

**Whitefish Bay School District  
Middle School Elective/Exploratory  
Wheel Committee (MSE<sup>2</sup>W) Report**

**January 10, 2018**

# Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	p. 3
II.	Background	p. 4-7
III.	Committee Membership and Organization	p. 8-9
IV.	State Law Requirements	p. 10-11
V.	Stakeholder Data Analysis Overview	p. 12-15
VI.	Evidence-Based Research Review	p. 16-20
VII.	Summary of Recommendations	p. 20-24
VIII.	Appendix	
	Research that Guides our Work- Appendix 1	p. 26
	Career Clusters- Appendix 2	p. 27
	Seven Thriving Dispositions- Appendix 3	p. 28-31
	Social Emotional Learning Competencies- Appendix 4	p. 32-33
	Whitefish Bay School District Focus Plan - Appendix 5	p. 34

# I. Introduction

In March 2017, the WFB School Board approved the following recommendation from the Art and Music Curriculum renewal and design process. *“A District committee should be established to study the Whitefish Bay Middle School elective wheel. When the WFBMS implemented the block schedule changes in 2014-2015, the elective wheel was not part of the overall work of the original committee. We have found that we have many competing priorities in the current wheel, which may or may not be beneficial for meeting the District’s Focus Plan.”* At the same time, the District worked hard to prepare for the implementation of the new State law to include academic, college, and career planning for all 6-12 graders starting in the fall of 2017. The Board desires to also ensure that students have as many opportunities as possible to develop the whole child while chasing their passion.

The purpose of this report is two-fold:

1. to report on the Middle School Elective Wheel Committee review conducted in the 2017-2018 school year.
2. to provide recommendations around our middle school elective offerings, ensuring that the Whitefish Bay School District is:
  - a. aligned and exceeding both current state and national standards.
  - b. aligned to the most current and best research in the brain and adolescent development.
  - c. consistent with the WFB Focus Plan.
  - d. integrates the seven thriving dispositions and social-emotional competencies in order to ensure student growth towards college, career, social-emotional and life readiness.

## II. Background

### *Committee Guiding Questions Answered:*

- Is our elective/exploratory experience equitable for ALL learners?
- How does our current practice align to the District's adoption of DPI's Teaching and Learning Principles and the MS non-negotiables/belief statements?

This report is the result of work completed by the Middle School Elective/Exploratory Wheel Committee (MSEW). The Committee was charged to design a DRAFT of a workable elective wheel schedule and offerings ensuring all legal requirements, while also identifying the benefits, drawbacks and unknowns (to the extent that is even possible) that would inevitably emerge. It will utilize current research, market comparables, and practicality to uncover, understand, and articulate the complexity associated with the elective wheel.

- What are the DPI requirements and are they being fulfilled?
- Do we want an exploratory wheel or an elective wheel? What's the difference?
- How should intervention/enrichment (RtI) time be supported in the schedule?
- What is valued by the community?
- What do we know about middle school learners?
- What are the students interested in?
- How does our current practice align to the District's adoption of DPI's Teaching and Learning Guiding Principles and the MS Non-negotiables/Belief Statements?
- What is our data telling us? Who is registering to take what?
- What are the financial or staffing implications of any changes?
- How does this support a robust Academic Career Planning (ACP) process?
- Can we provide students engaging opportunities to explore relevant and meaningful career paths?
- Do our offerings align with high school course offerings? Are there potential high school implications?
- How do we ensure student growth towards college, career, and social-emotional growth?
- Is our elective/exploratory experience equitable for ALL learners?

The Whitefish Bay School District employs a formalized curriculum renewal and design process that involves review of each **curricular area** (science, math, etc.) at least every six to seven years. This K-12 process is designed to target continuous improvement along with ensuring a

guaranteed and viable curriculum which are essential to achieve our WFB Focus Plan. We are unable to review this wheel by looking only at the isolated curricular areas through our current review process. What makes the MS elective programming unique is that it can provide opportunities for students to experience challenging, relevant, and integrated learning that builds upon and deepens the core curriculum, assists in exploring areas of interest, and opens pathways to further explore our seven thriving dispositions and 21st century skills. At the same time, the District has been working hard to prepare for the implementation of the new State law to include academic, college, and career planning for all 6-12 graders starting in the fall of 2017.

Prior to beginning a review of the current elective/exploratory programming, it was necessary for us to review the historical background of the Whitefish Bay Middle School through the historical lens of the MS committee members. Curriculum files of the time are not readily available and not stored electronically. The Middle School was opened in 1989. The District previously had K-8 buildings. Its original design was to create a schedule and offerings tailored to meet the needs of the middle school/adolescent learner. At the time, the following information was also noted:

- It was called an exploratory wheel in 6-7 (all kids had 5 choices) and an elective in 8.
- Students with disabilities did not always have access to the wheel due to their special designed programming.
- 42 minutes
- Who taught what back in the day? Schedules to stay a 1.0 FTE
- Music: pulled out small groups for instrumental lessons that took place throughout the day and during academic courses.
- World Language: 6th grade was a wheel in itself. All 6<sup>th</sup> graders took all three World Languages, then they would choose one language to focus on. At 7th and 8th grade, World Language was taken every other day opposite physical education.
- FACE (Creative Publications, Dollars and Cents, Fitness and Conditioning) went away in 8th grade.

