

Agenda Item 13. Middle School Program Guide

Subject: Middle School Program Guide	Date: December 8, 2005
Policy Reference <u>CL</u>	Enclosures: 2
Strategic Planning Goal 1	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION: Action _____ Information <u>X</u>

Background

Based on a long-standing Board Priority (since 2000) to improve middle school programming, the Superintendent directed central administrative staff to work with middle school principals to review middle school programs during the 2004-2005 school year. This work resulted in the Middle School Program Review report received by the Board on March 10, 2005. Recommendations in the report included expanding academic learning time for students enrolled in standard or practical level language arts or mathematics to a minimum of 90 minutes of high-quality instruction daily in those courses; reorganizing exploratories at the middle school level into 3 strands: World Languages, Career and Technical Education, and Visual and Performing Arts; requiring students to participate in at least one exploratory in each strand by the time they complete middle school, beginning with the 6th grade class in 2005-2006; and, strengthening the World Languages program by offering Spanish and French to students in standard and advanced/honors-level language arts beginning with semester offerings of Spanish and French in grade 7 to be followed by 2 semesters of Spanish or French in grade 8 beginning in 2005-2006. These recommendations were implemented at the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year.

The Middle School Program Review report identified several areas for continued work including ensuring that there is no variance in core offerings across middle schools, including courses in Visual and Performing Arts and Career and Technical Education, and the development and distribution of a common middle school program guide.

Administrative Consideration (Rationale)

Committees composed of teachers, parents, principals and central office staff have reviewed program areas and incorporated proposed revisions into a new middle school program guide. The proposed revisions identify baseline expectations for the Division's middle school program. The proposed revisions have been available for review and comment via the web and the work in various drafts has been shared with school staff, PTO representatives, the Parent Advisory Committee, a student focus group, local business representatives, and the School Board.

Budget Implications (Short and Long Term)

Staff is reviewing budget implications for proposed revisions including staffing, curriculum development, and instructional resources.

Recommendation/Future Direction/Time Line

Receive the new Middle School Program Guide 2005-2006 for information and direction.