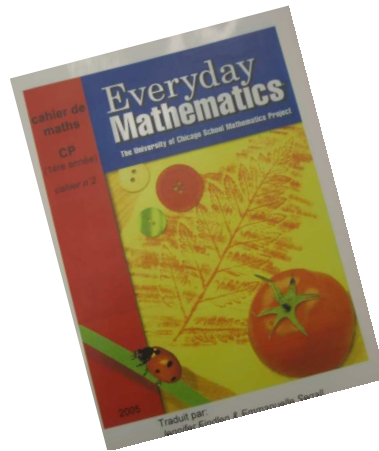


World Language Committee Report

April 6, 2010



**WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
MILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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**WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
MILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

World Language Committee Members

John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel - Co-Chair
Gracie Burke, Director of World Languages – Co-Chair

Courtney Affanato, Parent
Kristan Bagley Jones, School Committee Member
Fatima Bourass-Elzein, Teacher
Andy Cantillon, Parent
John Doyle, Teacher
Margaret Eberhardt, Parent
Janis Gordon, Teacher
Dr. Dore Korschun, Elementary Principal
Emily McElhinney, Parent
Raju Pathak, Parent
Erin Power, Teacher
Mary Ann Rull, Parent
Rachel Schewe, Parent
Rachel Shanor, Parent
Martha Sherman, Elementary Language Arts Coordinator
Marietta Surette, Parent
Veronica Watson, Teacher

World Language Committee Meetings

November 12, 2009
November 19, 2009
December 9, 2009
January 7, 2010
January 20, 2010
January 27, 2010
February 24, 2010
March 3, 2010
March 11, 2010
March 18, 2010
March 24, 2010
March 31, 2010
April 6, 2010 – Presentation to Milton School Committee

**WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
MILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

World Language Committee – Goals of the Committee

On November 12, 2010 the World Language Committee convened for their initial meeting. At this meeting Superintendent Gormley gave the committee their charge and goals as a committee.

The Milton Public School system is committed to continuing the English Language Arts program with Spanish FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools) and the French Immersion Program in the elementary schools. The World Language Programs are unique programs which bring value to the district. The goal is to investigate ways to ensure the long term success and sustainability of all language programs (French Immersion and English with FLES). The committee will report out to the school committee in late February or early March and will deliver a final report to the School Committee on April 6, 2010.

The committee will have an open discussion of issues, survey parents, research and collect data, study budget implications, and review proposed plans (past and future) for language programs (French Immersion, English with FLES).

History: As a result of budgetary issues projected for 2009 the district proposed a number of options that would reconfigure French Immersion classes across the district resulting in a substantial budget savings. Following the successful passing of an override the implementation of these plans was not necessary. After receiving subsequent parent and community feedback, the school committee and school administration chose to review the options again for possible budgetary savings and long term sustainability.

Rationale: To investigate long term sustainability of the World Language Programs at the Elementary level considering:

- *Personnel Needs*
- *Inequity of Class Size*
- *Possible Budgetary Savings*
- *Quality of Educational Programming*

The goals of the World Language Committee were as follows:

- Analyze the current structure of the Elementary World Language Program in the Milton Public Schools
- Define and review different options to restructure the Elementary World Language Program in the Milton Public Schools
 - Identify potential strengths and weaknesses for each option
 - Identify potential budgetary savings for each option
- Survey parents for feedback on various aspects of the World Language Program in the Milton Public Schools
- Communicate findings to the Superintendent of Schools and the Milton School Committee

WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE MILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

World Language Committee - Summary

The World Language Committee conducted a series of two hour meetings starting in November 2009 and continuing through March of 2010 (12 meetings total). The group consisted of parents, teachers, school administrators, and school committee representatives.

The Committee meetings began with introductions and a review of the norms for the group and the framework for the committee's work. The committee then generated an initial series of questions/queries to gather data and feedback on programmatic options, increasing enrollment, perceptions of programs, the impact of FLES, and the impact on the budget. The data from the 2008 French Immersion Review Team was reviewed which was inclusive of test data, cost of programs, and enrollment trends. The committee also reviewed research on French Immersion and FLES programs provided by Gracie Burke, Director of World Languages.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel John Phelan and Gracie Burke, Director of World Languages, presented the Grade 1 Parent Information Presentation to the committee to ensure that the group was familiar with the information that the district was presenting to incoming grade one parents regarding the French Immersion and English/ FLES Programs.

