

**Frequently Asked Questions on
Proposed Changes to the Instructional Model, Electives, and More**

**Updated April 26, 2010
Version 1.5**

The following is the most current list of frequently asked questions and answers regarding the reforms and changes that have been proposed to address the educational and financial challenges facing Grand Rapids Public Schools. These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were developed based on the extensive input and questions we received from students, parents, staff, and community members.

Additional information about the proposed changes, including power points, research articles, videos, and other information is also available at www.grpublicschools.org. There is also information airing on Cable Channel 27.

Please note that these FAQs are a work in progress and will be regularly updated with more questions, more answers and additional details based on the constructive feedback, input and suggestions we are gathering from students, parents, staff members and the community.

We appreciate you taking the time to learn more about the proposed changes. Any and all ideas, thoughts, concerns and criticisms are welcome and encouraged. We need to hear from you!

These are extremely difficult times and now more than ever we need to identify and implement real, sustainable, long term solutions that address the academic and financial issues facing GRPS. The proposed changes were developed based on the following parameters:

- Enhance the district's ability to improve student achievement and other outcomes for 21st Century learners
- Foster efficiency and collaboration
- Reduce costs

As you review the proposed changes and develop your ideas and suggestions, we simply ask that you please use these parameters as part of that process. Please feel free to contact us with additional questions, thoughts or concerns at:

Grand Rapids Public Schools
P.O. Box 117
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0117
Call: 616-819-2149
Email: communications@grps.k12.mi.us

Thank you very much!

Please note: The information included in these Frequently Asked Questions is subject to change with updates and corrections. As noted above, we will be frequently updating, improving and expanding this document to ensure the most accurate and detailed information as possible.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Categories:

General Questions

Instructional Model Questions

Elective Hub Questions

Elementary Model Questions

Theme School Questions

City High School Questions

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

1. What is driving the need for these proposed changes and reforms?

There are three major factors that are driving the need for these proposed changes: 1) the academic achievement rates, predominantly at the high school level; 2) financial challenges as a result of the state economy, budget cuts, and other funding related issues; and 3) the national public education model that is outdated, broken and not designed to meet the needs of the 21st Century learners.

- 1) Academic Achievement: GRPS has made dramatic academic gains in just five short years. Since 2006, GRPS has nearly doubled the number of schools meeting federal standards (Adequate Yearly Progress), up from only 26 to 45 schools meeting AYP – only 10 schools shy of every school in the district meeting AYP. These achievements have been predominantly made at the elementary, middle schools and K8 level. Now all elementary buildings are meeting AYP.

The major issue of concern is at the high school level where graduation rates and academic achievement rates have been persistently unacceptable.

The district's graduation rate as calculated by the State of Michigan is only 52% (76% traditional high schools and 33% alternative schools) -- something that by most standards is simply unacceptable.

The high schools have failed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress for seven years. And while 3 of the 4 comprehensive high school met AYP for the first time in 2009, the Michigan Merit Exam test scores reveal that the achievement rates are still unacceptably low with less than 30% of students testing proficient or higher in math, writing, science and English Language Arts. Here are the latest MME scores:

Math 26% Students Proficient or Advanced
Writing 22% Students Proficient or Advanced
Science 29% Students Proficient or Advanced
English Language Arts 28% Students Proficient or Advanced

GRPS was also identified as failing to persist students to graduation by the U.S. Department of Education due to the drop out rate at the 9th grade level.

Again, by most standards, these graduation rates are unacceptably low and have been this way for too long.

- 2) Financial Issues: Like school districts, government agencies, private sector employers and families across Michigan, GRPS is facing significant financial issues. GRPS is facing the perfect financial storm and a budget short fall of \$10 to \$15 million that must be addressed as state law requires the district to have a balanced budget.
 - State Funding Cuts: GRPS is facing a \$165 per pupil cut this school year and a projected per pupil cut of \$255 next year. It is important to note that these numbers are subject to change based on actions taken in Lansing that tend to change on a regular basis.
 - Declining Enrollment: While enrollment trends show notable signs of improvement and a “leveling off” GRPS lost approximately 7000 students in the last 10 years. GRPS is still facing declining enrollment with the latest projections showing a loss of approximately 300+ students. Given that the district’s funding is based on per pupil funding, this would result in a significant financial loss.
 - Rising Expenses: Health insurance costs are projected to increase by an additional 8%; retirement costs are projected to increase to 19.41%; and other expenses related to utilities (heating, electric, water) are also expected to increase.
 - Unfunded Mandates: GRPS estimates that approximately 10% of every per pupil dollar is used to offset the costs of unfunded mandates issues by the state and federal government for special education, English Language Learner, and other mandates services.
- 3) Public Education Model: The national public education model is outdated, broken, financially unsustainable and based on a 1908 Carnegie model. The system was built around rules, laws and policies that overprotect failure, stifle true competition, restrain innovation, and foster inequality. The public education system is not designed based on the needs and interests of 21st Century learners.

The proposed changes are seeking to re-tool, re-imagine, and reposition the Grand Rapids Public School system to better meet the needs of 21st Century learner and do so in a way that is more efficient, less costly, and more collaborative with community partners.

2. What is the district doing to inform and engage students, parents, staff members and the community in this process?

GRPS is aggressively working to inform and engage all internal and external stakeholders using a wide range of communications tools and activities including but not limited to:

- Student, parent, staff and community meetings

- Letters, flyers, school newsletters, and the Highlights Newspaper
- Emails
- District Web Page and “Video Player”
- Facebook Updates
- Cable Channel 27 Videos / Focus on GRPS / News Ticker
- Speakers bureau presentations
- And much more.

The following is a list of recent or upcoming meetings and other communications.

Student Meetings:

- Student Assemblies at High Schools: Week of March 22 at all 4 high schools.
- Student Assemblies for 8th Graders: Week of March 29
- Student Advisory Council: April 14

Parent Meetings:

- March 24 and March 31 @ Union, Ottawa, Creston, Central
- March 30 @ City High
- District Advisory Council April 26 at 6pm at the Franklin campus auditorium.
- PTA Meetings

District Wide Staff Meetings:

- March 30 and April 15 from 3:00pm-4:30pm and 4:30pm to 6:00pm @ Union, Ottawa & Creston

Hub Elective Work Sessions:

- April 1, April 29, May 13, and May 27 at 3pm at City High School.

3. How will the proposed change impact staffing?

GRPS is a service organization with more than 80% of our resources invested in people. The proposed changes, new instructional delivery model, and elective hubs will have an impact on staffing.

