

MICHAEL RETTIG: For those of you that came back, thanks for coming back. For those of you that are new, thanks for joining us. Good luck catching up. So, we'll just roll into this. I'm going to kind of reintroduce this school that we were talking about that – the school system in Virginia that I've worked with. Those of you who were with me before, I worked in the Prince William County schools beginning about 10 years ago. There's 58 elementary schools there, and I worked with 10 in a pilot that lasted two years, and the things in the pilot that the schools all agreed upon were their time allocations, Encore rotations, and different kinds of rotations to share staff and things like that. They were so happy with the pilot in those 10 schools that the entire school division decided to go district wide with some of the concepts that we were employing in their scheduling framework.

And so we got together a district committee that included representatives from the elementary schools, both pilot and non-pilot, and those representatives were teachers and administrators plus central office people, and we negotiated some things that were going to be consistent across all the schools in the school division, and everything else would be left to site-based flexibility, okay, and so it's my ying and yang of district and site-based areas of agreement and not so much agreement.

So, one of the things that they agreed at the district level was to have the same kind of time allocations in the schedules. They had a 390-minute day or 6½-hour day, which is pretty typical elementary school day, and in the primary grades you'll notice that they had 120, 90, everything else, 45 for social studies, Encore, I.E., lunch, and recess, but then in the intermediate grades, because of our testing system in the state of Virginia, where we test in science and social studies beginning in third grade, they took away some of the time from language arts and math and allocated it to science and social studies.

I want you to notice how, too, those of you who were with me during the first half, notice that all of the numbers up there are divisible by 15. I was in the room during the discussion. I knew I was going to have to help them build the schedules, and I knew I wanted that building block as big as I possibly could get it, and so 15 was our greatest common factor of all those periods.

So, there was, we agreed on the time. Then we agreed on – agreed to disagree on Encore rotations. Every school was site-based managed, had site-based budgets, and had hired their own Encore staff and had different rotations. And so, the minimum the district said was that every kid had to have one P.E. class, one art class, and one music class, at a minimum of every six days. So, that meant if you were on a four-day cycle, one P.E., one art, one music, one could be a repeat or an additional thing. Five-day cycle, same drill: One P.E., one art, one music, repeats, or something else. When you got to eight days, though, if you're on an eight-day rotation, you had to have more than one P.E. class and more than one art, more than one music to meet the minimum. Okay.

And then the last thing, as I said earlier, was the way they were going to do instrumental music. And just for the new ones in here, I will repeat this and then we'll be done with the repeat. They had a strings program in fifth grade. That was it. Okay. And what they agreed to do was a third of the schools in the district had their I.E. period, their intervention enrichment period, and their Encore period in the first two periods of the day. Another third of the schools in the district had those two periods, the I.E. and their Encore specials block in the last two periods of the day, and then a third had it in the middle. And so the strings teacher, rather than showing up all day and pulling kids out all day, would only show up at a school for a couple of periods, attempt to pull most of their groups out of the I.E. period for the fifth grade, but if the kid had an intervention in the I.E. period every day, their lesson would come out of the Encore period. And because the Encore rotations were different than a Monday-Friday schedule, they didn't always miss the same thing out of there. So, for those of you that were here this morning, that's the end of the repeat.

Let's look at the schedules – a schedule they came up with. The first thing I want to do is show you this. This is my website, and it's free. And if you go to the handouts – not the handouts – yeah, the hand – no, the schedules tab, you'll see some – there's some sample schedules on it, and then you'll see a thing that says Blank Elementary School Template. Okay. That's that Excel template that you saw me pop up earlier that had the time allocations piece on it, but it also has a blank, a blank – you'll see it in a minute. Here's the allocation thing. Here's the blank master. And that blank master – Let me blow it up so you can see it better – is a time – has a time thing across the top. You see this right here? The only time that's fixed on this master is the first one. All the rest of them are a formula that says add five minutes to the, to the other one. So, if the day actually started at 9 o'clock, all I have to do is go in there and change 8 to 9 and all the rest of those little puppies fall in, you know, in line right there because it's a formula.

And the next thing is, this is a good tool to visually depict things. So, say Encore was going to be 45 minutes. Well, to do an Encore class of 45 minutes, all I have to do is merge together nine of these little cells right here. I've created a toolbar on the template that has that merge button there, so I merge those together. I can type in a label if I want. I can go to format cells and go ahead and go to alignment, and let's get that centered. And let's put a little color in it to make it pretty. And now I can just grab that Encore box and copy and paste it wherever I want and it'll always be nine boxes. It'll always be 45 minutes. Are you with me on that? This is going to be a visual tool that we use to build schedules, and it's really good to do it right in front of the group that you're working with, if you can.

By the way, if principals can't, you know, aren't good with Excel, get somebody who is in – we don't need you for your tech skills; we need you for

your brain and your leadership, for principals; okay? And so if you got a tech person who's good at this, they'd be happy to participate in it. If you're good at it, do it. But don't let the technology screw up the process, because if you're fiddling with this in front of a group and they're all looking at you – you know what I'm talking about? So, for the principals in the audience, that's my comment.

Here's – here is – oh, by the way, at that – at the same website, at the same website are some tips, and these are Excel tips, and what I've done is I've recorded – I use a little program that's called Camtasia Studio. It's actually free on the web, and it's – there's another program like it, I forget what it's called, but it allowed me to record a screen shot, a moving screen shot with an audio track. And I don't think we have sound here right now, not much anyway, but I'm loading one right now, and what these are, are me just showing a few little tips of how to manipulate the spreadsheet, and the web is very slow here so I'm not going to wait for it. But you can download those and they'll play. So if you want to know how to create a toolbar or how to change a starting or ending time or how to merge or unmerge cells or things like that, there's about eight or nine or so tips there that you could use. And then some of the handouts that you already have are available here, too. So, that's that.

But here's the Antietam schedule and, you know, it's hard to read from a distance. It's one of the handouts that you did receive. But let's take a look at it together. It's not a really sophisticated elementary school schedule because I think we did this about eight years ago, but it's a pretty good teaching tool. Who has Encore last thing of the day? Can you see? Last thing of the day. First grade. And then right before them, who has Encore? Third. And then right before them. Second. And then for kindergarten I got this little thing going on here that says Encore, I.E., Encore, I.E., and it's in different parts of the day. Got any idea what might be going on there? Those of you who were with me. They have half-day kindergarten. Anybody have half-day kindergarten here?

You know, when you think about doing the Encore schedule for half-day kindergarten, I kind of find three approaches to it. One is they don't get anything. Okay. That's one approach. The day is so short they don't get anything. Okay. The second approach is they ought to get about half. Okay. And then there's two ways to approach that. They ought to get about half. One way to approach it is give them a sliver. Okay. So cut your normal Encore period about in half and give that to the kindergarten. One in the morning and one in the afternoon. So if you were given a normal Encore of 45 minutes or so or 50 minutes, the kindergarten gets 25 minutes in the morning and 25 minutes in the afternoon, and that's the way to do it. I don't much care for that because 25 minutes, by the time you get them down there and get them back, it's hardly worth the trouble. Okay.

So, what we do, and what we did in this school that had half-day kindergarten at the time – it doesn't anymore – was here is how we approached

it. We thought the kindergarten should get about half as much. They were there half as long. That makes sense. And so what we did is the morning – on like day one, kindergarten in the morning had an Encore class. And that - kindergarten teachers all like common planning time in the morning. On day one, the afternoon didn't get any Encore. On day two in the cycle, the afternoon kindergarten got an Encore class and the kindergarten teachers planned in the afternoon, and the morning class didn't get an Encore class. But they were 45 minutes in length. They were the normal length. So, the teachers planned day one in the morning, day two in the afternoon, day three, boom, boom, boom, and the kids got an Encore class every other day for a normal kind of length. Does that make sense what I'm talking about? That's another way to approach doing it halfway. And that's what was going on in here.

And then we had the fifth grade and the fourth grade down here. And notice the fifth grade has Encore and I.E. in the first two periods, because that was a school that was a morning strings school and, remember, the strings teacher showed up here in these two periods every day, or however many days we needed. We tried to get all the lessons out of there, as many as we could out of the I.E. period, but if there was a special needs child who was getting in an intervention during this time, they might have their lesson out of Encore. Okay. Put something in, you gotta take something out.

Now, let me show you a few other things in this schedule and then we'll delve into some of the details.

By the way, if you'll recall the time allocations, the time allocation for language arts in the primary grades was 120 minutes, so this is 24 boxes merged together, but in third, fourth, and fifth grade it was only 90 minutes, so those are 18 boxes that are merged together, copied and pasted where they need to go. And so if you look at this whole schedule, what is the – where do you see the shortest chunk of time that seems to be instructional time? Where's the shortest chunk? Yeah, it's kind of hard to see from here if you don't have it in front of you. It's that chunk right there of math. That's actually 30 minutes. That's not a bad chunk. Okay. I try to keep a schedule, if possible, of nothing shorter than 30 minutes in the schedule. It's 30 minutes of a 90-minute math block, and the math teacher is there to – the second grade teachers didn't care a bit that that was broken 30/60, and they were the only ones that had to do that.

Notice the lunches are staggered. That's a 15-minute stagger and then there's a 15-minute stagger from this, the start of this one to the start of that one, and then a 15-minute stagger from the start of this one to the start of that one, then there's actually a half hour stagger to that one right there, so we purposely stagger the lunch and recess so that it doesn't overcrowd the cafeteria at any one time. If you'll notice in here, there you have the capacity to have three classes in the cafeteria at the same time, three grades, and that happens right here, but – and in a couple other places, but you can see that in there.

The next thing is I want you to look at this language arts block, that language arts block, and that language arts block. Why do you think they're scheduled that way? Why would you think we would do something like that? Yeah. It didn't happen to be a reading specialist; it happened to be a special ed teacher was doing an inclusion class in third and an inclusion class in fourth and language arts and an inclusion class in fifth. There's one. And there were like four classes at a grade level that were cluster kids in each of one of the three or four classes at the grade level, and she was able to move from here for 90 minutes to here for 90 minutes to here for 90 minutes. If we had allowed the teachers to make their own schedules, I would imagine that the fifth grade probably would have tried to stick their language arts over here. It would've overlapped with the fourth grade. We couldn't have done that. So we had to build them together that way.