Additional historical perspective before the more recent block scheduling changes, the following information is noted:

- Read 180 and Math Support pulled students out of electives.
- In the early 2000s, the Board decided that 7th grade WL would go every day and students prioritized languages in sorted students based on interest.
- We had three time slots:
  - 6th and 7th Grade Students: Exploratory Wheel- Physical Education/Opposite- Elective/Intervention.
  - 8th Grade Students: Elective Wheel- Physical Education/Health- Elective/Intervention.
- Past administrators made decisions that were not clear to staff (scheduling, staff opening and then courses would be added over the summer?).
- Many changes in courses over this extended period of time. They were hands-on and more accessible for ALL students.

### **Current Middle School Elective/Exploratory Wheel Information**

#### **Sixth Grade:**

- Exploratory Wheel: 4 classes (Health, General Music, Art, Design and Modeling).
- World language/PE
- Select or Placed in 1: Music/Study Hall/Intervention
- There are some students with disabilities that do not take a WL and instead take an additional study hall/intervention, etc.

#### **Seventh Grade:**

Most students do not have a choice in taking Music and World Language (because of entry points), and that is why we added Hands-on Drumming and Hands-on Guitar.

- Option 1:
  - World Language
  - Exploratory Wheel (Art, PLTW, Leadership, Life Skills)
  - PE/Music (every other day)
- Option 2:
  - World Language

- PE/Elective Options: (Life Skills required/Art/Hands-on Drumming or Hands-on Guitar)
- 2 Music
- Option 3 (no WL):
  - Exploratory Wheel (Art, PLTW, Leadership, Life Skills)
  - 2 Music
  - Elective Options/PE
- Option 4 (no WL or music):
  - Exploratory Wheel (Art, PLTW, Leadership, Life Skills)
  - Study Hall
  - Elective Options/PE

**Eighth Grade:**

3 electives to fill

- Health/PE is a must!
- WL
- Elective Offerings (quarter based offerings): Music (¾ of year), Art, PLTW, other music offerings.
- For students with disabilities or intervention it comes from WL at this time.

**Other Considerations for the current structure:**

- Physical Space
- Staffing: teacher availability, teacher certification, FTE, overloads?, other duties assigned.
- Overlap of “specials” period.
- Interventions/RtI
- De Facto tracking into the electives (if they are all taking interventions at a time, they travel to PE together for example).
- Hands-on versus academically driven.
- ACP
- Seven thriving dispositions and ISTE standards.
- Two main impacts to our current structure: 7th grade WL going everyday (squeezed music) and the block schedule.

### III. Committee Membership and Organization

In this section, a description of the committee, leadership, organization, and timeline of the program evaluation process are included. A collaborative and representative team of stakeholders in the district, is vital in carrying out a reliable and valid program evaluation. In April and May 2017, Whitefish Bay administration began the first step to organize a committee to study best practices in middle school elective programming and provide recommendations around our middle school elective offerings. This process was done in transparency, allowing any staff member interested to serve on the committee based upon similar district committee structures.

Thus, the Whitefish Bay School District’s Program Evaluation Committee was comprised of a cross-representation of classroom teachers, specialists, and building administration.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade/Area</b>
Jeff Truel	Counselor
Jeff Trask	Physical Education/Health Teacher
Ken Carson	Music
Heidi Ludorf	World Language
Becky Doherty	Exploratory Wheel
Bizzy Schultz	BLT Member
Lisa Link	Special Education
Jerney Lupis	Elective Wheel/Core
Jodi Schmidt	IRC
Caitlin Etten	Literacy Coach
Maria Kucharski	Director of Teaching and Learning Services
Mike O’Connor	Principal

#### Timeline / Key Events of the Program Study and Evaluation

The PK-12 Visual Arts Program Evaluation Committee operated in a four-part process as described below:

#### **Information Phase**

- Spring 2017-Summer 2017- Collect and organize evidence based practices research.
- April-May 2017- Establish committee membership.



### **Work Team Phase**

- August 16, 2017- Summer committee meetings conducted. Focus on establishing current usage of time and state requirements, establishing beliefs and priorities, reviewing research in social-emotional learning and best practices, review of HS offerings, creating surveys for parent and student feedback about current offerings and potential future needs for consideration
- Fall 2017- Administer and review student and family survey data. Depending on data results, focus group sessions may be hosted.
- Additional Meetings- September 20, October 24, November 2, December 7, January 18
- District website will be created to house all of the committee's learning and work. This helps create transparency to the broader community.

### **Board Information Phase Timeline**

- August 16, 2017- Update the Board on the committee purpose and timeline of work.
- On-going- Board will be updated similar to all District committees after each scheduled meeting through the FYI.
- Monthly updates from the committee will come to the Teaching and Learning Council and thus update through the monthly TLC updates at Board meetings through Board Representative, Sandy Saltzstein.
- September 27, 2017- Update to the Board Instruction Committee.
- Throughout the fall 2017- Survey and potential focus group data will be shared.
- October 18, 2017- Update to the Teaching and Learning Council.
- October 25, 2017- Update to the Board Instruction Committee.
- November 15, 2017- Update to the Teaching and Learning Council.
- November 24, 2017- Update to the Board Instruction Committee.
- December 13, 2017- Update to the Teaching and Learning Council- report shared.
- December 13, 2017- Board hosts Stakeholder Listening Session.
- January 10, 2018- Board receives committee report.
- Potential approval of final report and recommendations to the Board in January 2018.

