

## **Wellington High School Redesign / Summit Learning Platform FAQs**

- **It was my understanding that Redesign was going to be voluntary, why did that change?**

Early in the Spring of last year when we first started talking about Redesign and what it would look like, we initially intended to have about half of the Freshman and Sophomore classes be in Redesign. After we opened the application process and over 90% of each class had expressed interest in being a part of it we had to make a decision to go completely with Redesign partly due to available resources and partly because we wanted to afford all students the best educational opportunity available. This was announced in late Spring.

- **When will they get to pick the time they come to school?**

When it was decided that the Summit Platform was the best option to increase rigor while addressing many of the other Redesign principles such as, Personalized Digital Learning, Project Based Learning, and Social Emotional aspects, we had to decrease some of the flexibility students would be offered in regards to time. While we have some flexibility built into our schedule (Flex Wednesdays) we are currently working on ways we can continue to increase this flexibility and hope to be able to offer this in the future.

- **Why does my student say there is less teacher interaction compared to last year?**

There is actually more of a focus on quality student-teacher interaction this year than ever before in years past. In a WHS Mercury Endeavor classroom, teachers are teaching in ways that help students develop critical-thinking skills, not just memorize content. They spend the majority of their time teaching projects that help students learn to apply their content knowledge to real-world issues.

Summit has created more than 200 interdisciplinary projects that develop the skills and habits students need to be successful in college and life. For example, ninth grade students create scientific experiments to measure the impact of technology waste on our environment.

Teachers also mentor students, helping them plan and organize their school work and giving them feedback. Summit Learning is designed to help teachers develop strong relationships with students to truly understand their passions, interests and aspirations and how they can help them achieve those goals. These relationships are at the heart of great teaching.

- **Why does my student enter a classroom that is standing room only?**

While some Mercury Endeavor classes are above average in size for WHS, the average class size is 24 students. This is not standing room only sizes considering most classes have around 30 desks in them.

- **How do you think that you can protect students personal information when even Zuckerberg's teams of software engineers couldn't protect their users private data?**

Just like any student records, our school and Summit have strict protocols in place to protect student data contained in the Summit Learning Platform. The Platform contains limited information on student grades and assignments, teacher feedback, and email addresses that allow students to log in to the Platform.

Summit also uses secure servers, encrypts student information, and limits who can access student data. Summit has strong policies and practices in place to protect student information:

-Summit goes above and beyond legal compliance. Summit is a signatory to the Future of Privacy Forum's [Student Privacy Pledge](#) and follows the set of principles established to safeguard student privacy, including responsible stewardship, protection, and transparent handling of student information.

- In addition, Summit voluntarily complies with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). While COPPA does not apply to nonprofits, Summit voluntarily embraced COPPA requirements to provide increased transparency to our parents.

-Students' information is safe. All of the personal information students share (or that is provided about them by Wellington High School) is used only for educational purposes. WHS, students, and families own and control their personal information and can request deletion of personal student information at any time.

-WHS, teachers, and/or students own and control the information provided to Summit and do so in a manner that is consistent with FERPA.

-Summit will never sell student information and does not profit from schools, teachers and students. Not only is Summit absolutely opposed to using student information in this way, as a nonprofit public school network there is no reason for them to do so.

- **How do I see my child's progress grade?**

If you were to log into the parent portal there are a variety of things that you can see. The progress tab at the top under your student's name will illustrate everything that they have attempted, mastered, and done for each week and it is broken down. You can also look over the the right side of the page on that progress tab and you will see student grades. You will not see an actual grade until completion of a project. If you were to click on the week tab at the top you will be able to see the student's goals they have set for the week. If they are green that means they have accomplished that goal and if they are blue it means they have not yet completed that particular goal. You also have the year tab that will indicate where they are in regards to the year. The blue vertical line indicates where they should be according to average pace. The color are much like a stop sign: green means good to go, yellow means caution and something needs to be revised, and red means behind or not to the level they need to be at.

- **How do kids know when and what mini lessons are being taught on flex day? My son had a red activity on his timeline. I asked him why he didn't go to the mini lesson and he said he didn't know it was being offered.**

Mini Lessons are scheduled for every Flex Wednesday Block of time(once in the morning and once in the afternoon). Teachers share a document that lists which lesson is taught when. They then announce these times and post in the rooms for students and allow them the opportunity to attend the mini lessons.

- **It seems like the students have to get 100% on almost everything to get an A in the class, is that accurate?**

No. The same grading scale we use throughout WHS classes is in effect. 90% is the threshold for an A.

