



Parent Letter FAQ

Washington Middle School

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FAQ about Washington Middle School for parents.

WMS Parent Letter FAQ

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1. Leadership

a. Vision for WMS

i. What are the top 3 things you want to change at WMS and what specific steps will you take to change them? How will you measure your success? How can the parent community help you succeed?

While I look forward to learning more about WMS in the coming weeks and months, the urgent priorities include:

Area for Improvement	Supporting Information & Data	Critical Steps	Measure	Parent Community Support
Financial & Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget did not include funding for a needed ELA teacher that was included in the communicated master schedule. This means other positions had to be cut to ensure we had sufficient ELA teachers. This also required redoing the entire master schedule as soon as funding for the ELA position was identified, which did not take place until 10/4. This caused schedules to not be ready on the Friday after Strong Start ended. • Some line items intended to be funded by the Levy or LAP funds were not allowable because they were not serving level 1 and 2 students exclusively, which means we had to find other general fund sources of funds for them. This has also required shifting positions and materials to other sources of funds. • One position reduction of a legacy employee slated to take place this year did not follow HR procedure, which meant the move could not be made without grievance. This was corrected, but increased the position’s cost to the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remedy problems with the 18-19 budget developed in the Spring and balance the budget. • Get every student a schedule aligned to requirements and our WMS budget. • Ensure Semester 2 schedules are done well before the first day of Semester 2 and have minimal need for corrections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced 18-19 Budget. All existing positions funded ideally with sufficient money left over for non-personnel expenses. (i.e. supplies) • Students receive schedules on time and largely error-free for Semester 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patience with respect to beginning of year schedules for your child. • Involvement in conversations regarding budget development for the 19-20 school year. • Advocacy for additional funding for WMS with the district, given our unique population and being a middle school. We are 79% Free and Reduced Meals eligible without the HCC magnet, which means we would be a Title I school. On the other end, SPS does not currently provide additional funding for HCC programming. As a middle school, we must have teachers who are licensed to teach both middle and high school courses—an issue which is unique to schools with HCC programs and more challenging at a school like WMS that would otherwise be Title I.

