



Q&A for Cider Mill Schedule Proposal - March 11, 2024

Purpose for Draft CM Schedule Proposal: As educators, we have noticed a shift in students' emotional-well being and behaviors. We know one way to address the social emotional needs of our current student population is to slow the pace of our school day by minimizing transitions and simplifying the daily schedule. The integration of languages into our content-areas (science and social studies) is research-based and developmentally appropriate. We also aimed to provide the recommended instructional time for math and ELA. The proposed schedule also provides an opportunity for students to take a language who previously could not access the language program (due to interventions or special services)- we feel access and equity is critical. Budget pending, we hope to enhance our special area rotation by adding a combination of additional PE/Health/SEL and STEM experiences. Finally, over the years, we've collected feedback from students, teachers and our families. Frequent requests include: additional SEL support, more STEM opportunities and longer lunch/recess shifts. We need almost 2.0 FTE to be allocated to CM to run this proposed schedule.

Schedule Feedback: A total of 62 people responded to the parent (46) and teacher (16) feedback surveys. This initial feedback form was designed to collect comparison feedback from constituents familiar with our current schedule. The survey was shared by someone to the general public and to the MD family community. 30 CM families, 6 MD families and 10 general public members responded to the survey. A brief summary of the 30 CM responses can be found at the end of the current Q&A. We will continue to collect feedback and make revisions as needed. Next week (3/21/24), we will share an update with the Board of Education. The following week we will share the proposed schedule (2.0) with the MD PTA and provide a chance for in-coming families to ask questions.

<p>1. Communication & Feedback Timeline</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has the staff had input? 2. Cider Mill (CM) families? 3. Miller Driscoll (MD) in-coming 3rd grade families? 	<p>Feedback & Communication plan to date (revisions as needed!):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. January 30: Initial meeting with CM scheduling committee (teacher reps from across grades, content-areas and admin); feedback collected 2. February 7: Meet with the CM leadership team; feedback collected 3. February 12: Feedback meeting open to scheduling committee and leadership team; draft proposal shared with all staff; feedback collected 4. February 27: Meet with PTA to review draft proposed schedule (1.0) changes; feedback form shared with all CM Families 5. February 28: Meet with full faculty to discuss the schedule; feedback collected 6. February 29: Meet with the BOE to review proposed schedule 7. March 4: Follow up meeting with scheduling committee and leadership team;
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feedback collected

8. TBD: Voluntary follow up meeting with faculty to discuss the revisions (2.0)

Next steps:

- 9. 3/11/24: Share revisions to proposal with CM Staff
- 10. 3/12/24: Share revisions to proposal with CM PTA based on feedback
- 11. 3/15/24: Share revised draft proposal with MD PTA along with an opportunity to ask questions/provide feedback via a form; working with MD PTA to see if a separate presentation would be helpful
- 12. Process additional feedback as needed
- 13. Board Update - 3/21/24
- 14. Schedule will be approved by the Board sometime after the budget is approved

2. Comparison of instructional minutes (current to proposed)

- 1. How will less transitions support their change to MB?
- 2. Can you show schedule change minutes in a chart?

- 1. MB has between 7-8 transitions per day; the proposed CM schedule has 7
- 2. Reference chart below:

	2023-2024 Time Avg Weekly:	2024-2025 Time Avg Weekly:	Diff b/w 23/24 and 24/25	Percentage Difference
Math	275 Min	320 Min(4x80 & 1x80)	+45 Min	+16%
Reading	275 Min	300 Min	+25 Min	+9%
Writing	200 Min	300 Min	+100 Min	+50%
Word Study	150 Min	0 Min	-150 Min	-100%
Sci/SS	200 Min	190 Min	-10 Min	-5%
ACT	100 Min (2x40 or 3x40)	0 Min	-100 Min	+100%
World Language	100 Min (2x40 or 3x40)	90 Min (3x30)	-10 Min	-10%
Specials	200 Min	300 Min	+100 Min	+50%
Teacher Recess	100 Min	0 Min	-100 Min	-100%
Lunch/Recess	200 Min	300 Min	+100 Min	+50%

