

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 303
K-6 Educational Programs & Innovation Committee
Meeting Minutes

Date: January 10, 2013
Place: Board Room – Commodore Commons
Time: 12:30 – 5:00 PM

Superintendent Faith Chapel opened the meeting by asking committee members to review the minutes from the December 13th meeting as a way to set the stage for the discussions to come. Ms. Chapel noted quite a bit of time had been spent at the last meeting, discussing ways to encourage innovation, key considerations about options programs, and a review of the original procedures for proposing and approving options programs. The original procedures document was developed a couple of years ago and during the review at the last K-6 Educational Programs and Innovation Committee (EPI) meeting, folks submitted their suggestions/comments to Associate Superintendent Julie Goldsmith. In addition, EPI Committee members Allison Krug and Clint Pells agreed to be part of the subgroup to work on the next iteration of the procedures document. Ms. Chapel turned the meeting over to Associated Superintendent Julie Goldsmith.

District Processes to Support Innovation: Draft Process for Proposing and Approving Options/Pilot Programs

Ms. Goldsmith took all the comments and suggestions about the original procedures for proposing and approving options programs, and merged them into a new draft document. She then sent the draft out to EPI Committee members Allison Krug and Clint Pells, as well as Superintendent Chapel. Following their comments and edits, Ms. Goldsmith completed the document revision process. Copies of the revised document were distributed to the committee, who were then asked to read it. Ms. Goldsmith noted the changes included the edition of an introduction, definition of key elements (neighborhood schools, online courses, etc.), added language about pilot programs, elimination of redundant text, and a new section related to accountability and assessment. Following the review of the new document, committee members were asked to engage in elbow-partner discussions taking into consideration, 1) whether the new document was a reflection of the previous meetings suggestions; 2) if there were ideas that are strongly supported; and 3) were there other additions or deletions that need to be made.

At the conclusion of the small group discussions, the whole group came back together to share comments, edits and additional suggestions. Shared comments included: *a)* Formatting - The number one *value* for each heading needs to be consistent throughout the document, with appropriate sub-headings. *b)* Define when a “pilot” moves to a “district wide” project. It was suggested that an example such as ST Math or Zeno Math be included in the definition. *c)* Perhaps there are two types of pilots – 1) a pilot that is part of the implementation phase of an options program (with final approval by the Board); and 2) a pilot process that is internal to the school community that is either approved at the principal level (within the site plan), or at the district level. (It was noted any pilot program/innovation should be vetted to make sure it meets the intent of the district adopted curriculum, which has been accepted through the program review process.) *d)* Suggest definitions of *best practices*, *school-level decision* or *review by the district/board* be included. Perhaps examples of existing innovations could be included (ex: Farm-to-School). *e)* Options and pilots should be open to all students. *f)* Define the application process more clearly. *g)* Refine the definition and process for seeking funding for the innovation/option program (grants, donations, etc.). *h)* Define the process or a committee for vetting/approving the innovation/options program. *i)* Similar to a grant process, there should be a form letter for submittal. *j)* Separate documents; one process for innovations and one for options. *k)* Break out the staffing and funding costs to a separate bullet. *l)* Further define the timeline for processing the proposal. *m)* There should be ongoing evaluation/assessment of innovations/pilots/options. *n)* More defined timeline for proposal process. The group discussed at length how program innovation moves from an internal school concept vetted through a principal, to a larger program idea that needs to be vetted at the district or board level. The implementation of ST Math at Blakely Elementary was used as an example of an innovative program that progressed to district-wide implementation. Principal Reese Ande explained cost (of an innovation/pilot) has impact, and when ST Math came along, there was no intention that it grow, but it just went that way. Related to cost, it was suggested there be a more formal grant process as a means of funding innovation, perhaps through the Bainbridge Schools Foundation.

Regarding innovation, the importance of having these ideas start at the school level was underscored. The Monday early release days have created time for colleagues to collaborate, and out of that collaboration can come some great ideas at the building level. It was suggested perhaps a committee would be useful to vet proposals and the associated funding. The group talked about whether a formal proposal (form) was needed, or would a proposal letter suffice. Ms. Goldsmith noted committee members expressed confusion between “pilot programs,” and the more formal process for “options programs.” While it is important to encourage innovations, encouraging many more “options programs” in the district may not be the committee’s goal. Ms. Goldsmith suggested separating processes for options programs and innovations into different documents; one that encourages innovations, and one that is more finite for the options programs. Committee members seemed to agree with this concept.