The committee also developed a survey that was distributed to all parents and guardians to gather information regarding the World Language Programs in the Milton Public Schools. The survey consisted of ten questions and was conducted electronically. The survey received 630 completions. The committee reviewed the survey results and analyzed them by looking at the answers through different filters. These filters (e.g. by program or years in the system) provided another lens to view these important survey results. The survey provided some insight into why parents select the language program for their child and also projected what the response would be, based on the different program options.

Next steps were to define the possible program options and to develop definitions for these options. The committee then formulated strengths and weakness for each of the options. The committee also inquired about the long term sustainability of the various options.

**WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
MILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

World Language Program Options - Definitions

French Partner Schools:

In this option two schools will be partnered together to consolidate the French Immersion classes. Between the two schools in the partnership French Immersion will be housed in only one school per grade.

Example: If the Collicot Elementary and the Cunningham Elementary School were partnered, Grade 1 French Immersion would only exist at the Collicot School for the 2010-11 school year. This grade of students would continue at this school for the duration of its Elementary Career (Grades 1-5). In the year 2011-12, the Cunningham School would host the Grade 1 French Immersion classes, and these students would continue at this school for the duration of their Elementary career (Grades 1-5).

French Continuum Strands:

In this option the French Immersion classes will be consolidated across the district into 1 school. Among the four schools the French Immersion will be housed in only one school per grade.

Example: Grade 1 French Immersion would only exist at the Collicot School for the 2010-11 school year. This grade of students would continue at this school for the duration of its Elementary Career (Grades 1-5). In the year 2011-12, the Cunningham School would host the Grade 1 French Immersion classes, and these students would continue at this school for the duration of their Elementary career (Grades 1-5). Etc...

French Integration in Grade 5

In this option students in Grade 5 are assigned to different classes with different students by subject. This allows for student enrollment and assignment to be balanced in this particular grade and school.

Example: Students in both French Immersion and English would be mixed together and have one teacher for 70% of his or her day and then would be split by program and have another teacher for the 30% of the day that is French Immersion or English with FLES.

The committee concluded that the Integration Option was could be better used as an internal district option that would be decided by school administration after further review and discussion with principals and teachers. This option was removed from consideration as a restructuring possibility for the purposes of this report.

**WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
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Lottery/Capping of French Immersion

In this option the Superintendent would fix the number of classes of French Immersion per school and the number of seats per class. Families would select to enter the French Immersion Lottery. If more students select the French than seats are available, a lottery would be held to determine who was enrolled into French Immersion. If open seats were available in another school, families would have the option of entering a lottery for those seats as well. Students who are not selected to attend French Immersion would instead be enrolled in English program classes per the Elementary Student Assignment plan.

Example: The Collicot has 2 sessions of Grade 1 French for the 2010-11 school year with a maximum of 25 students per class. If more than 50 families select French, a lottery is held for those seats.

Alternate Assignment

Designate a fixed amount of classes of French Immersion in each school that is consistent year to year. Designate the class size limit up front that is fixed each year. If more students apply than seats available the district would assign those students based on either 1.) a lottery or 2.) the Elementary Student Assignment Plan. The Superintendent of Schools has the discretion to either fill all existing classes with students or to open an “auxiliary class” at one or more schools. Any student not selected to fill a French Immersion seat in their “home school” would be given the opportunity to attend French Immersion at an “auxiliary class”. The “auxiliary class” and students would remain in the assigned school for the entire five years of their elementary experience. However, other siblings of students who are placed in an “auxiliary class” do not necessarily transfer or enroll to the same school. These siblings will follow the Elementary Student Assignment Process for their “home school”.

Example (Lottery Driven): The Collicot has 2 sessions of Grade 1 French for the 2010-11 school year with a maximum of 26 students per class. If more than 52 families select French, a lottery is held for those seats. The students who are not selected for the seats via the lottery are offered a seat in the English program at Collicot (if available) or French Immersion in the Auxiliary School (if available).

