

2020 Glen Rock HS/MS Administrative Structure Proposal

The Glen Rock Board of Education believes that the proposed school restructuring can better support teacher effectiveness, enhance student learning and improve the climate and culture of the building. But there is no "magic bullet" or simple recipe for successful school restructuring. This restructuring proposal is clearly focused on three key factors:

- Student Learning and Student Achievement
- Instruction and Assessment
- Principal Accountability

In schools, getting the right leader in the right environment can effect enormous improvements. We believe that combining the HS and MS principals into a single 6-12 leader will lead to:

- A consistent vision for the building
- A unified strategy to monitoring student progress
- Ensuring the ability to implement initiatives that impact all grades
- More collaboration between the schools
- Setting tangible and attainable goals for the building

We believe that the addition of content area supervisors will help district principals and teachers address content-specific concerns, which currently are the responsibility of the principal or assistant principal. Additionally, supervisors will help to:

- Address parental class placement concerns or issues with a teacher
- Review lesson plans
- Conduct teacher observations
- Articulate K-12 curriculum aligned for New Jersey Student Learning Standards
- Provide professional development

This proposal was designed for the unique characteristics of the Glen Rock School District. This is not a cost cutting proposal but is the structure that best supports forward looking advancements in education for Glen Rock students.

Please review the following FAQ for more detailed information and answers regarding the proposal.

2020 HS/MS Administrative Structure Proposal: Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs Related to Staffing for 2020-2021 (Supervisors)

Q: What will be the role of the new Content Supervisors? What will they be doing?

A: The goal of a Content Supervisor is to assist in the improvement of the quality of teaching and curriculum within the district and their responsibilities will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Articulate K-12 curriculum aligned for New Jersey Student Learning Standards
- Develop curricula from kindergarten through grade 12
- Observe and evaluate staff in the areas of their speciality
- Work with other district staff to ensure effective delivery of their curricular speciality and appropriate professional development
- Consult with teachers, parents, support staff, and district administrative staff regarding their curricular speciality
- Use data to plan goals, measurable objectives and strategies for continuous improvement of their K-12 curriculum speciality
- Work cooperatively and collectively with principals, other supervisors, and teachers to ensure that instructional programs and services are coordinated in the schools and are administered uniformly and equitably
- Recommend budget line items and coordinate the purchasing of instructional materials and equipment

While the supervisors do not directly interact with students, they will spend time in the classrooms modeling and co-teaching lessons with staff.

Q: To whom would the Content Supervisors report?

A: Supervisors will report to the Assistant Superintendent, as will the Director of Curriculum, Director of Special Education, Director of Guidance, and Elementary Coaches.

Q: Will the High School still have Department Chairs?

A: Yes, the High School Department Chairs are in the 2020-2021 budget.

Q: Will Elementary Coaches remain in the 2020-2021 budget?

A: Yes, the coaching positions are in the 2020-2021 budget.

Q: How will the Content Supervisors benefit the elementary schools?

A: The K-12 Content Supervisors can offer professional development around innovative ideas to enhance elementary curriculum, working with our coaches and teachers.

They would assist in facilitating both vertical and horizontal articulation of curriculum. Having someone to maintain dialogue between elementary schools and the middle school would be especially helpful.

Content supervisors will be able to look at data across the four elementary schools and summarize our strengths and weaknesses, make decisions for revisions and eliminate any inconsistencies should they exist.

Content supervisors can stay abreast of new research in their area and share with staff in the elementary schools. This is important for 21st century learning, and will help Glen Rock retain its reputation as a cutting-edge district at all grade levels.

Q. How will the Content Supervisors benefit the HS/MS?

A: Under our current structure, principals & assistant principals spend parts of their days managing facilities, handling operational issues, assisting in discipline, conducting formal observations, etc., there is little time to stop by classrooms and observe classes informally. Walk-throughs by supervisors will offer a meaningful source of data to identify both staff strengths and weaknesses. This will allow professional development to be planned based on data.

At the high school and middle school level, principals are generally only experts in the subjects they taught (unlike elementary level, where teachers teach all subjects). Content supervisors would be helpful in assisting teachers with lesson and unit planning, creating meaningful assessments, helping make connections with field experts and guest speakers, etc. Content supervisors would also give the most meaningful formal observations to others in their content area.

Content supervisors would be extremely helpful in creating consistency horizontally for curriculum within grade levels, but more importantly, the flow of curriculum from year to year. Articulation from year to year in grades six through twelve will lead to less overlap and redundancy in material, deeper learning, and greater connections.

Greater support for less seasoned staff, especially from a content supervisor, could ultimately lead to greater staff retention. Content supervisors would also be an obvious choice to mentor new staff within their content area, as opposed to principals and assistant principals having to resort to using a teacher in a different content area.

Content supervisors, experts in their area, would be able to help identify the highest quality staff members by adding and assessing interview questions specific to the relevant content area. They would also be of assistance in evaluating demo lessons for content accuracy.

Q: Will parents have a relationship with the supervisors?

