

**JOINT PRESENTATION
to Minneapolis Federation of Teachers
May 21, 2007**



We represent three distinct programs offered in the Minneapolis School district who have a common goal:

Preserve the integrity of our

International Baccalaureate

Montessori

Immersion

programs by retaining teaching staff that is trained with our particular curriculum tools and educational philosophy

much as teachers trained in Special Education would be retained

International Baccalaureate

WHO ARE WE?

Founded in the 1960s in Geneva, Switzerland
Currently includes more than 2,000 schools in 125 countries

Based on the premise that education can foster understanding
among young people around the world.

Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Characterized by

- Highest educational standards/expectations
 - Quality teacher training
- Communication and study skills development
 - Intercultural awareness and sensitivity
- Community awareness and participation through service
- Reputation and recognition by worldwide school systems and communities
 - Flexibility to work within local, state and national requirements

Includes these schools in the Minneapolis school district
(which must meet strict requirements of the IB organization every two years):

Henry High School, 87% children of color
Southwest High School, 38% children of color

Anwatin Middle School, 73% children of color
Northeast Middle School, 73% children of color

Elizabeth Hall International Elementary School, 96% children of color
Whittier International Elementary School, 85% children of color

WHY OUR IB TEACHING CORE MATTERS

1. The financial investment in our IB-trained teachers is considerable

Grants, district funding, teacher out-of-pocket expenses and parent fundraising have been used to pay for specialized training, professional development, materials, curriculum development, meeting world language requirements

Not only should the extra teacher hours spent in preparing for the rigorous standards of IB not be dismissed, but **the district's financial investment should be protected by retaining IB-trained teachers WITHIN our own district.**

2. The pay-off of the IB program is dramatic

For example, at Whittier International Elementary School, in just two years of the IB program:

- **PTA membership has tripled,** with the influx of parents who consciously chose the educational philosophy of the IB program and who expect and participate in its success and integrity
- **Fundraising and parent-led activities has increased dramatically**
- **Disciplinary problems have significantly reduced**
- **Parents are coming to the school FROM OUTSIDE the district**
- **Our children are consciously exhibiting the IB attitudes and profiles,** thanks to carefully devised curriculum units by our teaching teams. Each month students and teachers recognize and honor fellow classmates who have specifically exemplified:
 - an IB Attitude**
(enthusiasm, appreciation, commitment, confidence, creativity, cooperation, curiosity, empathy, integrity, respect, tolerance)
 - a Learner Profile**
(thinker, inquirer, communicator, risk-taker, knowledgeable, principled, caring, open-minded, reflective, balanced)

In recent Kindergarten units, for example:

Children discovered that honor and respect were a focus of most celebrations. To turn a Valentine's party into a celebration, the children made cards that were then delivered to the residence of a nearby nursing home.

For the "Where We Are in Place and Time" unit, the children brought in their own change to raise \$240 for Heifer International to buy an animal for a family in need.

In "How We Express Ourselves: Sense Ability" children met an elderly man who talked about losing his sight, ate popcorn and explained the senses used in experiencing it, listened to a demonstration of a cochlear implant, felt the vibrations of a piano and discussed how Beethoven composed music after he was deaf.

In "Who We Are," various families talked about celebrations from their lives. This allowed the students to compare and contrast across cultures.



By doing research about a planet of their choice using books, lithographs and the Internet, kindergartners were required to demonstrate inquiry, communication, their thinking skills and being caring about others' feelings.



I am an ardent labor/professional union supporter. I have been a member of three different unions during my thirty-four years in the workforce and I feel strongly that unions are essential in protecting workers and their family's rights. I also support that part of the mission of the union movement that promotes economic justice by ensuring that all workers have access to our collective prosperity. We want to see our children succeed. Many of our students are first generation Americans whose language and cultural orientation differences could be a large obstacle in many school settings. The IB program is designed from a global, international, intercultural perspective. It promotes culturally universal values like good communication, mutual support, respectfulness, participating, and listening. These values combined with Native Language Literacy and high academic standards makes IB a very promising educational approach for many of our city's children. In order for the IB program to succeed at my son's school, our teachers must be particularly invested, which means they have to be qualified to teach this curriculum and they have to be personally and professionally committed to the International Baccalaureate model. Please grant us some latitude in continuing to build our staff to meet our unique needs.

