

Powder Mill Middle School

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Dear Parents,

This year we moved forward with changes in the structure of our grade 7/8 teams at the middle school. A number of issues effecting programming, instruction and children prompted this decision. In addition, it was equally important to make these adjustments in advance of our arriving grade six class, the largest single grade level in the middle school. To address all of these issues within the same year would have been overwhelming and even more difficult to manage.

As we created the final drafts of our new team structure, we recognized the need to adjust instruction in science for our current grade eight students. This is a single year issue. The state frameworks group science topics to be taught over a three year period. A majority of the topics are introduced to students at the grade six level and then presented again in greater depth in grades seven and eight.

Beginning on October 5th we will “lock” one science period daily. Students will be placed in a science classroom that will address topics not taught to them in grade seven. Grade eight science teachers will begin with a focus on Engineering/Technology topics, none of which were taught to students in grade seven. This will be followed by two tailored science curriculums, one with a focus on physical science and the other on life science. These curriculum documents are posted on the STRSD website. The use of a “lock” block is a practice that we have used for years to tailor instruction in mathematics. Students affected will not require a change in team or homeroom they will simply move in science.

I continue to believe that our current team structure will more effectively service our students. I am equally confident that we will be able to successfully insure that all current grade eight students receive the complete and appropriate instruction in science that will prepare them for the high school and spring MCAS testing.

Should you need further information feel free to contact me at the middle school. As always, I thank you for your support and confidence.

Sincerely,

Ronald W. Peloquin
Principal

RWP