A: Yes. Supervisors would be available to answer parent questions about curriculum, content, assessments, etc. In addition, supervisors work with teachers and

parents to address academic concerns in the classroom.

Q: How will the supervisors role differ from the Director of Curriculum role?

A: The Director of Curriculum oversees the full breadth of the curriculum and cannot be a content expert in all areas. The supervisors are content experts and will bring additional insight and resources to allow us to keep pace with the rapid evolution of curricular mandates.

FAQs related to the new HS/MS Administrative Structure

Q: Why make the switch from two principals to one? What are the benefits?

A: The High School and Middle School have always had difficulty moving in the same direction. Having one leader provides for a consistent vision for the building, ensuring the ability to implement changes in initiatives that impact all grades - for example instructional technology, security plans, bell schedule, and facility usage.

A single leader can think more holistically about how to ladder up instruction across the seven grades - for example, new coding and engineering programming that starts in middle school and prepares students for advanced coursework in high school. There will be opportunities to share best practices across the schools, and to encourage more collaboration in the teaching staff across all seven grades.

Under this structure, the Middle and High schools should be able to offer a wider range of coursework and programming in areas such as the arts, coding, engineering, etc. which today would require additional teaching staff or be hampered by a scarcity of available classrooms. By moving to a similar bell schedule and a unified management of staff and facilities, we will open up more flexibility in use of space across the schools, and more opportunity for current teaching staff to work across grades where appropriate.

We also believe the scope of this expanded role will attract very strong, experienced Principal candidates who are interested in the chance to innovate and move our schools forward.

Given all of the above, we truly believe this structure best supports forward-looking advancements in education for Glen Rock students.

Q: What is the role of the 6-12 principal under this new structure?

A: Under the general supervision of Dr. Charleston, the 6-12 principal will provide leadership and supervision in administering the educational programs of the HS and MS in order to promote the educational development and achievement of students.

Q: Will the role of the 9-12 and 6-8 Assistant Principals change?

A: In this structure, we envision that the Assistant Principals have the opportunity to play a

bigger role in building the individual identity of the middle school vs. the high school. For example: they can work with the middle school and high school teaching staff in coordinating class and student council activities, oversee clubs and co-curriculars, help plan class trips, and actively work to inspire school spirit. As they do today, they will get to know the students individually and spend a lot of time out in the hallways making sure the climate is a positive one. They will understand the issues impacting the students in each grade and can ensure those issues are raised to the Principal.

Q: If there is “one vision” for the building, does that mean there will no longer be a distinct identity and culture for the middle school apart from the high school?

A: No, far from it. The HS and MS will have their own assistant principal, guidance counselors, nurses, Child Study Team, co-curricular clubs and activities, sports, and other traditional events. In addition, the teachers will continue to play a critical role fostering culture and climate.

The superintendent will oversee both schools and ensure that there is a balanced approach across the two schools.

Q: What other schools in the area have one principal across MS and HS, or across the same enrollment size as our MS and HS?

A: There are several Northern New Jersey schools that have one Principal across middle school and high school, including:

School	Grade Span	Enrollment	Admin Structure
Cresskill	6-12	974	1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, 6 Supervisors
Emerson	7-12	493	1 Principal, 5 Directors/Supervisors, No Assistant Principals
Park Ridge	7-12	555	1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, 7 supervisors, 2 Directors
Glen Ridge	7-12	831	1 Principal, 1 HS Assistant Principal, 1 MS Assistant Principal, 3 Directors
Westwood	8-12	1,130	1 Principal, 4 Assistant Principals, 1 Director
New Providence	7-12	1,010	1 Principal, 1 HS Assistant Principal, 1 MS Assistant Principal

In comparison, Glen Rock has a higher enrollment at 1325 students across 6th through 12th grades. Given this larger enrollment, our proposed structure keeps both the High School and Middle School Assistant Principals, which do not exist in the above districts with the exception of Glen Ridge and New Providence.

It is not at all unusual in New Jersey to have a single principal in a school with upwards of 1,000 students in one building. Some examples in high-performing districts include:

High School (9-12)	Enrollment
Fair Lawn	1474
Livingston	1927
Morris Knolls	1484
Mount Olive	1502
Ridgewood	1740
Northern Highlands	1359
West Windsor - Plainsboro North	1425
Princeton	1596

Q: How will the needs of entering 6th graders be cared for in the 6-12 setting? How can you ensure younger students are not more exposed to older students if the high school and middle school setting start to converge?

A: The same programs and activities that exist today will be in effect. These include:

- Grade 6-8 receiving counselors meet with 5th graders to speak about the transition to 6th grade
- 5th grade parent night
- Rising 6th graders will have the opportunity to tour the school
- A 'discovery day' where students follow their schedule and become more acquainted with the school and expectations

We may utilize some classroom spaces across the two schools more often in future. However, we can still use similar measures as today to create separation between 6-8 and 9-12 students, such as separate MS & HS bathrooms, using screens to divide the cafeteria, having a special area in the media center dedicated to MS students, different hallways for MS lockers, etc.

Q: What role might the guidance department play in this new administrative structure to help make it successful?

