

Middle School Reform Report

Physical Education and Unified Arts

Since their inception in the 1960's, HCPS middle schools have offered a variety of courses known as "unified arts" or "special area" classes. As school staffing changed, and facilities were built, remodeled, or reconfigured, these unified arts offerings changed from school to school. Currently, each of the nine middle schools has a different group of unified arts classes and/or a different rotation timetable and/or a different way of enrolling students in these classes. To meet the charge from the Board of Education to determine a "consistent program of offerings", the Middle School Ad Hoc Committee sought to create a middle school unified arts schedule that could be phased in throughout the county, with the end product being a uniform program for all middle schools.

The proposed unified arts schedule was based on middle school survey data, current and future staffing, COMAR regulations, and interviews with HCPS supervisors. The committee's adoption of integrated technology instruction also influenced course recommendations, since computer class as a unified arts class will be phased out, if the proposed recommendations are accepted.

Research concludes, and the Middle School Ad Hoc Committee agrees, daily physical education represents a critical aspect of the education of the middle school child. Physical education, provided at school, is an ideal way to encourage activity and develop fitness among children and, for many children, will be their only preparation for an active lifestyle. Although the committee supports daily physical education, the finite number of minutes in the middle school day necessitates that performing music groups participate in physical education every other day.

Recommendation 6

All middle schools will provide a unified arts program utilizing a nine week rotation. Students will take art and health in grades 6, 7, and 8; family and consumer sciences in grades 6 and 7; technology education in grades 6 and 8; and general music in grades 7 and 8. Grade 8 students not in a Level I world language course will complete a world language exploratory course in lieu of one of the unified arts courses offered in grade 8.

Recommendation 7

All middle schools will provide physical education every day, for every student, except band, chorus and orchestra students, who will attend every other day.

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Recommendation 6:

All middle schools will provide a unified arts program utilizing a nine week rotation. Students will take art and health in grades 6, 7, and 8; family and consumer sciences in grades 6 and 7; technology education in grades 6 and 8; and general music in grades 7 and 8. Grade 8 students not in a Level I world language course will complete a world language exploratory course in lieu of one of the unified arts courses offered in grade 8.

Rationale:

- Exploratory programs capitalize on the innate curiosity of young adolescents, exposing them to a range of academic, vocational, and recreational subjects for career options, community service, enrichment, and enjoyment. (National Middle School Association, 1996)
- In February 2008, 1,543 parents, students, community members, administrators, post secondary faculty, central office staff and middle school faculty were asked the degree to which they support the following statement: "All Harford County middle schools should offer the same classes." 72% of the respondents answered "strongly agree or agree." (Middle School Ad Hoc Committee Stakeholder Feedback, 2008)
- A majority of those who answered the Middle School Survey indicated students should take each unified arts class all three years of middle school. (Middle School Ad Hoc Committee Stakeholder Feedback, 2008)
- COMAR requirements for Fine Arts (Art, Dance, Music, Theatre) states "each local school system shall provide an instructional program in fine arts each year for all students in grades K-8." (COMAR, 13A.04.16.01)
- COMAR requirements for Health states "each local school system shall provide an instructional program in comprehensive health education each year for all students in grades K-8." (COMAR, 13A.04.18.02)

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Recommendation 7:

All middle schools will provide physical education every day, for every student, except band, chorus and orchestra students, who will attend every other day.

Rationale:

- The National Association for Sport and Physical Education, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Association for State Boards of Education all recommend daily physical education or its equivalent (225 minutes per week for middle and high school students). (Burgeson, 2004)
- In February 2008, 1,543 parents, students, community members, administrators, post secondary faculty, central office staff and middle school faculty were asked the degree to which they support the following statement: “All middle school students should have physical education class every day, except those in a performing arts group (band, orchestra, chorus), who will attend physical education class every other day.” 78% of the respondents answered “strongly agree or agree.” (Middle School Ad Hoc Committee Stakeholder Feedback, 2008)
- COMAR requirements for Physical Education includes: “each local school system shall provide an instructional program in physical education each year for all students in grades K-8.” (COMAR, 13A.04.13.01)
- The Voluntary State Curriculum of Maryland provides instructional guidelines for the physical education program.
- In addition to being physically active, children need to learn fundamental motor skills and develop health related physical fitness (cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition). Physical education, provided at school, is an ideal way to encourage activity and develop fitness among children and, for many children, will be their only preparation for an active lifestyle. For this reason, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), and the American Heart Association all recommend comprehensive daily physical education for children K-12. (Summerfield, 1998)

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Status of Physical Education in HCPS Middle Schools

School	2008-2009	2009-2010
AMS	Students in band, chorus, or orchestra receive two quarters of physical education; all other students have physical education every day.	Students in band, chorus, or orchestra will have a physical education class every other day; all other students will have a physical education class every day.
PMMS	Students in band, chorus, or orchestra have physical education every other day for 1 semester and health every other day for 1 semester; all other students have physical education class for 3 quarters and health class for 1 quarter.	
BAMS*	Students in band, chorus, or orchestra have physical education every other day; all other students have physical education every day. *Students in need of remediation are removed from physical education.	
EMS		
FMS		
HGMS		
MMS		
NHMS		
SMS		