The group continued to share suggestions and comments regarding elements of the proposal process. Additional comments included: *a)* Evaluation of the innovation/option/pilot program was important and should be shared, even within a school. It is considered a necessary bureaucracy. *b)* Simple, “boiler plate” templates could be created and shared. *c)* Principals could be the “curators” of the documents/programs; like the “hub of a wheel.” *d)* Supplemental, credit bearing innovations and the opportunity for that prospect (online – page 2, first bullet) were noted as important. *e)* The group briefly mentioned differentiated learning, which takes staff time and funding. The question was raised; *Was this document the correct place for that notation?* At the conclusion of the discussion, folks were asked to submit their notes to Ms. Goldsmith.

Update on Current Options Programs/Pilot Projects

Ms. Chapel distributed a brief historical overview of options programs in the Bainbridge Island School District. Historical highlights included the following: *a)* 1972 Strawberry Hill Alternative School created. *b)* 1995 Diverse Student Program Review Process developed. *c)* Alternative Delivery Model Sub-committee formed to increase use of different student grouping options, establish a middle school alternative program, and expand Strawberry Hill. *d)* December 1995 – Pilot Proposal for “Family Classroom” Program. *e)* Space was created with the construction of Woodward Middle School. *f)* 1996 – Commodore Options opens in September. Current option programs in the district include: Eagle Harbor High School, Odyssey 1-8 Multiage Program, All Day Kindergarten, Mosaic Program, Online Learning, and Developmental Preschool. Ms. Chapel also included current Board Policy 2510: Options Programs.

Wilkes Multiage Program

Ms. Goldsmith shared an update on the Wilkes Multiage Program, which will be presented later in the evening to the school board. The program was developed in response to parents request for an expanded Odyssey Multiage Program. The District conducted a feasibility study to determine location (Wilkes), and cost/staffing implications. Following the feasibility study, which was a two-year process, the Wilkes program started as two 1st/2nd grade multiage classrooms. A public awareness process was conducted, and registration was done via lottery. It was noted the Wilkes multiage parent group has been included as part of the Wilkes PTO, but they do have their own bi-laws. The group also reviewed the guidelines for the Options Program (to be refined by the EPI Committee), as well as a brief overview of multiage education. Ms. Goldsmith explained the enrollment and structure of the current Wilkes Multiage Program includes 24 first graders and 24 second graders. Next steps for the program will be: *1)* Determine enrollment for the 2013-14 school year. There will be an open house at Commodore Options on February 12th. Open enrollment is February 12 through March 22 for grades 1, 2, & 3. A lottery will be held if necessary on March 22. *2)* Data will be analyzed to determine impact and cost to the district for expansion to 3rd grade. *3)* The Board of Directors will review the impact and costs, and determine if the program will expand for the 2013-14 school year.

Spanish Immersion Pilot Program

Ms. Goldsmith distributed the Spanish Immersion Pilot Project (SIPP) Proposed Feasibility Study and Action Plan presentation to be given to the Board of Directors later in the evening. The purpose of the presentation was described as: *1)* To provide an overview of the current Spanish Immersion Pilot Project. *2)* Review the plan for gathering information to assist the Board in making a decision about the continuation or expansion of the pilot. *3)* Gather input from the Board of Directors on additions or changes to the Feasibility Study. *4)* Provide information gathered in the recent World Language Survey by the K-6 Educational Programs and Innovation Committee. Ms. Goldsmith also provided some background information noting the SIPP was developed as a component of Mosaic Home School Partnership. A Mosaic steering committee was formed to address declining enrollment and a change to Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) funding. Phase one of the pilot project was launched in February 2012, and included

Spanish Immersion two days a week. Phase two of the pilot was launched in September 2012, with a five-day-a-week program. Explaining the configuration of the program, it was noted there are 29 students in the program, with 18 in Grades K-2, and 11 in Grades 3 – 4. The primary class gets 90% of instruction in Spanish, and 10% in English. The intermediate class receives 50% of instruction in Spanish and 50% in English. The program’s curriculum is aligned to the District’s core curricula, and fundraised dollars have been used to purchase core materials in Spanish (reading, math, and science).

Regarding assessment and accountability, Spanish versions of the DRA2 for K-2 have been purchased. The English version is used for Grades 3-4, and those students also participate in the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) in reading/math, as well as Washington State Assessments. The program is currently looking for a language acquisition assessment. The instructional philosophy and goals of the program are to produce student who are bilingual and biliterate, to create an awareness of different world cultures, to increase overall student academic achievement, and to produce students who can be competitive in the global marketplace. Further defining the instructional philosophy, Ms. Goldsmith noted the 90/10 instructional model. She added the Spanish Immersion Program is an academically challenging and enriching program for developing linguistic proficiency in Spanish and English. Answering a question about how an immersion program might work for seventh and eighth graders, Commodore Principal Dave Shockley explained the difficulties related to a middle school program. As the curriculum for the older student becomes more specialized, it becomes harder to find bilingual teachers who are endorsed in the areas of math, science, and other core subjects.

