

# J.C. Booth Middle School

## Rotating Schedule Factsheet



**BACKGROUND:** The goal of class scheduling is to facilitate the operation of school programs in the education of students and to ensure that students and teachers can attain maximum instructional benefits from the time allotted. An effective schedule is child-centered and promotes the development of students' self-esteem and self-efficacy. A well designed schedule is the foundation for an exemplary middle level program.

Since the interdisciplinary team organization is “a signature practice” at a middle school, the schedule must support the assignment of both students and teachers into team structures that promote the delivery of an interdisciplinary curriculum.

A second goal of the middle grades level schedule is the provision for both individual and common planning time for teaching teams. The team’s common planning time provides the opportunity to develop collaborative instructional lessons and assessments, plan interdisciplinary instructional units, counsel students, and work with parents to meet individual student needs. Research shows that four or five teachers thinking collaboratively is a powerful method of meeting students' needs. The Georgia State Legislature directs the length of the public school day and the number of hours of instructional time schools must provide to our students.

This school year we are implementing a **rotating class schedule** (see the schedule below). **This schedule provides students with the opportunity to receive instruction at his or her optimal learning time as teachers meet the needs of our diverse learners.** In order to give every child a chance to perform at their best in every subject, we will rotate classes weekly. This gives a child who performs better in the morning or the afternoon the advantage of having most classes at that time every three weeks.

9 Week Grading Period Schedule Rotation		
Week	Rotation	Schedule
1	A	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
2	B	3,5,6,4,7,1,2
3	C	6,7,1,4,2,3,5
4	A	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
5	B	3,5,6,4,7,1,2
6	C	6,7,1,4,2,3,5
7	A	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
8	B	3,5,6,4,7,1,2
9 *	C	6,7,1,4,2,3,5
<i>*Subject to change due to semester exam schedule</i>		
<b>Connections Schedule:</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> grade: 6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> pds; 7 <sup>th</sup> grade: 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> pds; 8 <sup>th</sup> grade: 3d & 5 <sup>th</sup> pds		

CLASS TIMES			
Class	Begin	End	Minutes
Homeroom	8:25 AM	8:35 AM	10
1 <sup>st</sup> period	8:38 AM	9:18 AM	50
2 <sup>nd</sup> period	9:21 AM	10:11 AM	50
3 <sup>rd</sup> period	10:14 AM	11:04 AM	50
4 <sup>th</sup> period/ Lunch/ Warrior Time	11:06 AM	12:41 PM	95
5 <sup>th</sup> period	12:44 PM	1:54 PM	50
6 <sup>th</sup> period	1:57 PM	2:47 PM	50
7 <sup>th</sup> period	2:50 PM	3:40 PM	50

The rotating class schedule consists of seven (7) 50 minute class periods (5 academic classes & 2 connections classes) including one 95 minute block that includes a 50 minute academic class with a 25 minute lunch period and a 20 minute advisory/organization/ academic intervention period (Warrior Time) for all grade levels. The schedule will change every week on an A, B, & C rotation. The rotation week (A, B, or C) will be posted in every hall and classrooms and the schedule is printed in each student’s Agenda. Anticipating some initial confusion, we are confident that we will adapt quickly like other schools using this schedule.

Before deciding to implement this academic program, key members of our school’s faculty and administration visited a middle school in Douglas County that has used a rotating schedule for over 10 years. We received excellent feedback from their staff and students. Teachers we spoke to say it ensures they have children at their most receptive time at least every three weeks. One teacher from that school reported that she used to notice students yawning in the first-period class, especially on Mondays. She said she's most alert during the first class after lunch, while students indicated that they did their best at other times of the school day. The staff prefers a rotating schedule because students come into class with different mind-sets. "It just shifts. It's less boring. I like how it shifts," said a seventh-grader from that school. "It's not the same thing every day."

# J.C. Booth Middle School

## Rotating Schedule Factsheet



"Some kids come in sleepy and some kids tire out early," the principal from the school said. "It has to do with more than sleepiness. Different kids have different learning styles." Allowing kids to experience math or another subject the first thing in the morning means that different kids will maximize that time. "We vary our instructional times the same way good teachers vary their instructional practices. It's one of the tools to the way middle grade students learn." He also noted that in his opinion, the rotating schedule promotes a more positive building climate.

### **HOW WILL STUDENTS BENEFIT?**

1. **Classroom Instruction**: The rotating schedule promotes academic achievement and promotes a more positive building climate, including such things as higher attendance rates, a decrease in discipline referrals, and increased numbers of students recording passing grades. Student learning is preserved for students who are habitually tardy or have routine doctor/dentist appointments; they are not missing the same class.
2. **Self-directed Learning**: Students improve their self-directed learning skills. Developing the awareness of time management, the rotating schedule requires students to stay organized with their time, assignments and materials by having a thorough knowledge and understanding of their schedules. Other schools in the metro area implementing a rotating schedule have seen homework completion go up.
3. **Engaged Learners**: Students become more engaged in learning and develop self-advocacy skills. Because students don't attend the same class time each day, the students and teachers develop a more holistic view of each other. For example, students who may be less engaged early in the day may be much more involved later in the day. The schedule promotes greater student self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as promotes higher levels of teacher satisfaction.

### **OTHER ADVANTAGES:**

1. Parents can **schedule routine doctor and dentist appointments** so that their student(s) don't miss the same classes at the beginning or the end of the day.
2. Teaching teams can schedule **parent meeting** at different times in the school day depending on the rotation, making scheduling more convenient for parents.
3. Several years ago we implemented our **Warrior Time** program as academic time carved from the class schedule to allow for academic intervention, student advocacy and relationship building. This time was added to homeroom at the beginning of the day. This year we will reschedule Warrior Time to the 4<sup>th</sup> period, along with lunch, to create a 95 minute period. Teams on each grade level will have concurrent Warrior Time periods, with 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades scheduled at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> period and 6<sup>th</sup> grade scheduled at the end.

### **DISADVANTAGES:**

1. Transitioning to a rotating schedule can be **a challenge for some students, especially those with disabilities**. Signs showing the weekly rotation will be posted prominently in every classroom and in the hall ways. Those students who experience confusion will be supported by teachers and peer helpers. We will be rotating the order of classes each week, rather than daily, providing the benefits of rotation without the stress of altering the schedule each day.
2. Transitioning to a rotating schedule can be **a challenge for some staff members** as well. Experience in other schools shows that most staff members quickly adjust to the change. Once the model is fully implemented, most personnel praise its benefits.
3. With this schedule we will **be compacting the time our school can serve lunch**. Students and teachers will still have 25 minutes to eat lunch, but we will be feeding everyone in the same class period, a 95 minute 4<sup>th</sup> period that will not be part of the rotation. Due to the restrictions in the size of our cafeteria, **students who bring their lunches will eat at designated tables in the Gallery in our 7<sup>th</sup> grade wing and will need to bring their own drinks**. Our outdoor lunch recess area will stay open. We will expand this area in order to accommodate the increased number of students who will take advantage of the fresh air and recreation/ social opportunities afforded by this unique program.

# J.C. Booth Middle School

## Rotating Schedule Factsheet



4. Friday Warrior Time clubs will continue, but the new Warrior Time schedule will preclude 6<sup>th</sup> graders from participating with the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders.