

Appendix E

Reports

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Review and Analysis of World Languages Syllabi at the Secondary Level

Prepared for Arlington Public Schools

In the following report, Hanover Research responds to a request from Arlington Public Schools to examine and evaluate the content of all world language syllabi at the secondary level. This analysis includes a review of learning objectives, alignment of standards across grade levels, and the inclusion of grading policy information.

Introduction

As the United States becomes increasingly diverse, comprehensive knowledge of a world language can improve a student's chance of success in schooling, careers, and personal life. Arlington Public Schools (APS) has requested the assistance of Hanover Research in examining and evaluating over 100 syllabi from world languages courses at the middle and high school levels in an effort to improve and standardize the methods of presenting course information. The following report includes multiple methods of evaluating these syllabi in order to provide APS with the most comprehensive analysis possible.

Methodology

The various methodologies used in evaluating the syllabi were developed by Hanover and approved by APS. Although each section contains a more detailed explanation of the methodology used, it is important to note that all criteria for syllabi evaluation were drawn from the Secondary World Languages Curriculum Framework.¹ When applicable, specific analyses of Spanish immersion courses, courses for fluent speakers, AP Language and Literature courses, and IB courses instead use the Spanish for Fluent Speakers Curriculum Framework document. Similarly, analyses of Latin courses use the Latin Curriculum Framework.

To demonstrate the range of findings on a particular topic while preserving the confidentiality of schools and teachers, throughout our report, individual schools names have been replaced with randomly-assigned letters ranging from A through I. This methodology allows for syllabi comparison across schools without disclosing the identity of any individual school within the district.

Report Contents

The report is divided into three main sections and one smaller section at the end. The first section includes a review of the alignment of syllabi to the curriculum framework, including the “five C’s” of curriculum, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Each syllabus is examined for these five learning objectives, as well as sub-standards for communication, cultures, and comparisons.

The second section then examines syllabi to evaluate the continuity of goals across learning levels. Syllabi are examined by level, with the analysis again including the five learning objectives and one to three sub-standards for each area. Points are awarded

¹ The information presented in the Secondary French Curriculum Framework and the Secondary Spanish Curriculum Framework was identical to that presented in the Secondary World Languages Curriculum Framework in the areas of interest to this research.

to each sub-standard based on alignment with the relevant curriculum framework, with syllabi with high numbers of points demonstrating the strongest continuity. The third section reviews each syllabus to identify the inclusion of eight statements/explanations of the course grading system. These explanations include a review of summative and formative assessments, the weight of various activities in grade calculation, and an explanation of late work policies.

Finally, the report concludes with a brief section examining the World Languages Website. Although the World Languages Curriculum Framework does not provide any standards for reporting learning objectives or other information to the public, Hanover has identified a number of ways in which the website enhances the clarity of its communications with students and parents or guardians.

Key Findings

Section I

- ❖ Alignment of the syllabi to the World Languages Curriculum Framework was generally low. Overall, the world language syllabi at APS mentioned approximately half of the curriculum standards examined in Section I.
- ❖ The area of communication was referenced most frequently, with approximately 80 percent of syllabi mentioning the standard and at least 65 percent including the four sub-standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The objective of culture was also at least mentioned in over 80 percent of syllabi. The high representation of the areas of communication and culture reflect the general trend in syllabi of briefly referencing the importance of student development in the four areas of communication and in appreciation of other cultures.
- ❖ Syllabi from the middle schools included a slightly higher average percentage of the number of included curriculum standards in Section I. There was a slight difference between the average number of included learning objectives by subject area, with French syllabi including the highest number of standards and Latin syllabi including the fewest.

Section II

- ❖ In Section II, the majority of syllabi examined did not demonstrate strong alignment of learning objectives across grade levels. The majority of German, French, Chinese, and “traditional” (not Spanish for fluent speakers, immersion courses, AP Language or Literature, or IB) Spanish syllabi examined did not demonstrate the inclusion of many learning objectives under each

performance standard, as the overall average number of points awarded to each syllabus was only 4.97 out of 37 possible points.

- ❖ Spanish Immersion courses, courses for fluent speakers, and IB/AP Language and Literature courses ranged from including 7 percent of learning objectives to nearly 30 percent, with an average of approximately 16 percent of objectives included per syllabus. The Latin syllabi, also examined separately in Section II, included an average of approximately 11 percent of progress indicators per syllabus.
- ❖ The sequence of communication goals across world language learning levels may be the most clear and consistent. Communication was again the most frequently mentioned learning objective, with approximately 93 percent of traditional world language syllabi including some reference to the development of interpersonal, interpretive, or presentational communication. Similarly, over 80 percent of Latin syllabi and syllabi for fluent Spanish speakers, immersion, AP, and IB included the general learning objective of communication. The area of culture was also mentioned in over 50 percent of examined syllabi.
- ❖ The majority of syllabi do not mention how they complement and build upon the curriculum of previous courses in the same language, and thus it is difficult to accurately evaluate which courses are more successful at articulating goals in a continued sequence than others. Further, this complicates the evaluation of continuity of standards from middle school to high school.
- ❖ It was somewhat common for a syllabus to mention the importance of communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities without providing specific examples of the practices that would lead to these learning objectives. This lack of detail suggests that Hanover's analysis should be interpreted with caution: the information presented on the syllabi may not be an exact interpretation of what is taught in the course.

Section III

- ❖ While some grading policy information was included on the majority of syllabi, other information was rarely present. The explanation that quarterly exams, mid-terms, and/or final exams are calculated into the quarterly grade and final grade was included in approximately 85 percent of examined syllabi.
- ❖ The average number of explanations included on high school syllabi was slightly higher than the middle school average. The average number of stated expectations and information was similar across most languages.

Section IV

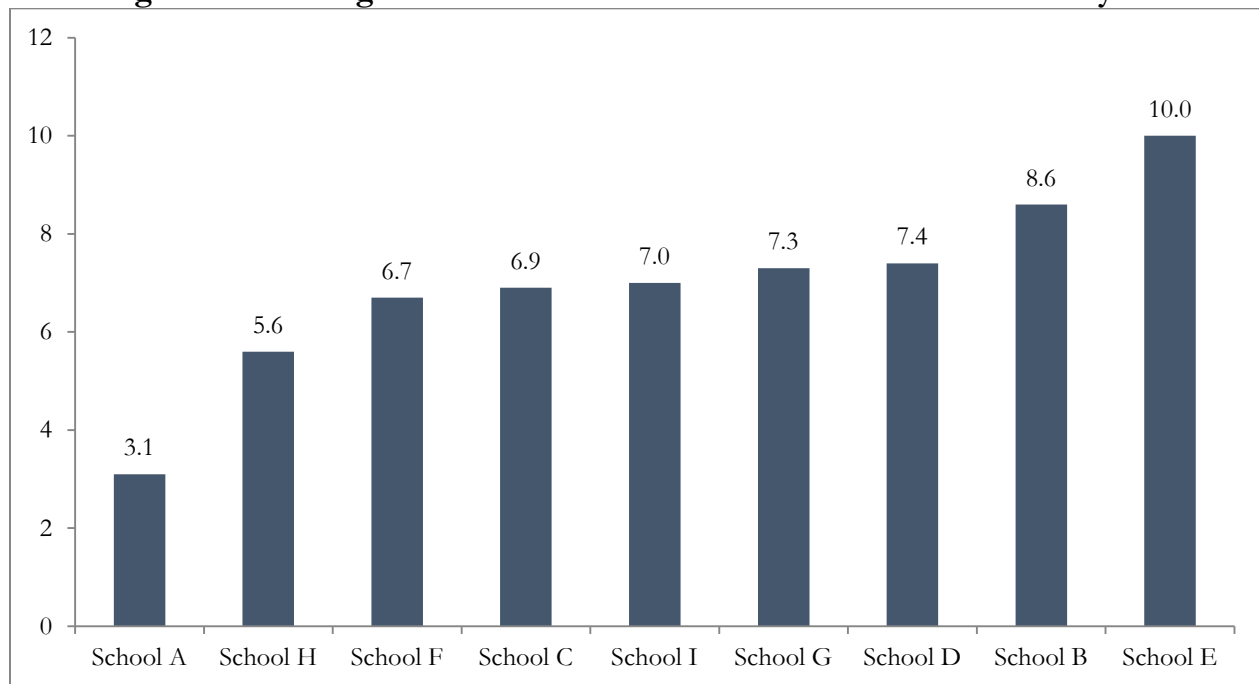
- ❖ In order to provide parents and students with the information they need to understand world languages programs as outlined by the World Languages Curriculum Framework, APS website could include more detailed information, including:
 - First, parents and students may benefit from a listing of which courses are offered at which schools. This would allow future students to plan a course of study from elementary school through advanced high school courses.
 - Further, a brief description of the standards of learning at each level of world language study would allow parents to evaluate their student's progress against district norms. These descriptions could include further subdivisions and explanations of the five learning standards.
 - The website may also post the syllabi of all world language courses. Although the majority of syllabi currently require a parent or guardian to sign a form indicating that they have reviewed the document, providing each syllabus online would allow parents to reexamine the document throughout the school year when they have questions about their child's course.

Section I: Alignment with Curriculum Standards

The first section of this report examines the world languages syllabi to determine how often there is stated alignment with the curriculum framework. According to the standards outlined in the Secondary World Languages Curriculum Framework, students should receive world language instruction in the “five C’s:” communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and community. As all world language syllabi should include an explanation of how the “five C’s” will be addressed throughout the course, all syllabi are examined along the same rubric regardless of language.

Overall, the world language syllabi at district schools included the mention of an **average of 6.9 curriculum standards**. The range of curriculum standards spanned from 3.1 (School A) to 10 (School E). The figure below presents the range of scores. **Syllabi from the middle schools² had a slightly higher average number of included curriculum standards, 7.2, than high schools, 6.7.** Additionally, there were 12 specific syllabi that included 10 or more curriculum standards.

Figure 1.A: Average Number of Curriculum Standards Included in Syllabi³



The following table demonstrates the total number of syllabi that included each general and specific standard. Syllabi used at multiple schools were only counted once, for a total of 127 syllabi. As demonstrated, the communication goal was referenced most frequently, with approximately 80 or more syllabi including the four

² To maintain the confidentiality of schools, grade levels are not differentiated in table 1.A

³ Incorrectly labeled syllabi are not included in averages.

sub-standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The culture goal was also included in over 100 syllabi. The high representation of the areas of communication and culture reflect the **general trend in syllabi of briefly referencing the importance of student development in the four areas of communication and in appreciation of culture.** Oftentimes, this reference did not include further details, as demonstrated by the smaller proportion of syllabi that included references to the sub-standards of cultural practices or products. In the figure below, the number of syllabi referencing each learning objective is presented and then shown as a percent of the total number of world language syllabi examined.

Figure 1.B: Number of Syllabi including Curriculum Standards

Content and Learning Objectives	Total Number	Percent of Total
Communication: Use knowledge and language skills for functional communication	107	84.3%
Listening skills	86	67.7%
Speaking skills	103	81.1%
Reading skills	89	70.1%
Writing skills	90	70.9%
Cultures: Gain knowledge of other cultural perspectives and practices	104	81.9%
Cultural practices	54	42.5%
Cultural products	46	36.2%
Connections: Connect foreign language study to experiences in other curricular areas to personal interests	36	28.3%
Comparisons: Compare the target language and culture with their own language and culture	36	28.3%
Linguistic comparisons	16	12.6%
Cultural comparisons	18	14.2%
Communities: Use the language and apply learning to the world beyond the classroom	14	11.0%
Mention Virginia Standards for Foreign Language Learning	4	3.1%
Mention National Standards for Foreign Language Learning	7	5.5%

Only nine syllabi included some mention of the Virginia or National Standards for Foreign Language Learning.

Section II: Alignment to and Sequence of Performance Standards

The second section of this report analyzes syllabi for continuity of articulated goals across grade levels to ensure that students receive the appropriate development of the stated learning objectives. The curriculum frameworks provided by APS included specific standards related to the goals of communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and community across five levels of language learning.⁴ The evaluation of these syllabi includes an examination of the multiple sub-standards for each learning objective, with each included sub-standard earning one point towards the total score of the syllabus. Syllabi with a larger number of points outline more of the objectives that students need in any single language level to move on to the next language level successfully. Specific details regarding the methodology used for various syllabi types may be found below.

Methodology

World Languages Syllabi except Latin, Spanish for Fluent Speakers, Spanish Immersion, and Spanish IB/AP

There are a total of 37 performance standards across the “five C’s” for language development in “traditional” language courses in Spanish, German, French, and Chinese. Therefore, in scoring each syllabus for continuity, one world language syllabus could earn a maximum of 37 points. Thus, the higher the number of points awarded to a syllabus, the stronger the alignment to the performance standards and learning objectives across the five levels of language learning. Syllabi can earn up to 10 points in communication, seven points in culture, four points in connections, six points in comparisons, and 10 points in community.

Figure 2.A demonstrates *one example* of the sub-standards for the Cultural Practices section of the Culture performance standard. A syllabus could earn up to four points in this area, as one point is awarded for each area addressed.

Figure 2.A: Performance Standards: Culture: *Cultural Practices*

Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Levels V-VI
<i>Identify cultural practices among same language cultures.</i>				
Identify some patterns of behavior	Explain some aspects of the daily life of people in the target culture	Identify differences between daily life practices among the same language cultures	Understand and deal with hypothetical and/or real cultural situations on a limited basis	Explain cultural practices and perspectives
<i>Recognize the differences in cultural perspectives among same language cultures.</i>				

⁴ See: Pages 15-24.

Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Levels V-VI
Recognize some cultural perspectives in target cultures	Explain several cultural practices in target cultures	Recognize that differences exist in cultural perspectives among the same language cultures	Describe some differences in cultural practices	Explain some cultural perspectives among same language cultures
<i>Identify the role of customs and institutions within the target culture.</i>				
Recognize basic customs and institutions	Describe basic customs and institutions	Compare and contrast basic customs and institutions	Explain differences in customs and institutions	Evaluate customs and institutions
<i>Recognize and use appropriate non-verbal communication.</i>				
Recognize non-verbal patterns of behavior appropriate to the target culture(s)	Imitate non-verbal patterns of behavior appropriate to the target culture(s)	Recognize culturally appropriate behaviors	Use culturally appropriate behaviors in interactions with the target culture	Use culturally appropriate behaviors to enhance verbal communication, showing some understanding of meaning

Spanish for Fluent Speakers, Spanish Immersion, and Spanish IB/AP

The performance standards in the curriculum framework for Spanish for Fluent Speakers I, II, III, IV-AP Language, V-AP Literature Part I, VI-AP Literature Part II; and IB differ somewhat from the World Languages Curriculum Framework performance standards. The Immersion Middle School Framework does not provide sequential goals; consequently, immersion course syllabi are examined using the Spanish for Fluent Speakers Curriculum Framework. The standards within this Framework include descriptions of appropriate learning objectives for fluent speakers in the performance standards of communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and community. While the latter four performance standards each contain one to four descriptions, the goal of communication is divided into listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skill areas are provided for five general levels of Spanish instruction, from Level I to Level V/VI. Standards for required learning objectives vary by level, with Level I courses requiring basic skills development while Levels IV and V demand more challenging curricula. Additionally, syllabi are evaluated for the development of appropriate grammar skills.

However, each level of standards for Spanish for Fluent Speakers has a different total point value based on the number of learning objectives included in the Curriculum Framework. Therefore, the point totals for syllabi cannot be compared across levels and must be evaluated as a percent of total points. This analysis will be included later in Section II with the examination of these syllabi.

Figure 2.B: Spanish for Fluent Speakers, Immersion, AP, and IB Syllabi Scoring Framework – Maximum Number of Points Possible

	Level I A	Level I B	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V/VI
Communication	32	25	25	36	38	8
Culture	4	4	4	2	2	6
Connections	2	3	4	1	1	4
Comparisons	2	3	3	1	1	7
Communities	2	2	3	2	2	0
Total	42	37	39	42	44	25

Latin

Similarly, the learning objectives (entitled “progress indicators” in the Latin Curriculum Framework) in the curriculum framework for Latin courses are different from those in other curriculum frameworks.

Latin syllabi were evaluated regarding the articulation of learning objectives in a continued sequence across courses as students progress in language development. The number of learning objectives varies by level within this framework, meaning that the maximum number of points scored also varies as shown below:

Figure 2.C: Latin Syllabi Scoring Framework – Maximum Number of Points Possible

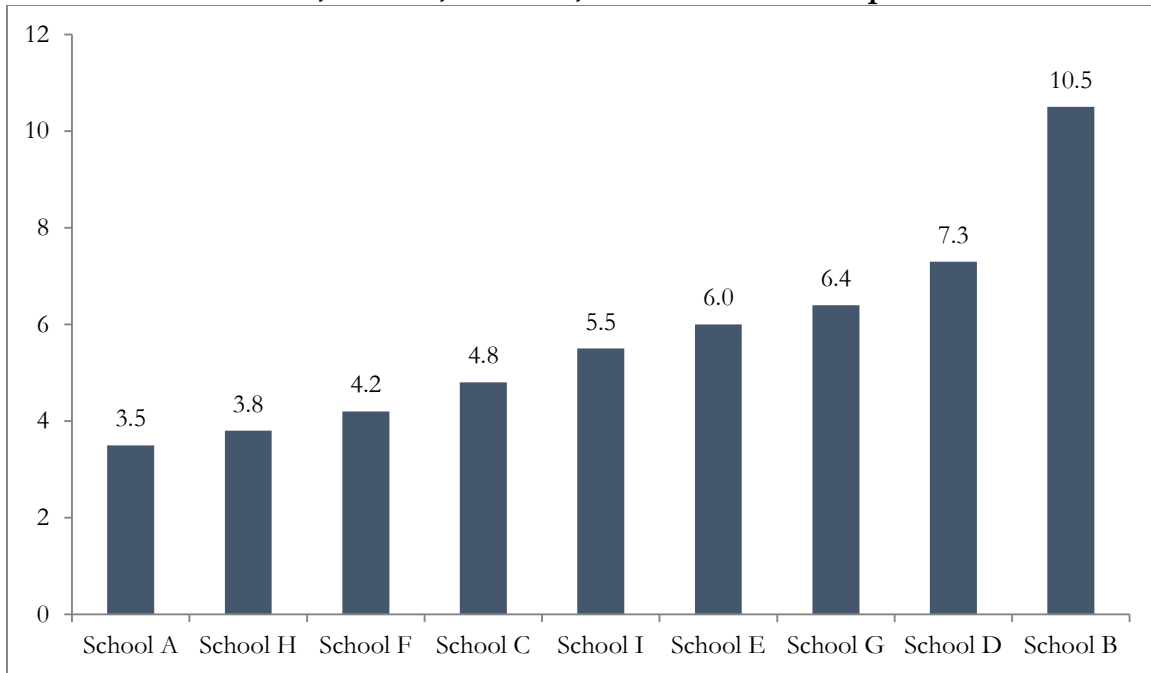
	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV (AP Vergil)	Level V (AP Catullus)
Communication	17	9	16	10	12
Culture	4	7	8	3	4
Connections	3	3	2	3	3
Comparisons	6	4	5	3	5
Communities	3	2	4	6	2
Total	33	25	35	25	26

The point totals for syllabi cannot be compared across levels and must be evaluated as a percent of total points. This analysis will be included later in Section II with the examination of these syllabi.

Summary Analysis

The majority of German, French, Chinese, and “traditional Spanish” (Spanish courses not for fluent speakers, immersion, AP, or IB) syllabi examined did not demonstrate the inclusion of many learning objectives under each performance standard, as the overall average number of points awarded per syllabi was only 4.97. The following figure demonstrates the average number of learning objectives included in the syllabi at each school. This figure does not include Latin courses or courses designed for fluent speakers of Spanish, immersion, AP or IB courses, as these courses are evaluated separately.

