MEMORANDUM

July 19, 2018

TO:

Education Committee

FROM:

Craig Howard, Senior Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT:

Update - MCPS Dual Language Program

PURPOSE:

Receive update from MCPS staff, no action required.

The Education Committee will receive an update from Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) representatives on its dual language two-way immersion program. After a brief discussion of dual language programs as part of the Committee's November 27, 2017 update on the MCPS Choice Study¹, Council Vice-President Navarro requested a separate, more in-depth update on this topic. During worksessions on MCPS's FY19 budget, the Committee recommended scheduling this update during the summer timeframe.

MCPS staff will provide a presentation on the dual language program, followed by Committee questions and discussion. As part of the worksession, MCPS staff has been asked to address the following topics:

- MCPS' plan for future dual language two-way immersion program roll-out;
- Data on the effects of the program at MCPS schools;
- Information on how outreach is conducted to families at each of the schools with a dual language program;
- Feedback from staff at schools with the two-way immersion model about the impact of the program on instruction; and
- Information on related-types of programs, such as the academic language pilot program at Highland Elementary School.

Background

Dual language programs refer to academic programs where students are taught literacy and contact in two languages. MCPS' website describes the dual language two-way immersion program as follows:

¹ http://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=169&clip_id=14118&meta_id=146262

"Two-Way Immersion is an educational model in which students develop high levels of speaking, reading, writing, and listening in English and in Spanish (or another non-English language). Teachers deliver the same academic content and standards (MCPS Curriculum) as traditional classroom teachers, while providing instruction in two languages. Ideally Two-Way Immersion classes are comprised of a fairly equal balance of native English-speaking students and native Spanish-speaking students. Native speakers of each language serve as fluent peer models of the language. The students receive lessons from two teachers; one providing academic instruction in English, and the other providing academic instruction in Spanish. Teachers are native or near-native speakers of the target language."²

The research literature shows multiple positive benefits for students that participate in dual language two-way immersion programs, including:

- Cognitive benefits from being bilingual and biliterate;
- Improved academic performance for both native English speakers and non-native English speakers;
- Reductions in the academic achievement gap; and
- Enhancing cultural competency of students.

MCPS' website (listed on the footnote at the bottom on the page) includes links to several research studies on dual language programs.

Current MCPS Dual Language Two-Way Immersion Program

The FY19 MCPS budget that was requested by the Board of Education and approved by the Council included \$282,121 to expand the two-way immersion program to two additional schools. The program was in place at Kemp Mill, Brown Station, and Washington Grove elementary schools in FY18, and will be implemented in Oakland Terrace and Rolling Terrace elementary schools in FY19. The table below briefly describes the program status for each school. The two-way immersion program is open to students enrolled at these schools, and is not part of the lottery for MCPS's other World Language Immersion programs.

In addition to the details described in the table below, as part of the two-way immersion program MCPS notes that teachers and staff will receive "ongoing, intensive support, resources, and recommendations from experts. This includes a partnership with the Center for Applied Linguistics, which provides continuous professional development, conducts site visits, and shares feedback on strengths and growth areas for instructional delivery."

 $^{^2\ \}underline{\text{http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms/elementary/two-way-immersion.aspx}}$

School	Program Status		
	• In the 2017-18 school year, the two-way immersion model was fully implemented for all kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms. For 2nd-5th grade classrooms there was a mix; most classrooms participated in two-way immersion while others offered English instruction only.		
Kemp Mill Elementary School	• For the 2018-19 school year, the two-way immersion model will be fully implemented for kindergarten through 2 nd grade, and will continue to roll-up by grade level until all grades are participating in 2021-22.		
	• Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies content are delivered in both English and Spanish for students in the program. All specials classes (Art, STEM, Music, PE) are delivered in English.		
Brown Station Elementary School	In the 2017-18 school year, the two-way immersion model was fully implemented for all kindergarten classrooms.		
	• For the 2018-19 school year, the two-way immersion model will be fully implemented for kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms, and will continue to roll-up by grade level until all grades are participating in 2022-23.		
	 Language Arts and Math content are delivered in both English and Spanish for students in the program. Science instruction occurs in Spanish, and Social Studies instruction occurs in English. All specials classes (Art, STEM, Music, PE) are delivered in English. 		
Washington Grove Elementary School	 In the 2017-18 school year, the two-way immersion model was fully implemented for all kindergarten classrooms. 		
	• For the 2018-19 school year, the two-way immersion model will be fully implemented for kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms, and will continue to roll-up by grade level until all grades are participating in 2022-23.		
	 Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies content are delivered in both English and Spanish for students in the program. All specials classes (Art, STEM, Music, PE) for two-way immersion students are taught in Spanish. 		
Oakland Terrace Elementary School	• The two-way immersion model will be implemented for all kindergarten classrooms in the 2018-19 school year, and will continue to roll-up by grade level until all grades are participating in 2023-24.		
	 Language Arts content will be delivered in both English and Spanish for students in the program. The language of instruction for all other content areas will be determined by the school's Steering Committee. 		
Rolling Terrace Elementary School	• The two-way immersion model will be implemented for all kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms in the 2018-19 school year, and will continue to roll-up by grade level until all grades are participating in 2022-23.		
	 Language Arts content will be delivered in both English and Spanish for students in the program. The language of instruction for all other content areas will be determined by the school's Steering Committee. 		

Academic Language Pilot Program

In addition to the dual language program, MCPS recently developed an academic language pilot program at Highland Elementary School program. In a June 4 memo to Council Vice-President Navarro (attached at ©1-2), MCPS described the program as follows:

"Highland Elementary School serves approximately 600 students, 53 percent of whom are identified as English for Speakers or Other Languages (ESOL) students and more are English Learners. For years, the school has been granted between 6-7 full-time ESOL teaching positions. However, despite the use of several instructional models, there were limited academic gains for this population of students. In fact, many of the ESOL students had the most fragmented scheduled in the building; there were competing needs for limited instructional minutes among the classroom teacher, intervention teachers, special education teachers, and ESOL teachers; and there was variance in teacher ownership and accountability for student learning.

Given that the majority of the Highland Elementary School students are English Learners, there was an interest in taking a more holistic approach to developing academic language for ALL students. In March 2017, Highland Elementary School submitted a proposal to reallocate five of their dually certified ESOL teacher allocations into classroom teaching positions, reducing class size across the board to 17:1. An instructional specialist from the Elementary Integrated Curriculum Team worked closely with the ESOL Team and Core Team to develop training for staff members on how to develop academic language for all students. Additionally, ESOL teachers worked with grade-level teams on creating language objectives that aligned with content objectives and creating structures to promote more student discourse."

One advantage of this pilot program is that it was implemented at no additional cost to MCPS since it used existing staff allocations. The Committee may want to discuss with MCPS how pilots such as these fit into the long-term plans for expansion of the dual language two-way immersion program.

Immersion Montgomery Report

In January 2017, Immersion Montgomery (a group formed by parents and other supporters of dual language programs) released a report they commissioned titled *Potential Pathways to Equitable Foreign Language Immersion and Dual Language Education in Montgomery County Public Schools*. The report (attached at ©3-4) was written by a consultant, Dr. Virginia Diez.

The report discusses the research and evidence that supports dual language programs; provides case studies on the experience of implementing dual language programs in Portland Public Schools and Unified School District U-46 in Elgin, IL; and provides recommendations for program expansion specific to MCPS that are listed in the table below (with more detail available at ©5-31).

