EXPLORING THE OPTIONS: GRADE REDISTRIBUTION AND REDISTRICTING
The research on grade configuration is inconclusive at best and there is no research that shows one configuration is better at improving student learning. Research shows that there is greater impact on student learning when the emphasis is not on the location of students but on the educational experience students receive. Districts that are most successful at reorganizing grades start with a clearly articulated vision for the education of middle grades students. **Education Partnerships, Inc. 2012.**

https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED538738
RESEARCH ON GRADE CONFIGURATION

• “…research suggests that grade configuration is not a factor in student performance. What we should focus on instead is providing young adolescents strong academics in settings that are developmentally responsive and socially equitable no matter where they are housed”. Deborah Kasek, executive director for the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform (2013). http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/06/18/the-middle-school-conundrum/grade-configuration-among-middle-school-students-isnt-the-problem

• Advantages to this concept include consolidation of teachers and resources for the specific grade levels. Disadvantages include parents having children in more than one school, attending multiple PTO meetings, performances, etc. – Joyce Craig (facility planner with HBA Architecture and Interior Design) from Grade Configurations (2006).

https://webspm.com/Articles/2006/03/01/Grade-Configurations.aspx?Page=1
The potential to offer programs in music, foreign language, and gifted/talented to students in upper elementary grades.

Housing 5-6 graders in a developmentally appropriate setting.

Provides more academic collaboration and targeted professional development opportunities for staff.

https://pdgraham.wwcsd.net/assets/pdfs/century-committee/question-answers-dec-09.pdf
Advantages of Grade Level Attendance Centers

- Each school more clearly focuses on educational/social needs of children.
- Curriculum/instruction focuses specifically on the grade level age group.
- Building facility design/usage accommodates a specific age group.
- Class size is better balanced.
- Demographics are better balanced.
- Curriculum, instruction, and program are more consistent.
- May have fewer class sections within a grade, thus operational economies.
- Better mainstreaming of special education/ESL children.
- Reorganization cost savings allow real savings.
- Articulation across grade levels improves.
- Eliminates competition and comparison between schools.
Disadvantages of a 5-6/7-8 school configuration

• Children no longer attend their “neighborhood” schools.
• Parents/children don’t have as much time to build loyalty for a school.
• Requires more busing.
• Longer bus rides for some children.
• Brothers and sisters may be in different schools.
• Parents may experience child-care difficulties with children arriving and departing at different times.
• Young children lose older role models.
• Parents may have to choose between PTA/PTO meetings and participation at other events.
• Changing centers every two years is disrupting to children and parents.
• Communities like to identify with their K-5 elementary school.