

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Administration

June 19, 2008

MEMORANDUM

Information

TO: Dr. Ken Vedra, Superintendent

FROM: Sherrie Brown, Executive Director of School Administration

SUBJECT: **Recommendations from K-12 World Language Task Force**

Background

The Bellingham School District's commitment is to have its graduates ready for college, careers and citizenship. Students must be able to communicate in languages other than English and gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures. It is the belief of the World Language Task Force that all of our children must have the opportunity to gain a degree of competency in a world language other than English and that world language programs provide a global perspective in not only language, but in other content areas as well.

During the 2007-2008 school year, a K-12 World Language Task Force was established by the Bellingham Board of Directors. This task force had the charge to review existing world language opportunities for students, review new world language graduation requirements, identify issues and research on language acquisition K-12, explore effective programs and practices for the teaching and develop a proposal for the implementation of a K-12 world language program in our district.

The task force met regularly throughout the 2007-2008 school year. They began their work under the direction of Susan Zoller, former Deputy Superintendent, and have finished their work with Sherrie Brown, Interim Deputy Superintendent. The group includes parents, teachers, administrators, student and community members.

Task Force Membership:

April Boyden	Katie Gomez	Gail Knops	Evan Ritchie	Sally Unger
Sherrie Brown	Janae Hodge	Stan Kreft	Betsy Rocks	Sharon Voth
Sean Cooper	Brend Holma	Lois Longwood	Elizabeth Sanchez	Elizabeth Wright
Kristin Denham	Mary Hooker	Rob McElroy	Anita Sassen	Susan Zoller
Robin Gilster	Bobbie Jaffe	Deirdre O'Neill	Sabine Sloley	

The group reviewed current research and was guided by information found in the book The Essentials of World Languages, Grades K-12 by Janis Jensen and Paul Sandrock. They explored world language opportunities currently available for Bellingham students. Members of the task force toured schools in Mt. Vernon, Seattle and Bellevue that offer world language, both through immersion and taught as a class. The task force established criteria for selection of world languages by our district and have made recommendations for the district regarding language models and demonstration of competency. An online community survey was used to solicit community feedback. Their recommendations and an implementation timeline follow.

Criteria for World Language Selection

Criteria were established for the selection of world languages in the Bellingham School District. The criteria are as follows; some of which may overlap:

1. Career Opportunities
 - Will the language enhance student career opportunities in the rapidly globalizing world they enter as graduates?
 - Is the language important because of usage, or significant politically, economically, culturally, or socially?
 - Is the language important for United States national interests, scholarly regard, business, foreign diplomacy, commerce, or other government programs?
2. Connecting to Existing and Potential Resources and Structures
 - How does this language connect to what we are currently offering?
 - Will we be able to identify and hire highly qualified teachers of the language?
 - Will students have opportunities to continue developing proficiency in the district (K-12) with this language?
3. Number of Speakers (Heritage Language Learners)
 - How many speakers use the language locally, nationally, and globally?
 - Will the language promote involvement of non-native speakers and families within our community?
 - Is the language culturally and linguistically important to local residents?
4. Global and International Perspectives (Diverse Cultures)
 - Does the language support understandings of diverse cultures?
 - Does the language give balance to languages of European and Non-European origin?
 - Is the language used in educational institutions, broadcast or print media, or written and oral literature of the cultures?

Competency

The World Language Task Force recommends that students be given the opportunity to meet graduation requirements by demonstrating their competency in a language. The task force recommends that the Curriculum Department develop guidelines that provide multiple ways for competency to be determined that include reading, writing, speaking, and the use of a variety of authentic assessments (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL]). Students should be assessed through a variety of ways that demonstrate real-world application of the language. Assessment should provide evidence of how well students hold conversations with native speakers, understand written and spoken language, and present information in ways that are linguistically and culturally appropriate.

The task force also believes that it is important that further recommendations be made by the Curriculum Department on how students can earn graduation credits. Clarification needs to be made as to whether or not a student who has demonstrated competency should receive credit toward graduation or be marked as having “fulfilled” the graduation requirement. The task force

does not have a recommendation about this question and feels that it should be made as part of the comprehensive World Language K-12 curriculum review process.