## IV. State Law Requirements

**Committee Guiding Questions Answered:**

- What are the DPI requirements and are they being fulfilled?

Grade	World Language	Music	Art and Design Education	Physical Education	Health/ HGD
6	None	Required- under direction of licensed teacher.	Required- under direction of licensed teacher.	Required- under direction of licensed teacher.  Three times a week or 90 minutes.	Required- under direction of licensed teacher.  Once a week for the entire school term.  HGD- not required by law.
7-8	Receive regular instruction in sufficient frequency and length to achieve objectives of OUR curriculum.  **Note that our current curriculum is more rigorous.	Music instruction including, general music, vocal music, and instrumental instruction, shall be available and taught by a licensed teacher.	Art instruction shall be available and taught by a licensed teacher.	Each week for the entire school year taught by a licensed teacher.  Minutes and amount of time is not specified.	.5 health credit requirement in grades 7-12 (**CPR Requirement)  HGD- not required by law.

### Additional Law Requirements for Consideration

Topic	Information/Impact
<b>Instructional Minutes:</b>	Grade 6: 1,050 hours Grades 7-8: 1,137 hours  You can include up to 30 minutes a day of recess.
<b>Vocational Skills</b>	Need to teach them in some type of program and does not specify what grade, level, etc.
<b>Personal Development</b>	Need to teach them in some type of program and does not specify what grade, level, etc.

<b>Reading Instruction</b>	Developmental reading program for all grade levels at all levels. You need to have a comprehensive reading program, etc.
<b>Response to Instruction</b>	<p>No. A comprehensive/school-wide RtI system is not required in Wisconsin.</p> <p>However, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 and the 2006 federal regulations implementing IDEA, included significant changes in the evaluation requirements for SLD. One significant change was the regulation that states could no longer require the use of significant discrepancy between intellectual (cognitive) ability and achievement as part of SLD eligibility. Another important change was the requirement that states must adopt rules that permit the use of a process based on a student’s response to scientific, research-based intervention.</p> <p>Wisconsin’s revised SLD rule was finalized in September 2010. Much of the new rule took effect on December 1, 2010. The rule included a three year transition period for implementing the insufficient progress criterion; this is the criterion which addressed the federal requirement to use a process based on a student’s response to scientific, research-based interventions. Full implementation of the insufficient progress criterion for all public school students evaluated for potential SLD took effect on December 1, 2013.</p>
<b>Special Education</b>	<p>IEP teams determine what services, supports, and placements are most appropriate to meet students’ needs. In making these decisions, the team must consider the least restrictive environment (LRE). Pursuant to §300.114 (a)(2)(i-ii), each public agency must ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment, occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.</p> <p>Therefore, to the extent appropriate, students with IEPs should participate in any system of support available within the scope of general education, as any student would, with the addition of the accommodations outlined in their IEPs. In an RtI system, supports available to any student may include screening, progress monitoring, and systematic interventions or additional challenges. IEP teams determine any specially designed instruction necessary to meet a student’s needs.</p>
<b>Academic and Career Plan</b>	Under <u>Wis. Stat. § 115.28(59)(b)</u> , every school board will ensure that it is “providing academic and career planning services to pupils enrolled in grades 6 to 12 in the school district” beginning in fall 2017.

## V. Stakeholder Data Analysis Overview

***Committee Guiding Questions Answered:***

- What is valued by the community?
- Do we want an exploratory wheel or an elective wheel? What is the difference?
- What are the students interested in?
- What is our data telling us?

Below is the data analyzed by the committee, along with some broad data statements made by the Middle School Elective Wheel Committee. Also, there is a list of reflective questions that were used to guide our discussion and data review:

- Tell me what stands out to you?
- Can we use this information to guide our work?
- Are there any things that don't make sense?

Committee's Data Observations:

**Data Review Notes:**

- Current Middle School Student Survey
- Family Survey
- Alumni Survey
- Board Prioritization Activity
- Board Listening Session

### MSEW Current Student Data- Common Themes

Considerations	Themes
For Elective Courses	<p>Most kids are taking WL and Performing Arts, which are listed as most interesting to them.</p> <p>The two strands that we are not offering which are of high interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business and Informational Technology</li> </ul> <p>What to add:            A cooking class was mentioned often- 10% (60 of 539 comments) of the comments were added here.            Lots of comments on theatre, gaming/coding, and business.</p> <p>Health is saturated and is shown in the comments.</p> <p>Study Hall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time of day matters.</li> <li>• 190 kids said it was helpful. Only 13 kids were around the Nos.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If I had the opportunity, it would help me.</li> <li>• Some stated they need it to reduce stress.</li> </ul>
For Instruction	<p>PE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do we play football? To work on working with a group.</li> <li>• Can we integrate some of the course selections (like cooking) to be integrated in, like a health or wellness class/business course?</li> <li>• Alternatives to traditional physical education.</li> </ul>
Reasons why they liked a class or wanted to add a class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their reasons are personal</li> <li>• Hands-on (cooking)</li> <li>• Choice</li> <li>• Got them away from stress and anxiety</li> <li>• Active</li> <li>• Movement</li> <li>• Participation</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Learning something new</li> <li>• Break from academics</li> <li>• Time to socialize or connect- relationships</li> <li>• Fun</li> <li>• Outside</li> <li>• Freedom</li> <li>• It seems like the reason was evenly distributed.</li> <li>• They like it. They pursue what they are interested in.</li> </ul>
Reasons why they didn't like a class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not active enough</li> <li>• "I am not good at it."</li> <li>• No choice/lack of choice</li> <li>• Not interested in it</li> <li>• Boring</li> <li>• Class size (choir too large)</li> <li>• Hard</li> <li>• Not valued (not relevant)</li> <li>• Repetitive learning</li> <li>• Does it "feel" like a core course</li> <li>• Not engaging</li> <li>• Too much stress and anxiety</li> </ul>
General Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kids wanted to be heard.</li> <li>• They did not skip questions (except study hall).</li> </ul>