Also notice that we have the I.E. period is separate for every grade level, too. So, if we have some people who are providing pullout support services, they have access points to each grade level that don't overlap. They also had access points to kindergarten on the day that they didn't have Encore. So, on the day that kindergarten had Encore in the morning, the afternoon would do I.E. stuff. Am I making any sense here? It alternated. Okay.

Now, the next thing I want to show you in this schedule are the Encore rotations, and if you have this, look at it. If not, I'll blow it up big so we can read it. But this is kind of the way I depict the Encore schedule. Let me blow that up bigger than this. I'm going to focus in on fourth grade right now. And if you look here, these times right here, that 8:45 to 9:30, 9:30 to 10:15, they all correspond with the block that says Encore on the master schedule on the previous page. And what this then is is the rotation of Encore classes that is occurring at that time.

And in this particular school, I'm going to use fourth grade as an example, we had an eight day rotation. Now, the eight day rotation is sort of eight days and sort of four days, depending on how do you think about it. So, if you look here, we have P.E., art, music. Teacher 4A. What we're reading is her schedule across an eight day cycle. On day one she has P.E. On day two, art. On day three, music. Day four, library. Then it's P.E., art, music, computer lab. So, kind of for P.E., art and music it's really a four-day rotation, but for library and computer lab, it's eight days, it's once every eight days. They alternate. That's a concept that's worth considering in a schedule where two things occupy the same scheduling slot and alternate.

And the reason I suggest that is both computer lab and library are things that I like to see partially scheduled and partially open. Do you know what I'm saying? The library I'd like to see partially scheduled. I'm not a big fan of pure flex time. You know. And the same thing for the computer lab. If we just have

an open computer lab with support in it, kids' access to it will be dependent on the whim of their teacher. Okay. And whether they like to do it or not versus - you know what I'm talking about? If the teacher likes to do it, they'll go. If they don't, they won't. So, I like to have partial schedule, partial, partial open access. You know, see how that's structured.

But in terms of this pattern, in creating the pattern, I really created a four day pattern. If you look at it, it's P.E., art, music, library. Slide it over one. P.E., art, music, library. Slide it over one. P.E., art, music, library. Slide it over one. P.E., art, music, library. Copied that whole thing, dropped it in there, and then changed library to computer lab. And so that's how you - scheduling is all about creating patterns and repeating patterns.

Now, I want to point out something about another part of the pattern. Look at fifth and fourth grade. On days one, two, three, four, they have library. On days five, six, seven, eight, they have computer lab. We're going to kind of ignore kindergarten for the moment because it's half day. And then if you look at second, third, and first grade, they have the reverse. On days one, two, three, four, they have computer lab, and days five, six, seven, eight, in the afternoon they have library. Well, while the library's full on days five, six, seven, eight, what has open time? The computer lab. And when the computer lab is full on days one through four in the afternoon, what has - who has open time? The library.

And that's reflected in this schedule down here that's really hard to see. You can see the kind of big open blocks. Let me blow it up a little bit so we can see it a little bit better. That's too big. Okay. Okay, this is the library schedule. So if you look at it there. On days one through four, she works in the morning and is done at 10:15. And if you go through the rest of the afternoon, except for not in kindergarten class, it's totally free time. And if you look in days five through eight, she's open in the morning until she meets with second grade beginning at 1 o'clock. So, there's big blocks of open time that could be used for teachers to go with their classes to library and do collaborative work with the librarian. And the computer lab schedule is the exact puzzle piece fit of that. Exact puzzle piece fit of that.

So, ask me a question about any of this, if you have one. Happy to ask - answer a question. Kind of get it?

Okay, let's look at something else. The - what I want to do now is look at a more sophisticated version of an elementary schedule that begins to build a, an inclusion kind of and combination I.E. schedule. And so the basic concept behind sharing special education staff or any special service staff across grade levels or across classrooms is basically this. If I've got a special service provider who needs to provide service during a certain kind of subject in multiple grade levels, those grade levels can't have that subject all at the same time; okay? And so, if you'll notice here, perhaps I've got somebody who's working in a language

arts classes in first grade, that can't totally overlap with the time for second grade, or if they're working in third grade, too. It could partially overlap, but you'll notice here I've got two 50-minute chunks here, two 50-minute chunks here, two 50-minute chunks there. The same person could actually work here, here, and here.

By the way, that same concept can work within a grade level, too. You know, with multiple teachers within a grade level. And then I have another one here that shows the same thing with somebody who's working in fourth and fifth and third. But the basic idea is we can't all do the same subject at the same time if the person has to go – is going in there. Okay.

Now, it's usually more complicated than that. And the example I'm going to look at right now that really illustrates that is the Falmouth Elementary School example. The basis schedule looks like this. If you've printed them out or if you have it in your computer. Let me get that down so we can see it. That's the basic, but where I want to start are the time allocations. First thing I want to point out to you, if you look at this, look at those time allocations, and what's the greatest common factor of all these numbers right here? Five. All you have to do is look at this. Seventy-five and 70. I'm dead. Okay. Remember my building block. This is not going to piece together as pretty. And all you have to do is kind of take a peek at that and compare the big picture Gestalt of that schedule, which is based on the time allocations you just saw, to the Antietam one we just saw a minute ago, and how much cleaner the Antietam was in terms of the breaks and the, you know, the lines and the chunks of time. The Antietam one was much cleaner, and that has a lot to do with the fact that the basic building block here is five minutes versus 15 minutes in the Antietam schedule.

So, let's play with this. In this particular school they had three special ed teachers. Okay. And who were basically taking on the role of learning support, what you would call in Pennsylvania, learning support teachers. But the three special ed teachers, based upon the needs of the various grade levels, they determined that one of those special ed teachers was going to work primarily in first and second grade, one was going to work in third and fourth grade, one was going to work in fifth grade, because they had the biggest number of kids needing support in fifth grade, and was likely to pick up anybody who showed up in kindergarten who needed some assistance. That was their plan, their basic plan, you know, before the school year began, and they knew it was going to happen based upon the kids they had the previous year. Everybody makes that plan. Okay. You know. And so we need to build a schedule that was going to support that plan.

So, I'm going to take first the teacher who was going to work in first and second grade. Okay. Well, one of the things that we felt that we needed to do was to do a little bit of math to find out what was possible for that teacher. And so that teacher was going to work in first and second grade, and there were 390

minutes in the day. Well, the first 15 minutes of the day, or the first 10 and the last 5, were home room type things, and she really can't provide much in the way of services then except touching base with her kids and things like that, so that took us down to 375 minutes of workable time that she had. Well, she needed to get her lunch period. In this school, her lunch was 30 minutes and so we took that. That left us with 345, okay. She needed to get her planning period every day. That was 45 minutes in this school, and so that left us with essentially 300 minutes that she could work. That's all she could work.

Now, I kind of like the schedule planning periods at lunch for special ed teachers, you know. A lot of them I know, 95 percent of them, are running around with their heads chopped off trying to meet the needs of their kids and foregoing lunch and planning on a regular basis to do that, mainly because they have crappy schedules. And so that's 95 percent of them. Five percent of them you don't know where they are, but – yeah, you know. I was in between schools. You were at the bank. Cheap shot, I know, but a little bit of truth, though, huh. A little bit of truth.

So, the needs in this particular school were judged to be about the same for first and second grade, so that kind of meant, well, we're going to give about the same amount of time to first and second grade. Okay. So, that's 150 minutes of the time that that teacher can instruct on a daily basis. The next thing they said was, well, we want them to work in the I.E. period. Well, each grade had an I.E. period. They called it C.E., core extension, and it was 45 minutes long and they were separate times, so that meant – excuse me – 45 minutes for I.E., okay, at each grade level, which left us 105 minutes left at each grade level. So if this is first and this is second. Okay. And then they said, well, we'd like to do some inclusion teaching and we think language arts is more important. We have to do some inclusion and we think language arts is more important. Kind of look at the times here and they said, well, let's do an hour in first grade inclusion and we'll do an hour in second grade inclusion. That left us with 45 minutes left. And they said, well, I guess the best we're going to do in math is 45 and there it is. And so basically we used up all their time. Okay. That's kind of our goal in the schedule.

Now, getting from this to an actual schedule that will do that is a different story. If you look at the schedule here, this is the first grade line, this is the second grade line, and this is the special education teacher's line. And a lot of times that's the way I'll do it. I don't just build a first and second grade schedule. We will put a blank line as we're building them together, and build the special ed teacher's schedule at the same time we're building the academic schedules for the two grade levels. Does that make sense? Because then – and, by the way, that special ed teacher's usually sitting right there, okay, while we're trying to build that.

And so let's see how we did here, okay. We did pretty well. The special ed teacher, this is her line. Well, by the way, second grade had their language arts block of 120 minutes first thing and so did first. The special ed teacher spent an hour in one class here and an hour in a first grade class there. Does that make sense? Now, she had an aide that worked with her, too, and a teaching assistant who flipped with her. Went the other direction, you know. And so that's what was going on the first two hours of the day.

Then that special ed teacher was able to work in the second grade I.E. period, right here. Now, she could see again some of the kids she saw with inclusion here. And I kind of like the model, if we can pull it off, where the special ed teacher provides services in a – has the opportunity to pre-teaching, co-teaching, and re-teaching. Okay. Pre, co, re. And if you think about it, the I.E. is the place for the pre and the re, and back here was the place for the co-teaching.

So, she could do pre-teaching of what might going to be happening in language arts tomorrow, re-teaching of what might happen in language arts today, or pre-teaching of what might be going to happen in math today, or re-teaching of what might have happened in math yesterday during this time. She also might be working with some other kids who aren't in her co-teaching classes who get services out of other second grade rooms. But there's her 45 minutes in second grade I.E.

