

John Stanford International School Language Planning Committee

January 19, 2001

To: Language Planning Committee (Nani, Lucy, Amy, Maria, Dolly, Tori, Karen, Margreet)

cc: Action Team for School-Family-Community Partnerships (Math Subcommittee), plus others in attendance at the meeting (Donna Andrews and Sandra Hernandes from UW)

From: Michele Anciaux, Facilitator for the Language Planning Committee

Re: Meeting of Language and Math Task Force with Regla Armengol 1/18/01 7-8 PM at the John Stanford International School

Thanks to everyone who attended the meeting with Regla last night (Donna, Margreet, Amy, Tori, Patty, Maria, Dolly, Karen, Sandra, Regla, Michele). The purpose of this memo is to summarize some of the ideas, visions, and concerns that we shared.

Goal of the Language and Math Task Force

As I understand it, the overall goal of the Language and Math Task Force is to help the John Stanford International School implement a coherent K-5 math program that:

1. Supports the language acquisition goals of the immersion program for Spanish
2. Will be able to support the language acquisition goals of the immersion program for Japanese
3. Prepares students to meet or exceed the grade-level Math standards of the Seattle School District

What thoughts have you brought to this meeting?

To begin, we asked everyone to share what was on their mind about the Math program (ideas, concerns, plans, desires, etc.). Here is a summary:

- It takes planning every day to see what works with the language.
- Are we on track? Will we be able to cover the Math Standards for first grade?
- It's a new adventure each day. There are different resources to draw from.
- I have concern as a parent that there needs to be a continuum from grade to grade. Can we have assessments and portfolios that move with the child?
- Second grade will be very challenging, but the kids will have a great foundation from K-1. When subbing for the first grade, I could see that the kids could do the problems.
- Test scores have been slipping at the school. (That will do us in if the trend continues.) We still need to be ready for the tests.

- As a parent, I'm comfortable with immersion. I like seeing homework written in Spanish (with English translation for the parent).
- I would like to see a more comprehensive program in Math. We need to know how to target help for the kids.
- Immersion teachers have to be top-notch teachers of language and content – all the time. It's a process of trial and error. It's hard to be a first year immersion teacher, but we have excellent resources. There are experienced teachers here to draw from. The kids already have so much comprehension in the immersion program.
- I would like to see portfolios with student language samples.
- We need to get to what is essential. In some ways we have too many resources to draw from, but no time to evaluate or adapt them.
- How can we meet the needs of all the children? There is a wide range of ability in the classroom. Parents want to see their kids go beyond the standards. (The standards are really the minimum level of work.) We need to teach the vocabulary and concepts (for the language), but still push some children beyond in Math.
- How can we have sequence and consistency (like Reading)? (Note: The staff has been analyzing the five strands of Math to see where the standards are and how TERC and Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley meet them to make sure we cover any holes.)
- We need to analyze where our kids sit at each standard from the district (based on reports from standardized tests) so that we can provide targeted assistance in the areas where they fall below standard.

Some observations from Regla

The immersion teachers need to modify standard materials to provide language scaffolding (for second language learners). Regla shared with us an example from 5th grade science, where the teachers added language-specific supports (such as critical vocabulary or grammatical structures) at the top of the worksheets so that the students could access that language support as they responded to content questions about the Science. In this way you can infuse grammar into the Science lesson.

Commercially-available curricula in Math, such as TERC or Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley, are not adequate by themselves – even if they're translated into Spanish. That's because they don't build in the language scaffolding needed for second language learners.

The language immersion teachers are going to need to spend time (perhaps in the summer) modifying the curricular materials to include the language scaffolding needed to make the materials work in an immersion setting.

Some Conclusions from Michele:

1. We are not going to find any one Math curriculum that meets all the needs of the immersion program (even if it's available in Spanish translation).
2. We want to have, and parents expect us to have, a comprehensive K-5 program that ensures that children are actually taught what they're expected to know to meet the District's grade-level standards in Math.
3. Children have differing abilities. We want to provide extra support or extra challenge for those who need it.
4. Closer analysis of our school's assessment data can help us identify weak spots in our students' mastery of math knowledge and skills.
5. Teaching content in an immersion program requires extra time – in advance and on a daily/weekly basis – to modify standard curriculum materials to include language scaffolding.

Recommendations:

1. Math Curriculum

Use TERC and Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley, the District Math adoptions, as a starting point, while continuing to draw from a variety of other resources (such as *Math Excursions* and *Box It or Bag It*).

2. Comprehensive K-5 Math Program

Ask the staff to continue mapping resources to the Math map. (In other words, which standards are addressed by using units from which books?) Document our Math curriculum in a way that makes it clear which resources we're drawing from for teaching which topics in which years.

3. Communications with Parents

In communications with parents, focus on the learning goals for each year (the District's grade-level Math standards) rather than a specific curriculum, and provide milestones to show parents how students are progressing. (For example, if the standard is to "Count objects to 30" by the end of kindergarten, show milestones along the way, such as "Count objects to 10" by December and "Count objects to 20" by March.)

4. Meeting Different Student Needs

Create "Enrichment packets" (as Regla described them) for students to use at home or with mentors/tutors at school. For any grade level, certain packets may be more targeted for remediation, while others are for challenge. (Students don't need to know the distinction. All students can have access to something "extra.")

5. Assessment Data

Continue analyzing our school's assessment data. Ensure that we are using curricular materials that will allow us to address the current weak spots in student achievement.

6. Extra Planning Time for the Immersion Program

Find the resources to allow more planning time for teachers to adapt materials for the immersion setting.