### MSEW Alumni Student Data- Common Themes

Considerations	Themes
For Elective Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of health was unpopular</li> <li>• Offer business classes</li> <li>• Common new courses suggested: home economics/cooking, world cultures</li> <li>• Visual art courses</li> <li>• World Language is important</li> </ul>
For Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dislike how physical education is taught.</li> <li>• Study hall responses are all over the place.</li> </ul>
Reasons why they liked a class or wanted to add a class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative courses</li> <li>• Freedom</li> <li>• Performance courses</li> <li>• Relaxing or de-stressing</li> <li>• Choice</li> <li>• Hands-on</li> </ul>
Reasons why they didn't like a class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff member teaching it</li> <li>• Relevance</li> <li>• No new learning</li> <li>• Boring</li> </ul>
General Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current classes allow kids to find something they like.</li> <li>• They needed to make some difficult decisions. They don't have enough time to take everything they would have liked to take.</li> <li>• Several comments about being unable to take courses because of the schedule.</li> <li>• Scattered interest based on personal interest.</li> </ul>

### MSEW Family Data- Common Themes

Considerations	Themes
For Elective Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classes to be included</li> <li>• Comments split on study hall.</li> <li>• Lower interest in health and wellness classes.</li> <li>• High interest in IT and applied technology classes.</li> <li>• Study hall was split almost in half.</li> </ul>
For Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical education programming.</li> </ul>
General Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low response rate did not meet statistical significance.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses from this stakeholder group is very different than current MS students and alumni.</li> <li>• Responses are all over the place. Hard to find too many themes.</li> </ul>
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**Board Prioritization Activity- November 2017**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<b>Sixth Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow students to choose their music option (band, orchestra, choir or general music) to meet DPI requirement.</li> <li>• Integrate health into physical education</li> <li>• World language requirement</li> </ul>
<b>Seventh and Eighth Grade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do something different than our existing health courses at this level; maybe integrated in physical education</li> <li>• Informational technology course is of high interest</li> <li>• “Other electives” mirror our student survey; all over the place for interest based on the person</li> <li>• A/B cycle of days</li> <li>• Potential change in world language instruction</li> </ul>

**Board Listening Session- December 13, 2017 Notes**

<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Themes</b>
Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to look at 6<sup>th</sup> grade differently than seventh and eighth grade, because of the legal requirements.</li> <li>• Sixth grade should be an exploratory wheel.</li> <li>• Seventh and eighth grade should be an elective course focus.</li> </ul>
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the amount of health.</li> </ul>

\* One 5<sup>th</sup> grade parent attended the listening session.

## VI . Evidence-Based Research Review

### *Committee Guiding Questions Answered:*

- What do we know about middle school learners?
- How does this support a robust Academic Career Planning (ACP) process?
- How do we ensure student growth towards college, career, and social-emotional growth?

Our students' middle school elective programming should provide opportunities for students to experience challenging, relevant, and integrated learning that builds upon and deepens the core curriculum, assists in exploring areas of interest, and opens the pathways to the seven thriving dispositions and the future global job market. The following highlights the current research utilizing adolescent brain development, academic and career planning (career clusters and interest surveys) implications, social-emotional learning components, and recent workforce (some from our approved E4E plan) data. The following are the key components of the research and related to the middle school elective/exploratory wheel:

### **Adolescent Development**

The committee conducted a review of current literature relating to the adolescent brain and overall development. Several themes emerged from this study and are depicted in the figures below. They were divided into two categories: what we know about them as learners (what matters in their learning environment and instruction), and what we know about them as an adolescent person (characteristics).

### **Defining the Qualities of a Middle School Learner**

Scaffolding/ Modeling Engage emotions (emotional content, link to feelings, memories or personal association) and social structures Think about their thinking. Relevance- Real life pursuits
--



Make mistakes in a safe space  
Active  
Positive social relationship  
Small group  
Initiate their own learning: if given a significant role in determining the learning, it will fuel the motivation to learn.  
Opportunities of self-expression  
Metacognition: shift in their ability to think. Into the formal operational stage of cognitive development.  
They can think about thinking themselves.  
Integrated curriculum  
Health and wellness: how to stay healthy rather than how to avoid disease?  
Setting goals: connecting your present-self to a future-self.

### **Defining the Characteristics of a Middle School Person**

Need 9 hours of sleep  
Social  
Puberty: body changes, brain growing  
Impulsive  
Identity: who am I?  
Honesty  
Positive role models  
Role in decision making (Gradual release of responsibility)  
Need to feel a sense of belonging  
Be heard  
Self-expression without rejection  
Autonomy: develop their own individual voices  
"Right of passage"  
Sense of invincibility and/or invisibility  
Present moment thinking

### **ACP Information**

According the Wisconsin Department of Instruction, "Academic and Career Planning (ACP) is a student-driven, adult-supported process, in which students create and cultivate their own unique and information-based visions for post-secondary success, obtained through self-exploration, career exploration, and the development of career management and planning skills."