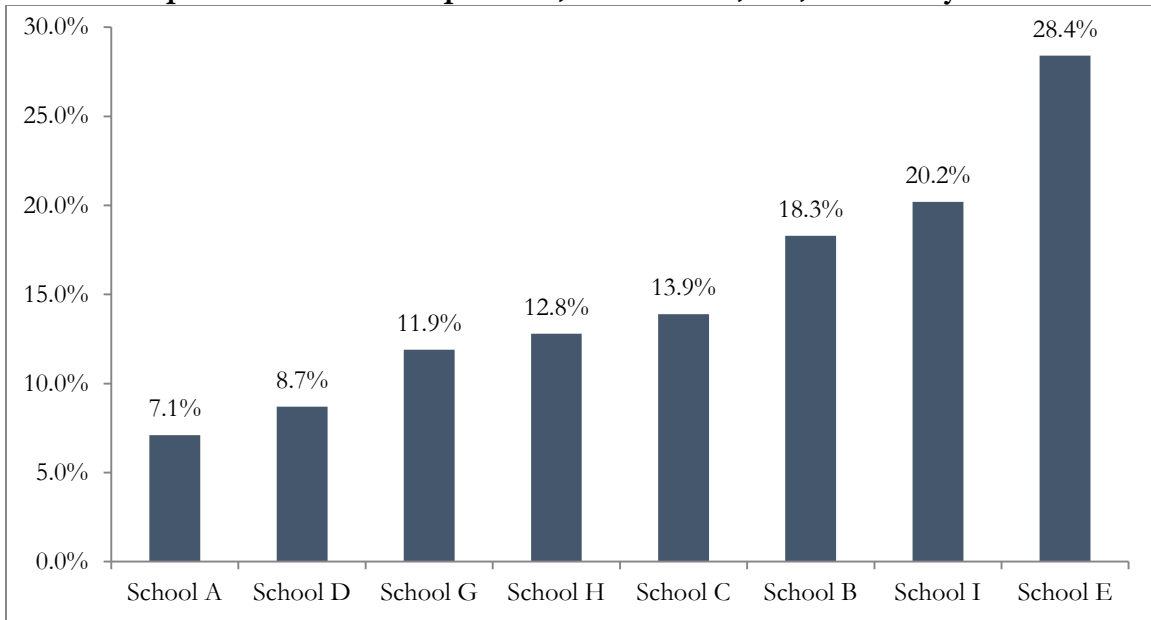
Figure 2.D: Average Number of Learning Objectives Included in Syllabi, German, French, Chinese, and “traditional” Spanish



There was significant variance among the averages at the middle school level, with syllabi from the highest school (School B) averaging at 10.5 standards and syllabi from the lowest school (School A) only averaging 3.5 standards. Despite these differences, **the average number of included learning objectives at any given level for all middle schools was higher than the average for the high schools.** This suggests that middle school syllabi communicate the articulation of learning objectives/goals better than high school syllabi, as well as suggests that the **articulation of goals between middle and high school may be low.**

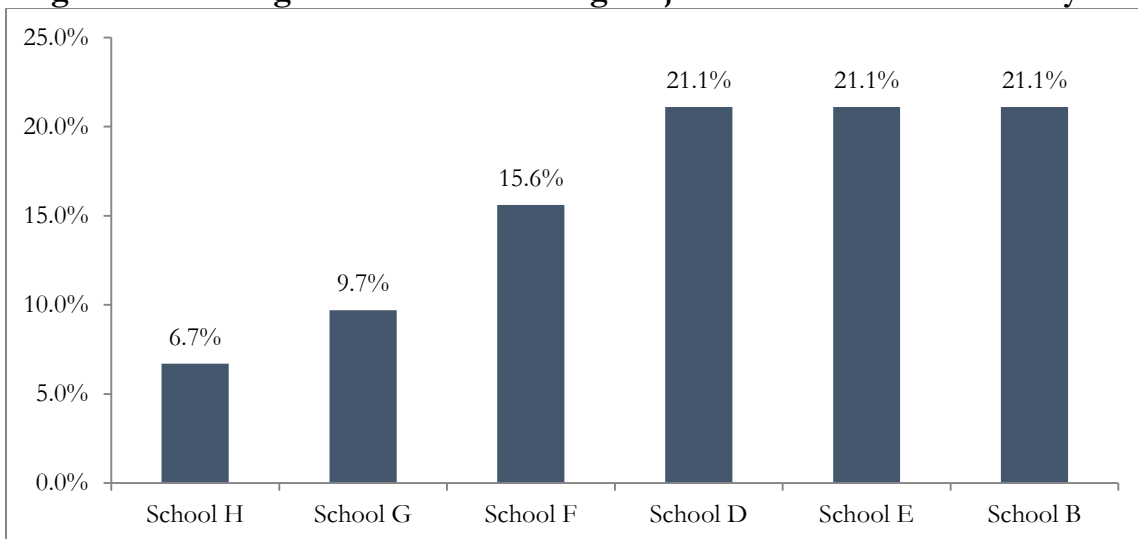
As the total number of learning objectives for Latin and Spanish for fluent speakers, immersion, AP, and IB courses differs by level, the following figures present the number of included standards as a percent of the total for each level. These percentages were then averaged by school. Percentages for Spanish for Fluent Speakers, Immersion, AP, and IB courses are reflected in the following chart. As illustrated, School A syllabi had the lowest percentage of learning objectives (7.1 percent) while School E syllabi had the highest percentages of learning objects (28.4 percent).

Figure 2.E: Average Percent of Learning Objectives Included, Spanish for Fluent Speakers, Immersion, AP, and IB Syllabi



Percentages for Latin courses are presented below. Syllabi from School H had the lowest percentages of learning objects (6.7 percent), while syllabi from schools D, E, and B had the highest number of learning objectives (21.1 percent). Additionally, we note that, while middle school syllabi for Spanish for Fluent Speakers, Immersion, AP, and IB course included roughly the same percentages of learning objectives as high school syllabi, middle school Latin syllabi contained a higher overall percentage of learning objectives than high school Latin syllabi.

Figure 2.F: Average Percent of Learning Objectives Included in Latin Syllabi



The number of learning objectives contained in the world languages syllabi (excluding Spanish for fluent speakers, immersion courses, Spanish IB/AP, and Latin) was generally low. There were only four syllabi that received 15 or more points.

The number of performance standards contained in syllabi for Spanish for fluent speakers courses, immersion courses, or Spanish IB/AP courses was similarly low. The total average percent of included objectives per syllabi was approximately 16.1 percent, with no individual syllabi including 50 percent of the appropriate standards. The average number of objectives included in level I courses was only 5.9 out of a potential 42 points.

The number of performance standards that appear in Latin course syllabi were also very low, with an average of 11.1 percent of progress indicators included per syllabus. The highest number of performance standards found is six out of a possible 33 for Latin I and six of 25 for Latin II.

Communication was the most frequently mentioned learning objective in all examined syllabi, with approximately 94 percent of traditional world language syllabi including some reference to the development of interpersonal, interpretive, or presentational communication. Similarly, approximately 85 percent of Latin syllabi and syllabi for fluent Spanish speakers, immersion, AP, and IB included the general learning objective of communication, with all four standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing mentioned in at least 50 percent of these syllabi. **Second, the area of culture was mentioned in over 50 percent of all examined syllabi**, including courses for fluent Spanish speakers. Nearly 70 percent of Latin syllabi included the instruction of culture through history, the arts, and daily life.

The following table demonstrates the number of mentions for each learning objective and this number as a percent of the total syllabi for German, French, Chinese, and traditional Spanish courses. Further, the table also includes the total points awarded in each learning standard. Syllabi used at multiple schools were only included once, with a total of 88 syllabi reviewed for these foreign language courses.

Figure 2.G: Number and Percent of Syllabi Including Learning Objectives

Learning Objective	Total Points	Number of Syllabi	Number as Percent of Total
Communication	236	82	93.25
Interpersonal Communication	132	70	79.5%
Interpretive Communication	57	40	45.5%
Presentational Communication	45	33	37.5%
Culture	123	59	67.0%
Cultural Practices	70	44	50.0%
Cultural Products	44	29	33.0%
Connections	20	17	19.3%
Connections with Other Disciplines	17	14	15.9%

Learning Objective	Total Points	Number of Syllabi	Number as Percent of Total
Comparisons	29	21	23.9%
Linguistic Comparisons	12	11	12.5%
Cultural Comparisons	15	11	12.5%
Communities	32	21	23.9%
Practical Applications within Communities	30	19	21.6%
Total	437	88	100%

Figure 2.H displays the frequency of these objectives for Spanish for fluent speakers, immersion, AP, and IB courses, and Figure 2.I depicts the frequency of progress indicators included in Latin syllabi. Overall, 23 Spanish for fluent speakers or immersion syllabi were examined and 16 *unique* Latin syllabi were examined.

Figure 2.H: Frequency of Learning Objectives, Spanish for Fluent Speakers

Learning Objective	Number of Syllabi	Percent of Total
Communication	19	82.6%
Listening	11	47.8%
Speaking	14	60.9%
Reading	17	73.9%
Writing	16	69.6%
Culture	18	78.2%
Connections	8	34.8%
Comparisons	6	26.1%
Communities	1	4.3%
Total	23	100%

Figure 2.I: Frequency of Learning Objectives, Latin

Learning Objective	Number of Syllabi	Percent of Total
Communication	14	87.5%
Culture	12	75.0%
Connections	2	12.5%
Comparisons	7	43.8%
Communities	6	37.5%
Total	16	100%

Across languages, it was somewhat common for a syllabus to mention the importance of goals relating to communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and community without providing specific examples of the practices that would lead to these learning objectives. In some instances, one point is awarded to the section in general when these standards are mentioned.

The majority of syllabi do not mention how they complement and build upon the curriculum of previous courses in the same language, and thus it is difficult to accurately evaluate which syllabi are more successful at articulating goals in a continued sequence than others. Further, this complicates the evaluation of continuity of standards from middle school to high school. Level I courses at the

high school level may or may not be designed to build upon previous world language instruction, but include introductory objectives and skills either way. Beyond courses designed for fluent Spanish speakers, no Level I syllabi offered at the high school level included any indication of the continued development of learning standards for world languages courses that began in middle school. The **relatively frequent mention of communication and culture performance standards and learning objectives across syllabi levels suggests that these goals may also be better articulated** than the comparisons, connections, and community performance standards and objectives.

The low number of goals articulated on syllabi suggests that an analysis based solely on the syllabi may not provide an accurate indicator of the articulation of goals across levels and between schools. An analysis of curricula and assignments has the potential to be much more accurate.

Spanish for Fluent Speakers, Immersion, AP, and IB Syllabi Analysis

A total of 23 unique syllabi designed for Spanish for fluent speakers, immersion, AP, and IB courses were examined using the standards found in the Spanish for Fluent Speakers Curriculum Framework. These objectives include the “five C’s” and the sub-standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Standards for required learning objectives vary by level, with Level I courses requiring basic skills development while Levels IV and V demand more challenging curricula. An additional row is included at the bottom of each table to evaluate the development of appropriate grammar skills. For grammar, syllabi may earn a total of five points.

Overall, these Spanish courses did not demonstrate a high frequency of alignment of syllabi to performance standards and learning objectives at any given level of language development. The majority of syllabi included some mention of the development of communication skills and knowledge of the culture of Spanish speaking countries, although the learning objectives under the connections, comparisons, and community goals were rarely addressed. Spanish Immersion courses, courses for fluent speakers, and IB/AP Language and Literature courses ranged from including 7 percent of learning objectives to nearly 30 percent, with an average of approximately 16 percent of objectives included per syllabus.

Oftentimes, these courses for fluent speakers were upper-level or AP classes with a focus in Spanish literature or language development. The specified nature of these courses decreased the attention to connections with other disciplines, comparisons, or interaction with local communities as students are instead focused on developing skills in critical thinking and literary analysis. Further, although the Spanish for Fluent Speakers Curriculum Framework includes standards for grammar development, only three courses explicitly noted a focus on grammar instruction. The **minimal**

inclusion of learning objectives overall suggests that goals are not well articulated at each language level or across schools.

Latin Syllabi Analysis

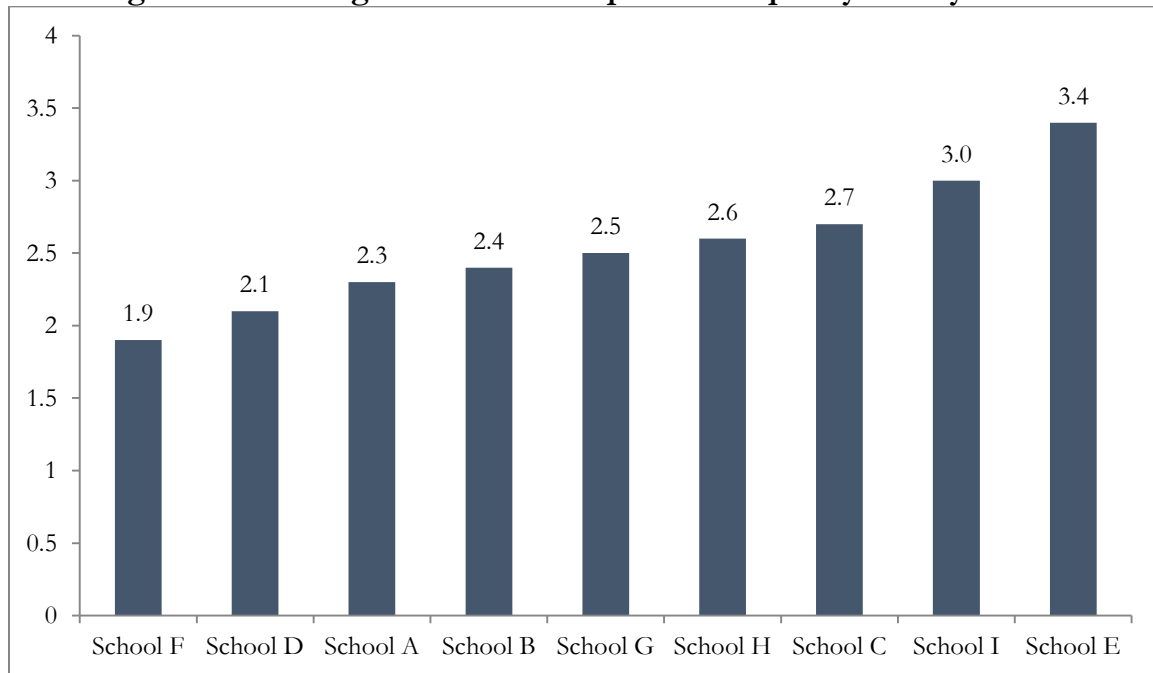
A total of 16 *unique* syllabi for Latin courses were examined using the Latin Curriculum Framework and the methodology outlined previously. Learning objectives/progress indicators for each level of language development were used to examine syllabi at each level to determine the articulation of goals in a continued sequence. As mentioned previously, the number of progress indicators/goals mentioned in each syllabus was very low overall. The majority of the syllabi mentioned communication and culture. Interestingly, mentions of learning objectives relating to comparisons were also relatively prevalent, most likely due to the influence of Latin and Roman culture on Western languages and political systems.

Section III: Communication of Grade Reporting

The third section of the analysis examines each syllabus for a number of statements and information that APS expects to be included along with the curriculum for the course.

Instructors should include information related to grading policies, formative and summative assessments, and standards for make-up work. However, the world language syllabi did not demonstrate a strong inclusion of this information. Out of eight areas, the majority of syllabi only included an average of 2.6 of the statements. Figure 3.A demonstrates the average number of information standards included in the world language syllabi at each school. While the previous two sections saw disparities in the percent of included information by school, the average number of grade reporting explanations and statements was relatively constant across schools.

Figure 3.A: Average Number of Explanations per Syllabi by School



No syllabi included over five of the eight explanations, and only four included five.

While some information was included on the majority of syllabi, other information was rarely present. For example, the statement “Student grades reflect student achievement and not student behavior” was not included on any world language syllabi, while an explanation that courses which do not offer a final exam must calculate the final grade through equally weighted quarters was only mentioned on one syllabus. Further, the grading policy that quarterly grades will round up when the percentage is 0.5 or higher was only explained on three syllabi.

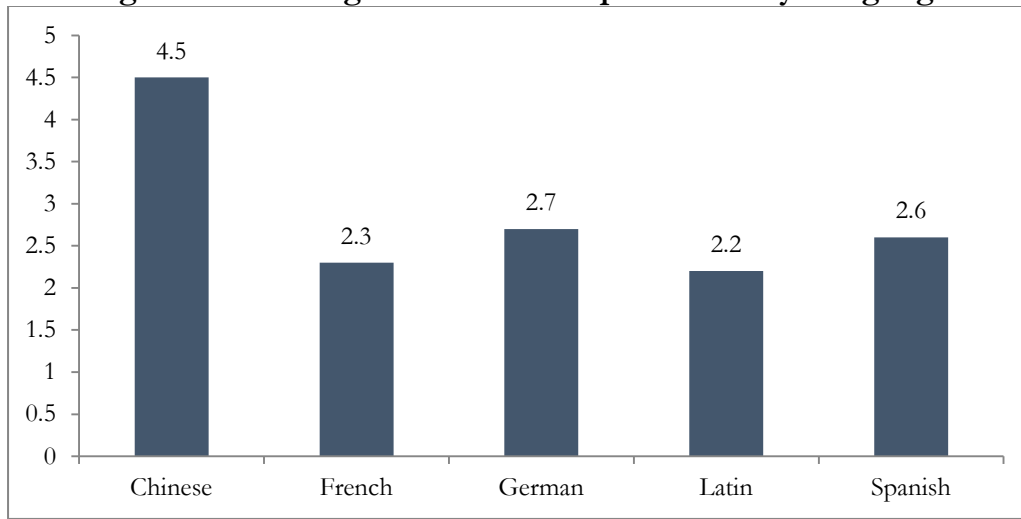
In contrast, other information was included by the majority of instructors. The explanation that quarterly exams, mid-terms, and/or final exams calculations into the quarterly grade and final grade was included on 108 syllabi, representing 85 percent of examined syllabi. Next, nearly 60 percent of syllabi explained that quarterly grades are calculated through the accumulation of summative and formative assessments. The following figure includes the total number of syllabi containing each statement or explanation, as well as the percent of total examined syllabi. Syllabi used at multiple schools are only included once in this analysis (a total of 127 *unique* syllabi).

Figure 3.B: Number and Percent of Syllabi Containing Each Explanation

Explanation	Number of Syllabi	Percent of Total Syllabi
“Student grades reflect student achievement and not student behavior.”	0	0%
Quarterly grades are calculated through the accumulation of summative and formative assessments.	75	59.1%
Quarterly grades will round up when the percentage is 0.5 or higher.	3	2.4%
Quarterly exams, mid-terms, and/or final exams are calculated into the quarterly grade and the final grade.	108	85.0%
Final exams may count for a maximum of 20% and the balance of the final grade for the year is equally divided across the 4 quarterly grades.	22	17.3%
Courses which do not offer a final exam must calculate the final grade through equally weighted quarters.	1	0.8%
Explanation of late work policies.	55	43.3%
Listing of summative and formative assessments or grading categories and their weight in grade calculation.	53	41.7%

Unlike the previous two sections, **the average number of explanations included on high school syllabi was slightly higher than the middle school average.** The four high schools had an average of 2.8 standards, and the five middle schools demonstrated an average of 2.5 standards.

The average number of stated expectations and information was similar across most languages, with Latin, German, Spanish, and French all having an average between two and three. Chinese had a higher average at 4.5, although this is only the average of two course syllabi. The following figure briefly displays the averages for each language.

Figure 3.C: Average Number of Expectations by Language

Section IV: World Languages Website

Finally, Hanover examined the World Languages Website in order to evaluate the extent to which the website aligns with the information needed by parents and students to understand the world languages program as outlined by the World Languages Curriculum Framework. At the secondary level, the website briefly presents and describes the five goals and standards of communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and community. The main webpage also includes a listing of all world languages courses available to middle and high school students.

As the World Languages Framework document does not include standards for reporting information to parents or the public, Hanover has created a brief list of additional information and practices that may improve the World Languages Website in the future.

- First, parents and students may benefit from a listing of which courses are offered at which schools. This would allow future students to plan a course of study from elementary school through advanced high school courses.
- Further, a brief description of the standards of learning at each level of world language study would allow parents to evaluate their student's progress against district norms. These descriptions could include further subdivisions and explanations of the five learning standards.
- The website may also post the syllabi of all world language courses. Although the majority of syllabi currently require a parent or guardian to sign a form indicating that they have reviewed the document, providing each syllabus online would allow parents to reexamine the document throughout the school year when they have questions about their child's course.

