

TO: Dr. Thomas Hagerman  
FROM: Lynne Shain  
RE: Middle School Mandarin  
DATE: February 25, 2016

At the February 3, 2016, Board of Education meeting, the administration presented an [Updated Budget Request and Rationale](#), which included a proposal to add 1.0 Mandarin teacher, **if a minimum of 48 sixth graders enroll, a figure reduced from the proposed minimum of 60 students** in the [November 16, 2015](#) report. This update was counter to an original proposal to hold off the implementation of Mandarin for further study and evidence of student interest. This change was a result of major staffing changes in the World Language Department, along with the recognition of the importance of the current World Language Chair to be included in the planning process. Even so, we were clear that our support for the potential implementation of Middle School Mandarin would be predicated on student interest and commitment to this program as indicated by a minimum enrollment number of 48 students. Further, we emphasized that Mandarin, like our other language offerings at this level, would be a beginning course, and not necessarily suited for students with extensive prior experience, nor would it be leveled. As with all Middle School World Languages, students would also be making a three year commitment.

In order to get a firm number of registered 6th grade Mandarin students, we used the regular Middle School course registration process. Parents of rising 6th graders were sent registration information about World Language and Music course choices on February 9 and asked to return their choices by February 12. During this time we received numerous questions. As a follow up, the District sent a clarifying email to address all the potential concerns that were raised with us. Additionally, there were a few cases where parents asked for an extension; in each situation an extension was granted.

We now have World Language registration information from parents of all rising 6th graders as follows:

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Mandarin | 42  |
| French   | 71  |
| Spanish  | 248 |
| ENL/LRC  | 11  |

As previously stated, because of the substantial financial, time, and other resource commitments involved, we believe that 48 students should be the absolute minimum number, thus creating four sections of 12 students.

These numbers have not materialized; therefore, we withdraw our request to add 1.0 FTE MS Mandarin teacher to the 2016-2017 budget. We will continue to study the viability of adding Mandarin in the future should student enrollment support this addition.