



Board of Directors
Thursday, December 12, 2016
AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

Agenda Item	Yu Ming Education Committee Report
Time Allotted	Consent Agenda
Summary	The Yu Ming Education Committee met on December 12, 2016. The committee discussed the school’s strategies for meeting school annual goals in Mandarin Language Arts, SBAC and Common Core, Upper School developments, school culture and climate, and the effects of proposed board enrollment policy changes on the educational program.
Type	Information and Discussion
Background	The Yu Ming Education Committee Report updates board members about the current and pending work of the Yu Ming Education Committee.
Key Questions	1) What is the board’s feedback related to: 1) the school’s strategies for meeting annual goals, 2) preparing the educational program based on changes in the enrollment policy
Attachments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yu Ming Education Committee Report



Yu Ming Board Education Committee Meeting Report

December 12, 2016

Members and school staff in attendance: Eric Peterson, Rebecca Cheung, Xinyi Xu, Sue Park, and Lihua Zhang.

Introduction

Introductions of attendees were made. The agenda was reviewed.

Topical Discussion

Mandarin Language Arts/Mandarin Language Development

The first trimester Chinese reading assessment results are in and show that 91% of students met their grade level standard in reading for the level they were expected to meet by the end of the first trimester. In Chinese writing, 58% have already met the standard that they are expected to achieve by the end of the school year. In Chinese language grammar and conventions, 52% of students met the standard for end of the year standard that they are expected to achieve by the end of the school year.

The Chinese reading assessment is modelled on Fountas and Pinnell and is created by a company called Level Chinese. Other major Mandarin immersion schools are using Level Chinese such as Yu Ying (29 U.S. immersion schools in total are piloting). The writing rubric in Chinese is modelled on the English rubric which is aligned to the California Standards (Common Core).

The proficiency level gap increases each grade level from K to 6th grade in reading. The school suspects that the main factor affecting this gap is that our instruction in Chinese has been improving each year as the school has identified and implemented more effective teaching strategies and curriculum. Our highest achieving students in Chinese are not just students that have a Chinese speaking parent at home. The school has implemented more interventions and supports for students that don't have a Chinese speaking parent. All U.S. Mandarin dual immersion schools are just now starting to have access to leveled reading assessments; therefore, in the future we will start multi-year reading data, such as student cohort data over time, to help provide more information if students are maintaining at the standard.

The school is considering increasing the rigor of our Chinese assessment based on ACTFL proficiency levels since most students are at or above our reading target for them for this period of the year.



Potential Effects of the Board Enrollment Policy Changes on Educational Program (pending ACOE approval)

The committee discussed the school's plans for how Yu Ming will prepare for a more diverse student body with more students without Chinese language support at home. The school is planning to add more staff support to kindergarten next year which will include potential primary language support from a non-teacher support staff in the first couple months of kindergarten for social-emotional needs. Instruction will still remain in Chinese at the 90% level. The first couple months of kindergarten can be very difficult for students even in non-immersion schools, so more social-emotional support will be helpful for students who are also struggling to adjust to a new language. Also, the school is planning more family support meetings for kindergarten parents to better understand what is happening in the classroom and how they can partner with the school to support their child at home.

Upper School Program Implementation

The school just finished the first Upper School intercession (a one week break from regularly scheduled instruction for students to participate in intensive experiential and project-based learning). There will be a debrief of staff on how the intercessions went and a survey of students on their response to the upper school program thus far. Intercession activities were in music, art, science, and maker/design. The next intercession will include some of the first intercession activities as determined by student and teacher feedback on how well particular activities went during the first intercession.

During intercession week, the core teachers were able to plan and collaborate. All courses except science 5th grade are now on the online Summit Platform. The Learning Headquarters writing program is also in the process of being added to the Summit Platform.

Students are continuing to develop their skills on the Chromebook. The school is monitoring student use of technology and adjusting the level of student use and access. 6th grade students are using the Summit platform more independently while the 5th grade students have more direct teacher facilitation of their use of the platform.

