

Millard Middle Schools Middle School Philosophy

The purpose of the Millard Middle Schools is to meet the intellectual, social, ethical, emotional, and physical needs of 11-14 year old students through programs and instructional practices that are academically and developmentally appropriate and include essential elements of instruction, management, and curriculum.

The essential elements of middle level instruction, management, and curriculum are:

- High academic expectations
- Interdisciplinary teams
- Exploratory offerings
- Inclusionary practices
- Student advisement
- Developmentally appropriate instructional practices
- Climate conducive to learning

Operational parameters for the middle schools include:

- Common team planning
- Schedule conducive to multiple options for students
- Developmentally appropriate co-curricular program
- Team leadership and team structure
- Effective transition in, through, and out of middle grades
- Partnership of students, home, staff, and community

Millard Middle Schools Essential Elements

High Academic Expectations

The middle school academic program will promote scholarship through curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices designed to challenge each student to reach his/her potential. Students are provided the necessary support and opportunities for success.

Interdisciplinary Teams

Interdisciplinary teams offer an organizational structure that helps support student achievement through professional collaboration and communication, mutual reinforcement of student behaviors, flexible scheduling, and the development of differentiated curriculum that meets student learning needs.

Exploratory Offerings

Students are exposed to a variety of success oriented interactive activities and experiences related to adopted curriculum, athletics, community service, and student interests. Exposure to a variety of activities will help students develop an understanding of and excel in their areas of strengths and interests.

Inclusionary Practices

Inclusionary practices ensure success for all students in academic, physical, social, and service activities. Programmatic decisions for all students will be made based upon current best practices and relevant assessment and evaluation.

Student Advisement

The advisement program is designed to establish a close working relationship between each student and at least one teacher, counselor, or administrator in the building. The Millard Public Schools life skills are an integral part of the advisory program.

Developmentally Appropriate Instructional Practices

The instructional practices used by teachers will meet the emotional, cognitive, social, and physical needs of preadolescent learners. Learning activities that are varied, motivating and actively engage students will be practiced by all teachers.

Climate Conducive to Learning

The school creates a personalized environment that supports each student's intellectual, ethical, emotional, social, and physical development, characterized by stable, close, and mutually respectful relationships.

Millard Middle Schools Operational Parameters

Common Team Planning

Each team of teachers shares a scheduled planning period allowing them to meet to discuss student needs, coordinate instruction among disciplines, and plan team activities.

Schedule Conducive to Multiple Options for Students

Many scheduling options are available to teachers because team teachers share the same group of students. Therefore, teachers are able to address student needs through scheduling. Examples may include:

- Most classes may be scheduled next to each other during the school day - this creates a block of team classes.
- Teams may flex the time frame in which they offer classes; i.e. English may decide to take 20 minutes for a spelling test while science uses over an hour to conduct a lab.
- The regular manner in which classes are offered may be rearranged; i.e. only math and science one day and only English/Social Studies/Reading the next.
- The opportunity for interdisciplinary approaches is more easily available - interdisciplinary instruction helps students more readily see connections in learning and curriculum.

Within this framework, district and state standards are accomplished.

Co-Curricular Program

Co-curricular activities for middle level students are designed with student age, ability, and maturity as important considerations. All activities, including athletics, music, and club offerings, provide for maximum participation with an appropriate level of competitiveness for this age of student.

Team Leadership and Team Structure

Team Leadership – Team leaders are responsible for channeling the energy and resources of team members into productive problem solving and planning for instruction. They should provide a structure within which issues can be discussed and decisions made, keep the agenda on positive track, and hold team members accountable for their assigned responsibilities.

Team Structure – Interdisciplinary teams may include teachers of English, math, science and social studies for a designated grade. In addition, each team should have a guidance counselor, team leader, and resource teacher. A daily team planning time supports effective teaming practices.

Effective Transition In, Through, and Out of Middle Grades

Transition, the movement of a student from a familiar, supportive environment to one that is unknown often causes anxiety and can decrease school achievement during the transition period. The middle grades program must support students during the significant transitions from elementary to middle, through middle school, and from middle to high school. Utilization of effective communication at each grade level will aid in the understanding of others' concerns, philosophies and objectives.

Partnership of Students, Home, Staff, and Community

The school develops alliances with families to enhance and support the well-being of their children. It involves families as partners in their children's education, keeping them informed, involving them in their children's learning, and assuring participation in decision-making.