



**Ashland Public Schools
Superintendent Recommendation
for Future Programming at the
David Mindess Elementary School**

October 23, 2019

The Mission of a School

- ★ The (Insert) School seeks to provide a nurturing environment in which to develop the talents of the learners. As a community, we learn from each other, and about each other.
- ★ Working together, we will develop an enrichment approach to learning, enhanced by exposure to libraries, museums, experiments, technology, and of course, books.
- ★ Recognizing individual learning styles, different needs, diverse backgrounds and personalities, we will endeavor to spark a life-long love of learning.
- ★ Considering students' interests and creative talents, we will provide opportunities to pursue independent, self-directed learning, while creating enjoyable learning environments. As a result, students will share and exhibit products that reflect the process of their learning to other members of the community.
- ★ Striving to create a balance between enjoyment and hard work, student achievement will be recognized, validated and celebrated. As a talent developer of all children, our ultimate goal will be to create a joy of learning, a gift that continues throughout life.

Work to Date

★ Academic Program Study by Dr. Maureen Cohen - January-December of 2018

- “Self-selected nature drives the inequities around the multi-age program not being representative of overall school population.”
- Once students are admitted into multi-age programming there is no mechanism for transitioning out until 3 years is up.
- Curriculum in multi-age is not taught in sequential order of the MA Frameworks for grade levels
- Role modeling of multi-age is a wonderful benefit and creates a more positive climate.
- Grade 2 teachers often struggle with how to discuss with parents the differences in programs.
- School within a school model presents numerous challenges for scheduling and creating a “Unified” building.

Work to Date

★ School Committee Summer Retreat - Dr. Caira & Mrs. Bennett

○ July 30, 2019 and August 13, 2019

- The belief is that we need a school which incorporates the best of the single-age programming with the original intent/mission of the multi-age program.
- Continued lack of interest has resulted in reducing one classroom in the Multi-age.
- An elementary school c
- The differences in pedagogy between the multi-age and single-age programs are minimal. Many of the “innovative” teaching methods of the multi-age program from 20 years ago are common practice today in all classrooms.
- More similarities than differences - Instructional Methodologies

★ Instructional Methodologies of Single-Grade and Multi-Grade

In-Class Differentiation	Embedded Differentiation
Flexible Grouping	Flexible Grouping
Small Group Instruction	Small Group Instruction
Whole Group Instruction	Whole Group Instruction
Collaborative Opportunities	Collaborative Opportunities
Cross-Classroom Collaboration	Cross-Classroom Collaboration
Project Based Learning	Project Based Learning
Hands-On Experiences	Hands-On Experiences
Technology Infusion	Technology Infusion
Inquiry-Based Instruction	Inquiry-Based Instruction

Recommendation

★ Superintendent Recommendation

- Phase out the multi-age program and create a single-age program across the entire school by 2022-2023 school year. Plan will be presented by Monday, October 28, 2019 for School Committee review on Wednesday, October 30, 2019.
- Work to create a modeling program that allows for older students to mentor younger students.
- Focus on skill-based groupings vs level-based groupings
- Work towards building a culture that incorporates the best of both programs into ONE UNITED MINDESS

Next Steps:

- School Committee receives feedback and open meeting on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 at 6 pm in Town Hall Meeting Room.
- School Committee takes vote on Wednesday, November 13, 2019 on Superintendent's recommendation.

Questions?