



MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
BLAINE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61
THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2012 – 12:00 P.M.
DISTRICT OFFICE

For complete details, please logon to the Blaine County School District website www.blaineschools.org and watch the streamed broadcast of the January 26, 2012 Special Meeting/Work Session of the Board.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Chairman Steve Guthrie called the Special Meeting/Work Session of the Board of Trustees of Blaine County School District No. 61 to order at 12:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Present were Board Members Don Nurge, Paul Bates, and Shawn Bennion. Also present were Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Lonnie Barber, Assistant Superintendent, John Blackman and Board Clerk, Laurie Kaufman.

Chairman Guthrie stated that a quorum was present.

II. Any Additions, Corrections, Modifications or Substitutions to the Current Agenda

None.

III. Strategic Plan Goal #3: K-12 World Languages Program

Patricia McLean, Director of Curriculum, Molly Michalec, Coordinator of Dual Immersion Program, and Dr. Jane Walther, Coordinator of 6-10 IB-MYP Program

- Strategic Plan Goal #3: Our students are prepared for a multicultural and multilingual world.

Curriculum Director Patricia McLean suggested that this is not the time for World Languages solutions or plans, it's really about looking at where we might want to be; the pathway is going to take more thoughtful discussion.

Discussion with the Board and the Learning Session audience ensued throughout Ms. McLean's World Languages presentation. Please logon to the streamed broadcast, www.blaineschools.org, for full details.

Ms. McLean's World Languages presentation is book-marked for reference.

IV. Process for Parent and/or Community Involvement in Textbook Adoptions

Patricia McLean reviewed a draft version of the “*Candidate Expression of Interest in Textbook Adoption Process*” application with the Board. Modification suggestions will be received from the Board and the public before a final version goes before the Board for approval at the Regular February Board Meeting.

The draft “*Candidate Expression of Interest in Textbook Adoption Process*” is book-marked for reference.

Comment from Vice Chairman Don Nurge:

We want the parents and community involved, but when you're on a committee in a group of people you have to play nice. You will bring your different views and opinions but you have to work as a team. If there's a straw vote and it goes against you, you have to be able to move on to the next issue and think of what's best for all kids. That's the important thing; we really want this group to work well together and be respectful of each other and look for the product that is best for all kids. The task force, not us [Board], will be picking the parents from the applications.

There being no further business to discuss, Board Member Don Nurge made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Paul Bates and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Steve Guthrie: Aye

Don Nurge: Aye

Paul Bates: Aye

Shawn Bennion: Aye

The Special Meeting/Work Session of the Blaine County School District Board of Trustees adjourned at 1:40 p.m.



Board of Trustees Learning Session

World Languages

Thursday, January 26, 2012



World Languages Encompass

Three programs with a common goal

- **World Languages** — Focus on French, Spanish
- **English as a Second Language** (ESL classes and DI classes)
- **Dual Immersion** (K-12 - a particular identified group of students and teachers)


A Common Purpose

- content focused **and** form-focused language learning
- **proficiency as a measure of progress** in all forms of communication (reading, writing, speaking, understanding)
- proficiency
 - text-type (word, sentence, paragraph, extended discourse)
 - degree of accuracy and ability to sustain accuracy
 - vocabulary – richness, extensiveness
 - functions – tasks we can do
 - e.g. lists, asking questions, narrating in the past
- Understanding of cultures where these languages are spoken (beyond flags, food, and fiestas)
- Languages are used for a variety of purposes, which demand different levels of proficiency



Foreign language learning

- What are your memories from past language learning?
 - Positives?
 - Negatives?
- Why did you elect to take a foreign language?
- Did you take 2 years of high school in French? German? Latin? Russian? Spanish?
- How long did you take a foreign language?



How would you describe your language skills upon leaving high school?

1. Simple words and memorized phrases?
2. Ask and answer questions about family, interests, travel needs?
3. Describe experiences, events, ambitions?
4. Resolve an unexpected situation?
5. Offer opinions and support them with reasons?
6. Understand the main ideas (“gist”) of a national newspaper article?
7. Interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity with native speakers?
8. Understand demanding texts and the implicit meanings?



Now it is time to....

- Suspend thoughts about your own experience




BCSD Mission:
To be a ***world class***, student-
focused, community of
teaching and learning

- What are some ideas that might lead us to a definition of the term “*world class*”?


Internet Definitions

- Ranking among the foremost in the world; of an international standard of excellence; of the highest order: a world-class figure skater.
- among the best in the world ▪ a world-class athlete



Vision: To be a model school district

- Model school districts offer long-term, quality, language offerings for two or more languages depending on enrollment numbers
 - Long-term = student opportunity for 5-7 years of daily instruction in well articulated sequences grades 6-12
 - Quality = superior teachers, instructional materials, current instructional practices




What is the legacy of World Language learning we want to leave with BCSD students?

