

Program Development
**The Connections
Program**

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Agenda

- Developmental Issues
 - Social/Emotional
 - Organization/Academic
 - Adolescent Needs
- The Connections Program
- Program Development
- Teaming at R.J. Grey Junior High School

Developmental Issues

- Social (relationships)
- Emotional
- Organizational
- Academic

Social/Emotional Issues

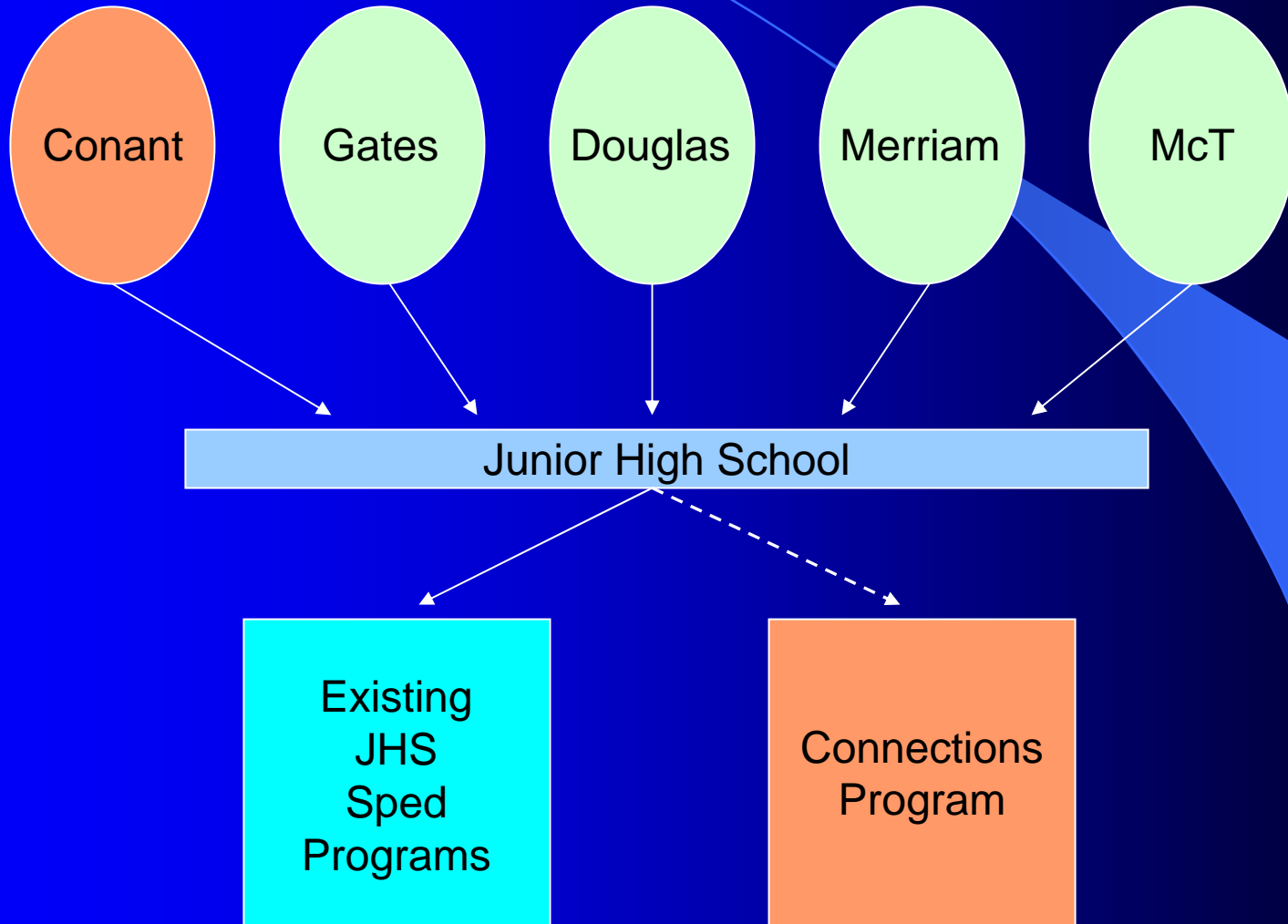
Characteristics	Home	School	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peers for approval• Struggle w/ Identity• Mood swings• Testing limits• Strong reactions to small things	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IM and phone• Less interest in family activities• “That’s not fair!”• Testing limits• Focused on present	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gossip• Arguing with friends• Peers group change• Talking in class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caring adult role models• Emphasize respect for others• Opportunities for success• Clear expectations• Expect change

Organization/Academic Issues

Characteristics	Home	School	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thinking more abstractly• Curious• Disorganized• Distractible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asking big questions• Forget they asked• Messy room• Forget chores	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Messy locker• Class Preparation• Leave lunch at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizational skills• Notebook checks• Clear expectations• Support during learning process• Quality vs. Quantity• Link academics to civic responsibility

The Connections Program

JHS Programming



Student Profile

- Sensory-Motor and Visual/Spatial deficits
- Executive Functioning/Organizational deficits
- Social skill difficulties
- Difficulties with problem solving skills
- Difficulties regulating emotions/managing associated anxiety

