

**Math Task Force
November 3, 2005
Meeting Minutes**

The second meeting of the 2005-06 Math Task Force met on Thursday, November 3 at 4:00 p.m. The following members were present at the meeting: Keith Barber, Jo Edwards, Charleen Hayes, John Hitchman, Karen Hougan, Cindy Johnson, Randy Lobe, Chris Mondau, Robyn Muzatko, Suzette O'Donnell, Kelly Pankau, Teri Poff, Susan Rice, Susan Rowell, Scott Rutledge, Mary Jo Stientjes, Vickie Tuvey, Aaron Vail, Monica West, Marsha Woods and Jan Stuckey. Matt McCauley thanked the members for attending.

The minutes of the last meeting were emailed to all members. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as written.

Math Team:

Matt explained the Math Team. He is preparing a memo for Principals requesting their suggestions of members and explaining the characteristics needed in team members. The Math Team will do the "in the trenches" work of aligning the curriculum, creating pacing charts and 3 common assessments for each grade level. It is expected that the elementary group will need 3 days for work and the middle school will need about 6 days. Task Force members were encouraged to volunteer and talk to others in their building. We are looking for 3 members at each grade level. Susan Rowell reminded the group that the report card needs to connect with the GLE's.

Request to Publishers:

Matt is currently in the process of contacting publishers regarding materials for the committee to preview.

Role & Timelines:

The school board is very interested in funding curriculum needs. The reality is middle school appears to be the greatest need. Olympia High School reports their books are in poor condition and many are from the early 90's. We may want to review what texts we are using at the high school level if we plan to replace books. The adoption recommendation needs to be ready in the spring, but the budget request is needed by the end of January. Matt is planning a request with various options.

Matt asked if the elementary teachers felt there was satisfaction with the Trailblazer program in the district.

Cindy Johnson talked about the transition from 5th to 6th grade. She felt skipping courses in middle school caused anxiety and more communication was needed for 5th graders and their parents.

Matt agreed that Trailblazers might lack computation skills. We may need to align the middle school computation curriculum with trailblazers. The students need the computational skills for high school. The goal of this committee last year was that every student in 9th grade would be ready for algebra.

Charleen Hayes suggested anonymously surveying the elementary teachers about Trailblazers.

Marsha Woods felt that if funds were available, there would be interest in a new program with continuity between middle school and elementary. We need materials that work

well together. Now there is no continuity to how teachers are supplementing Trailblazers.

Aaron Vail believes Trailblazers is a good program.

Jo Edwards stressed the need for help at home. Trailblazers helps with the concepts.

Joni Wolpert feels kids have a stronger sense of concepts, but lack the computational skills. No middle school teachers dislike Trailblazers for the concepts, but the middle school program is all computational.

Keith Barber was familiar with Investigations by Prentice Hall. It is a program that is similar to Trailblazers. He was very unimpressed with Trailblazers when he first started, but now after 2 months is enjoying the curriculum.

Scott Rutledge had heard about Math-Thematics by McDougall-Littell. It is a K-9 approach that is being used in Bellingham.

Aaron Vail shared that Madison's special services uses Saxon.

Jo Edwards believes that money and time are missing from the Trailblazer curriculum.

Third graders don't recognize money.

Aaron Vail would like to encourage math at home, but parents are not comfortable with Trailblazers.

Marsha Woods and Jo Edwards agreed that Trailblazers is hard for parents to understand.

Jo Edwards shared that sometimes the lower kids get the concepts better with Trailblazers. The concepts are often taught in cooperative learning groups and students don't do as well individually on tests.

Marsha Woods believes the concepts are not taught to mastery.

Susan Rowell believes you should send time, money and computation skills home for homework.

Karen Hougan said that ESL students have a very difficult time with Trailblazers.

Keith Barber shared that the schools that had the best results on the WASL were using Investigations supplemented with Accelerated Math. Accelerated Math is a computer based, individually paced program.

Joni Wolpert said many textbook companies have textbooks on line.

Jo Edwards shared that Garfield is experiencing a lack of access to computer use at this time due to reduced tech support.

The committee showed no need to see more data.