When looking at the Middle School ACP process more in-depth, it is focused on the following:

- The focus of the Middle School ACP is on helping students explore the essential question of “Who Am I?” as well provide career exploration opportunities.
- In 6th grade, students meet with counselors to learn to use Naviance, while engaging in personal and career exploration activities.
  - “Who Am I?” Survey: strengths, interests, activities, goals
  - Learning Style Inventory
- In 7th grade, students explore how personality traits and values influence career choices as well provide opportunity for further career exploration. Students complete:
  - Career Key: based on Holland’s Six Personality Types
  - ACP profile update: revision of goals, interests, activities
  - Counselors meet with each student to review information focusing on “How Am I?”
- In 8th grade, students explore career clusters based on school subjects, personal qualities, interests and activities. Clusters are then saved in Naviance for further exploration. Students have the opportunity to look at necessary post-secondary education, wage ranges, outlook, and geographic location.
- Career Clusters: identify top career clusters
- 8th Grade ACP Profile: prepares for grade 8/9 transition meeting with high school counselor and discussing “What’s Next?”

**Career Clusters** (Appendix 2 gives the complete groups and pathways) are broad occupational groupings that serve as an organizational tool, categorizing common knowledge and skill sets for secondary and post-secondary education. Career Clusters use 16 broad groups of occupations and 79 pathways (sub-groups). As a tool, Career Clusters:

- blend rigorous academic/technical preparation
- provide for career development
- offer options for students to experience all aspects of a business or industry
- facilitate/assist students and educators with ongoing transitions

### **Social-Emotional Learning**

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the way that both students and adults learn and practice the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to:

- Understand and manage emotions.
- Set and achieve positive goals.
- Feel and show empathy for others.
- Establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Make responsible decisions.

Cultivating the social and emotional competencies are important for creating models for student social and emotional growth. The Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has identified five core SEL competencies:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Responsible decision making

Appendix 4, shares CASELS infographic and more details about the five core competencies that were reviewed and discussed at the committee.

### Workforce Data

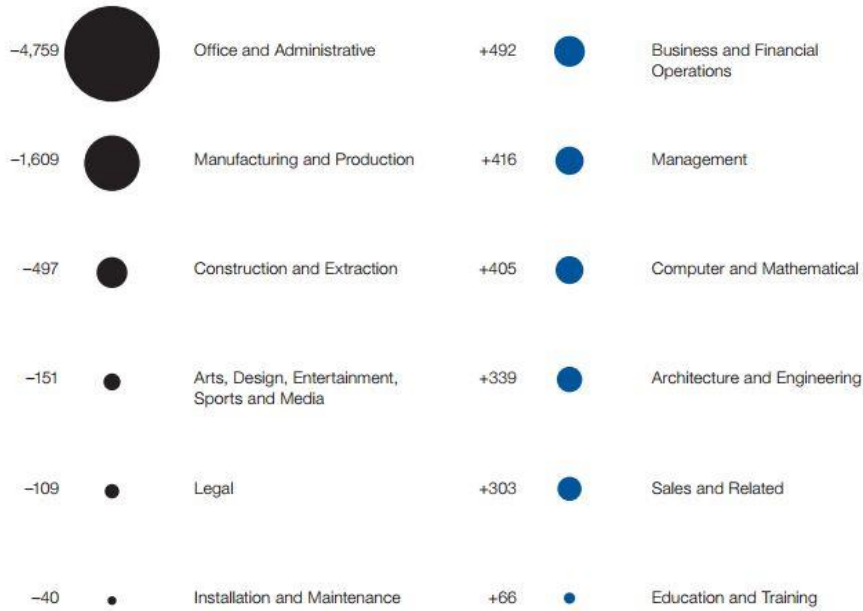
Below is an analysis formulated by the Economic Forum concerning the top ten skills necessary to be successful in the workplace. Experts have noted that many of these skills are not skills in which students excel. When comparing the 2020 skills, it is well noted that the following seven thriving dispositions are noted:

- Critical thinking and problem solving (decision making)
- Curiosity and imagination (creativity)
- Collaboration (coordinating with others)
- Initiative and entrepreneurialism (service orientation)
- Access and analyzing information (judgment)



Our District’s approved Education for Employment (E4E) plan included a global market analysis based on job families for the same time period as the World Economic Forum skills referenced above.

**Figure 6: Net employment outlook by job family, 2015–2020**  
Employees (thousands, all focus countries)



Looking at our best practices and evidence based research, our middle school recommendations for the elective/exploratory programming, take into account the unique needs of the adolescent person and learner, are rooted in in relevance for the level, and are designed to integrate several district (seven thriving dispositions, social-emotional wellbeing) initiatives and State requirements (ACP and E4E).

## VII. Summary of Recommendations

### *Committee Guiding Questions Answered:*

- Can we provide students engaging opportunities to explore relevant and meaningful career paths?
- What are the financial or staffing implications of any changes?
- Do our offerings align with high school course offerings? Are there potential high school implications?
- How should intervention (RtI) time be supported in the schedule?

