



**HNH Steering Committee**

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**Questions?**  
Please email them to [horizons@d41.org](mailto:horizons@d41.org)—  
you will receive a prompt reply.

Hadley New Horizons (HNH) is an organizational improvement effort that began in summer of 2007 with the goal of improving the academic, social and emotional experience for all Hadley students. The HNH work aligns with the **Hadley Mission**: The purpose of Hadley Junior High School is to prepare our students intellectually and emotionally for their high school years and the future by providing a safe and supportive learning environment that meets the unique needs of our adolescent learners, while developing respectful relationships among students, staff, families and community.

### Action on HNH Recommendations expected in March

*On Jan. 12, the HNH Steering Committee brought its recommendations to the Board of Education (BOE). The BOE reviewed related costs of the recommendations on Feb. 2, and expects to take action on them March 2 (this timeline is different from the original plan for BOE action in February). The recommendations fall into two categories: the elements that we would like BOE approval to implement next year, and those we plan to continue studying for potential implementation in the future. We have received many inquiries and much feedback on the HNH recommendations, kudos and questions alike. The committee has found this heartening because it shows that people are engaged in the process, are following the HNH work, and know that their opinions matter. I encourage you to visit [www.d41.org](http://www.d41.org) and click on the HNH icon on the home page. You'll be able to read about the recommendations in more detail and see the documents that were shared at the BOE meeting. The purpose of the fifth issue of **HNHnews** is to provide a summary of the work and help our parents know what to expect as we move forward.*

*Thank you—Christopher Dransoff, Principal of Hadley*

### Seeking BOE approval for implementation next year:

- **Choice for students:** The original Exploratory sequence of courses currently offered has been improved, and many new courses have been added from which students may choose. These courses are aligned with the curriculum and with student interests. Choice options increase as students move from sixth to seventh to eighth grade.
- **Learning support:** Students who need help with Math and Literacy will have increased time for instruction that targets their needs.
- **Focus on learning:** Daily Math class will increase from 43 to 60 minutes, Literacy will be delivered in a solid 90-minute class, and students will seldom be pulled from classes because instrumental music will be a scheduled part of the school day and pullouts for non-academic activities will be diminished.
- **New schedule:** The day will start and end at the same time as at present, but the schedule will be constructed using 15-minute increments. This provides the flexibility to

provide the improvements noted above and would reduce hallway congestion. An "A/B" schedule is recommended for Exploratory, meaning that 9-week courses would be offered every other day over an 18-week period (2 days during week one, 3 days during week two, or vice versa). The A/B schedule will provide flexibility and support the HNH goal of providing greater choice to students.

## Elements we are continuing to study:

HNH is interested in structuring Hadley to help students build and sustain long-term relationships with their peers and teachers, relationships that enrich their academic, social and emotional lives. Right now, students are organized into grade level teams of about 125 students. Students are mixed outside their team and grade in some classes, for extra-curricular activities, on the school bus and in outside activities such as youth groups, Scouts, sports, and in their families and neighborhoods. The HNH recommendations below take an intentional approach to the way students are organized and supported and align with research around what is best in middle level education. They are intended to strengthen a student's central school relationships in order to provide the confidence to explore their Hadley environment, much the way a strong family helps children feel secure enough to venture forth into the world. The HNH steering committee will continue working on them and providing information about them to our parent community with a view toward possible implementation in the future.

- **Houses:** Students would be organized into grade-level teams within multi-grade houses. They would have classes in their houses for Literacy, Science and Social Studies. This means that they would have instruction from their house teachers within a designated physical location. They would be mixed with other houses for Math, PE, Exploratory, lunch and other non-core activities. Structured, supervised house processes and activities would help engage students with house peers in a positive, planned manner.
- **Looping:** Seventh grade teachers would be encouraged to loop with their students to eighth grade. For example, if Jenny had Ms. Smith for seventh grade Literacy, she would have her again in eighth grade. Students would not be in the same class formations, but would have the consistency of the same teacher in some areas. This happens now in some instances either because it's just the way the schedule turns out, or because the same teacher teaches all grades, as in Exploratory and instrumental music. Several teachers on the HNH steering committee have looped in other districts, and they confirm what the research says—that looping offers benefits for learning, especially in the second year. In any instructional structure, there have to be processes in place for managing conflicts and dissatisfactions, either between students or between a student and teacher.
- **ENCORE:** The name comes from the purpose: **Encouraging Relationships**. ENCORE would be an interest-based program connecting teachers and students around activities and learning both value in what would be a hybrid of class and club. The schedule on one day a week could be adjusted to provide time for ENCORE.
- **Mentoring:** Teacher mentors would be matched with those students who are identified using a criteria as benefiting from a mentoring relationship. Mentors would be trained and would establish objectives with their mentee. The mentoring program as a whole would be evaluated for effectiveness over time. Eventually, the program could evolve to include peer mentoring.

## Anticipated costs of HNH recommendations

A detailed cost estimate was provided to the BOE, which is reviewing it in context with the financial climate, the priority of the HNH project, the anticipated benefits to students and the options for compensating for the expenditures with efficiencies elsewhere in the budget. The costs fall into two categories: the curricular resources needed to provide the proposed choice offerings to students, and the cost of adding teachers so that daily math instruction can be expanded.

