

## **Key Research Findings Related to the Impact of Common Planning Time**

Middle grades educational research has addressed and documented the positive effects of providing interdisciplinary team teachers with common planning time (CPT).

### Student outcomes:

- Students are better known by a team of teachers (Lipsitz, 1984).
- Students receiving instruction from teachers on teams with CPT had higher overall self-concepts and more positive overall perceptions of their school climate than did students receiving instruction from teachers on interdisciplinary teams without CPT (Warren & Muth, 1995).
- Increases in the amount of CPT are strongly associated with increases in the amount of time the team spends coordinating content, diagnosing individual student needs, planning special events, conducting parent conferences, regrouping, and rescheduling (Mac Iver, 1990).

### Teacher outcomes:

- CPT promotes heightened levels of teacher collegiality (Lipsitz, 1984; Rice, 2003), professionalism in curriculum development (Lipsitz, 1984), and reduces teacher isolation (Rice, 2003).
- Teachers on interdisciplinary teams with CPT had more positive overall perceptions of their working environment than did teachers who were organized departmentally (Warren & Muth, 1995).
- Teachers on interdisciplinary teams with CPT had significantly higher perceptions of personal teacher efficacy and more positive perceptions of their working environment than did teachers on interdisciplinary teams without CPT or teachers who were organized departmentally (Warren & Payne, 1997).

Additionally, middle grade schools engaged in interdisciplinary teaming with high levels of common planning time (minimum of 4 meetings/week; 30 mins or more/meeting) had very positive outcomes:

### *Teachers report...*

- Engaging in higher levels of interdisciplinary team and classroom instructional practices (Felner, Jackson, Kasak, Mulhall, Brand, & Flowers, 1997; Flowers, Mertens, & Mulhall, 2000a, 2000b).
- Higher levels of teacher job satisfaction (Flowers, Mertens, & Mulhall, 1999)
- More positive interactions with their colleagues (Flowers, Mertens, & Mulhall, 2000a)

*Students report...*

- Lower levels of depression (Mertens, Flowers, & Mulhall, 1998)
- Fewer behavior problems (Mertens, Flowers, & Mulhall, 1998)
- Higher self-esteem (Mertens, Flowers, & Mulhall, 1998)
- Greater academic efficacy (Mertens, Flowers, & Mulhall, 1998)

*Schools report...*

- Higher levels of student achievement, particularly for schools with higher percentages of free/reduced-price lunch students (Flowers, Mertens, & Mulhall, 1998, 1999, 2003)

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