The proposed middle school elective model outlined below, was generated after extensive feedback from various stakeholders. The model exposes students to learning experiences within several career clusters: Information Technology and Entrepreneurship, Health Sciences and Wellness, Applied Technology and Engineering, and Visual and Performing Arts. Key considerations included in the design of this mode are outlined below:

### *Key Considerations in Schedule Design*

Expanded opportunities for students to explore potential areas of interest and/or strength. Provide course offerings that are both robust and relevant. Maintain music and wellness courses as year-long, every-other-day offerings. Improve course alignment with high school offerings when developmentally appropriate. Emphasize and embed the seven thriving dispositions.
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### MSE<sup>2</sup>W Committee Recommendations

\*Administration may have to adjust when the offerings in the wheel takes place, based off of shared staffing.

\* Course title may also change once created.

\* Based on what most students will select.

<b>Grade 6</b>				
Period 1- Required	Physical Education Wellness Course	World Language		
Period 2- Required	Band, Orchestra, Choir OR Study Hall (General Music for one quarter for NON BOC)			
Exploratory Wheel	Introduction to Business	PLTW	Art	Introduction to Computer Science

<b>Grade 7</b>				
Period 1- Required	Physical Education Wellness Course	World Language		
Period 2- Required	Band, Orchestra, Choir OR Study Hall			
Exploratory Wheel	Drama	Health	Art	PLTW

<b>Grade 8</b>				
Period 1	World Language			
Period 2	Physical Education Wellness Elective Courses	Elective	Elective	
Elective Options	Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective

**Elective Options**

\*Below are examples of current or potential new elective options created by the administration.

<b>Health Science, Physical Education, Wellness Courses</b>	<b>Performing &amp; Visual Arts</b>	<b>Applied Technology and Entrepreneurship</b>	<b>Additional Electives</b>
Leadership	Video Production	Design Challenge	World Cultures
Life Skills	Band *	Business Design	Genius Hour
Personal Fitness and Nutrition	Orchestra *	Marketing	Study Hall
Yoga	Choir *	Computer Design	Language Lab
Medical Detectives (PLTW)	3D Art	Personal Finance	Makerspace
Team Sports	2D Art	Game and Web Design	
Individual Sports	Pop Art		
Exercise and Physiology	Hands-on Guitar		
	Hands-on Drumming		

\*= Year Long

### **Additional Committee Recommendations**

- Review current Physical Education curriculum to include portions of Health and to consider survey feedback on instructional practice (they are entering a curriculum review along with Health next year).
- Survey and review again after full implementation (2020-2021) to see if it is meeting the community needs. Some committee members believe that we still have an opportunity to apply some design thinking principles to how we are viewing electives and the wheel. We need to have a more regular review of the Middle School Exploratory/Elective offerings and instruction.
- Human growth and development should be taught in the PE courses, but it would benefit for consistency to be done by a medical provider.
- Look to continue to integrate some electives with family and consumer education and other disciplines (World Cultures could integrate cooking, art, music, history, etc.).
- The new courses curriculum should be created to align to the best practices and unique characteristics of the adolescent learner.
- The committee’s learning around the adolescent learner should be shared with ALL middle school staff and influence instruction and curriculum in both cores and electives.
- The middle school course proposal form should be different than the HS to include the unique characteristics of the adolescent learner.
- Some additional learning happened outside of the charge of the committee that the Middle School Leadership team will need to continue to explore in the upcoming years; common planning time for non-core teachers, ensuring all kids have access to electives, and that we may need to evaluate if we have enough “time” allocated to the periods to meet the learning needs.

### **Implementation Timeline**

#### **Potential Implementation Timeline:**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Board approves New Middle School Elective Recommendations	January 2018
Board approves of new courses at Grade 6 and 7 are brought to the Board for approval for implementation in 2018-2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business course</li> <li>• Drama course</li> <li>• Computer Science course</li> </ul>	January 2018
Curriculum Writing for New Courses at Grade 6 and 7	Spring 2018-August 2018
Grade 6 and 7 courses and approved wheel recommendations are implemented	September 2018
Board update on elective/exploratory wheel changes	November 2018
Board approves additional middle school elective courses	December 2018-January 2019
Curriculum writing for new elective courses	June 2019-August 2019
Additional new elective courses implemented	September 2019
Board update on elective/exploratory wheel changes	November 2019
Review MSE <sup>2</sup> W (placed on curriculum review and renewal process)	2021-2022 School Year



## **VIII. Appendix**

Research that Guides our Work- Appendix 1

Career Clusters- Appendix 2

Seven Thriving Dispositions- Appendix 3

Social Emotional Learning Competencies- Appendix 4

Whitefish Bay School District Focus Plan- Appendix 5

# Appendix 1

## Research that Guides our Work

Academic and Career Planning., *Wisconsin Department of Instruction*, 2017. Retrieved August 16, 2017.

Armstrong, T., *The Best Schools: How human development research should inform educational practice*, ASCD, Alexandria, VA., 2006.

Career Clusters, *Advanced CTE*, <https://careertech.org/career-clusters> Retrieved August 16, 2017

CASEL Secondary Guide., Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning 2015. Retrieved August 16, 2017.

Daniels, E., *On the Minds of Middle Schoolers*. *Educational Leadership*, 62 (7), 52-55.

George, P., *The Evolution of Middle Schools*. *Educational Leadership*, 58 (4), 40-44.