Hanover could provide additional assistance to APS through the administration of parent surveys to determine what types of information would be more useful to parents and guardians on the World Languages Website.

Conclusion

Overall, there was considerable variation in the alignment of elements of the syllabi with curriculum standards, learning objectives, and components of the course grading system. **While alignment of the syllabi to the World Languages Curriculum Framework and the learning objectives was generally low, certain elements of the course grading policy were present in nearly every syllabus.** Specifically, the world language syllabi at APS mentioned approximately half of the curriculum standards examined while the German, French, Chinese, and “traditional” (not Spanish for fluent speakers, immersion courses, AP Language or Literature, or IB) Spanish syllabi examined had an average of 4.97 out of 37 possible points awarded to each syllabus. Spanish Immersion courses, courses for fluent speakers, and IB/AP Language and Literature courses ranged from including 7 percent of learning objectives to nearly 30 percent, with an average of approximately 16 percent of objectives included per syllabus. The Latin syllabi included an average of approximately 11 percent of progress indicators per syllabus. Relating to grading policy, **the explanation that quarterly exams, mid-terms, and/or final exams are calculated into the quarterly grade and final grade was included in approximately 85 percent of examined syllabi.**

Of the “five C’s” of curriculum, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities, the areas of communication and culture were referenced most frequently. Specifically, **in Section I, the area of communication was referenced most frequently,** with approximately 80 percent of syllabi mentioning the standard and at least 65 percent including the four sub-standards of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The objective of culture was also at least mentioned in over 80 percent of syllabi. The high representation of the areas of communication and culture reflect the general trend in syllabi of briefly referencing the importance of student development in the four areas of communication and in appreciation of other cultures. The sequence of communication goals across world language learning levels may be the most clear and consistent. **Communication was again the most frequently mentioned learning objective,** with approximately 93 percent of traditional world language syllabi including some reference to the development of interpersonal, interpretive, or presentational communication. Similarly, over 80 percent of Latin syllabi and syllabi for fluent Spanish speakers, immersion, AP, and IB included the general learning objective of communication. The area of culture was also mentioned in over 50 percent of examined syllabi.

Differences were seen within each section of analysis on the presence of each element when compared between middle school and high school syllabi. Syllabi from the middle schools included a slightly higher average percentage of the number of included curriculum standards in Section I. There was a slight difference

between the average number of included learning objectives by subject area, with French syllabi including the highest number of standards and Latin syllabi including the fewest. In Section II, while the average percent of included learning objectives was somewhat even for middle school syllabi and high school syllabi for Spanish courses for fluent speakers, immersion, AP, and IB, middle school Latin courses included a significantly larger percent of learning objectives than high school syllabi. The analysis of grading policy information, however, presents a different finding than the elements above, as the average number of explanations included on high school syllabi was slightly higher than the middle school average. The average number of stated expectations and information was similar across most languages.

In addition to findings on the alignment of the curriculum to the curriculum standards, learning objectives, and components of the course grading system, the most frequently referenced of the “five C’s,” and the differences in elements of middle school and high school syllabi, the following conclusions have been noted. First, the majority of syllabi do not mention how they complement and build upon the curriculum of previous courses in the same language, and thus it is difficult to accurately evaluate which courses are more successful at articulating goals in a continued sequence than others. Further, this complicates the evaluation of continuity of standards from middle school to high school. Secondly, it was somewhat common for a syllabus to mention the importance of communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities without providing specific examples of the practices that would lead to these learning objectives. This lack of detail suggests that Hanover’s analysis should be interpreted with caution: the information presented on the syllabi may not be an exact interpretation of what is taught in the course.

In a different line of analysis, the World Languages Website was analyzed. The following information, if added, would provide more detailed information to both parents and students. First, parents and students may benefit from **a listing of which courses are offered at which schools.** This would allow future students to plan a course of study from elementary school through advanced high school courses. Secondly, **a brief description of the standards of learning at each level** of world language study would allow parents to evaluate their student’s progress against district norms. These descriptions could include further subdivisions and explanations of the five learning standards. Finally, **the website may also post the syllabi of all world language courses.** Although the majority of syllabi currently require a parent or guardian to sign a form indicating that they have reviewed the document, providing each syllabus online would allow parents to reexamine the document throughout the school year when they have questions about their child’s course.

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STUDENT ORAL PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT
(SOPA)

IMMERSION PROGRAM EVALUATION

Arlington Public Schools
Arlington, VA

Report

Igone Arteagoitia, PhD.

August 31, 2011

CAL

Center for Applied Linguistics
Washington, DC

I. Introduction

In the spring of 2011, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) contracted with Arlington Public Schools (APS) to conduct criterion-referenced assessment of students' oral language proficiency in Spanish using the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA), as part of the district's evaluation of the immersion program. Dr. Igone Arteagoitia, Senior Researcher at CAL, and Melissa Sen, APS World Languages Teacher Specialist, conducted the assessment interviews at the four participating schools: Key, Claremont, Barcroft, and Gunston.¹

In response to the request of the APS Office of Research and Evaluation, the assessments of oral language proficiency in Spanish were administered to approximately 50% of the immersion students in fifth and eighth grade during the 2010–2011 academic year. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the sample was representative of the district's immersion program, a stratified random sample of students that comprised approximately the same percentage of: 1) Spanish and English native speakers; 2) Limited English Proficient (LEP), former LEP and non-LEP students, and 3) students with disabilities as that of the total pool of fifth and eighth graders was generated for the purposes of the study. As shown in Table 1, the final sample comprises a total of 136 participants, 96 in fifth grade (54 native Spanish speakers or NSS and 42 native English speakers or NES) and 40 in eighth grade (20 NSS and 20 NES). A slightly higher number of students than that noted in the sampling framework was used as point of departure so that it would be possible to make substitutions if certain students were found to be ineligible for participation.

Following this introduction, this summary report provides: (1) a description of the SOPA instrument; (2) results from the 2011 administration of the oral proficiency assessment; (3) a discussion of the results; (4) a comparison with the results of the 2004 evaluation, when the previous program evaluation was conducted; and (5) discussion and conclusions. Mean findings are reported along with summary comments in the text, followed by detailed breakdowns of findings in tables and charts.

¹ While Barcroft elementary school does not have an immersion program, a representative sample of students in the First Language Support (FLS) program was included in the sample.

Table 1: 2011 Sample

	Spanish Dominant Student Count	English Dominant Student Count	Total Student Count*	Sp. Dom. Sample Size +/- 10% error 90% Conf.	En. Dom. Sample Size +/- 10% error 90% Conf.	Total in Sample
Grade 5	96	95	197	54	42	96
Grade 8	38	47	86	20	20	40
Total	134	142	283	74	62	136

* It includes students from language backgrounds other than English and Spanish.

Overview of the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA)

Oral language proficiency in Spanish was assessed using the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA). The SOPA measures speaking ability, including oral fluency, grammar, and vocabulary, and a listening comprehension rating is also assigned. CAL staff developed the SOPA in 1991 as an interactive listening and speaking assessment for children learning a foreign or second language in a school setting. Since 1991, the SOPA has been used widely to assess students in a variety of language programs: foreign language in the elementary school (FLES), foreign language exploratory (FLEX), partial immersion, and two-way immersion (TWI) programs. The SOPA follows an interview format, allowing students to demonstrate their highest level of performance in oral fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and listening comprehension. The SOPA Rating Scale is based on the Proficiency Guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) (1999) and is used to assign ratings in the four skill areas mentioned above. The following three sections provide an overview of the SOPA instrument (Thompson, Boyson, & Rhodes, 2001).

Description of the SOPA

Two researchers were involved in the administration of each SOPA interview. One took primary responsibility for interviewing the students, while the other took primary responsibility for assigning ratings. The assessments took place in a quiet location (e.g. a spare classroom or office) that had been reserved for the interviews. This arrangement provided a relaxed setting where the students could enjoy the activities and have ample opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency levels. Two students were

assessed at a time and were paired by their teachers according to their speaking ability in Spanish. Although they interacted primarily with the interviewer during the assessment activities, they also interacted with each other and with the rater at times.

The SOPA interview consists of a series of tasks that follow the natural development of language skills, focusing first on listening ability and then on speaking proficiency. Since receptive skills are less demanding than productive skills, this order also helps put the students at ease, allowing them the opportunity to be successful immediately and thus build their confidence. The students were encouraged to say as much as they could during the interview, which took 15-20 minutes to complete. During a short break between interviews (2 or 3 minutes), the interviewer and rater discussed the students' speech samples and assigned ratings after reaching an agreement on their proficiency levels. The complete interviews were videotaped for post-assessment verification of the assigned ratings.

SOPA Format and Tasks

The SOPA script (see Appendix A) is generally composed of five tasks representing varying levels of difficulty. Depending on the students' proficiency level, the interviewer uses three to five of the following tasks for the interview:

- identifying objects following Total Physical Response (TPR) instructions and naming the objects
- answering informal questions
- describing a science sequence (e.g., life cycle of a plant) or other scene
- retelling a story (e.g., Goldilocks and the Three Bears)
- supporting an opinion (e.g., opinion about new school rules)

During the APS evaluation, to begin each session, the interviewer and rater greeted the students, introduced themselves, and requested that the students be seated. The interviewer then asked the children their names and reminded them to say as much as they could and speak only in the language being assessed. Throughout the assessment, the SOPA interviewer and rater used only Spanish, asking informal questions, making comments, and giving instructions in a natural, conversational manner.

The interview generally began with “answering informal questions” in Spanish, and the interviewer moved quickly to more difficult tasks if students performed very well on the easier ones. When it was evident that the interviewer had probed beyond the students’ highest level of proficiency, she began the wind down by asking a few questions or giving some commands at the students’ comfort level. The goal of the wind down is to give students an opportunity to respond successfully and leave the interview with a positive feeling about it. After the interview, the students received a small reward for their participation.

SOPA Rating Scale

The nine-level SOPA Rating Scale (RS) (Appendix B) is used to determine ratings for oral fluency, grammar (speaking), vocabulary (speaking), and listening comprehension. The proficiency levels of the SOPA-RS are *Junior Novice-Low*, *Junior Novice-Mid*, *Junior Novice-High*, *Junior Intermediate-Low*, *Junior Intermediate-Mid*, *Junior Intermediate-High*, *Junior Advanced-Low*, *Junior Advanced-Mid*, and *Junior Advanced-High*. See Appendix C for descriptions of SOPA levels. For calculation of average ratings, the nine rating scale levels were converted to numeric values: Junior Novice-Low=1, Junior Novice-Mid=2, and so on through Junior Advanced-High=9.

Assessment Procedures

CAL staff worked with Office of World Languages in APS to adapt the SOPA tasks and language to reflect Arlington’s curricula for the fifth and eighth grades. The activities carried out were as follows:

- customizing the SOPA interview script,
- conducting the assessment interviews,
- assigning and verifying SOPA ratings,
- analyzing and interpreting the student data, and
- submitting a written report on the assessment results

Over the course of four weeks, CAL and APS collaborated in the administration of the Spanish SOPA to all 136 students participating in the evaluation. Melissa Sen

(APS World Languages Teacher Specialist), who had previously completed SOPA training courses with CAL, conducted the interviews with the students, and Dr. Arteagoitia (CAL Senior Researcher) assigned the ratings. The results of the assessment are presented in Section II of this report.

II. Results

This section presents the assessment results for the 136 fifth and eighth grade students who participated in the Spanish SOPA interviews in 2011, as part of the evaluation of the APS district's immersion program. Using the COPE/SOPA-Rating Scale, all participants received SOPA ratings in four skill areas: oral fluency, grammar (speaking), vocabulary (speaking), and listening comprehension. It was the district's expectation that students in fifth grade would be at the Junior Intermediate-Mid level in the three skills that assess language production and at the Junior Intermediate-High level in listening comprehension; and students in eighth grade would be at the Junior Advanced-Low level in the former and at the Junior Advanced-Mid level in the latter.

The distribution of ratings for the Spanish SOPA is presented in Tables 2-5. Findings are displayed by skill area for each grade level and are disaggregated by native language. Additionally, a visual representation of these findings is provided in Figures 1-8. Each table is followed by two graphs, as the graphs present the information at each grade level separately. As shown in these tables and graphs, the majority of NES in fifth grade scored between Junior Intermediate-Mid and Junior Advanced-Low, while the majority of NES in eighth grade scored between Junior Intermediate-High and Junior Advanced-Mid on all four components. The average performance of NSS was higher than that of NES, with most NSS students in fifth grade scoring between Junior Intermediate-High and Junior Advanced-Mid and all of the students in eighth grade scoring at Junior Advanced levels for all four components. Moreover, the average scores on the four components were very similar, although both native language groups at both grades did have slightly higher average scores in listening comprehension than in the three categories that assess language production, followed by oral fluency, grammar and vocabulary being the domains where the lowest scores were registered.

Table 2: Distribution of Participants by Oral Fluency Levels

	Grade 5		Grade 8	
	NSS	NES	NSS	NES
JNL	0	0	0	0
JNM	0	0	0	0
JNH	0	0	0	0
JIL	0	2	0	0
JIM	0	12	0	1
JIH	9	10	0	3
JAL	32	16	1	11
JAM	13	2	11	5
JAH	0	0	8	0

NOTE

JNL=Junior Novice-Low
 JNM=Junior Novice-Mid
 JNH=Junior Novice-High
 JIL=Junior Intermediate-Low
 JIM=Junior Intermediate-Mid
 JIH=Junior Intermediate-High
 JAL=Junior Advanced-Low
 JAM=Junior Advanced-Mid
 JAH=Junior Advanced-High

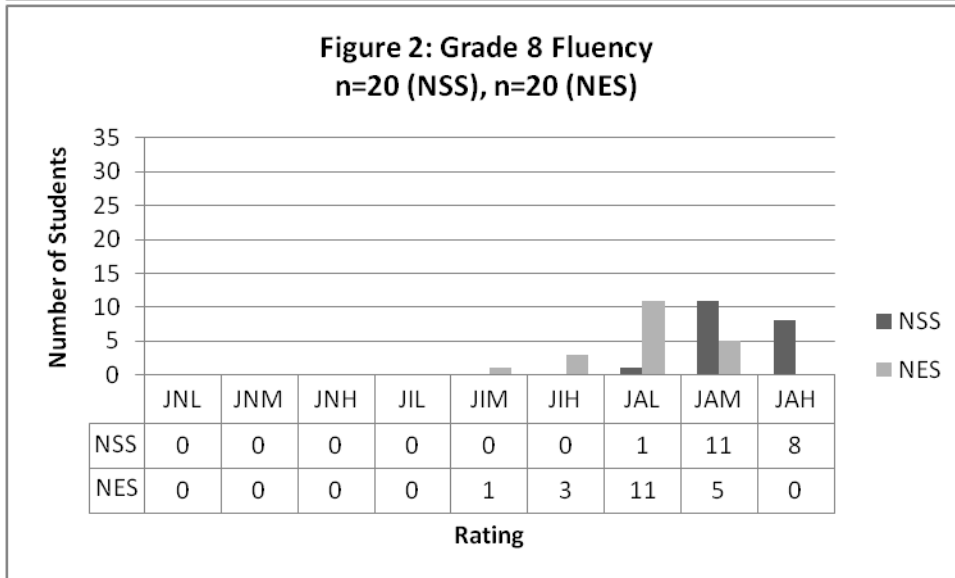
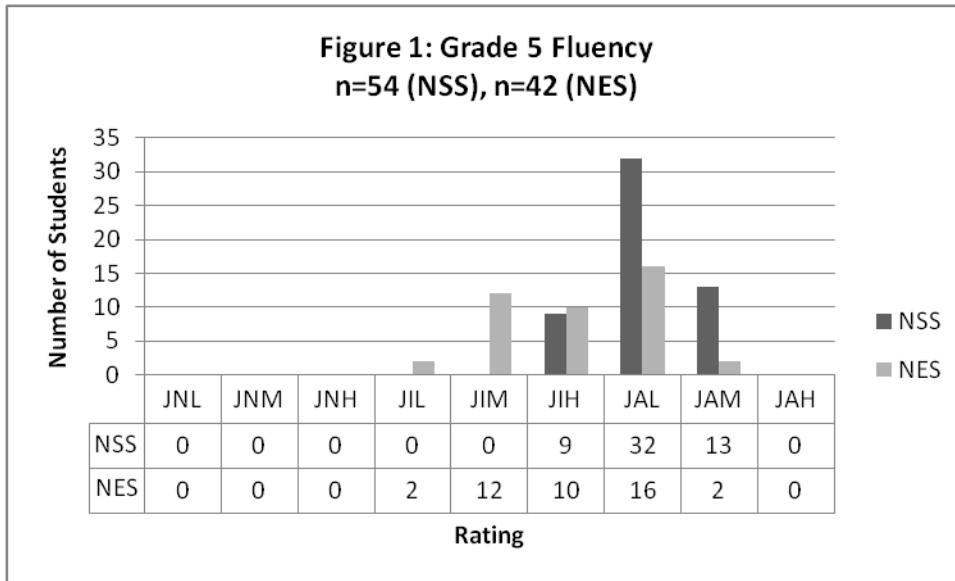


Table 3: Distribution of Participants by Grammar Levels

	Grade 5		Grade 8	
	NSS	NES	NSS	NES
JNL	0	0	0	0
JNM	0	0	0	0
JNH	0	1	0	0
JIL	0	5	0	0
JIM	1	13	0	2
JIH	14	13	0	3
JAL	26	10	1	10
JAM	13	0	11	5
JAH	0	0	8	0

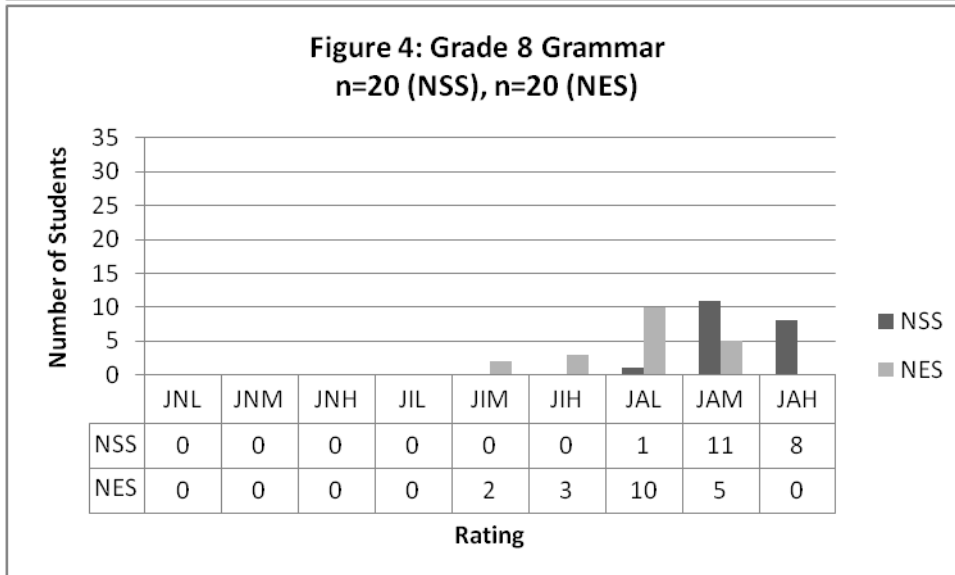
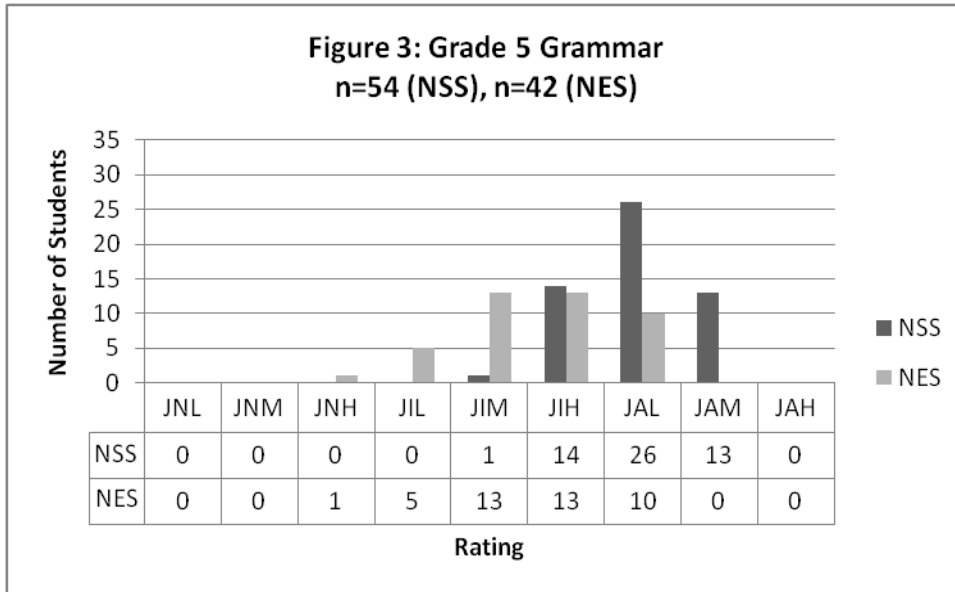


