

Re-Imagining Middle Grades, 2019-2020

Olsen Middle

RMG Implementation Model: PBL Focus



What exactly does Re-Imagining Middle Grades (RMG) mean?

Broward County Public Schools is committed to changing the middle school experience for its students and implementing incremental steps that will ultimately lead to a systemic change in our District. As a result, we have begun to “re-imagine” our middle schools, beginning in the 2018-2019 school year. We ultimately will strive to include all students in a project-based or problem-based experience via an interdisciplinary approach. Social-emotional learning will support students in a warm environment where their unique educational needs are met. This will lead to enhanced student engagement and motivation and facilitate connections across content domain. The plan also calls for increased electives and extracurricular activities at the middle school level. The ultimate goal of our “reimagining work” is for students to be engaged and to have the social emotional competencies, problem-solving skills, and academic achievement to help them successfully transition from middle school to high school and beyond.

What is our school’s focus for Re-Imagining Middle Grades?

Awesome Olsen Middle School’s mission is to provide ‘Excellence for Every Student, Every Day!’. As a new Magnet School in the 2019-2020 school year, Olsen’s focus this year is to expose students and teachers to the concepts of project-based learning (PBL) and social-emotional learning (SEL). Our commitment this year is make sure that all of our faculty are trained in these methods to create a common language of instruction and relationship building with our students

As we infuse new instructional models in classrooms, how do we support our teacher’s growth through professional learning?

- Our plan to support teacher growth starts from modeling SEL and PBL expectations with our faculty in PLC, grade-level and Response to Intervention (RtI) meetings.

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- Faculty and grade-level meetings provide opportunities to differentiate training and support while creating a positive environment through implementation of SEL strategies.
- Administrators use the “Gold Standard PBL” to coach our lead teacher(s) in creating quality PBL activities that keeps the focus on student learning goals, essential project design elements, and support project-based teaching practices.
- During RtI meetings we bring a team together, composed of key individuals at our school. The team meets weekly to ensure that we are providing adequate and appropriate support and implementing interventions that support student needs.



- We have taken advantage of the PBL training made available from the iCAN grant and the district to ensure all teachers have been trained in PBL.
- We have developed several networks of support to help professional growth. The first method is by creating peer buddies for team members as a means of support for resources, curriculum, PBL, or induction. Secondly, using school based experts in various professional development areas such as Curriculum, ESOL, ESE, Canvas, and School Safety. Finally, we have utilized support from the district on a rotating basis to help support best practices in curriculum and instruction.

What additional elements have we implemented to support Re-Imagining Middle Grades?



- Awesome Olsen Middle School is now an iCAN Magnet Academy. This means that Olsen is a full school magnet with five separate academies. These academies are designed to help students prepare for college and career. Students at Awesome Olsen Middle School get to choose their own pathway that develops hands-on, real life experiences within the curriculum. Students at Olsen Middle have an opportunity to earn high school credit within the program. Our magnet program is aligned with South Broward High School which has created a plan of study that could lead to students graduating high school with an Associate’s Degree.

- . Awesome Olsen also has a huge cross-section of extra-curricular activities that support students’ sense of community and serve as the foundation of our SEL and PBL work. Providing students with opportunities to participate in various clubs such as: National Junior Honor Society, Student Government Association, Science Olympiad, Latinos In Action, Best Buddies, First Priority, Cultural Arts, Viking Voices, Band, and Athletics gives students a sense of pride and belonging.



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- We have hosted several successful activities such as: Dad, Bring Your Child(ren) to School, Start with Hello, Peace Week, Math League Competition, Turkey Drive, Fall Festival, Holiday Hoorah, Elementary Matriculation, Code Party, Veterans and Grandparents Day activities.

- Our “awesome” after-school programs (21st century and Hispanic Unity), school initiatives (Immersion, Brain Bowl, and Friday Night Live), award and incentive ceremonies, and supportive community mentors (Angels Without Wings and Viking Valor Boys) assist us in effectively creating a community of inclusivity. We have a vested interest in ensuring that every student feels a sense of community and acquires the necessary academic skills to be college and career ready.

- Electives, such as, Linking Education and Employment Outcomes (LEEO) and Virtual Enterprises Junior Ventures Career Academy (VEI) allows students the opportunity to create and develop their own product and gain the necessary computer skills to present, market and create a business.



- Students earn industry certifications in Microsoft Office software applications.

- At Awesome Olsen Middle School also offers an Advanced Achievers Academy whose accelerated curriculum gives students the opportunity to complete middle and high school courses at their own pace as well as explore various electives to support their interests within the academic day. The ability of students to engage in academic competitions such as Science Olympiad, Math League and Global Scholars has many added benefits, such as: allows students to problem-solve in a real-world context, compete against and develop lifelong friendships while demonstrating their knowledge and skill to middle school students across the county, state, country, and ultimately the globe.



At Olsen Middle, we are committed to excellence.