

Arcola Intermediate School~

Everyone, Every day, Every Way!

April 1, 2019
Dr. Amy K. Mangano

The Magic in the Middle

Middle level education...

When you join up in the middle grades, you become part of a passionate team. You cherish the middle level playbook because, as it's stated in [This We Believe](#), you "value young adolescents and are prepared to teach them" (p. 14). In many ways, it's like signing up to play on a football team. It takes committed players. It takes dedicated coaches. And many days, you wish you wore a helmet.

Let's Begin with the End in Mind~

Our students!

EVERYONE, EVERY DAY, EVERY WAY~

- Opportunity/Access
- Support/Enrichment
- Exploration

I have chosen to be a middle grades educator, for I recognize that the years of early adolescence are pivotal and abound with individual potential and opportunity.

Therefore, I will care for these students personally, listen to their voices, respect their concerns, and engage them in meaningful educational experiences that will prepare them for a promising future.

This I Believe



I believe that every young adolescent...

- ✦ Has the capacity to learn, grow, and develop into a knowledgeable, reflective, caring, ethical, and contributing citizen.
- ✦ Must have access to the very best programs and practices a school can offer.
- ✦ Must be engaged in learning that is relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory.
- ✦ Faces significant life choices and needs support in making wise and healthy decisions.
- ✦ Thrives academically, socially, and emotionally in a democratic learning environment where trust and respect are paramount and where family and community are actively involved.
- ✦ Deserves educators who are prepared to work with this age group, who are themselves lifelong learners and committed to their own ongoing professional development and growth.

Therefore, I proudly dedicate myself to becoming the best middle grades educator I can be and an active advocate for all young adolescents.

The History~

The story of where we were, where we have come and where we want to go!

- Who were we?
 - Administrative turnover
 - Staff perceptions
 - Parent perceptions
- Who are we?
 - 760 Students
 - 116 Professional/Support Staff
 - Third year as principal
 - 3 academic teams per grade level
 - Caring and dedicated staff
 - Supportive parents/guardians
 - Excellent kids
- Where do we want to go?
 - To great and beyond!
 - Promote growth for all students
 - Promote growth for all staff
 - Build a positive climate and culture
 - Strengthen relationships and trust in entire school community- students, staff, parents/guardians and administrators

Starting Point~

Setting the foundation: climate, culture and structure

- As a leader, it is my role to provide the structure and support necessary for both student, parent and staff growth. This has been my goal from day one
- This work must begin by building a climate and culture on core values of trust and relationships- power of WE is key
- With a solid foundation we can work on the structure to support the academic, social and emotional growth for every student and staff member
- We have been engaged in such conversations for the past 3 years

The Scheduling Committee~

The goal and the task

- The committee consisted of 23 staff members representative of all subject areas who dedicated themselves over the course of the 2018-2019 school year to this work
- The goal was to create flexibility and efficiency within the schedule in order to deliver instruction that will positively impact student learning, achievement and growth
- The task was to engage committee members in the process of research and best practices to develop and make recommendations for our students and staff
- We began by developing our core values

Arcola Core Values~

Cultivating an environment with values that provide:

- Opportunity/Access
- Support/Enrichment
- Exploration

- Developmentally responsive:
 - Using the distinctive nature of young adolescents as the foundation upon which all decisions about school organization, policies, curriculum, instruction, and assessments are made
- Challenging:
 - Ensuring that every student learns and every member of the learning community is held to high expectations
- Empowering:
 - Providing all students with the knowledge and the skills they need to take responsibility for their lives, to address life's challenges, to function successfully at all levels of society, and to be creators of knowledge
- Equitable:
 - Advocating for and ensuring every student's right to learn and providing appropriately challenging and relevant learning opportunities for all

Arcola Core Values~

To create
opportunities at
Arcola that will:

- Ensure **opportunity/access** for every middle school student to a rigorous curriculum
- Provide all students with **opportunity/access** to World Language experiences
- Provide **exploratory** learning that allows for passion-based, critical and creative thinking
- Provide strategic and meaningful academic, emotional, and social **support/enrichment**

Recommended Changes~ for 2019-20

Future Conversations and Considerations~ for 2020-21

2019-20 Recommendations that offer students **opportunity/access, support and exploration**:

- Period 8, WARRIOR WIN-
 - *Information item only*
- World Language-
 - *Board Action Required*

2020-21 Future considerations, continuing the conversations:

- All subjects area courses and paths:
 - ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies
 - Course path offerings

