

## **WORLD LANGUAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FAQs**

### **What is the WLAC?**

The World Language Advisory Committee is a broad-based committee set up by the Board of Education to advise on and advocate for language programs in District 97.

### **How did it get started?**

In the early 1990s, there was a whirlwind of new research about the importance of language learning on child development and its links to achievement. Parents and educators came together informally to discuss the research and begin to explore language learning options. As District 97 began to consider options for in-curricular language study at the elementary level, the committee grew, changed names various times, and became more formalized as a committee of the board.

### **What is its charge?**

Its charge is to advocate for, advise on, and advance the district's elementary world languages programs ensuring curriculum implementation, high quality instruction, and sharing and articulation between all levels in the language learning continuum, elementary to high school.

### **Who are its members?**

Members include representatives from all ten district schools and the various communities which meld into the larger District 97 family: classroom teachers, language teachers of all in-curricular strands (FLES, immersion, middle level), parents, administrators, board trustees, community members, and the chair of the OPRFHS World Languages Division. Membership is open to anyone with a love of language learning and an active commitment to making the District 97 programs the best they can be.

### **How is it organized?**

Presently, the WLAC is undergoing a structural reorganization. Aligning its work with national and state language standards, current district goals, and the developing strategic plan, the WLAC plans to re-build its active membership, re-energize its efforts, become more action-oriented, and assist in developing strengthened measures for communication and program development, measurement, accountability.

By spring 2007, the plan is to have in place a structure that would radiate out in concentric circles around a committed core team focused on the vision of language learning as an integral part of student learning, essential to Knowledge, Culture and Citizenship.

The leadership team of about 10 people would meet monthly to formulate action initiatives in keeping with broader district goals and focus on the areas of Advocacy, Communication, Program Development and Evaluation, Resources, and Research. Sub-committees would meet as needed to develop the initiatives and engage the larger community to help bring them to fruition. The broad-based Committee of the Whole would continue to meet on a trimester basis, more often as needed, as an integral part of whole district input, communication, and interaction for further action.

### **How can I support language learning in District 97?**

Let your school, the district administration, and the board of education know you value language learning and multiculturalism as important for your child's learning.

Get involved in your school's PTO World Language Committee (if it doesn't have one, help start it!). Write letters to the local press to advocate for continued and expanded language learning opportunities. Report on language events at your school. Volunteer to assist the World Language staff, especially if you speak Spanish. Attend World Languages Day, Ethnic Festival, and other school and district language/culture events.

Join the **World Language Advisory Committee** and volunteer on a committee congruent with your interest and skills. Now is the time!

### **How can I become involved?**

Contact any of the in-curricular D97 language teachers (FLES, Lincoln immersion PSIP, middle level), your school office, or the teachers listed below. Watch district communications for meeting dates and other information, such as the developing WLAC listserv.

### **For more information contact:**

Dawn Fogle Deaton,  
Teacher-Leader, Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) program  
[ddeaton@op97.org](mailto:ddeaton@op97.org)

Kathleen Priceman,  
Senior Faculty, Partial Spanish Immersion Program (PSIP), Lincoln School  
[kpriceman@op97.org](mailto:kpriceman@op97.org)