3. WL Time Reduction:

- 1. How will World Language (WL) teachers meet requirements with the reduction of time?
- 2. How much time per week will students

- 1. Currently the biggest shift in time is in our Science and Social Studies curriculum as we have adjusted the WL time to be in 30 minute chunks rather than 15 minutes. Since the WL teachers will be supporting the Sci/SS content, we believe that we will be able to continue to meet the necessary requirements with the reduction in Sci/SS time.
- 2. Currently students receive 100 minutes of WL, and next year's schedule has

	<p>receive for WL and how does this compare to previous years?</p> <p>3. How will WL teachers have time for cultural/special events?</p> <p>4. How will elementary teachers be prepared for WL in middle school where it is a core subject</p>	<p>students scheduled to receive 90 minutes of WL per week; however, we are excited that we will be able to provide an additional WL Studio for students who opt into this additional experience.</p> <p>3. WL teachers will fit in the cultural and special events by working with the classroom teachers to determine the best day to do it.</p> <p>4. Because students are exposed to a wider variety of topics (see answers below on how content-based FLES works), students generally attain a higher level of proficiency than their counterparts in non-content related FLES programs, making them better prepared for MS.</p>
<p>4. Shift in content for WL Instruction (BICS & CALPS)</p>	<p>1. How does this content-area method of instruction work?</p> <p>2. If on carts, how can they bring multi-model materials?</p>	<p>1. Content-based, or content-related FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary School) involves relating subject area content from the regular school curriculum to instruction in world language. Teachers integrate content learning with language development by developing unit plans and activities that draw from the main topics and vocabulary in the regular curriculum (e.g., social studies, mathematics, or science) so that language is acquired in a meaningful context. These content-based activities can provide a framework for developing higher cognitive skills as well as a vehicle for both language learning and content learning.</p> <p>2. Other than this year, WL classrooms have always been on carts at CM; we simply don't have enough space for each WL class to have a room in each house. This year we attempted to try and give French a room and it created many challenges as students needed to transition across the school to the French/Spanish classrooms. Previously since French numbers were so small, the French teacher has held class in the WL office space. Regardless of a schedule change, all</p>

French/Spanish classes will be fully back on carts and WL teachers will have “offices” to store/prepare instructional materials accordingly.

3. What is the role of the gen ed teacher with the new content area units of instruction?

3. During World Language (WL) instruction, classroom teachers will stay with the students and actively engage in the learning process alongside them. This includes participating in warm-up activities such as student greetings, discussing the weather, the calendar, etc. Additionally, they will offer assistance to the WL teacher as required.

4. What does research say about this method of teaching?

4. Content-Based Instruction (CBI) is a popular way of teaching languages that has grown in popularity since the 1990s. It's not totally new, but it's a fresh approach within language teaching. CBI works well in different schools and helps students learn effectively. Teachers have found it useful for students at different levels. There are also different models to fit different kinds of students and goals. CBI is flexible and can be used to teach many subjects, which makes it good for different types of learning. *Citation: Duenas, M. (2004). The whats, whys, hows and whos of content-based instruction in second/foreign language education. International journal of English studies, 4(1), 73-96*

5. Where is the report from the Curriculum Review?

5. In prior years, Curriculum Review Committees captured their recommendations in the committee agendas (they now do it primarily in presentations). Included [here](#) are agendas from the WL review meetings in 2016 and 2018, and a review committee presentation from 2016 on WL & Social Studies. The committee’s focus on Content-Based WL instruction is clearly represented in the notes and in the presentation.