Ms. Goldsmith spoke about the research on immersion programs, noting bilingual students generally demonstrate academic gains. The students also develop cultural literacy, as well as enhanced cognitive skills. Research shows students learn languages more easily at an early age. Immersing and instructing students in a second language provides an effective vehicle for students to learn to speak, read, and write fluently in both languages. In the Puget Sound region, school districts offering language immersion programs include Bellevue (Spanish & Chinese), Federal Way (Spanish), Highline (Spanish), Northshore (Spanish), Seattle (Spanish, Japanese & Chinese), Vashon Island (Spanish), North Kitsap (Spanish), and Bremerton (Spanish). It was noted there are two distinct objectives for offering an immersion program; one is in areas of large populations of native speakers to immerse students in, for instance, English and Spanish, and one is to prepare students for the world stage.

The timeline of activities for the feasibility study was presented as follows:

Activity	Target Date
Create timeline for communication and feasibility study	January 10
Gather survey data	January 10
Initial progress report	January 10
Open House	February 12
Determine location implications	March 28
Enrollment	March 28
Finalize pilot proposal for 2013/14	March 28
Cost analysis	April 19
Funding	April 19
Feasibility study completed	April 25
Board of Directors action	April 25

Elementary World Language Survey Results

Ms. Goldsmith provided the results of the recent World Language Survey sent out to parents via listserv, posted on the District’s website, and announced in a Bainbridge Review news article that contained a link to the website. Survey respondents included 94.92% with children currently enrolled in District schools, 11.53% enrolled in BI private schools, 1.69% enrolled in Mosaic, and 3% in non-island/public schools. Three world language instructional models were included in the survey question - Which, if any, type of World Language Program would you like to see the district develop over the course of the next few year? Those models included Total Immersion, Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES), and World Language Enrichment Program. Response to the question included 45.76% for Total Immersion, 77.29% for FLES, 23.05% for World Language Enrichment, and 2.71% chose none of them. To the question - How important do you feel it is to have a World Language Program available to children at an early age?, respondents overwhelmingly chose very important or important. Regarding which type of World Language Program was preferred, respondents indicated FLES (79.79%) over Total Immersion (48.97%) and World

Language Enrichment Program (32.88%). The world language preferred by respondents was Spanish, followed by Chinese/Mandarin, French, and Japanese. Finally, survey respondents indicated world language instruction should begin at the elementary level or preschool.

Following Ms. Goldsmith's presentation, Ms. Chapel asked committee members to discuss the survey results with their elbow partners, focusing on what they would like to have happen with World Languages. At the conclusion of the small group discussion, committee members shared their comments and suggestions as follows: *a)* Folks were surprised at how much interest there was in a FLES program, and suggested more information be gathered about this model. *b)* It was suggested a broader survey be conducted to gather additional information about world language, and to get input on other topics parents may want the committee to review. *c)* Language instruction would be in addition to the regular program; parents don't want a "trade off." *d)* Research indicates the need for students to learn a language before the age of nine. *e)* Language instruction would be good for the district and could attract families to the Island. *f)* Language instruction would be a value-added educational opportunity – not if but when – "let's get the funding and go." *g)* Could language instruction start at a pilot level with one or two schools? *h)* What about an elementary level elective? *i)* Time (planning and staffing) is needed if a move is made to FLES or a blended model. *j)* There is an immediate need to gauge the interest, demand and commitment for the current Spanish Immersion Pilot Program. *k)* Could different language models be piloted at different schools? *l)* Committee members would like to see examples of language models currently implemented in other districts.

Ms. Chapel noted the topic of differentiation would be tabled until the next EPI Committee meeting. Reviewing the meeting's discussion, what may not be captured in the proposal process documents is how to encourage innovation. In addition, the alignment of resources and professional development opportunities are important elements to be included in the next iteration of the proposal process document. There will also be discussion at the district level about the development of a broader survey that would include input about topics of interest from parents. Committee members Amy Burton and Ali Krug offered to do further research about international language instruction models, including one used in India. Ms. Burton also noted a tour of Bremerton School District's language immersion program would take place on February 15th from 1 – 4:00 PM. Finally, Ms. Chapel noted the committee will address differentiation, one of the major topics to be covered, at the next meeting.

Next Meetings:

February 7

March 7

April 18

May 9