INSTRUCTION

Classroom Management

Grouping (Middle School)

Instruction in the middle school grades should be appropriate to the needs and characteristics of early adolescents. One method of meeting the instructional needs of middle school students is through flexible instructional grouping. Although the method of grouping will be determined at the building level, grouping should be flexible and fluid to prevent grouping of low achieving students for a major part of the day.

Since middle school students are in transition from concrete to abstract thought processes, instruction should have an emphasis on experience, demonstration, practice and personal relevance. Furthermore, there must be on-going assessment to ensure flexibility in instructional grouping and regrouping as the student progresses. Therefore, a student's class assignment should maximize individual potential and a variety of instructional strategies must be incorporated in order to address individual differences within the classroom, i.e., cooperative learning, cross grade tutoring, use of learning style inventories, etc.

In the middle schools, in order to comply with state and federal regulations, some instructional grouping of students may be appropriate; however, there is considerable evidence that heterogeneous grouping is beneficial to the academic achievement of students. Likewise, there is evidence that grouping of students who have lower ability results in low achievement and low self-esteem. Therefore, the practice of grouping which results in "tracking," in which students are inflexibly assigned to "low groups," will not occur. Every effort should be made to ensure that classrooms include students with a range of abilities whose instructional needs will be met through regrouping and the use of appropriate resource materials.

In those cases where the principal determines that flexible grouping will best meet the instructional needs of students, the following must be assessed before any grouping occurs:

1. Available standardized test data to include CRT results.
2. Current grade average in the subject area.

3. Teacher recommendations.

4. Student interest and motivation.

Regardless of the type of grouping that occurs in a school, it is the principal's responsibility to prevent:

1. Grouping of students that results in "tracking."

2. Keeping low-achieving students together for a major part of the day.

3. Placing a disproportionate number of minority students in certain classrooms.

4. Placing a disproportionate number of behaviorally troubled students in certain classrooms.

The principal, the appropriate Area Associate Superintendent, and the Associate Superintendent for Instruction will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this regulation.