There will be a reduction in the number of total staff at GRPS including teachers and administrators. The final number will be based on what the final plan and recommendations are based on the feedback, input and suggestions received. The staffing will also be done in accordance with all of the collective bargaining agreements with the seven unions.

There will also be a number of staffing roles that will change, expand, and/or be reduced. Some jobs that were once full time jobs may become part time or hourly. Some jobs may be compensated at a lower level than they are now based on the new roles and responsibilities. The staff cuts and changes are predominantly at the secondary school level; however there will be changes throughout the system.

It is important to note that even in regular school years/budget cycles, the district does not finalize staffing until late April/early May based on contractual time lines and school budgets that are developed in late March/early April. As such, we do not have specific numbers of potential job cuts available yet.

4. What are the cost savings associated with the new model?

The estimated annual operating savings of the new model is \$8,535,000. It is important to note that even with the reforms, restructuring and new model, the district is still short of addressing the \$10 to \$15 million budget shortfall based on the latest financial numbers out of Lansing. The following is a line item break down of the proposed changes.

Description	Estimated annual operating savings
School administration restructuring (including counselor model)	1,300,000
Special education reductions (restructuring of co-teaching model as well as other adjustments within local and center programs)	1,000,000
High school instructional delivery system change, including implementation of blended instruction, hub elective model a semester schedule	1,500,000
Middle school instructional delivery system adjustments and scheduling efficiencies	500,000
Scheduling changes at the elementary level related to art, music and physical education	1,200,000
Significant reduction of theme school allocations (retain regional transportation system)	600,000
Re-structure middle school classes in k-8 buildings as self contained elementary classrooms (change in elective offerings and teacher prep time)	325,000
Re-structuring of the juvenile justice program to better align with the current student success model	250,000
Building closures, inclusive of administrative, clerical and custodial/grounds reductions as well as utilities maintenance savings	910,000
elimination of athletic programs at Central High School (part of prior years planned phase out of Central as a comprehensive high school)	200,000

general revenue increases (leases, donations, accounts payable model.)	250,000
transportation savings - re-negotiation of contract with Dean Transportation	500,000
Total	8,535,000

5. If the state and district’s budget situation improves, will this change the model or prevent the need for changes?

No. While the funding issues are certainly significant contributing factors, ultimately, the real issues that are driving the need for the proposed changes are related to student achievement and an outdated education service delivery model.

As noted above, the graduation rates and student achievement rates at the secondary level are unacceptably low. The “way it’s always been done” simply is not nor does not work for all students – particularly the 21st Century learners.

We need to develop a new, innovative instructional delivery model that is sustainable, flexible, and designed to meet the diverse and varying needs of the 21st Century learners.

6. What is the timeline for staffing decisions?

Any and all staffing decisions will be done in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements the district has with the seven unions and the procedures for the non-union groups.

For teachers, in accordance with the GREA contract, any lay off notices would be issued in late June. However, there are a number of steps in the contractual process that lead up to any lay offs.

7. If parents want to transfer students out of one GRPS school to another, how will that happen?

The transfer process will remain the same. Students/parents can contact Student Services at 819-2150 to obtain a “transfer application” and additional details about the transfer process.

8. Will the district still comply with Highly Qualified requirements for teaching staff as defined by the federal government?

Yes, the district will remain in full compliance with all state and federal laws.

9. Are you eliminating ROTC?

No, the district remains committed to maintaining a high quality JRTOC program. We are still working through the details of this and how the ROTC program fits within the proposed changes to the instructional model and electives.

10. Why is GRPS looking at opening charter schools? What is the advantage of a district sponsored charter school?

One major component of our proposal is aimed at re-configuring our high school options to include a menu of school choices including the traditional/comprehensive school, a Center of Innovation and a district sponsored charter school -- all co-located on each of the existing high school campuses.

It is very important to note that “district sponsored charters” are different than “independent charters” in that they are done in partnership with the school districts and the teaching staff are GRPS teachers and members of the Grand Rapids Education Association with an alternative negotiated agreement as required by restructuring corrective actions.

There are a number of benefits to GRPS that include:

- Increased school choices with district-sponsored charters done so in a strategic, targeted manner aimed at increasing student achievement and graduation rates for high needs/at-risk students in persistently failing schools. This approach is much more sustainable than simply opening up a series of new, independent charter schools – in essence new school districts – at a time when we need more consolidation and collaboration of school districts and school services. This would also provide a greater degree of accountability for charter schools that would be governed by an elected school board with full transparency in finances and operations.
- Consolidation and collaboration of services to maximize the impact of taxpayer dollars on student outcomes and instructional practices. The High School options model could include shared facilities, shared food service operations, shared building management, shared technology, shared special education and English Language Learner services, and more.
- Healthy “in-district” and “on campus” competition between schools will help to foster systemic changes in educational service delivery, instructional practices, leadership practices, and more.
- No child left behind: The most at-risk, high needs students with the least economic means stand to gain the most with this high school options proposal because it brings the choices and opportunities directly to the students and provides a full menu of educational services and support systems for all children – regardless of the age, income, ability, special needs, native language, etc. Right now with few exceptions, the current charter school law and school of choice laws benefit students who have minimal special needs, who have the economic means, and whose parents are actively engaged.

The High School options proposal co-locates the menu of school choices all on one campus, each with a unique offering of education services, all specifically centered on the interests, choices, and needs of students.

11. If one or more of the high schools meet Adequate Yearly Progress or “Safe Harbor”, will this change the model?

No. The comprehensive and alternative high schools have been persistently failing to achieve acceptable academic standards and graduation rates for more than seven years and the Michigan Merit Exam test scores reveal that less than 30% of the students are proficient or advanced. The proposed changes to the instruction model are aimed at dramatically increasing student achievement and graduation rates and providing students/parents with a menu of high quality school choices, instructional delivery choices, and elective choices.

12. How will alternative education look next year? Will it be impacted by the new instructional model?

GRPS is already implementing alternative education reforms including a new instructional model that began this school year that included 100% on-line courses. While we will continue to work to improve this model, the alternative education model that is currently in place is expected to remain the same.

13. What will happen with the Juvenile Justice program?

It is being proposed that the Juvenile Justice program shift to reflect the alternative education model that is currently being implemented.

14. Will the pass/failure rates of teachers be made available to students and parents to help with making choices about what courses and schools to select?

Yes, it is available upon request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

15. How does the high school model save money given the investment in technology? What are the cost breakdowns for technology purchases?

The annual operating costs for the technology, including E2020 are all factored into the budget estimates and model that has been shared with the Board. As outlined above, we are addressing the “upfront” costs to implement the new model in a variety of ways utilizing one-time. It is important to note that the proposed model will provide annual operating savings of \$1.5 million (+/-) and it is a significantly more financially sustainable model than what we have today.