- **It is also my understanding that students are allowed to continue to take exams until they pass with 7 out of 10. How does that give you an accurate account of what their grades should actually be?**

The platform is designed for students to master content and truly grasp and understand what they are learning. Most students have to pass with an 8/10 to be considered proficient in the content. This grading is only on the focus areas that will later help them apply what they have learned and accounts for 30% of their grade. The projects, which consist of 70% of their grade are based on cognitive skills and their ability to apply what they have learned. This grade does not require a specific measurement and students can score according to their cognitive abilities (this is why they have several checkpoints to try and reflect and improve). Students can still get the traditional grades A,B,C,D, or F.

- **Why do they have to wait so long for feedback, which sometimes isn't really feedback it is just move on comment?**

Teachers try their best to look over the content and provide feedback in a timely manner. If it is quality and no revisions are necessary they provide a green and no feedback is required. The teachers have been trained on when to provide feedback and when not to (depending on the task). Students are aware what the feedback colors mean and what they need to do with each color. Teachers are always available if a student has a particular question about feedback or if they think they don't have enough clarity, I know the teacher would sit down with them and discuss.

- **Are student able to download videos/reading materials etc in order to complete some work without access to the internet? Or is internet required for everything?**

Internet access is required because they access all documents from the drive, which requires internet. Our building is open and available from 7am - 6pm if students are needing additional internet usage. I also know that the library has internet as well as several other locations around town.

- **Where is the empirical data that shows that Summit will increase ACT scores?**

Summit continues to work with districts that share data regarding test scores in various aspects including ACT, state assessments, SAT, and other national and local testing.. This is something that they have tracked over the last decade.

- **Why are so many schools trying to get rid of Summit?**

Summit continues to grow year to year. In the 2017-2018 school year, more than 330 schools, 2450 teachers, and 54,000 students across 39 states participated in the Summit Learning Program (Kansas joined in the 2018-2019 school year along with numerous other schools in Kansas). 93% of schools that were in the program remained in the program the following year. Of those schools that remained, over 80% expanded their Summit learning to other grade levels.

- **I didn't get an email about parent login? How and where do I go to get this?**

If you have not received an email from Summit regarding logging in to your students' account then please email either your students' mentor, Mr. Buckendorff at [jbuckendorff@usd353.com](mailto:jbuckendorff@usd353.com) or Mrs. Smith at [ssmith@usd353.com](mailto:ssmith@usd353.com).

- **Why can't the student move ahead a grade level if they complete their current level requirements? What is the incentive for them to get ahead?**

Students ARE able to move ahead if they get to that point. We are encouraging them to move at a pace that is comfortable for them and if there comes a point they are ready to move on to the next grade level then that can be supported. We will also be providing incentives for those students that complete a certain number of focus areas per week to be entered into a drawing. The more focus areas they complete the more tickets and chances they have for their name to be picked.

- **What system is in place for students to share their concerns with the administration?**

We have discussions in our Crusader Connections classes and many teachers in these classes have documented all student concerns on a shared document that Administration and Mercury Endeavor teachers discuss weekly to make adjustments on how we operate our classes, schedule, testing, etc. We have met with students personally and we invite them to share their feedback with teachers and administration and we definitely take all concerns into consideration. We are going to be developing a student panel second quarter that will have student representatives meeting bi-weekly to discuss issues.

- **Please explain the grading system. It was stated that a grade reported in Dec for the semester could be changed if the student became more proficient with the concepts during the spring semester and their grade improved. What does this really affect? Isn't the final grade, once the student has completed the course, what is used when figuring GPA?**

This is a year long grading period for the platform because you want to see growth and development within the cognitive skills. Semester grades are what is calculated into the GPA so both Dec and May grades would be calculated within GPA that is why we wanted to provide the opportunity to go back and change grades if needed.

- **What about getting access to e-books like a regular textbook?**

We have both e-books and traditional textbooks/books for classes and students currently being used.

- **What timeline markers have been established to assess the success/failure of this change?**

We are continually monitoring student data and reflecting on a daily basis. We also have a mentor that meets with administration on a bi-weekly basis that assist with analyzing our data and problem solving around it. We don't necessarily have a timeline as we continually are improving, problem solving, and analyzing the data.

- **How is it that, after parents in Wellington rallied and got rid of block scheduling, we have come full circle to block scheduling again?**

We are not in a traditional "block scheduling". We are offering students extended time during their core classes 4 days a week to allow time to manage their projects and have time to complete them.

- **My son said he has only met once with his mentor. Will this increase once the newness gets worked out or do you need more mentors for a smaller student/teacher ratio?**

Yes, there will be more frequency with mentoring after the mentors get to know their students. We should be in a timeframe to meet bi-weekly for most and then weekly for some students depending on the needs of the students.