A: At this time, the guidance department structure will remain consistent, keeping the counselors with their assigned grade levels. When the new principal is in place, we anticipate the guidance department working with school administration to research and decide on whether changes are needed. Our counselors work very well with incoming 6th and 9th grade students and parents to help lessen anxiety due to the transition, and will continue to do so.

Q: How is it possible for one Principal to do the work that is currently done by two Principals? What stays in their daily job routine and what moves elsewhere?

A: We do not believe that it is possible, which is why there needs to be additional help in the form of the supervisor positions. Content-specific concerns, which currently are the responsibility of the principal or assistant principal, would be handled by the content supervisors. For example, concerns related to class placement or issues with lesson plans or curriculum would be handled by the applicable supervisor. The supervisor would also handle some of the teacher observations. All of this enables the MS/HS principal to truly return to an instructional leader role and focus on setting the vision, guiding programs, enhancing professional development, launching new school initiatives, etc.

Q: What qualifications will you be looking for in hiring the new MS/HS principal? What characteristics will be important to make the person successful in this role?

A: The Board of Education is looking for a candidate that includes many qualifications and characteristics. Some of the following are applicable:

- Ability to establish and maintain working relationships with students, staff, parents, and community members
- Thorough knowledge of the principles and methodology of effective teaching and administration
- Thorough knowledge of 6-12 special education, skills, and practices
- Recognizes and rewards students' academic, extra-curricular, and/or other school / community related accomplishments
- Uses resources of the community and involves parents and community members in evaluating the school program, volunteering in the school, and enhancing the enrichment programs
- Proven track record of establishing and driving culture
- Driven by a passion to bring our district to the next level in terms of innovation and programs

FAQs related to the overall restructure.

Q: What is the budget impact of this proposal?

A: The 2020-2021 budget is still under development, but assuming that the amount of state aid we receive is similar to this year, we are able to fund this proposed administrative structure within the state-mandated 2% cap. The proposal has nothing to do with saving money, but rather what we believe is best for students and Staff.

Q: What is the driving force behind the proposed restructure?

A: We believe this structure is best for teachers, administration and most importantly, best for students. We truly believe it will accelerate and open up opportunities for improvements and innovations to our district as a whole.

Q: You say the proposal is budget neutral this year. Will there be increased costs next year if additional content supervisors are hired for science and social studies?

A: The Board is NOT committing to hiring any supervisors beyond the three outlined in the current proposal. If additional content supervisors are proposed in the future, those positions would be considered as part of our usual annual budget discussions and with a strong sense of commitment to balancing costs and benefits. The Board and Business Administrator continue to actively search for cost-saving opportunities throughout the budget, with a focus on items that do not impact students in the classroom.

Q: Did the Superintendent propose similar changes in other school districts where he has worked? If so, what were the results and feedback from parents?

A: No. The Superintendent has made improvements in previous districts, but this type of proposal is unique to the situation in Glen Rock (e.g. size of the student body, single shared MS/HS school building, high-achieving but small-scale district, opportunity to “do more” for the students by sharing resources.)

Q. Will there be a proposal to also restructure our elementary buildings to be K-2 and 3-5 buildings?

A: No. This has never been discussed.

FAQs related to our decision-making process

Q: Has there been conversation with the GREA and teaching staff about this proposal?

A: Dr. Charleston will hold ‘office hours’ on Thursday, February 20th where staff will be able to drop by to ask questions. He will also hold a faculty meeting for HS/MS staff where he will review the proposal and rationale for the administrative restructure.

Q: Has there been conversation with the current HS Department Leaders? What were the reactions (positive and negative)?

A: Yes, Dr. Charleston met with HS Department Leaders, HS/MS administrators, and Directors at the HS Instructional Council meeting on Feb 14. There was some support, some neutral, and some not in support.

Q: Why are we moving so fast with this proposal? Why not slow down so there is more time for discussion?

A: The board has been discussing this possibility for some weeks. Unfortunately, public discussion could not occur until key personnel related changes (retirement, resignation) were officially shared with the public more recently. It is important that we start recruiting for the new Principal position in March. This is the prime season for education job searches, so we will be able to access the best candidates. Also, the timing allows us to

have a candidate selected in time for a notice period and a smooth transition/handover with our current administrators this summer.

Q: Is the Board listening to the parents, community and current administrators before making their decision?

A: The Superintendent discussed this proposal with the Board of Education in Liaison meetings prior to sharing it with the public. The Board then shared this proposal with the public at the first possible opportunity on Feb 11. At that time, the Board heard input from the community in public comment and encouraged the public to email the Board with their questions. This overview and FAQ was posted on the district website on Feb 19 to help inform the community. The public has been invited to an open Q&A discussion with the superintendent on Feb 20 at 7pm. School staff were also invited to join separate discussion sessions. The HSA Presidents from all district schools will have the opportunity to share input gathered from other parents during their usual monthly meeting with the Superintendent on Feb 21. The public will have another opportunity to provide public comment and hear Board discussion on Feb 25 prior to the anticipated Board vote on March 10.