For the upfront technology costs, first, we are utilizing the limited remaining dollars from the School Construction Bond. Second, we are utilizing unused, unallocated, non-salary dollars in the secondary school budgets. Third, we are using \$550,000 from the one-time transfer of GRASP surplus dollars. Fourth, we secured a \$400,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation that includes funding for technology and software. Fifth, we are working with the Grand Rapid Student Advancement Foundation. SAF will be announcing a new “tools” campaign centered around fundraising and investment in laptops for high school students. Sixth, we are also

working with other foundations who have reached out and expressed interest in supporting GRPS in this transition. This includes possible grant funding for technology.

16. This appears to be a significant change in curriculum which the Board of Education is required to approve. Will the Board vote on the proposed changes?

What is being proposed is not a change in curriculum; it is a change in service delivery. The curriculum will not change and will remain as it is today aligned with the state mandated curriculum requirements. The full Board has been presented in small group meetings and in the regular Board meetings all the proposed changes, complete with the budget information. The presentation was made directly to the Board as opposed to through the committee process because the proposed changes ultimately reflect pieces and parts that could be in all three committees. This way it was presented to all the Board members at the same time. As always, the budget portion of the proposed changes will go through the Finance Committee for a vote and recommendation to the full Board for a vote.

Additionally, it is important to note that the Board approved “Budget Parameters” in January 2010 that have guided the work and development of the proposed changes. The Board has been and will continue to receive frequent updates on the budget changes as well as additional improvements, tweaks, and changes to the proposed new instructional service delivery model. A final budget recommendation is expected to be presented to the Board in May for the Board’s final vote and approval by June 30, 2010.

INSTRUCTION MODEL QUESTIONS

17. What are the proposed changes to the instructional model?

GRPS is proposing to offer students and parents new and expanded choices for how they would like to receive educational/instructional services. These choices include:

- 1) Traditional classroom instruction: One teacher will work with a set number of students. This will be an option that students in grades 9-11 select and seats will be limited to approximately 72 students per grade. Those who teach in the traditional setting will be expected to work with their students through the students' junior year.

GRPS is proposing to use Disciplinary Literacy strategies to offer two sections of classes for every core course in the traditional model; serving approximately 72 students per grade. A highly qualified, certified teacher would instruct a class of approximately 36 students.

- 2) Blended instruction: The blended instructional model incorporates a blend of both traditional classroom instruction and on-line instruction. The model combines Disciplinary Literacy (direct and inquiry based “traditional” instruction) using the Principles of Learning with online self paced instruction and independent learning opportunities to create an assortment of lessons addressing curriculum standards.

The model being proposed would provide for a three day rotation of blended instruction. **Day one** would be 100% teacher facilitated “Disciplinary Literacy” instruction.

Day two would include a blend of teacher facilitated instruction with introduction of and transition into to the on-line module.

Day three would include on-line learning with help and support from the academic instructional team. Students may accelerate or may receive individual assistance from a teacher or a content tutor based on student need and progress.

Day four would then repeat the rotation going back to traditional Disciplinary Literacy instruction.

The staffing for the blended model for Math and English Language Arts will include a highly qualified certified teacher; a highly qualified, certified special education teacher (based on student need/federal requirements); a grant-funded (31A) certified teacher (based on student need/state funding requirements – rotating between sections); a Technical Instructional Support staff (paraprofessional focus on tracking assessments, student progress, and monitoring technical issues – rotating between sections); and two content area tutors/specialists for every 90 students.

The staffing for the blended model for Science and Social Studies would be nearly identical except there would be one less content tutor and a half time highly qualified special education teacher (subject to change based on student needs).

The student to teacher ratio is approximately 36 to 1 (same as traditional instruction) and student to adult ratio is approximately 16 to 1 for ELA and Math and 20 to 1 for Science and Social studies. Based on these calculations the student to adult ratios are significantly better than the traditional model.

- 3) Online instruction: This option is by student/parent choice only. Students may select to do one or more classes totally on-line using research-based, nationally recognized software. The on-line model is being used successfully in our Centers of Innovation (Academy for Design and Construction / School of Business) with a high amount of one-on-one attention between students and the teachers. Our Student Success Centers and the past Summer of Success program also successfully utilized on-line technology.

18. Does this model just replace teachers with computers? Will there be student-teacher interaction and face to face time?

No it does not replace teachers. There is still a live, highly qualified teacher facilitating and supporting student learning. There is also a highly qualified special education teachers and an academic support team with content area tutors. The student to teacher ratio in the blended model is largely the same as the traditional model with approximately a 36 to 1 ratio. If you include the academic support team, the student to adult ratio may be more like 16 to 1 or 20 to 1. It is also

important to note that the on-line courses were developed by highly qualified, certified teachers and the content that is delivered through the on-line program is done so by highly qualified, certified teachers.

Students in the Academy for Design and Construction where core courses are 100% online actually testify that they get *more* one-on-one attention with their teacher than they do in a traditional classroom. This is in large part due to the self-pacing that takes place and teacher monitoring of the progress. The teacher and academic support team monitor student progress, receive instant data about the student achievement, and can provide for immediate intervention to support student learning.

19. How will students learn coveted ‘groupwork skills’ if most of the interaction is with a computer?

The blended instruction model allows for student-to-student interaction, teacher-to-student interaction, computer-to-student interaction, and teacher-to-computer-to-student interaction.

20. What are the benefits of the blended instructional model?

The potential benefits of this new model include among other things:

- Increased use of technology in learning and instruction
- Significantly student to adult ratios
- More opportunities for “team teaching”
- More opportunities for student enrichment and credit acceleration
- Real-time, instant data measurement and student support based on student progress using on-line technology
- Self-paced learning and extra supports for students and teachers
- Reduced behavioral and other classroom management related issues
- Flexible scheduling
- Cost savings and financial sustainability
- Differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students
- Adapt lessons to meet the different learning styles of students
- Students begin to develop 21st century skills
- Students learn to communicate person to person and electronically
- Consistency in content learned
- Teachers can focus on students and not lesson planning

21. Is there research that supports the blended and/or online instructional models?

Yes. The proposed changes to the instructional model are based on best practices, best models, and the latest research from within the district and across the state and nation.

GRPS is one of 10 school districts in the KISD utilizing E2020 on-line technology to support student achievement. In fact, Grandville Public Schools was the first school district to begin implementing a blended model, similar to what GRPS is proposing. They started this year with six courses that were developed by the teacher, based on the Traverse City model that GRPS has

also been studying. Grandville is offering three days of traditional instruction and two days of on-line instruction using Moodle.