Models of Instruction

The task force believes that World Language programs should be offered through an immersion setting or separate world language classes. The goal is for all students to become proficient in the language being studied. The task force recommends that the dual immersion model be piloted in at least one elementary school by 2009-2010. A dual immersion model is one in which students are taught in two languages e.g., Spanish and English. It is recommended that if dual immersion is piloted, it begins in kindergarten and first grade. In addition, it is recommended that a school be chosen for the pilot that has the most speakers in the second language. It is the hope of the task force that students who begin the immersion program in kindergarten and first grade can continue the program throughout their elementary years. The program would “grow” with them second through fifth grade and into middle school.

The task force feels that it is important for families to be able to choose whether or not they want their students to participate in a dual immersion program and that options be given to families to “opt out” of the immersion program, as well as for families to have the option to apply to participate in the program. The task force questions whether or not mathematics and science should be delivered in a non-English language. They were not convinced, because of their visits at immersion schools, that students had been as successful in math and science as measured on state assessments (WASL) when they were taught in a language other than English.

In addition to a dual immersion program, it is recommended that all students have the opportunity to take at least one language in elementary and middle school and have the opportunity to take multiple languages in high school.

Implementation Timeline and “Phase-in” Recommendation

First priority for World Language recommendations needs to be assuring that our district has what we need in place to implement the new World Language graduation requirements. Beginning with the class of 2014, all graduates must take two years of world language to graduate. The two years must be in the same language. At this time our district has enough world language staff to insure that all students can take two years of a language in the high school, however, we do not have enough world language staff to insure that students would be able to choose from both European and non-European languages. To meet the recommendations of the task force, priority must be given to hiring non-European world language teachers as opportunities arise. Non-European languages would need to be phased-in over time to provide more choice for students.

A second priority for world language recommendations needs to be in assuring that we have enough world language staff to allow all eighth grade students to take language for credit at the middle school.

For both of these recommendations, there are attached charts showing the cost projections for each of these recommendations. There is also a chart showing a recommended implementation timeline.

Other Concerns/Recommendations

There were several concerns and other recommendations that the World Language Task Force would like to share:

- Middle and high school schedules need to be reviewed with the goal being to allow students to have more options to take world language and/or other electives.
- If only one language is offered for high school credit at the middle school, this may limit student options in exploring other languages in high school. For example, if a student only has the option to take Spanish for credit at middle school, then he/she will have to take Spanish in high school to get the second credit that fulfills their graduation requirements. This scenario will have an impact on the number of students who take other languages e.g., French, German, Japanese, etc. at the high school level.
- Staffing issues may emerge at both middle and high school levels because the district does not currently have staff to meet increased demands for teaching non-European languages.

The K-12 World Language Task Force is grateful for the opportunity to work together to develop recommendations to the Bellingham Board of Directors. Representatives will be at the board meeting to answer questions about their recommendations.

**RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF
WORLD LANGUAGES**

Level	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Elementary	Task force Recommendations	World Language K-12 Curriculum Review	Implementation of a pilot immersion program in at least one elementary school at the K-1 level.	Continue immersion program into second grade at pilot school; add other immersion programs at other schools; one language at all elementary schools.	Continue immersion program into third grade at pilot school; add other immersion programs at other schools; continue one language at all elementary schools.
Middle School	Task force Recommendations	World Language K-12 Curriculum Review	One language offered in 6 th and 7 th grades; 8 th grade option for high school credit	One language offered in 6 th and 7 th grades; 8 th grade option for high school credit	Addition of a second language considered; 8 th grade option for high school credit
High School	Task force Recommendations	World Language K-12 Curriculum Review	Three languages offered at each high school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Non-European • Others 	Three languages offered at each high school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Non-European • Others 	Three languages offered at each high school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Non-European • Others

- Notes:
1. Review World Language K-12 Curriculum on a regular basis (every 5 years).
 2. Review middle and high school schedules to allow for more options in electives and languages.
 3. Consider beginning, intermediate and advanced language at middle school instead of grade specific offerings.

**WORLD LANGUAGE IMPLEMENTATION
ELEMENTARY COST PROJECTION
30 Minutes – 2 X Week**

Elementary	Enrollment	Target FTE	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
1	350	0.5	0.2 Immersion	0.2	0.1
2	400	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2
3	200	0.3	0.2	0.1	
4	400	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2
5	300	0.4	0.2	0.2	
6	300	0.4	0.2	0.2 Immersion	
7	450	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2
8	200	0.3	0.2	0.1	
9	450	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2
10	300	0.4	0.2	0.2	
11	450	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2 Immersion
12	350	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1
13	400	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2
14	350	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1
FTE Per Year			2.8	2.6	1.5
Cumulative Effect (FTE)		6.9	2.8	5.4	6.9
Cost Per Year			\$196,000	\$182,000	\$105,000
Cumulative Effect (Cost)			\$196,000	\$378,000	\$483,000

1 FTE = \$70,000

Note: Calculation for “Targeted FTE” example:

200 students = 8 staff x 2 sessions/week x 30 minute sessions = 16 sessions required/week .2 FTE
= 60 minutes
of instruction or 10 sessions/week therefore .3 FTE is needed to implement.

