

Elementary World Language (FLES) Academic Year 2011-12 Program Recommendations

June 28, 2011

Overview: During the last couple months, the Administration and Elementary World Language (FLES) team have seriously considered how to enhance language learning. The plan presented here suggests action for beginning to move forward and a time line for the coming academic year. It builds upon the vision and guidance of the superintendent, the directives and parameters laid out in the Strategic Plan, research, and feedback from teachers, administrators, Board members, and the community.

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. In K-2 this will double number of contacts which is an increase in the total number of minutes by about 30%.

Recommended Board action: Approval of 2 FTE Elementary World Language (FLES Spanish) staff positions to support added minutes at primary level – expense approximately \$140,000.

Tentative time line:

Summer – 2011

- Begin K-2 curricular overhaul as per consultant's recommendation to focus on a language production (proficiency) model.

First trimester 2011-2012

- Begin more intensive Spanish learning for grades K-2.
- Do grade level assessment for 2nd and 4th graders at end of first trimester to obtain baseline data. Reassess at year's end for comparison on growth.
- Continue with planning grant work.

This grant from the State of Illinois in the amount of \$39,039 was awarded in April and extends to December 2011. It directly supports our plan to strengthen and modify our language programs with the ultimate goal to add more time in instruction and other languages.

Planning grant goals/provisions:

1. Conduct and write a comprehensive review and assessment of the three (current) in-curricular language programs.
2. Revise all foreign language curricula, and align to learning standards.
3. Explore new models and resources in foreign language acquisition to enhance student achievement.
4. Write a comprehensive plan for expanding the current foreign language study options for all students in District 97.

Second trimester 2012

- Report to board in January with plan for 2012-2013.
 - The plan will include recommendations relative to:
 - additional languages
 - greater use of technology
 - shift in learning model
- Once board approval is achieved, we will communicate with staff, students, parents and community members about program changes.

Conclusion:

As noted above, this plan of action represents recommended first steps for moving forward. The initial changes may be short-term. The focus of academic year 2011-2012 will be to create a sustainable program that will be transformative in nature, address our priorities, support best practices, and strongly attend to the learning needs of our students.