Washington County School District
121 West Tabernacle Street
Saint George, Utah 84770
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District Policy 4410

Middle School Guidelines

Graduation, Curriculum, Instruction Washington County School District - Adopted 1-12-93

1. Purpose:

1.1. Mission Statement: The mission of Washington County Middle Schools is to provide every student a successful transition from elementary to high school in a positive and safe climate by providing an optimal learning environment, promoting intellectual capabilities, emphasizing respect for self and others, and encouraging hope for the future.

1.2. Philosophy: Washington County School District is committed to preparing young students with the understanding and skills necessary to cope with their own changes from childhood to adolescence and with the academic skills and knowledge essential for continued school success and life-long learning. The middle school programs must reflect understanding of the students' physical, mental and social needs, the importance of individual values, and the encouragement of parental and community involvement in the educational process.

2. Policy:

3. Procedure:

3.1. Guidelines:

3.1.1. Transitional Experience: Since the middle school years are the years in which the greatest changes take place in a student's life (physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally), the middle school should be structured to accommodate these changes.

3.1.2. Staff with a Personal Touch: The middle school staff must have a desire to work in such a school with specific training in working with students of this age group. Every effort should be made by the staff to be an advocate for the students in order to facilitate a positive educational experience.

3.1.3. Socialization: Varied opportunities for socialization and activity should be provided for all students.

3.1.4. Positive Student Assessment: In order to give students a feeling of success, assessment of individual student achievement and progress should be honest and encouraging.

3.1.5. Parental Involvement: In order to foster a positive school/home relationship, middle school administrators and teachers should involve parents as partners in the educational process.

3.1.6. Exploratory Opportunities: The middle school experience should provide students with the educational opportunity to explore many curricular areas with emphasis toward "hands-on" experiences.

3.1.7. Background in Basics: The middle school should provide students with a background in required basic subjects.

3.2. Middle School Instructional Organization Patterns And Curriculum - 7th, 8th, and 9th Grade:

3.2.1. Individual middle school models will be developed with faculty and community input.

3.2.2. Special Notes:

3.2.2.1. Continue to improve school organization and curriculum through the use of current research and trends.

3.2.2.2. Exploratory classes will be funded through the regular District budgetary allocation process.

3.2.2.3. Teachers will receive a half-day common planning period on a day designated by the Board of Education.

3.2.2.4. Consideration may be given to operating middle schools on a closed campus basis.

3.3. Middle School Activity Program And Grading System

3.3.1. MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITY PROGRAM:

3.3.1.1. Ninth grade extra curricular activities will be under the umbrella of the Utah High School Activities Association.

3.3.1.2. Schools will be encouraged to cooperate and work with community activity programs that are offered for middle school aged students.

3.3.2. GRADING AND REPORT SYSTEM: Grades 7-9 should be a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F. Pass/fail may be used for exploratory classes.

3.3.2.1. Back-to-School night will be held at the beginning of each school year to acquaint parents with school programs.

3.3.2.2. A parent-teacher conference will be held twice a year for parents to discuss their students' progress with individual teachers.

3.3.3. MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND INSERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM: Each middle school should be involved in an organized and on-going staff development and inservice program to provide training:

3.3.3.1. To better understand the needs of the middle school student.

3.3.3.2. In philosophy, methodology and instructional skills.

3.3.3.3. As a student advocate.

3.3.3.4. In developing motivational skills.

3.3.3.5. To involve parents as partners in the educational process.

3.4. Staff Development And Inservice Training: Each middle school should be involved in an organized and on-going staff development and inservice program to do the following: (efforts should be made to obtain funding to give teachers remuneration for inservice training where concentrated periods of time are required).

3.4.1. Better Understand Student Needs: To better understand the needs of the middle school age student.

3.4.2. Knowledge of Various Classroom Organizations: Provide training in philosophy, methodology, and impact on middle school age students relative to self-continaed classrooms, core concept, and departmentalized organization.

3.4.3. Being a Student Advocate:

3.4.3.1. Provide staff training in:

3.4.3.1.1. Being an effective student advocate.

3.4.3.1.2. Being an effective teacher/advisor.

3.4.3.1.3. Working effectively with parents.

3.4.3.1.4. Conducting effective teacher/student/parent conferences.

3.4.3.1.5. Being a key person in providing students a "home base" at school.

3.4.4. Student Motivational Skills: Provide staff training to help develop expertise and specific instructional skills in the following areas:

3.4.4.1. Working effectively with students of the middle school age.

3.4.4.2. Teaching reading in multi-content areas.

3.4.4.3. Working with and coordinating interdisciplinary learning (as opposed to one curriculum area).

3.4.4.4. Providing meaningful recreational experiences for students (not a "full-blown" P.E. program until 7th and 8th grade).

3.4.4.5. Intramurals and how to be an effective component of an on-going, organized intramural program for all students.

3.4.4.6. Providing meaningful "on task" instructional experiences for students, learning experiences which are relevant and give "hands on" involvement as much as possible.

3.4.4.7. Develop knowledge about and specific skills in using positive reinforcement techniques with students.