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Funding Source: MU Undergraduate Research Scholars Program

Elementary Latin pedagogy in University Model Schools

Tiffany Lee & Barbara Wallach

This study investigated University Model Schools® that offer Latin either two or three days each week. These schools were surveyed to determine the unique needs of schools teaching Latin on this reduced schedule. The responses from these surveys indicated that many of the current Latin curricula available were not able to be easily modified for a two to three day per week class. Also, parents were not as comfortable assisting their children with Latin homework as they were with other academic subjects. In addition the current curricula available often did not provide enough information for a teacher without a strong background in the Latin language. Drawing from these responses, prototypes are being developed for a curriculum that would allow more schools to teach Latin by following a reduced schedule. The curriculum prototype provides an in-depth examination of the material designed for teachers inexperienced in Latin, but also provides flexibility for those teachers who have a strong background in Latin. The prototype also contains a guide to the parent or guardian of the student which allows them to assist the student to a greater extent in their study. This curriculum would reduce the need for employing a full-time teacher of Latin, and would permit a teacher from a different subject area to instruct the beginning levels of Latin, helping to make Latin a practical course offering for more schools. Because of the documented increase in academic performance of students who study Latin, making Latin more widely available could improve the test scores and achievement of many students.