

Middle School Language Arts Curriculum Committee

December 9, 2008

Location: ASD ED Center - Board Room - West Side

3:45 PM- 5:15 PM

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

Refreshments (H2O) & Catching up With Colleagues

Call to Order 3:45 PM

Mentor Text Activity

Agenda Approval

Minutes Approval (October 14, 2008)

Reports: (1-2 minutes)

- Mardell Kiesel
- Amy Goodman, MS Literacy Support
- Brenda Fenton, Gifted Education

Continuing Business

4 *Lightning Thief* presentation by Janene Schoenborn, Wendler

- Discussion
- Vote to approve (core or supplementary)

New Business

4 *Two Old Women* by Velma Wallis, A Grant and 21st Century Tools
Corrine Mc Vee, ASD Grants Department

4 **Skills Alaska and a Middle School Benchmark Assessment**

- Mardell Kiesel, Amy Goodman & Joe Hackenmueller
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4 **Curriculum Guide Refresh: What are the basics? Amy and Mardell**

- Process
- Product

In the Folder:

- Minutes (October 14, 2008)
- "Spirit Bear" article
- *Lightning Thief* approval forms

Announcements... "For the good of the order."

Next MSLACC January 13, 2009

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Call to Order 3:50 PM

Mentor Text Activity "The Inheritance of Tools" by Scott Russell Sanders. This particular piece of writing struck a chord in Mardell as a powerful choice of words. She suggested the mentor text as a means for teaching grammar and gave each member an excerpt from the book Grammar Study by Janet Angelillo.

Agenda Approval Approved!

Minutes Approval (October 14, 2008) Motion to approve minutes from 10/14 made by Marcie Indahl. Seconded by Janene Schoenborn. Motion carried.

Reports: (1-2 minutes)

- **Amy Goodman, MS Literacy Support** This is the second module of Cohort Training. All is on track.
- **Brenda Fenton, Gifted Education** Brenda handed out a brochure showing the expectations for the gifted program. She also mentioned behavioral strategist, Henry Ferguson, who may be able to offer support to underachieving gifted students. Also, the gifted program has support materials for differentiation.

Continuing Business

4 *Lightning Thief* presentation by Janene Schoenborn, Wendler

- Discussion – Thought that this would be a good supplementary addition to Unit 2 in the 7th grade curriculum which focuses on Greek gods and mythology. It is a modern adventure that builds upon the knowledge kids have about the "regular gods." This book is popular with students, and it has been recommended by several.

- Vote to approve (core or supplementary) A motion by Marcie Indahl to accept the book Lightning Thief as a supplementary novel for Unit 2 in 7th grade. Seconded by Michelle Foss. Motion carried.

New Business

- 4 *Two Old Women* by Velma Wallis, A Grant and 21st Century Tools
Corrine Mc Vee, ASD Grants Department

There will be 3 iPod learning labs (40 iPods each) available for teaching Two Old Women. Stephanie Timmerman will be enhancing her curriculum to encompass this mode of teaching as well. The three schools to start this will be Clark, Begich, and Romig, since they have the highest concentration Alaska Native students.

One idea for use of the learning lab would be creating performance assessments with podcasts. In theory, the lab would remain with a /teacher for approximately three weeks. Components include books, iPods, other print resources, a digital video camera, and five laptops. Other ideas included audio/digital slideshows, iMovies, “clicker” technology, mapping, interviews, etc.. Teacher training is also included in this grant. It was also suggested that teachers who use this initially would be asked to present this in other venues for teachers, ie. Cross-district trainings, ASTE conference, etc.

- A unit like this would cost approximately \$7000-\$9000.

Any further suggested resources or ideas for the grant should be sent to Mardell or Corinne McVee.

4 Skills Alaska and a Middle School Benchmark Assessment (Grammar & Usage)

- Mardell Kiesel, Amy Goodman & Joe Hackenmueller

Skills Alaska is currently site licensed at Wendler, Romig, and Begich. There are some more site licenses coming up in January. This began primarily in Title I schools. By January, there will be 30 site licenses in ASD (elementary, middle, high schools). Joe H. gave us a demonstration of this assessment tool. This could be used as a mid year benchmark tool to help direct the remainder of the year’s instruction. Training is available; this grant is provided through the Department of Defense.

- Two people are needed to help Joe, Amy, and Mardell create a 7th and 8th grade benchmark assessment.

Skills Alaska assessments are available for remediation or acceleration. Funding for Skills Alaska (SOAR) is from DOD – since ASD is a military impacted district, this is available and free for all students.

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4 Curriculum Guide Refresh: What are the basics? Amy and Mardell (tabled until next MSLACC)

- Process
- Product

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Next MSLACC January 13, 2009

Meeting adjourned at 5:18.