Language offered 2 x week is a minimum number of sessions for language classes. Projections do not include funds for instructional materials and supplies.

**WORLD LANGUAGE IMPLEMENTATION
ELEMENTARY COST PROJECTION
45 Minutes – 5 Days a Week**

Elementary	Enrollment	Target FTE	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
1	350	2.0	0.6 Immersion	0.7	0.7
2	400	2.4	0.8	0.8	0.8
3	200	1.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
4	400	2.4	0.8	0.8	0.8
5	300	1.8	0.6	0.6	0.6
6	300	1.8	0.6	0.6 Immersion	0.6
7	450	2.6	0.8	0.8	1.0
8	200	1.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
9	450	2.6	0.8	0.8	1.0
10	300	1.8	0.6	0.6	0.6
11	450	2.6	0.8	0.8	1.0 Immersion
12	350	2.0	0.6	0.7	0.7
13	400	2.4	0.8	0.8	0.8
14	350	2.0	0.6	0.7	0.7
FTE Per Year			9.2	9.5	10.1
Cumulative Effect (FTE)		28.8	9.2	18.7	28.8
Cost Per Year			\$644,000	\$665,000	\$707,000
Cumulative Effect (Cost)			\$644,000	\$1,309,000	\$2,016,000

1 FTE = \$70,000

Note: Language offered 45 minutes a day is the optimum number of sessions for language classes. Projections do not include funds for instructional materials and supplies.

WORLD LANGUAGE IMPLEMENTATION

**MIDDLE SCHOOL COST PROJECTION
(8th Grade Credit Option)**

Middle Schools	Enrollment	Current FTE	Target FTE	FTE Required to Meet Target	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
1	450	.5	1.0	.5	0.2	0.2	0.1
2	600	.5	1.4	.9	0.4	0.4	0.1
3	600	.5	1.4	.9	0.4	0.4	0.1
4	640	.5	1.4	.9	0.4	0.4	0.1
FTE Per Year					1.4	1.4	0.4
Cumulative Effect (FTE)		2.0	5.2	3.2	1.4	2.8	3.2
Cost Per Year					\$98,000	\$98,000	\$28,000
Cumulative Effect (Cost)					\$98,000	\$196,000	\$224,000

1 FTE = \$70,000

Note: Calculation – 800 8th grade students / 25 per class = 32 sections
32 sections / 6 periods per teacher on 7 period day = 5.2 FTE

3.2 additional FTE would be required if all 8th grade students took world language for high school credit in middle school.

WORLD LANGUAGE IMPLEMENTATION

HIGH SCHOOL COST PROJECTION

School	Current # Sections	Target FTE	Target # Sections
BHS	25	4.4	22
SHS	28	4.0	20
SqHS	29	4.8	24
TOTALS	82	13.2	66

Note: Current FTE would be adequate to offer enough sections for students to take world language to fulfill the graduation requirements. A comprehensive K-12 world language curriculum review will occur in 2009-10. Both European and non-European languages will be identified through the review process. A balancing of the offerings will occur through attrition or the intentional “phasing out” of some languages.

CURRENT SECTIONS OF WORLD LANGUAGE 2007-08

2007-08	Semester 1			Semester 2			Totals
	BHS	SHS	SqHS	BHS	SHS	SqHS	
French 1st Year	2	3	3	2	3	3	16
French 2nd Year	1	2	3	1	2	2	11
French 3rd Year	1	1	2	1	1	2	8
French 4th Year	1		1	1		1	4
French AP		1			1		2
German 1st Year	1	1	2	1	1	2	8
German 2nd Year	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
German 3rd Year	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
German 4th Year	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Japanese 1st Year	1			1			2
Japanese 2nd Year	1			1			2
Spanish 1st Year	5	6	6	5	6	7	35
Spanish 2nd Year	4	5	5	4	5	7	30
Spanish 3rd Year	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Spanish 4th Year		1			1		2
Spanish AP	1	2	1	1	2	1	8
World Language IS	2	1	1	2	1		7
Totals	25	28	29	25	28	30	165