Immersion Montgomery Report Recommendations

- Develop a clear vision for how dual language and foreign language immersion programs support of should support MCPS' focus on racial equity.
- 2) Establish a dual language expansion committee.
- Conduct an assessment of community needs and assets to teach different partner languages.
- 4) Develop a comprehensive, districtwide plan for diversifying and expanding dual language programming to create racially integrated classrooms and schools and narrow achievement gaps.
- 5) Develop a Communications Plan with cross-departmental input to ensure adequate outreach to under-represented families.
- 6) Develop a dual language professional development plan with comprehensive training for administrators and office staff.
- 7) Establish a Department of Dual Language.
- 8) Establish capacity-building pipelines to develop the district's own corps of dedicated bilingual/biliterate teachers.
- 9) Evaluate program quality in the partner language.
- 10) Develop curriculum alignment plans in English and in the partner language.
- 11) Design admissions policies that maximize equitable enrollment, student and parental satisfaction, and reduce attrition.
- 12) Plan for similar attrition rates to those currently observed in foreign language immersion programs.
- 13) Broaden admission standards for middle and high school dual language programs.
- 14) Create incentives for students to continue through middle and high school.

The Committee may want to discuss with MCPS how the current two-way immersion program and/or future expansion plans align with some of the best practices identified in the Immersion Montgomery report. In particular, Council Staff highlights the issue of developing a staffing pipeline of bilingual/biliterate teachers as a potentially significant undertaking for the long-term success of the two-way immersion model.

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June 4, 2018



The Honorable Nancy Navarro Member, Montgomery County Council Stella B. Werner Council Office Building 100 Maryland Avenue Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Ms. Navarro:

Highland Elementary School serves approximately 600 students, 53 percent of whom are identified as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students and more are English Learners. For years, the school has been granted between 6-7 full-time ESOL teaching positions. However, despite the use of several instructional models, there were limited academic gains for this population of students. In fact, many of the ESOL students had the most fragmented schedules in the building; there were competing needs for limited instructional minutes among the classroom teachers, intervention teachers, special education teachers, and ESOL teachers; and there was variance in teacher ownership and accountability for student learning.

Given that the majority of the Highland Elementary School students are English Learners, there was an interest in taking a more holistic approach to developing academic language for ALL students. In March 2017, Highland Elementary School submitted a proposal to reallocate five of their dually certified ESOL teacher allocations into classroom teaching positions, reducing class size across the board to 17:1. An instructional specialist from the Elementary Integrated Curriculum Team worked closely with the ESOL Team and Core Team to develop trainings for staff members on how to develop academic language for all students. Additionally, ESOL teachers worked with grade-level teams on creating language objectives that aligned with content objectives and creating structures to promote more student discourse.

Strengths of the Pilot

- Student discourse has increased.
- Academic language instruction and discourse benefit ALL students.
- Reduced class size enables teachers to build stronger relationships with students, provide
 more small group and one-to-one support, and work more effectively with students who may
 not have had as much attention in the past.
- Schedules for ESOL students are much more cohesive.

Office of the Chief Academic Officer

- Office referrals have been reduced and student behavior concerns are almost nonexistent.
- Classroom teachers have the most accountability for student performance, so by reducing the size of their classes, we have set them up to be more effective.
- It is great recruiting tool for new staff members (class sizes).
- It is a no-cost initiative for the school and the school system.

Challenges of the Pilot

- Highland Elementary School is the only MCPS school engaging in a comprehensive Integrated English Language Development Pilot, therefore, there are no benchmarking partners.
- There is no available space left in the building.

Future Goals

During the 2018–2019 school year, the leadership team will work with Dr. Deann M. Collins, director, Division of Title I and Early Childhood Programs and Services, on a proposal to work with Dr. Tonya Ward-Singer, author of *El. Excellence Every Day*, to help take the work to the next level. They also will focus on strategies for working with newcomers and deepening academic conversations among students. End-of-the-year academic data will be compiled in July to make informed decisions about next steps.

If you have any questions or would like a school visit in the fall, please contact Mrs. Niki T. Hazel, director, Department of Elementary Curriculum and Districtwide Programs, at 240-740-3930.

Sincerely

Maria V. Navarro, Ed.D. Chief Academic Officer

MVN:NTH:ecr

Copy to:

