

Franklin City Schools Curriculum Council Meeting: May 4, 2009

Those present: Steve Buerschen, Dan Darragh, JoAnn Feltner, Peggy Darragh-Jeromos, Lisa Garlow, Jim McFarland, Paula Ruppert, Sherry Terrill, Michelle Cash, Dee Sellers, Jim Martin, Tom Pecor.

Congratulations: Dr. Buerschen congratulated Council member Jim McFarland for being named the district's Project Excellence Innovative Teacher and to Kristen Dursch for being named at the district's Project Excellence Excellent Teacher.

Announcements: Mrs. Feltner thanked the group for serving for the year and said she hoped we would say on the council next year.

The state government is looking at mandating all-day kindergarten starting in 2010-2011. The district will need additional classroom space.

On May 11, an architect will be at the Board Meeting to discuss the process of Community Engagement. This is the first step in evaluating our facilities and making a master building plan that will take the district through the next 40-50 years. Council members should attend if possible.

Elementary Foreign Language Instruction Concept: Dr. Buerschen reviewed the research about elementary foreign language instruction.

Common languages that would be taught K-12 are those that are commonly used in the world such as Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic. For this to work, the language would also have to be offered at the middle school and high school levels.

To implement, the district would need someone certified in all grades for that language. There are programs through several universities that could help bring to the district someone whose native language is the one desired (e.g. Chinese).

There are several ways to add an early foreign language. Some examples would be:

- Making language a "special" type session (such as art, music, or library)
- Making it an after-school program
- Setting up a magnet school with language immersion.

Whether to add early language should be part of the community engagement process, where the community has a chance to provide input.

One member commented that it might be easiest to add an early language that's already available in grades 7-12, to ease the transition. That would be Spanish or French, although French is being taught less and less in schools.

Adding language as an after-school option would also be a fairly easy way to make the transition and a good experiment to gauge interest.

Mrs. Cash asked if there were a priority for items that the district might wish to adopt. Some of the district's priorities will be clarified in the district engagement process. Dr. Buerschen said that Mr. Elam is looking at Fine Arts for one thing. Also, the state is looking at lengthening the school year and phase one is to reduce the number of calamity days allowed, with eventually none being built into the schedule.

District Curriculum Committee Work: Dr. Buerschen reviewed work of the district's various curriculum committees for the year including Social Studies, Science Material Review, Continuous Improvement Committee, 7-12 Health, K-12 Visual Arts, and K-12 Technology.

Next meeting: September 14, 3 p.m. One item on the agenda will be early graduation.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Darragh-Jeromos