Table 4: Distribution of Participants by Vocabulary Levels

	Grade 5		Grade 8	
	NSS	NES	NSS	NES
JNL	0	0	0	0
JNM	0	0	0	0
JNH	0	0	0	0
JIL	1	6	0	0
JIM	2	11	0	1
JIH	22	17	0	4
JAL	21	6	3	11
JAM	8	2	9	4
JAH	0	0	8	0

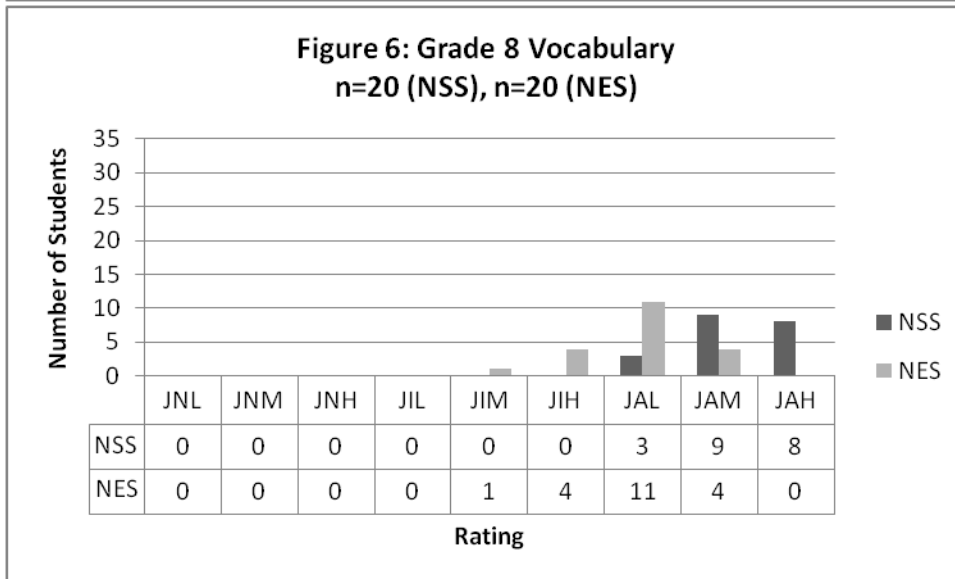
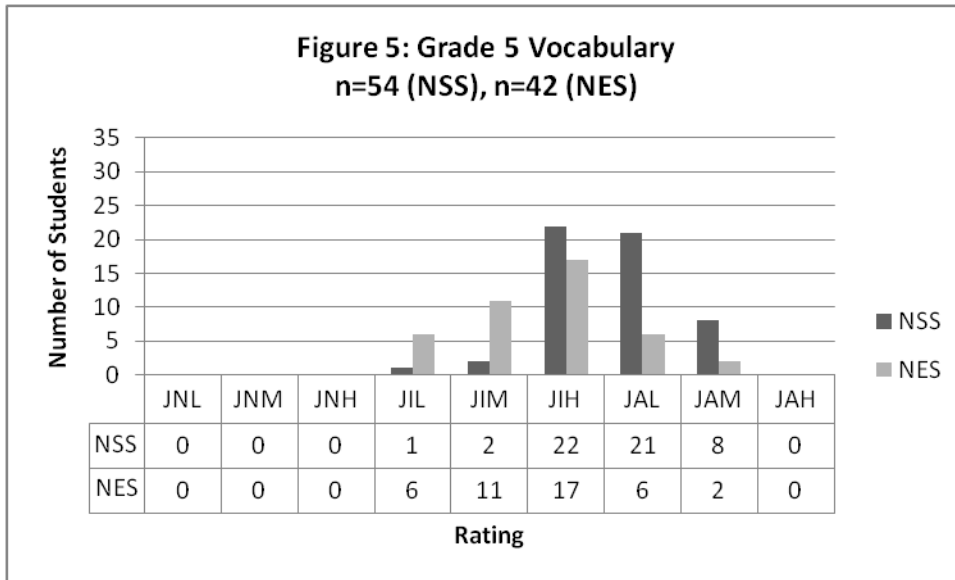
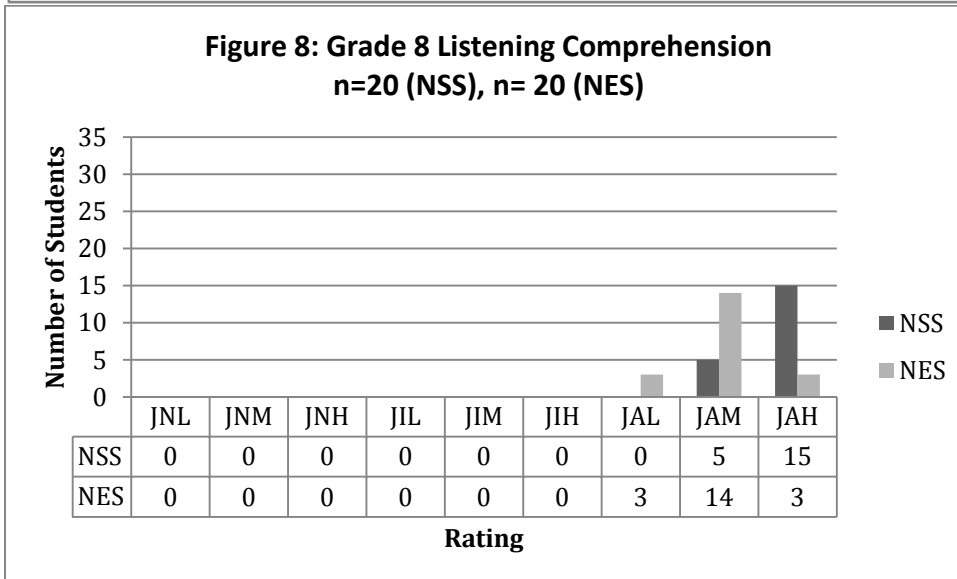
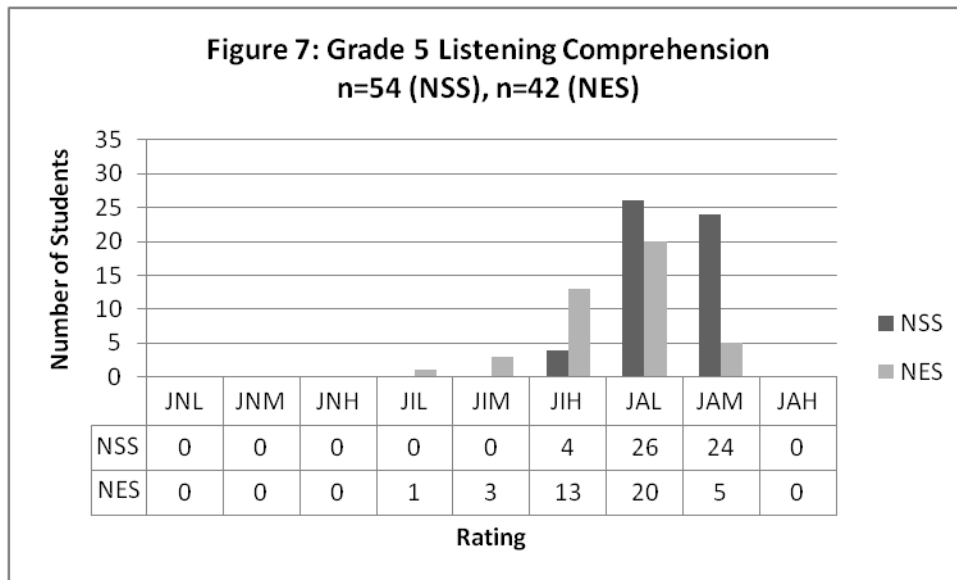


Table 5: Distribution of Participants by Listening Comprehension Levels

	Grade 5		Grade 8	
	NSS	NES	NSS	NES
JNL	0	0	0	0
JNM	0	0	0	0
JNH	0	0	0	0
JIL	0	1	0	0
JIM	0	3	0	0
JIH	4	13	0	0
JAL	26	20	0	3
JAM	24	5	5	14
JAH	0	0	15	3



With the exception of one student in fifth grade whose vocabulary skills were rated at the Junior Intermediate-Low level, all NSS in both grades met or exceeded APS expectations for the Spanish SOPA components. Ratings for NES, while also rather high, were more mixed. In fifth grade, 95.2% of NES met or exceeded expectations for oral fluency, 85.7% for grammar and vocabulary, and 90.5% for listening comprehension. The ratings were somewhat lower for eighth grade NES, with 80% meeting or exceeding expectations for oral fluency, 75% for grammar and vocabulary, and 85% for listening comprehension. The highest average ratings were found in listening comprehension and oral fluency, while grammar and vocabulary received the lowest average ratings, and this was the case regardless of native language. This finding will be discussed in the next section.

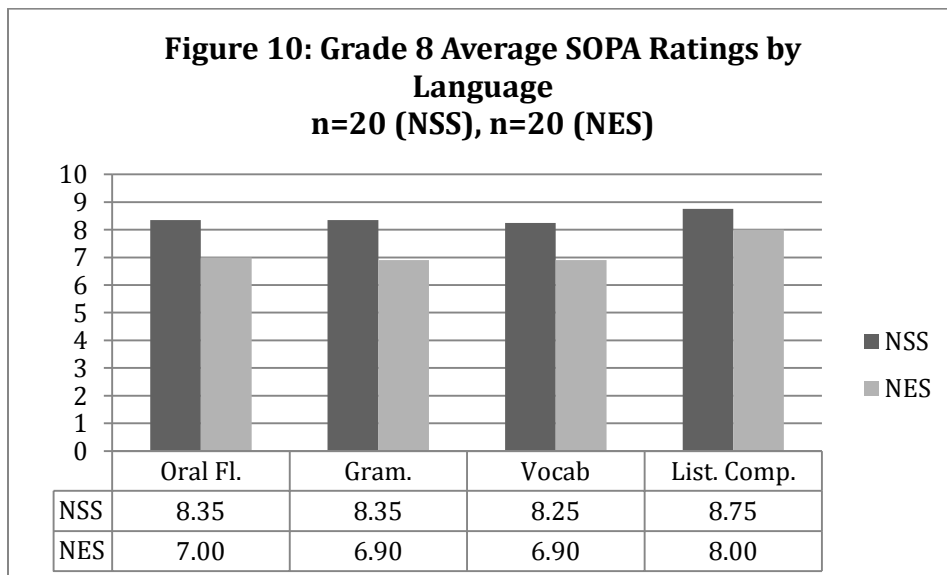
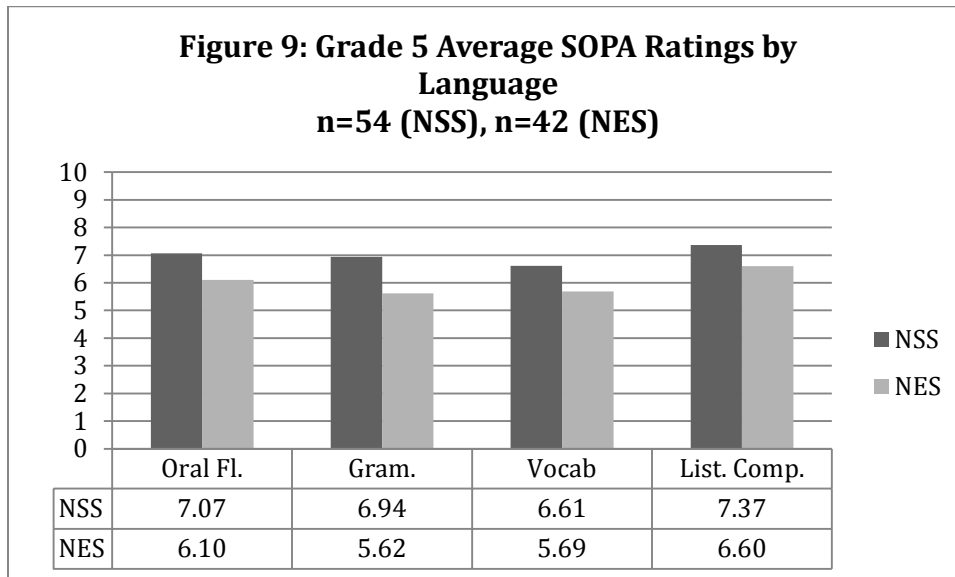
On average, NSS scored significantly higher than NES on the Spanish SOPA in both grades. This finding is in line with that of previous research that has found persistent differences in Spanish oral proficiency attainment between NSS and NSS in two-way immersion programs (Cazabon, Lambert, & Hall, 1993; Howard, Christian, & Genesee, 2004; Howard & Sugarman, 2007). Table 6 displays the average ratings by native language within each grade level. Results are also shown visually in Figures 9 (fifth grade) and 10 (eighth grade). As shown in Figure 9, in fifth grade, the average ratings for the two groups revealed gaps (in terms of the numerical values assigned to proficiency levels) between 0.77 to 1.32 proficiency levels on the four components. Similarly, the gaps in performance between NSS and NES in eighth grade ranged from 0.75 to 1.45 proficiency levels (see Figure 10). These difference in average ratings between NES and NSS were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) in both fifth and eighth grade.

Overall, average ratings for both NES and NSS students were significantly higher in all four components of Spanish oral language in eighth grade than in fifth grade ($p < 0.05$). Because the data are cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, it is impossible to discuss true developmental changes over time. However, these findings provide a promising indicator that such growth actually occurs.

Comparisons between the results of the 2011 evaluation and those of the previous evaluation conducted in 2004 are presented in Section III of this report.

Table 6: Average SOPA ratings by grade and language

		Grade 5		Grade 8	
		NSS n=54	NES n=42	NSS n=20	NES n=20
Oral Fluency	Mean	7.07	6.10	8.35	7.00
	SD	0.64	1.03	0.59	0.79
Grammar	Mean	6.94	5.62	8.35	6.90
	SD	0.76	1.06	0.59	0.91
Vocabulary	Mean	6.61	5.69	8.25	6.90
	SD	0.86	1.05	0.72	0.79
Listening Comprehension	Mean	7.37	6.60	8.75	8.00
	SD	0.62	0.89	0.44	0.56



III. Comparisons between 2004 and 2011 Spanish SOPA Ratings

This section will examine the findings discussed in Section II in light of the results obtained in 2004 when the Spanish SOPA was administered to a sample of third, fifth and eighth grade students as part of the district’s evaluation of the immersion program (see Table 7). Since only fifth and eighth grade students participated in the 2011 evaluation, we will only be including the findings for these two grade levels.

Table 7: 2004 Sample

	Spanish Dominant Student Count	English Dominant Student Count	Total Student Count	Sp. Dom. Sample Size +/- 10% error 90% Conf.	En. Dom. Sample Size +/- 10% error 90% Conf.	Total In Sample
Grade 3	60	74	134	32	35	67
Grade 5	62	45	107	32	27	59
Grade 8	23	10	33	17	9	26
Total	145	129	274	81	71	152

Before we can make meaningful comparisons between the 2004 and 2011 results, it is important to ensure that the two samples are drawn from the same population, and are thus comparable. If the samples varied in some way, statistical comparisons would not be appropriate. Other things to take into consideration when comparing the performance of these two groups is the fact that, while they come from the same schools,² there is a seven year gap between the two evaluations and in that time some changes have taken place in the program³ and some of the teachers who implemented the program in 2004 are no longer in the program. So, it is not only the students that are different but to a certain degree so are the program and the teachers. Two student variables that were available from the two evaluations and are known to potentially affect language performance (August & Shanahan, 2006) were used to compare the two samples: 1) LEP

² The small sample from Barcroft Elementary school (n = 12) is the only exception, since that school did not participate in the 2004 evaluation.

³ For example, in 2008 the district added a daily 40-minute period of instruction in Spanish language arts at the elementary school level.

status (i.e., whether a student was classified as LEP or not); and 2) disability status (i.e., whether a student had a disability or not).

Regarding LEP status, only Spanish-dominant students were considered as, with the exception of one student in the 2004 sample,⁴ all students classified as LEP were Spanish-dominant. As shown in Table 8, the percentage of Spanish-speaking students classified as LEP in the 2011 sample was higher than that of 2004 in both grade levels. While the number of students with disabilities that participated in both samples was rather small (non-existent in grade 8), the same pattern was observed regarding students with disabilities, i.e., the percentage was higher in the 2011 sample than that of 2004 in grade 5 (see Table 9). Given these differences between the two samples, conducting statistical analysis on the data and looking at potential significant differences between the two groups was not warranted. However, since APS expressed interest in looking at findings from both evaluations, in the remainder of this section, we will display the average ratings by year side by side. Readers are reminded, nonetheless, to bear in mind that the two samples are different when they are looking at the findings displayed in the tables and graphs.

Table 8: Percentage of students classified as LEP

Grade 5			Grade 8	
NSS			NSS	
2004	2011		2004	2011
n=32	n=54		n=17	n=20
56.25	79.63		3.85	12.5

⁴ While the student was classified as English-dominant, the fact that he or she was also classified as LEP must mean that he or she was not fully fluent in English and therefore must not have been a native speaker of the language. Unfortunately, we were unable to verify this information as no native language data exists from the 2004 cohort.

Table 9: Percentage of Grade 5 students with a disability

Grade 5			
NSS		NES	
2004 n=32	2011 n=54	2004 n=27	2011 n=42
9.37	16.5	0	4.76

Table 10 displays the average ratings by grade level. Results are also shown visually in Figures 11 (fifth grade) and 12 (eighth grade). As shown in Table 10, the SOPA ratings in 2011 were very similar to those obtained in 2004, and this is true of both grade levels and all four domains (oral fluency, grammar, vocabulary and listening comprehension). In fifth grade, students participating in the 2011 evaluation performed on average slightly higher in oral fluency than those participating in the 2004 evaluation but the opposite was true of their performance in the other three domains. A similar picture emerges in eighth grade with students in the most recent evaluation performing slightly higher in oral fluency and vocabulary than those involved in the previous evaluation and slightly lower in listening comprehension and grammar. These differences in average ratings between the two evaluation studies are negligible and overall average performances are extremely similar at both grade levels and in all four domains.