<p>Safety and Climate</p>	<p>Many children in the hallways without passes during class: observed, shared by staff and students</p> <p>18-19 School Climate Survey Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28% average favorable response to School Safety questions overall (19 percentage points less than district average) • 39% favorable for “I feel safe at my school” • 15% favorable for “adults are able to stop someone from being bullied at school.” • 14% favorable for “adults notice if someone is bullied at school” • 19% favorable for “students in my classes are respectful to adults.” • 24% favorable for “students in my classes are focused on learning.” • 10% favorable for “students in my school treat each other with respect” • 23% favorable for “I feel proud of my school” • 27% favorable for “Adults at school treat students fairly” <p>A group of students were so concerned about the degree of sexual harassment taking place at school that they created and gave a survey of students on the topic and provided last year’s administration with recommendations for this year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move administrator offices to the hallways to be closer to students for monitoring purposes • Create a culture of being in and remaining in class. • Create a culture of passes in order to be in the hallway during instructional time. • Create a sense of urgency to move to class quickly between periods. • Improve lunchtime supervision • Train teachers in common method for building positive, productive rapport with all children (Capturing Kids’ Hearts) • Build teacher awareness of race and equity issues and/or bias that may impact their classroom management • Improve teacher ownership and management of classroom behaviors • Increase Tier 1 supports for all students • Develop restorative practices that teach appropriate behavior, repair harm done, and deter repeating the negative behavior • Improve school’s PBIS implementation • Review and implement recommendations made by students related to sexual harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in students with more than one out-of-school suspension • Reduction in out-of-school suspensions • Empty hallways during class time except for students with passes in hand • Increase in climate survey responses indicating favorable responses for Classroom Environment, Safety, and Healthy Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage your student to communicate with school staff when they are being bullied or feel unsafe at school • Encourage students to know and follow school and district rules • Communicate to school administration when your child feels as though they have been treated unfairly • Stay engaged in your student’s academic progress and speak with your student about it regularly. Center all conversations about behavior on its impact on their learning. • The school has been practicing PBIS for more than a year without a great deal of success in part due to a lack of student incentives. The school would love to work with the PTSA to fund PBIS-related incentives
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<p>Improve academic outcomes of our students not involved in Advanced Learning or HCC services</p>	<p>Less than 31% of non-HCC students met grade-level standard last year in ELA, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less than 20% of black students • less than 17% of latino students • less than 9% of students receiving ELL services • less than 8.5% of students receiving special education services <p>Less than 25% of non-HCC students met grade-level standard last year in Math, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less than 15% of black students • less than 20% of latino students • less than 17% of multiracial students • less than 13% of students receiving ELL services • just 14% of students receiving special education services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build teacher awareness of race and equity issues and/or bias that may impact their instruction. Continue school and district focus on culturally relevant teaching practices. • Share data broken down by subgroups, including AL/HCC and non-AL/HCC magnet data with school staff and the broader school community • Increase Tier 1 supports for all students • Educate staff on their legal responsibilities for serving students with disabilities and English Language Learners and provide support to do so • Ensure Levy and LAP funding is spent on supplemental positions, programming, and resources that benefit Level 1 and 2 students per the requirements of that funding. • Create a culture in which common, school-wide, research-based instructional practices (previously called the Teacher’s Toolkit) are expected, rather than recommended. • Increase teacher coaching and support from career ladder teachers and instructional coaches • Increase administrator observations with feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade-level MTSS up and running • Evaluation final comments match teacher overall scores • Establish baseline for number of instructional support services by career ladder teachers and instructional coaches • Increase the number of administrator observations with feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss your student’s weekly progress report with them each Friday. • Sign up for the library and encourage your child to read everyday • Discuss your student’s academic goals with them often • Take steps to ensure your student comes to school every day and is on time. • Communicate regularly with your student’s teachers and advisor
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate staff per the criteria set forth by the state and district with fidelity • Increase access to the general education curriculum for students receiving ELL and special education services 		
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b. Communication

i. What will be your regular schedule for both phone/email and in-person communication with families?

We will do a monthly newsletter beginning in November. Each Sunday night, a communication from the district’s School Messenger program will go out to all families.

We will announce parent events as they are scheduled. Given the transition in leadership over the summer, new administration is working with previous staff to ensure past traditions are upheld and to add programming that enhances our parent offerings. It is a top priority for new administration to have dedicated time for families who have not typically been heard or engaged with the school through traditional outlets like the PTSA. A series of listening sessions with these populations will be held over the next few months.

We are also in the process of updating our website.

c. Decision-making Process

i. Has the BLT approved the budget changes made for this year?

Per our budget analyst, no changes were made to the approved budget.

ii. In your decision-making process so far, was feedback solicited from the BLT, staff, and families? How did BLT and teacher feedback inform the changes you’ve made this year?

1. Decisions were based on student achievement data, climate survey results, feedback from staff and students I met with in June, parent feedback regarding what they wanted from the new principal in Spring 2018, meetings I’ve had thus far with students, a review of our budget and the master schedule, meetings with district HR and budget representatives, feedback from district leadership, and a review of state and district law, policy, and procedure and SPS collective bargaining agreements. The BLT chair is on a leadership group I’ve met with frequently over the summer which includes school administration, teachers identified by the district as career ladder teachers (top in the district), an SEA representative, our school’s instructional coaches, our special education department chair, and our Race and Equity Team leader. The district also had parent and community representatives on the principal interviewing team when I was chosen to lead WMS.

iii. What specific mechanisms are you putting in place for family engagement?

