

Middle School Transformation Task Force

The Middle School Transformation Task Force designed an optimal middle school structure that is consistent and equitable throughout School District U-46. This structure promotes every student’s right to learn with relevant, challenging, engaging curriculum and instruction with opportunities to attain high school, college and career readiness.

Current Middle School Day in U-46

43 minute class periods, 3 minute passing periods

Student Day

1	Reading	9:00 – 9:43
2	English	9:46 – 10:29
3	Math	10:32 – 11:15
4	Science	11:18 – 12:01
5	Social Studies	12:04 – 12:47
6	Lunch	12:50 – 1:33
7	PE	1:36 – 2:19
8	Option 1	2:22 – 3:05

Student Classroom Time

(includes every period except lunch)

7 periods x 43 minutes
301 min

Teacher Instructional Time

5 periods x 43 minutes
215 min

Total School Time

365 min

Teacher Day

1	Class	9:00 – 9:43
2	Class	9:46 – 10:29
3	Personal Plan	10:32 – 11:15
4	Class	11:18 – 12:01
5	Class	12:04 – 12:47
6	Lunch	12:50 – 1:33
7	Supervision	1:36 – 2:19
8	Class	2:22 – 3:05

*This schedule does not take into account all variations that currently exist. Actual end times vary from 3:19 to 3:28.

Transformed Middle School Day

43 minute class periods, 3 minute passing periods



Student Day

1	Reading
2	English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Option 1
9	Option 2

Student Classroom Time

(includes every period except lunch)

8 periods x 43 minutes
344 min

This is an additional 43 to 45 minutes of daily student instruction.

Teacher Instructional Time

5 periods x 43 minutes
215 min

Total School Time

411 min

Teacher Day

1	Class
2	Class
3	Personal Plan
4	Class
5	Class
6	Lunch
7	Team Plan
8	Curriculum & Data Plan
9	Class

The Middle School Foundation

Currently	Transformation (What?)	What it looks like (How?)	Rationale (Why?)
Middle schools consist of grades 7 & 8 in all schools in the district.	6–7–8 Model	When a student enters middle school, they will be in a building containing grades 6 through 8. (Contingent upon redistricting)	This reflects the shift in Common Core Learning Standards, where grades 6 th through 8 th are grouped together as middle school.
Schools begin at 9:00 am. The size/configuration of the school determines 3 or 4 minute passing periods. Class times vary from 40-45 minutes.	Start Time and Minutes	The middle school day will begin between the hours of 8:00 and 8:30 am Depending upon the configuration of the school, passing periods will be 3 or 4 minutes long, and class periods will range between 43 and 45.	With this transformation, 43-45 minutes are added to the school day. The bulk of this additional time should be in the morning to best meet the academic needs of the student, and to accommodate family and community concerns in the afternoon.
There is a lack of consistency in class offerings. For example, some students do not receive reading and some students are only offered 1 elective. One school out of 8 require reading	6+2+L	Every student will have a schedule with 6 core curriculum classes, which includes reading, English, math, science, social studies, and physical education/health. They will also have 2 elective classes and a period for lunch. *See Appendix A for sample student schedules	Advocates for every student’s right to learn and provides challenging and relevant learning opportunities
Some students do not have a reading class and only some schools offer an advanced reading section.	Language Arts Block	With this transformation, every student will have both Reading and English commensurate with their ability (Regular or Advanced Reading and English - see Appendix B). This may be in a block with the same teacher teaching both classes, or may be the same group of students traveling from a Reading teacher to an English teacher.	District reading scores are flat lining. This model is in alignment with Common Core and Destination 2015 expectations by moving more students into the college readiness band.

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Currently	Transformation (What?)	What it looks like (How?)	Rationale (Why?)
<p>There is a disparity in how students are scheduled for rotation/elective classes. In a majority of schools, reading is considered an elective.</p>	<p>+2 Electives</p>	<p>Students would receive 2 of the following elective choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A semester of Project Lead the Way and a semester of Speech and Debate (see Appendix B) • A quarterly rotation of art, family and consumer science, computers, and general/cultural music (see Appendix B) • Chorus • Band • Orchestra • AVID • World Language • Intervention 	<p>2 elective offerings will increase common core content associated with elective classes which will prepare students more effectively for college and career readiness. Advocates for every student’s right to learn and provides challenging and relevant learning opportunities</p>
<p>Only 3 schools currently offer a version the teaming structure.</p>	<p>Teams/ Learning Communities</p>	<p>Students would be grouped into interdisciplinary teams, having a consistent group of teachers: a reading, English, math, science and social studies teacher would all have the same students.</p> <p>Teachers will have collaborative time with teams as well as department members, in lieu of supervision. Hourly employees will be hired to supervise the following, including but not limited to, SAS, hallways, libraries and cafeterias.</p> <p>(see Appendix C)</p>	<p>Promotes an emotionally nurturing and academically supportive environment. This fosters purposeful learning and meaningful relationships, as defined within Common Core expectations</p> <p>Professional Learning Communities allow for conversations surrounding progress monitoring, communication to parents, and integration of curricula.</p>
<p>1 out of 8 schools have team planning</p> <p>2 out of 8 schools offer building wide student led conferences.</p>	<p>Student Led Conferences/ Parent Involvement</p>	<p>Teams of teachers will met with parents during team planning time during the school day.</p> <p>Student led conferences will be implemented at all middle schools. Professional development will be provided for all teachers.</p>	<p>With the development of team planning, time will be available to meet with parents during the school day.</p> <p>Provides students the opportunity to build metacognitive skills and be accountable for their own learning.</p>

