

**The following pages of the 1998 Middle School Common Expectations**

**Have been reviewed and revised for the implementation of**

**MMSD Middle School Model – February 2005**

## **COMMON EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

**This document is a compilation of strategies and plans which are intended to implement the Madison Metropolitan School District's Middle School Philosophy and Goals. The Middle School Philosophy and Goals are viewed as the foundation upon which further programming decisions should be based.**

**The term used to present the practices designed to operationalize the Philosophy and Goals is "Common Expectations." Expectations not addressed in this paper are generally reserved for the individual school.**

### **1. School Day**

**Each school day shall be a minimum of 375 minutes, exclusive of lunch but inclusive of passing time, and every student at each grade level shall have a minimum of 220 minutes of instruction daily in the basic subjects: language arts, math, science, and social studies.**

### **2. Grade Organization**

**Local schools will establish their grade organization to facilitate the transition from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school.**

**Groups formed within and across grade levels to facilitate instruction should reflect the heterogeneous composition of the total school community. Addressing individual student needs within heterogeneous classrooms remains the primary goal of middle school organizational structures. Grouping patterns should not limit the opportunity for individual students to move from one group to another group.**

**To facilitate instructional planning, common planning time shall be maintained and interactions shall be scheduled by the principal. Accommodations should be made whenever possible to include EEN and unified arts staff in team planning.**

**The sixth grade teacher is to have certification in grades K-8, 1-8, 4-8, 5-8 or a comparable license. Subject area certification with comparable skills in working with middle school students is appropriate.**

Seventh and eighth grade teachers are to have certification in grades K-8, 1-8, 4-8, 5-8, or a comparable license or appropriate subject area license(s).

### **3. Staffing Levels**

Staffing levels are determined by school enrollment and the special needs of the school's student population.

- a. BASE teacher allocation will be provided based on a formula ratio.
- b. DISCRETIONARY instructional support (learning coordinator, LMC and counselor) allocation is determined utilizing the total student population and computing at the formula level.
- c. SUPPLEMENTARY allocation is provided to each school based on the Equity Needs Index Formula. (Free/Reduced Lunch, mother's education, home status and number of EEN and ELL students)
- d. TARGETED allocation is provided for an assistant principal to schools with enrollments 500 or greater. Small schools (Wright and Spring Harbor) receive an additional 1.0 allocation each.

Allocations for social workers, psychologists and nurses is provided to each school based on a formula.

### **4. Basic Subjects**

Language Arts. . . . . Required in all grades. The "Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Language Arts" and the Madison Metropolitan School District content and grade level performance standards for Language Arts identify specific expectations for all middle school students. The "Six Traits Plus One of the Writer" and the "Middle School Language Arts Instructional Framework" are stressed as a part of the Language Arts curriculum but also across all academic content areas.

Reading. . . . . Required in all grades. The "Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Reading" and the Madison Metropolitan School District content and grade level performance standards for Reading identify specific expectations for all middle school students. Within each school, a staff member will be designated to provide leadership and coordination. Specific time shall be provided for the instruction of developmental reading to all students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade. Supplementary activities will be available for students whose reading level is two or more years below grade level. The "Six Traits of the Reader" provides the foundation for our reading

curriculum.

**Social Studies. . . . .** Required in all grades. The “Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies” and the Madison Metropolitan School District content and grade level performance standards for social studies identify specific expectations for all middle school students. The specific standards include Geography, Political Science and Citizenship, History, Economics, and Behavioral Science. Sixth and seventh grade curriculum focus includes Ancient Civilization/World Cultures and Geography/Global Connections. The eighth grade focus is United States History to 1865.

**Math . . . . .** Required in all grades. The “Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Math” and the Madison Metropolitan School District content and grade level performance standards for math identify specific expectations for all middle school students. Attention is given to Patterns, Relations, Functions and Algebra, Statistics and Probability, Measurement and Geometry, and Estimation, Computation, Numeration and Number Theory with an emphasis on student engagement in Problem Solving, Communication, Reasoning and Connections. A standards-based eighth grade algebra course, that is equivalent to the high school algebra course, will be available to all students who wish to take it and are prepared for it based on grades, available assessment information, staff recommendation, and parent/student input.

**Science. . . . .** Required in all grades. The “Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Science” and the Madison Metropolitan School District content and grade level performance standards for science in grades 6-8 identify specific expectations for all middle school students. The standards are as follows:

1. Connections
2. The Nature of Science
3. Science Inquiry
4. Physical Science
5. Earth and Space Science
6. Life and Environmental Science
7. Science Applications
8. Social and Personal Perspectives

The curriculum is inquiry based and integrated (physical, earth and biological) at each grade level.