GRPS has also been piloting the use of online technology over the last year. The 2009 Summer School was 100% on-line for the first time ever. All of the alternative education programs, now known as Student Success Centers, are 100% online. Also, two of the district's Centers of Innovation (Academy for Design and Construction and the School of Business, Leadership and Entrepreneurship) are using a blended model with 100% on-line core courses supported by an academic team and traditional courses for electives in the theme focus areas.

There are currently 4 million college students and 1 million high school students taking classes on-line right now across the country. Blended learning is emerging as the predominant teaching model of the future. This is in large part due to the unique, diverse, and expanded ways that 21st Century student learn and process information. A combination of flexibility, independence, and experience with online tools has been associated with critical thinking, research, and computer skills.

Models across the nation include Cincinnati Public Schools Virtual High School; Odyssey Charter School in Clark County, Nevada; Commonwealth Connections Academy in Pennsylvania; Chicago Virtual Charter School; Hoosier Academy in Indianapolis, Indiana; Kentucky Virtual Schools; VOISE Academy in Chicago; the Community High School in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Henrico County Public Schools, Virginia; St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana; Albuguerque Public Schools, New Mexico; Digital Harbor High, Baltimore, Maryland; and Omaha Public Schools among many others.

It is important to note that while there is a lot of data, research and models that support the proposed instructional model changes, there is *also* still more study and analysis to be done and changes/tweaks to the model will be necessary over time to meet the needs of students.

We studied the successful models in Michigan and beyond; we assessed what was working internally with our on-line credit recovery, Student Success Centers, Centers of Innovation, and what we learned with the Summer School; and we took the best of what we saw and used it to develop our own customized model that is now being proposed.

22. When will you be able to tell us specifically what the high school model/schedules will look like?

We will be presenting the Board and parents/the public with more detailed information about the blended model, specifically as it relates to “what the day looks like” in late April and May. Some of this is already included in the FAQs and has been verbally presented to staff, parents, the Board, and the community. The curriculum team is developing “sample” course work that will outline what happens in detail on day 1, 2 and 3.

Specifically on scheduling, Dr. Taylor has been very clear that ALL students MUST have their schedules at or prior to orientation. We are working to develop the final schedule and courses

which we expect will be finalized by mid-summer, in advance of the high school orientations. The Board will be updated as this process proceeds.

It is important to note that this new model should in fact help to streamline scheduling, largely because there will no longer be “singletons” (single class, with a single section) and it clearly defines the times and days for core courses and electives.

23. How are students selected for the “traditional” instructional options?

Students will be selected through random lottery; just like students are selected for Theme Schools and Centers of Innovation when there is limited seating.

24. Why are 12th graders limited to just blended or online?

There are multiple reasons for this. First, one of the goals of the overall high school reforms is to provide students with more dual enrollment opportunities so they may accelerate their post-Secondary school experience. Second, this option also will provide for more credit recovery opportunities to ensure students stay on track to graduate, particularly with the switch from trimesters to semesters and the strict state graduation requirements. Third,

25. Will this model work for special education students? How will the proposed instructional model accommodate and support special education students?

Yes. All three choices are designed to support the needs of special education students. All Individual Education Plans (IEP) will be followed in accordance with federal requirements. The various choice offerings support all different learning styles. Just like in a traditional classroom, a special education teacher will be devoted to students with IEPs and other special needs in both the blended and online model.

26. Does the instructional model apply only to high school? What about middle school?

Yes, it is primarily focused at the high school level. However we do anticipate some limited changes at the middle school level beginning next year to expose students to the blended and online model as part of their eventual transition to high school .

27. Will there be uniform high school start times?

No. High schools will have differing start times, however students will be able to access the elective hubs in a uniform manner at uniform times. The final start times for school as well as the start times for the elective hubs needs to be finalized.

28. When will KCTC/KTC be offered?

We are working with the KISD to finalize these details however it is expected to be offered in the 3rd session/the latest session in the day which compliments the proposed elective hub schedule.

29. What if a child wants the traditional instructional options and there is no room – what is their choice?

We will work with every students and parent to provide their preferred choices and meet their needs. If the seats are full in the traditional model offering, the other choices will include the blended model which includes traditional instruction or the on-line learning. Students may have the choice to transfer to other schools based on seat availability or other school choices in the system where the model is different (i.e. Centers of Innovation, district sponsored charter, etc.).

30. Do colleges recognize and accept credits from online courses for admissions?

Yes, absolutely. All online courses and blended courses are aligned with state and national standards for high school graduation and college admission. In fact the current state graduation require a minimum number of credits earned from an on-line course.

31. How will scheduling be done for the instructional model?

All students will be scheduled into the core (i.e. English, Science, Math, Social Studies) classes based on their grade level, academic need, and their individual choice/selection (subject to seat availability and other criteria).

We are working to finalize a specific process to address scheduling, scheduling conflicts, and the overall selection of courses and instructional methods. Additional information will be shared with parents and students in the coming weeks.

32. How will students be accommodated for all core classes in hours 1-4?

Each of the high school buildings have a significant amount of capacity and space to adequately serve all students. The proposed new instructional choices will actually help to streamline the overall scheduling process.

33. What security measures will be used to ensure that the on-line content is age appropriate and inappropriate websites are not accessible?

The district's computer network is equipped with the latest filtering software that is updated daily to block potentially inappropriate websites. In addition, the school computer labs include a teacher work station that is equipped with software that allows them to monitor each and every student computer station in a classroom.

34. How will the district manage on-line 'cheating'?

Students will be in classrooms and computer labs working with teachers and other support staff who will continuously monitor progress. All assessments will be done in school, on site, with direct supervision of teachers and academic support staff. In addition, the teacher work station is equipped with software that allows the staff to monitor every computer station in the lab.

35. Will course syllabi be available for all classes (online, blended, traditional)?

Yes, it is our intent to ensure that all classes will have syllabi.

36. What role will teachers play in helping to implementing and further improve the instructional model to ensure its success?

Teachers and school principals have been and will continue to be involved in the overall process for developing, implementing and ultimately improving the overall model for success. It is important to note that components of the on-line and blended instructional model have been piloted throughout the district in two of the Centers of Innovation, the Student Success Centers, and Summer School. As such, we have been continuously gathering feedback and input about how to further strengthen and improve these models based directly on what teachers, support staff, principals and students are saying.

37. Will students be allowed to go to a traditional class if they fail an online course? What happens if a student fails?

GRPS offers a number of academic support and credit recovery opportunities to ensure all students succeed and stay on track to graduate. If a student is struggling or failing an online course, there will be intervention opportunities that may include a traditional classroom setting, small group, before/after school tutoring and support; or other credit recovery options.