Status of Unified Arts in HCPS Middle Schools

School	2008-2009	Quarterly Classes to Be Phased In (Pending Budget)		
		Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
AMS	Two or four classes a year; 9 week rotation Students in band, chorus, or orchestra take 2 of the 6 classes a year and most other students take 4 of the 6: general music, family and consumer sciences, art, computer, health, character education (Students will take each class at least once during the middle school years). Identified 6 th graders have math intervention for 1 quarter in lieu of 1 unified arts class; identified 8 th graders have math intervention all year in lieu of unified arts.	Art Health Family & Consumer Sciences Technology Education	Art Health Family & Consumer Sciences General Music	Art Health Technology Education General Music FLEX* *If a student is not in a Level I World Language Class, he/she will take FLEX for one quarter, in lieu of art, technology education, or general music. All students will take health each year.
BAMS	Four classes a year; 9 week rotation Each student takes 4 of the 5 classes offered: art, general music, computer applications, technology education, health			
EMS	Four classes a year; 9 week rotation Each student takes 4 of the 6 classes offered: art, general music, computer, technology education, health, FLEX			
FMS	Four classes a year; 9 week rotation, some students may get 18 weeks of one class Classes offered: general music, art, family and consumer sciences, health. All 7 th graders take health.			
HGMS	Five classes a year; 7 week rotation; all students take: art, technology education, general music, computer, and health			
MMS	Five classes a year; 36 day rotation Grades 6, 7, 8: computer, family and consumer sciences, art, general music, health			
NHMS	Four classes a year; 9 week rotation Each student takes 4 of the 6 classes a year: general music, family and consumer sciences, art, computer, health, technology education, FLEX (Students will take each class at least once during the middle school years; 6 th graders do not take FLEX.)			
PMMS	Five classes a year; 7 week rotation Grades 6, 7, 8: general music, family and consumer sciences, computer, art, enrichment/intervention			
SMS	Five classes a year; 7 week rotation Grade 6—art, general music, technology education, computer, family and consumer sciences Grade 7— art, general music, technology education, computer, family and consumer sciences Grade 8—art, FLEX, technology education, computer, family and consumer sciences			

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Unified Arts Facilities Needed

	Family and Consumer Sciences Labs	Technology Education Rooms*	General Music	Art Rooms
AMS	None	2 rooms needed, equipment for 1 room	None	None
BAMS	2 labs need to be recaptured	2 rooms needed, equipment for 2 rooms		
EMS	None	1 room needed, equipment for 1 room		
FMS	None	1 room needed, equipment for 1 room		
HGMS	2 labs need to be recaptured; all equipment needs to be purchased	1 room needed, equipment for 1 room		
MMS	Computer lab needs to be returned to a FACS lab; some equipment needs to be purchased	2 rooms needed, equipment for 2 rooms		
NHMS	None	1 room needed, equipment for 1 room		
PMMS	None	2 rooms needed, equipment for 2 rooms		
SMS	None	None		

*HCPS is currently using the ITEA-CATTS (International Technology Education Association’s Center to Advance the Teaching of Technology and Science) curriculum. This curriculum provides for many learning opportunities that can occur in a modestly equipped lab setting, such as a typical classroom, with the use of hand and portable power tools and equipment.

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Implementation Plan for PE/UA Recommendations (6, 7)

Project Managers: Supervisors of Unified Arts and Physical Education						
Timeline	Step/Goal	Persons Responsible	Stakeholders	Strategies	Budget Implications	Indicators of Implementation
June 2008- June 2009	Begin alignment of staffing for recommended unified arts offerings	Executive Director of Secondary Education Middle School Principals Human Resources-Senior Management Supervisory Personnel	Unified arts staff Middle school principals Supervisory personnel Human Resources	Analyze current staffing allotment, retirements, transfers, master schedule, course offerings, and facilities	Teaching stations	Middle school principals' needs assessments
June 2008- June 2011	Create master schedule to phase in recommended unified arts classes	Middle School Principals Supervisory Personnel	Middle School Principals Supervisory personnel PE and UA teachers ILT's	Re-evaluate and modify current master schedule Work in collaboration with content area supervisors Review and comply with the technology integration plan	Equipment Materials of instruction Hiring of qualified staff	Principal submission of master schedule
June 2008- 2011	Identify and procure needed teaching stations	Middle School Principals Supervisory Personnel	Middle School Principals Supervisory personnel PE and UA teachers ILT's	Modify building use to accommodate needed changes	Teaching stations Equipment and room furnishings Materials of instruction	Master scheduled aligned with Middle School Reform recommendations

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Evaluation Plan for PE/UA Recommendations (6, 7)

Project Managers: Supervisors of Unified Arts and Physical Education	
Data Point	Indicators of Success
Exit exams in unified arts and physical education courses	Positive trend in student achievement data
Report card grades for unified arts/physical education	Positive trend in student achievement data
Enrollment in high school linked courses and career pathway selections	Positive trend in the growth and development of career pathways linked to unified arts
Fitnessgram data	Positive trend in fitness data
Student satisfaction survey	Positive trend in perception data

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Bibliography for PE/UA Recommendations (6, 7)

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