Sensory/Motor Skills

- Physically awkward
- Difficulty with tracing, cutting, coloring, handwriting
- Difficulty with note taking
- Sensory overload

Executive Functioning

- Attention
- Planning
 - *Creating/using study guides*
 - *Note taking - templates, strategies*
 - *Breaking down assignments*
 - *Sequencing/synthesizing information*
 - *Balancing workload*
 - *Personal Organization - bring materials to/from school*
- Organizing
- Prioritizing
- Shifting
- Memorizing
- Checking

Social Skills/Social Judgment

- Impulsivity
- Difficulty understanding jokes or sarcasm
- Misinterpretation of social cues
- Limited self-awareness
- Predisposition to anxiety and/or depression
- Difficulty making friends

Problem Solving Issues

- Difficulty with changes in routine
- Reliance on scripts in novel situations
- Inflexibility, concrete, rules oriented
- Difficulty considering alternative actions

Program Development

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Enhancing Student Performance

- Understand their learning, and social/emotional profiles – staff training to respond accordingly
- Set goals and focus their effort
- Ongoing strategies to plan, organize, prioritize
- Social Coaching (Peer relationships, Student-Teacher relationships)
- Directed social activities

Programmatic Priorities

- **Social** – A safety zone/a retreat, but part of an inclusive community
- **Academic** – Inclusion w/ opportunities for separate instruction
 - Homework
 - Tests
 - Long-term projects
- **Non-Academic**
 - Sports, arts, hobbies, after school activities
 - support during unstructured times
- **Communication** – family access to classroom/program information

Teaming at RJG

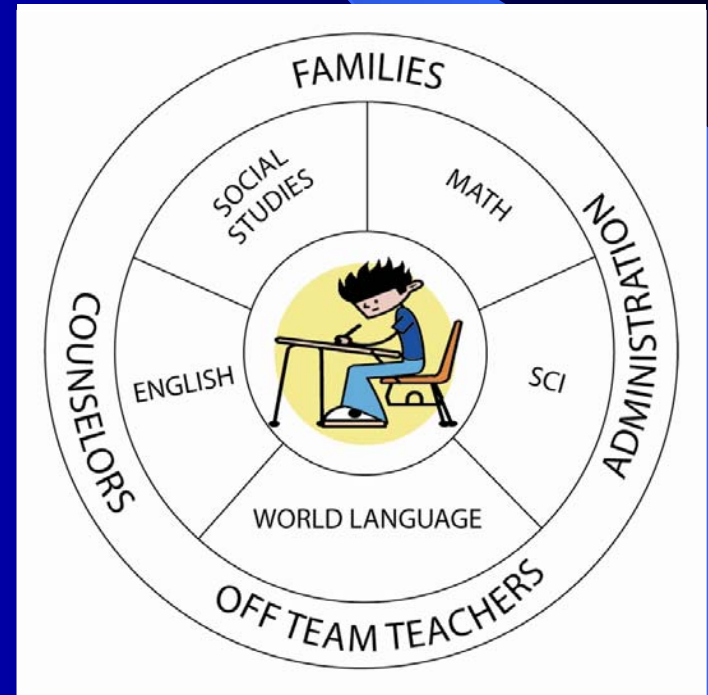
How does it fit in?

How does it meet the needs of our students?

Teaming

Fundamental Principles of Teaming

- Shared students
- Common team schedule
- Team Meetings



Teaming

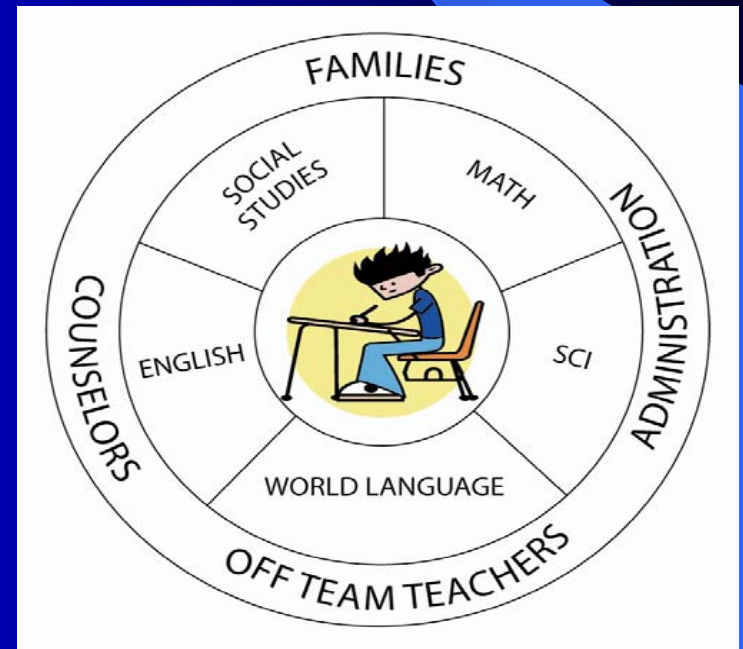
Fundamental Principles of Teaming

Smaller learning communities

- 4 ½ Teams in Grade 7
- 4 Teams in Grade 8

Structure

- Flexible scheduling
- Daily teacher communication
- Coordination of assignments
- Parent/teacher conferences



Sharing Ideas

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