

DRAFT
MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH TEXTBOOK REVIEW
MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH TEACHERS' FORUM
MINUTES FOR 2/01/07

Matt McCauley opened the forum, by asking the committee members to introduce themselves. He introduced Dick Withycombe as our facilitator throughout this process, and gave a brief description of Dick's background and experience. Matt reviewed with the teachers that last year the Math Task Force was formed to identify math priorities. The Task Force determined that middle school math was the most urgent issue to be addressed. Several members for the Review Committee will now do a presentation regarding our middle school math review process and where we are at in making a recommendation. Following the presentation, we would like input from those who are present.

Debbi Hardy spoke briefly concerning mathematical proficiency and the information in the booklet "Helping Children Learn Mathematics". She will provide a more complete presentation tonight at the Community Forum.

Theresa Tsou spoke about our review process. The Math Task Force was formed in the fall of 2005. The Task Force reviewed math curriculum throughout the district, and decided that we should continue with Math Trailblazers, but look at a new curriculum for middle school. The Middle School Math Textbook Review Committee was formed. The original committee consisted of 25 people – district staff and parents. The first meeting of the committee was an all day review of 7 textbooks. The second meeting was a discussion of the books reviewed, and at the third meeting, 3 presenters spoke regarding CMP2 and a vote was taken concerning which curriculum to recommend to the Board. A recommendation was made to the Board in May 2006. Due to parent concerns, the Board asked the committee to re-form and broaden their process for making a recommendation. Beginning in Fall 2006, the committee re-formed, added some additional members to fill in holes in representation and added a facilitator to the process. The committee met six times, reviewed and narrowed three traditional textbook choices to one, aligned CMP2 and McDougal Littell (the traditional text), set up criteria filters, and have been unable to reach consensus as to which of these two texts to recommend. The Middle School Teachers and Community Forum were set so the committee could present their findings, and ask for input.

Julie McDougall spoke concerning the filters used in evaluating the two choices of texts. The committee narrowed the filters to four primary:

1. Has balance – problem solving, critical thinking, applications & basic skills
- 2A. Student retention of knowledge
- 2B. Aligns with State standards
4. Meets needs of various levels of learners

2A. and 2B. are listed in this way, because they both received the same number of votes. Each of these four primary filters received 10 or more votes. Other important secondary filters also surfaced:

- Student interest
- Addresses the issue of lower performing students
- High school preparation
- Data driven
- Professional development

Kate Trafton used the filters to describe the two texts:

McDougal Littell Math 1,2,3:

- Basic skills are well supported in textbook
- Problem solving, critical thinking and application are supported in additional resources
- Spiraling curriculum – similar to Glencoe
- Additional resources are provided which meets the needs of various levels of learners

CMP2:

- Problem solving, critical thinking and application skills are well supported in textbook.
- Basic skills are supported in additional resources
- Students go deeper into math concepts, with the expectation that they will retain those concepts – a different approach from Glencoe
- Practice in the textbook allows for students to progress at their own pace and ability level, thus meeting the needs of various levels of learners

She reviewed the budget for adoption. The next steps will be for the committee to meet on Feb. 7th, review the comments and prepare for a recommendation to the Board on Feb. 12th.

A detail of the Powerpoint presentation is available on the district website and through the K-12 Teaching and Learning office.

Dick Withycombe reviewed that at tonight's Community Forum he will limit input from the audience to 3 minute comments only. But, for this afternoon's Middle School Math Teachers' Forum he would like to hear from non-committee members and would encourage both comments and questions and answers. Questions, comments and answers are listed as follows:

- **One staff teaches students with learning disabilities. Her understanding is that in CMP2, concepts are only taught in certain grade levels. If a student has a goal in a specific area (say fractions) how will she meet their needs with CMP2?** Discussion included that other resources could be used, and that whichever curriculum is adopted there will need to be protocol for special education teachers and meeting their kids' needs. Also, the Teachers Edition in CMP2 does outline what concepts are taught and reference to when. This could be used as a resource for teaching specific concepts for children with learning disabilities.
- **What about new students transferring into OSD? If they miss a concept in CMP2, how will they learn it?** While fractions (for example) is the emphasis in 6th grade, they are still used and built on throughout other books in 7th and 8th