Then she had her 45 minutes in first grade I.E. where she could again see the same kids she saw here or pre-teach what was going to happen in math later. So, then she has her lunch, 30 minutes of lunch. Then – oh, by the way, we had a five minute goof here, but we couldn't fix it, couldn't – it just didn't work right because of my 15 minute problem. It was only a five minute issue. Remember the greatest common factor. Has her lunch 30 minutes. Forty minutes in the back half of first grade math and 45 minutes in the back half of second grade math to be included, and then her planning period. Her planning period there were two goofs in this schedule, but you couldn't fix them really. And the first one is her planning period only overlapped second grade. Well, since she got the same planning period to have it overlap both first and second, she'd have to have two planning periods. Okay. So, she overlaps second, but we made a decision that she was only going to do inclusion services in second grade four days a week and maybe the assistant would take her place. And one day a week she'd be able to go plan with the first grade. Does that make sense what I'm saying there? We needed to get her some co-planning there. And the other goof was the five minutes right here. So, we did pretty well.

Now, when you look at the grade level schedules for those two grades, let's kind of evaluate them. If I'm a first grade teacher, I look at this and I think okay, language arts for two hours and then we have lunch and recess. That's pretty good. Then I have my I.E. period and it's kind of connected to either language arts or math, I guess. Then I have my math. If I'm the co-teaching

class I have a teacher the second half of language arts here and the second half of math there. I have my Encore and then end the day in science and social studies. That's a pretty good schedule. I think first grade teachers would like that schedule.

Second grade teachers, however, I don't think they would agree to do this exactly like this if they had their choice. The first two hours in language arts, that's good. Follow it by I.E., that's good. Lunch and recess in the middle of the day there, that's okay because Encore's at the end, that'd be all right. Science and social studies for before math, no way. Okay. No second grade teacher is going to do their science and social studies before math if they get their choice. Okay. They're going to do math first. You understand what I'm talking about? If they put things in order. But, what would have happened, we had to have their science and social studies there. Why? If I allowed them to have their math there, what would have happened in the schedule? It would have screwed up my support for the special ed teacher. By putting their science and social studies there, it backed up their math later and so that person could go from first grade math to second grade math like there, which is just another illustration of why you can't let the classroom teachers to do their schedules by themselves. Okay. Because it won't work out and won't be the best use of resources.

Go ahead.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: [can't hear question]

MICHAEL RETTIG: Or they would probably go in together with them, and so there would be two of them in the second grade I.E. and two in the first grade I.E. And lots of times when we do schedules, we'll do the special ed teachers and the assistant's schedule as well. You know, you've got to do that where there – if there is one. Some places have them, some don't, okay. And, you know, I don't remember all the fine details of this. This is just a pretty good illustration of sort of the process you have to go through to create a decent schedule for a special service provider, especially one where you want it to be a mix of service provision types. This is a mix of inclusion and pullout. Okay. This same schedule would also work as a mix of replacement and pullout. Why? Well, see this block of two hours right here? This special ed teacher could, if it were replacement instruction, pull first graders and second graders at the same time for that two hour block, and then do I.E.'s later. Does that make sense what I'm talking about there? So it could work for replacement instruction, too. Yeah?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: 33:15

MICHAEL RETTIG: In this school it was one time a week for second grade; it was every day for first, right. There now ideally, it probably would have been good if I could match up – you know what would have been good. But we couldn't get second grade to agree to it. If they would've allowed part of their

math to be here, then I could have flipped it back where now the Encore for first is here and second is here. If part of the math was – no, what do I want. I would want something I could flip back and forth so I could do it more frequently, but we couldn't figure it out. Okay. So it was one day a week in first grade and, you know, all the time in second. Which is still better than most places get. You know. Unless you just let them out. I mean, by let them out, I mean – I suppose what I could do – here's what we could have done. I could've put this chunk of math here and she could support here in math sometimes and here in math sometimes and alternate the planning, but that's second grade. First grade is not going to want their math right here. I can tell you right now. They wouldn't want anything there. And so that wasn't going to fly. I'm not saying somebody couldn't do it better, but that's just the way we kind of did it. I'd prefer, like it to be even, like every other day first and second. You know, something like that. But we also didn't want to, you know, cut down on the instructional time she had with kids either too much. So you didn't want to like give her a full period in first and a full the second. That would eat up too much of her time. Yeah?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: 35:12

MICHAEL RETTIG: You mean the actual creation of the –

AUDIENCE MEMBER: 35:12

MICHAEL RETTIG: Depends on the facility, the people who are doing - I mean, the way I normally work is I'll do a district introduction that lasts a full day and there are central office people there, there are school teams there led by principals. They have those representative groups there. They learn the lingo. They're up to speed and so when you go work with them then, they get it, they've already worked on it some, been thinking about it themselves, and so I'm the one working with them, you know. I can work with two or three schools a day and we can knock out a pretty detailed schedule. They usually take it much further than we get in that two or three hours. Because once people start getting this, they make it better and better and better and better. They get the process. Yeah. I mean, you know, I'm the one manipulating the spreadsheet, so it depends on the facility or the people who, you know, are doing it, you know. And, you know, how much time do they have altogether. And you don't have to do it in a spreadsheet either. You can do it on paper, you know. It's just not as, you know, and it can be visual. Some of you have done it with paper and, you know, sticky notes, and things like that, you know, and you can do it different ways. Probably a day, you know, of people working together, negotiating back and forth, and then probably you got a draft and it goes out and it comes back and forth and back and forth and back and forth. Something like that.

One of the things I wanted to say here is every once in a while, and I'm probably going to get in trouble for saying this in front of this group, there'll be a special educator in my audience who will say, well, that schedule's all fine and

dandy, but by federal and state law we have to follow what the IEPs say, and if it doesn't match with your schedule tough luck buddy, you know. And, you know what I'm saying. They get on their high moral horse and give me the IEP song and dance. And it's like, okay. I say, you know in high school and middle school, isn't it interesting that every IEP that they write in middle school and high school is always done in an increment of what the period is up there as though 42 minutes of support were the exact research based amount that kids should get and that's why we write it in the IEP. We write it in the IEP because that's how long the period is, okay. Am I right about that? That's the – and part of the problem in the elementary school is we haven't had a schedule in the back of our head, so there's been no sort of appropriate chunks to think in, and so when we're writing IEPs, we kind of write them relative to one kid to the next. More for him or her based upon need, but there's no like schedule in the back of our head that guides us in writing the IEP, you know. And it seems to me that if we've determined that we could have a 45-minute I.E. period, that I might start writing some of my support in 45-minute chunks or 30-minute, whatever it – do you understand what I'm talking about there? There has to be some kind of template in the back of your head to write an IEP. It's got to fit practically into the schedule or we can't deliver it, you know. And I don't know. The nice thing about doing a schedule like this and doing it in advance is if you, if this schedule's completed in May and you've done the best you can, and you've got your list of kids and you know who's getting served in each of those places, you've got a more, a data driven way to say we are short on staff and we need help. Here's the schedule. Can you do it any better Mr. Personnel Person? You know. You understand what I'm saying? You got, rather than just, I mean, everybody's out there asking for more all the time in terms of support services and without much more than, you know, anecdotal argument. I don't know.

Let me show you something else in this particular schedule I think you'll find interesting. Their Encore schedule. Shows you another rotation that's different. I think this school division they were on a five day – not a five day. They were on a Monday-Friday schedule. I was only working with one school and so I couldn't get the whole vision together and change their thinking about that. So, if you look what it is here, it's kind of interesting. It's P.E., music, library, P.E., art. P.E., music, library, P.E., art. And the third week, P.E., music, guidance, P.E., art. I had a counselor in here. I don't know if I still do. Anyone? My daughter-in-law is an elementary counselor. You know how she does her schedule. When can I have your kids? Okay. Tries to run around. The American School Counselor Association recommends that about a third of the counselor's time be spent in the sort of developmental guidance program, which is classroom guidance. It's the preventative piece, you know. And about a third of their time. And a lot of times they're – they've got to run around to different teachers and try and get access to kids and it's probably almost always out of science and social studies because they won't give them to it during language arts and math, and it's hard to get them sometimes. It's hard to get access and do what you know needs to be done there.

So, one of the things that we've done in a lot of schools is to insert the counselor into the Encore schedule, but not as a full member; as a replacement for something on an occasion. Remember what I did with library and computer lab before? What I'm doing with it here, I'm doing it with library and guidance in this. So once every three weeks, in place of their library class in this school, a kid gets a guidance lesson. Now, on that third week at this time block right here when guidance is happening for those two grade levels, fifth and fourth grade, who has open time during that time? The librarian's not scheduled because we scheduled guidance out of the library slot. Okay. Now, why am I pointing that out? Putting the guidance counselor in the schedule is a problem, you know, in a schedule where it's covering contractual planning time can be a problem, too, because what happens? Stuff happens in school. You have a guidance emergency in the school. There'll be a kid come off the bus, he's crying, we need Mrs. Jones, the counselor, but she's in Mrs. Smith's class teaching her guidance lesson. What do we do, you know. And so what we've done in this school and others who do this, is there's an automatic backup system when there's a guidance emergency. What is it? The librarian. If there's a guidance emergency the librarian can take the class, the guidance counselor deals with the emergency, and then the next time available they flip back to even things out. Does that make sense?

So, if you were to look at this particular schedule, notice here that the fifth grade and the fourth grade have guidance in week three. The third grade and the kindergarten have guidance in week two. And, the first grade and the second grade have guidance in week one. Which is going to spread out her load. And so when you look to the schedules here, if you look at the guidance counselor's schedule in this particular school – if you look at the guidance counselor's schedule in this particular school, here we go. Week one, she works with no more than two classes a day. Week two, she works with no more than two classes a day. Week three, she works with no more than two classes a day. All the rest of that time is available for what? Small group, individual counseling, and the other work that the counselor does. Fits in with their national standards, most state standards, and it also provides a time for all students to get those services.

