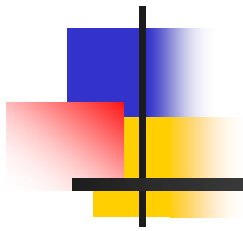


Level IV Exploratory Committee Meeting



Tuesday, October 21, 2008
Franklin Sherman ES Library
7:00 p.m.



Committee Members

FSES Staff:

- Vicki Duling, Principal
- Eileen Connor, Asst. Principal
- Pat Schreiber, Enrichment Specialist
- Carolyn Ferek, 3rd grade teacher
- Jacqueline D'Ermes, 3rd grade teacher
- Pat Brownley, 4th grade teacher
- Ann Soldz, 5th grade teacher
- Luayne Crandall, 6th grade teacher
- Michelle Gottke, art teacher
- Ashlee McKibben, counselor



Committee Members

- Cynthia Alksne, PTA president- 6th & 4th grade students FSES; 4th and 5th grade students at Haycock
- Kristen Conklin---1st grade parent
- Barbara Lamkin---4th grade parent
- Mary Mallus---1st grade parent, 4 year old & 18 mo old
- Katie Maness, PTA Treasurer---5th grade (FSES but center eligible); 1st grade parent
- Michelle Sandler---parent of 4th grader, 1st grader, and a preschool student



Committee Members

- Mike Slavik---3rd grade parent and current private K student
- Melissa Sporn---3rd grade parent (Haycock) & 1st grade
- Jennifer Weaver---3rd grade parent (Haycock) & 1st grade and 4 year old
- Helen Miller---1st grade parent and 2 younger future FSES students



Parent Pros

- A more invigorating curriculum for all students – more hands-on interactive learning for all. Research supports that more intensive, applied instruction improves the acquisition and retention of knowledge. This is true for all children – across all races, ethnicities, income levels and academic abilities.
- Curriculum seems to have a higher standard for all kids. Rising tide lifts all boats.
- Ways for our children to participate in more project based learning, teacher use of simulations and ways for teachers to stimulate higher level thinking skills for ALL students.



Parent Pros

- Appropriate for a school who has 30- 40% of the 3rd grade student population who qualifies (and then leaves). Also, good for Franklin Sherman not to lose these kids – good for community and fiscal stability (keeps our student numbers up).
- Students will be learning from each other, from questions to standards to modeling.
- FSES is already providing acceleration in math, this is just extending our model not radical overhaul
- Our school has a huge number of Level Three and other “GE” students who would utilize specific Level Four services if offered; allows students to advance in their areas of strength.



Parent Pros

- Teachers required to complete on-going professional courses anyway – why not use this training.
- Training is free for the teachers – teachers can obtain training now before the budget cuts impact staff development
- Differentiation within the classroom, rather than segregation in separate schools – philosophically more in tune with many people's values
- Good preparation for the day they stop busing kids due to budget constraints



Parent Pros

- Already in transition – why not launch with the newly renovated school? Renovation all around.
- Students will not have to be bused to another school – splitting up siblings; Keeps our community together
- Provides ways for teachers to expand their teaching methods for the 21st century; use of innovative and exciting learning methods for students
- Good for our housing values – people will move here b/c there are more options.



Parent Pros

- Less stress for the kids – who got in/who didn't get in to Haycock.
- This exploration process is just starting. Perhaps we can review various models from other schools (Chesterbrook / Crossfield) , learn from those and structure what will work for us specific to the needs of Franklin Sherman– (Several parents mentioned we should talk to different parents in different schools.)



Teacher Pros

- Increased enrichment opportunities for all students
- Increased training opportunities
- Move away from academic focus on test scores to project based curriculums
- The Gifted and Talented office offers wonderful curriculum and training for teachers



Teacher Pros

- Allows students to think in different ways
- Offers more right-brained learning opportunities
- May keep stronger students here at Franklin Sherman rather than losing them to the Center
- Students would be able to stay at Franklin Sherman with neighborhood and previously made friends
- The GT preferred teaching style can benefit all students



Teacher Pros

- Additional teaching resources and methods will be available to draw upon to use as appropriate with all students in our school.
- We need to stretch students and look for more creative responses from them
- The focus on SOL scores and rote responses to multiple choice formats needs to be secondary in our teaching focus



Parent cons

- Extra stress on teachers – more training and class more complicated
- Extra stress on teachers already involved in a two-year construction project
- Change, no matter how positive and carefully vetted, can sometimes create stress and division in a community



Parent Cons

- Class size will increase if kids don't go to Haycock
- \$\$\$ - at some point will cost more money and the county is facing several budget cuts
- Some students may feel left out if not included in Level IV grouping; may affect their self esteem



Parent Cons

- Re: phasing in with younger students – some parents may have “sour grapes” that their Level IV child was not included
- Concern on how to serve children returning from Haycock
- May put stress on kids in the classroom – because can’t keep up with Level IV
- Space issues?



Teacher Cons

- Inability to recreate the Center experience at Franklin Sherman which may disappoint parents who think this might or should be possible
- Decreases the time available to work with students who are struggling readers, English speakers and mathematicians who need basic instruction
- Increases to an even higher level the amount of time needed for teachers to properly prepare, already an impossible situation...general education teachers already wear many hats and have many responsibilities



Teacher Cons

- In a small school with only 2 classes per grade, how do we overcome the sense of the "haves" and "have nots"?
- More differentiation without more staff support
- Training commitment for staff
- Will we really keep enough students to make this work? Will we commit to this even if most students continue to move to the center program



Teacher Cons

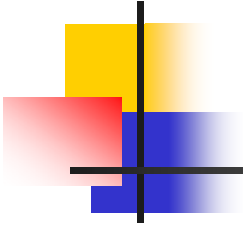
- Franklin Sherman teachers already have a lot on their plate with the renovation, adoption of Responsive Classroom, new expectations from the school board, etc.
- An entire gifted curriculum cannot be implemented with a diverse group of students
- The size of Franklin Sherman makes it close to impossible to flexible group for all subjects



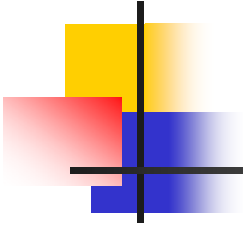
Teacher Cons

- A school based program will never be like a center program because what really makes a GT center is the group of students you are working, with not the curriculum.
- With the selected group of students, it almost doesn't matter what the curriculum is, the students will take it to new heights.
- How this will work in a small school with the haves and the have nots on each grade level.

Additional thoughts generated
in our meeting discussion



Additional thoughts generated
in our meeting discussion





Additional thoughts generated
in our meeting discussion



Next Steps



Next steps

- Share the information discussed this evening in a larger forum
- Distribute the parent surveys to the community
- Distribute a staff survey to staff members
- Compile information and share the results