Period 8 Recommendation For 2019-2020~

- Opportunity/access
- Support/enrichment
- Exploration

- Restructure the time of the current eighth period to provide more student-centered opportunities such as:
 - Advisory
 - Enrichment
 - Support/Remediation
 - Clubs, Music
 - Activities/Athletics
- WIN Period will be more structured, organized and allow for student choice
- Will build upon our climate and student-teacher relationships

World Language Recommendation For 2019-2020~

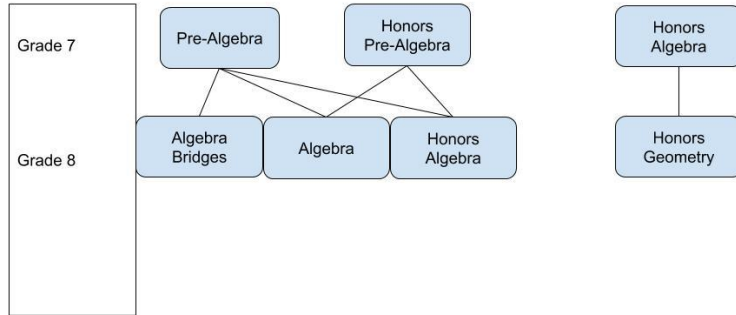
- Opportunity/access
- Support/enrichment
- Exploration

- Spring 2019:
 - Expose current grade 7 students to all languages, Spanish/German/French to help make an informed choice for grade 8
- 2019-20 SY:
 - All students in grade 8 will take level one World Language
 - Eliminate Literature course and repurpose Reading Specialist to provide supplemental reading support in English classrooms and WIN period
- Impact:
 - Requires additional sections of World Language
 - Where applicable-leverage HS staff
 - If additional staff required-estimated cost of \$29,000 for a .4 may be needed
- Future discussion/considerations~ To investigate offering World Language exploratory rotation in an earlier grade

Arcola Math Path

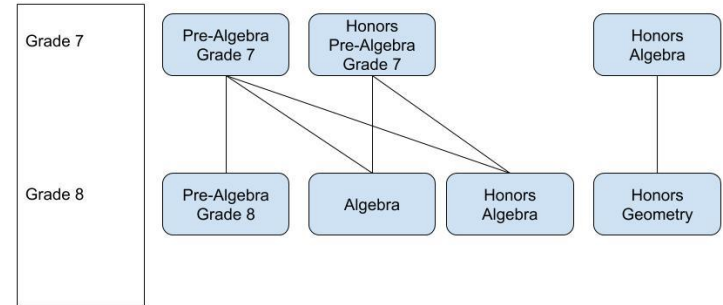
2018-2019

Current Math Path, 2018-19



2019 - 2020

Proposed Math Path, 2019-2020



Future Conversations/ Considerations~

In our ongoing efforts to improve instruction, grow our students and staff, and plan for a K-12 vision, we will do the following:

- Continue to work toward the District Strategic Plan Goal for meeting the needs of the whole child and differentiated instruction
- Reflect upon our current core content course levels and offerings to ensure rigor, access and equity
- Engage and educate our students, parents and staff in these important discussions
- Engage all staff in planned and purposeful staff development and training focused on differentiated instruction
- Empower our staff by leveraging reading, math, and gifted specialists
- Explore options for instructional delivery

Review all Content area Course Offerings~ 2019-2020

2019-2020~ Continue the conversation:

- What is the purpose and function of all core content courses, honors and academic levels?
- What is the impact on our students K-12?
- Do the course offerings align both vertically and horizontally?
- Do our course offerings reflect our core values
- What does the research tell us?

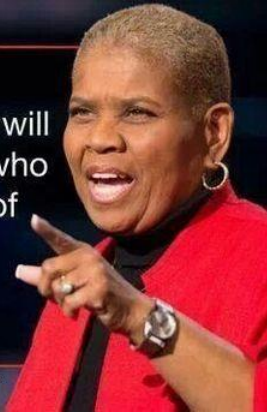
We will work to:

- Engage all stakeholders in discussions
- Review all data, research and best practices
- Review what surrounding districts are doing
- Invite, survey and educate students, parents/guardians and staff into the discussions and the process

Summary, Conclusions, Questions~

"Every child deserves a champion: an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists they become the best they can possibly be."

- Rita Pierson, Educator



Thank you!

For 2019-20:

1. Add/Reorganize Warrior Win (8th Period)
2. Increase World Language (2 sections)
3. Eliminate Algebra Bridges/rename course titles
4. Combine homeroom/period 1
5. Organize/structure two extra team periods per cycle

Continue the conversation 2019-20:

1. All subjects area courses and paths for ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies etc.