It would be important to understand what the contributing factors were that led to the failure before any determination would be made about intervention.

38. What professional development will be done with staff to prepare?

There will be a variety of professional development opportunities and strategies throughout the summer and school year to prepare teachers and school leaders for the new instructional model. GRPS recently received a \$400,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to assist with this transitional process to help ensure a smooth and successful implementation.

39. Will there be assessments and how will they be done?

Yes, there will be common assessments in both blended and on-line instruction. In addition the district will continue to utilize the Michigan Assessment Program throughout the school year to provide another level of assessment in addition to the course assessments.

40. Does GRPS have the bandwidth and technology to implement?

Yes, GRPS has an extensive computer network, complete with wireless capabilities in all of our high schools. We are continuously evaluating, updating and securing new technology. This is also being supported through public-private fundraising efforts such as the W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant and the Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation.

41. How will the needs of English Language Learner students be met with this new model?

The needs of English Language Learners will be supported in a variety of ways under this new model. Blended instruction provides for more differentiated instruction because it has one on one time with the teacher and academic support staff; time with the online learning piece that may also be done in a student's native language; as well as other extended learning opportunities to meet the needs of students. In addition, special ESL classes will be provided based on student need at the designated Language Center at Union High School.

42. In what two content areas will co-teaching exist?

English Language Arts and Math. Co-teaching may also be provided in science and social studies based on student need.

43. If taking online course, will there be homework and how will it be done?

For online courses, there will not be homework in the traditional sense. The "homework" assignments are embedded in the online course work and completed along the way during normal school day and extended learning times (after school, before school, Saturday school). Students will also be able to access online outside of school (home, library, coffee shop).

44. Some students do not have computers at home to complete online work, what will be done to accommodate and address this?

The majority of all course work is embedded in the online course work and completed along the way during the normal school day. In addition, students will have extended learning opportunities before school, after school and at Saturday school to access coursework.

Public libraries, local colleges/universities, coffee shops, and other neighborhood locations that offer free online opportunities may also be utilized by students.

45. How many hours of work will students do outside of the classroom?

This will be based on the student pacing and progress with coursework.

46. Is there additional time for writing and reading?

The focus on core instruction, coupled with switch to semesters, will allow for more time on task in ALL core subjects including writing and reading.

47. How will the district cover the expense of supplying a computer for each student in each blended class in all core content areas in all district high schools simultaneously?

There are a number of ways the district is working to ensure that the technology is fully available for all students to support the proposed new model. It is important to note that we are not just looking at computers for the blended and on-line. We are looking at technology for all the classes including traditional. We are looking at it from both a one-time fixed cost as well as a maintenance and upkeep standpoint. First, we are utilizing the limited remaining dollars from the School Construction Bond. Second, we are utilizing unused, unallocated, non-salary dollars in the secondary school budgets. Third, we are using \$550,000 from the one-time transfer of GRASP surplus dollars. Fourth, we secured a \$400,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation that includes funding for technology and software. Fifth, we are working with the Grand Rapid Student Advancement Foundation. SAF will be announcing a new “tools” campaign centered around fundraising and investment in laptops for high school students. Sixth, we are also working with other foundations who have reached out and expressed interest in supporting GRPS in this transition. This includes possible grant funding for technology.

48. Are there survey results from staff, students or parents related to on-line learning?

The most recent survey we have related to a fully on-line experience is from the Summer of Success program where students took credit recovery using on-line technology facilitated by a highly qualified teacher. Of the 100 students surveyed, 91% indicated the online summer school was slightly to very positive and 80% indicated they were glad summer school uses online courses. Of the 100 staff members surveyed, 78% indicated the experience facilitating online learning was very positive and 22% said slightly positive. 94% indicated they were glad summer school uses online and 72% indicated that students were slightly or much more interested in technology based delivery.

49. Is there an apples-to-apples blended model comparison to any current model we have in place?

No, there is no apples to apples model comparison. The blended models across the state and nation vary in many ways. What we have done is take what we believe is the best from the various models, including what we have learned with our own pilot programs at Student Success Centers and Centers of Innovation, and developed our own customized version of a blended model. One of the major points where our model we believe is better is that we have layered on people/support staff AND we have also developed a blended schedule that provides students with opportunities to work electronically or face to face individually with teachers and support staff or in small groups. The benefit of the blended model is that it is also highly flexible. So as we implement, we will be able to change and tweak it so it better meets the needs of students.

50. What might be the number of hours students would possibly be online each day on all models?

There is not a perfect answer to this question because it will vary by class and by student need. It is important to note that students will never be working on-line for an hour without teacher and support staff interaction. There is a misperception that students taking “online” courses or blended courses with Day 2 and 3 will be simply in a computer lab, with headphones on, working by themselves all day, every day, every hour. This is absolutely not correct. Student will never be working on-line for an hour without teacher or support staff interaction. Students could

also be working in small group or face to face with teacher and support staff. Some students may accelerate with the on-line instruction and may be more apt to spend a higher amount of time interacting with the on-line technology. However, the blended model is designed so that on Day 2 and Day 3 students will work electronically or face to face individually with teachers and support staff or in small groups.

51. What will be the teacher's training in use and development of online course work?

Professional development and teacher/support staff training will take place throughout the summer and into the school year. There already exists a number of teachers and support staff who are well trained and able/prepared to assist with the training of others. There will be multiple opportunities for the development of the online course work and overall training. We will be utilizing the \$400,000 Kellogg grant to assist with this transition.

ELECTIVES:

52. What is the proposed new high school electives model?

GRPS is pleased to offer new, improved and expanded elective choices for high school students across the district – each uniquely designed to support and meet the needs of the 21st Century learner! The menu of elective choices includes:

- **Traditional Elective Offerings (Base School):** Each high school will continue to offer a broad list of elective courses in the more traditional model of instruction that are based on student interest and demand.
- **New On-Line Elective Offerings (Base School):** Each high school will also offer a new and expanded list of on-line elective opportunities that will be facilitated using on-line technology. This new elective opportunity significantly expands the number of high quality elective choices available to all students.
- **New Hub Elective Offerings (Hub School):** The “Hub Electives” offer five cutting-edge new elective opportunities that are designed to align and concentrate all the unique talents of students, teachers, and our public-private partners to provide high quality elective opportunities in core focus areas that are equally accessible and available for ALL students.

The “Hub Electives” will be offered three days a week – Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday – for 90 minutes each during the 6th period. The new high school schedule provides for travel time between the “base school” and the “hub school.” GRPS will provide “shuttle” transportation to each of the elective hubs from the base schools.