Spend a moment and talk to somebody next to you. Is there something you found in the last bit of time that we've been together that is interesting and you think has possibilities in your school? And the second question is, is there something you don't get and you have a question about. So just talk to somebody. Turn around and just talk to somebody. Nobody stay by yourself. Talk. Any observations or questions that you'd like to share? Especially questions. Sure.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Inaudible

MICHAEL RETTIG: And the math doesn't work in what you're talking about. I mean, the math does not work. I mean. If you're saying somebody's got to be K-6 and you're going to put kids in three different classes in each grade level and they're going to do co-teaching, good luck. I mean, you don't have enough minutes in the day unless you're going to do 10 minutes in each class of co-teaching, which is waste, you know, is a waste, in my mind.

So, I don't know if you're going to agree with what I'm going to say. One way to approach it is that person in that case could work through I.E. periods and could be part of a team in each I.E. period, because I can find probably 45 and for 50 minutes for them in every grade level during the I.E. time where we could work. It wouldn't be during the basic instruction of language arts or math, but I could do it that way. The only thing we can do, too, is cluster. And, you know, it depends how you do clustering whether it's okay. I'd be in some places where there's – it's kind of a three top school and they'll be a cluster of special ed kids in one class and the cluster ELL kids in another class and a cluster of Title I reading kids who aren't special ed and another – you know, kind of spread the clusters out so it's fairly balanced in terms of need, you know, but – I don't know. Any principal do that kind of stuff? And the main reason to do it is so that you can have a person who can go co-teach or work with those kids for a longer time period, or else you're trying to spread people too thinly, you know. So, without, you know, unlimited staff resources, I don't know what else to do. You're either kind of running out of I.E. or do some clustering, you know.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Inaudible

MICHAEL RETTIG: I have an answer. It's probably not the answer.

AUDIENCE MEMBER:

MICHAEL RETTIG: No, that's no good.

AUDIENCE MEMBER:

MICHAEL RETTIG: No, that's a self-contained special ed class with a few visitors, you know.

AUDIENCE MEMBER:

MICHAEL RETTIG: I find that more of an issue in secondary school. You know, in middle and high school, but those clusters get awfully big up there sometimes. Okay, and it starts being not a good environment. I don't know, four or five, you know. That'd be okay in a class of 20. You know, I think that'd be okay, you know. Especially if it's balanced in another class with four or five struggling readers who aren't special ed and if it's – and then I can at least spread my special service providers. They can be with kids more, more time. That's the battle. If that's the trade off. The bigger the cluster, the more they can

be there. The smaller the – you know, it's – and that's why I did math. You know, remember with the Falmouth model I just said, we got 390 minutes. What can we possibly do with it, you know. So, somebody else. Good question, thank you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Inaudible

MICHAEL RETTIG: You're talking about trying to get a special ed teacher planning time.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Inaudible

MICHAEL RETTIG: At the same time for several grade levels. You understand what she's talking about? If I took K-3 and they all had social studies and science at the same time, they can get a planning time then, yeah, because all the kids would be back in there with no support. And, yeah.

The other thing I've done, and it was funny. I did it in a school that was, it was only two grade levels that they were serving, but I had the second grade in Encore while the third grade was in lunch and then flipped them like that. You understand what I just did there? And so the second grade was in Encore when the third grade was in lunch and that teacher had a second and third grade class and so she got her lunch in Encore time with no kids. The kids were either in lunch – yeah, with two. Right. But I think what you're, you came up with was pretty clever, you know, and the other way it's done is during the time when the biggest number of kids is out, you see, is there an assistant or some, or you can move in somewhere else to supervise kids in centers or some – you know, that's the way I see it get done, too. So, you're, you're, you know, first, second and third grade, but we've got three second graders and three first graders and nine third graders this year or something. So the third grade's out, I got six left, can an assistant supervise during a center space thing and I get my plan – I've seen that, too, you know. It's hard.

The other choice is one you don't like. And I don't like it either, is that you create an Encore period for that class and they all go together to Encore, which we don't like either. Or, we treat them as a spoke – for example, I might be a four top school, but got three in this grade level and I add that group in. Say, it's, you know, it might be second grade only has three and I'll add the special ed classes first, second, and third grade in there and they can go with them and I can mix them up, but then I have first and, you know. There's other things you can do. I don't like the self – you know, one of the best times to integrate kids is in their Encore times and so I don't like those except for the very, very, very, very most needy kids separate Encore periods for special ed classes, you know, so –

Somebody else with a question?

Let's talk about departmentalization very briefly, very briefly, and then when we come back from the break, we're going to do parallel block scheduling, which is the coolest stuff that I do, okay. The coolest stuff that I do, I think. And it's the stuff I get the most excited about.

Departmentalization. In terms of scheduling it, it, you have to create blocks so that the rotation can work within it. So, if it's a two teacher team, they have to have equal blocks that they flip kids back and forth. If it's a three teacher team there has to be three equal blocks that it can fit in. And one of the things that I've found with departmentalization schemes in elementary school is sometimes they're designed around kind of teacher preferences versus what kids need sometimes, you know what I'm talking about.

So, for example, one of the most common three teacher team departmentalizations I've seen is this: We all teach our own language arts, and I do the math, you do the social studies, and you do the science. Is there anybody in the room that thinks that math, social studies, and science should get the same amount of time? Almost nobody does, you know. And so you'll end up with something like you have two hours for language arts and then 50 minutes for math and 50 minutes for science and 50 minutes for social studies, which isn't enough math and it's probably too much science and social studies, but it's got to be an equal chunk to make the departmentalization work, okay. And so that's one of the things I get worried about.

Now, the other thing I'll say about departmentalization in the handout and in our book, chapter 5, there's all kinds of schemes in there for departmentalization, is sometimes I'm willing to suck that up. If say I got a su- - you know, one of the reasons to do departmentalization is you have extreme ability in one area from one of your teachers or extreme weakness in an area from one of your teachers. So if I have Mrs. Einstein as one of my fifth grade teachers and a knock down drag out fantastic math teacher, I'd rather have her with my kids 50 minutes a day than somebody else with them 70 minutes a day just because that's the time allocation. Teacher skill trumps time allocation any day in my mind. Does that make sense, then? I also might have the reverse, where I have Mrs. Checkbook who can't balance hers and I don't want her teaching kids math, you know, and so there's that issue. But in building the master schedule, whatever departmentalization scheme you come up with, you have to have the even blocks so that it can rotate in it. So that means the placement of the I.E. period, the lunch period, the Encore period has to be strategic to make all of that work.

My kind of opinions about departmentalization, too. Some people are totally anti in elementary school, and I've been in some places where they have a full almost high school based departmentalization at the elementary school where there's an English teacher, math teacher, science and social studies

teacher. It seems to me that in communities where there's a variety of characteristics or criteria we think about when we consider doing it.

By the way, there's no research that says one way or the other it ought to be done. So, absent that. Absent that, if I'm in a community where there's like very good community and home support and the kids seem to get the nurturing they need from their homes and community, I'm more inclined to do departmentalization in that place than I am in a place where the school is providing that mostly, where the kid needs that one special adult in their life and they're – you understand what I'm saying there? The skill piece is there, too. Or if I have really rigorous standards in a particular discipline, I'm more inclined to do it than if they're not so much that way. If I have a really strong skill in a particular teacher I'm more inclined to do it than other ways. If our departmentalization scheme at the elementary school is very similar to the one they're going to experience in the middle school, I'm more inclined to do it.

Like, one of the most common departmentalization schemes we use in elementary school is a three teacher team where a kid gets a block of language arts every day, like 90 minutes, a block of math every day, 90 minutes, and a block of science and social studies every day, 90 minutes, so they get 90, 90, 90, which is not a bad distribution. A lot of middle schools do something very similar to that. And so if what we do in elementary school can help with the transition to middle school, that's not a bad idea. It cuts down on one of the problems that we have in that transition.

I'm not going to show you a lot of models. In the handout there are some different ones. I'm not selling them. There are problems with them, with some of them. I don't like departmentalization models where we divorce writing from reading, either. Sometimes you'll see everybody will do their own reading and then writing is taught by somebody else, okay.

So, I've just been given the word that it is time for the break, okay. And I think there are like sodas and stuff. Where are they? Straight down the hall. We'll be back here at – what time is it now? So, 3 o'clock, and then we got an hour for parallel block scheduling. We'll talk about grouping issues and all of that, and we'll talk about extended planning time on an occasional basis for teachers for this work they have to do. Okay. So see you back in 15 minutes.

It's a lot of extra work for teachers, and if there were any way we could get them some additional planning time to do that, some of that important work together, that would be nice. Probably not just nice. Probably required by some of your contracts. Because I find that a lot of places in Pennsylvania the contract specifies individual planning time minutes that must be met, and if you want to conduct a meeting, even if you've managed to create a schedule with common planning time during that time, it has to be in addition to the minutes of protected individual planning time. You all understand what I'm talking about there? And

so, let me show you some things that we've done in a couple of schools to do that, okay.

The first example I'm going to give you is with a school in Virginia that we did it for a different reason. It turned out well in many respects, but let me show you the basic concept here. If you look at what I've done here, I've scheduled I.E. and Encore in consecutive periods right here. For each grade level except kindergarten is with lunch right there. I probably could have done it with all of the grade levels. And so what if on an occasional basis we were able to insert into the I.E. period another secondary Encore rotation. And I'll show that in a minute. If I were able to put maybe once a week, maybe once every two weeks, on an occasional basis, another rotation in there of different people other than the ones in the regular Encore schedule, then that would create a nice 90 or 100-minute block of contiguous planning time that those folks would have to work together. Kind of get what I'm talking about here? I'm trying to extend the planning block using part as their regular Encore, part as an additional piece.

So, for example, if I had my regular Encore rotation was this three day rotation of P.E., art and music, what if I inserted once a week a rotation that was library, computer, guidance. And so, the first time the week – that we ran this extra rotation I might get a library class in that extra period. The next week we ran it I may get a computer class. The next week we ran it I might get a guidance class. And so once every three weeks I'd get one of those classes in addition to my regular planning period provided by P.E., art and music. Is this making any sense at all? Okay.

By the way, another way I've seen people do it who don't have additional resources is what they'll do is they'll get a team of subs on an occasional basis. So, if here's my regular Encore period, my team of subs works here for one period, then here for another period, then here for another period. They just rotate classes so that over the course of the day those three subs can cover an extra period for each grade level, given a nice 90 or 100-minute block of time to work together. So that's an idea.

