



FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Excellence is not an act, but a habit." – Aristotle

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

The district would like to take this opportunity to share aspects of the 2018-2019 Dorseyville Middle School schedule in order to clear up confusion and address misrepresentations of information on social media.

- Each student will have lunch every day.
- There will still be a Homebase period in the middle school schedule. Homebase will be a time for teachers to connect with students.
- The schedule calls for 60 minutes of math instruction with an additional 20 minutes of intervention and enrichment in mathematics. Currently, intervention and enrichment takes place in Homebase. This will no longer be the case.
- Social studies will continue to be a core course. Students will also have the option to take an additional social studies course as an elective in seventh and/or eighth grade.
- In sixth grade, students will continue to have exposure to the following courses: music, physical education/health, art, world language, technology education, and computer science.
- In seventh and eighth grade, families can choose from one of two schedule options. These two options, the Exposure Pathway and the Individualized Pathway, are explained in the video that is linked to this email.

—If families select the Exposure Pathway, students will receive an increase in instructional minutes in computer science, family and consumer science, art, music, and technology education over the course of their time at DMS. There is a slight decrease in time for the required health and physical education course. In order to mitigate this loss in minutes, some content typically taught in health will now be taught in science (for example, the unit on body systems). Over the course of a student's time at DMS, world language minutes will also decrease slightly. However, students in grade 6 will now have the opportunity to begin Level One instruction. This will increase program consistency throughout the middle school and better prepare students for high school language instruction.

—If families select the Individualized Pathway, students will have the opportunity to select six electives over the span of seventh and eighth grade. These electives include family and consumer science, art, music, technology education, world language, an additional social studies elective, and/or an additional computer science elective. Physical education and health will be required for all students. For families who choose this pathway, students will gain instructional minutes in the electives of their choice.

- In the spring of 2018, fifth grade students at the elementary schools will participate in exploratory language experiences through a language symposium at their school. This will provide them with exposure to French, German, Latin, and Spanish so they will be prepared to choose their language for the sixth-grade year.
- While the instructional minutes dedicated to world language are sufficient for next year's sixth and seventh graders, the district recognizes that a transition plan is necessary for the incoming eighth graders. The district will provide incoming eighth graders the opportunity to double up on their language of choice in place of the core computer science course. This will allow students to maintain the same number of instructional minutes as our current eighth graders.

We thank you for reading this communication, and we encourage you to watch the video at <https://youtu.be/xa9kLJefRhw>. We anticipate that it will clear up confusion and rectify any misconceptions regarding the DMS schedule.

Bonnie Berzonski
Coordinator of Communications