

VOORHEESVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Voorheesville Middle School
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September 16, 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Many middle school students received new schedules today. While I understand this will cause disruption to the routines that have been developed, I felt it was necessary for a variety of reasons.

First, our Middle School enrolled many more students than had been projected. This fact, in combination with the reduction from five sections to four sections in the core content subjects in grades six through eight, led to higher than desirable class sizes. Specifically, our concern was with the class sizes in eighth grade English Language Arts and math. Through the support of the Board of Education and collaboration with our colleagues in the high school, we were able to find a way to reduce our class sizes in those subject areas without a budgetary impact.

Second, the number of students who we are mandated to provide Academic Intervention Services (AIS), which we received in August, was higher than anticipated. The only way to accommodate the higher number of students in need of AIS was to re-schedule the impacted students.

In re-scheduling students we had three goals. Our first goal was to review each student who was impacted on an individual basis and, therefore, make a schedule change that met his/her specific need. Next, in an effort to minimize the disruption to the larger student body, we tried to impact as few students as possible. Finally, we wanted to make all the new schedules at one time so students would not receive multiple schedule updates.

Also, all eighth grade students received this letter and a new schedule today, regardless if their schedule had any changes. So your child may have received a new schedule today that was not different from his/her previous schedule.

In the end, I believe we have a new schedule that reduces class size in key content areas, allows us to meet the mandated services that we must provide, provides our students in need of AIS better opportunities to be proficient on the New York State assessments, and does not increase our budget.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



James Franchini