The “Hub Elective” schedule is also designed to be part of the traditional school day, therefore students interested in sports or The Loft after school program should still have the opportunity to participate.

53. What are the proposed elective hubs?

1. The Center for Design, Technology and Visual Arts @ Union High School

Possible courses include: fashion design, graphic design, photography, ceramics, film, broadcast journalism, watercolor, web design, drawing and painting, sculpture, and digital media.

Potential partnerships include WMCAT, UICA, Kendall College, Grand Rapids Art Museum, West Michigan Film Alliance, and more.

2. The Center for Human Services @ Central High School

Possible courses include education, teen leadership, psychology/sociology, sign language, cultural competence, social work, health and wellness, service learning, and more.

Potential partners include GRCC, GVSU, WMU, Network 180, and human service agencies from throughout the region.

3. The Center for Instrumental and Musical Expression @ City High

Possible courses include rock band, jazz band, orchestra, marching band, symphonic choir, concert band and more.

Potential partnerships include Grand Rapids Symphony, St. Cecilia Music Society, Grand Rapids Youth Symphony, and more.

4. The Center for Leadership @ Creston High School.

Possible courses include mock trial, debate, model U.N., Close Up, forensics, “We the People,” Enhanced ROTC, cultural/world studies, and more.

Potential partners include World Affairs Council, Grand Rapids Bar Association, local elected officials and government leaders, local law firms, the Gerald R. Ford Museum, and more.

5. The Center for Theater Production and Performing Arts @ Ottawa Hills High School

Possible course include choir, advanced chorale, dance, theater arts/drama, costume design, musical theater production, lighting/staging/sound, script and song writing, set design and more.

Potential partners include Civic Theater, Opera Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids Ballet, GVSU, SMG, and more.

54. What will the schedule be for the new electives model?

Elective opportunities are available to students five days a week during the 5th and/or 6th periods. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, students interested in the “Hub Electives” would have built in time in the schedule to travel between the “base school” and the “hub school.”

Period	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
(1)	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction
(2)	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction
(3)	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction
(4)	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction	Core Instruction
(5)	Academic Support or Electives	Academic Support or Electives	Academic Support or Electives	Academic Support or Electives	Academic Support or Electives
(6a)	Travel or Electives Academic	Travel Or Electives	Travel Or Electives	Travel Or Electives	Electives
(6b)		Hub Electives	Hub Electives	Hub Electives	

55. Will art be offered at a hub or at a base high school? Will a student wind up with less experience then they have today at a base high school?

The elective hub offerings at Union, Ottawa, and City all offer some form of art course(s). For those students at Creston and Central where their elective hubs do not offer art, we have decided to add Art 1 as a school-based elective for 2010-2011. This is just one of many examples of how we are gathering input and working to further improve and tweak the proposed new model to address concerns and meet student needs.

56. Will band/orchestra/etc. be eligible to compete at festivals and competitions?

Yes. We spoke with the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association and they confirmed that joint or combined teams are eligible to compete at festivals and competitions. This is not unlike how the Michigan High School Athletic Association accommodates athletic teams (like GRPS Hockey), where there may not be enough students at each school for individual teams, so they are combined and are eligible to participate. This has been happening for years.

57. Will this model serve special education students?

Yes, all students will be offered the choices to select traditional, online and hub elective offerings.

58. What on-line and traditional electives will be offered at schools in addition to hubs?

Every school will have a list of elective options based on student interest that will be selected through the Student Automated Request System. The list of elective course offerings will be available the week of March 29th.

59. Does the elective model only apply to high school?

The on-line and hub electives are only available for high school students at this time.

60. Will there be multiple elective teachers in the elective hubs?

Staffing will be based on student needs and the number of students that choose to enroll in a particular elective.

61. Will there be a uniform start time for electives?

Yes. The new high school schedule provides opportunities for electives at the 5th and 6th periods. Core instruction would take place in the first four periods. Electives would be offered at the 5th period five days a week. Hub electives would be offered at the 6th period, including designated transportation time, three days a week (Tuesday-Thursday).

62. How will the elective model impact staffing? Who will be staffing the elective hubs and what will the certification be?

The traditional, on-line and hub electives will all be facilitated by certified teachers. We will continue to adhere to all state and federal laws and contractual guidelines for staffing.

63. What is transportation time and how will students be transported?

Students electing to participate in the elective hubs will be provided transportation by the district from their base school to the hub school. The schedule budgets a minimum of 35 minutes and a maximum of 55 minutes based on the start of school time.

64. What is the staff to student ratio in the elective hub classes?

This will be based on the number of students who enroll in the hub elective courses. We will have a better idea of staffing and student to adult ratios as students complete the elective selection process.

65. Will more than one class be in session at the same time in the elective hubs?

This will also be determined by the level of student interest and enrollment. We anticipate that there will be multiple hub elective classes happening at the same time.

66. Is this based on other state or national models?

Yes, in fact it is based in part on a very successful program that GRPS implemented in the 70's known as Educational Park, where students from throughout the city traveled to then "Junior College" for high school elective courses.

67. What happens to the students on Mondays and Fridays?

Students would still have the 5th period for school-based electives. After 5th period, students would have the choice of simply returning home. They would also have opportunities for extended learning including credit recovery, tutoring, as well as extracurricular and teen leadership opportunities at their school.

68. Will students be bussed back from elective hubs for sports? Will the elective hubs conflict with sports?

The elective hubs are part of school day. Athletics and The Loft afterschool are extracurricular activities outside of the school day. Students would be provided transportation to the elective hubs. Students would not receive transportation back to their base school. Instead, students would rely on the normal transportation (The Rapid/public transit) to either proceed home or back to their base school for athletics or other extracurricular activities.

This process has worked successfully for students at City High school who for years after school lets out have traveled to their attendance area high school to participate in sports.

69. Where/how will scheduling be done for electives?

Starting the week of March 29, high school students will log on to the Student Automated Request system (STAR) to select elective courses for 2010-2011. This process will continue for several weeks to finalize the selection and scheduling process by end of April.

70. What if students want both art and music electives?

From year to year, student could be involved in different hubs that provide for a diversity of learning in art or music. At least one elective hub (Ottawa Hills) will have elective opportunities that include a blend of both music and art. In the 5th period elective, students will also have opportunities through the on-line electives to participate in art and music appreciation.

71. Can students switch elective hubs mid year/different semester?

The elective hubs are designed as full year course offerings; however students may decide to experience a different hub each year.

72. Have any of the organizations considered for the partnership been contacted?

Yes. The leading organizations, corporations, and higher education institutions have been contacted and many have been meeting as part of the hub elective work session over the last month. We have not formalized any partnerships yet and we are still working to seek additional partners, define partnership roles and responsibilities, and determine how best to align and utilize the talents and resources of our public-private partners.