6. What type of professional learning (PL) and support will be provided for WL teachers to support this shift?

6. Our World Language teachers will visit New Canaan schools to observe world language lessons, inquire about teaching methods, and learn how to craft curriculum units customized for this transition. Furthermore, they will engage in

	<p>7. Based on this model, what does a unit and typical lesson look like?</p>	<p>research review, collaborate with educators employing similar models as needed, and receive numerous weekly opportunities to collaborate as a Cider Mill team to plan and prepare for the upcoming year. These measures are among the various supports provided to facilitate this change effectively.</p> <p>7. In a content-based instruction lesson for 4th graders studying US regions, students explore the diverse geography and culture of the United States while enhancing language skills. Beginning with map analysis and text study, students learn about regional characteristics. Through interactive activities like comparing climates and resources, students develop language proficiency alongside critical thinking. Collaborative projects, such as creating travel brochures, deepen understanding and communication abilities. Integrating language with content, this lesson cultivates informed, linguistically adept learners in an engaging setting.</p>
<p>6. How will WL classes be organized? Numbers and time</p>	<p>1. How is class size impacted for WL? How many students will be in WL and Sci/SS classes?</p> <p>2. Will students rotate from homerooms?</p> <p>3. What amount of time is suggested for WL instruction in elementary school?</p>	<p>1. Using this year's numbers, we can project for next year's 4th and 5th grade classes to be less than 26 students, with most being around 20.</p> <p>2. At this time, students would only rotate when they have their Science and Social Studies blocks.</p> <p>3. The Connecticut State Department of Education suggests 10-15 minutes daily in grades K-3, and 20-30 minutes daily in grades 3-6. The Center for Applied Linguistics recommends a minimum of 75 minutes per week for elementary students. ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) recommends 90 minutes, and should occur more than twice per week.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>1. How will the rotation of WL and</p>	<p>1. World Language will teach three times a week for 30 minutes and math will have</p>

<p>How core subjects be impacted (reading, math, writing)</p>	<p>extended math work?</p> <p>2. How will the math block and additional math instructional blocks be spent? Isn't an hour already too long for elementary students?</p> <p>3. What kind of PL will be provided to support longer instructional blocks for teachers/students?</p> <p>4. How will students with accommodations be supported with the longer instructional blocks</p>	<p>one day a week of extended time. On the day with extended math, there will not be world language, so that will allow students to stay in their classes for the extended math and then transition to their Science or Social Studies class.</p> <p>2. Most districts near us have 60-90 minutes of math each day for elementary students. One hour is devoted to the instruction of the lesson. Illustrative Math calls for a minimum of a 60 minute lesson which includes a warm up, two activities, lesson synthesis, and cool down. The additional 15-20 minutes one day a week would be for small group instruction, extension, and/or fluency practice. There is movement built into each math lesson. Students have multiple opportunities during a lesson to move and work around the room with different partners when they are not doing independent work.</p> <p>3. This year, CM has 55-minute blocks for reading and math. Our elementary teachers are trained in Responsive Classroom techniques, Mindfulness strategies, and other SEL supports to support the longer blocks. <i>Even in the current schedule, our students do not typically remain in one spot for more than 20-minutes as they require movement.</i> Additionally, when elementary teachers plan for instruction, they plan for a variety of formats which will include a balance of whole group, small group and individual instruction. Instruction is designed to engage learners in a variety of methods (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) throughout longer blocks. Movement breaks will continue to be an important part of our learners' day. <i>The longer learning blocks will not translate to students sitting or engaging in one activity for longer amounts of time.</i></p> <p>4. Teachers will work closely with support staff to ensure that students who require additional breaks are supported accordingly.</p>
<p>8. How does the schedule align with POG</p>	<p>1. Global Citizen Attribute? Other Portrait of the Graduate (POG) attributes</p>	<p>1. Without being able to ADD time to our day, we believe this schedule allows our students to fully access ALL of the POG attributes. With the current revision, we're able to:</p> <p>a. <i>Balanced Healthy Human</i> (slow pace down, hope to add SEL related partial special for 5th block, movement breaks, added PE, extended lunch/recess)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. <i>Contemporary Multiliterate Scholar</i> (meet time expectations for math/literacy programs, integrated science, social studies and world language content) c. <i>Self Navigated Learner</i> (focus throughout the day in all content-areas) d. <i>Creative Entrepreneur Designer</i> (LLC, MakerSpace, we hope to increase STEM with the extension of the 5th special) e. <i>Courageous Ethical Leaders</i> (focus throughout the day in all content-areas, student leadership) f. <i>Active Socially-Sensitive Citizen</i> (across all content-areas)
9. Budget	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is this retaliation from budget cuts? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No, the proposed schedule was not budgetary driven; there is no FTE reduction due to the schedule - we actually require approximately 2.0 FTE to run the proposed schedule.
10. Lunch/Recess	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will transitions work to ensure 30-minute lunches for staff and students? 2. Why did you extend lunch/recess? 3. Who will be with students during recess? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are 5 minutes of transition time at the start of each lunch block for the incoming students. Currently 5th grade lunch ends at 11:20 and 4th grade starts at 11:20. Just like this year, teachers will be expected to be on time for pick up and drop off, which helps for smooth transitions into and out of the cafeteria. 2. We extended lunch/recess based on many years of family feedback that 20 minutes was not enough time for students to finish their lunch and that the play cycle requires longer than 20-minutes. 3. Similar to this year, next year we will continue to have lunch and recess monitors. We will be adding teachers to each lunch and recess wave next year to allow for additional support and supervision.
11. What do staff think of the change?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General staff? 2. World Language staff? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The staff is excited about the additional academic time, hour long blocks, and the Monday through Friday schedule. There is some concern around how the World Language integration will take place, but we will be providing training and visits to other districts to observe how they conduct this model of World Language in an effort to ensure this change is as smooth as possible. 2. Similarly, they have concerns about how this integration and change will take place, which is why we are providing additional training and collaboration with a

