

Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual

Title: MIDDLE GRADES SPECIALIZATION

Section: 602.1

Board Report: 11-0525-PO1

Date Adopted: May 25, 2011

Policy:

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Board amend the Middle Grades Specialization Policy.

PURPOSE:

To require 1) that Chicago Public Schools ("CPS") students in grades 6, 7 and 8 receive instruction in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies from teachers recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education as Middle Grade Content Area Specialists in those content areas; 2) that a sufficient number of teaching positions be programmed for Middle Grades Content Area Specialist teachers; and 3) that schools, where possible, use a departmentalized model when providing instruction to middle grades students.

POLICY TEXT:

I. Definitions: For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

A. "Middle Grade Content Area Specialist" means a Middle Grades teacher of record who possesses a middle grades content area endorsement from the Illinois State Board of Education in the subjects they teach whether Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and/or Social Science.

B. "Middle Grades" means grades 6, 7 and 8.

II. Required Staffing and Assignment of Content Area Specialists to Provide Instruction in Content Areas.

Effective July 1, 2011, Principals and unit administrators at schools and units serving students in the Middle Grades shall ensure that Middle Grades students receive instruction in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies from a Middle Grade Content Area Specialist in the appropriate content area. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board temporarily suspends the application of this policy to Middle Grades special education teachers who exclusively teach special education students until such time as the Chief Education Officer completes an evaluation of the appropriate application of this policy to such special education teachers. The Chief Education Officer shall, based on this evaluation, make a recommendation to the Board no later than May 2012.

III. Obligation to Designate Positions as Positions Programmed for Middle Grades Content Area Specialists.

The Office of Management and Budget shall designate teaching positions allocated to schools or units serving Middle Grades, a minimum number of teacher positions in each of the following core content areas of middle grade Mathematics, Science, Language Arts and/or Social Studies, which positions shall be programmed for Middle Grade Content Area Specialists. The actual number of positions to be designated for Middle Grade Content Area Specialists shall be determined by a formula or formulas based on the number of students in the Middle Grades.

IV. Guidelines and Authority to Grant Waivers or Modifications.

The Board delegates to the Chief Human Capital Officer in collaboration with the Chief Education Officer the authority to grant a waiver or modification of this policy to schools or units when staffing or other educational considerations at the school or unit make compliance impossible or educationally imprudent. The Chief Human Capital Officer in collaboration with the Chief Education Officer shall establish Guidelines to Implement Middle Grade Specialization, which may be amended or modified from time to time as determined by the Chief Education Officer and the Chief Human Capital Officer. Said Guidelines shall include but not be limited to:

- A. A formula or formulas for determining the number of positions to be designated as Middle Grade Content Area Specialists, including a mechanism for applying that formula to schools and units that receive per pupil funding; and
- B. Processes by which schools and units may seek a waiver or modification of the requirements of this policy based upon exigent circumstances.

Schools unable to meet the requirements of this policy or seeking to meet the requirements through alternative means must submit a waiver or modification request to the Chief Education Officer and the Chief Human Capital Officer according to the processes outlined in said Guidelines. Waiver requests must include a plan for coming into compliance with this policy. Approved waivers must be monitored and reported on annually.

V. Teacher Supports.

Chief Human Capital Officer in collaboration with the Chief Education Officer will endeavor to create partnerships with local universities to provide Middle Grades teachers with programming to gain and expand their content-area knowledge and academic depth and support their success through instructional specialization.

VI. Reporting to the Board.

Commencing in January 2012, the Chief Human Capital Officer shall make a written report to the Board on compliance with and the administration of this policy which shall include the following:

- A. A report on the number of positions designated as Middle Grades Content Area Specialists;
- B. A report of schools not in compliance;
- C. A report on the number of waivers or modifications of this policy sought by schools or units, and, if granted, the reasons for such waivers or modifications.

Amends/Rescinds:	Amends 08-1022-PO1
Cross References:	87-0527-PO2
Legal References:	23 Ill.Admin.Code 1.720; 23 Ill.Admin.Code 25.100; 23 Ill.Admin.Code 25.464