



Lexington Public Schools

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To: Dr. Paul B. Ash
Members of the Lexington School Committee

From: Carol A. Pilarski

Re: Elementary World Language Committee

Date: October 22, 2013

The purpose of this memorandum is to give an update on the current status of the World Language Committee charged by Superintendent Ash to: *discuss the process and steps that would need to be put in place in order to investigate and study the possible re-instatement of and Elementary World Language Program.*

In consultation with Dr. Ash, School Committee members, Alessandro Alessandrini, Mary Ann Stewart, and myself, it was decided that the composition of the committee would include the following twenty-six (26) representatives.

1. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, & Professional Development:
 - Carol A. Pilarski, Chair
2. Two School Committee members:
 - Alessandro Alessandrini,
 - Mary Ann Stewart
3. Two World Language Department Heads:
 - Cathy Brooks, 6-8
 - Marie Murphy, 9-12
4. Two Middle School World Language teachers:
 - Joan Yarmovsky
 - Sarah Franford
5. One High School World Language teacher:
 - Rebekah Bray
6. One -Two Elementary Principals and/or Assistant Principals:
 - Rebecca Brogadir, Estabrook
7. Two Middle School Principals and/or Assistant Principals:
 - Jennifer Turner, Clarke
 - Laura Horst, Diamond

8. Eight elementary general and/or special educators:
 - Katie Bettencourt
 - Karen Kishpaugh
 - Ruth Litchfield
 - Deirdre Schadler
 - Julie Selhub
 - Len Swanton
 - Holly Stumpf
 - Karen Thompson
9. Seven Lexington residents:
 - Dr. Nabila Baba-Ali
 - Sarah Felton
 - David Frohman
 - Humaira Kirmani
 - Gina Leto
 - WenShuai Liao
 - Harvy Simkovits
10. Others: As the need arises, Art, Music, Physical Education, and other district-wide program leaders may be called in to committee meetings in order to offer perspectives and opinions on various suggestions or recommendations being considered.

Listed below are some of the multiple questions, topics, and considerations that will be addressed during the course of our committee work, in order to help prompt our collective thinking, as we embark upon this charge. I will provide updated reports to the School Committee regarding the status of our work at several meetings throughout the course of this year with an end-of-year report in June of 2014. Should you have any additional topics or information you would like included in our committee work, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Topics to be researched and studied:

1. What are the benefits of offering an elementary World Language program?
Are there any negative implications?
2. What would be the expected outcomes for students in the program?
3. What districts currently offer an elementary program?
4. What do their programs “look like?” How many elementary students either speak a language other than English at home OR are currently studying another language?
5. Would Lexington’s program be an optional or required subject?
6. What language or languages would be taught?
7. At what grade level would we introduce the language/s?
8. Would we commence the program at all 6 schools in the 1st year?
9. Would we commence the program as a “pilot” in 1 or 2 schools?
10. How much time would be allocated per lesson / per week for this program?

11. Could this program be a voluntary “after school” program? Is it feasible to offer a viable after-school World Language program? Are there community alternatives?
12. If so, how could we prepare the World Language department at the middle school to receive these students?

Impact/Implications to consider:

1. What would be the estimated cost of the various Foreign Language program options, including start-up expenses, as well as long term cost?
2. What would be the target timelines for implementation?
3. How would the introduction of this program impact time appropriated for other curricular areas?
4. If the additional time for World Language instruction comes from another curricular area, what content/skills would be lost?
5. If the language program were to be offered during the course of the current school day, how would we adjust the current time allocations appropriated to all other programs and the current intervention blocks?
6. How would we prepare the middle school curriculum, students, and staff for the transition into the middle school Foreign Language program?
7. Would it be possible to consider lengthening the school day?
8. Other considerations?

As you can see from the questions and implications posed above, this is a multi-faceted topic that requests multiple considerations and deliberations. It is deserving of very thoughtful and extensive discussion. I look forward to working with the newly established World Language Committee in addressing these and other topics, as our work progresses.