Schoolwide Communication Vehicles

- Sunday Evening Calls
- Friday weekly progress reports from advisory
- Monthly Newsletter
- Website
- School Facebook Page

- Student-Led Conferences
- Curriculum Night (Back to School)
- Arena Conferences
- Student-Led Conferences

Teacher Vehicles

- Parent Meetings
- Schoology & The Source
- Parent Contact

Our parent involvement programming will focus on six areas:

- Parenting
Assist families with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students. Also, assist schools to better understand families.
- Communicating
Conduct effective communications from school-to-home and from home-to-school about school programs and student progress.
- Volunteering
Organize volunteers and audiences to support the school and students. Provide volunteer opportunities in various locations and at various times.
- Learning at Home
Involve families with their children on homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.
- Decision Making
Include families as participants in school decisions and develop parent leaders and representatives.
- Collaborating with the Community
Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.

A top priority this year will be creating space for our under-represented populations on traditional parent groups like the PTSA to be engaged and heard.

iv. You've cited several changes you feel required to make based on legal compliance (HCC vs. Honors, LAP funding distribution). Have you been referring your legal questions to district legal counsel for legal guidance? If not, why not?

Yes. I received feedback from district legal counsel and members of the district staff regarding the course titles for classes taken by students receiving HCC services. I also received feedback from our program contacts with the Levy and district grant staff regarding allowable expenditures for LAP and Levy funds. I also consulted with school staff about the duties they performed last year and reviewed if they were allowable per the requirements of Levy and LAP funds.

v. Have you engaged other principals at middle schools in the district that house an HCC program and a Scholars program to understand what has worked and what has been a challenge at those schools.

Yes. One way in which we are unlike other SPS schools with an HCC program is that our non-HCC population is 79% Free and Reduced Meals eligible, less than 11% of non-HCC students met grade-level standard last year in ELA, and less than 9% of non-HCC students met grade-level standard last year in Math. Comparing us to a Garfield or Thurgood Marshall is not fully helpful either as unlike an elementary or high school, we must have staff who are licensed to teach both middle and high school subjects, which is more expensive. For example, an elementary-licensed teacher is licensed to teach a 4th grade student performing at the 6th grade-level; however, a middle-school licensed teacher is not necessarily licensed to teach a 7th grader Chemistry, Biology, Algebra I, Algebra II, or Geometry.

vi. Have you engaged Principal May at Thurgood Marshall who has very successfully led a feeder elementary school with an HCC

Yes, I have met with Principal May and will continue to work with her and other principals within our feeder pattern to strengthen our overall academic program.

vii. Why are all of these changes happening in the first two weeks of school rather than over the summer?

See Financial and Scheduling portion of Section 1A. Budgets should be done by late Spring and the master schedule should be aligned to the budget when it is developed shortly thereafter. Schedules communicated to teachers, students and families should align with the budget realities of the school. This will be corrected for the 19-20 school year.

2. Budget

a. How many students are enrolled in WMS this year? How does that compare to last year?

Year	Projected	October
17-18	703	712
18-19	679	9/24: 668

b. What is the budget for WMS this year (in teacher full-time equivalents and dollars) and what was it last year?

This is what the district allocated each of the last three years:

See additional budget document.

c. When did budget problems become apparent?

Problems became apparent in late July/early August when we had hired all of our budgeted ELA vacancies and yet there was still a 1.0 ELA position in the master schedule that was not accounted for in the school’s budget. Staff members who worked at WMS last year and continue to work here this year expressed having concerns before that time. Unfortunately, we had only one vacancy that could be modified to meet our ELA need (world language) and even that was not sufficient to address the full range of budget shortages we had. There are district deadlines for notifying employees of their displacement (loss of job at a school) and they had already passed, so we were unable to rectify the scheduling issues until we had enough vacant FTEs to shift funding to ELA. A late resignation in our music department combined with the world language position gave us a path forward to fund the additional ELA FTE as well as take care of some of the other budgetary problems.

d. Did changes to the world languages program actually help with the budget problem or just shift the problem as those students now needed to take other classes?