Here's a school that does it. We had – let me, come on, get out of here. Okay. Oh, where is it. Whoops. I've got the wrong thing here. Hang on just for a second. I must have hit something. There it is.

This was the Henry Clay schedule, if you happen to have that. This was a K-2 school in the state of Virginia and they had seven or eight sections at each grade level in K-2. Now, because they had seven or eight sections and they had full-time – people came full days for Encore, we weren't able to get the whole kindergarten off together. We could only get four off at a time. So, we had to divide each grade level into half for Encore. So if you look right here, three of the kindergartens have off for Encore here and three of the kindergartens normally have Encore off for here, four first grades here, four first grades there, four

second grades there, four second grades there. So that means the whole grade level doesn't have common planning time; it's half at a time. And schools that have three grade levels in them are too – end up with that all the time. Okay. You can't get everybody off; there's just too many teachers to get off and you don't have the resources to do it and so you can't do it.

But what we did was every Tuesday for these three teachers we created another little Encore rotation on Tuesday here, and then it was just done with these three teachers right here, so that gave the whole grade level about 70 or 80 minutes off together every Tuesday. And we did the same thing here and the same thing here.

So, let's look at what that rotation was. And this is crazy. It'll probably make your eyes glaze over more, but let me just look at it here. The regular rotation is really nuts here because of the way we had – you know, some places you work you just end up having to share teachers in such weird ways that you do crazy stuff and so look at this. Okay. I think we can see that.

So, here's teacher K.A. I want you to look at this. The regular rotation here. Teacher K.A. has music, art, P.E., library, music. They got two what classes? Music. BKB has art, music, art, P.E., library. They got two – and kindergarten C has library, P.E., music, art, P.E. They got two P.E.'s. Well, wouldn't be exact. Why? Because we got four days of each and only three group – you know, it's – so, it wouldn't be right for one class to get two art classes all year long and one class to get two P.E. classes all year long, and one class to get two music classes all year long, so what do we do? Every six weeks we switched what schedule you were on so it all evened out by the end of the year. Anybody have to do goofy stuff like that to make things come out even? I find we gotta do goofy – by the way, they still have their common planning time. It didn't affect that. It just evened things out for the kids so they got the same amount of classes in P.E., art and music. And I would have much rather done a four-day rotation, but I couldn't because their people came on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. I couldn't do that, okay. So, but that was the regular rotation.

The second rotation, the Tuesday rotation for this group of teachers, their regular planning period 8:45 to 9:30, but on Tuesday their kids got to go to either a writing class, a guidance class, or an additional library class. Why an additional library class? Because on the – on Tuesday I didn't use the librarian in the regular schedule right there. She's free on Tuesdays. So the first week you get a writing class – I think they used the Title I teacher to do it – the next week you get library and the next week you get guidance. So we slotted that in, which gave them about an 80- minute block once a week that they could work together uninterrupted. And the teachers, the Encore teachers made the transfer of classes, so the teachers didn't have to pick them up and drop them off at the

other one. You understand what I'm talking about there? So, that's how we did that.

Next, here's another idea for doing this. One last one, and then we'll get to the parallel block path. I worked with the Cherry Hill public schools in New Jersey, which is a fine school division. They have 12, I think 12 elementary schools. Maybe 14, I forget. And they have a contractual requirement that teachers get a minimum of 30 minutes of planning every day. And we managed to get them common planning time. But, well, they're doing an I.E. period and they need time to meet together, but they couldn't schedule that unless they got additional planning time beyond that. So, let me find their schedules in a minute here. Where do I need to go.

So, by the way, Cherry Hill's a big instrumental music program and oh, they're a double I.E. school, too. If you look here, double I.E. periods for fifth grade, fourth grade. We didn't do it for – just fifth and fourth because of instrumental music.

Oh, this is kind of interesting, if you're interested at all. They had fourth and fifth grade instrumental music, so double I.E. periods for fifth grade here, double I.E. periods for fourth grade here. The instrumental music teacher comes in the morning here and goes to another school in the afternoon who has their I.E. periods for fourth and fifth grade in the afternoon. You get what I'm talking about there? So we're only taken out of I.E. the instrumental music. But that's not what I'm here to show.

Their rotation is this. Cherry Hill. They have two P.E. classes, one art class, one music class, and a Spanish class every five days. That's the rotation. So every grade level has common planning time for 45 minutes every day and that's the rotation. You notice there's no library there, though. On the day that we're going to have the PLC meeting, we have to replace the teachers' individual planning time because we're at – holding a meeting during that time. And so the library schedule does that. So, if you look here, on day one of the cycle, the first grade has their PLC meeting during their common planning time, but to make up for the fact they're losing their individual planning time because of that meeting, each first grade has a library class that day out of their language arts block. Am I making sense there? So they got the 30 to replace it, they can hold a meeting here.

By the way, this worked great for the librarian, too, who is available for the PLC meeting, so she can, she can meet commonly with them. This is the first grade planning time. So, on day two of the cycle, the second grade, this is their PLC meeting time, but each one of the second grade classes got a library period that day. They can meet here and get their individual planning time at a different time. Same thing for third here, fourth here, and fifth here. They had a half-day kindergarten, so it wasn't an issue. Does this make a bit of sense what I'm

talking about? You had to substitute in. They had common planning time, but you had to substitute and provide additional planning time for them so that you could hold and conduct the meeting.

Now, some of you have contracts that don't require that, you know, but many places I find in Pennsylvania do have a contract that sort of protects a minimum number of minutes of teachers' individual planning time. And even if you don't, you know, I think we sort of have a moral responsibility to not lay it on without some help, you know. So if we're expecting people to have these in-depth conversations about data and student tiering and intervention and enrichment activities during that time, it sure would be nice if we could support them a bit with a little bit of extra time to do that during the school day. So there's a couple ways to do it anyway.

Okay. Let's talk about parallel block scheduling. Some of you are familiar with the research that's behind this graphic right here. Research in the probability of third grade students graduating from high school given the following set of circumstances. If I read one year below grade level, and I've been retained and I'm poor and I go to school with a lot of other poor kids, my chances of graduating from high school are close to zero. Okay. So, that scares me. You know, that scares me to death. And I see the results of it because I work in high school, too, and, you know, some of our urban areas, I mean, Detroit, what's the graduation rate? Thirty-seven percent. Something like – you know, some ungodly amount. I work in Vegas. Fifty-seven percent of their kids graduate from high school, you know. It's marching orders for all of us in education, but in elementary school I'd like to prevent that set of circumstances from being there, and the one thing I can work on there is can they read by the end of third grade, okay. That's one thing I have some control over as somebody in elementary education. Now, the reasons behind this problem are complex, and that's why I love this quote: "For every complex problem there's an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong." And we look for those answers all the time in education. The magic bullet. Usually the simple magic bullet that will do it, okay. Kind of like scriptic reading programs or something like that. But, you know, and then we're looking for things like – and there's some good things, but, okay.

So, I'm going to start in kindergarten because we're going to – in the model – no, the first thing I'd do is change the education requirements. If you want to teach kindergarten or first and second grade in Retig's state, you have to be a reading specialist. You have to have a master's in reading. I want you to understand the development of young children, fine, but I want you to be a reading specialist, because that's what it's all about down there. Literacy. Isn't it? We're going to do other things. We're going to have a lovely kindergarten that you're going to see in a minute, but if I had reading specialist who could diagnose, prescribe for student learning needs, and teach it the right way the first time, too, and all that. You know, most of our kids come in out of prep programs have maybe 6 to 9 hours of reading that they take because they have to get a

degree in something in addition to what they're doing. I don't know. Wouldn't you like people who really understood how kids learn how to read and could do that as the primary teachers. As the primary teachers. I think that would help.

Next thing I'm going to do is going to reconstruct kindergarten. So, here we go. Imagine we have four kindergarten places. I got three regular rooms, sort of regular rooms. I got this other place called the extension center. I need a place. It's a program. It might be one of the regular kindergarten teacher's rooms, but just imagine this extension center. See, the interruptions that happen in kindergarten are far more fragmenting than the ones that happen in the regular – in first, second, and third and fourth grade, because in kindergarten we got like centers going on back there. And, you know, when I'm trying to work with a little group teaching them the initial consonant D and the block tower falls and the paint spills and somebody steals my toy, well, unless I got a lot of help in there, I gotta stop and go deal with it. Okay. You got all this craziness going on while you're trying to work with a little group in there, and I still like that craziness to happen in kindergarten, but it sure messes up what's happening at my table over there, you know. And unless I've totally mastered the death stare, I'm up and out of there dealing with it, you know, and so that's what I gotta do. So, I'd like to get all that stuff out of my room. I still want my kids to do it, but not while I'm trying to work with a little group. So I'm going to get that stuff out of my room.

So, we're going to create a place where we're going to put centers. Kids are going to go out to recess. Kids might get read of story. Probably not in that same room, but somewhere else. And they might get some special services here, too. You're going to see how that's going to work in a minute.

Now, this RWG thing there, that stands for Reading Writing Group. We're going to provide an assessment to students in kindergarten very, very, very early in the school year. And in Virginia we use the PALS. It's called the Phonemic Awareness Literacy Screening, developed at the University of Virginia. It's used in a lot of states. It gives you a pretty good read on kids' literacy acquisition from age three through grade three. Okay. We're going to use the PALS and divide teacher A's classroom into three little groups based upon the PALS. Group one is lower scoring group. Group four, a higher scoring group. Group seven, the highest scoring group in her class. All clustered together in kind of a needs based skills based way, based upon some assessment. Let's say it's the PALS. Needs teacher has three little groups. And then we got this place, this extension center thing, that's going to be happening. So that's kind of the setup.

Here's the schedule. Here's my three teachers. Here's my three teachers. Each have three little groups. Here's this extension center, and it's gotta be staffed and it's gotta, there's gotta be a place. I know I'm not getting any more staff, so I gotta use what I have to do it. But here's how the schedule works. For the first hour these three teachers have their full classes. They have their home room and they're doing whole group instruction, calendar math, some

unit time, a whole group of language arts activity, some regular math might be happening in that first hour in this particular version of this schedule.

