Hadley, but in self-contained classroom with an elementary-style experience
- Preparation for gradual independence for decision-making
- Access to counselor/adult advocate
- Outdoor activity time in 5-6 space
- Grade-level activities; 5-6 activities
- Game/activity nights; after-school sports in a non-competitive environment
- Buddy/mentor relationship with older students
- Separate buses, entrances, schedules from 7-8

Staff

- Support for transitions
- Professional development for middle-level teaching
- Dedicated administrator for 5-6
- Guidelines for parent involvement, communication
- Enhanced opportunities for grade-level collaboration and with 6th-grade teachers for curricular articulation and student transition

5th

Some features of 6th grade

Academic

- Teaming (like 6th has today), but in a 5-6 environment.
- Mentoring relationships with younger and older students
- More gradual preparation for 7-8

Social-Emotional

- Age grouping within a 5-6 school; 6th graders have much in common with 5th graders
- Teaming in a 5-6 environment provides more gradual transition to junior high years
- Students use organizational skills for greater self-direction in academic planning and performance
- Grade/class leadership opportunities
- Grade-level activities; 5-6 activities
- Game/activity nights; more after-school sports
- Buddy with 7th graders
- Preparation for gradual independence for decision-making
- Separate buses, entrances, schedules from 7-8

Staff

- Support for transitions
- Support and training for staff transition to a more elementary approach
- Dedicated administrator for 5-6
- Guidelines for parent involvement, communication
- Enhanced opportunities for grade-level collaboration and with 5th-and 7th-grade teachers for curricular articulation and student transition

6th

Please turn the page for information on program development for grades 5 & 6. 