Example (Student Assignment Driven): The Collicot has 2 sessions of Grade 1 French for the 2010-11 school year with a maximum of 26 students per class. If more than 52 families select French, students are placed in the open seats via the Elementary Student Assignment Plan. The students who are not selected for the French Immersion seats are offered a seat in the English program at Collicot (if available) or French Immersion in the Auxiliary School (if available).

**WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
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World Language Program Options – Strengths, Weaknesses, Savings

French Partner Strands	
<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once assigned to a school in grade 1, students stay in the same school for five (5) year elementary experience. • The English Program will continue to follow the Elementary Assignment Plan. • Kindergarten students will continue to follow the Elementary Assignment Plan. • To realize a savings all grades (1-5) must be partnered between the two schools (with no grandfathering). • Will provide a clear policy or process for parents to have predictability in program choice • All language programs would be available to all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families may have students who attend different schools if French is chosen. This may cause: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple start times ○ Multiple PTO’s (less parent involvement) • Cost savings and/or cost increases would have to be projected for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teacher specialists ○ Transportation ○ Fluctuating enrollment at schools • May not address sustainability issues. • Would impact all elementary French immersion students in year 1 of implementation. Disruption would occur. • Parent choice of program is may be based on logistics rather than content of program. • If implemented only for grade one, this would not result in a savings.
<u>Savings</u>	
<p>The Partner strands would save 1.0 FTE in classroom teachers for the 2010-11 school year. This forecasts a one year savings only. Please see the projected enrollment chart on page 9. The savings is where the X is at Collicot, Grade 5.</p>	

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Projected MPS 10-11 Enrollment Chart - Partner

		CAPS		22	22	23	25	25	25
		PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	
Collicot	English (PreK-5)	44	23	21	22	19	22	24	
	English (PreK-5)		23	21	22	18	19	23	
	English (PreK-5)		23	21			9		
	English (PreK-5)		22						
	Coll/Cunn Half Day		18						
	French (1-5)			25		24		26	
	French (1-5)			25		25		25	
	French (1-5)			25		25		25	
	French (1-5)			25					25
	All SPED (PreK-5)		46	2	0	3	0	5	5
Subtotals		90	111	163	47	111	55	128	
Cunningham	English (PreK-5)		23	21	21	23	19	22	
	English (PreK-5)		22	21			20	24	
	English (PreK-5)		23				12		
	English (PreK-5)		23						
	French (1-5)				25		22		
	French (1-5)				26		22		
	French (1-5)				26		22		
	French (1-5)				26				
	All SPED (PreK-5)		0	0	2	1	2	5	
Subtotals		91	42	126	24	119	51		
Glover	English (PreK-5)		22	20	23	23	25	26	
	English (PreK-5)		22		21			26	
	English (PreK-5)		21						
	French (1-5)				28		20		
	French (1-5)				25		20		
	French (1-5)				26		20		
	Integrated Role Models		13	12		12	13	10	
	All SPED (PreK-5)		4	4	0	7	5	7	
Subtotals		82	36	123	42	103	69		
Tucker	English (PreK-5)		19	19	21	18	23	27	
	English (PreK-5)		21						
	French (1-5)			24		26		21	
	French (1-5)			25		25		21	
	French (1-5)			25		25		20	
	Integrated Role Models		11	11	6	7	12		
	All SPED (PreK-5)		6	6	8	11	7	0	
Subtotals		57	110	35	112	42	89		

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French Continuum Plan	
<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once assigned to a school in grade 1, students stay in the same school for five (5) year elementary experience. • The English Program will continue to follow the Elementary Assignment Plan. • Kindergarten students will continue to follow the Elementary Assignment Plan. • To realize a savings all grades (1-5) must be reorganized at one time (with no grandfathering). • Will provide a clear policy or process for parents to have predictability in program choice. • All language programs would be available to all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families may have students who attend different schools if French is chosen. This may cause: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple start times ○ Multiple PTO's (less parent involvement) • Cost savings and/or cost increases would have to be projected for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teacher specialists ○ Transportation ○ Fluctuating enrollment at schools ○ More frequent moves between schools for teachers • May not address sustainability issues. • Would impact all elementary French Immersion students in year 1 of implementation. Disruption would occur. • Parent choice of program is may be based on logistics rather than content of program. • If implemented only for grade one, this would not result in a savings. • Insufficiencies of physical space – Does Tucker have the space?
<u>Savings</u>	
<p>The Continuum option would save 2.0 FTE in classroom teachers for the 2010-11 school year. This forecasts a one year savings only. Please see the projected enrollment chart on page 11. The savings is where the X is at Cunningham, Grade 4 and Glover, Grade 5.</p>	