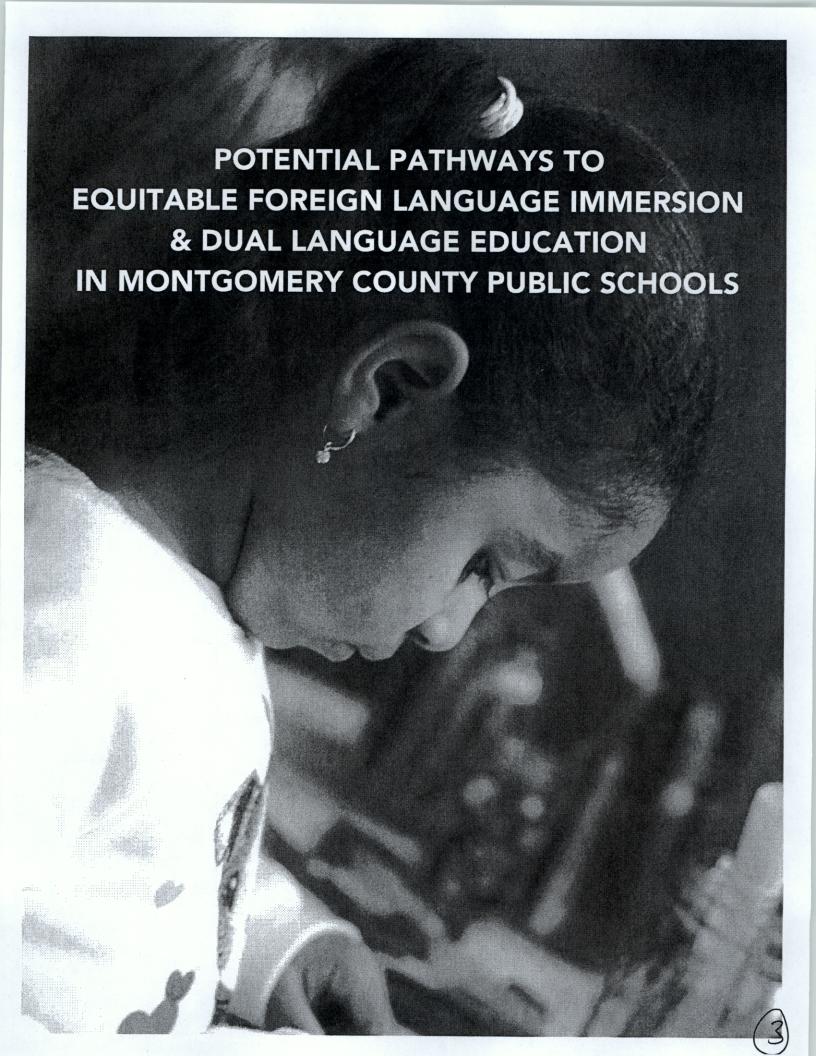
Dr. Statham

Dr. Johnson

Dr. Kimball

Dr. D. Collins

Mrs. Hazel



AUTHOR

Dr. Virginia Diez has fifteen years of experience conducting applied research on the question of what constitutes a quality education for English Language Learners. She served as a Research Associate at the University of Massachusetts Mauricio Gastón Institute in two landmark studies about the implementation of services and outcomes of English Language Learners in Boston Public Schools, in Massachusetts. She has served on the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Association for Bilingual Education, where she integrated the working group responsible for developing guidelines for launching and implementing transitional bilingual and two-way/dual language programs for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. She was also the lead researcher and author of guidelines and recommendations for implementing two-way immersion programs in Boston Public Schools. Currently, she is working as an independent consultant.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The paper was commissioned by parents and other supporters of dual language/immersion programs in MCPS, an effort known as Immersion Montgomery, to support deliberations about best pathways to expand dual language and foreign language immersion programs in Montgomery County Public Schools in keeping with the district's commitment to a high quality and equitable education for all students. A special thanks goes to Dr. Annette Acevedo and Wilma Valero of School District U-46 in Elgin, Illinois; Michael Bacon of Portland Public Schools; Dr. Julie Sugarman, of the Migration Policy Institute, who served as senior advisor to the project; and the many parents in Montgomery County who made personal donations to support this body of work to create more opportunities for children in their communities to become bilingual and biliterate.

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INTRODUCTION

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has a long history of offering quality foreign language immersion education, in which English speakers¹ receive language and content instruction in a partner language² along with English, with the goal of developing oral and written language skills in two languages. The first program launched in 1974 and offered immersion in French just as the first outcomes studies of French immersion students in St. Lambert, Quebec, Canada, reported academic advantages for English-speakers who received instruction in French from an early age (Lambert & Tucker, 1972).

A recent study of Choice and Special Academic Programs (the Choice Study) submitted to the Montgomery County Board of Education in March, 2016 by the consulting firm Metis Associates (Metis, 2016) reports the history, outcomes, and enrollment of foreign language immersion programs. Historically, in the 1980's and 1990's, MCPS, like many other districts nationwide, opted to offer foreign language immersion and other Choice programs as magnets to attract White middle class families to low-income, racially segregated schools. After the first French program, the district launched Spanish and Mandarin, yet the programs have not been updated or expanded since 2009 (Metis, 2016). By school year (SY) 2014, MCPS offered Spanish, French and Mandarin immersion in seven elementary schools to 1,539 students, while another 500 students attended four middle school programs (Metis, 2016).

In addition to promoting racial desegregation at the school level, students in the foreign language immersion programs have been successful at at-

¹ The term "English speakers" is used to refer to students whose home language is English, or who speak other languages at home but are proficient in English upon school enrollment.

taining superior reading and math scores on standardized tests in English vis-à-vis district averages, and vis-à-vis their peers attending general education programs in the same elementary and middle schools. A remarkable outcome identified by the Choice Study, based on cross sectional data from SY2014, is the rapid rate at which these programs appear to close achievement gaps. While scores on standardized tests in Grade 3 reading and math registered significant gaps between Black/African American and Latino/Hispanic students and their White and Asian counterparts, on that same year, gaps in Grade 5 were minor, and of no statistical significance for these subgroups enrolled in foreign language immersion. Similar achievement gap closures were found for FARMS³ and non-FARMS students districtwide and within the same school building (Metis, 2016). The data is correlational and does not look at family characteristics, extracurricular supports, rates of attrition between 3rd, 5th and 8th grade, and so forth. However, the achievement gap closure is noteworthy and deserves further study to understand the rapid rate at which it occurs.

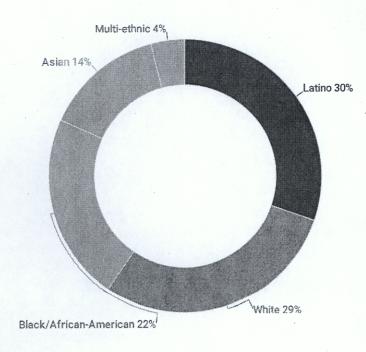
In the face of these outcomes, it is not surprising that increasing numbers of families seek access to foreign language immersion programs. Yet, in SY2014, the 1,539 MCPS students enrolled in elementary programs represented 2% of all elementary students; only 369 new kindergartners were admitted, and 40% of applicants were wait-listed. The shortage of seats has generated parental discontent, especially in light of enrollment figures that show an over-representation of White students and under-representation of Hispanic/Latino, Black/African-American, FARMS, special education, and English language learner (ELL) students vis-à-vis district figures.

³ FARMS stands for free and reduced-price meals, a proxy for low-income used in educational research.



² In this paper, the term partner language refers to a language other than English which is used for instruction.

FIGURE 1. RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF MCPS STUDENTS, 2016



Source: Montgomery County Public Schools (2016). *Update on Student Enrollment and Facilities.* Presentation to Montgomery County Board of Education on October 10th. URL: www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/planning/demogra-phics.aspx.

This disproportion in enrollment of underrepresented groups seems to reflect the rapid demographic change experienced by Montgomery County in the last 20 years. In a very short period of time, MCPS has transformed from a largely White district, into a "majority-minority district" (see Figure 1). In SY2014, ELLs amounted to 10.5% of all students in the district.

The presence of ELLs is an important factor in conceptualizations of equitable access to foreign language immersion programs because these students are known to benefit most from instruction in their native language along with instruction in English as a second language in programs where they are integrated with English speakers (Thomas & Collier, 2002). Thus, the growth of the ELL population in Montgomery County presents a unique opportunity to service the needs of two groups of students who benefit when integrated at the classroom level: English speakers and ELLs. Such integration results in more raciallyand economically-balanced programs, and, when well implemented, supports superior academic attainment in English by all students (Thomas & Collier, 2012, Steele et al., 2015), language preservation by ELLs, and the multiple benefits of integration across linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic differences. The tremendous educational gains achieved by all students involved in integrated dual language programs (to be defined in the next section) cannot be overstated. In fact, their effectiveness has led to a steady, exponential growth since the 1990's, well documented by the Center for Applied Linguistics.⁵ The two factors driving this growth are, first, an increased awareness that the language skills of U.S. citizens lag behind other industrialized countries, and may undermine U.S. competitiveness in an increasingly globalized economy.6 Second, there is increasing empirical evidence documenting achievement gap closures for all students enrolled in these programs, regardless of native language, race, or income.

