

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DATE: April 22, 2008

TO: **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

FROM: Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent

SUBJECT: **CONSIDERATION OF THE LANGUAGE ARTS PILOT FOR GRADES 6 AND 7**

ORIGINATOR: Sonia Diaz, Chief Academic Officer

RESOURCE PERSON(S): Yvonne Barhight, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Humanities, Heather Miller, Cecilia Roe

RECOMMENDATION

Currently, a set of consistent language arts materials does not exist for students in Grades 6 and 7. The PDK audit recommended a standard text which includes written language instruction.

The recommended researched-based materials for Grades 6 and 7 language arts will provide systemwide consistency of instruction and resources, and also will address the PDK audit recommendations regarding systematic and rigorous written language instruction. The use of uniform materials will ensure alignment among the written, taught, and tested curricula, and will provide equal access to innovative curricular materials for all students. Additionally, consistency in curricular resources will streamline efforts of C & I staff in providing support for teachers, aligning curriculum and resources, and providing professional development opportunities to ensure that all middle school language arts teachers deliver high quality instruction. The selected series will build upon the elementary language arts program to ensure continuity for all students moving from elementary to middle school. The pilot will be evaluated by the Office of Research, Accountability, and Assessment.

The following middle schools have been selected to pilot the language arts materials in Grades 6 and 7: Arbutus, Cockeysville, Deep Creek, Deer Park Magnet, Dumbarton, Dundalk, Golden Ring, General John Stricker, Lansdowne, Loch Raven Academy Middle River, Old Court, Pikesville, Southwest Academy, and Stemmers Run.

We are requesting approval of the language arts pilot for Grades 6 and 7 beginning in fall 2008. The selected materials for the pilot include: McDougal-Littell *Literature*, Pearson/Prentice-Hall *Literature*, and College Board *SpringBoard*.

Attachment I: Middle School Pilot Timeline 2007-2010 Implementation

Attachment II: Selection Committee & Schools Contact to Pilot

Grades 6 and 7 Pilot Materials Selection 2007-2010 Implementation Timeline

September 2007

- Select vendors to submit materials; materials sent to the LA office.
- Generate list of criteria for the selection.
- Collaborate with the Office of Research, Accountability, and Assessment to create an evaluation tool.
- Form a selection committee of stakeholders.

October 2007

- Presentation of materials by publishers.
- Review materials using evaluation tool.
- Submit summary sheet of findings by selection committee.

November 2007

- Contact interested principals to participate in a second publisher presentation.
- Invite a member of the Minority Achievement Group to participate in a second publisher presentation.
- Presentation of materials by publishers.
- Review materials from the second presentation.
- Submit summary sheet of findings from the second presentation.

December 2007

- Meet with selection committee in early December to review the summary sheets and to determine the two texts to pilot.
- Attend a presentation on SpringBoard by the College Board.

January-July 2008

- Develop implementation plan for pilot programs.
- Select pilot schools (minimum two schools from each of the five areas).
- Contact principals of selected pilot schools.
- Establish guidelines for the infusion of the pilot into the current curriculum.
- Provide professional development for teachers.
- Collaborate with the Office of Research, Accountability, and Assessment to develop an evaluation plan for pilot programs.

August 2008-June 2009

- Conduct pilot
- Provide ongoing professional development for teachers.
- Provide ongoing evaluation of both textbooks series.
- Conduct program evaluation.

June-August 2009

- Review evaluation results of the pilot program.
- Make final decision of one textbook series.
- Complete revision, editing, and printing of the “bridged curriculum.”
- Provide professional development for pilot teachers.

June-August 2010

- Complete revision of curriculum after one year’s use.
- Provide professional development for teachers.
- Conduct program evaluation of full implementation.

Grades 6 and 7 Language Arts Pilot

Selection Committee:

Committee Members	Position
Yvonne Barhight	Acting Assistant Superintendent, Humanities
Heather Miller	Coordinator, English/Language Arts PreK-12
Cecilia Roe	Supervisor Secondary English/LA
Anne Mehall	Supervisor Secondary Reading
Sarah Adams	Language Arts resource teacher
Sharon Fischer	Special Education Language Arts resource teacher
Rose McCauley	Language Arts Specialist
Lynn Elliott	Language Arts Department Chair Arbutus Middle (certified in English and as reading specialist)
Judy Crowley	Reading Specialist Dumbarton Middle (certified in English and reading specialist)
Cheryl Skinner	Mentor Southwest Academy (certified in English; former Old Court Middle Language Arts Department Chair)
Tamara Brown	Language Arts Teacher Hereford Middle
Michelle Murphy	Special Education resource teacher
Traci Mathena	Language Arts Department Chair Dumbarton Middle
Terry Mobley	Language Arts Department Chair Deer Park Middle
David Rollison	Language Arts Department Chair Golden Ring Middle
Sarah Paul	Language Arts Department Chair General John Stricker Middle
Kevin Roberts	Principal Southwest Academy
Jayne Lee	Parent—two middle school children in BCPS

Schools Selected for Anthology Pilot in Grades 6 and 7	Schools Recommended for <i>SpringBoard</i> Pilot
Deep Creek Middle Deer Park Middle Magnet Dumbarton Middle Cockeysville Middle Dundalk Middle Golden Ring Middle Lansdowne Middle Middle River Middle Pikesville Middle Southwest Academy	Arbutus Middle General John Stricker Loch Raven Academy Old Court Middle Stemmers Run Middle