

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #832**  
**STUDY SESSION – BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Tuesday, November 24, 2009 - 7:00 PM**  
**Mahtomedi District Education Center - Community Room**

The Mission of the Mahtomedi School District No. 832, as a multi-community public school system, is to provide individually challenging, lifelong learning experiences for all people, leading to productive and self-fulfilling roles in a global society, accomplished through partnerships with students, families, staff and communities all committed to excellence.

**- AGENDA -**

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL OF ATTENDANCE
3. DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS
  - A. Presentation on Proposed Mahtomedi Middle School Schedule 2  
Presenter: Dr. Sharon Zweber
4. ADJOURNMENT

# Current MMS Master Schedule

## CURRENT 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule: On Team

**Mathematics**  
(every day)

**Language Arts**  
(every day)

**Science**  
(every day)

**Social Studies**  
(every day)

**Lunch and Advisory**  
(every day)

**Physical Education/Health**  
(every day)

**Art**  
(one quarter)  
**STEM/Tech Ed**  
(one quarter)  
**Family Consumer Science**  
(one quarter)  
**Reading Strategies**  
(one quarter)

### **ELECTIVES: (A/B)**

Choose one combination below:

- Band/Spanish
- Exploring Music/Spanish
- Vocal Music/Spanish

Targeted support options scheduled by Admin/staff:

- Reading support

## Current MMS Master Schedule

### **CURRENT 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule: On Team**

**Mathematics**  
(every day)

**Language Arts**  
(every day)

**Science**  
(every day)

**Social Studies**  
(every day)

**Lunch and Advisory**  
(every day)

**Physical Education/Health**  
(every day)

**Art**  
(one quarter)  
**STEM/Tech Ed**  
(one quarter)  
**Family Consumer Science**  
(one quarter)  
**Reading Strategies**  
(one quarter)

#### **ELECTIVES: (A/B)**

Choose one combination below:

- Band/Spanish
- Exploring Music/Spanish
- Vocal Music/Spanish

Targeted support options scheduled by Admin/staff:

- Reading support

# Current MMS Master Schedule

## CURRENT 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule: On Team

**Mathematics**  
(every day)

**Language Arts**  
(every day)

**2 PERIODS OF ELECTIVES: (Semester or Full Year)**

**Band, Spanish** (Full Year Courses)  
(Semester Courses)

**Drama**

**Clay and More**

**Pop Art and More**

**Digital Art**

**Culinary Arts**

**Textile Arts**

**Design & Robotics**

**Wood Production**

**Home & Design Construction**

**Machines & Electrons**

**Strategic Reading**

**Social Studies**  
(every day)

**Lunch and Advisory**

**Science**  
(every day)

**Physical Education/Health**  
(every day)

**PROPOSED MMS 6-PER. DAY  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule: Team**

**Mathematics**  
(every day)

**Language Arts (Includes Reading)**  
(every day)

**STEM/Tech Ed**  
(One Quarter)  
**Family Consumer Science (Includes Health)**  
(One Quarter)  
**Spanish**  
(Two Quarters)

**Social Studies**  
(every day)

**Lunch and Advisory**

**Science**  
(every day)

**Physical Education**  
(A/B)  
**Band/Vocal Music/Exploring Music**

**PROPOSED MMS 6-PER. DAY  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule: Team**

**Mathematics**  
(every day)

**Language Arts (Includes Reading)**  
(every day)

**STEM/Tech Ed**  
(One Quarter)  
**Art**  
(One Quarter)  
**Spanish**  
(Two Quarters)

**Social Studies**  
(every day)

**Lunch and Advisory**

**Science (Includes Health)**  
(every day)

**Physical Education**  
(A/B)  
**Band/Vocal Music/Exploring Music**

**PROPOSED MMS 6-PER. DAY  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule: Team**

**Mathematics**  
(every day)

**Language Arts**  
(every day)

**1.5 PERIODS OF ELECTIVES: (Semester or Full Year)**

**Spanish I+ or II (Full Year Courses)**  
(Semester Courses)

**Vocal Music or Band**

**Drama**

**Pop Art and More**

**Clay and More**

**Digital Art**

**Culinary Arts**

**Textile Arts**

**The Snack Shop**

**Advanced Robotics - STEM**

**Design and Woods**

**Strategic Reading**

**Social Studies**  
(every day)

**Lunch and Advisory**

**Science**  
(every day)

**Physical Education/Health - Required**  
(Semester)

To the Editor:

As the principal of Mahtomedi Middle School, I am writing to clarify some of the issues that have arisen as the Mahtomedi School District considers all options for cost savings in these challenging economic times.

As the result of a projected one million dollar budget shortfall for the 2010-11 school year, a proposal is being considered that would move Mahtomedi Middle School from a 7-period day to a 6-period day. Under this proposal, the core classes of language arts, science, mathematics, and social studies would most likely continue to meet every day. Losing a period would reduce, but not eliminate our offerings in physical education and the allied arts. Under our current seven period day, the majority of our students have physical education/health every day and complete coursework in Spanish, music, art, FCS, STEM/tech ed and reading. Switching to a 6-period day would reduce the amount of time that students would have in some of these courses, but our intention would be to continue to offer the same rich combination of exploratory and elective offerings.

Rich curricular offerings are an important component of a middle school. However, it is the decision to embrace a student-centered middle school philosophy that is at its heart. We as a school and a community have a responsibility to nurture young adolescents during this critical time in their development. MMS truly embraces a middle school philosophy – one that emphasizes building relationships with students while offering courses that are informative and inspiring. Our staff does an exemplary job of working with students and I am honored to be the principal in a building where we focus on putting students first.

Having a top notch middle school is not about the number of class periods in a student's day, it is about having fantastic teachers who are student-centered, who use data to make informed decisions about curriculum, and who connect with colleagues to align coursework and assess student's academic and social progress. These tough economic times may force us to make some changes to our curriculum delivery model. They will not change our commitment to our students.

Sharon Zweber  
Principal, Mahtomedi Middle School

To the Editor:

It is gratifying to see so much attention focusing on Mahtomedi Middle School. The middle school level is the most challenging, invigorating, and exciting time in a student's life. However, it is very important to note that "middle school" is not about a grade configuration, a number of periods in the day, or even a building. Middle school is about the attitude and philosophy of the people working with students in that building.

Spending time in the building, meeting with teachers, answering questions at a staff meeting, having lunch with students, etc., it is easy to see the dedication and passion of the MMS teachers. And one can see the great results they get.

In the current discussions about middle level programming, there has never been any intention of eliminating any of the allied arts from our MMS curriculum. When the State of Minnesota freezes funding for schools and schools face annual rising expenses, reductions must occur. In Mahtomedi, reductions have occurred in seven of the last eight years and this year is no different.

One proposal is the move from a 7-period day to a 6-period day. Such a move would reduce, but not eliminate, allied arts classes. The core classes of language arts, science, mathematics, and social studies would stay intact. If such a change were made, it would mean additional time in each of the core classes — adding the equivalent of about 30 class periods over the course of a year. That increase in class time, in the hands of our outstanding teachers, will undoubtedly lead to better academic results.

The reduction of allied arts opportunities means there will be some exploratory classes that all students will be required to take and then additional options from which student may choose. This isn't that different than what 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at MMS experience now.

No one is happy about budget reductions, but I can assure you that the district and school administration will design the very best curriculum possible given the resources.

Mark Larson, PhD  
Assistant Superintendent/Director of Teaching and Learning  
Mahtomedi Public Schools