Table 10: Average SOPA ratings by grade and year

		Grade 5		Grade 8	
		2004 n=59	2011 n=96	2004 n=26	2011 n=40
Oral Fluency	Mean	6.58	6.65	7.27	7.67
	SD	1.73	0.96	1.15	0.97
Grammar	Mean	6.44	6.36	7.65	7.62
	SD	1.91	1.12	1.52	1.05
Vocabulary	Mean	6.39	6.21	7.38	7.57
	SD	1.82	1.05	1.24	1.01
Listening Comprehension	Mean	7.39	7.03	8.62	8.38
	SD	1.33	0.84	0.50	0.63

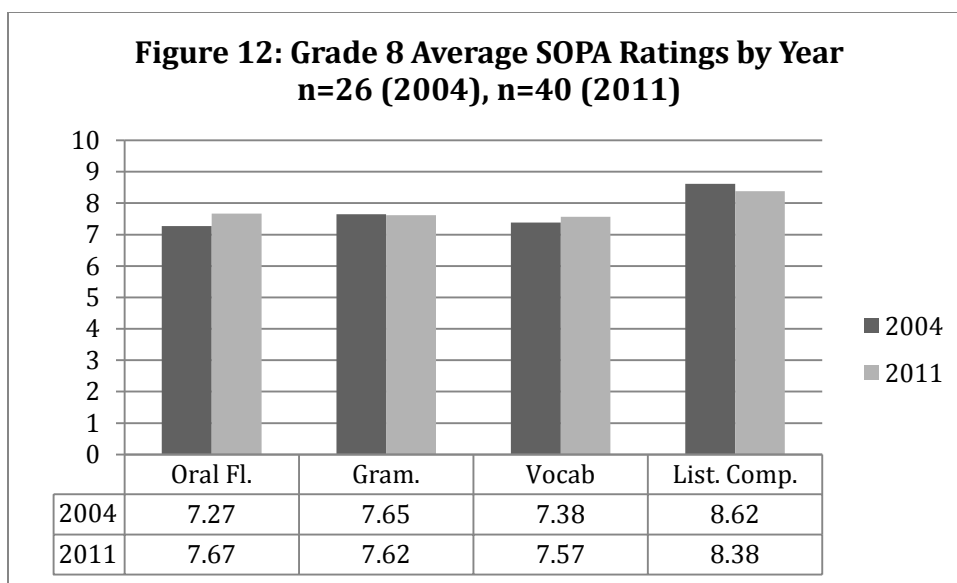
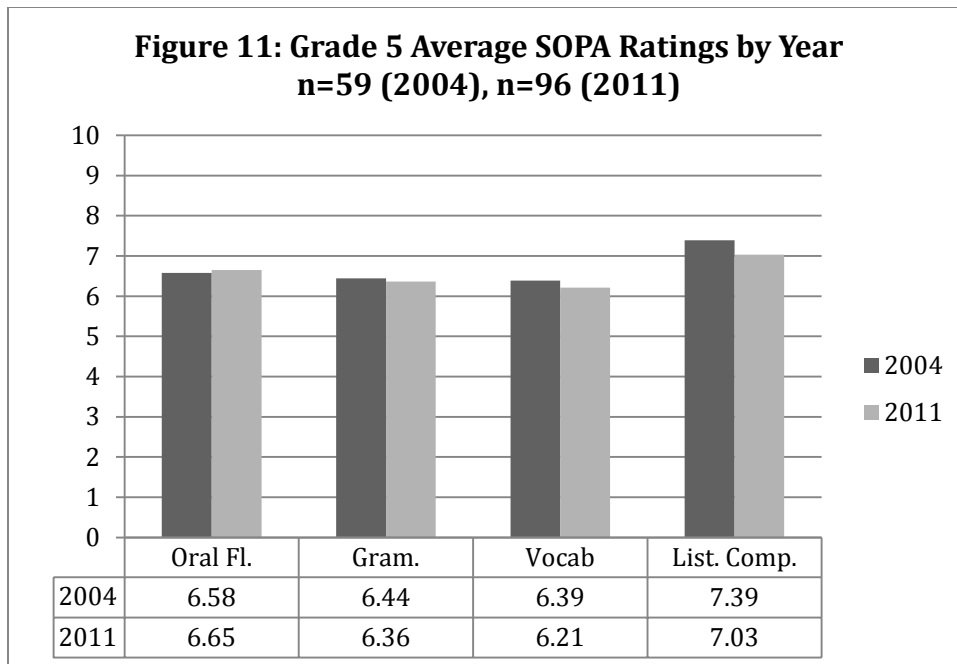


Table 11 displays the data by year and grade level disaggregated by native language. A visual display of these findings considering the two grade levels separately can be found in Figures 13 and 14. As shown in Figure 13, the fifth grade NES in the 2011 evaluation had slightly higher average ratings than the NES in the 2004 evaluation in all four domains, but the opposite was true of the NSS. A similar pattern emerges in the eighth grade NES data, i.e., slightly higher average ratings in 2011 than in 2004 with the exception of the listening comprehension component in which the opposite was true.

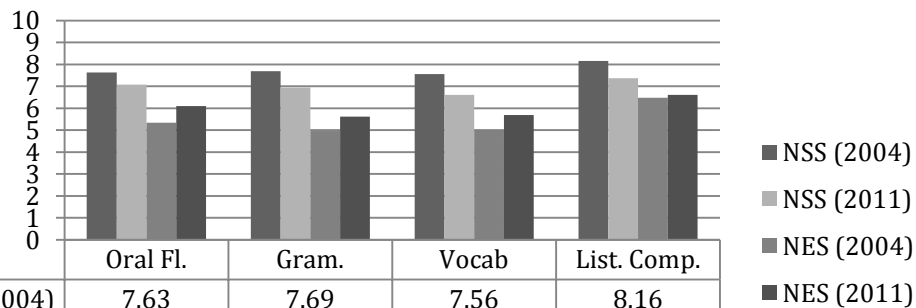
Finally, the average ratings of the eighth grade NSS at both points in time were extremely similar, slightly higher in oral fluency and vocabulary in the 2011 sample but slightly lower in grammar and listening comprehension than in the 2004 sample. Again, it is important to bear in mind that the fact that we are dealing with two different samples does not allow us to make statistical comparisons between them. However, the patterns observed in the two samples when examining the data by native language merit further discussion, and thus, will be taken up in the next section.

Table 11: Average SOPA ratings by language and year

		Grade 5				Grade 8			
		NSS		NES		NSS		NES	
		2004 n=32	2011 n=54	2004 n=27	2011 n=42	2004 n=17	2011 n=20	2004 n=9	2011 n=20
Oral Fluency	Mean	7.63	7.07	5.33	6.10	7.76	8.35	6.33	7.00
	SD	1.19	0.64	1.44	1.03	0.66	0.59	1.32	0.79
Grammar	Mean	7.69	6.94	4.96	5.62	8.47	8.35	6.11	6.90
	SD	1.31	0.76	1.40	1.06	0.72	0.59	1.45	0.91
Vocabulary	Mean	7.56	6.61	5.00	5.69	8.00	8.25	6.22	6.90
	SD	1.29	0.86	1.30	1.05	0.61	0.72	1.30	0.79
Listening Comprehension	Mean	8.16	7.37	6.48	6.60	8.82	8.75	8.22	8.00
	SD	1.05	0.62	1.01	0.89	0.39	0.44	0.44	0.56

Figure 13: Grade 5 Average SOPA Ratings by Language and Year

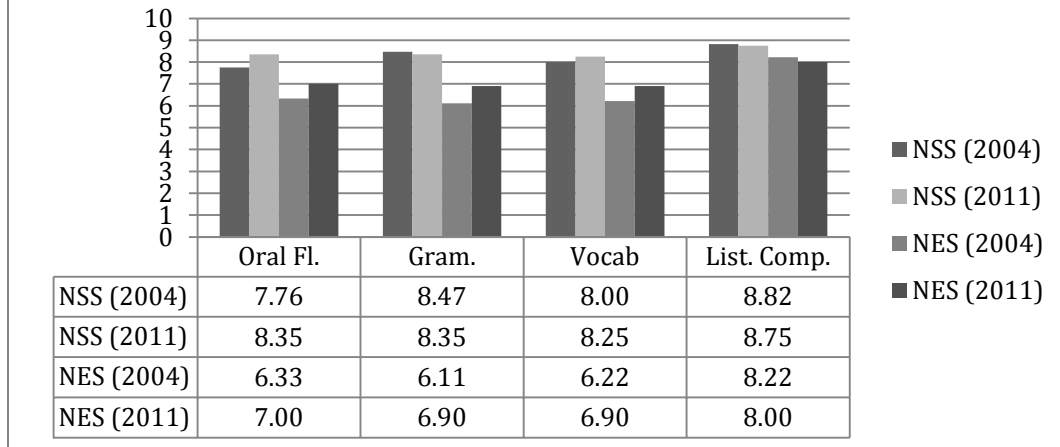
**n=32 (NSS 2004), n=54 (NSS 2011),
n=27 (NES 2004), n=42 (NES 2011)**



NSS (2004)	7.63	7.69	7.56	8.16
NSS (2011)	7.07	6.94	6.61	7.37
NES (2004)	5.33	4.96	5.00	6.48
NES (2011)	6.10	5.62	5.69	6.60

Figure 14: Grade 8 Average SOPA Ratings by Language and Year

**n=17 (NSS 2004), n=20 (NSS 2011),
n=9 (NES 2004), n=20 (NES 2011)**



IV. Discussion and Conclusions

This section will begin by briefly discussing the results of the 2011 Spanish SOPA interviews provided in section II and will then move on to interpreting those findings in light of the findings of the Spanish SOPA interviews conducted in 2004.

Overall, the results of the 2011 Spanish SOPA interviews conducted with fifth grade students are for the most part in line with the district’s expected performance outcomes (Junior Intermediate-Mid for the productive skills and Junior Intermediate-High for the receptive skill of listening comprehension). Virtually all NSS met or exceeded district expectations and the vast majority of NES did so as well. Listening comprehension and oral fluency were the two domains in which students obtained the highest ratings. Average grammar and vocabulary ratings were slightly lower, but still over 85% of the NES achieved at least the expected Junior Intermediate-Mid level. In eighth grade, district expectations were met or exceeded by all NSS, but the percentage of NES who did so was smaller than in fifth grade. Grammar and vocabulary were also the two domains where eighth grade students obtained the lowest ratings, with 75% of them reaching at least the Junior Advanced-Low level. This finding mirrors the trend found in other 50/50 two-way immersion programs in general, in which students (both NES and

NSS) demonstrate high levels of oral fluency and listening comprehension skills but their grammatical and vocabulary skills lag behind. However, this does not mean that an effort should not be made towards strengthening the grammar and vocabulary instruction in the APS immersion program at the upper elementary and middle. We commend the initiative that the district took in 2008 to start implementing a Spanish language arts curriculum daily for a 40-minute period at the elementary school level to complement the already existing math and science curricula. Such an effort should be supported and furthered in order to improve student outcomes.

As already mentioned, while statistical comparisons between the findings of the 2011 and 2004 administrations of the Spanish SOPA are not possible because the two samples are not drawn from the same population, it is useful to look for trends in both administrations and examine key similarities and differences. Overall, the findings of the 2011 Spanish SOPA interviews are rather similar to those of the 2004 interviews. On average, NSS scored significantly higher than NES across grade levels, and the two domains in which the highest ratings occurred were listening comprehension and oral fluency, with grammar and vocabulary being the domains in which the lowest ratings occurred. However, some differences can also be observed between the two cohorts. For example, the percentage of students who met or exceeded district expectations in 2011 was higher than that of 2004, and this was true across grade levels. This difference can be mainly attributable to the NES group, as the majority of NSS in both administrations met or exceeded APS proficiency guidelines for all four language domains. In other words, the average ratings for NES were higher in 2011 than in 2004, and thus, the gap between NSS and NES was larger in 2004 than in 2011. Another factor that seems to be contributing to narrowing the gap between NSS and NES in 2011, at least when it comes to fifth grade students, is the fact that the average ratings for NSS in fifth grade are lower in the most recent administration than in the previous one, even if they are still within the district's expected levels. Because these data are cross-sectional, it is not possible to know if this is indicative of a trend in the development of the immersion program or an idiosyncrasy of these two particular cohorts. What we do know, however, is that while the fact that a larger percentage of students met APS guidelines for Spanish oral language proficiency in the 2011 administration than in the previous one is certainly encouraging,

it is the immersion program's imperative to ensure that all students continue to develop their language skills as they continue their participation in the program.

To conclude, the Spanish oral proficiency data collected in 2011 indicate that the APS immersion program is doing a very good job of promoting oral language development in Spanish for both NSS and NES students. The fact that the performance gap between NES and NSS was not as large as it is often the case in two-way immersion programs (Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003) is indicative of greater-than-average success in promoting comparable performance for each of the two native language groups within the program. However, assuming that the goal is to have 100% of the students meet or exceed district expectations and that all students continue developing their language skills throughout their participation in the program, there is room for improvement. Specifically, while the vast majority of NSS students at both grade levels met or exceeded APS proficiency guidelines for all four language domains, the results for NES students were more mixed. In general, NES students demonstrated relatively strong listening and oral fluency skills, but their grammar and vocabulary skills were lagging behind. Given that grammar and, in particular, vocabulary were also the two domains in which NSS obtained the lowest ratings, and the two skills most closely related to literacy skills (i.e., reading and writing), it is recommended that steps are taken to strengthen these two areas in the immersion program at the upper elementary and middle school levels.

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APPENDIX A

CAL Oral Proficiency Assessment (COPA)

Arlington, Virginia Public Schools

Grade 5, Spanish Immersion Script

Warm up: *Using Spanish, greet the students and introduce yourselves. Tell them that you would like to speak with them and do some activities. Encourage them to say as much as they can in the target language and to ask questions if they don't understand.*

Ask the students their names and make nametags for them to wear. These tags will help you remember to address them by name during the interview.

Introducción: Hola me llamo Igone Arteagoitia. Y tú eres..., y tú... [Escribir sus nombres en la pegatina y pedirles que se las pongan]. Muchas gracias por venir. Su participación es muy importante, ya que estamos intentando averiguar cómo chicos de su edad aprenden a hablar en español. Hoy vamos a hacer unas actividades orales en español. Quiero que tengan la oportunidad de hablar todo lo que puedan, que se sientan cómodos, y si necesitan hacerme preguntas no duden hacerlo en cualquier momento. Les voy a pedir un favorcito, y es que hablen lo más claro posible para que se pueda oír bien en la cinta. ¿Tienen alguna pregunta?

Task 1: Preguntas informales.

Instructions: *The objective of Task 1 is to engage the students in conversation and see if they are capable of understanding and responding to a variety of questions with phrases or sentences. Keep your manner as natural as possible and rephrase or go on to a different question or topic if you do not get a response from the students. Do your best to engage students equally and to get them to respond with more than "yes" or "no." The questions below are possible topics of interest for the students. Note that the starting question in each category is the easiest and the additional questions are progressively more demanding and can be used as you sense that the student is capable of handling more complex questions.*

Intrucciones: Les voy a hacer unas preguntas sobre una serie de temas, y quiero que me contesten lo mejor que puedan.

1. Hablemos sobre tu familia. ¿Tienes hermanos o hermanas? ¿Cuántos hermanos tienes? ¿Son mayores o menores que tú? ¿Cómo son? ¿Qué les gusta hacer?

2. ¿Tienes una mascota/un animal doméstico en tu casa? ¿Qué tipo de animal es? ¿Cómo se llama? ¿Cómo es? [*If the students says, "no," ask:*] ¿Te gustaría tener un animal doméstico? ¿Qué clase de animal?
3. ¿Qué tipo de comida te gusta? ¿Cuál es tu restaurante favorito? Descríbelo.
4. ¿Qué materias estudias en las clases? ¿Cuál es tu materia/clase favorita? ¿Qué haces en esa clase? ¿Por qué es esa tu materia/clase favorita?

Transition to Task 2: *Thank the students for answering your questions and tell them that you are now going to do a different activity with them. Tell them you are going to show them some pictures and ask them to tell you about the pictures.*

Transición a la siguiente actividad: Muy bien. Lo han hecho muy bien. Ahora vamos a pasar a la siguiente actividad para la que les voy a enseñar un dibujo y les voy a hacer unas preguntas sobre el dibujo.

Task 2: Comparar las capas de la tierra con las capas de un durazno

Instructions: *The objective of Task 2 is to give students the opportunity to speak on an academic topic, using descriptive language. Show the students the picture of the earth's layers and of a peach cut in half and have them take turns describing the different parts of each diagram. Tell them that you would also like them to describe the similarities and differences between the layers of the earth and the layers of a peach. Encourage the students to say as much as they can. The following questions may be used to prompt the students if they are hesitant in responding.*

Instrucciones: [Muéstreles el dibujo de las capas de la tierra y el durazno cortado por la mitad y pídale que describan las distintas capas y las diferencias/similitudes entre los dos].

Han estado estudiando sobre la estructura de la tierra este año, ¿verdad? Me pueden decir:

¿Cuántas y cuáles son las capas de la tierra? ¿Cómo son estas capas?

¿Me pueden decir de qué manera el interior de la tierra afecta la superficie de la tierra?

Aquí tengo una foto de las placas tectónicas de la tierra.
¿Qué son las placas tectónicas? ¿Qué hacen las placas tectónicas? Me puedes decir por qué es importante que entendamos el funcionamiento de las placas tectónicas?

Vamos a hablar de los volcanes. Aquí hay una foto. ¿Me pueden describir lo que ven en esta foto?

¿Pueden explicar por qué hay volcanes? ¿Por qué hacen erupción o cuándo hacen erupción? ¿Qué puede suceder cuando un volcán hace erupción? ¿Cómo puede afectar a los seres humanos la actividad volcánica?

¿Qué puede suceder cuando un volcán hace erupción dentro del agua....arriba de la superficie? ¿Hay una diferencia?

¿Qué harías si en tu ciudad hubiera una alerta de erupción de un volcán? ¿Conoces alguna ciudad que haya sido afectada por un volcán o por un movimiento telúrico (temblor o terremoto?)

¿Me puedes describir un experimento o un modelo que hayan hecho en clase para entender el tema de la tierra o los volcanes?

Transition to Task 3: *Thank the students for their description and introduce the story.*

Transición a la siguiente actividad: Muy bien. Lo han hecho muy bien. Vamos a pasar a la siguiente actividad.

Task 3: Narración de un cuento: Ricitos de oro y los tres ositos.

Instructions: *The objective of Task 3 is to give more proficient students an opportunity to narrate in past tense and produce paragraph-level speech. Give the students the book,*

Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Encourage the use of past tense by asking them to tell what happened in the story. Tell them to imagine that they are telling the story to their little sister or brother so they should use a lot of *of* expression when telling the story! Have the students take turns telling the story. **Remember that the purpose of this task is to find out if students can produce paragraph-level speech. It is important to allow them to produce as much language as they can on their own.** If they do not initiate a response on their own, prompt them with questions. The following or similar questions may be used.

Instrucciones: Para la siguiente actividad les voy a pedir que me cuenten un cuento que estoy segura que ya conocen COMO SI SE LO ESTUVIERAN CONTANDO A UN NIÑO/A PEQUEÑO/A. [Enseñarles la primera página].

To introduce the story

¿Sabes cómo se llama el cuento? ¿Recuerdan el título?

¿Quiénes son estos? (*point to the three bears and Goldilocks*)

¿Dónde viven? (*point to the house*)

If you suspect that the students can speak in sentences or paragraphs, immediately give them the opportunity to do so. Use past tense in your question.

¿Qué pasó aquí en esta página?

If students cannot get started on their own, or the interviewer has miscalculated the students' ability, ask some questions (easy or more difficult depending on ability). If this task is clearly beyond the students' ability, let them answer a couple of questions successfully and go on to the wind down.

¿Quién vino/entró a la casa? (*point to Goldilocks*)

¿Sabes qué son éstas y de quiénes son? (*point to papa, mama, and baby bear's chairs*)

¿Qué hizo ella aquí? (*point to Goldilocks eating the porridge*)

¿Qué hizo Ricitos de oro? ¿De quién es esa cama? (*point to Goldilocks in baby bear's bed*).

¿Qué hicieron los osos cuando la encontraron allí?

¿Cómo se sintieron los osos? ¿Cómo lo sabes? ¿Cómo se sentía el osito?

¿Qué hizo ella aquí? (*point to her running away*)

For more proficient students: *Additional questions you might ask:*

¿Qué crees que será lo primero que haga Ricitos de oro cuando entre en la casa? ¿Cómo te sentirías tú al entrar en una casa desconocida?

¿Cómo se sintieron los osos cuando encontraron el desorden en la casa? ¿Cómo lo sabes? ¿Qué hubieras hecho tú si fueras el papá oso o la mamá osa?

¿Cuándo Ricitos de oro se escapó, cómo crees que se sentía? ¿Por qué?

Transition to Task 4: *When the students have finished narrating the story, tell them that you are going to play one more game or if they had great difficulty telling the story, omit Task 4 and go directly to the **Wind down**.*

Transición a la siguiente actividad: Muy bien. Hacía mucho tiempo que no oía ese cuento. Muchas gracias por contármelo. Ahora vamos a pasar a la última actividad. [Si han realizado la actividad con mucha dificultad, no es necesario hacer la siguiente actividad].

Task 4: Defender una postura.