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Currently	Transformation (What?)	What it looks like (How?)	Rationale (Why?)
<p>Deans and Guidance Counselors do not exist in the middle school system. Social work varies from building to building. The current social work allotments do not meet the needs of students.</p>	<p>Dean and Support Staff</p>	<p>Within the building there would be additional support staff to address the social, academic and transitional needs of all students. A full time dean would be in all buildings. A second full time support staff member, such as a social worker or guidance counselor, would be determined by the needs of the building.</p>	<p>Empowers and provides students with the knowledge and skills they need to take control of their lives</p> <p>Allows availability for principals and assistant principals to become instructional leaders</p>
<p>There is minimal release time for scheduled professional development.</p>	<p>Professional Development Release Time</p>	<p>Students would be released from school early once a month to allow for teacher professional development.</p>	<p>Vertical and horizontal communication in alternating months. One month will be in building, the next month will be district wide.</p> <p>Provides ongoing professional development that reflects best educational practices that align to Destination 2015 and Common Core expectations</p>

Middle School Transformation Task Force Appendix A - Examples of Student Schedules

General Education Student

1	Reading
2	English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Semester 1 – PLTW Semester 2–Spch/Debate
9	Quarter 1 – Art Quarter 2 – FACS Quarter 3 – Comp Quarter 4 - Music

Special Education Student

1	SPED Reading
2	SPED English
3	SPED Math
4	SPED Science
5	SPED Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Semester 1 – PLTW Semester 2–Spch/Debate
9	Quarter 1 – Art Quarter 2 – FACS Quarter 3 – Comp Quarter 4 - Music

ELL Student – Level 4

1	ESL Reading Level 4
2	ESL English Level 4
3	ESL Math Level 4
4	ESL Science Level 4
5	ESL Social Studies Level 4
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Semester 1 – PLTW Semester 2–Spch/Debate
9	Quarter 1 – Art Quarter 2 – FACS Quarter 3 – Comp Quarter 4 - Music

ELL Student – Level 3 and Band

1	ESL Reading Level 3
2	ESL English Level 3
3	ESL Math Level 3
4	ESL Science Level 3
5	ESL Social Studies Level 3
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Semester 1 – PLTW Semester 2–Spch/Debate
9	Band

ELL Student – Level 2 SBL

1	SBL Reading
2	SBL English
3	SBL Math
4	SBL Science
5	SBL Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Semester 1 – SBL PLTW Sem 2– SBL Spch/Debate
9	Quarter 1 – Art Quarter 2 – FACS Quarter 3 – Comp Quarter 4 - Music

Student in Dual Language

1	Reading
2	Dual English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Dual Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Semester 1 – SBL PLTW Sem 2– SBL Spch/Debate
9	Quarter 1 – Art Quarter 2 – FACS Quarter 3 – Comp Quarter 4 - Music

Student Needing Intervention

1	Reading
2	English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Semester 1 – PLTW Semester 2–Spch/Debate
9	Intervention

Student in World Language

1	Reading
2	English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Semester 1 – PLTW Semester 2–Spch/Debate
9	World Language

Student in Chorus and Intervention

1	Reading
2	English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Chorus
9	Intervention

Student in World Language and Band Student in AVID and Orchestra

1	Reading
2	English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	Band
9	World Language

1	Reading
2	English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	AVID
9	Orchestra

Student in AVID and World Language

1	Reading
2	English
3	Math
4	Science
5	Social Studies
6	Lunch
7	PE
8	AVID
9	World Language

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Appendix B – Curriculum Development

Curriculum development is needed for:

- Project Lead the Way
 - Implemented as a semester long course
 - Offer curriculum in Spanish for ESL levels 1-3 and Dual Language Students
- Speech and Debate
 - A sample proposal is included on the following pages
 - Offer curriculum in Spanish for ESL levels 1-3 and Dual Language Students
- General Cultural Music
 - This course offers students the opportunities to participate in a performance ensemble outside the traditional band or chorus setting. Students learn music reading and performance skills by performing on various percussion instruments including bongos, congas, hand drums, xylophone and marimba.
- Advanced Reading and English
 - Curriculum needs to be developed to provide rigor for high performing students
- Develop elective course offerings that include real world application
 - Fine art examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Graphic design
 - Photography
 - Journalism
 - Applied art examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Computer programming
 - Multimedia production
 - Environmental conservation