Griffin L., *The Developing Teenage Brain*. *School Administrator*, 74 (8), 20-25.

Inlay, L., *Safe Schools for the Roller Coaster Years*. *Educational Leadership*, 62 (7), 41-43.

Social Emotional Learning., *Wisconsin Department of Instruction*, 2017. Retrieved August 16, 2017.

Sousa D., *The Rewired Brain*. *School Administrator*, 74 (8), 27-30.

Sprenger, M., *Inside Amy's Brain*. *Educational Leadership*, 62 (7), 28-32.

Zull, J., *The Art of the Changing the Brain: Enriching the practice of teaching by exploring the biology of learning*, Stylus Publishing, Sterling, VA., 2002.

# Appendix 2



## **Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources**

- Agribusiness Systems
- Animal Systems
- Environmental Service Systems
- Food Products & Processing Systems
- Natural Resources Systems
- Plant Systems
- Power, Structural & Technical Systems
- Architecture & Construction

## **Architecture & Construction**

- Construction
- Design/Pre-Construction
- Maintenance/Operations

## **Arts, A/V Technology & Communications**

- A/V Technology & Film
- Journalism & Broadcasting
- Performing Arts
- Printing Technology
- Telecommunications
- Visual Arts

## **Business Management & Administration**

- Administrative Support
- Business Information Management
- General Management
- Human Resources Management
- Operations Management

## **Education & Training**

- Administration & Administrative Support
- Professional Support Services
- Teaching/Training

## **Finance**

- Accounting
- Banking Services
- Business Finance
- Insurance
- Securities & Investments

## **Government & Public Administration**

- Foreign Service
- Governance
- National Security

- Planning
- Public Management & Administration
- Regulation
- Revenue & Taxation

## **Health Sciences**

- Biotechnology Research & Development
- Diagnostic Services
- Health Informatics
- Support Services
- Therapeutic Services

## **Hospitality & Tourism**

- Lodging
- Recreation, Amusements & Attractions
- Restaurants & Food/Beverage Services
- Travel & Tourism

## **Human Services**

- Consumer Services
- Counseling & Mental Health Services
- Early Childhood Development & Services
- Family & Community Services
- Personal Care Services

## **Information Technology**

- Information Support & Services
- Network Systems
- Programming & Software Development
- Web & Digital Communications

## **Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security**

- Correction Services
- Emergency & Fire Management Services
- Law Enforcement Services
- Legal Services
- Security & Protective Services

## **Manufacturing**

- Health, Safety & Environmental Assurance
- Logistics & Inventory Control
- Maintenance, Installation & Repair
- Manufacturing Production Process Dev.
- Production
- Quality Assurance

[www.careertech.org/Career-Clusters](http://www.careertech.org/Career-Clusters)

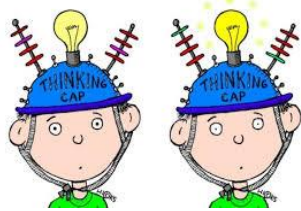
# Appendix 3

## Seven Thriving Dispositions

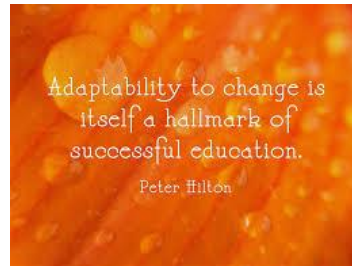
### WFB Focus Plan Wordle



### Critical Thinking and Problem Solving



### Agility and Adaptability



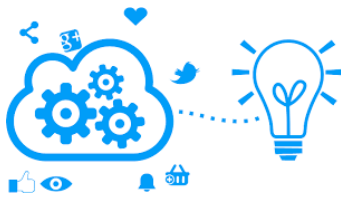
### Curiosity and Imagination



### Initiative/ Entrepreneurialism



### Access and Analyze Information



### Effective Oral and Written Communication



### Collaboration



## 1. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Organizations have flattened over time, and are organized in teams for specific projects. Work is no longer defined by a specialty; it is defined by the task or problem you and your team are trying to solve or the end goal you want to accomplish. The solution is not prescribed- the biggest challenge is to have the critical thinking and problem solving skills to be effective in teams, because nobody is telling them exactly what to do.

### 1A. Reason Effectively

- Use various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation.

### 1B. Use Systems Thinking

- Analyze how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems.

### 1C. Make Judgments and Decisions

- Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims, and beliefs.
- Analyze and evaluate major alternative points of view.

- Synthesize and make connections between information and arguments.
- Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis.
- Reflect critically on learning experiences and processes.

#### *1D. Solve Problems*

- Solve different kinds of non-familiar problems in both conventional and innovative ways.
- Identify and ask significant questions that clarify various points of view, and lead to better solutions.

## **2. Agility and Adaptability**

The shift from hierarchal authority that tells you what to do to a team-based environment has been both rapid and profound. Similarly, the intensifying rate of change, the overwhelming amount of data, and the increasing complexity of problems that individuals and teams face every day in their work, are dramatic new challenges for everyone.

#### *2A. Adapt to Change*

- Adapt to varied roles, jobs responsibilities, schedules and context.
- Work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities.

#### *2B. Be Flexible*

- Incorporate feedback effectively.
- Deal positively with praise, setbacks, and criticism.
- Understand, negotiate and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments.