⁴ Education Week article: http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/08/20/01demographics.h34.html

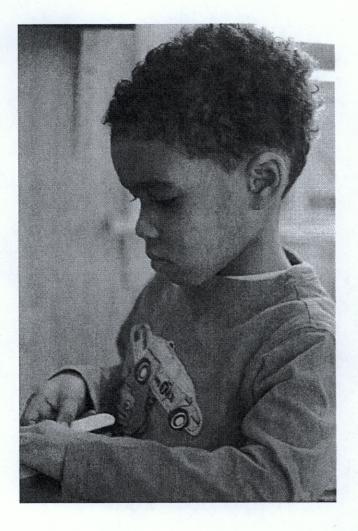
⁵ See URL:http://www.cal.org/twi/directory/growth.gif

⁶ See study by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2016) at URL:https://www.amacad.org

In light of these gains, windows of opportunity to expand dual language education at the state level recently created by the re-authorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA), are driving bilingualism for <u>all</u> students to the top of the 2017 educational reform agenda in many states.⁷

Furthermore, integrating English speakers and ELLs in dual language programs addresses the Choice Study Recommendation 7 which encourages MCPS to "align efforts" to expand seat capacity in choice and special programs "with the district's core values, including equity, and consider a wider variety of models, such as dual language ..." (Metis, 2016, Executive Summary, p. x). This paper looks at this and other Choice Study recommendations through the prism of dual language education, and offers guidance for expanding access to a range of language learning programs. This includes the existing foreign language immersion for English speakers while also adding capacity to serve the needs of ELLs with high quality, cost-effective dual language models. Implementing both types of programs moves a larger number and broader range of students towards ambitious outcomes, including attaining the state's Seal of Biliteracy.8 This paper also considers the role that admission's policies, in particular the sibling link, play in the quality and success of language programs. It recognizes the importance of the sibling link in supporting families and thereby preventing attrition which is of specific concern in language programs due to the difficulty of filling seats in the later years with language-proficient students. It also recognizes the importance of the sibling link in both promoting a home environment where siblings can support one another in learning the target language, and in helping to build a strong school community.

The report begins with a review of terminology and empirical evidence about different kinds of programs in the field of dual language education in the U.S. today, and then provides examples of best practices from two districts that are applying the latest thinking to the design and implementation of dual language programs as a tool to build equity and excellence. The paper ends with recommendations for MCPS leadership and the board of education.



⁷ See December 29, 2016 article in Education World at URL:http://www.educationworld.com/a_news/effectiveness-bilingual-education-reason-invest-2017-1529523464.



⁸ See http://sealofbiliteracy.org/maryland.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE IMMERSION & DUAL LANGUAGE

TERMINOLOGY

Foreign language immersion - the type of program offered by MCPS - is one of four types of programs grouped by some researchers under the term *dual language*, as shown in Figure 2. All of the programs under this umbrella share the common goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural competence, which are achieved by using a partner language (Spanish, French, Chinese, etc.) for at least 50% of instruction for at least 4-6 years, preferably spanning the full K to 12 or pre-K to 12 sequence. By the time they reach upper elementary grades (roughly fourth or fifth grade), students are expected to perform on grade-level in English and the partner language.

The main difference between the four models shown in Figure 2 is the student population:

<u>Developmental Bilingual</u>: All students are native speakers of the partner language and are ELLs

Two-way Immersion: Enrollment is balanced between native speakers of the partner language (who are usually ELLs) and English speakers, with neither group making up more than two-thirds of the total

Heritage Language Immersion: All students are English-dominant but have a connection to the language through exposure at home or in their culture or community

Foreign Language Immersion: Students are English speakers learning a world language not spoken at home

Transitional Bilingual Education Transitional Bilingual Education Transitional Property of the Elementary School (FLES)

FIGURE 2. DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM MODELS

Source: Howard, E. R., Olague, N., & Rogers, D. (2003). The dual language program planner: A guide for designing and implementing dual language programs (p. 3). Washington, DC and Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.



Along with the dual language models, there are two other models that provide some language instruction, but not enough to develop full academic bilingualism and biliteracy: transitional bilingual education, in which ELLs are taught for one to three years in their native language while transitioning to English, and foreign language in the elementary school (FLES), in which instruction in the partner language constitutes less than 50% of instruction.

In order to develop bilingualism and biliteracy, dual language programs share other important characteristics:

- Language and content instruction are integrated, so that the language is not taught in isolation
- Teachers use sheltered instruction strategies to make content comprehensible to language learners.
- Students have frequent opportunities for interaction and collaborative learning.
- Instruction through the partner language is viewed as an enrichment experience for all, not as remedial or compensatory education for the ELLs in the program
- The program includes a focus on the culture of the speakers of the partner language in order to increase cultural competency and make connections between language and culture that are critical for full language proficiency

Unfortunately, there is little consensus across the United States about the terminology being used to describe these programs. The dual language label is most frequently applied either to two-way immersion programs only or to either two-way or developmental bilingual programs—in other words, in many settings, dual language is a term associated with programs that enroll ELLs. Practitioners of foreign language immersion typically do not refer to their programs as dual language. Because of the strong history of foreign language immersion as a term and as a program in MCPS and the ways that the various terms are used in the comparison districts described in this paper, we use the term dual language to refer to developmental and two-way programs, and foreign language immersion to refer to the type of program that already exists in MCPS. This also mirrors the usage of the Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition, which refers to "immersion and dual language education" in order to ensure that both constituencies see themselves in their work.

Another critical set of terms needed to understand foreign language immersion and dual language programs relates to the alternatives for how much of the partner language is used in the early years of the program:

- The partner language is used 80% to 100% of the time in pre-K and kindergarten, with additional English instruction gradually added throughout the elementary years until they reach a 50-50 balance (called "full immersion" in foreign language programs, and 90/10 or 80/20 in dual language)
- The partner language and English are each used 50% of the time for the duration of the program (called "partial immersion" in foreign language programs, and 50/50 in dual language)

It is important to note that programs that enroll ELLs do not use the 100/0 model, in which all content is taught in the partner language and English instruction is often delayed until late elementary school. Dual language programs that enroll ELLs incorporate English language development instruction right from the beginning. However, dual language research has shown that the 90/10 dual language model is the most effective, as it allows ELLs to learn to read in a language they understand, and English dominant students to have sufficient early exposure to the partner language to develop high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy (see findings discussed in section on empirical evidence).

In two-way immersion programs, two additional best practices are important to implement in order to ensure the outcomes promised by the research. First, native speakers of the partner language (including ELLs) can enter the program at any grade level, but students who do not have proficiency in the partner language are not al-

lowed to enroll after first grade. Additionally, students from the two language groups must be integrated for instruction most or all of the day at all grade levels. These two practices ensure that English speakers acquire sufficient levels of the partner language to be able to engage in grade-level instruction in the upper elementary grades (Howard and Sugarman, 2007).

As this paper recommends that MCPS take a broad look at the full mix of foreign language immersion and dual language (two-way immersion and developmental bilingual) programs, it is important to keep in mind the political and sociocultural context in which these programs have always existed, and how the conversation around ELL education may change in our increasingly divided society. Although they appeared on the scene around the same time (the 1960s), foreign language immersion came out of a tradition of enrichment for English speakers, while bilingual approaches (including transitional bilingual and dual language) were developed in order to address civil rights mandates—starting with the Supreme Court's decision in Lau v. Nichols that students who do not speak English must be provided accommodations in order to ensure that they have meaningful access to the same education as other students (Baker, 2001). The tremendous growth of foreign language immersion and dual language programs in the last fifteen years (Rhodes and Pufahl, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2015) is evidence of communities' recognition that these programs offer the strongest evidence of closing achievement gaps and preparing students for the 21st century.

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

All of the foreign language immersion and dual language program types are backed by considerable empirical evidence showing superior academic outcomes for all students across language, race, and socioeconomic background. Of special interest in two-way immersion is that students learn each others' languages and cultures, in classrooms that are integrated socioeconomically and racially.

Outcomes For English Speakers

Descriptive studies of the foreign language immersion model have shown positive effects on English outcomes (Barik & Swain, 1978; Caldas & Boudreaux, 1999; Marian, Shook, & Schroeder, 2013; Padilla et al., 2013; Turnbull, Hart, & Lapkin, 2003). The second language acquisition approach taken by these programs of teaching language and literacy by teaching content in the second language is the most successful school-based model for teaching second languages.