The cut of the world language vacancy combined with a reduction in the FTE for the orchestra position helped to pay for the missing ELA teacher and the shifts in what was charged to Levy and LAP budgets that brought us in compliance with the rules of those grants. The moves also enabled us to ensure all students have an ELA teacher for their ELA class.

3. Equity

a. How will you measure whether the changes you are making move the school in the direction of your equity goals? Where are those goals documented?

The district has equity goals related to eliminating opportunity gaps and is working to become more equitable generally. School Board Policy 0030 outlines the board’s expectation that SPS provide a racially equitable education and expresses a commitment toward eliminating achievement gaps. The school has related documented goals in the CSIP that we have not been meeting as there are significant gaps between students receiving gifted services and those not. Many WMS parents—HCC and not—have communicated a commitment to equity, particularly with respect to race. Given the extremely low percentage of non-HCC and AL students meeting grade-level proficiency, change, while difficult, is necessary. A link to district’s goals can be found here: <https://www.seattleschools.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=627&pageId=14245065> . A link to board policy 0030 can be found here: https://www.seattleschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_543/File/District/Departments/School%20Board/Policies/Series%200000/0030.pdf .

b. Why was advisory moved later in the day? Doesn’t that have an adverse effect on kids whose parents can’t take them to school in time for first period, given SPS’s transportation challenges?

i. Advisory is a research-based structure the school has in place that, while in need of improvement, is a strength of the school's programming. Social Emotional Learning was tied as the highest favorable score on the 18-19 Climate Survey at 74%, and the bulk of those questions were addressed by programming that was a part of the school's advisory program. We have fewer teachers this school year and our nurse and fiscal manager do not have advisories unlike last year. The Assistant Principal position that was cut also had an advisory in 17-18. To address these personnel changes, this year our Seattle U and Parks staff serve as advisors and they are more often available nearer the middle of the day.

SPS does have transportation challenges that they are working to remedy. We have also reached out to the transportation department to secure temporary Orca cards for students impacted by the bus driver shortage. Students are excused for the time they miss due to late-arriving buses, meaning they may make-up all work missed without penalty and the tardy does not negatively impact their academic record.

Moving advisory later in the day also makes it less likely that students will come late to skip advisory.

c. In what ways was Levy and LAP funding improperly used in the past, and how will you be using those funds going forward? Have you consulted district legal counsel about the alleged improper use of those funds in the past?

See 1c4

d. What are average class sizes and top-end outliers, and how do these numbers compare across programs? Are the reports of 40+ students in some math classes accurate?

The only classes that have 40 or more students in them are some of the music and PE classes. This is common in SPS. After all scheduling moves we were able to make this semester in order to reduce class sizes, the following is a breakdown of our classes that have any sections with more than 32 students:

Course	Average Class Size	Largest Class Size
Geometry	29.25	35
6th ELA	31	35
7th ELA Honors	30.2	33
6th ELA Honors	35.25	36
Math 8	28.33	33
PE	30.33	41
Science 6 Honors	29.4	34
Spanish 1B	32	35
US History 8 Honors	31.6	37
World History 6 Honors	35.25	37
World History 7	29.5	33

World History 7 Honors	31.2	35
Biology	31	36
Chemistry	33.75	37
Algebra I	34	37

4. Changes to Electives

a. Access to Electives

i. Do you plan to allow kids to choose their own electives as WMS has done in the past?

Many middle schools across the country address electives in middle school via a rotation. All students in a particular grade may take a given course for a predetermined period of time. This is age appropriate and supported by research and aligned with middle school student development as exposure and exploration is key to students learning about their identity, likes, and dislikes. Choice of electives is more typical in high school. Choice in middle school may be limited to whether a student wants to play an instrument, perform in choir, or take a more generalized music course that is a mixture of instruments, making music, and singing. Choice is often dependent upon the school's budget. Rotation scheduling is often less expensive to staff and more efficient to schedule.

ii. Why are Scholars this year allowed only one elective, when the HCC students get two?