After that time, either the teacher or assistant working with the extension center program shows up at teacher A's classroom, picks up groups four and seven, takes them away, and leaves group one in the classroom by themselves with their teacher. Are you with me there? Same person or somebody else picks up groups two and five from teacher B's classroom, takes them to the extension center, or part of the program there, leaving group eight by themselves. Somebody else picks up groups three and nine, takes them to the extension center, leaving group six with their teacher by themselves.

Now, I'm going to talk about what's happening up here, and I know you're getting worried about this. Because if your math is any good, that number seems a bit big to you down there, right. Now, it's probably about 40 kids. Now, they're not all in the same place, okay. But hold your horses on that one and let me talk about what's happening up here first.

Now, if I've got reading specialists up here, I got six or seven kids all at the same level with my reading specialist right there, and they're going to use their best practice reading instruction with those kids at that level. But here's what they're not doing. Here's what I know they're not doing. They don't start – and when I taught first grade – remember I told you I taught first grade – across the hall from me, Sue Klank taught kindergarten, and Sue, you know, she did what all kindergarten teachers did back then. First week of school, you did B. And you did B for everybody in the classroom and you traced the capital B and there's the lower case B, and you did all the B stories and all the B collages and the B sandpaper trace and the B – all the B stuff, right? And the B blowup doll. Remember the B blowup doll? Some of you are old enough to remember those. The B blowup doll. And the second week of school, what'd you do? C. Third week of school, what'd you do? D. Fourth week of school, what'd you do? Thank you. Okay, yeah, because we skipped those pesky vowels because they were too hard for the kids, right. And you got B whether you needed B or not. Okay. And you got it. And by the end of the year we got through all the consonants first and then they did the vowels, short vowels. And then, what did we in first grade have to do? Start all over again. And why? Because none of it stuck because it was all done in isolation. It wasn't in the process of really learning how to read.

So, they're not doing that. Okay. They're not doing that. They're doing something like, well, based upon the PALS level, there are a number of consonants that you're going to get introduced to. You're going to learn the initial consonant sounds for these four or five consonants as soon as you've got those down tight, we're going to introduce you to the first vowel. Now you got four consonants and a vowel and what are we doing? Making a whole mess of words. Word families. We get enough words in our word bank, even with those

four consonants and that one vowel, what are we doing? We're making sentences. We're really reading, we're asking comprehension questions. There's a lot of reading programs that are kind of like that right now. You know, the clusters of consonants, then in vowel and then reading as soon as you possibly can, even if it's very short sentences, asking comprehension questions as soon as you possibly can. The goal in this program is to have all kids reading some by Thanksgiving. Okay. By Thanksgiving. And some, based upon the level they're in, will read more than others.

Now, notice that group one, which is the lowest group for teacher A, and group two, which is the lowest group for teacher B, and group three that's the lowest group for teacher C, are all at different times. There's two reasons for that. First reason is I could put a special service provider in that group with that teacher. This is the most needy group of kids. And it might be a reading specialist or it might be a special ed teacher. And we could actually take that six, seven or eight kids and divide them in half and really give them intense instruction. And that same person could work here and then they could work here. And then they could work here. Am I making sense there? With my most needy kids.

The other thing I could do – the other reason I do it this way is because then down in the extension center group, I have what kind of grouping down there? I've got a heterogenous grouping of students down there because not all of the, you know, the lower groups are in there at the same time or the higher groups, and so I keep a heterogenous mix down here. So that's kind of what's happening up here. Best practice reading instruction. Small group is 35 minutes. Might break up these groups even smaller if we have the resources to really zero in on the kids who need it the absolute most.

Now, what's going on down here? So, we're going to go to the next slide, and I'll talk about some of the possibilities that could happen down here. You remember I got six groups. Two, three, four, five, seven, nine, during that period. So we go here, and here they are. Two, three, four, five, seven, nine. Half of the groups are in centers. So I have a room and I've taken the best centers from my kindergarten classrooms and they're set up in this common area. You know, maybe it's one of the room – kindergarten teacher's rooms, maybe it's a commons area we have, or an extra room we have, if we happen to have one, but there they are. I would argue that this centers room doesn't need to be supervised by a teacher, okay. An assistant or maybe two could supervise that center's room. Okay. Are you with me on that? I don't think I need to staff that with a teacher.

Now, I've got another assistant, if I happen to have one. Somebody I was just talking to has a whole mess of them. But I got another assistant and this person has been specially trained how to read stories to kids. What do I mean read stories to kids? I mean they like do a DLTA with them. A Directed Listening

Thinking Activity, where they get kids to predict what's going to happen and ask them for evidence in what they've heard so far, and do all those kinds of things. And, we've selected, as a team of kindergarten teachers, the library media specialist, and the reading specialist, 150 books that every kindergarten kid is going to be exposed to this year. Some literature, some poetry, some nonfiction, and we've got this one assistant who we've trained to really read stories well to kids, and what does she do? She picks up group three from their classroom and takes them to a quiet corner within the library to read that story to them. They're not in the same room as centers. That doesn't make any sense. Okay. Does that make sense? Could I have six or seven kids getting read a story? Okay. Maybe more.

I got another two – another group, another assistant doing the same thing, and then I got another assistant who's taken – oh, I'm in the afternoon. I'm in the wrong place. Went too far. I thought I – and so here's where we are. Story. And I got two groups going out to play. What do I mean out to play? They're having recess, okay. Do I need one of my highly paid, highly trained teachers supervising recess? No, that's stupid. I'd like an assistant supervising this, you know.

And so let's see what kids do during the day in here. Let's follow a group of students all the way through the day and see what their day is like. So, here we go. Let's follow – everybody follow group four. Who's group four's teacher? A. Where's group four from 8 to 9 o'clock? 8 to 9 o'clock? With their teacher, whole group instruction. Where's group four from 9 to 9:35? In extension doing something. We got to look at the next slide to see what they're doing. What are they doing? They're in centers. They might rotate through two during that time. We go to the next block of time. Where's group four from 9:35 to 10:10? They're with their teacher in small group instruction. Where's group four from 10:10 to 10:45? They're in extension again. What are they doing this time? Getting read a story. And then we have lunch and recess. Then we have our Encore classes and our teachers plan. And then because this is such a needy school, we're going to do it again. Instead of from 12:35 to 1:10, where's group four? They're in extension. What are they doing? They got to go to centers for the second time. Where are they from 1:10 to 1:45? With their teacher for their second 35-minute lesson, so that's 70 minutes with the teacher in a small group that day. Okay. And where are they from 1:45 to 2:20? Back in extension doing something. Now they get to go out and play, and then we have 40 minutes of home room activities in math and other unit time that ends the day in the whole class right there.

So, over the course of the day, in this model, and it's done different ways different places, here's an hour in the beginning of the day for whole group instruction including some whole group language arts and math, and there's a 40-minute period at the end of the day for the same kind of stuff. There's 50 minutes of Encore, 50 minutes lunch/recess, and then six little periods. How are

the six little periods distributed? Two you get to work with your teacher in a small group. Two you went to centers. One you got read a story. One you got to go out and play. Listen to what they do. Work with their teacher in a small group. Go to centers. Get read a story. Go out and play. Does that sound like kindergarten? Sounds like it to me. Okay. Now, they're moving a little bit, but kindergarten kids need to move. Okay.

And, I would argue – oh, by the way, if I have a kid – here's my six things they do a day. If I have a kid who needs an articulation lesson, because from the speech language teacher. Remember the prime rule of school scheduling. If thou put something in, thou must take something out. What am I taking out for that kid? I'd take out one of those extensions and I'd take out one of the centers because they got to go twice. That same kid is identified early resource, midyear in kindergarten. They're already getting speech language pullout. Now I gotta pull them out of something else. We had two small groups. We got two centers. We already pulled one of those out. We've got story. We've got play. What would you pull out now? I'd pull out play. I pull out play because during lunch they get to go to recess, too, okay. Remember that? They had lunch and recess. Otherwise I might have been with you, okay. But, special services are pulled out of the extension program based upon individual – is that making any sense? I would argue, if I've got people who know what they're doing right here, I've set up an almost perfect storm of circumstances for kids to learn how to read. Okay. And to get the support they need to do it.

We've got 15 schools in Augusta County, Virginia do this. I've got Baldwin Elementary School in Manassas, Virginia does this. There's seven schools in Alexandria, Virginia do this. I've a bunch of schools in North Carolina do this. They're getting tremendous results. It's just a different way to think about doing kindergarten with a laser-like focus on literacy acquisition for kids who really need it. Trying to prevent that set of circumstances I set up with that earlier slide. But it's a culture shift in kindergarten that's dramatic. Okay.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Inaudible

MICHAEL RETTIG: You know, I'll tell you a story about that. Remember I told you I work with the Prince William County schools? And they were on half-day kindergarten. Remember they – the Antietam schedule I showed you. That was half-day kindergarten. Well, three years ago they went to full-day kindergarten. Three or four years. Their school board said, "And we don't want to see nap time on the kindergarten schedule. We're already, you know, we already, we don't want to pay for kids to sleep in school. We already got that problem in high school." So, if naptime occurs, it probably happens in the beginning of the year during story time where a kid is allowed with their blankey to listen to the story or something like that, you know. Which is not unusual. I don't know. You negotiate it all, you know.

I'm going to show you a schedule of a real school that doesn't admit it, but go ahead and ask some questions.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Inaudible

MICHAEL RETTIG: Oh, know, there are none.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Inaudible

MICHAEL RETTIG: Yes, sure, yeah. Now, there are sometimes contractual limitations in the teachers' contracts that won't allow assistants to do certain kinds of things, but it's usually an instructional sort of thing. But I would argue that supervising centers, which they're doing in the back of a room sometimes already anyway, I'm just getting it the heck out of there so it's not disrupting the instruction I'm asking the teacher to do is a very reasonable thing to do, and really I have – they're not doing the kind of direct instruction that the teacher's doing in a subject. It's a supporting thing. From a legal standpoint, you know, as someone who taught school law for a bunch of years, but who's not a lawyer, I can tell you right now, to take an adult and supervise 14 or 15 kids out on the playground or read a story to them, that's a perfectly reasonable kind of thing to do from a legal standpoint. Unless you have a state law that says something else, which I don't think you do, you know.