— Stuart Barron, parent of Whittier kindergartener, Southwest IB freshman,
and Southwest IB graduate.

Montessori

WHO ARE WE?

Founded in 1907 by Dr. Maria Montessori in Rome, Italy.
There are now about 10,000 Montessori schools in the US alone.

Background

Montessori is a scientific method of education based on the observations and work of Dr. Maria Montessori. She found that children learn best by doing.

Montessori education also focuses on the concept that children become independent. Using scientifically designed materials, Montessori introduces concepts on a concrete level, allowing the child to work at his/her own pace toward abstraction.

A Montessori classroom is child centered. Providing a prepared educational environment where students use specifically designed Montessori materials to meet their academic needs. The environment is also a place where students can make choices about their own learning.

Montessori is a method of education delivered by trained teachers. Montessori trained teachers not only have licensure in Elementary Education, but also are required to complete a comprehensive training program.

Montessori is a method of education that allows children to make choices about their own learning and progress at their own rate.

Montessori is a long-standing, proven educational method.
Parents who choose Montessori would send their children to private schools if we did not offer authentic, public Montessori programs in MPS.

Includes these schools in the Minneapolis school district

Armatage, 36% children of color
Park View, 84% children of color
Seward, 50% children of color

WHY OUR MONTESSORI TEACHING CORE MATTERS

1. Our uniquely qualified teaching staff and education model retains and draws families into the district

- Our programs fill immediately upon school choice.
- In 2006-07, 21 families attend Armatage from outside the district and several families attend Seward from Wayzata and St Paul.

MPS needs to maintain the integrity of its Montessori programs, which means hiring and retaining Montessori trained teachers.

2. A growing number of families are choosing MPS Montessori Schools

Armatage Montessori has added one classroom a year for the past three years.
In 2007-08 Armatage Montessori will add two more classrooms.

3. Montessori-trained teachers facilitate learning.

- Seek academic excellence in balance with social and emotional maturity/capability.
 - Present lessons in small and large groups as well as individually.
 - Create real life experiences for children in the classroom.
 - Deliver curriculum that is integrated/holistic/interconnected.
- Look at the whole child – academic ability, social emotional ability,
 - behavior and match the work to the child.
 - Guide the child toward independence

4. To gain a Montessori Certificate requires 2 years of intensive training

Montessori teachers dedicate their own time and money into training for Montessori certification, paid out-of-pocket and by the district. It doesn't make fiscal sense to train teachers and then lay them off.

Teachers are trained to move students through curriculum, as well as extensions and enrichment that enable students to acquire a deeper understanding of the material/skills

Teachers are also trained in sequenced lessons that move the student from the concrete to the abstract using specifically designed Montessori materials.

WHAT IS MONTESSORI TRAINING?

Montessori is a method of education delivered by trained teachers.

Montessori training requires mastery of the Montessori philosophy, curriculum and materials.

There are several accredited (American Montessori Society) Montessori training centers around the United States as well as around the world (American Montessori International) including the College of St. Catherine.

The Elementary I training (required to teach 6-9 year olds) is 24 credits at \$448 per credit.

The Elementary II training (required to teach 9-12 year olds) is 31 credits at \$448 per credit.
(You must have Elementary I in order to take Elementary II.)

This Montessori training course can be taken as a Masters Program or for Continuing Education and is recognized by the District for lane changes.

WHY THE CONTRACT SHOULD SUPPORT THE SPECIFIED NEEDS OF THE MONTESSORI PROGRAM

Instead of a temporary MOA, we are asking for a permanent change of language in the contract for the following reasons:

1. Montessori is a specific method of education in which:
 - Teachers have, in addition to an Elementary Education License, certification in an Accredited Montessori training Center in the Montessori method of Reading, Math, Science and Social Studies,
 - which includes training in the use of particular Montessori Material (such as the stamp game and grammar boxes) specifically designed to support the Montessori method and philosophy.
2. Minneapolis Public Schools offer Magnet Program choices to their families. Families should be able to expect these Magnet Programs to be staffed with appropriately trained teachers. When the integrity of these programs is compromised, families will look elsewhere and leave our district.
3. Program stability: In addition to hiring appropriately trained teachers, we are asking for permanent language to retain them as well.