**Physical Ed. . . . . Required at all grade levels. The “Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Physical Education” and the Madison Metropolitan School District content and grade level performance standards for physical education identify specific expectations for all middle school students.**

**Music . . . . . Required in grade six. All phases of music (band, orchestra, choral and general music) must be offered in grades 7 and 8. The “Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Music” and the Madison Metropolitan School District content and grade level performance standards for music identify specific expectations for all middle school students.**

***Note: The complete Content Standards and Grade Level Performance Standards for all subject areas are available through the MMSD'S Teaching and Learning home page.***

**5. Exploratory Subjects**

**Exploratory Subjects may include Art, Computers, Family Consumer Education, Music (strings/band/chorus/general music) Drama, Media Production, Technology Education, etc.**

**All unified arts and elective courses are exploratory experiences which, when possible, will be in minimum time increments of 45 minutes. The intent is to provide the adolescent learner with opportunities to apply skills in a supportive learning environment based on options available within a school.**

**Approximately one-third of a student's day should be devoted to exploratory activities including those courses listed above. Specific time devoted to courses should reflect DPI requirements and MMSD Teaching and Learning guidelines.**

**6. Foreign Language(s)**

**Foreign Language is offered at all middle schools. It may be elective or required. It provides the foundation for further study at the high school level. In some schools, foreign language courses may be considered part of the Unified Arts block.**

**7. Study Halls**

**Study periods shall be kept to a minimum.**

## **8. Other Areas**

Health, career education, LMC, TAG, developmental guidance, multicultural education, environmental education, computer literacy, human relations, study skills, self-understanding, and group interactions are usually integrated into existing subject areas. District-wide leadership groups will identify and coordinate the development of these content areas. Any health curriculum offered at middle school will be carefully coordinated with the district-wide required ninth grade health and wellness course.

## **9. Student Evaluation**

All schools are required to have at least one parent conference per school year, plus report cards which contain narrative statements and letter grades. The letter grades reflect student academic achievement as it relates to content and grade level performance standards and teacher assessments; the accompanying comments relate to effort, behavior, and social development. The letter grade designations are as follows:

| <b><u>Description</u></b>  | <b><u>Numerical Score</u></b> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>A - Excellent</b>       | <b>100-90</b>                 |
| <b>B - Above Average</b>   | <b>89-80</b>                  |
| <b>C - Average</b>         | <b>79-70</b>                  |
| <b>D - Below Average</b>   | <b>69-60</b>                  |
| <b>U - Unsatisfactory</b>  | <b>59-below</b>               |
| <b>S - Satisfactory</b>    |                               |
| <b>P - Pass</b>            |                               |
| <b>I - Incomplete</b>      |                               |
| <b>MD - Medical Excuse</b> |                               |
| <b>NG - No Grade</b>       |                               |

To facilitate parent-teacher conferences, an appropriate amount of release time for staff will be scheduled.

## **10. Intramural Athletics**

Each middle school should provide the opportunity for participation in intramurals (after school sports) and clubs which are reflective of the Middle School Philosophy and Goals. The activities will be organized in such a manner as to provide positive, continuing learning experiences for students.

Each school, with assistance from the Recreation Department, will develop a plan

for implementing club activities. The plan will reflect the philosophy and goals of the middle school intramural intent statement. The emphasis of the program should be on student participation.

**11. After School Sports**

Each school, with assistance from MSCR, will develop and implement an after school sports program for seventh and eighth grade students with competition between the middle schools. The emphasis should be on participation, sportsmanship and the improvement of athletic skills.

**12. Middle School Principals Meeting**

A monthly Middle School Principals Council will meet to address common issues and concerns. Schools design a team infrastructure to accomplish the goals and objectives of the School Improvement Plan. Staff development opportunities are aligned to the SIP plan.

**13. School Improvement Planning**

Each middle school shall annually develop a local school improvement plan which incorporates District priorities and local school goals. Schools design a team infrastructure to accomplish the goals and objectives of the School Improvement Plan. Staff development opportunities are aligned to the SIP plan.

**14. Transition/Orientation Programs**

Each middle school will provide an orientation program for incoming sixth grade students and their parents. Each middle school will work collaboratively with the high school to successfully transition students into high school.