Foreign language immersion students who begin the program as English speakers consistently develop native-like levels of comprehension, such as listening and reading skills, in their second language. They also display fluency and confidence when using it. Further, the more time spent learning through the non-English language, the higher the level of proficiency attained. (Fortune, n/d)⁹

However, it has been hard to move students beyond intermediate levels even in high-performing foreign language immersion programs. Studies have found that students' "oral language lacks grammatical accuracy, lexical specificity, native pronunciation, and is less complex and sociolinguistically appropriate when compared with the language native speakers of the second language produce" (Fortune, n/d). Some researchers have argued that a reason students do not reach higher levels of proficiency in the partner languages is that "...students do not get the benefit of interactive dialogue with native-French-speaking peers in their classes, as would happen in a twoway model" (Thomas & Collier, 2012, p. 11); however, research has yet to test that assump-

http://carla.umn.edu/immersion/documents/ImmersionResearch_TaraFortune.html



⁹ The research on foreign language immersion (including findings on Chinese immersion) is well summarized by Tara Fortune here:

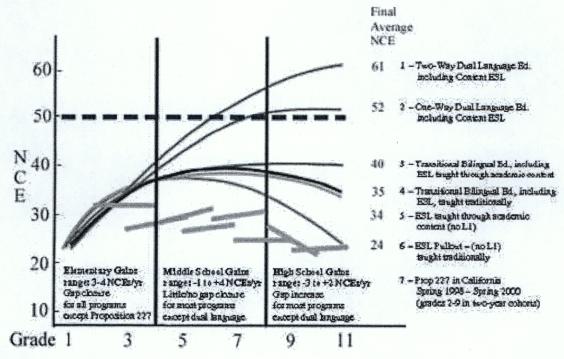
We do know that English speakers in both foreign language and two-way immersion programs show superior second-language outcomes to students in traditional foreign language programs, and frequently score above their peers in tests of English and academic content. Wayne Thomas and Virginia Collier's research in North Carolina demonstrated that both White and African-American English speakers outscored their peers on academic tests in English—sometimes by a full grade level—in upper elementary and middle school grades (Thomas & Collier, 2012).

Outcomes for ELLs

In terms of educating ELLs, the empirical studies of developmental bilingual (not discussed here) and two-way immersion conducted by Wayne Thomas & Virginia Collier over the last twenty years have consistently shown that these two types of dual language programs are superior to transitional bilingual education and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) in terms of English development for ELLs. Figure 3 pro-

vides a stark comparison of ELL student outcomes in standardized reading tests in English by grade and across program models. All solid lines represent ELLs, whereas the dotted line at the 50th percentile/NCE represents the average performance of English speakers across the U.S. (the norm group) on English reading assessments at each grade level. The direction of the program lines indicates gap closure, as ELLs make more progress than English speakers per grade, or gap widening, with ELLs making less progress than English speakers. The bottom line represents a series of two-year cohorts in California after the state passed English-only legislation (Thomas & Collier, 2012). The graph shows that although in the primary grades, students in any bilingual program score below their English-speaking peers, after 5th grade and certainly into high school, students in two-way immersion programs outperform English speakers significantly. One-way (developmental bilingual) programs, in which ELLs are not integrated with English speakers, are nearly as beneficial as two-way immersion.

FIGURE 3. ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS' LONG-TERM K-12 ACHIEVEMENT IN NORMAL CURVE EQUIVALENTS (NCES) ON STANDARDIZED TESTS IN ENGLISH READING COMPARED ACROSS PROGRAM MODELS



Source: Thomas and Collier, 2012, p. 93

In brief, given the superior outcomes for both English speakers and ELLs in two-way immersion, as well as the clear benefit of integrating students along racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines (Wells, Fox, & Cordova-Cobo), MCPS has an opportunity to ingrate a linguistically-diverse student body into the highest-performing programs known to exist for language learners.

This paper looks at how districts that are regarded as paradigmatic of good dual language (foreign language immersion and two-way immersion) program design and implementation have expanded in response to demographic change by integrating English speakers and ELLs into the same programs. These districts are Portland Public Schools in Portland, Oregon, and School District U-46, in Elgin, Illinois (in the northwest suburbs of Chicago). Significantly, School District U-46 has been endorsed by David Rogers, the executive director of Dual Language Education of New Mexico (DLENM) and a national authority on dual language implementation as "the model to follow for districts wanting to start a districtwide dual language initiative ... In my opinion, they did everything right" including having "a sense of urgency to improve services for English Language Learners" and expanding programs "methodically, based on where there was demonstrated leadership and family interest."10 Portland has long been considered a leader in foreign language and dual language immersion, with a recent study finding that dual language students outscored their non-dual-language peers in reading by a significant extent (Steele et al., 2015).

Demographically, the districts are smaller than MCPS, and their ethno-racial makeup is different, as shown in Table 1. School District U-46 has the same percentage of White students as Montgomery County and has undergone similarly rapid demographic change in the last ten years. However, the population distribution is more heavily Latino and the percentage of ELLs is twice as

large (28.4%) as MCPS. The district is particularly interesting for its rapid growth, and well-documented, systematic planning, which lends itself to replication. Portland, on the other hand, has also grown at a good pace (9 programs in 15 years), but its most relevant characteristic is a linguistic diversity closer to that found in MCPS, as well as the presence of engaged English-speaking parents who are committed to providing equitable access for all students in the district.

TABLE 1. STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS
IN THREE DISTRICTS

	MCPS SY17	PPS SY16	U-46 SY16
TOTAL STUDENTS	159,242	49,075	40,400
White, non- Hispanic	29%	55.9%	29%
Hispanic or Latino	30%	16.2%	52%
Black/African American	22%	10%	6%
Asian	14%	7.3%	8%
Multi-ethnic	5%	8.9%	4%
American Indian	<5%	0.9%	1%
ELLs	14.2%	7.3%	28.4%
ELLS	22,612	3,582	11,473
Free/reduced- price meals	34.5%	46.3%	58%

Sources: .http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/about/;

http://www.pps.net/domain/265;

http://www.illinoisreportcard.com

¹⁰ Dual Language Fact Sheet: http://www.edline.net/pages/SDU46/Hot_Topic/Dual_Language/DL_Fact_Sheet

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Founded in 1851, Portland Public Schools (PPS) is the largest PreK-12 school district in Oregon, serving nearly fifty thousand students in 78 district schools and other community programs. The student population is highly diverse, racially and linguistically (see Table 1 in appendix). PPS offers what it calls dual language immersion¹¹ as a K-12 program in 35 schools (15 elementary, 13 middle, and 7 high schools), which amounts to 44% of all district schools. About 1 in 10 students (9.7% in SY2016) were enrolled in dual language immersion programs, of whom 41% were ELLs. 12 While half of Portland ELL families speak Spanish, a hundred other languages are also spoken in the district, and have driven the diversification of language offerings in these programs, including Spanish, Chinese/Mandarin, Japanese, Russian, Vietnamese, with Arabic under current consideration. The district is strongly committed to dual language immersion, as expressed in the following mission statement:

The aim of the PPS K-12 Dual Language Immersion Program is for all students to be bilingual, develop strong cross-cultural and high-level thinking skills, and achieve a solid academic foundation that prepares them for high school, college and beyond. To achieve these outcomes, the program promotes self-confidence and motivation, a love of learning, and supports the linguistic and cultural identity that allows all students to become independent and active members of the global community.¹³

HOW THE PROGRAM EXPANDED¹⁴

Portland's entry into dual language education began in the 1980's and '90's and has accelerated since the turn of the millenium. The early immersion programs were designed as enrichment for English speakers—e.g. Ainsworth's English/Spanish and Woodstock's English/Mandarin. Over time, as demographics changed and the proportion of ELL students from different linguistic backgrounds grew (similarly to the process observed at MCPS today), PPS began to look at equitable practice through a racial lens.