73. What is the timeline? When will this be implemented?

The new, improved and expanded electives – including on-line, traditional and hub electives – will begin this fall at the start of school for 2010-2011. Students begin the elective choice/selection process the week of March 29.

74. How does Upward Bound fit into the new elective model?

We are working through this and are making every effort to incorporate this in some way, shape or form. One possibility we are exploring is having additional elective hubs for Upward Bound and Trio at the respective higher education institutions.

75. How will the needs of English Language Learner students be met with this new elective model?

The needs of English Language Learners will be supported in a variety of ways under this new model just like we have provided elective services to ELL students in the past. Most of the elective on-line courses may also be available in Spanish and other languages.

76. Will the classes offered at one hub be offered at other schools?

No, the hub electives will be a concentrated set of electives around core themes and focus areas that are designed to serve students from all the high schools.

77. Do you have an idea of what the level of student interest is with on-line electives?

Yes, in fact the reason students were asked to begin selecting elective courses was to assist us in developing budgets, staffing, and ultimately the final course offerings for next school year. This is identical to how we have done elective selection in the past.

The following is the number of students who selected one or more on-line courses: Creston 280; Union 660; OHHS 695; and Central/GRM 295.

78. How can students be registering for courses if we have not approved anything as a Board?

The student selection of electives at this point in the school year is standard operating procedure. Every year at this time, students are asked to choose from a list of electives. The reason students were asked to begin selecting elective courses was to assist us in developing budgets, staffing, and ultimately the final course offerings for next school year. This is identical to how we have done elective selection in the past.

It is also important to note that we have been moving forward based on the Board's direction provided under the Budget Parameters. In the past, the BOE has never engaged in nor voted to determine what elective courses are offered, when students choose those electives, or what instructional delivery method is used.

79. Hub concept and sports: How will the district get the schools they compete against to change the game?

In order to address these concerns, we have modified the start/end times for the hub electives. The proposed end time is now at 3:40pm whereas it was after 4:00pm as originally proposed.

We are and will be working with coaches and teachers to make accommodations for student athletes participating in the hub electives as needed for early departures from class to attend games/matches. This is a common practice that we already are doing across the district now and in the past.

ELEMENTARY

80. What prep time will elementary teachers receive?

Elementary teachers will receive prep time in accordance with contractual guidelines. At this time the proposed schedule will allow for 96 minutes per week.

81. Is elementary art/music model a cost savings?

Yes, it is. Through creative scheduling we are able to maintain a high quality of art and music offerings while reducing costs.

82. How will the model impact staffing?

The number of art and music itinerant teaching positions will be reduced.

83. Will elementary students have art and music? If so, how and when will it be scheduled? Is there any flexibility?

All elementary students will have a physical education class once a week for the entire school year. In fact, the class will be longer than it is this school year. Each student will also receive

both art and music classes during the year. Both will be provided once a week for one full semester.

84. Will elective teachers have classes prior to classes in the afternoon?

It is possible that an art or music teacher could move between schools (elementary, middle or high school) subject to teacher certification and scheduling needs.

85. What would an elementary art, music, and physical education class look like? How many minutes a week for that one semester?

The art, music, and physical education classes will look/feel the same. The only difference is “when” they will be offered. Currently students receive art, music and PE in both semesters of the school year. The proposed changes would simply split the art and music courses between the two semesters. For example, in semester one, students would receive 48 minutes of art and 48 minutes of PE each week. Then in semester two, students would receive 48 minutes of music and 48 minutes of PE each week. The time students spend/receive with art and music under this model is actually slightly more than the contractually required minimum of 95 minutes.

86. Why is the K-8 transitioning to the “elementary model” and what does that mean? What does it look like?

The State recognizes K-8 schools as elementary schools. The elementary model is simply a less expensive model. There is a team-based approach to teaching the core content areas in a self-contained setting as opposed to students switching classes and teachers for each content area.

The elementary model (self contained) allows for a more integrated curriculum; (ie teaching reading could also include science or social studies). It also allows for more grouping (small group, targeted instruction based on student needs) because there is less movement and switching.

THEME SCHOOL

87. Is the theme school funding being eliminated and what are the potential ramifications of this decision?

In prior years we have provided expanded transportation and additional general operating funding to our theme schools. The expanded, regional transportation allowed more students to access the theme, and the additional funding was used to enhance theme experiences.

At this time, we have been able to retain the enhanced transportation, ensuring that all students have the ability to select a theme school if they wish to do so. We have, however, significantly reduced the additional funding that has allocated in the past. This will mean that some of the enhancements that have been in place in prior years may not be available for the next school

year. We are working closely with our theme schools to help infuse the theme experiences into the classroom in a variety of creative ways.

88. We are hearing that theme school teachers will be cut as a result of the proposed changes. Is this true? If so, is there anything that the schools can do to maintain these staff members?

This is not entirely accurate nor is it ultimately final because the overall budgets and staffing decisions have not been made yet. With that said, the rumor is stemming from the proposed elimination of “theme school allocations” that are above and beyond the funding that traditional schools receive. The decision to eliminate the theme school allocation came down to the question: Do we cut theme school transportation, thus limited student/parent choice and access or do we cut the theme school allocation and figure out how we can utilize existing and other funding sources to maintain the theme and staffing.

While the theme school allocation has been cut, there are other funding sources that in some cases may be utilized to preserve the themes and theme-focused staff members. We are working to re-define positions and develop creative solutions to address this. C.A. Frost for example was considered at-risk of losing one or more staff members. As a result of the principals hard work and creativity, we are able to avoid any staffing changes. This will be modeled and used at other theme schools across the district.

CITY HIGH SCHOOL

89. What are the hubs?

Center of Instrumental and Musical Expression at City High-Middle School

*9, 10 core are requirement for Middle Years Program,

Choir – Band – Orchestra will be offered at the City Hub

Center of Theater Production and Performing Arts at Ottawa Hills High School **

Center for Human Services at Central High School **

Center for Leadership at Creston High School **

Center for Design Technology and Visual Arts at Union High School **

**elective option for 11 & 12th graders

7 & 8th grade students will have the performing arts as a part of their school day (MYP)

9 & 10th grade students (MYP) will attend the City Hub

11&12th grade students may choose to attend a Hub of their choice

90. Can my City student transfer from one elective hub to another?

11th and 12th graders may do so, 9th and 10th graders are required to attend the City Hub as a requirement of our IB MYP program.

91. Will the bands/orchestra/choir be eligible to compete at Festivals and Competitions?

Yes, and we anticipate a higher success rate at festivals and competitions.