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Projected MPS 10-11 Enrollment Chart - Continuum

	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	
Collicot	English (PreK-5)	44	23	21	22	19	22	24
	English (PreK-5)		23	21	22	18	19	23
	English (PreK-5)		23	21			9	
	English (PreK-5)		22					
	French (1-5)				26	24		
	French (1-5)				26	25		
					25	25		
					26	25		
					28	25		
					25	26		
Subtotals	90	111	63	229	187	55	52	
Cunningham	English (PreK-5)		23	21	21	23	19	22
	English (PreK-5)		22	21			20	24
	English (PreK-5)		23				12	
	English (PreK-5)		23					
	French (1-5)						26	
	French (1-5)						25	
							25	
							25	
Subtotals		91	42	23	24	179	51	
Glover	English (PreK-5)		22	20	23	23	25	26
	English (PreK-5)		22		21			26
	English (PreK-5)		21					
	French (1-5)							23
	French (1-5)							23
								23
								23
Subtotals		82	36	44	42	43	207	
Tucker	English (PreK-5)		19	19	21	18	23	27
	English (PreK-5)		21					
	French (1-5)			25				
				25				
				25				
				25				
Subtotals		57	210	35	36	42	27	

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Grade 5 Integration

No longer an option – decided by World Language Committee

Strengths

Weaknesses

Savings

**WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
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French Immersion Lottery/Capping	
<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational stability/predictability would be realized for the French Immersion program. • Quality of program maintained because class sizes would remain educationally sound. • All parents who select French have the same “chance” of getting selected. • Educational soundness in the organizational stability • Once assigned to a school in grade 1, students stay in the same school for five (5) year elementary experience. • The English Program will continue to follow the Elementary Assignment Plan. • Kindergarten students will continue to follow the Elementary Assignment Plan. • Will provide a clear policy or process for parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey results show that majority of parents do not support capping. • Legal issues of implementing a “lottery” should be considered. • May not result in immediate financial savings. • Some students will not be able to participate in French Immersion.
<u>Savings</u>	
<p>The lottery/capping option would not provide an immediate savings on classroom teacher FTE’s. Instead, this option would help to provide sustainability in the Elementary World Language Programs.</p>	

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Alternative Assignment Lottery Driven vs. Student Assignment Driven	
<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will provide some predictability in number of sessions per school. • Will provide a structure that could possibly balance the English & French ratio for program sustainability. • The English Program will continue to follow the Elementary Assignment Plan. • Kindergarten students will continue to follow the Elementary Assignment Plan. • Will provide a clear policy or process for parents. • Once assigned to a school in grade 1, students stay in the same school for five (5) year elementary experience. • All language programs would be available to all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families may have students who attend different schools if French Immersion is chosen. This may cause: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple start times ○ Multiple PTO's (less parent involvement) • May not result in immediate financial savings. • Some students will not be able to participate in French Immersion in their home school.
<u>Savings</u>	
<p>The Alternative Assignment option would not provide an immediate savings on classroom teacher FTE's. Instead, this option would potentially provide sustainability in the Elementary World Language Programs.</p>	

**WORLD LANGUAGE COMMITTEE
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World Language Committee – Parent Survey Results & Findings

The World Language Committee created and distributed an online survey for all Milton Public School parents in grades PreK-12. The purpose of the survey was to solicit parent feedback on a number of variables that pertain to the structure of the current World Language Program in the Milton Public Schools as well any potential changes to the program. The committee received 630 responses, analyzed the results, and has developed the following findings:

- Offering Spanish FLES in grade 1 would potentially increase the likelihood that a parent would choose the English with FLES program option.
- Limiting the French Immersion program for grade 1 to certain schools from year to year would potentially reduce the number of parents who choose the French Immersion program.
- The majority of parents surveyed choose the French Immersion program over the English with FLES program because of the “Total Language Immersion Experience.”
- The majority of parents surveyed responded that they would not “accept a cap or lottery on the overall enrollment of the French Immersion Program.”