Applying a racial equity lens implies asking questions about the potential impact of programs on different racial/ethnic groups, and specifically on how programs exacerbate or alleviate racial disparities. For example, PPS leaders considered the impact of Thomas & Collier's findings (2002, 2010, 2012) showing that ELLs and other lowincome students who participate in two-way immersion programs not only close achievement gaps but actually outperform similar students one year ahead in both reading and math in the elementary and middle school grades (see section on empirical evidence). Based on this empirical evidence, foreign language immersion programs were re-conceptualized not only as enrichment for English speakers but also as equitable services for ELLs. As a result, ELLs who spoke a program's partner language were integrated with English speakers for their mutual benefit as ELLs could preserve and develop their native language while learning English, and enhance the partner language learning experience of English speakers. Both groups of students benefit tremendously from early friendships forged across language, socioeconomic and racial boundaries.

Today, the Ainsworth—one of the first programs—has transitioned from offering a foreign

¹⁴ For a brief video of PPS dual language expansion, see: http://www.pps.net/Page/88



¹¹ In Portland Public Schools, the term "Dual Language Immersion (DLI)" encompasses programs that provide core content instruction in two languages—i.e. two-way immersion, foreign language immersion, and one-way developmental bilingual programs (although these are less frequent).

¹² Portland Public Schools Enrollment Details for October 2015:http://www.pps.net/site/default.aspx?PageID=942
See link for Dual Language Immersion and Dual Language Learners on 2015-16

¹³ See Dual Language Immersion Brochure link at: http://www.pps.net/Page/892

language immersion program similar to the current ones in MCPS, which reserves 100% of seats for English speakers, to a two-way immersion where 33% of seats are reserved for Spanish speakers designated as ELLs. Such linguistic diversification was paralleled with programmatic changes in curriculum, instruction, and language allocation times. Whereas it was possible to teach 100% of the time in the partner language when all students were English speakers, time in Kindergarten in the partner language was reduced to 90% and paired with instruction in English for 10% of the time in order to teach English to Spanish-speaking ELLs. 15 The proportion of instruction in each language changes each year until it reaches a 50:50 balance in the mid- to upperelementary grades. The Mandarin program at the Woodstock followed a similar path, and now enrolls 50% English speakers and 50% native Mandarin speakers. Unlike the Ainsworth, instruction at the Woodstock is split evenly between English and Mandarin throughout the elementary grades in what is known as the "50:50 model." 16

Other programs launched in the 1990's and all programs (except the Japanese) launched after the turn of the millennium have been integrated with 50% of each language group. Program expansion is currently managed by a Department of Dual Language in conjunction with a Dual Language Expansion Committee where parents, who constitute 50% of the membership, work together with teachers, administrators, and representatives of community organizations. An important criterion guiding expansion is responding to growing linguistic communities, and to the interests of parents of English speakers. Currently, the new language under consideration is Arabic as parents

15 This is referred to as a "90:10" language allocation model in which instruction is conducted in the partner language 90% of the time and in English the remaining 10% at first. Partner language instruction decreases while instruction in English increases, until each language is used for instruction 50% of the time. This occurs by grades 4 or 5.

of English speaking students have expressed interest, and there is a growing community of Arabic speakers in Portland.

EQUITABLE ACCESS AND LOTTERIES

Dual language immersion programs at Portland Public Schools are programs of choice ("focus options"). Formally, access is gained by making transfer requests, granted through a computerized lottery administered by the district. Families apply to these programs in the spring prior to their enrollment in pre-K or Kindergarten. The number of slots available every year is determined by the school principal, and students are selected based on a number of preferences including their native language, residence within the school's catchment neighborhood, or in other neighborhoods. Within each of these preferences, slots are assigned first to students who have siblings at the school. Students who do not win a slot are assigned to the general education program in their local schools.

The Sibling Preference

In PPS, siblings who live in the same household and have the same supervising adults are given preference in the lottery, which guarantees them a slot in the program. In 2014, PPS's Board of Education considered giving the sibling preference a lower priority (no guaranteed slot). However, following public comments and the recognition by the district that the lack of outreach was the reason spots were not being filled by low-income students, the district instead decided to keep the sibling preference due to its many known benefits to students, families, and schools, and especially to prevent attrition. Specifically, the district decided to keep the sibling preference as a high priority in part when its own data showed that the sibling link was not the reason that many schools had few low-income students.¹⁷

It seems worth noting that considerations about whether or not to change sibling preferences in PPS aligned with pro- and con-rationales to

¹⁷[http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2014/12/pps_change_on_sibling_preferen.html]



¹⁶ The 50:50 language allocation model refers to programs in which the partner language and English are each used for instruction 50% of the time. The two main models (50:50 and 90:10) can be successful with any partner language and in both foreign language immersion and two-way immersion settings.

changes to MCPS Board Policy JEE, Student Transfers. While MCPS has given greater weight to the Choice Study recommendation to eliminate sibling links, in PPS, the decision favored an argument also mentioned in the Choice Study, specifically the benefits of sibling preferences to "families with more than one child and parents who cannot transport their children to more than one school because of work schedules or afterschool commitments," and also "to reinforce learning in homes where parents or guardians do not speak the language of instruction" (Metis, 2016, p. 39). Instead, equitable access to programs in PPS was attained by increasing the number of seats assigned based on language preferences.

In addition to the benefits accrued by sibling preferences to families and students, considerations about benefits to program viability in the upper elementary grades are especially significant to dual language program administrators. The success of dual language immersion programs is predicated on maintaining a balanced enrollment of English speakers and ELLs throughout the elementary grades. Since it is hard to admit students with grade-level skills in the partner language in grades 2 and beyond, a reduction of program seats may affect costs if teachers have insufficient numbers of students in their classrooms. Furthermore, when siblings are not enrolled in dual language programs, the loss of academic expertise embedded within the family may contribute to attrition, which can be due to the rigor and difficulty of foreign language immersion programs (Boudreaux and Olivier, 2009). Finally, having children in two different schools deters parents from fully investing their limited time, energy, and personal resources into building a strong school community which, again, is especially important in dual language programs.

The Language Preference

In PPS, increased equitable access to dual language was attained by turning foreign language immersion into two-way immersion programs. Two-way immersion programs reserve at least one third of seats for each language group in order to ensure as close a balance in enrollment as possible. In Portland, empty partner language seats are kept open until the end of the summer in order to increase participation by immigrant families. In the past, empty seats had to be filled by the end of the previous school year, so seats reserved for one language group could be given away as long as the 33% threshold for speakers of each language was met. This policy was changed as it was found to disadvantage the ELL community, particularly families who moved to the area over the summer. The switch from foreign language to dual language immersion also called for instructional changes. While foreign language immersion is designed for English speakers who do not require ESOL instruction, the inclusion of ELLs who speak the partner language requires not just a change in enrollment procedures, but a redesign of the program to include tailored English instruction that provides simultaneous ESOL support for ELLs and opportunities for English speakers to refine their language and literacy skills.