- So now, what would an ideal WL experience look like?
 - What experiences would you like students to have?
 - What language skills and tasks would they be confident in performing?
 - What other questions might help define the legacy?



Research Findings on 2nd Language Study

- ...benefits academic progress in other subjects
- ...narrows achievement gap
- ...benefits higher order, abstract and creative thinking
- ...(early) enriches and enhances cognitive development
- ...helps students score higher on standardized tests
- ...improves chances of college acceptance, achievement and attainment
- ...enhances career opportunities



Studying a second language improves skills and grades in math and English and can improve entrance exam scores -- SATs, ACTs, GREs, MCATs, and LSATs

- Research has shown that **math and verbal SAT scores climb higher with each additional year of foreign language study**, which means that the longer you study a foreign language, the stronger your skills become to succeed in school.
- Studying a foreign language can improve your analytic and interpretive capacities. And three years of language study on your record will **catch the eye of anyone reading your job or college application**.
- If you've already learned **a language other than English at home, expanding your knowledge of its vocabulary, grammar, culture, and literature** -- at the same time you are learning English -- **will also improve your chances for success in school and in your career**.



T. C. Cooper - Foreign Language Study and SAT-Verbal Scores. *The Modern Language Journal*, 71/4, 381-387.

- Data from the College Board's Admission Testing Program revealed that SAT-verbal scores of **students who had taken four or five years had a greater positive effect than any other subject.** A large-scale study conducted by Eddy in 1981 concluded that students who study foreign languages for longer periods of time did better on various SAT sub-tests and on the test as a whole than students who studied less foreign language, **even when the variable of verbal giftedness was controlled.** Cooper's own study revealed that **students who take a foreign language in high school scored significantly higher on the verbal portion of the SAT than those who do not.** Performance of students receiving **free and reduced lunches, were not affected**

Education Week: January 26, 2011


- “Research and experience show convincingly that **language learning makes students better in the basics – both math and literacy** – and it is high time that Americans were no longer bound by their linguistic limits.”

An argument

- "A pervasive lack of knowledge about foreign cultures and foreign languages threatens the security of the United States as well as its ability to **compete in the global marketplace and produce an informed citizenry.**"
- Regarding World Language Education NEA Research, December 2007

What is the relative time it takes to learn different languages?

- Category I: Languages closely related to English (French & Spanish)
23-24 weeks (575-600 class hours)
- German 30 weeks (750 class hours)
- Category II: Languages with significant linguistic and/or cultural differences from English (Greek, Russian, Turkish, Vietnamese, Farsi)
44 weeks (1100 class hours)
- Category III: Languages which are quite difficult for native English speakers (Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese)
88 weeks (2200 class hours)(about half that time preferably spent studying in-country)
- Above data based on FSI personnel who already speak several languages, have high aptitude to language learning, and spend 25-30 hours a week in class, with another 15-20 hours of focused study.



Interagency Language Roundtable - ACTFL Level 2 - Advanced Limited Working Proficiency

- able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements
- handles most basic social situations with confidence, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, work, family, and self
- handles limited work requirements, needing help in handling complications; gets the gist of most conversations on non-technical subjects (i.e. topics which require no specialized knowledge), and has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions
- has an accent, though often quite faulty, is intelligible
- handles elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar



Factors that affect language programs

- Program goals
- Program intensity – time dedicated to learning
- Staffing with highly qualified teachers
- Extended sequence for all languages
- Smooth and logical transition from one level to the next
- Instructional practices and materials
- Effective teacher and program evaluation
- Professional development
- Progression based on performance, not number of years in a program
- Community, district, and school value for language learning
- Honesty

Past - Present

- Learned About language – grammar
- Teacher-centered
- Artificial situations form the textbook
- Assessing to find out what students don't know
- Only the teacher knows the criteria for grading
- Students use the language
- Learner-centered
- Using language to teach academic content
- Assessing to find out what students can do
- Students know and understand the criteria for tasks & grading

Best Instructional Practices

- The “foreign language” is spoken 90% of the class period by both teacher and students
- Content and form focused instruction and assessment
- Lesson and unit plans with deliberate and intentional instruction in all aspects of language (listening/understanding & reading comprehension) vs productive skills (speaking and writing)
- Routine exposure to a variety of accents/voices in the classroom
- Assess students based on **BOTH achievement** and **proficiency** assessments in all domains
- Teacher evaluations by professionals who possess both high levels of language skills and teaching experience in a foreign language.