## **3. Curiosity and Imagination**

These are key factors not only in solving problems, but also in developing new or improved products and services needed in our global society. These dispositions will be our competitive edge in the future. We need those who can think in disciplined ways, but also those who have burning curiosity and a lively imagination; the true knowledge worker.

#### *3A. Think Creatively*

- Use a wide range of idea creation techniques (such as brainstorming).
- Create new and worthwhile ideas (both incremental and radical concepts.)
- Elaborate, refine, analyze, and evaluate their own ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts.

#### *3B. Work Creatively with Others*

- Develop, implement, and communicate new ideas to others effectively.
- Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work.

- Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work, and understand the real world limits to adopting new ideas.
- View failure as an opportunity to learn; understand that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes.

### *3C. Implement Innovations*

- Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur.

## **4. Initiative/Entrepreneurialism**

Leaders today want to see individuals that take more initiative and even be entrepreneurial in terms of the ways to seek out new opportunities, ideas, and strategies for improvement.

### *4A. Manage Goals and Time*

- Set goals with tangible and intangible success criteria.
- Balance tactical (short-term) and strategic (long-term) goals.
- Utilize time and manage workload efficiently.

### *4B. Work Independently*

- Monitor, define, prioritize and complete tasks without direct oversight.

### *4C. Be Self-directed Learners*

- Go beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise.
- Demonstrate initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level.
- Demonstrate commitment to learning as a lifelong process.
- Reflect critically on past experiences in order to inform future progress.

## **5. Access and Analyze Information Skills**

In the twenty-first century, we have to manage an astronomical amount of information flowing into our lives on a daily basis. We have to be able to access and evaluate information from many different sources.

### *5A. Access and Evaluate Information*

- Access information efficiently (time) and effectively (sources)
- Evaluate information critically and competently

### *5B. Use and Manage Information*

- Use information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand
- Manage the flow of information from a wide variety of sources
- Apply a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

## **6. Effective Oral and Written Communication Skills**

As more and more people are working in “virtual” offices, the ability to express one’s views clearly and to communicate effectively across cultures is becoming increasingly valuable. Communication via email and google hang-outs, requires the ability to communicate one’s thoughts clearly and concisely, but also the ability to create focus, energy, and passion.

#### 6A. *Communicate Clearly*

- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts
- Listen effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes and intentions
- Use communication for a range of purposes (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate and persuade)
- Utilize multiple media and technologies, and know how to judge their effectiveness a priori as well as assess their impact
- Communicate effectively in diverse environments (including multi-lingual)

### **7. Collaboration**

The skillfulness of individuals working with networks of people across boundaries and from different cultures has become an essential prerequisite for a growing number of multinational corporations.

#### 7A. *Collaborate with Others*

- Demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams
- Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal
- Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member

Resources/Excerpts from:

<http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework>

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Revised 1.20.17 mc

# Appendix 4



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# Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies

## SELF-AWARENESS

The ability to accurately recognize one’s own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”

- ➔ IDENTIFYING EMOTIONS
- ➔ ACCURATE SELF-PERCEPTION
- ➔ RECOGNIZING STRENGTHS
- ➔ SELF-CONFIDENCE
- ➔ SELF-EFFICACY

## SOCIAL AWARENESS

The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behavior and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

- ➔ PERSPECTIVE-TAKING
- ➔ EMPATHY
- ➔ APPRECIATING DIVERSITY
- ➔ RESPECT FOR OTHERS

## RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and a consideration of the well-being of oneself and others.

- ➔ IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS
- ➔ ANALYZING SITUATIONS
- ➔ SOLVING PROBLEMS
- ➔ EVALUATING
- ➔ REFLECTING
- ➔ ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY

## SELF-MANAGEMENT

The ability to successfully regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations — effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

- ➔ IMPULSE CONTROL
- ➔ STRESS MANAGEMENT
- ➔ SELF-DISCIPLINE
- ➔ SELF-MOTIVATION
- ➔ GOAL SETTING
- ➔ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

## RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed.

- ➔ COMMUNICATION
- ➔ SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT
- ➔ RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- ➔ TEAMWORK



## Appendix 5

# Focus Plan

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### Our Vision

The School District of Whitefish Bay, in partnership with families and community, is student-centered with a tradition of educational excellence. We will build upon this tradition by:

- Empowering students with the knowledge, skills, and character necessary to thrive in a changing, global society.
- Respecting the diversity of our students and engaging them as individual learners in an innovative learning community.
- Addressing the needs of the whole child in a caring, inclusive environment.

### Our Goals & Key Strategies

#### Academic Achievement and Engaging 21st Century Learning

Every student will meet or exceed comprehensive learning standards to promote future success within our global society.

1. Develop exemplary, standards-based curriculum and assessment.
2. Develop and implement data-driven, differentiated instruction across all grade levels and subject areas.
3. Develop and implement timely, comprehensive support systems to ensure success for every student.
4. Ensure access to reliable, secure and sufficiently robust technology infrastructure that facilitates transformational educational practice.

#### Supportive Environment & Whole Child Development

Every student will experience a caring, inclusive learning environment that supports the development of the whole child with balanced attention to physical, social, emotional, and intellectual well-being.

1. Conduct strengths and needs analysis, including the development of a student feedback process to inform the continuous improvement of a caring, inclusive and culturally responsive environment.
  2. Provide professional development for all staff members about nurturing the whole child.
- 

The Whitefish Bay School District



An Exceptional Place To Learn