Instructions: *The objective of Task 4 is to give the students an opportunity to express an opinion and give reasons to support it, using a more formal manner of speech to persuade.*

Give a context for the role play situation by explaining to the students that the school staff are considering some new rules for the next school year. The principal, Mr./Ms. X, has announced these rules and would like students to express their opinions about them. Tell the students to choose EACH one of the rules listed below and to tell you (the principal) respectfully why they think it is a good rule or a bad rule. They should offer supporting reasons that explain what they think would/wouldn't happen if the rule were adopted.

Instrucciones: Imagínense la siguiente situación. La escuela está considerando una serie de reglas nuevas para el año que viene. La directora quiere saber cuál es la opinión de los

estudiantes de la escuela al respecto. Quiero que se imaginen que yo soy la directora, y que elijan CADA UNO una de las tres reglas siguientes:

1. Todos los estudiantes deben llevar uniforme.
2. Todos los estudiantes deben asistir a la escuela todos los sábados.
3. Todos los estudiantes deben participar en un deporte de equipo.

Quiero que me digan por qué creen que es una buena/mala regla, y que me den todas las razones que se les ocurran al respecto (POR LO MENOS DOS), y que piensen en las consecuencias o repercusiones que la puesta en práctica de una regla así podría traer consigo, es decir ¿qué ocurriría si la regla se pusiera en práctica?

En el supuesto caso de que se decidiera poner en práctica dicha regla, ¿cuál creen que debería ser el castigo si alguien no cumpliera la regla? ¿Por qué?

Wind down: *Be sure that the last question you ask the students is one they can respond to successfully. The goal is for them to feel comfortable throughout the interview, especially at the end. Thank the students for their fine participation and offer them a sticker or other object for a reward.*

Cierre: Muy bien. Lo han hecho muy bien. Muchas gracias por todo. Aquí tienen una cosita en agradecimiento por su colaboración en este proyecto. [Hacer un par de preguntas sencillas/informales]. Por ejemplo: ¿Qué clase tienen ahora? ¿en inglés o en español?

CAL Oral Proficiency Assessment (COPA)
Arlington, Virginia Public Schools
Grade 8, Spanish Immersion Script

Warm up: *Using Spanish, greet the students and introduce yourselves. Tell them that you would like to speak with them and do some activities. Encourage them to say as much as they can in Spanish and to ask questions if they don't understand.*

Ask the students their names and make nametags for them to wear. These tags will help you remember to address them by name during the interview.

Introducción: Hola me llamo Igone Arteagoitia. Y tú eres...., y tú.... [Escribir sus nombres en la pegatina y pedirles que se las pongan]. Muchas gracias por venir. Su participación es muy importante, ya que estamos intentando averiguar cómo chicos de su edad aprenden a hablar en español. Hoy vamos a hacer unas actividades orales en español. Quiero que tengan la oportunidad de hablar todo lo que puedan, que se sientan cómodos, y si necesitan hacerme preguntas no duden hacerlo en cualquier momento. Les voy a pedir un favorcito, y es que hablen lo más claro posible para que se pueda oír bien en la cinta. ¿Tienen alguna pregunta?

Task 1: Preguntas Informales

Instructions: *The objective of Task 1 is to engage the students in conversation and see if they can understand and respond to a variety of questions, including some academic topics, using phrases and sentences in their responses. The questions below are possible topics of interest for the students. Note that the starting question in each category is the easiest and the additional questions are progressively more demanding and can be used as you sense that the student is capable of handling more complex questions. Keep your manner as natural as possible and rephrase or go on to a different question or topic if you do not get a response from the students. Do your best to engage students equally and to elicit responses beyond "yes," "no," and other single-word utterances.*

Instrucciones: Les voy a hacer unas preguntas sobre una serie de temas, y quiero que me contesten lo mejor que puedan.

5. Hablemos sobre tu familia. ¿Tienes hermanos o hermanas? ¿Cuántos hermanos tienes? ¿Son mayores o menores que tú? ¿Cómo son? ¿Qué les gusta hacer?
6. ¿Cuál es tu pasatiempo favorito? ¿Qué es lo que te gusta de ese pasatiempo? ¿Por qué?

7. ¿Cuál es tu actividad preferida durante el día escolar?
¿Qué te gusta hacer?
8. ¿Qué hacen en la clase de ciencias? ¿Me puedes describir algún proyecto o experimento que has hecho este año para esa clase?

Transition to Task 2: *Thank the students for answering your questions and tell them that you are now going to do a different activity with them. Tell them that they are going to do a role-play involving an American student and a student from a Spanish speaking country.*

Transición a la siguiente actividad: Muy bien. Lo han hecho muy bien. Ahora vamos a pasar a la siguiente actividad para la que les voy a enseñar un dibujo y les voy a hacer unas preguntas sobre el dibujo.

Task 2: Los Tipos de Energía

Instructions: *The objective of Task 2 is to give students the opportunity to speak on an academic topic, using descriptive language. Show the students the picture(s) and have them describe what they see. Encourage the students to say as much as they can. The following questions may be used to prompt the students if they are hesitant in responding.*

A. Dibujo de objetos usando diferentes tipos de energía

Instrucciones: [Muéstrelas la página con dibujos y pídale que describan lo que ven].

Task (page #1)

¿Qué ven en esta foto/dibujo? ¿Saben qué es la energía?
¿Cuántos tipos de energía conocen? ¿Cuál creen que es el tipo de energía que más usamos...y por qué? ¿Qué creen que ocurriría si esa energía se agotará?

Task (page #2)

¿Pueden explicar este dibujo? ¿Me podrían explicar de qué se trata? ¿Cuál es la diferencia entre convección y conducción?

¿Me puedes describir algún experimento sobre la energía que hayan hecho en clase recientemente? ¿Qué cosas usaron en su experimento? ¿Cómo lo hicieron? ¿Cómo registraron/organizaron los datos (tablas, gráficos, etc.)? ¿Qué ocurrió? ¿Te sorprendió? ¿Se te ocurre algún otro experimento que se podría hacer?

Task 2 (Page #3)

¿Pueden explicar este dibujo? ¿Me podrían explicar qué tipos de energía ven?

B. Dibujo de la batería y el bombillo (Page #4)

Instrucciones: [Muéstreles el dibujo y pídales que le describan lo que ven].

¿Qué ocurre en esta foto/dibujo?

¿De dónde sale la energía (luz)?

¿Me podrías explicar cómo es que funciona el bombillo?

¿Me puedes describir algún experimento que hayan hecho en clase? ¿Cómo lo hicieron? ¿Cómo registraron/organizaron los datos (tablas, gráficos, etc.)? ¿Qué ocurrió? ¿Te sorprendió? ¿Se te ocurre algún otro experimento que se podría hacer?

C. Dibujo de la Tabla de Elementos Químicos/Atomo

Instrucciones: [Muéstreles el dibujo y pídales que le describan lo que ven].

¿Qué ves en este dibujo?

¿Me puedes nombrar alguno de los elementos/sus partes (átomo)? ¿Cómo es? ¿Cuáles son sus propiedades? ¿En

¿qué forma se encuentra generalmente? ¿Para qué se usa?

¿Me puedes describir algún experimento que hayan hecho en clase? ¿Cómo lo hicieron? ¿Cómo registraron/organizaron los datos (tablas, gráficos, etc.)? ¿Qué ocurrió? ¿Te sorprendió? ¿Se te ocurre algún otro experimento que se podría hacer?

Transition to Task 3: *Thank the students for their dialogue and introduce the story.*

Transición a la siguiente actividad: Muy bien. Lo han hecho muy bien. Vamos a pasar a la siguiente actividad.

Task 3: Narración de un Cuento: Ricitos de oro y los tres ositos

Instructions: *The objective of Task 3 is to give more proficient students an opportunity to narrate in past time and produce paragraph-level speech. Give the students the book, **Goldilocks and the Three Bears**. Encourage the use of past tense by asking them to tell what happened in the story. Tell them to imagine that they are telling the story to their little sister or brother so they should use a lot of expression! Have the students take turns telling the story. **Remember that the purpose of this task is to find out if students can produce paragraph-level speech. It is important to allow them to produce as much language as they can on their own. If they do not initiate a response on their own, prompt them with the following or similar questions.***

Instrucciones: Para la siguiente actividad les voy a pedir que me cuenten un cuento que estoy segura que ya conocen COMO SI SE LO ESTUVIERAN CONTANDO A UN NIÑO/A PEQUEÑO/A. [Enseñarles la primera página].

To introduce the story

¿Sabes cómo se llama el cuento? ¿Recuerdan el título?

¿Quiénes son estos? (*point to the three bears and Goldilocks*)

¿Dónde viven? (*point to the house*)

If you suspect that the students can speak in sentences or paragraphs, immediately give them the opportunity to do so. Use past tense in your question.

¿Qué pasó aquí en esta página?

If students cannot get started on their own, or the interviewer has miscalculated the students' ability, ask some questions (easy or more difficult depending on ability). If this task is clearly beyond the students' ability, let them answer a couple of questions successfully and go on to the wind down.

¿Quién vino/entró a la casa? (*point to Goldilocks*)

¿Sabes qué son éstas y de quiénes son? (*point to papa, mama, and baby bear's chairs*)

¿Qué hizo ella aquí? (*point to Goldilocks eating the porridge*)

¿Qué hizo Ricitos de Oro? ¿De quién es esa cama? (*point to Goldilocks in baby bear's bed*).

¿Qué hicieron los osos cuando la encontraron allí?

¿Cómo se sintieron los osos? ¿Cómo lo sabes? ¿Cómo se sentía el osito?

¿Qué hizo ella aquí? (*point to her running away*)

For more proficient students: *Additional questions you might ask:*

¿Qué crees que será lo primero que haga Ricitos de oro cuando entre en la casa? ¿Cómo te sentirías tú al entrar en una casa desconocida?

¿Cómo se sintieron los osos cuando encontraron el desorden en la casa? ¿Cómo lo sabes? ¿Qué hubieras hecho tú si fueras el papá oso o la mamá osa?

¿Cuándo Ricitos de Oro se escapó, cómo crees que se sentía ella? ¿Por qué?

Transition to Task 4: *When the students have finished narrating the story, tell them that you are going to play one more game or if they had great difficulty telling the story, omit Task 4 and go directly to the **Wind down**.*

Transición a la siguiente actividad: Muy bien. Hacía mucho tiempo que no oía ese cuento. Muchas gracias por contármelo. Ahora vamos a pasar a la última actividad. [Si han realizado la actividad con mucha dificultad, no es necesario hacer la siguiente actividad].

Task 4: Defender una postura - Hablar con el/la director(a) de la escuela

Instructions: *The objective of Task 4 is to give the students an opportunity to express an opinion and give reasons to support it, using a more formal manner of speech to persuade.*

Give a context for the role play situation by explaining to the students that the school staff are considering some new rules for the next school year. The principal, Mr./Ms. X, has announced these rules and would like students to express their opinions about them. Tell the students to choose EACH one of the rules listed below and to tell you (the principal) respectfully why they think it is a good rule or a bad rule. They should offer supporting reasons that explain what they think would/wouldn't happen if the rule were adopted.

Instrucciones: Imagínense la siguiente situación. La escuela está considerando una serie de reglas nuevas para el año que viene. La directora quiere saber cuál es la opinión de los estudiantes de la escuela al respecto. Quiero que se imaginen que yo soy la directora, y que elijan una de las tres reglas siguientes CADA UNO:

4. No se debe llevar teléfono celular/móvil a la escuela.
5. Todos los estudiantes deben asistir a la escuela todos los sábados.
6. Todos los estudiantes deben participar en un deporte de equipo.

Hay dos partes en esta actividad:

A: Quiero que elijan una regla cada uno y que hablen entre ustedes en ESPAÑOL durante unos minutos sobre las razones por las que es una buena/mala regla, como si estuvieran planeando qué van a decirle a la directora.

B: Quiero que me digan a mi LA DIRECTORA por qué creen que es una buena/mala regla, y que me den todas las razones que se les ocurran al respecto (POR LO MENOS DOS), y que piensen en las consecuencias o repercusiones que la puesta en práctica de una regla así podría traer consigo (es decir ¿qué ocurriría si la regla se pusiera en práctica?), y también por qué creen que la directora está considerando estas reglas.

En el supuesto caso de que se decidiera poner en práctica dicha regla, ¿cuál creen que debería ser el castigo si alguien no cumpliera la regla? ¿Por qué?

Wind down: *Be sure to ask one or two simple questions that the students can respond to successfully to end the interview on a positive note. Thank the students for their participation and offer them a small reward.*

Cierre: Muy bien. Lo han hecho muy bien. Muchas gracias por todo. Aquí tienen una cosita en agradecimiento por su colaboración en este proyecto. [Hacer un par de preguntas sencillas/informales]. Por ejemplo: ¿Qué clase tienen ahora? ¿en inglés o en español?

APPENDIX B

RATING SCALE FOR CAL ORAL PROFICIENCY EXAM (COPE) AND STUDENT ORAL PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT (SOPA)

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JR. NOVICE-LOW	JR. NOVICE-MID	JR. NOVICE-HIGH	JR. INTERMEDIATE-LOW	JR. INTERMEDIATE-MID
Oral Fluency				
-Produces only isolated words and/or high-frequency expressions such as <i>good morning</i> and <i>thank you</i> . -Has essentially no functional communicative ability.	-Uses a limited number of isolated words, two- to three-word phrases, and/or longer memorized expressions within predictable topic areas. -May attempt to create sentences, but is not successful. Long pauses are common.	-Uses high frequency expressions and other memorized expressions with reasonable ease. -Signs of originality are beginning to emerge. -Creates some sentences successfully, but is unable to sustain sentence-level speech.	-Goes beyond memorized expressions to maintain simple conversations at the sentence level by creating with the language, although in a restrictive and reactive manner. -Handles a limited number of everyday social and academic interactions.	-Maintains simple sentence-level conversations. May initiate talk spontaneously without relying on questions or prompts. -Gives simple descriptions successfully. -May attempt longer, more complex sentences. Few, if any, connectors are used.
Grammar (Speaking)				
-May use memorized, high frequency phrases accurately. -Lacks an awareness of grammar and syntax.	-Memorized expressions with verbs and other short phrases may be accurate, but inaccuracies are not uncommon. -Does not successfully create at the sentence level with conjugated verbs.	-Creates some sentences with conjugated verbs, but in other attempts to create sentences, verbs may be lacking or unconjugated. -Other grammatical inaccuracies are present.	-Verbs are conjugated in present tense, but may be inaccurate. -Many other grammatical inaccuracies are common.	-Uses mostly present tense verbs although awareness of other tenses (i.e., future or past) may be evident. -Many grammatical inaccuracies may be present.
Vocabulary (Speaking)				
-Uses words in very specific topic areas in predictable contexts. -May use a few memorized, high frequency expressions.	-Uses specific words in a limited number of topic areas, high-frequency expressions, and other memorized expressions. -Frequent searches for words are common. May use native language or gestures when attempting to create with language.	-Uses vocabulary centering on basic objects, places, and common kinship terms, adequate for minimally elaborating utterances in predictable topic areas. -Use of native language is common.	-Has basic vocabulary for making statements and asking questions to satisfy basic social and academic needs, but not for explaining or elaborating on them. -Use of some native language is common.	-Has basic vocabulary, permitting discussions of a personal nature and limited academic topics. Serious gaps exist for discussing topics of general interest. -If speaker lacks precise word, use of circumlocution may be ineffective. May resort to native language.
Listening Comprehension				
-Recognizes isolated words and high frequency expressions.	-Understands predictable questions, statements, and commands in familiar topic areas (with strong contextual support), though at slower than normal rate of speech and/or with repetitions.	-Understands simple questions, statements, and commands in familiar topic areas, and some new sentences with strong contextual support. May require repetition, slower speech, or rephrasing.	-Understands familiar and new sentence-level questions and commands in a limited number of content areas with strong contextual support. -Follows conversation at a fairly normal rate.	-Understands sentence-level speech in new contexts at a normal rate of speech although slow-downs may be necessary for unfamiliar topics. -Carries out commands without prompting.

Scale based on the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines*, Revised 1999

**RATING SCALE FOR CAL ORAL PROFICIENCY EXAM (COPE) AND
STUDENT ORAL PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT (SOPA)**

(CONTINUED)

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JR. INTERMEDIATE-HIGH	JR. ADVANCED-LOW	Jr. Advanced-Mid	JR. ADVANCED-HIGH
Oral Fluency			
-Maintains conversation with increasing fluency. Uses language creatively to initiate and sustain talk. -Emerging evidence of paragraph-like speech with some connected sentences in descriptions and simple narratives, but cannot sustain paragraph-level speech.	-Reports facts easily. Can discuss topics of personal interest and some academic topics to satisfy the requirements of school and every day situations. -Narrates and describes at the paragraph level, though haltingly at times. -False starts are common.	-Handles with ease and confidence concrete topics of personal and general interest and some academic topics. -Narrates and describes successfully. -Connects sentences smoothly, and organizes speech into paragraphs using connectors such as <i>first, next, finally</i> , etc.	-Handles most social and academic requirements confidently, but may break down under the demands of complex, formal tasks. -Organizes and extends speech beyond paragraph. -Emerging ability to support opinions and hypothesize on abstract topics is evident.
Grammar (Speaking)			
-Uses present tense well, but lacks control of the past tenses. May use future tense. -Many grammatical inaccuracies may be present. Some awareness of these inaccuracies may be evident.	-Uses present, past, and future tenses. -May effectively self-correct when aware of grammatical inaccuracies. -Structures of native language may be evident (e.g., literal translation).	-Has good control of present, past, and future tenses. -Some inaccuracies may remain, but speech is readily understood by native speakers of the language. *In some cases, may use non-standard varieties of grammar.	-Uses all verb tenses accurately and sometimes uses increasingly complex grammatical structures. -Some patterns of error may persist, but they do not interfere with communication.
Vocabulary (Speaking)			
-Has a broad enough vocabulary for discussing simple social and academic topics in generalities, but lacks detail. -Sometimes achieves successful circumlocution when precise word is lacking. May use native language occasionally.	-Vocabulary is primarily generic but is adequate for discussing concrete or factual topics of a personal nature, topics of general interest, and academic subjects. -May use circumlocution successfully when specific terms are lacking.	-Has adequate vocabulary for including detail when talking about concrete or factual topics of a personal nature, topics of general interest, and academic subjects. -Uses circumlocution effectively. Rarely uses native language.	-Uses precise vocabulary for discussing a wide variety of topics related to everyday social and academic situations. -Lack of vocabulary rarely interrupts the flow of speech.
Listening Comprehension			
-Understands longer stretches of connected speech on a number of topics at a normal rate of speech. -Seldom has comprehension problems on everyday topics. (Can request clarification verbally.)	-Understands main ideas and many details in connected speech on some academic topics and on topics of personal interest.	-Understands main ideas and most details in connected speech on a variety of topics, but may be unable to follow complicated speech. -May have difficulty with highly idiomatic speech.	-Understands complex academic discourse and highly idiomatic speech in conversation. -Confusion may occur due to sociocultural nuances or unfamiliar topics.

* This feature may not appear, but if present in student speech, is acceptable at the Advanced-Mid level of proficiency.

Scale based on the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines*, Revised 1999

APPENDIX C

Description of SOPA Levels Represented in the Data

Junior Novice-High

Language learners at the Junior Novice-High level can use high frequency expressions and other memorized expressions with reasonable ease. They can also create some sentences successfully, but they are unable to sustain sentence-level speech. These sentences sometimes have conjugated verbs but in other attempts verbs may be lacking or are not conjugated and other grammatical inaccuracies are usually present. The vocabulary used by Junior Novice-High speakers centers on basic objects and places and the use of the native language is still common. At the Junior Novice-High level of listening comprehension, students understand simple questions, statements and commands in familiar topic areas, and some new sentences with strong contextual support. Students at this level may require repetition, slower speech, or rephrasing.

Junior Intermediate-Low

Language learners who speak at the JIL level create simple sentences to converse about some everyday and academic topics, although in a restrictive manner. They are understood by native speakers of the language who are accustomed to listening to learners of their language. JIL speakers use mostly conjugated present tense verbs and their speech includes many grammatical inaccuracies.

