



Tradition-Rich, Future-Focused

**REDFORD UNION SCHOOLS, DISTRICT NO. 1**

17715 Brady Street, Redford Michigan 48240

Telephone (313) 242-6000

Fax (313) 242-6025

Internet address: <http://www.redfordu.k12.mi.us>

May 11, 2023

Hello, Panther Families!

As the current school year draws to a close, I wanted to briefly highlight some important things for our Redford Union Schools community for this summer and the 2023/2024 school year. These are exciting times within our District.

1. Thanks in large part to our community's support of the zero tax-increase bond proposal, we will have another full summer of construction that will result in continued improvements of our buildings for students and staff. In addition to last summer's renovations at Keeler School and Beech Elementary, the current school-year construction projects at MacGowan School and within our District auditorium and auto shop are well underway and will draw to a close at some point this summer. Additionally, significant classroom and interior corridor renovations will take place this summer at Redford Union High School as that building is transformed into our new Secondary Campus for students in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade - with the Junior High and High School students occupying defined spaces within this single campus.
2. At the Elementary level we are excited for our return to "neighborhood" schools at both Beech Elementary and the renamed Hilbert Elementary. Families will be able to have all of their elementary-aged students in a single building location for these important and formative school years. More information will follow in the weeks ahead so that both our District resident and Schools of Choice families will know which location will be their "home" elementary building. Additionally, as we consider adjustments that will help to improve learning and behavioral outcomes for our students over time, a decision was made to return our 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students to the Elementary level. Accordingly, both Beech Elementary and Hilbert Elementary will be a "neighborhood" school to students from Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade beginning with the 2023/2024 school year.
3. With the traditional school year drawing to a close, our Summer School programming is right around the corner. While we certainly understand the importance of our kids and families having an opportunity to take advantage of what our summers here in Michigan (and elsewhere) offer, summer learning loss is a reality for many students. Due to this reality, the District will be offering Summer School programming for our students and families during certain periods of summer. For our families of elementary-aged students, the District has partnered with the YMCA to offer some extended-day programming that will offer a mix of summer learning and summer fun. More information on the Summer School opportunities for Elementary, Junior High, and High School students will follow this communication - if it hasn't already been shared.

Thank you for your time and for your partnership in your child's (or children's) education.

Stay Panther Strong!

Jasen Witt

Superintendent

# THE K-6 GRADE CONFIGURATION

## Redford Union Schools

Redford Union Schools (RU) is reconfiguring elementary schools to a K-6 model. RU partnered with Hanover Research (Hanover) to review relevant research on K-6 and K-8 grade configurations. This infographic provides RU parents and community members with a summary of the key findings from the research about the benefits of attending Grade 6 in K-6 or K-8 school.

### THE BENEFITS OF A K-6 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

#### ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT



Research finds that attending Grade 6 in elementary, rather than middle school, can lead to:

- ✓ **Reduced achievement loss** during the middle school transition.
- ✓ **Higher academic achievement** in Math and Reading.
- ✓ **Reduced achievement gaps.**

*In one study\* students who attend Grade 6 in elementary, compared to middle school, had pass rates on standardized tests that were on average...*



**6.9%**

Higher in **READING**



**6.2%**

Higher in **MATH**

#### BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE



Research finds that attending Grade 6 in elementary, rather than middle school, can lead to:

- ✓ **Fewer disciplinary infractions**, even after Grade 6, including **fewer suspensions and expulsions**.
- ✓ **Higher attendance rates.**
- ✓ Grade 6 students experiencing **less bullying and fights** and **feeling safer** at school.



*Because sixth graders are at a very impressionable age, delaying the middle school transition until students are more developmentally mature can reduce disciplinary problems in Grade 6 and even in the long-term.*

#### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL OUTCOMES & SUPPORT



Research finds that K-6 and K-8 schools promote social structures with **more positive social-emotional outcomes** than traditional middle or junior high schools.

**Attending Grade 6 in a K-6 or K-8 school can improve:**



##### SELF-ESTEEM

Raised self-esteem and decreased feelings of self-consciousness, particularly in girls.