All students who attend Washington Middle School are Scholars. All of our scholars' schedules are based on their academic needs. This may include requirements in an Individualized Education Plan, their language learning plan, any requirements for providing gifted services, or classes that address any academic performance in need of additional time and intervention to address. Not all students receiving gifted services are in two elective courses.

b. Languages

i. What is preventing you from restoring Spanish 1 for 7th graders right now, given that you have an experienced Spanish teacher in the building who has been assigned to teach other subjects?

We do not have sufficient world language teachers for all 7th graders to take world language. This is because we do not have sufficient funds this year to do this with our current schedule (6, 55 min. periods daily).

ii. If you don't restore 7th grade language classes, do you plan to assign all 8th graders to first-year language classes next year even though the content of those classes will have to be repeated in high school?

That is the hope and goal. Given its importance as an academic content area, all students aside from a very small population with significant cognitive disabilities and those just learning English should take world language in middle school, just as they should take art, music, PE, health, and technology. The middle school language classes in SPS are not taken for credit. Some students, however, do well enough in the course or through their own self-study to be able to test out of a first and sometimes a second year of high school world language. Even if we can only offer one semester, students may continue to pursue self-study outside of what WMS offers and may test out of entry-level, high school world language courses.

iii. If students are expected to take online courses in the library in small groups (e.g., French 2 and Japanese 2), who will be available to answer questions, help with pronunciation, and gauge whether they are successfully using and learning from the materials?

The online courses are taught by BYU teachers, the vendor we've chosen to contract with. Additionally, we hope to partner with speakers of French and Japanese to support students in online courses. Ms. Krasne and Ms. Harger have been assigned to support students in online courses by being available to answer questions and monitoring students' progress in the course. Families who wish to opt out of the opportunity to take French or Japanese 1B online may contact counselor, Mike Matsumoto at mamatsumoto@seattleschools.org.

iv. Equity concerns regarding languages

1. To address the distribution of kids taking foreign languages, what is your plan to encourage more students to take language classes?

The plan to encourage them is to schedule them into the class. Middle schoolers often don't know what they like until they have the chance to try it, which is why exposure is so important during this developmental time period. World language, art, PE, health, and technology are as important as core classes in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Research shows that exposure to each of these contents is beneficial to students. All students should take them as a part of their middle school program so they have a better sense of what they want to pursue or specialize in during high school. How often and how long students take each of these elective courses will be determined, in part, by the school's budget.

2. Why are you eliminating language classes for all 7th graders instead of providing them to as many 7th graders as possible?

One language position was reduced so that the school had sufficient funding for its needed ELA teachers. We will regroup and create a scheduling plan to ensure that all students take a world language course during their time at WMS.

3. Have you seen evidence that language classes were previously preferentially assigned to HCC students? If so, how do you intend to resolve that and restore language in an equitable way?

The goal is to have a majority of 8th graders take world language.

4. What is the equity outcome of removing languages at the south end HCC middle school while they are offered at other HCC middle schools?

World language has not been removed from WMS. We offer Spanish IB in person and Japanese and French IB online with a teacher via contract with BYU. All schools in Seattle Public Schools are neighborhood schools. While some schools have magnet programs for students designated as qualifying for HCC, these programs are funded at the same level as all SPS schools. Not all middle schools are able to budget for world language. For example, the world language courses at Aki Kurose Middle School are taught by a licensed teacher who is volunteering.

5. How will you address equity issues surrounding online coursework, where some kids have families who can better support/supplement their learning and others do not?

The course is fully taught by the staff at BYU. All students work on the course during their designated period in the library in lieu of taking another elective. Our world language teacher and librarian have been assigned to support students through technical and motivational issues with the course and to monitor and encourage student progress. We also hope to partner with families who are fluent in these languages to support students. As a part of the online course, students also have access to other students taking the course online who are not a part of the WMS community. Students will also have the opportunity to complete the required conversational portion of the course during HOST.

c. Music

i. Will every student take the "EXP" survey music course? Is it geared toward students who don't have prior experience with instrumental or vocal music?