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SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46 Middle School Speech/Debate Course

Proposal:

The middle school Speech/Debate class would be an 18 week class (semester course) and would be offered as an elective class for 7th and 8th grade students. The class would be offered in English for the general education population and in Spanish for ELL students (levels 1,2,3) as well as Dual Language students. The speech curriculum would be offered during the first nine weeks and the debate curriculum would be delivered during the second nine weeks. At the end of the second nine week debate course, students would have the opportunity to apply the learned skills in a formal debate meet competition. By participating in the Speech/Debate Class, the students enrolled in this course would choose to opt out of two nine week exploratory rotation classes.

The learning Outcomes and Curriculum Description:

Outcomes – Speech:

- Students will develop self-confidence and interpersonal communication skills. They will be able to overcome nervousness when speaking in front of groups, and to organize and present ideas logically and convincingly.
- A speech course will improve performance in the following areas which can all be linked to college and career readiness:
 - Speaking in public
 - Motivating people
 - Interviewing for jobs
 - Selling ideas or products
 - Customer service
 - Preparation and organization of essay writing
 - Delivering presentations (a requirement at some universities)
 - Interpersonal relationships

Outcomes – Debate:

- Learning opportunities will create an incentive structure for students to read/write above grade level in their research and preparation for competition and classroom debates
- Targeted skills will include: speaking, thinking, and listening
- Students will demonstrate ability to edit their own work and the work of other students
- Preparation for debate will advance students' ability to outline, respond to literature, and compose persuasive compositions
- Students will become more engaged in the world around them and develop sophisticated knowledge about a wide range of current events and complex ideas.
- Combination of learning opportunities will prepare students for success in high school, college, and beyond, while providing immediate benefits for academic success

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- Speaking and listening activities will prepare students to communicate effectively, while expressing ideas clearly and persuasively

Rationale:

Rationale – Speech:

- Upon the elimination of the speech/drama rotation at the middle school level, speech was to be embedded into the English curriculum. Although English teachers are attempting to include the elements of speech, students are not reaching levels of proficiency in the area of public speaking
- On the 8th grade 2012 Explore test given in the fall, 8th students are reporting needing help in the area of improving public speaking skills
 - Tefft: 44%
 - Eastview: 33%
 - Abbott: 43%
 - Ellis: 38%
 - Canton: 22.3%
 - Kenyon Woods: 35%
- The English/Language Arts Common Core State Standards include Speaking and Listening as one of the four strands – specifically identifying formal and informal talk
- PARCC research shows that colleges and universities want high school graduates to:
 - Conduct short focused projects and longer term in-depth research
 - Gather relevant, credible information from multiple print and digital sources
 - Produce clear, coherent writing, whatever the selected format
 - Communicate research findings (speaking and listening skills)
- All successful leaders have one quality in common – the ability to communicate effectively. Thus it is important that our students develop this ability early in life so that they may successfully meet the demands and challenges of today’s world.
- One of the stumbling blocks of literacy education is that we often convey technical literacy, but do not teach functional literacy (which includes a strong oral literacy component). There is substantial research that suggests students’ language development may be limited to the level of their oral and aural literacy and comprehension development.

Rationale – Debate:

- Debate addresses the element of cognitive strategies – a component of the definition of College and Career Readiness – Intellectual openness, inquisitiveness, analysis, interpretation, precision and accuracy; problem solving; and reasoning, argumentation, and proof
- PARCC says colleges and universities want student to:
 - Conduct research and apply that research to solve problems and to address issues
 - Identify areas for research, narrow those topics, and adjust research methodology as necessary and evaluate and synthesize primary and secondary resources as they develop and defend their own conclusions
 - Make arguments and critique arguments of others
- Debate aligns with Quadrant D (Bloom’s Knowledge and Application from the Rigor/Relevance Framework - Susan Gendron – International Center for Leadership in Education)
 - Verbs defining Quadrant D – evaluate, validate, justify, rate, referee, infer, rank, dramatize, argue, conclude, debate, perform, prove, predict, produce, integrate, assess, design

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- Addresses one of the three anchor writing standards of College and Career Readiness
 - Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Debate is valuable for gifted students and so-called “at-risk” students alike, helping students to take active responsibility for their own learning in a challenging and dynamic atmosphere
- Data from across the country suggests that students struggle with writing, critical analysis, and interpretation questions during standardized testing
- Bartlett High School principal (feeder school for Tefft and Eastview) reported that no students earned a score of 6 on the quarterly district English diagnostic writing prompt for first quarter