We have phenomenal teachers in the Minneapolis Public Schools. However, even the best, most well-intentioned teacher would be overwhelmed by the philosophy, method and materials if they are not educated and trained using Montessori methods. Therefore, the union should include in the next contract language stating that only Montessori trained teachers will be placed in Montessori schools. Ignoring the specific training needs of the teacher is an insult to teachers throughout our district who want to make a difference for the children they serve.

“After having experienced private school Montessori education for my two children in California, I was skeptical about what a public school could offer. I am extremely pleased with the quality of the Montessori education at Armatage”

“Small group instruction with hands-on learning helps our child feel confident.”

“I chose Park View for my child because he can work at his own pace and receive one-on-one attention.”

“The best part of Seward Montessori is the teachers. They make us do work that is just right and they teach us new things that we need to learn” — Student, Grade 3

“A Montessori program is the combination of a trained Montessori teacher and the Montessori materials. Without both of these elements, you cannot offer a Montessori program with integrity.”

OBJECTIVE: Make MOA language a permanent part of the MPS Teacher Contract

Whereas, there is currently a vacant position in a Montessori program caused by teacher placement and recall process and/or due to growth of the a Montessori program

Whereas, the District and the Union are desirous of providing Montessori trained certified teachers, if possible; and

Now, therefore be it resolved that the parties stipulate to this MOA in accordance with the following terms:

Be it further resolved that currently employed teachers who hold Montessori training and certification may be internally recruited may be internally recruited; and

Be it further resolved that any Montessori certified teachers who move to Montessori sites shall be provided with time and assistance in the move

Be it further resolved that the Montessori site will provide the necessary supplies, manipulatives and Montessori materials

For the purposes of bidding, a Montessori opening shall require Montessori training /Montessori certification at the appropriate level.

Dual Immersion / Two-way Immersion

WHO ARE WE?

Dual immersion programs integrate language minority and language majority students, providing instruction in both English and the native language of the language minority students. MPS' Windom Spanish Dual Immersion program, for example, is a 90/10 model: 90% of instructional time per day is in Spanish and 10% in English, gradually shifting to 50/50 by fifth grade.

The goal is to promote bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement, and positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors in all students.

Background

Two-way immersion (TWI) education has been in existence in the United States for nearly 40 years. Over the past 15 years, the number of programs has risen rapidly, to more than 300 programs nationwide today. An increasing number of school districts are **turning to TWI as a way to fulfill both state and federal goals of improving the educational achievement of their students.**

The recent growth of two-way immersion is due partly to research demonstrating:

- its effectiveness for both native English speakers and native speakers of another language,
- the recognition by policymakers and educators that the U.S. has a critical need for residents who are proficient in more than one language,
- and the rapidly increasing number of language minority students entering U.S. schools, particularly native speakers of Spanish.

Characterized by

Offering exceptional academic and social value not only for Latino families (who also have the option of choosing charter schools), but for non-Latino families who recognize the value of a bilingual education.

High-quality dual immersions programs produce not only bilingual children, but also result in **higher test scores for native English and native Spanish speakers.**

Studies show that Latino students in dual immersion programs **graduate from high school at a much higher rate.**

Includes these schools in the Minneapolis school district

Emerson, 85% children of color
Windom, 86% children of color

88 of the 864 students enrolled
in the district's dual-immersion programs in 2006-07

**come from outside MPS, including Richfield, Edina, Bloomington,
Eagan, Burnsville and Golden Valley**

WHY OUR IMMERSION TEACHING CORE MATTERS

1. Our uniquely qualified teaching staff draws families into the program

For example, in Windom's last year of its Open Program curriculum, not one family who toured the school chose the program. **Since becoming a Spanish-language dual-immersion school three years ago, it has immediately filled its kindergarten classrooms.** In 2007-08, a third kindergarten class will be added.

In 2007-08, 18 kindergarten students alone will be coming to Windom from outside the MPS district.

2. Competition is strong for teachers skilled in dual immersion

A growing number of families around the metro area and country are choosing dual-immersion programs. MPS needs to maintain the integrity of its programs, which means hiring and retaining qualified teachers.