Kelly Pankau reminded everyone that we need to meet the GLE's if we want kids to be ready for algebra in 9th grade.

Alice Burman believes that computation is the weakest area at the elementary level. She believes we could encourage home activities with calendar, temperature, and clock.

Aaron Vail is not sure how to get parents involved in math.

Matt McCauley suggested an online homework website and a Newsletter article about Math computation.

Jo Edwards would like to have the homework information prior to conferences on Nov. 14.

Joni Wolpert suggested that we change the approach when dealing with parents and homework. She suggested sending daily activities instead of a long list of assignments.

Karen Hougan reported that each quarter the Yelm teachers were given supplemental materials and assessments. At McKenny they are pushing math facts for 5 minutes a day and encouraging the use of flash cards.

Matt asked the group what we needed to get to the end. Common Philosophy

Vickie Tuvey would like a program totally aligned with the GLE's and less supplements. Marsha Woods wants at K-9 total program. We need to bridge from elementary to high school.

Vickie Tuvey asked if 5th grade teachers used Trailblazers.

Charleen Hayes said other 5th grade teachers have reported to her that they don't make it past unit 7 in Trailblazers. She is very aware of the bump between 5th and 6th grade.

Matt shared that Everett School District adopted CMP. It contains 24 units and they do the first 2 in 5th grade. If a student completes all 24 units they leave middle school with Algebra completed. If they complete 20 they start Algebra in high school.

Scott Rutledge asked if there was a transition from 6th to 5th in problem solving.

Keith Barber shared that some teachers use Write About Math for a supplement to get more WASL-type questions.

Joni Wolpert said 6th and 7th grade teachers supplement with WASL questions.

Susan Rowell expressed difficulty in evaluating Trailblazers without comparing to other programs.

Matt said he feels good about where we are headed. He feels the group will come to agreement about priorities.

Everyone is still in agreement that middle school is the top priority. They know the high schools have needs and are interested in more study of Trailblazers.

The group would like more data. They will research the top math curriculums and the style of each.

Teri Poff wanted to express that the high schools really need help. They would like to know what is out there for Algebra and Geometry.

Not all students will be able to do high school level Algebra – we may need to look at a different approach.

Cognitive Tutor seems to be working for the bottom chunk of Algebra students at Tumwater. It is an individualized, self-paced computerized curriculum where the teacher is the facilitator. The high school has many different kinds of learners. Another approach used in Tumwater was double dipping. Lower students took an additional Power Math class for support. The classes were small and very successful.

Teri Poff expressed a need to explore the text materials. Communication skills are missing in the traditional text. We need more open-ended problem solving. Capital is piloting an online approach.

The group agreed we need to get the vendor products in to look at.

When asked what OHS needed, Matt was told Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2 and Pre Calculus books. 1,020 books at about \$80 per book = \$90,000.
We could estimate spending \$200,000 at the high school level and \$225,000 at the middle school.
Cognitive Tutor cost about \$20,000 for 99 licenses for 5 – 7 years.

Jo Edwards suggested that if teachers could eliminate some curriculum, there would be more time to spend on math.

Joni Wolpert says we need to consider students with special needs and ELL

A recommendation made this year could mean a partial or full implementation in 2006-07. It would be up to the practitioners.

When Matt asked for comments about the process he received none.

Marsha Woods again expressed a desire to survey teachers. The survey should be short. Karen Hougan, Cindy Johnson, Charleen Hayes, Aaron Vail and Jo Edwards volunteered to work on the survey.
Chris Mondau would like to survey the middle school teachers too.
Marsha Woods suggested we survey each level.

Joni Wolpert felt that the middle school should include 5th and 9th when reviewing materials.

Scott Rutledge would like to learn more about Trailblazers

Kelly Pankau suggested that we need a list of criteria to review the materials.

It was decided to make the first round of reviews open to all and invite others when the field is narrowed down some.

Kelly Pankau shared that we need to be careful public relation wise and go through the correct process. A neighboring school district had trouble with their recommended adoption. There are different dynamics in each community.

The next meeting will be used to create a survey. The meeting will be held on Thursday, Dec. 1 at 4:00 p.m.