Bayside High School
Power Hour

Based upon the work of West Port High School in Ocala, Florida, Bayside High School began our Power Hour journey in 2014.

Power Hour restructures the traditional school day to expand the lunch period increasing student opportunities for academic success. The format is simple – students and teachers have one hour in the middle of the school day to participate in various activities. Teachers would always have 30 minutes for their duty-free lunch, but also maintain 30 minutes for office hours. During this time they could offer tutoring, take care of make-up work, sponsor clubs and activities, create a time and space for extended learning activities and build relationships. While the format is simple - developing and nurturing the culture that supports this initiative is a continuous process.

Our Why: Our students were not being as academically successful (as demonstrated on state standardized tests and nationally normed standardized tests, including SAT, ACT and AP) as we felt they needed in order to be career and/or college ready.

Our What: After eliminating factors over which we have no control, we resolved our focus needed to be on our students mastering the standards. We needed to answer the question, “in order for students to master the standards, we need to...” and “in order for students to master the standards, they need to...” The very simple answers to the questions above, are pretty complex problems to solve. They included (but were not limited to):

We need to.....ensure we are all teaching all of the standards of the course, but focusing on priority standards.
We need to.....ensure we are reaching the depth of the standards.
We need to....ensure we are engaging our students in the learning process.

They need to....be in school.
They need to....make up work.
They need to....ask for help.

While we didn’t believe, nor do we currently believe, Power Hour had all the answers, we do believe it has given us a platform from which to launch solutions.

Our How: After exploring the idea of Power Hour (including two visits to West Port High School) and believing it had potential, we completed two whole faculty exercises:
1. What are all the problems/concerns/fears about establishing Power Hour?
2. What are our non-negotiables to even consider PH as part of our practice to help students succeed?
As a team, this was our starting point. Although we were working in conjunction with another area high school to establish permission to move forward, we acknowledged that every school has a different culture, different needs and different solutions to meet those needs. Power Hour was not a package that came ready made to fit all sizes. Answering these two question up front were necessary before moving forward in gaining the confidence of our faculty, students, parents and the district. Whenever we faltered on a problem without a solution, we fell back on our “why”. If ensuring our students were ready for life beyond high school is truly important to us, then finding a solution needed to be a priority for us as an organization.

...And How, and How, and How: Our commitment to the faculty, students and parents was that we would continue to review and refine the process; that as problems emerged we would not throw the baby out with the bathwater, but seek solutions. As we become more comfortable with the possibilities, we stretch and grow and try new things. There are many moving parts to Power Hour. Some are the same as West Port and Eau Gallie, some are very different – unique to Bayside. Power Hour looks different this year from last year, and I hope will look different next year as we adapt and adopt to our school’s needs.