Description of the Recommended Materials:

The existing district middle school speech curriculum would be utilized to teach the first nine week speech content. The textbook, Speak Out! Debate and Public Speaking in the Middle Grades by Kate Shuster & John Meany will be used to deliver the second nine week debate course. Also used as a resource will be If They Can Argue Well, They Can Write Well... Using Classroom Debate to Help Students Think Critically, Research and Evaluate Internet Sources, and Write Persuasively by Dr. Bill McBride. These books were recommended at a workshop at the February 2012 National Association of Secondary Principals’ Conference. Additional resources will also be available at www.middleschooldebate.com which includes a teacher’s guide for the book, lesson plans, including plans for whole-class debating; and issue briefs to prepare students to debate dozens of current event topics.

Cost:

The addition of this class would involve an additional .4 for each middle school. Once instructional materials have been identified, additional costs would need to be determined.

Plans for the Evaluation of Change:

- All students enrolled in course will be pre and post tested using the district English diagnostic writing prompt
- All students MAP Reading data will be reviewed
 - 1st semester
 - Fall to Winter
 - 2nd semester
 - Winter to spring
- Review 8th grade Explore data to ascertain percentage of students attaining college readiness benchmark
- Review Explore data to look at percentage of students reporting a need for help in public speaking

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Appendix C – Collaborative Time

Team Plan Agenda Topics - Including but not limited to:

- Review IEP, 504 and interventions with support staff (social workers, guidance counselors, speech pathologists, hearing itinerants, occupational therapists, etc.)
- ELL placement and support
- Social emotional needs of students
- Student/Parent conferences and contacts
- Student led conferences and portfolios
- Team building activities
- Modification of student daily schedules
- Assessment scheduling
- Data analysis

Department/Collaborative Plan Agenda Topics - Including but not limited to:

- Common Core Standards
- Model lessons
- Lessons plans
- Integrate curriculums
- Development of assessments
- Formative and summative assessments and results
- Data analysis
- Collaborate between General Education, Special Education, elective and ELL teachers
- District trainings

Appendix D – Research

Links to research and resources:

<http://www.turningpts.org/>

<http://www.turningpts.org/TPVisionforEffectiveLearningCommunity.pdf>

<http://www.amle.org/AboutAMLE/ThisWeBelieve/The16Characteristics/tabid/1274/Default.aspx>

<http://www.amle.org/Research/ResearchSummaries/tabid/115/Default.aspx>

<http://www.amle.org/AboutAMLE/PositionStatements/SmallSchools/tabid/293/Default.aspx>

<http://www.amle.org/AboutAMLE/PositionStatements/AccelerateMiddleGrades/tabid/285/Default.aspx>

www.literacycollaborative.org/research

www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/PolicyResearch/AdolLitResearchBrief.pdf

<http://cesa7ita2009.pbworks.com/f/middle+schools+preparing+young+people+for+work+in+the+21st+century.pdf>

<https://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/ForgottenMiddle.pdf>

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	Cognitivity	Core Comprehension Curriculum	Communication	Citizenship and Social Responsibility	Time Management
What does this Look like at the middle school grades?	<p>Instructional periods of 43-45 minutes</p> <p>Teaming provides for progress monitoring of students</p> <p>Implementation of an advanced reading course</p> <p>Transfer of knowledge with integrated curriculum</p> <p>Exploration of new classes with availability of elective classes for all students</p> <p>1 semester of speech/debate</p> <p>1 semester of PLTW</p>	<p>All students will have reading</p> <p>Additional electives advocates for every students' opportunity for challenging and relevant learning</p> <p>Continuity of Common Core Curriculum (GR 6-8)</p> <p>Integration of curriculum planning</p> <p>Release day provides for development of best practices and implementation of CCSS.</p>	<p>Teaming develops student</p> <p>Team plan time allows for professional learning conversations</p> <p>Student-led conferences</p> <p>1 semester of speech/debate</p> <p>PLC allows for collegial conversations around CCSS</p> <p>Release day allows for vertical and horizontal articulation with elementary and high schools</p> <p>Additional support staff allows for addressing social, emotional and academic student needs</p> <p>Team</p>	<p>Teaming promotes purposeful and meaningful relationships.</p> <p>An additional social worker or guidance counselor empowers and provides students with self-empowerment skills.</p> <p>Providing electives for all students empowers and provides students additional knowledge and skills for development and self-empowerment.</p>	<p>The majority of the middle school morning shifts to core curriculum</p> <p>Dean and support staff allows for principals and assistant principals to become instructional leaders</p> <p>Scheduled release time allows for vertical and horizontal articulation.</p> <p>Scheduled release time allows for ongoing professional development that aligns to Destination 2015 and CCSS</p> <p>Release day allows for effect efficient professional development to occur</p>