So let me show you a school. This is a bigger school. This is Baldwin Elementary School in Manassas, Virginia, and you probably have that, I think you have that schedule, too. Show you their master schedule and the kindergarten piece of it, just to give you a sense of what it looks like. If you look here at the kindergarten line, they have 35 minutes of home room and teacher time. Three 35-minute little chunks of language arts right there. Like the blocks you saw before. Thirty minutes of lunch. No recess because recess is coming out of here. A 45-minute designated math period, and then they do the repeat and then 30 minutes of science and social studies at the end of the day where it's social studies where it's back to whole class.

If you look at the kindergarten schedule - I'm going to slide down – they had five teachers in this school, so that means 15 little groups we gotta deal with. Okay. We're going to follow one group through the schedule. If you look up here. Teacher K.E. has three little groups: Group 5, 10, and 15. Let's follow group five throughout the day. Where is group five the first period? They're with their teacher. Where is group five the next period? Find them. PALS, see. See, we have a program in the state of Virginia where kids who score below a certain level on the PALS get extra support, okay. It's provided by a specially trained teaching assistant, okay, who work under the egis of the reading specialist, okay. And so that's where those kids are right there. That's in place of going to centers one time for that group of students. And you'll notice that my bottom nine groups are getting that service here. This is a pretty needy school. About 50 percent

free and reduced lunch, 40 percent ELL this school is. And so where's group five the next period? There they are. Small group instruction. Where is group five the next period? Recess. Then they go to lunch, then they have math. Then where's group five the next little period? Centers. And then they get their second dose with their teacher. And then where's group five the last period? Getting read a story and then back in home room for science and social studies. So, they get those two little small group times every day with their teacher with no interruptions and nobody else in the room. It's pretty powerful. It's pretty powerful. This school had 87 kindergarteners the first year they did it. Eighty-two of them made our state benchmarks on PALS at the end of the year. It's retested at the end of the year and people from our state tell me that was amazing. The five who didn't make it, three were identified as special ed during the middle of the year and two showed up in February and spoke no English, okay. So this is the five that didn't make it, so they were doing quite well.

So, that's the sort of kindergarten – one kindergarten version of parallel block scheduling. Okay. Kind of interesting. There's movement in there. By the way, I would argue this: These kids know who their teacher is. You know, some people look at this and say, oh, they got too many teachers. No, they don't have too many different teachers. They know who their teacher is. You know. I'm taught by my teacher. If I'm in group five, I'm with her here. And then I go off to centers or something, and then I'm with her here, and then she takes me to lunch and I have math with her. I get to see her again here and I'm going to play within the sys -. You know, it's the same thing in kindergarten. We go within a system here or there, all the same deal. I know who my teacher is right there. It's not like she's working with everybody else. She's just working with her three groups right there.

So, let's look at what this looks like in the upper grade levels. What it looks like in the upper grade levels. And what would be the best way to do this? I'm going to tell a story about a school division that runs this schedule K-5 and built schools to make it work. So, I'll tell you the story about Manassas Park, Virginia. I'm not going to go through all these slides, but -. Let me tell you this story.

Thirty-five years ago, Manassas Park was part of Prince William County, Virginia and they were the blue collar poor step-child of the school division, so as is wanted – people are wanting to do in the south, they seceded from the Union and became an independent city. And so the independent city of Manassas Park was born out of Prince William County 35 years ago. When they did that there was only one school within the boundaries of the new municipality and it was a piece of crap. And so they needed some more schools, but they didn't have any money. So the joke was that the next year that you could see the Manassas Park public schools coming up on trailers up Route 29 north as they brought the school district buildings up to serve this new school division. Well, one of the elementary schools they built had 12 trailers on one side and 12 trailers on the

other side. They faced each other. They put a roof on top of that and bricked the sides. And you could run the half mile down the middle of the hallway, you know, of those 12 schools. I think they had a portable gym they attached to it and, you know, bathrooms and stuff like that. And for a good 25 years that was one of their main elementary buildings. It was terrible. And the rest of their buildings were terrible, too. They had - . This is northern Virginia. This is very next to the Fairfax County. This is – but it's a kind of blue collar community. And so the morale was poor, achievement was poor, community support was poor, yada, yada, yada. Everything was bad.

They got a new superintendent 15 years ago now. His name's Tom Debolt. There's been a book written about this. It's called *The Little District That Could*. Tom – Dan Duke from the University of Virginia wrote it. And it tells the story of this school division that's like many of your school divisions. It's a one high school district. Okay. And it's small for Virginia, but normal for, for Pennsylvania. A kind of one high school district. And the first thing Tom did when he got there 14 or 15 years ago was he and the school board chairman sort of surveyed the political situation in the district. And what they discovered was that every member of the city council and every member of the school board was Republican. Okay. They were all Republican. And it doesn't matter what your politics are, this story will make sense to you when I tell it. So they were all Republican.

So, they decided to go scope out the political scene, so they went to a caucus meeting one year before the elections, when they – you know, at the caucus meeting that's where they select the candidates who are going to run for office. Well, what happened there, there were about 40 people at the caucus meeting. They selected the candidates, and those candidates were put up for office in the city council and the school board, and because they were Republican, they always won because the Republicans always won. Okay.

And so the next year, he and the school board chairman got an idea. And so the next year at the Republican caucus, 200 people showed up at the meeting. Okay. A whole bunch of them were school supporting, some even school employees who showed up to the meeting who were in support of the schools, and they kind of controlled the caucus. They got candidates nominated for office who were in support of schools, and because they were Republican they won. Okay. So, now we have members of the school board, members of the city council who are good strong Republican school supporters there. And the first thing they did was built a new high school. This new high school is very cool. And it was only for 900 kids. It doesn't much look like a high school. It looks more like something you'd find in a high tech industrial park, okay. It's got – there's four office complexes in it. One in their interdisciplinary office complexes where every teacher has a cubby and a computer and a place to keep their stuff, and so they purposely mixed the disciplines up so that they can,

you know, interact with each other and talk about kids and all that, and there's so many neat things about that school.

But, the next thing they went to build was a new primary school. And so Tom put together a committee. Well, the first thing they did was make a political decision. And the political decision was to build one K-3 school for the entire district so they could avoid redistricting wars. You know what I'm talking about there. It happens all the time. One K-3 school for the entire district. The problem was it was going to have a thousand kids in it. Okay. Not my idea of a developmentally appropriate environment for young children. Okay. Served a thousand kids. So, that was a done deal. Do you ever have to deal with done deals and then make the best of it, you know. So that's what we had to do, too.

So, he put together a committee that included members of the central office, the new school administration for the school, teachers who were going to be working in the new building. They were combining a pre-K building with a one/two building, and pulling the third graders out of that other crappy building was talking to me about, so there was this mix of people coming together.

And then Tom invited me along, too, because of my scheduling expertise, and also the architects were in the room for all of the meetings. Okay. The architects in the room for all the meetings. So, we started to dream about what the school could be. First thing was gotta feel smaller. So the decision was made to divide the school into three communities, okay. Three separate communities. Three K-3 communities. Each K-3 community would have 300 students in it. More of a normal school size. And then it would be three sections of kindergarten, three first, three second, three third in each one of those communities. Okay. And then there be – so there's three 300-kid communities and 100 kids in preschool. So that's the division right there.

And then we started to dream about, well, what's the program that these kids here in Manassas Park need. And so the teachers talked about the program they needed and then Tom said, Mike, you're the schedule guy. We're going to have a thousand kids. Plan it for a thousand kids. Do a schedule for that program. So I did a schedule for the program. And I brought it back to the teachers and they said, oh, you gotta fix this, you gotta fix that. So we fixed all that stuff and we got a schedule everybody was happy with and the teachers bought into it, and architects in the room the whole time. Okay. The architects took the schedule back and they built the building around the schedule for the program that we created, okay.

So let me show you the building and then I'll show you the schedule, and you get a sense of, you know, it's just a great process that we went into and it's had tremendous results. So, this is the site of the – this is the architect schools. This is the front of the Cougar primary school, which was K-3. It's now K-2 because we built – just opened another building last April. But let's go and look

at some of it. It is in an urban environment, so it's a three-story building. We have a smaller footprint because of the space limitations. That's a distant view of the building. It's quite big. This is kind of a site plan right here. Let me slide up. Three community wings, three stories each.

In this area of the building we have art, music, the Gone With the Wind staircase in the library, and in this area of the building we have administrative offices, gym and cafeteria, and that's the preschool wing right there, so... This is the side of one of the wings, the bottom wing. Of course – the bottom story. Of course, that's kindergarten and first grade classrooms. The top story, of course, has second and third grade classrooms. The middle story of each community wing has a technology center, science and social studies rooms, and small rooms for small group instruction from special service providers. Okay.

And so if you look at a second story schematic of the building, which here's one wing. This big room right here, that's the technology center. There's room for 50 students in there. There's 50 computer stations in each – and each community has one of those. These two rooms here, the bigger rooms here and here, those are the science and social studies rooms, and then these smaller rooms here, here, here, here, here, here, are all for small group, ELL, special ed, Title I instruction right there, and those are all on the second floor. So K in one kid's going there come up one, second and third grade come in there and come down one. This room right here, art room, it's on the second floor. This room right here, music room.

Above this, on the third floor, is the media center. That's the whole third floor space in this area, and this thing you're looking at right here is the Gone With the Wind staircase with the post office right here and all those kind of neat stuff that – the gym and the cafeteria are over here. So you kind of get the picture of the building. Okay. You get the picture of the building.

Now let's look at the schedule. Okay. Oh, let's look at some data first. First thing. The building opened in the 2000-2001 school year, so this – these were their – when the building – building opened, these were their sort of demographics that year, and the year that I'm going to show you some data from, 2007-2008 school year, these were their demographics. And the only reason I put this here is would you at least agree with me that the job probably didn't get easier. You could agree with me on that. Okay. If nothing else, we can say that. Didn't get easier. Okay.