- grade. One teacher participating in the CMP2 pilot has had students move into her class throughout the year. They have had some difficulty at first with the transition, but with some additional support they have integrated well into the class, and have tested well. They are making steady improvement in the materials previously covered.
- **What is the plan for professional development for CMP2? How much is needed for new teachers, and what would be the expected commitment of the OSD staff?** It is likely that there would be a week long training in August. In checking with other districts, they have found it to be effective to have a trainer/expert come in once every 5-6 weeks to work with staff throughout the school year. We have also set up PLC's this year for collaboration time. We would continue with these and also hope to set up trainer models/mentors for new teachers. Teachers in other districts said the first year or two is a challenge, but are happy they are using CMP2. In addition to the initial money available for professional development through the adoption funds, we can also sustain professional development in the future through the use of Title II funds.
 - **Is there bias/dissension in making a decision about the curriculum choice? The set up of today's forum seems to divide the group. Was this intentional? Literature is being passed out at the schools by a parent group supporting traditional math. How valid is the literature?** While individuals may have their own personal bias, the committee has tried hard to keep the focus on the curriculum choices. We intended for this afternoon's meeting to be informal, however, due to time limitations we needed to set up the room as will be needed for tonight's meeting. There is a group of parents who have expressed concerns about CMP2. The literature they are handing out presents only one side; their perspective of the issues. It is also to be noted that another side is that more than 100 districts within Washington State are using CMP2. OSD is ranked 29th on the WASL, and 24 of the 28 districts doing better than WMS are using CMP2.
 - **How has the committee gotten to two different ends of the philosophical spectrum with regards to the two proposed math choices? Why did they not look at something in the middle ground, such as Mathscares?** Last year Mathscares was reviewed and did not make the top two. We also didn't have all the materials – they were unavailable at the time. The group felt we needed to start where we left off last spring, so we continued with CMP2 and (because of some new curriculum available since then) we reviewed 3 traditional texts and narrowed it down to one, McDougal Littell.
 - Concern was expressed about the lack of basic skills in CMP2.
 - There are also concerns regarding McDougal Littell and the lack of time devoted to problem solving and math reasoning.
 - Training is the most important piece for CMP2. It was useful in helping one staff member develop basic skills work for students.
 - One member who attended the training last August, noted that the bulk of the training includes doing the work students will do. Teachers without specific middle school math background commented that they were able to gain skills throughout the week by doing this work.

- **One teacher originally heard that CMP2 was most useful for kids who are struggling. However, has since heard from colleagues that it is not working well for those kids, but is most successful with higher level learners. They had also heard that kids were being pulled from CMP2 pilot classes because they are struggling.** No one who is piloting CMP2 could confirm that any of their kids were pulled from classes. There are students being pulled from math classes to get additional help (“double-dipping”), but this is not specific to the CMP2 pilot classes, but is happening at all levels in various classes. One teacher piloting Mathscapes said she has had students pulled from her classes because their study skills were lacking. A committee member teaching CMP2 commented that she has seen a shift in the balance of power. Students who may have struggled with traditional math are succeeding in CMP2, and students who have been successful in traditional math may have to work harder with CMP2. One of CMP2 pilot teachers commented that she is teaching two CMP2 classes, with mid-level learners, and none have switched out of her class. Several of these kids who were below grade level (5th grade) on the WASL are doing well in CMP2.
- **Are MAP testing results available for the CMP2 pilot classes?** The committee had requested to review these, however, due to snow days in January, problems with the software, and downtime needed to correct problems and install new software, the results are unavailable.
- Based on research by Dr. John Woodward, from UPS, students who are learning disabled need the conceptual type work that is offered in CMP2.
- To meet the needs of various level learners, we would need to run different tracks of CMP2 classes, and we can then move kids from slower to faster track classes (or vice versa) as their math development dictates.
- **Concern was expressed that if we do not use a spiraling curriculum and are not re-teaching concepts at higher levels over the years, how will students meet the benchmarks?** The philosophy of CMP2, is that when students learn conceptually, they understand concepts and their learning is deeply imbedded. They will later be able to retrieve this learning.
- CMP2 does have rigor.
- No matter which curriculum is used, there are always pieces missing that must be supplemented.
- Higher level students can do well academically in math, but if they only learn the formulas (rote) they will eventually get stuck because they don’t understand conceptually.
- The vocabulary in CMP2 is tough.
- Trying to pilot CMP2 without the summer training is very problematic.
- **If we go with CMP2, how we will transition it in? All grades all at once? Or slower.....6th grade for first year, 6th & 7th grade for second year, etc.?** These are all topics for the Feb. 7th meeting.
- Great appreciation was expressed for the committee’s hard work.

Meeting adjourned.