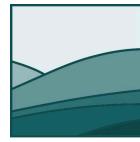


Strategic Shifts: Design Prototypes for LLESĐ

As part of LLESĐ's ongoing efforts to thoughtfully innovate and evolve, these one-pagers explore **ideas—not decisions**—through a human-centered design lens. They are meant to spark thinking and invite feedback as we consider ways to strengthen engaging learning, improve student success, increase efficiency, realize responsible cost savings, and surface creative solutions in the service of our students and community.



**Las Lomitas
Elementary
School District**
Inclusive. Engaging. Inspiring

The Shift	Redesigned La Entrada Bell Schedule
The Design Question How might we...?	<p>How might we redesign the La Entrada bell schedule to reduce long-term costs, increase staffing flexibility, and create greater clarity and predictability for students, staff, and families while preserving a high-quality middle grades experience?</p>
The Idea What if...?	<p>What if LLESĐ transitioned La Entrada from its current 6–8 “waterfall” schedule to a more consistent, repeatable schedule spanning grades 4–8, unlocking staffing efficiencies, simplifying the school day, and creating greater flexibility for master scheduling and cost savings over time?</p>
Status & Engagement	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Early exploration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seeking feedback <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refining the concept <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Considering a pilot <input type="checkbox"/> Moving forward with the idea <input type="checkbox"/> Not moving forward at this time</p> <p>The LE bell schedule redesign is in the design phase, actively seeking feedback as it refines schedule concepts informed by ongoing engagement with students, staff, and families. The design team is preparing to pilot elements of the proposed schedules during the winter/spring to test assumptions, gather additional input, and make refinements. If the work continues as planned, the goal is to present a new bell schedule for implementation in fall 2026.</p>

How might this idea take shape?

The potential redesign of the La Entrada bell schedule is underway through a human-centered design process guided by the Stanford d.school framework. A representative design team is engaging students, staff, and families to build empathy for daily experiences, understand needs across grade levels, and surface opportunities to improve clarity, flexibility, and sustainability.

Using this input, the team is exploring a range of bell schedule models—including more traditional schedules and modified block structures—while reviewing examples from other schools and districts and considering La Entrada's unique needs. Draft schedules are being developed to prototype and, where appropriate, pilot elements during the winter and spring to test assumptions, gather feedback, and refine designs.

Across all options, the design effort prioritizes a more repeatable and predictable daily structure that supports consistent instructional minutes, clearer routines, appropriate breaks for students, and flexibility for electives and extended learning blocks. The redesign also intentionally creates conditions for staffing models that better align with student demand—such as improved cross-grade-level staff sharing and the ability to match part-time work with part-time staffing—thereby strengthening both educational coherence and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Why might we explore this idea?

La Entrada's current 6–8 “waterfall” schedule offers meaningful benefits, including varied learning rhythms and rotating class times. At the same time, it creates structural challenges that increase per-student costs, limit staffing

flexibility, and introduce complexity for students, staff, and families. Grades 4–5 and 6–8 function in many ways like separate schools, reducing opportunities to share staff, design cohesive programs, and respond nimbly to changing student needs.

As the district works to address long-term fiscal sustainability while protecting the student experience, the bell schedule presents a high-leverage opportunity. A more consistent, repeatable schedule has the potential to improve clarity and predictability for students—particularly those who benefit from routine—while also expanding options for instruction, electives, and program continuity across grade levels.

Exploring alternative schedule models allows the district to preserve what works at La Entrada while intentionally designing for flexibility, coherence, and long-term sustainability. Thoughtful redesign can create a schedule that is easier to understand and manage, better aligned with instructional priorities such as increased math minutes, and more adaptable to future enrollment, staffing, and program needs—supporting both educational quality and responsible stewardship of resources.

Potential Benefits (if thoughtfully designed)?

- Greater clarity and predictability in the school day for students, staff, and families
- Increased flexibility for master scheduling across grades 4–8
- Improved alignment of staffing to student demand, including better use of part-time staffing
- Long-term cost savings through more efficient staffing models and attrition-based reductions
- Expanded ability to offer electives and extended learning blocks within a more consistent schedule
- Increased instructional minutes in priority areas, such as math
- Stronger continuity and coherence of programs across grade levels
- Improved access to routine and structure for students who benefit from predictable schedules
- A simpler schedule that is easier to manage, adjust, and sustain over time

Key Considerations

- Preserving valued elements of the current La Entrada schedule while addressing structural inefficiencies
- Continuing to engage students, staff, and families throughout design, prototyping, and refinement
- Balancing predictability and routine with flexibility for electives, extended learning blocks, and varied instructional approaches
- Ensuring the schedule supports appropriate breaks, transitions, and emotional regulation
- Aligning instructional minutes with academic priorities, including increased time for math
- Designing staffing models that are sustainable, equitable, and aligned with student demand over time
- Managing transitions thoughtfully to minimize disruption and maintain stability during implementation
- Communicating clearly that this is an iterative design process and that adjustments may occur based on feedback and learning

Financial Impact

Over time, a more consistent and repeatable bell schedule has the potential to generate meaningful cost savings by better aligning staffing with student demand. Unlike the current waterfall schedule, which can require full-time staffing without full-time groups of students, a redesigned schedule increases flexibility to match part-time work with part-time staffing and to share staff more effectively across grade levels. Through thoughtful implementation and attrition, preliminary estimates suggest this shift could reduce the number of FTEs by approximately 4–5, or roughly \$1 million annually, while preserving program quality and strengthening the district's ability to adapt to future enrollment, program, and budget changes.