Spanish learners at the JIL level frequently make mistakes in subject/verb agreement (e.g., *tiene mascotas* for *tengo mascotas*) and in article/noun/adjective agreement (e.g., *la viento* for *el viento*). Their vocabulary is generally adequate for basic social and academic needs but not for explaining or adding detail. They may often resort to their native language when they lack the vocabulary and structures to continue explaining or describing in the language they are learning.

Students at the JIL level for listening comprehension understand sentence-level speech in a limited number of content areas with strong contextual support and follow conversation at a fairly normal rate of speech.

Junior Intermediate-Mid

Students at the JIM level maintain simple sentence-level conversation and give simple descriptions successfully. JIM level learners may offer information without

prompting. They may attempt longer, more complex sentences but with little connection. The use mostly present tense but may show awareness of other verb tenses. Vocabulary at the JIM level permits discussion of personal and limited academic topics, but the speaker may resort to native language when lacking vocabulary.

JIM speech contains many grammatical inaccuracies. Spanish learners at the JIM level frequently make mistakes in subject/verb agreement (e.g., *las plantas produce* for *las plantas producen*) and in pronoun agreement (e.g., *hace tu comida* for *hace su comida*).

Students at the JIM level of listening comprehension understand sentence-level speech in new contexts at a normal rate of speech. Slow-downs may be necessary for unfamiliar topics.

Junior Intermediate-High

JIH speakers maintain conversation with increasing fluency. They also are beginning to connect sentences into paragraph-like chunks, but cannot sustain paragraph-level speech in descriptions and simple narratives. Learners at the JIH level use some future and past tenses, but in Spanish they lack control over the preterite and imperfect. Vocabulary at this level is broad enough for discussing simple social and academic topics in generalities but not in detail. JIH speakers may achieve successful circumlocution if precise vocabulary is lacking, and they occasionally use native language.

Language learners at the JIH level understand stretches of connected speech on a number of topics at a normal rate of speech. They seldom have comprehension problems on everyday topics and can request clarification verbally if they do not understand.

Junior Advanced-Low

JAL speakers report facts easily and can discuss topics of personal interest and academic topics to satisfy the requirements of school and everyday situations. They can narrate and describe at the paragraph level in present past and future, though sometimes haltingly. False starts are common. Vocabulary is adequate for discussing concrete and factual topics.

At the JAL level of listening comprehension, language learners understand main ideas and many details in connected speech on both academic topics and those of personal interest.

Junior Advanced-Mid

Language learners at the JAM level have good control of present, past, and future tenses. Some inaccuracies may be present, but their speech is readily understood by native speakers of the language. JAM speakers handle with ease and confidence concrete topics of personal and general interest and some academic topics. They can narrate and describe successfully, connecting sentences smoothly and organizing their speech into paragraphs.

At the JAM level of listening comprehension students understand main ideas and most details in connected speech on a variety of topics. They may have difficulty with highly idiomatic speech.

Junior Advanced-High

At the JAH level, speakers can handle most social and academic requirements confidently, but may break down under the demands of complex formal tasks. They organize and extend speech beyond the paragraph level and there is an emerging ability to support opinions and hypothesize on abstract topics. They use all verb tenses accurately with increasingly complex grammatical structures. Vocabulary is precise for discussing a wide variety of everyday and academic topics.

Language learners at the JAH level understand complex academic discourse and highly idiomatic speech in conversation. Confusion seldom occurs but it may occur due to socio-cultural nuances or unfamiliar topics.

Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools (FLES)
Program Evaluation Report
January, 2011

Executive Summary

This report addresses preliminary outcomes for the Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools (FLES) Program. Students in the FLES Program learn Spanish by focusing on the functional oral communication aspect of the language. Students develop vocabulary and structures that allow them to communicate about themselves, their world and their needs. The FLES preliminary evaluation report will be presented to the School Board on January 20, 2011. These results will be included in the World Languages program evaluation presented during the 2011-12 school year.

The results presented in this report are organized according to the 2010-11 FLES Decision Matrix adopted by the School Board on Thursday, December 15, 2010 (Attachment 1). The Decision Matrix categorizes outcomes into four focus areas and standards including:

- **Alignment** - Aligns with APS Strategic Plan and School Board Vision, Mission, and Priorities (student success and achievement and elimination of gaps).
- **Efficacy of Implementation** - Meets FLES program goals of novice-mid to novice-high levelsⁱ upon completion of a K-5 sequence for student language proficiency as detailed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).
- **Accountability** - Meets APS policy requirements for teacher planning time and planning factors (staffing).
- **Potential Long-Term Benefits for Students** - Meets established ACTFL National Standards for World Language Learning, thereby affording students with strong access to future participation and success in world languages at the secondary level and for college and career readiness.

Summary of Findings

1. Research on participation in world languages and FLES programs, as well as strategic plan indicators that monitor participation of APS students (PreKindergarten through Grade 12) in world language programs indicate that FLES aligns with the Strategic Plan and School Board Vision, Mission, and Priorities.
2. Proficiency assessments focused on Grade 5 students at Glebe and Henry, the first two schools to implement FLES (Year 1 Implementation schools). At the time of testing, this group was in its fourth year of FLES, and the proficiency outcomes were adjusted to reflect their four years in a six year program. Students' proficiency was expected to be within the Novice-Low to Novice-Mid range for listening, speaking and reading comprehension. Students exceeded proficiency expectations in all three skills.
 - Student proficiency in listening and responding in Spanish was assessed on the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA). SOPA was given to a random sample of about half the students who participated in FLES for four continuous years (n=40). One third of the students met expectations with oral proficiency rated Novice-Mid, and two thirds exceeded expectations with ratings ranging from Novice-High to Advanced-Low.

- Reading proficiency was assessed on the National Online Early Learning Language Assessment (NOELLA). NOELLA was given to 108 grade 5 students, which included 25 students who entered the FLES program after grade 2. Fifty-five percent of the students met expectations, with ratings of Novice-Low to Novice-Mid, and 45% exceeded expectations with rating that range from Novice-High to Intermediate-Low.
 - On both assessments, many of the students with four years of FLES exceeded the expectations for students with six years in the program.
3. Students in FLES exceed proficiency expectations on the ACTFL standard for communication. The program model and description provide a strong foundation to build on all five ACTFL standards through their emphasis on building an understanding and appreciation for the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries. The curriculum promotes making connections with other subjects and making comparisons across languages. While conclusions cannot be drawn at this time due to limited cohort longevity, expectations are that this solid foundation for language learning will lead to continued enrollment in language proficiency programs in secondary school.
 4. An analysis of longitudinal assessment results in reading, math, history and science suggest some positive outcomes on student performance, particularly for Title I schools. While these results are not part of the FLES decision matrix, the longitudinal study suggests some additional program benefits.
 5. Though teacher planning time was not assessed as part of this evaluation, staff has been monitoring planning time to ensure requirements are met per Policy and the corresponding Policy Implementation Procedures 35-8.3 *Contracts and Work Schedules*. This will be addressed further through the program evaluation of World Languages that is currently underway.

Recommendations

1. Continue to monitor student proficiency levels for speaking, listening and reading and in future years determine if the expectations need to be raised.
2. Establish expectations for enrollment in world languages classes after FLES, and develop monitoring reports to determine participation by various groups as established by strategic plan indicators (i.e.: race, ethnicity, economically disadvantaged, students identified with a disability or English language proficiency status, etc.)
3. Continue monitoring longitudinal student outcomes on non-language assessments to see if there are consistent long term benefits from participation in FLES.

Evaluation of the Foreign Language in Elementary School Program

Section I. FLES Description

Students in the FLES Program learn Spanish by focusing on the functional oral communication aspect of the language. Students develop vocabulary and structures that allow them to communicate about themselves, their world and their needs. FLES teachers incorporate a variety of strategies that are appropriate for students' age and learning styles. Some of the teaching activities in the FLES classroom may include singing, reciting poems, performing skits, etc. The main focus of the program is on developing listening and speaking skills, but reading and writing instruction are also incorporated as students develop more proficiency in Spanish.

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) identifies twelve "Characteristics of Effective Elementary School Foreign Language Programs."ⁱⁱ The characteristics were used by APS to design the FLES program. Some key program components are defined below, and a more detailed description is attached (Attachment 2).

FLES Program Goals: Upon completing the K-5 sequence of Spanish, FLES students will develop oral proficiency in the range of Novice-Mid to Novice-High in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

A second goal of the program is to provide a foundation for Spanish language proficiency that leads to continued study in middle and high school. This foundation supports the School Board's value of ensuring that APS students are proficient in at least two languages upon graduation. Students who begin a study of languages at early grades are more likely to reach higher levels of language proficiency. Table 1 reflects the current articulation and proficiency expectations between programs and grade levels and the proposed FLES articulation to secondary levels.

Table 1: Modern World Languages Articulation Chart

Elementary School Program (E)		Middle School Program (M)			High School Program (H)				ACTFL Targeted Outcomes
					Gr. 9 Level 1 Nov. Mid (ACTFL)	Gr. 10 Level 2 Nov. Mid-High (ACTFL)	Gr. 11 Level 3 Nov. High-Intermediate. Low (ACTFL)	Gr. 12 Level 4 Intermediate Low-Mid (ACTFL)	Novice High (ACTFL)
		Gr. 6 Exploratory (wheel) Not proficiency-oriented	Gr. 7 Level 1 Novice Mid (ACTFL)	Gr. 8 Level 2 Novice Mid-High (ACTFL) *Gr. 8 Level TBD Jr. Int. Mid-High(CAL)	Gr. 9 Level 3 Novice High-Intermediate Low(ACTFL)	Gr. 10 Level 4 Intermediate Low-Mid (ACTFL)	Gr. 11 Level 5 Intermediate Mid-High(ACTFL)	Gr. 12 Level 6 Intermediate Mid-High (ACTFL)	Int. Low-Mid (ACTFL)
Gr. K-2 Jr. Novice Low(CAL)	Gr. 3-5¹ Jr. Novice Mid-High (CAL)	*Gr. 6 Semester Jr. Novice Mid-High. (CAL)			*Gr. 9 Level TBD Intermediate Low(ACTFL)	*Gr. 10 Level TBD Intermediate Mid(ACTFL)	*Gr. 11 Level-TBD AP Lang. Intermediate High (ACTFL)	*Gr. 12 Level- TBD AP Lit Intermediate High-Pre Advanced	Int. Mid.-High (ACTFL)

Secondary proficiency ratings based on American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), 1999

*** Projected proficiency levels for students completing the K-5 FLES program.**

¹ Elementary proficiency ratings are based on Center for Applied Linguistics COPE and SOPA Junior Proficiency Scale, 2003. This scale is developed on the proficiency guidelines established by ACTFL (1986, 1999).

Intended Recipients and Expectations: All students attending FLES schools participate in the program. In some cases exceptions are made for

- students whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) specifies otherwise, and
- a few beginning English language learners whose first language is not Spanish.

After completing the K-5 sequence, students will:

- Understand short, simple phrases, sentences and directions.
- Engage in simple conversations about familiar topics.
- Speak and write in short sentences.
- Read and understand brief texts on familiar material when supported by visual cues.
- Recombine sentences for creative writing.
- Follow a clear progression into the secondary world language program.

Program Attributes: FLES instruction follows the APS curriculum framework and is delivered utilizing best practices in second language acquisition with the goal of developing functional language use. The focus is on developing:

- listening and speaking skills in Spanish
- cross-cultural awareness and understanding
- making cross-curricular connections
- learning grammar in meaningful contexts

Program Design:

- Students receive from 120 to 135 minutes of instruction weekly.
- Teachers must hold a Virginia teaching license in Spanish as Foreign Language (Spanish PreK-12).
- The curriculum is aligned with national and state standards for Foreign Language instruction.
- The curriculum is developmentally appropriate.

Instruction is differentiated in content and process for students who are native speakers of Spanish. This means native speakers study the same themes as their non Spanish-speaking classmates, but the activities planned for them provide enrichment and acceleration that targets their proficiency in Spanish. Second language students, whose native language is other than Spanish, participate successfully in the FLES Program as well. Anecdotally, in many cases, these students develop Spanish proficiency more quickly than do some native English speakers.

The FLES curriculum in Arlington also provides opportunities for making connections between Spanish and other subjects. For example, students in Kindergarten practice math skills by counting by 2's and by 10's or by making a bar graph of the students' favorite colors. This allows the students to learn specific vocabulary (colors, in this case) in an authentic context (talking about what they like) while at the same time practicing an important math skill at their grade level (making and reading bar graphs).

Time for FLES instruction is made available through the elimination of Wednesday afternoon Early Release. The redistribution of this Early Release time throughout the week is used for instructional time and for individual and team planning time for teachers.

The FLES program will be a pilot until the full six-year implementation has been accomplished in at least one school. The “pilot” designation is in recognition that full implementation at any one elementary school is a six-year process. While FLES is implemented K-5 when a school becomes a FLES school, the instructional sequence of study is not fully articulated until those students who entered FLES as Kindergarteners complete Grade 5. The pilot designation also allows staff to gather a robust body of evaluation data from which to make annual adjustments that will likely be needed as full implementation is realized.

Section II. Evaluation Findings by FLES Decision Matrix Standards

Focus Area: Alignment

Standard - *Aligns with APS Strategic Plan and School Board Vision, Mission, and Priorities (student success and achievement and elimination of gaps)*

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) states, “Foreign language instruction is an important part of Virginia’s efforts to provide challenging educational programs in its public schools and to prepare students to compete in global society. Knowledge and skills that students acquire in foreign language classes reinforce and expand learning in other subject areas.”

“School divisions are encouraged to offer foreign language instruction beginning in the elementary grades.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The 2005-11 APS Strategic Plan includes a goal to “prepare each student to succeed in a diverse, changing world through instruction and other school experiences responsive to each student’s talents, interests, and challenges.”^{iv}

The strategic plan also includes two goals that aim to:

- Ensure rising achievement for all students on standardized tests and other measures of performance that go beyond state and federal standards (goal 1).
- Eliminate gaps in achievement among identified groups (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners) (goal 2).

Four strategic plan objectives under the two strategic plan goals directly address student participation in world languages.

The first pair of objectives aims to increase the proportion of students taking challenging courses with a similar goal that seeks to eliminate the gap among student groups taking challenging courses. Annual progress on the objectives is measured by a number of indicators including:

- The percentage of students completing level 3 of a world language by the end of Grade 10.
- The gap in percentage of students completing level 3 of a world language by the end of Grade 10.

The second pair of objectives is directed towards increasing student participation in educational opportunities that develop their cultural knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity, across all students (Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12), while decreasing the gap among student groups on the same objective. Annual progress on these objectives is measured by a number of indicators including:

- The percentage of Grade 6-12 students participating in world language classes at various levels.
- The gap in percentage of Grade 6-12 students in identified groups participating in world language classes at various levels.

The School Board’s vision states, “Arlington Public Schools is a diverse and inclusive school community, with a focus on academic excellence and integrity. Instruction is provided in a caring and healthy learning environment, responsive to each student, in collaboration with

families and the community.” The School Board’s mission states, “Arlington Public Schools instills a love of learning in its students and prepares them to be successful global citizens.”

And the FLES decision matrix states the School Board’s values regarding APS World Languages as: “*All APS students should be proficient in at least two languages upon graduation and should have access to world language proficiency programs regardless of school of attendance.*”

Research on the Benefits of Elementary Foreign Language

Research suggests that young language learners develop a more positive attitude toward the target language and/or the speakers of that language.^{viivii}

Research studies of FLES programs indicate:

- There is a direct correlation between the amount of time devoted to language study and the language proficiency that the students attain.^{viii} FLES students were found to have significantly better performance in listening, speaking, and writing when compared to non-FLES students at the end of an intermediate-level high school class.^{ix} Together these studies suggest that students with sustained foreign language instruction during elementary school are more likely to develop a high level of proficiency in a foreign language when compared with students who do not have elementary foreign language instruction.
- Students develop an increased understanding of their own language through second language study. For students participating in such programs, grammar and vocabulary can be enhanced in students’ native language.^x
- Studying a foreign language in elementary school enhances students’ cognitive development and increases the ability to engage in higher order thinking skills.^{xi}

Inferring Alignment

The APS strategic plan and the School Board’s vision and mission, support world language experience K-12 as evidenced by:

- The strategic plan goal to “prepare each student to succeed in a diverse, changing world.”
- The strategic plan indicators that aim for all students to complete level 3 of a world language by the end of grade 10, and that no gaps exist among student groups.
- The strategic plan indicators that aim for all students to participate in world language classes at various levels, and that there will be no gaps among student groups.
- The mission that states “APS instills a love of learning in its students and prepares them to be successful global citizens.”

The program description notes that FLES in Arlington has the characteristics of an effective elementary school world language program based on nationally recognized characteristics of effective elementary world language programs (ACTFL). VDOE states that “foreign language instruction is an important part of Virginia’s efforts to provide challenging educational programs in its public schools and to prepare students to compete in global society.”

Research shows that students who participate in elementary foreign language study and FLES programs are gaining skills that are necessary to succeed in a diverse and changing world, such

as the ability to communicate in another language and the ability to function in multicultural settings. Students in the APS FLES program build a foundation for Spanish language proficiency and develop an understanding of the Spanish culture and Spanish-speaking countries.

Research indicates that FLES students are more likely to develop a high level of proficiency in a foreign language. This aligns to the strategic plan goal of higher levels of participation and higher achievement in language study. Over time, participation in FLES should result in more students completing level 3 of a world language by the end of Grade 10, and progress towards eliminating the corresponding gaps that exist among student groups.

The current plan for implementing FLES is helping APS make progress towards opportunities for all students at various levels participating in world language classes, but currently this is limited to the seven elementary schools that have world language as a part of the curriculum for all students. Thirteen elementary schools do not have a language proficiency program, which suggests a disconnect between the strategic plan and implementation of elementary world language programs.

Summary: Alignment

SB Standard	Standard for this Study	Outcome
<i>FLES aligns with APS Strategic Plan (student success and achievement and elimination of gaps)</i>	The strategic plan includes a goal to “prepare each student to succeed in a diverse, changing world.”	Students in FLES build a foundation for Spanish language proficiency and develop an understanding of the Spanish culture and Spanish-speaking countries.
	The strategic plan includes two indicators that aim for all students to complete level 3 of a world language by the end of grade 10, and that no gaps exist among student groups.	Over time, participation in FLES should result in more students completing level 3 of a world language by the end of grade 10, and progress towards eliminating the corresponding gaps that exist among student groups.
	The strategic plan includes two indicators that aim for all students to participate in world language classes at various levels, and that there will be no gaps among student groups	Thirteen of 22 elementary schools do not have a program which suggests a disconnect between the strategic plan and implementation of elementary world language programs.
<i>FLES aligns with School Board Vision, Mission, and Priorities (student success and achievement and elimination of gaps)</i>	FLES aligns with School Board Vision, Mission, and Priorities	Students in FLES build a foundation for Spanish language proficiency and develop an understanding of the Spanish culture and Spanish speaking countries.

Focus Area: Efficacy of Implementation

Standard - Meets K-5 FLES program goals of novice mid- to novice high levels^{xii} for student language proficiency as detailed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

Following the ACTFL standards, the FLES Program has set an oral proficiency goal of Novice-Mid to Novice-High on the ACTFL scale for students who complete an uninterrupted sequence of study from Kindergarten to Grade 5. During the 2009-10 school year APS evaluated Spanish oral and reading proficiency among students who had participated in the program the longest. These Grade 5 students, at Year 1 Implementation schools, started FLES in Grade 2 during the 2006-07 school year. Because this cohort had not participated in FLES since Kindergarten, APS developed an interim goal for proficiency for students who had participated in FLES for just four years. The expectation for these students is that they develop *Spanish language proficiency in the range of novice-low to novice-mid in listening, speaking, reading, and writing* (see Table 2).