Teachers are actively recruited by other districts on a regular basis and have been lost to more stable districts.

Other districts have much greater freedom in hiring, a more effective timeline and more stability. Minneapolis needs that to compete and survive.

3. Dual immersion requires more from its teachers than simply knowing Spanish

At Windom, for example, an unqualified teacher who spoke only conversational Spanish was sent to the program—and required a translator.

There is also a shortage of Spanish-fluent teachers, let alone those with dual immersion experience, so Minneapolis needs to do its best to retain these teachers.

Dual-immersion teachers put time and money into licenses and training that are very specific to the program, paid out-of-pocket and by the district. It doesn't make fiscal sense to train teachers and then lay them off.

When Dr. Green visited Windom,
he listened as Latino parents emotionally talked about
how valuable the program is for their families
and the difference it has made for their child.

**Latino students previously identified as low achievers
are excelling academically.**

Parents can communicate with the teachers.

Students maintain and improve their native language, which facilitates the acquisition of English.

Students are in an environment in which their language and culture are valued and highlighted.

“I got to watch my non-Latino daughter learn to read and write in Spanish first and then witness the magic of applying that skill to learning to read in English. Without having been officially taught to read in English yet, she was reading in English fluently by the middle of first grade. “

“I chose Spanish Dual Immersion because I want my daughter to attend a school community that represented the world community. It is also a unique opportunity for her to be bilingual, like most of the world.”

“Mi nombre es Tanya Aguirre. Yo tengo a mi hijo Daryan Clemente en kinder con la maestra Gisela estamos contentos con el programa de Inmersión Doble en Español e Inglés con este programa Daryan aprenderá a leer y a escribir en dos idiomas.”

“We toured nearly every Minneapolis school in our area. We were seeking a school with an enhanced arts or language curriculum, but in the end, we chose Windom because it just felt really good each time we visited. The language immersion experience is an added benefit. Our non-Latino son is in first grade and his Spanish language comprehension already surpasses what I can understand from two years of studying Spanish in high school. As a result of how thoroughly the teachers weave Spanish in throughout every part of his day, he's easy and comfortable with it, whether he's greeting a friend in the hallway or working out a math problem in his classroom. Even at this early stage, I can see that our son's language experience is a bridge enabling him to learn from and befriend people from language and cultural backgrounds different than his own. This will be an asset to him as he grows up, and, we hope, to his community.”

“Hola mi nombre es Elizabeth, Mendoza. Mi hija se llama Jacqueline esta en primer grado y estoy muy contenta con el programa de la escuela Windom por que para Jacqueline es su primer año en una escuela aquí y no habla Inglés pero este programa le ayudara mucho.”

CONCLUDING POINTS

Just as Special Education teachers have unique training to satisfy the needs of the classroom, of the students, of the families enrolled, of the district requirements, so too do teachers in International Baccalaureate, Montessori and Immersion programs require unique qualifications in order to retain the quality of its curriculum.

Just as you wouldn't put a high school math teacher into a dual-language Spanish immersion elementary school, so too is this fit ESSENTIAL.

The 11 schools in these MPS programs have banded together for this discussion because each of our programs, while quite distinct and different from each other, represent very unusual educational philosophies.

Our parents consciously CHOOSE these programs as a particular fit for the educational and lifestyle goals they have for their children. They fully expect all of the teachers in the program to have the required qualifications— as well as the passion for the philosophy behind it.

If the program objectives are not being met, our parents will make other choices. Including the **more than 212 families that have actually come TO THE MINNEAPOLIS SCHOOL DISTRICT from the outlying areas in 2006-07** because of the educational philosophy of the particular programs they have found here.

Note also that our schools are GROWING. In most cases, even with the newer programs, **kindergarten classrooms are BEING ADDED each year in order to accommodate the families who make these schools their first choice** and fill up the existing classroom space by February!

Nearly 4,000 students — or 10 PERCENT — of the district's students are enrolled in these 11 programs.

If we are to retain teaching staff that goes a very long extra mile for rigorous qualifications and curriculum development, such as required in these programs, and retain the very invested parents that come to these programs because of it, then we need to **provide wording in the contract (pages 208-210) that will protect the integrity of these programs.**