

High School Language Arts Curriculum Committee

April 5, 2005

Location: 6th & K Conference Room
3:30 P.M. - 4:45 P.M.

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

1. Increasing achievement for all students
2. Supporting effective learning environments
3. Accomplishing increased public accountability

Refreshments, Materials Preview, and Catching up With Colleagues
Welcome Everyone!

- * Introductions
- * Agenda Approval
- * Minutes Approval

Continuing Business

Following up on The House of Spirits and ASD Board recommendations:

4 Enid Hunter, Executive Director, CI S

Current Business

4 Cross District Inservice

Date: TBA (August) And So... ?

4

Book Talks and Recommendations So Far...

4 Book Talks: High School /Middle School Meetings

Bartlett, East, Clark and Wendler at Wendler
(Janene Schoenborn's room, 3:15 - 4:00 PM)

Language Arts Curriculum Cycle...

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Michael Graham, High School Administration Rep

Other:

4 Media Orders...Progress and Questions?

4 *Strategic English* (draft title!) pilots...teachers from West, South, Bartlett, Dimond and SAVE responded and have been invited to training on Feb. 24, and April 21.

4 UBD ...April 26, 27 & 28...and 29 - 30 More to come!

In the Folder...

Announcements...

- ASD TA ... June 13 - 23

4:45 Adjournment

Anchorage School District
High School Language Arts Curriculum Committee
Mardell Kiesel, Language Arts Coordinator
April 5, 2005

In attendance: Glen Wright (South)
Judy Olive (McLaughlin)
Chris Rumps (Benson)
Anne Morris (Dimond)
Marina Gantz (Bilingual)
Tricia Johnson (West)
Mary Henderson (Bartlett)
Janice Strickland (East)
Angie Armstrong (Chugiak)
Martin Lang (Eagle River High School)
Devon Roberts (Service)
Bret Burkehart (Dimond)

Excused: Mike Graham (Administration-East)
Francine Jackson (SAVE 1)

Guest: Enid Hunter (Executive Director of Curriculum)

Introductions
Agenda Approval

Following up on The House of Spirits (Isabel Allende) and ASD recommendations...

4HSLACC was called to order at 3:30 PM. Mardell introduced Dr. Enid Hunter to the committee. Dr. Hunter discussed the recent ASD Board actions regarding the contested, Advanced Placement/Literature book, The House of Spirits by Isabel Allende. The Board voted to approve the book not only for the AP course, but also, Honors English 11. Superintendent Carol Comeau requested that a syllabus be written for each AP and honors literature course by school. This syllabus must be made available prior to registration. HSLACC recommended a header for each syllabus that reads, "*The following books are approved for instructional use in ASD Advanced Placement and honors classes*". HSLACC members agreed that we should publish (LA Online!) a recommended and approved list of books for AP and honors classes.

HSLACC members and AP teachers expressed serious concern regarding the recommendation that an alternate title(s) be offered to students who are not comfortable with the content of the assigned text. An AP course is college level in depth and complexity and related resources are adult texts. The class achieves the high levels of critical analysis and comprehension because the instruction is focused on the assigned text. (P.S. The ASD Board finalized the action on the CRC recommendation during the Board meeting of April 11, 05.)

Current Business...

4 Cross District Inservice

Mardell shared with the committee there will be a cross-district inservice in August for content area teachers and she would like input regarding content and purpose. She shared that her intent would be to plan work/study groups that would continue through the year. “This day cannot be a stereotypical “drive-by” staff development without follow-up plans.” (Kiesel) For example, the following sessions could be offered with support from district teachers:

1. Vertical teams between middle and high schools
2. Curriculum guides for elective courses
3. Support for teachers in English 9 & 10 with the curriculum guides
4. Identification of authors and books that can be addressed in vertical teams from middle to high school ...which includes honors and highly gifted.
5. Keynote with College Board consultant (AP and higher level course work and/or *Understanding By Design*)

More suggestions... Glen Wright (South) suggested we identify specific tasks or issues to be discussed:

1. Uniformity and consistency among schools regarding the use of texts
2. What titles should be recommended for the AP and honors classes’ reading list?
3. The 10th grade curriculum ...is American Lit appropriate? Should we move American Lit to 11th grade? Should we still use some American Lit in grade ten, and include composition?
4. Guide for new teachers

Once these tasks have been identified by schools/departments, they could be compiled and returned to schools. Every LA teacher would sign up for one of these areas of interest. Within the department meetings, it would be decided who would attend each of the sessions. The inservice would involve consensus building, district-wide for these tasks. Mardell requested that the 4 “hot button” topics be discussed in department meetings and feedback returned to her.

Devon Roberts (Service) described efforts at Service to provide curriculum and support for ninth graders through an “academy” based on the AVID model. Anne Morris (Dimond) suggested revisiting grade 9 curriculum to revise content with more of a focus on skills. Mary Henderson (Bartlett) expressed support for the composition and grammar /vocabulary electives to be integrated with the grade 10 and 11 English courses. Judy Olive (McLaughlin) described her students’ need for basic skills and Marina Gantz (ESL) offered her support for content revisions and ESL students. Marty Lang (Eagle River) related support for dividing and extending American Literature to grade 11 while maintaining content to integrate with social studies. Angie Armstrong (Chugiak) spoke of a strong and positive teaching relationship with her social studies team partner. She spoke in favor of maintaining curriculum ties with social studies while revising and extending curriculum content. Chris Rumps (Benny Benson) related to the skills her students needed in their individual contracts but that she also used literature as much as possible. Janice Strickland (East) enthusiastically supported the proposed changes for grades 9 and

10 content and English 11. Mardell added that the work already done on the curriculum guides for grades 9 & 10 would be very beneficial to this process.

4Understanding by Design workshop... Mardell asked for people interested in being involved in curriculum development to let her know if they wish to attend the April 29-30 UBD meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.