##### POSITIVE SOCIAL CONTEXT

Stronger school attachment, peer support, and peer academic values.



##### SELF-CONCEPT

Higher self-perception of academic skills in reading.



##### SOCIAL SUPPORT

A supportive environment fosters:

- ✓ **Strong Relationships** among peers and teachers.
- ✓ **High Engagement** from parents and students.
- ✓ **Sense of Belonging:** feeling more welcome, known, and seen.



##### STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Students who are seen as leaders are more likely to behave like leaders.

\*Malone et al, 2020 (See page 2 for a complete list of sources referenced during the completion of this infographic)



## REFERENCES

### ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

- Clark, D.M. et al. "Math and Reading Differences Between 6-8 and K-8 Grade Span Configurations: A Multiyear, Statewide Analysis." *Current Issues in Education*, 16:2, August 15, 2013. <https://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/viewFile/1144/496>
- Johnson, J., Godwyll, F., and Shope, S. "The Influence of Grade Span on Student Achievement in Florida: A Quantitative Investigation." *International Journal of Education Reform*, 25:4, 2016.
- Jones, M.C., Slate, J.R., Moore, G.W., and Martinez-Garcia, C. "Grade Span Configuration and Academic Performance for Students in Poverty: A Texas Multiyear Analysis." *School Leadership Review*, 12:2, 2017. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1277426.pdf>
- Malone, M., Cornell, D.G., and Shukla, K. "Grade configuration is associated with school-level standardized test pass rates for sixth-, seventh-, and eighth- grade students." *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 31:2, 2020. Accessed via Taylor & FrancisOnline.
- Rockoff, J. and B. Lockwood. "Stuck in the Middle: Impacts of Grade Configuration in Public Schools." *Journal of Public Economics*, 94:11, 2010. Accessed via University of Pennsylvania Scholarly Commons.
- Schwerdt, G. and M.R. West. "The Impact of Alternative Grade Configurations on Student Outcomes through Middle and High School." *Journal of Public Economics*, 97, 2013.
- Starks, S.L., Owens-Mosby, D., and Rakow, E.A. "The Effects of School Grade Span Configuration on Student Achievement in Middle School-Aged Children." *Middle Grades Research Journal*, 12:1, 2018. Accessed via EBSCOhost.

### BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

- Arcia, E. "A Comparison of Elementary/K-8 and Middle Schools' Suspension Rates." *Urban Education*, 42:5, 2007.
- Booth, M.Z., H.C. Sheehan, and M.A. Earley. "Middle Grades' School Models and Their Impact on Early Adolescent Self-Esteem." *Middle Grades Research Journal*, 2:1, March 1, 2007. Accessed via EBSCOhost.
- Cook, P.J. et al. "The Negative Impacts of Starting Middle School in Sixth Grade." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 27:1, December 1, 2008. <https://gspp.berkeley.edu/assets/uploads/research/pdf/CookMacCounMuschkinVigdor2008.pdf>
- Schwartz, A.E., L. Stiefel, and M.W. Rothbart. "Do Top Dogs Rule in Middle School? Evidence on Bullying, Safety, and Belonging." *American Educational Research Journal*, 53:5, 2016. Accessed via SagePub.

### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL OUTCOMES & SUPPORT

- Booth et al. "Middle Grades' School Models and Their Impact on Early Adolescent Self-Esteem." Op. Cit.
- Cappella, E. et al. "A National Sample of Eighth-Grade Students: The Impact of Middle Grade Schools on Academic and Psychosocial Competence." *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 2017. Accessed via SagePub.
- Hough, D.L. "Findings from the First & Only National Data Base on Elemiddle & Middle Schools (Executive Summary)." *Middle Grades Research Journal*, 4:3, January 1, 2009. Accessed via EBSCOhost.
- Kim, H.Y. et al. "Navigating Middle Grades: Role of School Context in Students' Social Adaptation and Experiences." *Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 2014. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED562784.pdf>
- Schwartz et al. "Do Top Dogs Rule in Middle School? Evidence on Bullying, Safety, and Belonging." Op. Cit.