Table 2. FLES Program Expectations based on ACTFL Proficiency Levels (by years in program)

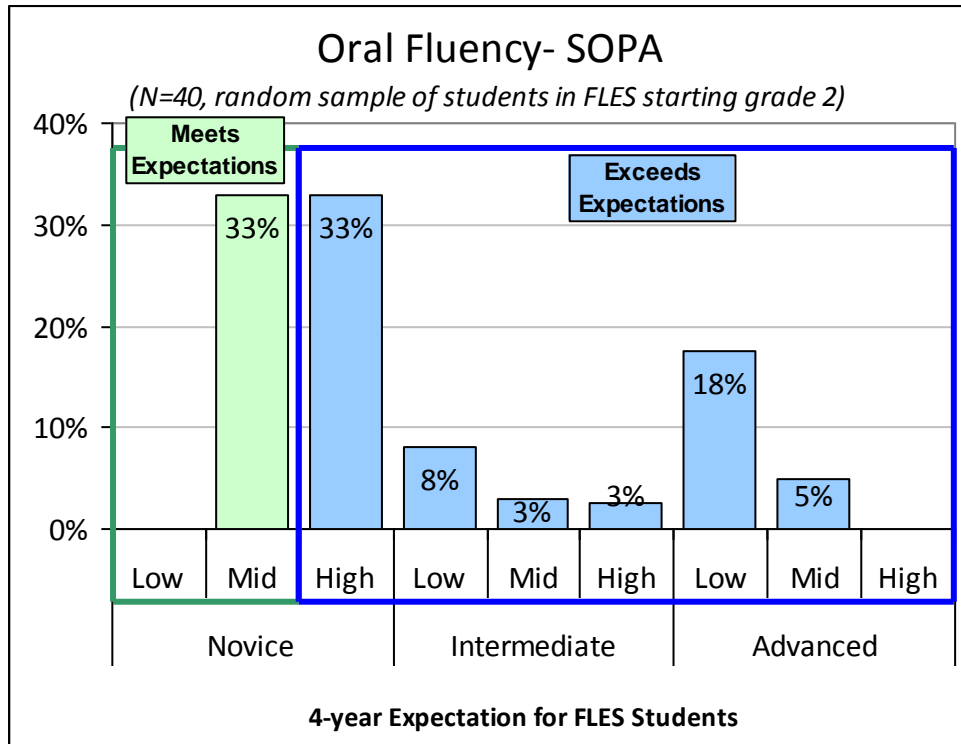
ACTFL Proficiency Levels		FLES Expectations	
Level	Description	4 years	6 years
Advanced	Junior Advanced-High	Exceeds	Exceeds
	Junior Advanced-Low		
	Junior Advanced-Mid		
Intermediate	Junior Intermediate-High		
	Junior Intermediate-Mid		
	Junior Intermediate-Low		
Novice	Junior Novice-High	Meets	Meets
	Junior Novice-Mid		
	Junior Novice-Low		<i>Does Not Meet</i>

Student Outcomes: Spanish Oral (Speaking and Listening) Proficiency

In June 2010, APS contracted with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) to assess the speaking and listening proficiency of a random sample of 40 students in the FLES Year 1 Implementation schools. Students were assessed using the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA). The SOPA consists of an interview involving two assessors and two students at a time, and includes a series of tasks that follows the natural development of language skills. Tasks include identifying objects, answering informal questions, describing a scene or sequence, telling a story, and supporting an opinion. A summary of the results is reported in Attachment 3, and the full report is included in Attachment 6.

CAL administered the SOPA to 30 non-native Spanish speakers at Year 1 Implementation schools. The average SOPA ratings for these students fell between junior novice-mid and junior novice-high for speaking and listening comprehension, exceeding expectations for students who had participated in FLES for four years. In fact, these results are more in line with expectations for students who had participated in the program for more than four years (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Oral Fluency on the SOPA Compared to 4-Year (Adjusted) FLES Expectations, N=40 (random sample of students enrolled in FLES schools continuously for 4 years).



CAL also administered the SOPA to 10 native speakers of Spanish at both schools. Of these students, nine received ratings at the junior advanced level, seven at junior advanced-low and two at junior advanced-mid. The program does not have standards specifically for native speakers of Spanish.

Student Outcomes: Spanish Reading Proficiency

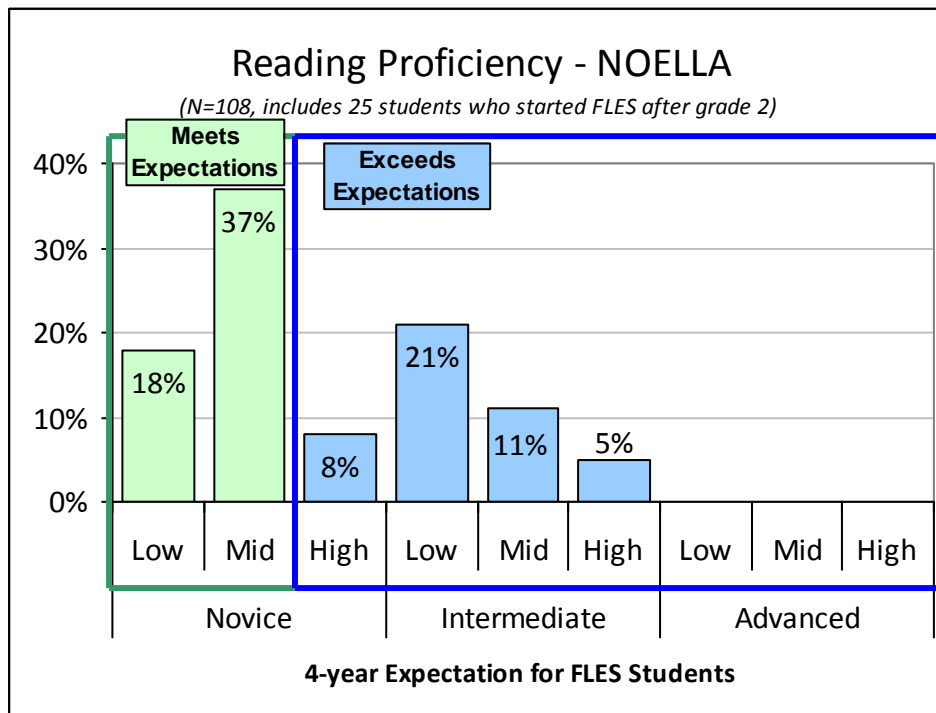
In May and June 2010, 108 Grade 5 FLES students at the Year 1 Implementation schools took the reading section of the National Online Early Language Learning Assessment (NOELLA), an adaptive Spanish language proficiency test developed by the Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) and designed for students in Grades 3 through 6. The NOELLA was in its final year of its piloting stage and was available free of charge to Arlington Public Schools. Researchers at the hosting institution, the University of Oregon, provided APS with national data to compare the performance of our students with that of students who participated in the pilot across the United States. The NOELLA pilot has been administered to students in different kinds of early language programs, including FLES and Immersion.

Among the group of 108 APS students tested on the NOELLA, 25 entered the FLES program after grade 2 (23%). The 25 students were not eligible for the SOPA assessment, which required them to participate in FLES over the four years; however, their results are included in the NOELLA. After processing the results, CASLS provided district level results. Individual student results were not immediately available, so we can not determine how the scores of the 25

students affected results on the NOELLA. The expectation is that those students perform at the Novice-Low proficiency level.

Eighteen percent of the 108 students tested scored at Novice-Low, less than the 23% expected based on the number of students who entered FLES after grade 2. Forty-five percent scored at the Novice-Mid (level 2) or Novice-High (level 3) levels, and 37% scored at higher levels, exceeding APS expectations for students who had participated in FLES for four years. Figure 2 shows results and a detailed summary is reported in Attachment 4.

Figure 2. Reading Proficiency on the NOELLA Compared to 4-Year (Adjusted) FLES Expectations, N=108 (includes 25 students who started FLES after grade 2).



APS was one of 10 districts that participated in the NOELLA pilot assessment of grade 5 students. CASLS provided APS with district-level results for 355 students at the other districts. Planning and Evaluation reviewed the websites for the comparison schools to better understand the results, and found the group included two charter schools, one private school and six public schools. The comparison districts represent a range of exposure to language programs with

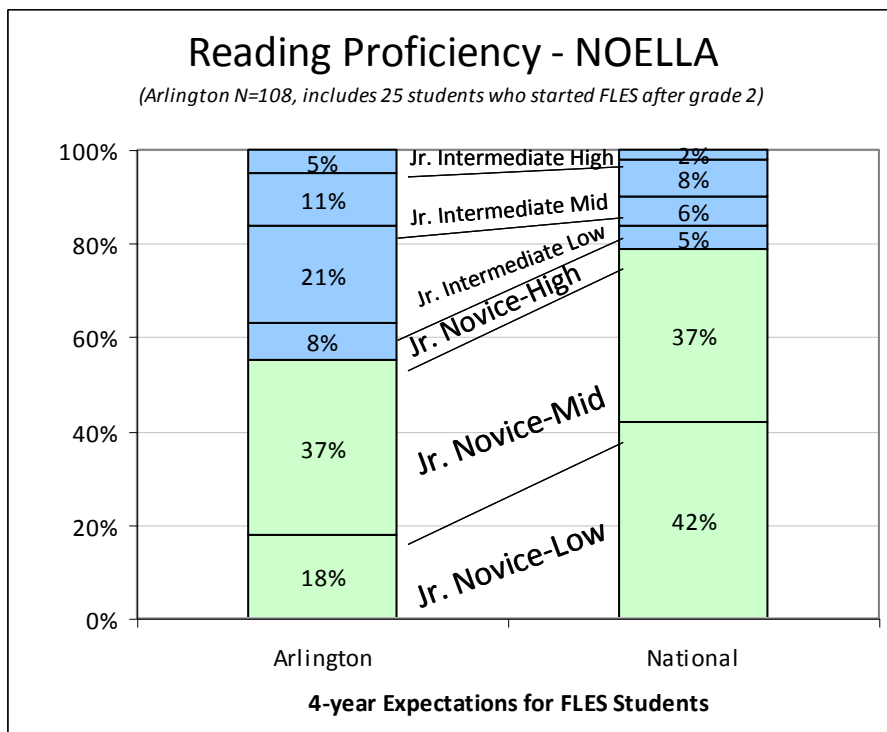
- 2 immersion programs,
- 2 programs offering K-5 Spanish, but the format for instruction was not clear,
- One International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program²,

²International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program schools must provide instruction in the learning of a language other than the principal language of instruction of the school from the age of at least seven.

- One program stating that Spanish is provided for K-12 students as a core content subject, and
- One providing Spanish in an after school program.
- No information was available for two of the comparison schools.

Since the comparison schools vary in approach to language instruction the following information needs to be interpreted with caution. Forty-two percent of the students in the other districts scored at level 1 compared to 18% of APS students. At the high end, 21% of students in the other districts scored at levels 3-6, while 45% of APS students scored at those levels. The results suggest that Arlington’s FLES program is effective at building student proficiency in reading.

Figure 3. Reading Proficiency on the NOELLA Compared to Schools Across U.S. Using 4-Year (Adjusted) FLES Expectations, APS N=108 (includes 25 students who started FLES after grade 2).



Student Outcomes: Spanish Writing Proficiency
 Writing was not assessed in this evaluation.

Summary: Efficacy of Implementation

SB Standard	Standard for this Study	Outcome
<i>Spanish Oral Proficiency: Meets FLES program goals of novice mid- to novice high levels^{xiii}</i>	Spanish language proficiency in the range of novice-low to novice-mid in listening, speaking and speaking (after 4 years of instruction)	Average ratings exceeded the standard and fell between junior novice-mid and junior novice-high for speaking and listening comprehension.
<i>Spanish Reading Proficiency: Meets FLES program goals of novice mid- to novice high levels^{xiv}</i>	Spanish language proficiency in the range of novice-low to novice-mid in reading (after 4 years of instruction)	Forty-five percent of 5 th grade students scored at the junior novice-mid (level 2) or junior novice-high (level 3) levels, and 37% scored at higher levels, exceeding expectations.
<i>Spanish Writing Proficiency Meets FLES program goals of novice mid- to novice high levels^{xv}</i>	Spanish language proficiency in the range of novice-low to novice-mid in reading (after 4 years of instruction)	Not assessed

Focus Area: Accountability

Standard - Meets APS policy requirements for teacher planning time and planning factors (staffing)

While teacher planning time was not collected for this study, it has been monitored by staff throughout the implementation. For example, from the original program inception changes were made in response to teacher feedback. This informed changes to Policy Implementation Procedures 35.8.1 *Contracts and Work Schedules*. This will be studied further in the World Languages evaluation report (Winter/Spring 2012).

Summary: Accountability

SB Standard	Standard for this Study	Outcome
<i>Meets APS policy requirements for teacher planning time and planning factors (staffing)</i>	At least 360 minutes of teacher planning time each week	Not assessed as part of the study. Program monitoring indicates that the standard is met with many teachers receiving up to 450 minutes of planning time each week.

Focus Area Potential Long-Term Benefits for Students

Standard - *Meets established ACTFL National Standards for World Language Learning, thereby affording students with strong access to future participation and success in world languages at the secondary level and for college and career readiness*

The ACTFL Standards for World Language Learning is based on the philosophy that, “Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which all students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. Children who come to school from non-English backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language.”

For this evaluation data was collected on the communication standard. The tables below identify how the FLES program is designed to support the ACTFL standards, and results are presented for the communication standards.

Communicate - Communicate in Languages Other Than English

The FLES program description states that students learn Spanish by focusing on the functional aspect of the language. Students develop vocabulary and structures that allow them to communicate about themselves, their world and their needs. The main focus of the program is on developing listening and speaking skills, but reading and writing instruction are also incorporated as students develop more proficiency in Spanish.

ACTFL Standard

Standard 1.1: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions
Standard 1.2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics
Standard 1.3: Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

FLES

- On average the students at Year 1 implementation schools who tested for oral communication (listening and speaking) schools exceeded program expectations. The SOPA assessment includes a series of tasks that follows the natural development of language skills, identifying objects, answering informal questions, describing a scene or sequence, telling a story, and supporting an opinion.
- On average the students at the Year 1 implementation schools who tested for reading exceeded program expectations.

Cultures - Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

The FLES program description defines the program attributes that focus on developing skills that include cross-cultural awareness and understanding

ACTFL Standard

Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied

Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

Connections - Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

The description of the FLES program describes opportunities for making connections between Spanish and other subjects. For example, students in Kindergarten practice math skills by counting by 2's and by 10's or by making a bar graph of the students' favorite colors. This allows the students to learn specific vocabulary (colors, in this case) in an authentic context (talking about what they like) while at the same time practicing an important math skill at their grade level (making and reading bar graphs).

ACTFL Standard

Standard 3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language

Standard 3.2: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures

Comparisons - Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

The FLES program description defines the program attributes that focus on listening and speaking skills in Spanish, and learning grammar in meaningful contexts.

ACTFL Standard

Standard 4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own

Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Communities - Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World

The FLES program description does not address the ACTFL standard for communities.

ACTFL Standard

Standard 5.1: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting

Standard 5.2: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Summary: Potential Long-Term Benefits for Students

SB Standard
Meets established ACTFL National Standards for World Language Learning, thereby affording students with strong access to future participation and success in world languages at the secondary level and for college and career readiness

Standard for this Study
Program is built around ACTFL standards and establishes a foundation for continuing study.

Outcome
Proficiency outcomes demonstrating students exceeding expectations indicate that students participating in the program gain a strong foundation in language learning. While conclusions cannot be drawn at this time, expectations are that this foundation will lead to continued enrollment in language proficiency programs.

Section III. Other Considerations

Not Addressed by the FLES Decision Matrix Focus Areas and Standards

In addition to the standards referring to language proficiency outcomes and alignment, APS monitors achievement in all academic areas in all schools as well as instructional time and teacher planning time.

Results: Other Academic Outcomes

In Fall 2010, the Hanover Research Council examined the ongoing performance of several cohorts of students who had participated in FLES for two, three, or four years and compared their performance to similar cohorts of students who had not participated in FLES. APS provided a longitudinal data set comprised of 1,059 grade 5 students (2009-10) who were continuously enrolled in APS over the 4 years that FLES was in place. Performance measures included a variety of assessments conducted between Grades 2 and 5: SOLs, DRP, and Stanford 10. A summary of the four studies is reported in Attachment 5 and the detailed reports are included in Attachment 6.

Hanover found evidence that the FLES program is impacting academic success in a number of areas. Table 3 identifies student participation in FLES as having substantial academic benefit on some SOL assessments across grades 3 through 5 compared to schools without a FLES program, based on significant findings from regression analysis of student assessment outcomes over four years.

Table 3. Hanover Longitudinal Studies Found Significant Evidence that FLES-Enrolled Students Derive Academic Benefit Compared to Non-FLES Comparison Students on SOL Assessments as Noted by ✓.

FLES Implementation Year	FLES Cohort	Comparison Schools	FLES Grades Assessed	SOL			
				Reading	Math	History	Science
2006-07	Title 1	Non-FLES Title 1	3		✓	✓	
			4				No test
			5			No test	
	Non-Title 1	Non-FLES	3				
			4				No test
			5			No test	
2007-08	Title 1	Non-FLES Title 1	4				No test
			5	✓		No test	✓
2008-09	Non-Title 1	Non-FLES	5			No test	✓

Hanover found evidence that the FLES program is impacting academic success in Title I schools, as evidenced by significantly higher scores on various assessments across grade levels and subject areas as compared to students in other Title I schools. However, the results did not necessarily suggest consistent academic benefits in any one subject area in particular.

Results for non-Title I schools were less consistent. Hanover found significant academic benefits of the FLES program for some non-Title I schools in comparison to schools that had not implemented FLES. In an examination of one non-Title I school, however, Hanover found no evidence that the FLES cohort derived substantial academic benefits from FLES, and instead found FLES enrollment to be associated with a lower score on most tests when compared to students countywide. One exception to this pattern was gifted students in the FLES cohort, who tended to perform at higher levels than their counterparts in the non-FLES cohort. Since this finding was at just one school, monitoring of performance in other academic areas will continue.

While these results are not part of the FLES decision matrix, the longitudinal study suggests some additional program benefits.

Recommendations

The recommendations below respond to the results presented in this report and where possible will be addressed in the World Language program evaluation.

1. Continue to monitor student proficiency levels for speaking, listening and reading and over time decide if the expectations need to be set higher.
2. Establish expectations for enrollment in world languages after FLES, and develop monitoring reports to monitor participation. Disaggregate results by race, Hispanic origin, etc.
3. Continue monitoring longitudinal student outcomes on non-language assessments to see if there are consistent long term benefits from participation in FLES.

Attachments

1. Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) Decision Matrix – 2010-2011
2. Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) Program Description
3. Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) Spanish SOPA Results
4. Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) Spanish Noella Reading Results
5. Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) Hanover Longitudinal Study of Impact on Other Academic Areas
6. Center for Applied Linguistics report on Student Oral Proficiency at FLES Schools (Glebe & Henry)
7. Hanover Research Council's Longitudinal Analyses of Other Academic Results

ⁱ Proficiency levels are aligned to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

ⁱⁱ American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), Characteristics of Effective Elementary School Foreign Language Programs, <http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3655>, December 17, 2010.

ⁱⁱⁱ Virginia Department of Education, Instruction: Foreign Language, http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/foreign_language/index.shtm, December 17, 2010.

^{iv} The 2005-11 APS Strategic Plan.

^v Bamford, K. W., & Mizokawa, D. T. (1989). Cognitive and attitudinal outcomes of an additive-bilingual program. U.S.; Washington: ED305826.

^{vi} Peal, E., & Lambert, W. E. (1962). The relation of bilingualism to intelligence. *Psychological Monographs*, 76(27, Whole No. 546), 23. from PsycINFO database.

^{vii} Riestra, M. A., & Johnson, C. E. (1964). Changes in attitudes of elementary-school pupils toward foreign-speaking pupils resulting from the study of a foreign language. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 33(1), 65-72. from PsycINFO database.

^{viii} Curtain, H. A. & Pesola, C. A. (1988) "Languages and children--Making the match." Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

^{ix} Vocolo, J.M. (1967). The effects of foreign language study in the elementary school upon achievement in the same foreign language in the high school. "Modern Language Journal, 51," 463-469.

^x Nespor, H.M. (1971). "The effect of foreign language learning on expressive productivity in native oral language." (p. 682). DA, 31 (02-A) University of California, Berkeley.

^{xi} Foster, K.M., & Reeves, C.K. (1989). FLES improves cognitive skills. "FLES News, 2"(3), 4.

^{xii} Proficiency levels are aligned to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

^{xiii} Proficiency levels are aligned to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

^{xiv} Proficiency levels are aligned to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

^{xv} Proficiency levels are aligned to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).