92. Will City students be prioritized for the City Music Hub?

Yes, students in grades nine and ten must attend the City Music Hub.

93. If City will be the hub for band/choir/orchestra, and all the 11th and 12th students in GRPS have the option of taking it plus the 9th and 10th grade City kids, where will we have the room to accommodate class for that may kids?

We will be using the three music classrooms, plus the Multipurpose Room, Gym, Cafeteria, and the old Choir Room. If more rooms are needed, we will larger classrooms.

94. Could you offer a “hub” guitar instrument?

The district is examining the option to offer a Rock Band option at the City Hub.

95. Could you offer a “hub” piano instrument?

Piano players could join Jazz Band or perhaps accompany a choir.

96. Will students from other schools come to City for the instrumental Hub?

Yes – students from all GRPS high schools will be able to elect to attend the Hub at City.

97. What will City students do from 2:05 to 2:25 on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday?

City students will be offered the opportunity to attend Workzone tutoring, as well as studying in the Cafeteria.

98. How can current 7th graders who were not allowed to take a foreign language catch up in 4 years – by 11th grade?

Students entering 8th grade this year will be part of the MYP. Your student will be scheduled into foreign language through their 11th grade year.

99. Will a Chinese AP Course be offered?

We have continued to add Chinese levels each year.

100. Can a student Dual Enroll for a course that is technically being offered at City?

"Eligible course" means a course offered by an eligible postsecondary institution that is not offered by the school district in which the eligible student is enrolled, or that is offered by the school district but is determined by the board of the school district to not be available to the eligible student because of a scheduling conflict beyond the eligible student's control; that is an academic course not ordinarily taken as an activity course; that is a course that the postsecondary institution normally applies toward satisfaction of degree requirements; that is not a hobby craft or recreational course; and that is in a subject area other than physical education, theology, divinity, or religious education. (retrieved from [http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(kjo4u145wi2ytg55btgdnx55\)/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-160-of-1996.pdf](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(kjo4u145wi2ytg55btgdnx55)/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-160-of-1996.pdf))

101. When would my current 9th grader take Health if she hasn't yet?

Students will have the option to take the Health course during as an elective during the 11th or 12th grade.

102. How will internships be affected if my daughter has to stay for the instrumental music hub? Can she do both?

The internship experience is a personalized opportunity for students to investigate through interviewing, job shadowing, and mentoring experiences. The length of the mentorship and the frequency of contact are arranged on an individual basis.

103. How will my student be informed about early college/dual enrollment classes?

Students will have the opportunity to meet with Ms. Ralston in group and individual settings to discuss interest in application for dual enrollment.

104. Will debate and forensics continue to be offered at City?

Debate and Forensics will be offered at City as clubs, operating within the same format as Academic Games, Robotics, French Club, Spanish Club, Asian Club, to name a few.

105. What is the Physical Education requirement?

PE is a year-long requirement for the Middle Years Programme (MYP) for grades seven through ten. Students who are not part of the MYP must complete one year of PE prior to graduation.

106. So there will be no Visual Arts for 7th and 8th grade students?

That is correct for the 2010-2011 school year.

107. What non-performance music electives will be offered at City?

There are no non-performance music electives offered at City for the 2010-2011 academic year.

108. How will current 9th and 10th grade students take electives in 11th and 12th grade?

Will they have the option of dual enrollment?

Students in the 11th and 12th grade have the opportunity to take their elective courses in three different ways: online electives, dual enrollment courses, or the Hubs.

109. How will the block schedule work?

We will be implementing a 4x4 block schedule for the 2010-2011 academic school year. Students will have four classes on one given day (an A day) and four different classes on an alternating day (a B day). A and B days will rotate – for example, Week One - Monday = A, Tuesday = B, Wednesday = A, Thursday = B, Friday = A, Week Two – Monday = B, Tuesday = A, Wednesday = B, Thursday = A, Friday = B. All of the classes will be the same length.

110. Are students at other high schools required to take a hub in ninth and tenth grade?

If current 9th and 10th grade students won't get an IB Diploma, why must they do the Hub?

City students are required to take the Hub at City due to the Middle Years Programme. Students at other GRPS high schools are not required to take the hub.

111. What happens to those 9th and 10th graders who do not play a band instrument or sing?

Music will be the only option offered for 9th and 10th grade students at City.

112. How will these changes affect college entrance admission requirements? Will colleges still look favorably at City's status?

Colleges award credit for IB Diploma courses completed. More information can be found at <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/recognition/> Information about University of Michigan IB credits can be found at http://www.admissions.umich.edu/admitted/freshmen/adv_credit/ib_guidelines.php Information about Michigan State University IB credits can be found at http://admissions.msu.edu/documents/MSU_IB_Equivalencies.pdf

Information about Wayne State University IB credits can be found at

<http://transfercredit.wayne.edu/pdf/ib.pdf>

Information about Grand Valley State University IB credits can be found at

http://www.gvsu.edu/images/intl_bac.pdf

Information about Ferris State University IB credits can be found at

http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/Policy/TRANSFER_CREDIT_POLICY.pdf

113. What will happen in blended and online classes when there are system problems (crashes, frozen screens, system down, etc.)?

System problems will be addressed on an ‘as needed’ basis. The GRPS Tech Help Desk will be available to solve technology issues.

114. What software or service provider will be used?

There is a large array of online offerings that may be utilized including but not limited to E2020, Michigan Virtual High School, Florida Virtual, etc. Genesse County ISD is the provider for our online curricula.

115. Is the teacher for blended instruction a content expert?

Teachers in the blended model will be highly qualified in their specific content area. For example, a certified math teacher will teach a blended math class - A certified history teacher will teach a blended history class.

116. Will the online classes be staffed by a highly qualified teacher or by a specialist?

Online classes will be staffed by a highly qualified teacher.

117. Do students do their homework online in online courses? If so, can they do homework at home or strictly at school?

Students will need to complete their homework online, but homework does not have to be completed at City.

118. How do students study for tests and finals in an online environment? Are tests and finals given online?

Students will have access to appropriate instructional materials and support through their online course. Students will be able to take notes on the content and interact with their instructor in the online environment.

Tests and finals are administered in the online environment.

119. Is the move towards ‘blended’ instruction due to budget costs?

The conversation around our change model was instigated by our financial crisis in the state of Michigan. The blended curriculum model reflects state of the art pedagogy and the ability to deliver high-quality differentiated instruction to all students.

120. Which classes will be subject to ‘blended instruction’?

We are currently examining high school classes in science and math areas for blended instruction. However, we are still investigating which classes would be best for blended