From these results the World Language Committee has determined that if FLES was reinstated in Grade 1 and if some parents had to choose between placement in French Immersion or “home school”, then the district would see a substantial decrease in the choice of French Immersion over English with FLES and help to promote a better balance in the enrollment of the programs.

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World Language Committee – Conclusions

The goal of the World Language Committee was to review the current structure of the World Language Program in the Milton Public Schools and identify potential changes that could result in program sustainability and cost savings. The committee tried to develop a structure that would provide a consistent organizational approach that clearly articulates how the district assigns students in both programs. A structure that provides clarity to the parent and communicates a dedication to the programs will promote a stable pattern of program choice for the future of the district.

In reviewing the proposed World Language Program options the committee has developed a list of potential strengths, weaknesses, and savings that will assist the Superintendent of Schools when determining the structure of the programs. Some options reviewed saved money for the district by reducing one or two teaching positions, but would result in a structure that does not promote program sustainability. Ultimately the option that is chosen should provide long term predictability and organizational stability for both programs.

Throughout the process the members of the World Language Committee were able to speak freely and adequately represent their peers. The process was conducted in an open and frank manner and resulted in a dynamic dialogue that produced as many questions as it answered. By analyzing the current structure, developing new ideas, and by collecting parent and teacher feedback, the committee has taken positive steps towards laying the foundation for educationally sound and sustainable Elementary Programs for the Milton Public Schools where World Languages are a valued core component.

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World Language Committee – Future Considerations

In addition to the conclusions drawn above, the committee also established a list of “Future Considerations” that were discussed during the meetings. These items will have an impact on the future of the Elementary World Language Program and should be duly discussed by the School Administration and/or any future committees. They are:

- The Administration should use this report to continue to stabilize the organizational structure of the program. It is imperative that we continue to strive to seek a balance in the elementary programs. If the enrollment ratio continues to increase for French Immersion the following issues may arise:
 - The district that has limited English classes and seats for new students who move in after Grade 1.
 - The district would have limited English classes and peer role model students for special education students.
 - The district will have to hire more teachers who are fluent in French. There is a limited pool of certified applicants for these unique Elementary French teacher positions.
 - A lack of organizational stability and predictability.
 - The integrity of both World Language programs would eventually be compromised.
- The Administration should review its Elementary Student Assignment Policy for its effectiveness; including the development of a “gray area” that is a mixed district area for Glover and Tucker, similar to the mixed area for Collicot and Cunningham. Also, a more clear definition of “grandfathering” should be outlined to ensure a better understanding of this guideline.
- The Administration should explore the possibilities of reinstating Spanish FLES in Grade 1. From our survey results, it appears that a significant amount of parents would be more likely to select the English with FLES program with FLES starting in Grade 1. In addition to the budgetary impact, the educational impact should also be considered.
- Exploring the idea of possible efficiencies between the Collicot and Cunningham schools as they are uniquely linked on one campus.
- Time and consideration should be given to the Kindergarten school assignment process and its potential impact on Grade 1 assignment.
- The Administration should continue to explore the possibility of using the Grade 5 integration option on a year by year, school by school scenario, regardless of the structure in order to realize educational and budgetary efficiencies.
- The Administration should explore the possibility of adding a parent or PTO sponsored event in addition to the Grade 1 Information Night to provide a “parent’s point of view” on the grade 1 language selection process.
- The Administration should revisit its current class size maximum policies, address the issue of educational assistants in classes that are oversubscribed, and communicate these policies.

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- In its communication to parents regarding French Immersion, the Administration should re-emphasize that when a parent chooses French for their child, they are making a commitment to the program for grades 1-5.
- The long term plan must be continually evaluated and monitored. This should include review of enrollment data and trends as well as gathering parent feedback.
- Explore the possibility of hiring Reading Specialists for all students.
- Continue to improve the process for providing information to parents on how to select the best program for their children, including predictable annual time tables.

End of Report