No. We do not have funds to support every student taking experiential music this year. It is geared towards students who weren't scheduled to be in instrumental or vocal music, for whatever reason. Due to WMS' wide array of instrumental music performance levels and offerings that are unique to this school and unmatched by even larger SPS middle schools and some high schools, there was previously no room in our music teachers' schedules for students to engage in music without a current desire to join the choir or play an instrument in the band or orchestra. After some exposure to the course, however, they may. And if not, they have had the opportunity to take the course and see if music is of interest to them.

ii. How will you measure whether the new music survey course is successful?

The goal is exposure and providing engaging instruction aligned to state standards for music. Again, middle school is a time for students to experience and explore. Should our budget be sufficient, a successful schedule will ensure students have exposure to technology, music, art, health, PE, and world language courses to supplement their core instruction in ELA, math, science, and social studies.

iii. If a 6th grader gets excited about music in the first semester, what happens in the 2nd semester?

Maybe they opt to join the band at WMS or at their high school.

iv. Are you familiar with the incredibly rich music history of WMS, Garfield and the Central District?

Yes, especially how central African-Americans were in the historic music tradition in the Central District. Unfortunately with the previous slate of music courses the school has offered, very few African-American students had access to take a music course and even less of an opportunity to be in the advanced ensembles. Seventy-five percent of students who were slated to be enrolled in music this school year were in HCC, and just 14% were black or Hispanic. By eliminating the Fiddlers/Eclectic Strings course and moving that program to afterschool for the 17 students involved and reducing orchestra and band performance levels from four to three, we were able to offer four sections of music to approximately 100 students who would have not otherwise taken music this school year.

d. PE

i. You said you may start denying some PE waiver requests. How will you decide which waiver requests to accept and which to deny?

We accepted waivers for medical reasons this semester.

5. HCC/Advanced Learning

a. Do “Honors” classes include other Spectrum/ALO/high-achieving students in addition to students with HCC designations?

i. If not, isn’t this inconsistent with Garfield’s “honors” classes, which are not testing-gated? Won’t this inconsistency be detrimental to non-HCC students who may come to believe that high school honors classes are not open to them?

It’s important to keep in mind that the HCC label is supposed to indicate performance and cognitive ability in the top 2%. All across the country, students not in the top 2% experience and succeed in academically rigorous courses, including those labeled Honors, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate. In fact, if you think of who tends to graduate from four-year universities in our country, only a very small percentage would meet the standard for an HCC label. There are very few students in core classes with students receiving HCC services who are not identified as HCC. Many of these students are identified as AL, and some had been admitted into classes with HCC peers prior to this school year.

b. Do you believe that HCC should be maintained as a program at WMS or would you like to see the program move to another middle school?

Administration is excited to serve every student enrolled in our school each year, however that is determined.

c. Are you coordinating with other middle school principals in schools that house an HCC program to ensure consistency across this district wide program?

WMS principals have and continue to meet with other principals at monthly meetings. We continue to operate in compliance with board policy that ensures consistency of program by requiring that students with the HCC designation receive instruction in a self-contained setting “in most core classes.”

6. Changes to student rules

a. What is the process for revising student rules, and what specific changes have been made? When will the student handbook be available?

Student rules were revised this year with feedback from students, staff, and a group of building leaders, including a union representative, administrators, instructional coaches, career ladder teachers, and the chairs of the Building Leadership Team and the Race and Equity Team. A few decisions were made by administrators only. Some rules may be revised based on changes to district and state rules, and other have been made after reviewing our data. The student handbook is available online [here](#).

b. Why are students required to stay in the lunchroom for the entire lunch period instead of being allowed to do homework in the library or get some exercise outside?

