Teaming in Middle School: From the Principal’s Perspective
Suggestions found in:

*Implementing and Improving Teaming: A Handbook for Middle Level Leaders*

by Jerry Rottier (2004), NMSA
The Principal

Plays a pivotal role in the development & implementation of teaming
Effective Teams consist of teachers who are able to work harmoniously and creatively for the benefit of their students.
Two ways to organize teams:

1. Principal assigns
2. Principal collaborates with team leaders
Principal Assignment

May have insufficient knowledge of individuals who can work together in a collegial manner.
Principal collaborates with team leaders

Preferred means of placing teachers on teams
Principal’s Role:

• Align team leaders & teams

• Monitor team performance

• Nurture team
As you think about your role, are you unsure of what to do next because you know...
Not everyone on your staff feels the same way about the idea of teaming.
Some people just aren’t very confident...
The First Step.....

Essential content of initial staff development
Staff Development

the bare bones, basic essential stuff you absolutely got to do if teaming has even a smidgin of success
Teaming Becomes A Powerful Organizational Strategy

1. Understanding teaming
2. Visiting quality middle schools
3. Developing team leaders
4. Building the team
5. Establish student expectations
6. Team Meetings
1. Understanding Teaming
There are more questions than answers....

Show me the research!

What is Inter-disciplinary anyway?

What if I want to change teams?

Why do we all have to be on teams?

How does this change things?

What are the rules and expectations?
Where do we get answers?

- Knowledgeable resource people
- Video tapes
- Attending middle school conferences
- Professional readings
2. Visiting middle schools with teaming

• 3 or 4 including an administrator make the visit

• Know which questions to ask
How are teams designed? Same for each grade level?

How are teachers assigned to teams?

How are students assigned?

How are team leader selected?

Are team leaders remunerated for responsibilities? If so, how?
What staff development activities were provided when teaming implemented?

What was teacher attitude at beginning? How about now?

How has student learning benefited?

What suggestions do you have for us?
3. Develop Team Leadership

Team leaders should have special training before teaming is implemented.
4. Building the team

What’s a team?

Team Goals?

Decisions and conflict?

Team roles?

Stages of development?
5. Establishing consistent expectations for students

Teams need to share ideas to reach agreement
Begin by agreeing on basic premises:
• Decisions are based on what is best for kids
• There is more than 1 good way to do things
• All teachers can change & be effective
3 sets of expectations for students:
1. Classroom management
2. Classroom instructional procedures
3. Learning skills
Classroom management:

• Tardiness, leaving the classroom
• Cheating, fighting, name-calling
• Improper language, put-downs
• Food & drink in classroom
• Required supplies, use of planners, covering of books, use of organizational notebook
Classroom instructional procedures:

• Grading procedures
• Late work, makeup work, extra credit
• Proficiency reports, deficiency reports
• Homework
• Paper headings
Learning skills:

• Reading, writing, speaking and listening
• Note taking, study skills
• Informational retrieval, test taking
• Critical thinking and organizational skills
6. Team meetings
TO DO:

• Student concerns
• Include resource people
• Organize student activities
• Professional learning
• Curriculum
Weekly Schedule for Team

DAY 1

- Preview of week
- Upcoming content
- Upcoming requirements
- Social activities
- Recognition/awards
- Parents
Weekly Schedule for Team

DAY 2

- Discussion of selected students

NOTE: counselor/support personnel may be present if they can contribute to the discussion of student under consideration
Weekly Schedule for Team

DAY 3, 4, and 5
Devoted to instructional and curricular matters
Instructional and Curricular matters

• Sharing instructional strategies
• Determining connections between curricular areas and developing interdisciplinary approaches to meeting those connections
Instructional matters continued…

• Reviewing appropriate assessment procedures
• Developing technological approaches to enhance instructional strategies
• Considering procedures to meet the diverse needs of students on the team.
Weekly Schedule for Team

ONE DAY

every two weeks for professional development
Check out the book for details and many other good ideas