Challenges to resolve

- **Increased demand for World Languages teachers**
 - **Increased WL requirements for IB/MYP**
 - A minimum of 50 hours of continuous and sustained language learning over the year
 - **Community value for language** offerings reflecting those of a model school district (daily at least from grade 6)
 - Current number and projected need for teachers to meet growth in **DI**
 - **Finding highly qualified speakers, readers, and writers of Spanish**
 - Demand for teachers exceeds availability – despite significant efforts to recruit in Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California, and advertised nationally

Challenges to resolve

- Obstacles to scheduling at middle school
 - Grade level teams
 - Proficiency Based Placement will likely place students of Spanish outside a defined grade level
 - DI classes – different cohorts with differing levels of proficiency within each cohort
 - 2 English classes for all students (except DI students) and in a cohort
 - Meeting IB/MYP requirements for CORE and elective classes

Challenges to resolve

- Educating staff, parents and community
 - **Realistic view of what it takes** on the part of a student for success in **AP courses** (personal motivation, study skills, self-discipline, dedication, etc)
 - **Different language requirements of different universities**
 - Language aptitude and **length of study to achieve “functional fluency” in less commonly taught languages** (Arabic, Chinese, Russian vs. French and Spanish)
 - Challenges of offering foreign language in the elementary school in the near future
 - Difference between **narrow content** in Language for Special Purposes (LSP), vs the ability to use language in a variety of contexts (chef, engineer, fireman, etc.)

Issues and concerns to resolve in DI w/ or without a magnet location

- Consideration of timing of proficiency-based placement for DI in grades 6-8
 - Lack of prior foundation and instruction in language grammar and structures
 - Teachers who may not have training in teaching and assessing both content and form-focused language
 - Significant disparity in proficiency in different domains among DI students

Closing Comments

- BSCD World Language professionals look to thoughtful development of a quality K-12 language program and taking the time to achieve it
- Establishing a quality 6-12 WL program, and then consider benefits of language K-5
- After school programs that align to BCSD goals for world languages
- Time to educate, strategize together for a win-win solution to overcome hurdles, develop phase in plan over 3 years

Candidate Expression of Interest in BCSD Textbook Adoption Process

Candidate process

- Review Candidate Profile and Guidelines and Expectations will be posted on the BCSD website under.....
- Complete *Candidate Expression of Interest Form*
- Attach Confidential Recommendation Form (school principal, director of other boards, public organization, municipal or county organization, etc)
- If *Candidate Expression of Interest Forms* are insufficient for a viable selection process, the period for submissions may be extended
- Submit by due date
- Candidate Profile Forms are reviewed and selected by the Subject Task Force
- Should a candidate not meet stated expectations, it is the responsibility of the facilitator to communicate concerns and if not resolved, parent will be asked to resign. Community participation will be reduced, as it is unreasonable for a committee to bring a replacement up to speed
- Ratio of parents to teachers will be about 1:5

Expectations of candidate

- Prepare for meetings (emails, reading, etc)
- Candidate must have a functioning email address and commit to reviewing email a minimum of three times a week.
- On-going attendance at a minimum of 80%
- Exercise honest and respectful communication in both public and in private conversations
- Maintain confidentiality of discussions prior to formal communication of progress or decisions
- Assume positive intent and “seek to understand”
- Participate in voting processes to determine
 - Publishers to be invited for textbook presentations
 - Textbooks to be piloted following textbook presentations
 - Textbooks to be adopted following input from teachers who have piloted texts
- Respect for privacy of email and telephone numbers of email and/or telephone conversations (to be used only for the purpose of relevant communication among textbook adoption committee)
- Parent responsibilities end after Board Approval of recommended adoption of a textbook

Profile

- Possess academic background, skills and knowledge directly related to the purpose/task of the committee/group
- Demonstrate positive and constructive communication and engagement on previous BCSD, city or county boards and/or decision-making groups
- Support for BCSD philosophy, values, and beliefs
- Support for BCSD Board of Trustees, Superintendent, Cabinet, and teachers
- Equal advocacy for all demographic groups of BCSD students



Parent or Community Expression of Interest

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Email _____ Primary phone # _____

Textbook Adoption Committee: check the subject matter that relates to your background and experience

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English Language Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> World Languages | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/PE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer/Engineering Tech | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual/Performing Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> ESL/ELL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

Names of children currently enrolled in BCSD:

K-5: _____

6-8: _____

9-12: _____

1. Describe how your academic background, skills, and/or work experience will contribute to the textbook adoption committee.

2. Describe a context in the past of how you have demonstrated advocacy for all demographic groups.

3. Describe how your past experiences have contributed to positive and constructive communication and engagement with a public organization(s) (BCSD, county, municipal govt, business boards, etc)

4. From your perspective, depict the significant subject matter concepts and issues that will be important for this textbook adoption committee to discuss and resolve.

5. Members of the appropriate (subject matter) Task Force will be responsible for determining which parent(s) serve on the textbook adoption committee. We welcome any other information that might be helpful when reviewing your *Candidate Expression of Interest Form*.