This year student homework has been reduced at all grades to make it more meaningful and focused based on where research indicates homework is most effective. Homework in 5th grade is more paper and pencil, while it is more online in Google Classroom for 6th grade.

Upper school advisory is progressing in its development and implementation. Advisory teachers are working on increasing their collaboration and communication with content teachers so that they can



more effectively monitor and support student academic progress. This collaboration and planning will happen primarily in the morning teacher planning time before advisory begins.

The school is seriously considering requiring a culminating project for 8th grade students to demonstrate their learning from their years at Yu Ming. For this culminating project, students would present a multi-faceted portfolio and presentation. The school is also considering providing the opportunity for students to take the AP Chinese Language and Culture test.

In terms of continued development of Chinese language skills after Yu Ming, students can take Chinese classes at U.C. Berkeley for college credit during high school if the college schedule aligns with their high school schedule. Some high school students, however, may not be mature enough for some of the abstract, political, or adult discussions in Chinese that can be held in a college class. Yu Ming or a local high school can also create concurrent enrollment agreements with U.C. Berkeley or another local college to see if they can set up a special section Chinese class for high school students that graduated from Yu Ming. The head counselor and Mandarin teacher at local high schools would be the contacts to set up special class sections in high school. Also, the U.C. Berkeley Academic Talent and Development Program gives high school credit for its summer programs and could potentially set up a special summer class for Yu Ming students to further their Chinese learning in high school.

SBAC and Common Core

School math benchmark assessments measure student progress on standards taught that trimester. The math assessments are in English except for kindergarten. Student overall proficiency in math was 67% on average. The school is reteaching standards that students did not master. The school math assessments are likely more rigorous than the state SBAC assessments. Teachers continue to use Singapore Math curriculum materials and supplement with Units of Study that are common core aligned. The school is also purchasing Zern, an online common core aligned math program. Students will use Zern for homework as well. The new family resource liaison can obtain free computers and online access for low income students so that they can have access to this online program at home.

In English Language Arts our teachers are conducting targeted group instruction based on individual student learning needs. Classes now have just right leveled book libraries for students that they can check out and take home. These leveled libraries are in both English and Chinese. The leveled libraries are at a standardized text complexity level based on the Fountas and Pinnell leveling system. We also have guided reading sets that are leveled to Level Chinese text complexity standards. Level Chinese is also aligned to ACTFL. This leveling system in Chinese will support most students in their learning all the way through 8th grade.

First trimester assessment results show that average English reading grade level mastery is already at 82% based on the school's targets for where students should be by the end of the year. English writing assessment results show that 45% of students are already at standard based the school's targets for



students to achieve by the end of the school year. English writing language assessment results show that 39% of students are already at standard based the school's targets for where students should be by the end of the school year.

Student Culture and Climate

The school is continuing its implementation of highly research-supported programs and interventions for building student culture and climate. The school has started implementing community meetings in Upper School every Monday. In these meetings there are celebrations, common practices, modeling of community values, and presentations on appropriate behavioral expectations. The school is also conducting community meetings in the Lower School every other week. All teachers are expected to implement a Responsive Classroom practice that supports culture and climate in their classrooms. These practices are reinforced in the community meetings. The toolbox curriculum for supporting culture and climate (and behavior) is taught in Advisory in Upper School, and it is taught in community meetings in lower school (then practiced in their classroom).

The school psychologist is working with students that need tier 2 behavior and social skills supports. They also support the creation of behavior intervention plans for individual students. Wei Shen is the Upper School lead for Responsive Classroom curriculum. The Assistant Principal of Student Support services directly supervises the implementation of practices and interventions for building student culture and climate. Yu Ming also continues to develop a more systematic hierarchy for responding to student behaviors. In addition, Yu Ming has a variety of highly trained part time staff to support students with special needs.