Ensuring Equitable Participation in the Lottery

Another way in which PPS supported more equitable access to dual language was by countering potential inequitable access to lotteries (as immigrant parents may be less likely to be able to navigate the necessary information and deadlines on their own). PPS conducts comprehensive outreach to inform and educate low-income and immigrant families about dual language opportunities, how to access them, and why they are beneficial. The district uses multilingual program materials in Chinese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese along with outreach by bilingual staff. District staff seeks out immigrant parents through home visits; informational sessions at Head Start, other federally funded pre-K programs, and community venues; and provides assistance filling out transfer applications. Parents are trained to help other parents, and to serve as program ambassadors in their communities.



STAFFING AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

"It is a common belief that dual language programs are expensive, but really the greatest problem they face is capacity building," claims assistant director for Dual Language Michael Bacon. Because the number of full time teachers are generated by the number of students, and the hours of instruction are the same as in general education, there are no increased costs based on personnel. However, half or more of the teachers must be bilingual/biliterate, and half of curriculum units or of academic subjects must be offered in the partner language. What districts need is personnel with the capacity to develop curriculum, interact with parents, support special needs, and provide professional development across languages. These additional needs in terms of learning materials and assessments in two languages are minimal compared to programs that require additional personnel.18

Although for some administrators the language capacity issue may act as a deterrent, Portland educators see it as a resource allocation issue that they are willing to navigate in exchange for extraordinary academic gains. These gains were recently confirmed through a randomized, experimental study of Portland dual language immersion students (Steele et al., 2015). The researchers found that students randomly assigned to these programs outperformed their peers on state accountability tests in reading by about seven months of learning in grade 5, and about nine months of learning in grade 8. Although no statistically significant benefits were identified in math and science scores for dual language immersion students, this finding was significant, as students learned math and science in the partner language and were then tested in English. Furthermore, students whose native language matched the partner language of the two-way immersion program had a 6 percentage point reduction in the probability of remaining classified

as ELLs as of grade 5, and a 14 point reduction in grade 6. The partner language (whether Mandarin, Russian, Japanese, or Spanish) did not appear to affect outcomes. Findings from this study led the authors to conclude:

The lesson for policymakers pursuing path-breaking 21st century reform is that language immersion¹⁹ may benefit students' English reading skills from midelementary school and enhance English learning for ELLs. Though effects in mathematics and science are less evident, a program that yields improved reading in English, improved long-term exit rates from ELL status, no apparent detriment to mathematics and science skills, and promotes proficiency in two languages seems difficult to criticize. (Steele et al., 2015, p. 28)

Staffing Considerations

Even before the study by Steele and her team, PPS has known the benefits of dual language, and for over 16 years, has built a pipeline of bilingual teachers through a partnership with Portland State University's Bilingual Teacher Pathway (BTP) program. Currently, the district is ready for an innovation that promises to meet its teacher staffing needs: an alternative certification program called the Dual Language Teacher Fellows. Rather than following traditional teacher training pathways that culminate in the Praxis test,²⁰ PPS has negotiated with the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission to award a Restricted Transitional License (RTL) to "individuals who are making a mid-life career change (e.g. attorneys wishing to become social studies teachers, engineers wishing to become mathematics or science teachers, registered nurses within to teach health)"21 Recipients of an RTL must have a bachelor's degree and a mentor in the sponsoring school district. This transitional license allows career changers to begin teaching immediately,

²¹ See Restricted Transitional License at:https://www.ets.org/praxis/or/alternate_route/



¹⁸ See FAQ, "What additional costs do dual language programs incur compared to mainstream programs?" at http://www.cal.org/twi/faq/faq18.htm

¹⁹ The term "language immersion" in this statement is used interchangeably with "dual language immersion."

²⁰ Praxis is a teacher-licensing test administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

and receive a full salary and benefits while receiving mentoring and training on the job. One of the training requirements is in civil rights, provided by the Dual Language Department. The license is not renewable after three years but gives individuals enough time to take courses towards licensure at Portland State University. Teachers hired through this program have strong bilingual, biliterate skills, and bring life experiences as well as dedication to their jobs. Prior to this, PPS experimented with international teacher exchange programs without too much success, as these programs are expensive and teachers are replaced every two years, which diminishes their commitment to students and classrooms.

"We tapped highly educated, bilingual, biliterate individuals right under our noses, who wanted to make a career change but couldn't bypass having an income... They bring great life experiences in the community and are dedicated to their work"

- Michael Bacon, Assistant Director of the Dual Language Department, Portland Public Schools

Cost-saving Considerations

The district created a small Dual Language Department charged with building departmental bridges to collaborate and muster support from departments with the capacity to implement aspects of dual language education, i.e., Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment; Special Education; Human Resources; and School-Family Partnerships. The Department of Dual Language works collaboratively with 15 part-time staff in other departments. Every major district department has adopted a dual language lens and is vested in properly implementing these programs. For example, the Department of Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment is now developing language arts curricula in each of the languages taught in dual language immersion programs.

Cost-saving involves ongoing advocacy work by Dual Language Department administrators, who constantly share data, communicate with "elevator speeches," and make the case that dual language is an investment with colleagues and department heads within the school building. In their communication strategies, dual language administrators prioritize building alliances, collaboration, and sharing reminders about the paradigm shifts intended to close opportunity gaps and reallocate resources. This has moved the department from relying on grants towards stable revenue sources from the district's budget.

In conclusion, launching a dual language programs for the first time can be labor intensive but can be handled without creating a financial burden on the district. Once a language has been launched, replication can rely on existing infrastructure, and tap an increasing number of teachers trained to work in these programs.

ARTICULATION BETWEEN ELEMEN-TARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL

Program articulation between elementary and secondary school promotes the continued development of second language skills, preparation to enter advanced language courses in high school or college, preparation for International Baccalaureate (IB), and for Advanced Placement language exams in high school (Montone & Loeb, 2003). However, the nature of the middle school schedule often leads to cuts in partner language instructional time. Generally, PPS middle schools offer two back-to-back courses in the partner language: one language arts course followed by a course in social studies. This extended language block immerses students in the partner languages for two class periods per day, and is a common model in grades 6-8. Instruction in the partner language amounts to 33% of the day, a lower percentage than the minimum 50% required in elementary school. In some instances, math or science are offered in the partner language in order to approximate the 50% mark, but this is not always possible, and left up to each school's discretion.

One common challenge faced by PPS is ensuring a critical mass of students in the same middle school program. This is in part due to natural attrition between elementary and middle school, when many students opt out of a dual language education to pursue other interests, or because of



student mobility. To counteract challenges to the language balance and, therefore, the program's viability, PPS has adopted a few practices:

More programs converge into fewer high schools. As shown in Appendix B, Spanish programs currently feed into four high schools and Mandarin programs feed into two high schools. In the future, these patterns will be streamlined by feeding more elementary programs into fewer middle schools to ensure a critical mass of students that supports each language program throughout the high school years.

