Board proposal outline: Elementary World Language (FLES) Changes 2011 -2012
June 14, 2011

Long term goals set by Supt. Roberts:
Students leaving 5th grade ready to do advanced work at middle school
Students leaving middle school as bilingual

Rationale:
Physical/Physiological
Intellectual/ Academic
Linguistic
Global Competence

Strategies:
Time and resources to support proficiency goals
Quality of instruction and daily exposure key
Direct link between time in language and proficiency

Resources:
Creative and committed language teaching staff
Feedback from colleagues on possible instructional model

Challenges:
Amount of time needed
Fiscal resources

Immediate first steps:
- Focus on primary learners, K-2
- Acknowledge importance of teacher input and interaction
- Expand time for language learning exposure as possible within fiscal constraints
- "Best instruction = face time at primary level"

In keeping with the goal of offering a stronger program starting next school year and looking at the larger picture within the current financial and time constraints, the decision was made to start with the youngest learners.

➢ **Recommended instructional action**: Beginning Fall 2011, change instructional time from twice a week, 30 minutes each (total 60 minutes) to four times a week, 20 minutes each (total 80 minutes) in grades K-2; continue twice a week at 30 minutes each for grades 3-5

K-2 -- double number of contacts; increase total number of minutes by about 30%
Not optimal, but best we can do at present time in keeping with fiscal responsibility and reasonable cost

➢ **Recommended Board action**: Approval of 2 FTE Elementary World Language (FLES Spanish) staff positions to support added minutes at primary level

   (to vote on at June 28 meeting)

In return for this vote of faith …

- On-going evaluation
  Monitor progress (pre/post assessment?) to assess value of more frequent contact;
  Reports at mid-year, year end

- Work to find creative solutions for expanding the time and "touches" as K-2 cohort moves up through system while continuing to support growth at intermediate and middle school levels

- Continue planning grant work which includes assessment of total district world language program – all 3 strands (in progress – June 14, 2011 1st report to Supt.) as well as curriculum building and staff development (in progress)

- Continued work on the "vision" (see below for further discussion)

What's going on now?

Convergence of several timelines and trajectories that are not always aligned but are happening simultaneously, sometimes almost in collision, because of timing and falling out of sequence as originally planned or needs to happen; balancing lots of balls that all need to be caught at same time. Presenting a bit of a challenge but at the same time forcing some positive action

1. ISBE planning grant for program information gathering and assessment: Was to have been awarded in February and used before June; not awarded until April, now may be used until December; original time line Feb-June; shortened time frame for information gathering; included in this is to be a report to the Supt and Board; Board report was to have happened in June; Instead report to Supt will happen in June; board report likely closer to end of planning grant cycle or in keeping with time line of application for next year's implementation grant

[Implication grant applications are set to be available in the fall. Districts that have participated in the planning process have a better chance of being awarded an implementation grant which can be used directly to augment programs]

2. Referendum: All program discussions deferred until final decision on referendum vote; discussions re-start mid April; school year fast approaches end

3. Budget /hiring decisions: Action for next year must be approved so that posting can occur immediately and staffing can happen during the summer. Must present to board in mid June for late June vote

4. Middle school changes (both adopted after referendum): New textbook series; increased options for 6th grade

Other work for 2011-2012

1. World Language teachers staff development; all strands (FLES, partial immersion, middle level)
   1st sessions June 14, June 15
    2nd sessions mid-August prior to start of school
    [Funded through ISBE planning grant]

2. Curriculum & assessment work by WL teams over summer in keeping with framework and direction begun in staff development with Dr. Terrill [Funded through ISBE planning grant]; work continues through 2011-2012 school year

Dr. Roberts' charge : "We begin now to build the next generation; as they move through the system can the paradigm shift so that more of the direct instruction takes place at K-5 involving the broader language staff; so that K-5 becomes very direct and intense; the primary place of language learning with middle school for further developing proficiency, reinforcing earlier skills, and perhaps adding languages."

3. Continue to develop vision of what language learning in D97 might look like as it evolves: (emphasis here per Dr. Roberts: This is still very much in the critical thinking stage)

Vision work includes following questions and considerations:

   a. Proficiency goals and how to best meet

   b. Planning grant consultant input on all aspects of program including instruction and assessment

   c. Additional fiscal resources:
   Continue to explore added fiscal resources such ISBE implementation grant; FLAP and other federal grants; possible partnerships with foundations or language institutes

   d. Instructional Model:
   Creative thinking about how instructional model may be changed to further increase time and exposure especially at primary and intermediate level (make more "direct and intense" while at the same time strengthening middle school; paradigm shift for staff/resource use?

   e. Technology:
   - Continued research into and consideration of technology options [included in planning grant proposal]; Consider questions such as Can we move to a model where with reasonable cost investment in technology we can achieve a more fluid instructional model – perhaps free up staff resources to deploy differently while at the same time strengthening the continuum of language? Where is there more "direct" teacher instruction; where is there less direct teacher instruction and more independent, student-based technology assisted instruction?

- Can technology be used to both reinforce current languages and offer increased access to additional languages for students and staff? Is this a financially viable model? Does the tech plan support the need? Which product would best serve our proficiency goals?

f. Special Education language learners:
Continued consideration of how to implement least restrictive language learning environment for special ed students (on-going discussions between special ed teachers, special ed admin, language teaching staff and district admin) in an instructionally and fiscally responsible way

g. Partnerships:
Continue to develop and utilize a variety of partnerships (with WLAC assistance) such as:
- PTO, parent & community, university & early childhood so that we have "centralized" language learning environment (supervised or coordinated by language teacher) of curricular and extra-curricular language learning so that they all pieces support each other -- strong web of mutually reinforcing language learning activities with a variety of options, including but not limited to, greater language diversity and academic differentiation; use of expertise of community in volunteer or other supporting capacity
- OPEF to increase language exposure to strategic languages with model such as "Global Village" scientist, ArtStart etc.
- Language institutes and schools (Goethe, Alliance Francaise, Cervantes, Confucius, etc.)
- consulates

h. Explore early childhood language learning community "outside" of D97 -- preschools, home day care, language and Montessori schools (with WLAC assistance and perhaps that of Collaboration for Early Childhood) to identify strong incoming language cohorts that may further contribute to future look of language instruction in D97 (such as more immersion options in Spanish as well as other languages)