

TITLE: MIDDLE LEVEL PROGRAM OF STUDY

1. Program Definitions.

1.1 Middle Level Education (Grades 5-8). -- Middle level education builds upon the results of early childhood education and transitions students into the adolescent education program. Middle level education provides unique, age-appropriate educational opportunities that challenge all students to use their minds well, providing them with the curriculum, instruction, assessment, support, learning skills, technology tools, and time they need to achieve rigorous academic standards. Students are provided opportunities for both independent inquiry and learning in cooperation with others. Middle level programming is challenging and engaging, tapping the young adolescents' boundless energy, interests and curiosity through rich exploratory experiences. Students learn to understand important concepts, develop essential skills and apply what they learn to real-world problems. The creation of small learning communities of adults and students produce stable and mutually respectful relationships that support all students' intellectual, ethical and social growth.

2. Program of Study.

2.1 Middle Level Education (Grades 5-8) Programs of Study.

Chart IV: Middle Level Education (Grades 5-8)	
<p>These required core courses shall be taught daily by a team of qualified teachers. Scaffolding will ensure mastery of the rigorous content standards and objectives at each grade level. The principal and a team of teachers will determine time allocations that provide adequate time to achieve mastery of the West Virginia content standards and objectives for each of the required courses and effectively address the academic needs of students who are below mastery in the literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening and language, and mathematics.</p>	<p>English Language Arts Mathematics Science Social Studies</p>

<p>Students in middle grades shall be provided not less than one full period of physical education, including physical exercise and age appropriate physical activities, each school day of one semester of the school year. Schools which do not currently have the number of certified physical education teachers or required physical setting may develop alternate programs that will enable current staff and physical settings to be used to meet the physical education requirements. The alternate programs shall be submitted to the WVDE and the Healthy Lifestyle Council for approval.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Physical Education</p>
<p>These required courses shall be taught as separate subjects. Students shall be enrolled in each course for a minimum of 18 weeks cumulative across grades 6-8.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Visual Art Music¹ Health²</p>
<p>Foreign language shall be offered annually.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Foreign Language³</p>
<p>These requirements shall be integrated into the middle level education as determined by the principal and the team teachers.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Advisory/Comprehensive School Guidance and Counseling Career Exploration⁴ Technology⁵</p>

¹. Choral and instrumental music must be offered no later than grade 6. Chorus or instrumental music may substitute for the required music course at each grade level.

². Middle grades schools should recognize that healthy lifestyles and academic success are tightly interwoven. Therefore, schools should promote wellness programs that extend beyond the course requirements for physical education and health. This may be accomplished through strong intramural programs that focus on skill development, sportsmanship and teamwork, while keeping the middle grades students physically active throughout the school year. Wellness programming should target the widespread behaviors that undermine the health and resulting capacity for personal success during adolescence. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-2-9, instruction in CPR and First Aid shall be included in the health education curriculum in any of the grades six through eight as considered appropriate by the county board of education.

³. The teaching of foreign language in grades 5 and 6 is encouraged. A foreign language course, in the same foreign language, must be offered for students in grade 7 and grade 8. Implementation of the foreign language program should model best practice and promote positive proficiency outcomes.

⁴. Students in grades 5-8 should be provided with an adult advocate, advisor, or mentor who takes an

interest in the student's successful learning, goal setting, career planning and personal growth. It is strongly recommended that schools implement an organized advisory program. Implementation of an advisory program allows schools to remove the randomness of interpersonal associations for students by personalizing their learning environment. The test scores and guidance information gathered by the American College Test (hereinafter ACT) EXPLORE, as well as other assessment data, will be used to assist 8th grade students in developing an individualized student transition plan. With guidance during well-planned activities, second semester 8th grade students, in consultation with their parents/guardian, advisor and counselor, will examine their EXPLORE results and determine the coursework and other requirements needed to achieve their postsecondary education and career goals. This is best accomplished by integrating these activities into an organized advisory program.

5. Students in grades 5-8 shall be provided the opportunities within the core courses to master the standards set forth in Policy 2520.14, Technology Content Standards and Objectives for West Virginia Schools. Students must be provided sufficient instruction and experience in technology applications to enable them by the end of 8th grade to demonstrate technology literacy and skills to meet the standards in grades k-8 set forth in Policy 2520.14.

An Individualized Student Transition Plan (hereinafter ISTP) covering grades 9-12 and the first year beyond graduation from high school is developed for every student in consultation with her/his parents/guardian and school counselor or advisor.

During the 8th grade year, each student's ISTP plan is developed for grades 9 and 10. The ISTP is based upon previous career awareness, exploration activities, and a review of the student's ACT EXPLORE results. The 8th grade guidance/advisement program will focus on teaching students and their parents to read the ACT EXPLORE student reports so that they may understand how to use the information provided within the Educational Planning and Assessment System (hereinafter EPAS) reports to transition to the level of performance required to meet the student's educational goals.

Each student, in consultation with his or her parents/guardian and school counselor or advisor, selects a broad career cluster of interest for exploration in grades nine and ten and develops the ISTP based upon their choice of a tentative high school educational pathway. The student shall designate an educational pathway (professional or skilled) at this time. The student may amend his/her ISTP at the end of any semester.

For an eligible gifted student, a four-year education plan is developed during the 8th grade year by an IEP Team. The four-year education plan replaces the ISTP and includes the honors College Board Advanced Placement® (hereinafter AP®) and/or International Baccalaureate (hereinafter IB) classes that must be provided for the student in grades 9-12.

For eligible students with disabilities the ISTP is developed during the 8th grade by an IEP Team.

The parent(s)/guardian and student each sign and receive a copy of the ISTP.

Students in the skilled pathway will designate a career concentration by the end of their 10th grade year.

This process is described in Section 5.6.d.

The ISTP must be reviewed annually with the student and his/her parent or guardian.

3. Review Schedule. This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with the Policy Review Schedule published by the Superintendent.

Legal Authority: West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510

Board Adoption: July 21, 2014