These are their testing results. We test in language arts, math, science and social studies in the state of Virginia, and these are their three year averages. Before the building opened – and I'm not saying it's all the building. It's everything else they did. It's not just the building, of course, or the schedule. But this school is one of – this school division itself is one of three in the state of Virginia – 15 in the state of Virginia. We have 140 school districts in Virginia.

One in 15 that every school in the district and the entire district as a whole has made AYP. Okay. It's only one of three school districts in the state that have done that that have any diversity in them. The rest of them are lily white, okay. And so, you know, they had significant challenges in this school. They make the N in this school in every sub-group area. So they gotta make AYP in every sub-group area. And they do, okay. Which is pretty impressive, okay.

So, what's their schedule? Here we go. They run a full parallel block schedule. Full. They do a little different kindergarten model than the one I showed you before, but this is their full schedule. This is the basic master block. Each community has been divided in half, so for planning purposes. The K-1 teachers in community one, there's three K teachers and three one teachers for a total of six. They all plan right there. The second and third grade teachers in community one, six of them, three seconds and three thirds, they all plan right there. The whole community together has lunch together and recess together right here. The younger ones, I forget who goes to lunch first, but half of them go to lunch first while the others are at recess and then they flip. Okay.

Community two, the K-1 teachers plan there. The second and third grade teachers plan here. They all have lunch and recess together right there. Community three, the K-1 teachers plan there. Second and third grade teachers plan there, and they all have lunch and recess together here.

The Encore schedule, or back in the day we were still calling it specials, there's six teachers in the grouping. They have a six-day rotation. It's one I showed you earlier. P.E., art, P.E., music, P.E., library. And if you'll notice here, my three kindergarten classes are in P.E. while my, while my first grade classes are in art, music, and library, and the next day my three first grade classes are in P.E. while my kindergarten classes are - Does that make sense? Do you see that? So we get the basic structure of the Encore schedule.

Now, I'm going to show you one half of one community's schedule, and I gotta talk about grouping a little bit now. Because in the other model, the kindergarten model that you saw previously, we created reading and writing groups out of home rooms based upon the PALS. Remember that? Here, beginning in the first grade we know a lot more about our kids. We create home rooms out of reading groups in this model. That sounds scary. Well, let's talk about that for a minute. And let's use an - How much time do I have? Only 10 minutes, so I can't talk about it that much, but I am going to talk about it. I have a song and dance I do about that, but I'm not going to do it.

Each teacher has two distinct reading groups. Rather than to give every teacher the full range of all abilities in their class, each teacher has two reading groups. One of those groups is generally on or above grade level, and one of those groups is generally below grade level. But the below grade level group is all in the same level below grade level, and the on or above grade level is on the

same level on or above grade level. You understand what I mean? Together when you put the two groups together, you form a fairly heterogenous mix of the class, but it's not the full range of all abilities. A third grade class wouldn't have kids who read on the kindergarten level and in the fourth grade level and everything in between like it would be normally.

Okay. And so we've clust – we've done that. And what's the reason for that? You know. And, and, and how might it look? If you thought – If I had three third grade classroom teachers, it wouldn't be unusual to sort of have a range of – if you thought about having six reading groups, I might have one group of kids that was still in first grade reading, the second half of first grade reading. I might not have another group of kids that was in two-one, beginning of second grade. I might have another group of kids that was in two-two, the second half of second grade. I might have a group that was right on grade level at three-one, and maybe a group that was three-two. Maybe a group that was four-one. You know. So I'd have that full spread. And if everybody got some of those kids, that means that every teacher I have has to be Carol Ann Tomlinson. Okay. And be able to master differentiation. I love Carol Ann, but not every teacher we have can, I don't think. She'd argue with me, I'm sure, but – So, I try to narrow the playing field a little bit. So now you've got two groups. Everybody's got one on or above, everybody's got one below. They're going to be taught together for some things and they're going to be taught apart for reading. Okay. We could have a big discussion about that, I bet. Okay. And you can still do this model without that, but here we go.

Teacher 2G. And by the way, if you want to read about what I just said in a lot more detail, chapter six of our book as a whole big thing about grouping in it, okay. It has a whole big thing about grouping, for this plan especially.

So, teacher 2G has two reading groups. The names of the groups are 213 and 216. Each has about 10 or 11 kids. Okay. Those numbers, group 213 is the on or above grade level group, 216 is the below grade level group. Together they make a fairly heterogenous mix. For the first 50 minutes of the day, after their 15-minute home room period where they're doing other kinds of instructional activities, we have a whole group language arts class. What do we do in that class? Things best done with a heterogenous mix of students. Writing. Okay. You can teach a writing lesson to a big mixed group of kids easily. Okay. Same prompt, different results. Okay. We can do spelling during this time. Why? Same activities, different word lists. Okay. We can do an oral reading activity with the kids. We read a story. We answer comprehension questions out loud. So things best done with a heterogenous mix of students are done during that time right there.

Then we plan, P.E., art, P.E., music, P.E., library, and then the assistant who works in the tech center shows up at my classroom and picks up group 216 and takes them to the tech center. 213 is now left alone where they have 50

minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction right on their instructional level. You with me?

What's happening down here? Well, there's actually four groups of students here, two from another grade level that aren't showing right here, but there's a teacher and a couple paraprofessionals who work in the tech center. The tech center time is essentially our I.E. time, and the tech center is sort of the enrichment program. So there's practice reinforcement enrichment activities computer based that kids are engaged in there, and if a kid needs to be pulled out for a special service, out of tech center time. Because they go every day. Okay, are you with me there? So that's what's going on here.

At the end of his 50-minute time period, group 213 is picked up by – well, they drop 216 off, pick up 213, take them to the tech center. So, by 11:35, what've we done? Whole group language arts. We had our planning time. Small group language arts for half the class, small group language arts, reading, writing group for the other half of the class while the other half is in the tech center getting practice reinforcement enrichment activities. I want to do done. Okay. So, that's the first half of the day.

And then we go into the math rotation. Now, I've got this math – this class that's made of these two reading groups, but they may not necessarily be in the same levels in mathematics. So we don't group them that way, you know. I teach a whole group math lesson here and then I divide my class in half for math groups here, but it doesn't – it's not based upon the reading levels, but it's still my whole home room. So we have whole group math here. And then we have lunch and recess, and then half my class gets math where – have you found the other half of my class now? Where are they? They're in science and social studies. We got a science and social studies specialist. That's all they teach all day long. Okay. And then the two groups flip.

So, what do kids get in this schedule? They get two periods of language arts a day. One whole group, one small group. Two periods of math a day. One whole group, one small group. Tech center every day or a special service. Science and social studies every day. A period of Encore, a period of lunch and recess. If I'm a teacher in this schedule, what do I do? If I'm a classroom teacher, how many periods a day do I work with my whole class? Two. How many periods a day do I work with half my class? Count 'em. Four. Two language arts, two math. It's a wonderful schedule for both students and kids.

You go to this school, it seems like it would be crazy middle school. It is the most organized place you'd ever want to be in your life. Okay. They manage those transitions beautifully. You get happy kids who are learning on honor level and doing great. It's a wonderful place to visit. And they have an incredible program. And they're getting the results I showed you.

Now, the – if you think of fourth and fifth grade. What is there not enough of in this schedule in fourth and fifth grade? Maybe there is. In Virginia there's not enough science and social studies in the fourth and fifth grade. So, in the intermediate school that we've just opened up last April, that is now third, fourth, and fifth grade, which is organized by houses just like this one. Third, fourth, and fifth grade houses, the autumn, summer and spring house. And each floor we have the understory and the force canopy and the, you know, it's all this green lead school now and all that jazz. It's a very cool place.

In the upper grade levels they replaced the tech period with a separate period for science, and so now we've got a period of social studies and a period of science and the tech period is out of there. But when I took the tech period out of there, what did I also take away the possibility for doing? Pullouts, right. And so what do we do to their schedule? We added something we talked about earlier today. An I.E. period. Shorten the periods and added a 45-minute – to 45 minutes added a 45-minute I.E. period for each grade level so that we can do the kind of support services that are necessary to support kids in it.

It's a very – both buildings are incredible. They have teachers who take less pay to stay there. You know, they don't pay quite as well as Fairfax County and teachers have had opportunities to leave that – the teaching – I mean, think about if you're a teacher there. I get my whole class and then half my class, half my class. And then I get my whole class for math and half my class, half my class. All I'm teaching is language arts and math up there. That's all I've got to prepare for. I've got somebody down here who does the science and social studies who can focus in on that and their professional development is all related to that and all. This is a really focused school that doesn't need things.

The last thing I'll say, and then I'm going to let you go, is related to music. The Encore rotation in the upper elementary school is different than in the primary school. Why? Well, we started a program there four years ago now because there's such a bad gang problem in the area. The superintendent there is committed to providing group activities for students at a young age that are more productive than the ones they might get engaged in at a later age. Sports works for some kids, but sports does not work for all kids. So, at this school everybody in fourth and fifth grade is in the band. Okay. They provide – everyone. All 180 kids are in the band. And they provide instruments. Now, they started it in fifth grade. All kids are provided with an instrument, and they can keep that instrument through eighth grade. Okay. Now, they have two band instructors and so the Encore rotation now in that school is this; two P.E. classes, one general music class, one art class, and two lessons on your instrument. Because everybody's in band, we can put band into the Encore rotation. Okay. Now, they just moved it last year – this is the second year of it – into fourth grade. In fourth grade all kids in fourth grade the first semester take recorder to do what? Learn how to read music and do rhythms and all that. And then they do an exploratory band class for the second semester of fourth grade where they

try each of five different instruments, and by the end of fourth grade working with the band directors, they select the instrument they're going to be playing in fifth grade. And so that's what they specialize then. But everybody's in the band. That has had tremendous results up in the middle school where they used to have 25 kids in the eighth grade band and this year they'll have 125, and they're keeping them into there. But just a very, very neat place. I did way too much, way too fast. Your eyes are probably glazed over with shards. I hope you got something out of this session. Thanks very much for coming and for coming back, I appreciate it.