

Elementary Language Arts Curriculum Committee

Anchorage Education Center - Red Room

4:30 - 6:00 PM -December 5, 2006

Our purpose as leaders in the language arts curriculum is to provide leadership and support in our schools for the Anchorage School District goals.

**M After-School Treats and Catching-Up Time**  
**Call to Order**



- **Introductions**
- **Agenda Approval**
- **Minutes Approval**

**Reports**

**Literacy Specialists:**

**Reading Coaches:**

**Coordinator's Report: Mardell Kiesel**

**Unfinished Business**

– **Standards Based Report Card Update**

– **Language Arts and Handwriting!**

**New Business**

–

**For the good of the order...**

– **Update on Teachers' Choices Project**

(In the folders)

**4 ELACC minutes 10/03/06**

**4 Math/Literature Connections**

**4 2 articles on handwriting**

**Adjournment**

*And...thank you for taking time out of your busy lives to attend and commit to the ELACC. If you have questions, concerns or just need more clarification, please contact me via email, #4852 or, better yet, drop by!*



*Mardell*

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Our purpose as leaders in the language arts curriculum is to provide leadership and support in our schools for the Anchorage School District goals.

### M Refreshments and Networking

#### Call to Order

Present: *Cindy Bagley, LaVon Bridges, Ella Brown, Carissa Cote, Jan Flavel, Carolyn Fuller, Sherry Girard, Dona Helmer, Martina Henke, Karen Iris, Stephany LaPointe, Celeste Long, Kahterine Miller, Terry Patka, Melanie Sutton, Pearl Theonnes, Marjorie Waggoner, Mardell Kiesel*

- **Introductions** Marjorie Waggoner, Title I  
Dona Helmer, College Gate
- **Agenda Approved**
- **Minutes Approved**

#### Reports

##### Literacy Specialists:

(Ella Brown) Discussed changing or modifying the district assessment flow chart to give more choice as to which instrument to use for assessment by teachers; revision should come out in January. Also discussed concerns re: SPED not having enough materials to support HM. Language support readers will be ordered for SPED in the coming month. This support will be a joint effort between Elem. Ed. and SPED. Mardell noted that this very concern was brought up at the October meeting. Carolyn asked if the conversation included vocabulary readers? Ella noted that they chose to purchase the language support readers because the text is at a lower level and includes labels on pictures to support SPED kids. Terry added that many are using the bilingual books and trying to share among several, so this was the one they were in favor of receiving. In addition, it was suggested that the SPED kids can use the below-level book on non-SPED days, because it looks similar to the language support book in their SPED class. Jan asked if Intensive Needs classes were included in this purchase? (No)

Reading Coaches: (Marjorie Waggoner) Title I budget has been reduced. There are ten wonderful coaches in the office. Emphasis is on successful implementation of HM and supporting teachers through the challenges of implementing something new.

Mardell asked which Title schools are still using a writing assessment in their buildings. Marjorie would check for the committee and report back later.

Coordinator's Report: Mardell Kiesel

Terry Patka, Mardell Kiesel and Sherry Girard are on a committee with Laurel Voracek and Enid Silverstein to identify formative assessments in each content area. The 6-year formative assessment plan will span across content areas and programs.

ASLA Conference in Juneau was successful, and the Alaska State Writing Consortium Board meetings were concurrent. The ASWC is working with the National Writing Project and UAA to write a grant for a local "Satellite Project" that is collaborative and draws upon the resources of all involved in support of teachers and students. The tentative plan is to focus on digital storytelling, writing process and teacher training.

### Unfinished Business

#### – Standards Based Report Card Update

Mardell has copies of the rubrics from each of the grades. Committee members can choose a sample to peruse. The *Faceplate* is the "front or first page" of the report card where the final "grades or assessment figure" is recorded. A lot of time was spent "wordsmithing" to make sure it spoke to the purpose and communicated to parents and kids. The committee acknowledged there is still room for change and improvement based on input from committee and Dr. Marzano.

The *audience* is the parent. Bold items under subject areas are "*measurement topics*," or "*strands*." *Indicators* are in the white fields. For each of these, there is a rubric. Rubrics have been saved in each form along the way; they look different from before because they needed to align with each grade level and the format must be consistent.

All GLEs are represented in the rubrics. Most "e.g." are examples, ideas for teachers, etc. and "i.e." notes that specifics will be on the SBAs.

The Level 2s have different qualifiers, "easier" or "lower" expectations, and fewer requirements. The committee suggested that we were using qualifiers like *sometimes*, *inconsistently*, etc. too much. Math looked at the same issue and decided that 2's would also be a default message. Language arts felt the need for the level 2 indicators and not just a default message.

The level 1s are with support. It has been brought up that we do not need to specifically say "none of the level 3 indicators" in the default

message; that may change. Fluency is an area where the committee may need to re-focus. The quantifiable parts of the rubric were taken from tables in HM program, but they were compared with other reading fluency figures used in the district, such as Scholastic and Dr. Richard Allington's work.

The SBRC draft was sent to Dr. Marzano for signature. We heard back almost immediately via email. Marzano will be talking to Ruth, Mardell, Enid, and Patricia at 8:30 AM Thursday morning; "a first glance discussion." Depending on what he says, we will or may not have the whole group meeting as discussed earlier. If we get lots of good feedback, Mardell wants all of us to hear. He has asked for a phone conference. The committee will be updated on progress and plans for the future.

Social & Emotional Learning has created their first draft of rubrics, too. Science and Social Studies are underway and Science is constructing performance tasks.

The ELACC strongly recommends the ASD move to tri-semester assessment periods rather than quarterly.

Concern was raised by one committee member regarding the timing of report cards and parent conferences. She believed that several parents did not attend because they already had their report cards. Another committee participant had the opposite reaction. She preferred sending the report card home and then later, focusing the conference on the actual portfolio.

The ASD SBRC Committee is meeting again next week to discuss timelines and training. The goal is to pilot in '07-'08 with schools/teachers interested. The pilot and the staff development plan are very critical to success. Several teachers are knowledgeable of the process and are eager to be considered for the pilot.

A question was raised regarding the Standards reporting section. *Does the statement about students who are 2's are well on way to being 3s mean we are giving a guarantee?*

(Answer) No, our goal is proficiency. A student could achieve a 3 the first marking. The goal is proficiency for all. We are assessing learning

progress on these indicators. During the first quarter, they may be making good progress, but not demonstrating consistency until end of year. This progress is reasonable, and it should not alarm parents to see 2s in those first quarters. We want parents and students to know that a level 3 or proficiency by 4<sup>th</sup> quarter is developmentally appropriate.

– Language Arts and Handwriting!

ELACC has discussed and researched this subject over the past four years. This standing committee voted to support handwriting instruction in grades K-6, in 2004.

We need to make a decision about how handwriting will be part of the curriculum and what resources are necessary. ELACC will continue work on this topic in the month of January. The following statements was drafted by the ELACCC in September 2004, and we will make this our next priority:

*Position Statement: The K-6 Committee recognizes that legible handwriting is crucial for effective communication and should be consistently taught. The committee proposes to study and summarize current research regarding instructional methods for handwriting, and to use this information to recommend district-wide policies regarding handwriting curriculum and instruction in the elementary grades.*

New Business

– None

For the good of the order...

– Update on Teachers' Choices Project

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Adjournment

Respectfully submitted by Martine Henke, Kincaid Elementary

