

School Board Meeting:

April 8, 2013

Subject:

English Language Development
Curriculum Adoption Proposal

Presenter:

Pam Miller and Lisa Jensen

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

Report only. Action will be taken at the next school board meeting.

DESCRIPTION:

Background Information

Lisa Jensen, ELD teacher at BCMS, reviewed three possible curriculum resource options to pilot. After careful review, two were selected; one, Pearson Longman's Keystone was piloted from October of 2012 to the present. The other option, National Geographic's Inside, was carefully assessed although not piloted because the company does not provide materials for districts to pilot with students. Since it was not possible to pilot the National Geographic Insider, several meetings to carefully evaluate the pros and cons of each curriculum with Becca Young, ELD teacher at both BHS and TES, as well as with Jenina Rothstein, Instructional Support Specialist. Content, rigor, application to the newly adopted Minnesota ELD standards of WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment), and students' engagement and interest were discussed. After careful consideration, it was determined that Pearson Longman's Keystone was the clear choice of curriculum for BCMS English Learners.

Rationale for Proposal

The ELD program at BCMS has largely been without a formal curriculum. Although there have been various curriculum resources used, it has been pieced together on an objective-based need. For example, if students were learning a language objective, such as using past tense verbs, the teacher pieced together units and lessons using various materials from various sources. After having done site visits to Wayzata East Middle School in 2011-2012, VandenBerge Middle School in Elk River, and in professional conversations with middle school ELD teachers in St. Michael-Albertville and other districts, it has become clear that a formal curriculum is what BCMS needs to meet Minnesota's newly adopted English Learner WIDA standards.

Program Implications

As a result of the implementation of the Keystone curriculum, the students in the ELD program are expected to progress in their language learning with the ultimate goal of exiting the program, meaning proficient in the English language. While this will not be true of every EL that comes through BHM's program, the typical learner, given that he/she has been in formal English instruction since elementary school, should exit somewhere near their 7th-9th grade years. This is not true of new-to-country or other learners not described here. With a formal

curriculum resource in place that is aligned to the outcomes of the standards, staff can concentrate on delivery of that curriculum and individualizing it to meet the EL needs presented instead of finding pieces here and there attempting to piece something together.

Financial Implications

Materials are needed at a variety of language proficiency levels. We are still in the process of working through a cost proposal, but the preliminary estimate is around \$5,000. Curriculum purchases are purchased through the site principal's budget.

Training will be provided at no additional cost by Pearson for Lisa Jensen to fully understand the program philosophy and components, as well as the technology resources available. Teaching & Learning will also provide curriculum writing time for Lisa for program development.

Evaluation

With the new WIDA standards, ACCESS testing, and placement within the Continuous Improvement Process, the BHM ELD Department will now have a qualitative and quantitative means to measure student results. These results will be reported to BCMS Administration and to the Director of Teaching and Learning.

Next Steps

Board approval will be recommended at the April 22nd board meeting. Once approved, materials will be purchased in coordination with Matt Lubben, BCMS principal, and curriculum writing and training for Lisa Jensen will be arranged.