local district who implements a similar model. They also expressed concerns about 15 minutes being too short of time, which is why the new iteration provides 90 minutes (three 30-minute sessions) of World Language/week. This is a weekly increase of 15 minutes and provides longer learning sessions and more flexibility.

**12.
5th Special Block**

1. Can WL fit into the special block to give more time? Even on a rotation?
2. Why are you adding PE if you're increasing lunch recess time?
3. Why not include other specials?

1. WL can not fit into the special rotation. If languages were moved into the special area rotation, there would not be enough time for the other specials and it would limit language instruction to 1-hour/week. The only way to have 2-hours of language in the special rotation would be to eliminate either LLC, art or music.
2. To be clear, the additional PE teacher is not replacing language instructional time or language teachers. The National Institute for Health (NIH) states that increased physical activity and physical fitness throughout the day improves academic performance, executive functioning and general well-being. The extended recess and PE two times/week helps accomplish this goal.
3. The proposed schedule will allow for a more integrated world language program PLUS a special area rotation which will include additional movement for our young students (PE), scheduled MakerSpace labs, science labs as well as SEL and integrated Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) lessons. These proposed changes support the POG and the well-being of our students. This is a budget pending option and to be finalized upon the passing of the budget.

5th Special Block (1 day/week)	
6 week cycle	6 week cycle
PE	SEL: health/DBT
PE	SEL: health/DBT
PE	SEL: health / DBT
PE	STEM: Science lab/MakerSpace
PE	STEM: Science lab / MakerSpace
PE	STEM: Science lab / MakerSpace

<p>INITIAL SURVEY FEEDBACK SUMMARY</p>	<p>16 Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, teachers were positive about the schedule shift (less transitions, longer blocks, M-F consistent schedule). Some teachers had questions around the different content-area WL model and the integration with science/social studies (including class size). A few teachers expressed concern with the shortened lunch (40 -30 minutes) even though it is adjacent to an increased prep time (40 - 60 minutes). • The WL teachers expressed significantly more concerns about the shift to content-area instruction (note: this change is based on the recommendations from the last WL curriculum review and is NOT required for the proposed schedule). They were also concerned with the reduced instructional time. <p>46 Families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overwhelmingly, families expressed concerns with the reduction in WL instructional time. Additionally, the 12 questions in the above Q&A were generated from themes found in the survey. 	
<p>13. Additional Questions submitted 3/11/24 or after</p>		

DRAFT 3/11/24