

ASD Grade Span Reconfiguration Website – *submitted by Abington School District*

<https://sites.google.com/abington.k12.pa.us/gradespans>

Background

For the past four years, a committee of Abington School District administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents/guardians, school directors and community members have been hard at work planning for a grade span reconfiguration across Abington School District, which will go into effect beginning September 2022.

In the past decade it was determined that ASD's seven elementary schools (grades K-6) were approaching their maximum capacity, with enrollment only anticipated to grow further in the years ahead. The District explored ways to alleviate this problem and it was determined that the best solution would be to expand the existing high school building (currently housing grades 10-12). As a result of enlarging the building, the District would be able to move up the 9th grade from Abington Junior High School (which currently serves grades 7-9). Since transitioning grade 9 to the high school would free up space at the Junior High, this would allow 6th grade classes to move up to the Junior High building, thus finding that much-needed space in all seven elementary schools.

The grade span reconfiguration was also aligning with several other key initiatives at the secondary level, including reworking the course offerings, scheduling and graduation requirements at the high school. Course offerings and scheduling would also be reworked at the Junior High, which will soon be renamed Abington Middle School to reflect the new grade span, as well as, a middle school versus junior high philosophy. At the elementary level, this also means that at the conclusion of this school year, 5th and 6th graders would be "graduating" from elementary school, which requires a shift in celebrations and rites of passage. These students will also need to adjust to a middle school schedule next school year, where they rotate classes, no longer take recess, and have access to new clubs and after-school activities.

The ASD Grade Span Reconfiguration Site

As two previous school years were bogged down with pandemic-related communications, ASD used the 2021-2022 school year to fully prepare families for the grade span reconfiguration and to do a larger scale communications roll out, starting in September 2021. This was a multi-faceted approach, but the main hub of information for families was a Google Site created to house all communications, FAQs, Board presentations, etc.

The site was designed to expand as more information became available, such as the recently approved Program of Studies and recordings of various informational meetings that have been held for families over the past several months.

As the reconfiguration will impact each grade level differently, it was important that the site was divided into sections based on what information each audience needed. Key elements of the site include:

- A breakdown of the level of impact on each grade level
- An archive spanning several years of key Board meeting materials that informed decisions/approvals made by the Board and/or administrators over time
- A page dedicated to the reimagined curriculum at Abington Senior High School

- A submission form for parents/guardians to ask questions. Answers are posted under the FAQ section.
- A list of upcoming key dates related to orientations, course selection, etc.

Promoting the Site

A link to the Google Site is included on the ASD website homepage, and has been consistently communicated to families on an ongoing basis whenever there is a communication or presentation about the initiative. The goal is to continuously drive families to this site when they are looking for information, as the site is updated whenever new materials or direction become available.