Students had to stay in the lunchroom until we had adequate supervision during lunch. We were able to gain some parent volunteers to support with supervision, and when our last two staff members started with us, we were able to adjust some duty schedules to ensure we have proper supervision. Students now have the option of going to the gym or library when they are done eating their lunch just as they have in the past.

c. When during the day can students use the restroom, pick up Orca cards, see counselors, address scheduling issues, submit PE waivers, etc...

Restroom: See [student handbook](#) pages 10-11.

d. The “no backpack” rule was initially instituted to address safety concerns. Has this rule change been vetted with district safety authorities?

There is no district policy stating students may not bring backpacks into classrooms. Our building is old and many students who do not wish to put their belongings in our school lockers—some of which are easy to open without a combination—make a strong case for not doing so. Because of the locker condition,

administration cannot guarantee the safety and security of student belongings in lockers. Additionally, going to their locker each period may make students late to class. So long as bags do not cause a problem with moving about the class, students may bring their backpacks into the classroom. They are encouraged to hang their bag on the back of their chair.

College students are permitted to bring backpacks into classrooms. Just as college students make choices about when to return to their dorm room between classes, WMS students will need to make good, responsible choices about when to go to their locker so that they are on time to every class.

7. Schedules

a. What should kids do if their schedules are still incorrect?

At this point, all student schedules for Semester 1 are correct and final. Changes made to schedules in early October were made to reduce class sizes and move the relevant students to their online world language classes once they were set up with BYU.

b. What is being done to ensure that this scheduling problem is not repeated?

First, we will ensure that we have a schedule that is funded. If we are unable to fund the schedule and programs we want, we will need to make difficult decisions about cutting certain programs and offerings that have been offered in the past. Secondly, we will follow all HR procedural guidelines and timelines for displacing staff and making adjustments to staff positions. Third, the budget presented to staff and BLT for vote will need to fit within the money we are allocated by the district. Fourth, we will only make a schedule and budget that meets requirements of any LAP and Levy funding we receive. Fifth, we will staff our positions aligned with our budgeted positions so no last minute changes to schedules or programming will need to take place. Lastly, we will do all of this well in advance of the first day of school so scheduling is solid and stable at the start of the school year.

c. Why was a spreadsheet used to develop the schedule when the district provides software?

Most master schedulers schedule on a white board, by hand on paper, or in an Excel spreadsheet. My preferred method is to use a spreadsheet as it allows us to project the impact of certain master scheduling changes on class sizes and ability to get all students into their required courses. Pivot tables are used to identify class counts as schedules are hypothetically changed so we can determine if the master schedule adjustment is a positive one to make. The district's software is like the "final draft" of a process that has many, many drafts. Once the master schedule and schedules are in the district's software, it takes quite a bit of time and effort to adjust them, whereas in a spreadsheet, you can copy and paste, drag and drop, clear contents in a matter of seconds, and run multiple scenarios all in one place and ultimately make the best decision possible. Given how little time there was to entirely redo the master schedule, using excel was also the most appropriate choice.

d. Why were the counselors not involved in the process as in previous years?

Key terms:

Course Request: Classes a student is required to have along with any possible preferences for electives they may have. Electives are often adjusted based on the master schedule created

Master Schedule: A listing and schedule of all courses for the term. This must be funded and aligned to the staffing in the building, including their licensure areas.

Student Schedule: The student's listing of classes with times for a given term.

Counselors were involved in gathering course requests in the spring. The principal then made a master schedule that should have taken into account the budget and that optimized as many students as possible getting what they need, followed by what they want. Unfortunately, the schedule made assumed a larger budget than the school actually had. As a result, the schedule had to be entirely redone to align with the budget. Counselors were involved in the revision to schedules. Once the master schedule was determined, they, along with the registrar and several others, entered students into classes.

Very rarely do counselors create a master schedule. This is a task typically done by an administrator as they know budget, staff, and licensure in a way that counselors rarely do. It is also a very time-consuming and tedious task; it is preferred that counselors have time to tend to meeting and working with students. Counselors, instead, focus on course requests and individual student schedules. They will continue to do this moving forward.