New elementary programs open with more than one strand as protection against attrition during the elementary grades and between elementary and middle school. Attrition is common in the elementary grades, and can jeopardize a program's viability. To prevent this, schools are encouraged to roll out grades with at least two classes (strands) in each, so that by the later elementary grades there will be at least one strand.

Admissions criteria for middle and high school will be broadened. Mechanisms will be provided for heritage speakers to enter the programs in middle and high school. Teachers can be trained to build grade-level literacy skills in students who already have the language background. Students can also be offered support prior to entering the program (e.g. summer courses), and during the first year.

The Seal of Biliteracy, which Oregon offered for the first time this year, is expected to provide incentives for students to complete a dual language education through high school. In SY2016, 120 PPS graduates were awarded the Oregon State Seal of Biliteracy. This recognition is not easy to attain and requires ongoing development of the second language throughout the high school years. Currently, to receive the Seal, students must demonstrate English proficiency and proficiency in a partner language. Proficiency in the partner language is measured by one of several measures including: "Advanced Low" level or above on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Scale; a score of

4 or above on the International Baccalaureate partner language exam; a score of 4 or above on the AP Language exam; 3 or more on the AP Literature Exam; and a portfolio that demonstrates language proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.²²

High-school level dual language immersion continuation programs require careful planning and alignment with K-8 coursework. These classes should look less like traditional high school foreign language classes, with an emphasis on grammar and vocabulary and more like high school English—with a focus on literature study and high-level writing skills—or other contentarea classes (math, science, or social studies). Schools may also develop electives (such as Latin American history) or service learning options that prepare bilingual students for globally-focused careers.

For students to be able to participate in coursework at this level, benchmarks must be set along the way that develop students' language skills in the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and progress in language development should be assessed annually (or more often) to be sure that students are reaching those benchmarks.

http://www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/priorities/oregon-state-seal-of-biliteracy-attachment---policy-description.pdf



²² See

SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46

Unified School District U-46 Elgin is located about 45 minutes west of Chicago, Illinois. The district currently serves over 40,000 children in 40 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, and 5 high schools. As in Portland, Spanish is the highest incidence language, but over 90 languages are represented in the district's student population. Similarly to Montgomery County, a demographic transformation in the last 20 years has resulted in a majority-minority district that is 52% Latino and 29% White. As a result, all current dual language immersion programs are English-Spanish. Other languages (Polish, Chinese, Urdu) are taught through transitional bilingual education programs for students enrolled in schools with 20 ELL students who speak the same language, as per Illinois state mandate. As in Portland, the decision to offer dual language programs emerged from a commitment to closing the "opportunity gap" for English language learners, and the rationale for its choice was based on the work of Thomas and Collier (2002, 2010, 2012).

"Dual language instruction is the only program proven to close the achievement gap between English Language Learners and their peers, and it offers English-dominant students a head start on bilingualism, preparing all students for an increasingly global world.... We are excited to continue expanding this program and develop new opportunities for middle school students to continue such rigorous academic and language learning, which capitalizes on students' cultural and linguistic strengths."²³

- Dr. Annette Acevedo, Director of the Office of English Language Learners

HOW THE PROGRAM EXPANDED

School District U-46 provides an example of well-planned expansion that integrates English speakers and ELLs. The initial dual language rollout was in SY2012, when grades pre-K through 2 launched at 29 elementary schools, with a total enrollment of 4,194 students and 179 teachers. In only five years, the program has more than doubled. In SY2017, one-way (developmental bilingual) and two-way immersion are offered in 33 schools to 9,066 ELLs and English speakers by 367 teachers. Of the 33 programs, 25 are two-way immersion. This rapid pace of growth has earned the district attention and praise from dual language experts nationwide.

Planning for dual language immersion began in 2008-09 in response to a growing ELL population and persistent achievement gaps for ELL students. The district appointed a Dual Language Committee which included all major stakeholders, including the teachers' union, to look at achievement data, demographics, research evidence, and the state's legal framework. The final report, entitled Accelerating Academic Achievement of English Language Learner Students, highlighted an opportunity gap for ELLs, who had not had access to dual language programs, even though these were known to be most conducive to closing achievement gaps. The report became the U-46 Dual Language Project Charter, and provided the framework for the Superintendent's initiative to launch dual language programs at 29 sites in 2011-12. In SY2012, the two-year District Improvement Plan (DIP 2012-14) included dual language immersion programs as a teaching and learning strategy designed to "strengthen

²⁴ Valero, W., Acevedo, A., Makishima, P. (2016). "21st Century Learning: Closing the Opportunity Gap through Dual Language." Presentation at La Cosecha, Santa Fe, New Mexico.



²³ See Dual Language Fact Sheet at: http://www.edline.net/pages/SDU46/Hot Topic/Dual L anguage/DL Fact Sheet

elementary education."²⁵ In fact, dual language became one of four major educational initiatives (together with early, special, and gifted education) under the Teaching and Learning Department to be tracked through a project management approach. Currently, the OELL director reports to the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, and plays a pivotal role in supporting the district's policy to provide "culturally and linguistically responsive instruction" to all families.²⁶

The entire district worked together for a year to design an expansion plan that involved several departments, including Curriculum and Instruction, Human Resources, Plant Operations, and Finance. The plan included nine milestones as follows:

- 1. Dual Language Implementation Timeline
- 2. Identification of the Demographics in TBE Schools (i.e., # of Spanish speakers)
- 3. Determination of dual language Program Model and admissions criteria (one-way/two-way 80:20/50:50)
- 4. Creation of Dual Language Committees (to support implementation)
- 5. Development of Communications Plans
- 6. Dual Language Professional Development
 Plan
- Curriculum Alignment Plan/DL Programmatic Features
- 8. Assessment in English/Spanish
- 9. Instructional Resources in English/Spanish

After setting an Expansion Timeline (Milestone 1), the next step towards deciding what program models to offer and where involved Identifying the Student Demographics (Milestone 2) of existing bilingual programs (also known as transitional bilingual education or TBE), as well as the number of qualified bilin-

gual/biliterate teachers who could be trained to work in dual language. This assessment of student characteristics and available resources to convert from TBE to dual language is an essential step to determine what human and material resources are available to offer the programs²⁷ at each site (Milestone 3). This was followed by the establishment of a Dual Language Implementation Advisory Committee (Milestone 4), integrated by the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Schools, the directors of Human Resources, Curriculum and Instruction, and ELLs, several principals, the Elgin Teachers Association, teachers of ELLs in grades 1-3, parents, and other key learning support staff. The committee was thus equipped to support implementation and provide support to challenges as they emerged.

Communications and Outreach Plan (Milestone 5): The district designed a communications campaign to alleviate concerns about the impact of dual language on teaching jobs, student outcomes, and the overall stress that a major programmatic change can place on a district. The key messages were: a) statutes support dual language as an entitlement for ELLs; and b) the empirical evidence makes dual language the equitable option for educating ELLs. The district conducted monthly informational meetings, wrote program handbooks for teachers and administrators, distributed a quarterly newsletter, and launched a bilingual website (English-Spanish) for teachers, parents, and the community. In addition, a parent handbook and informational brochures were issued in English, Spanish, Gujarati, Polish, Tagalog, and Urdu, and distributed at the Family Welcome Center. The district also opened a Language Line to answer parent questions, and an ELL Website (www.u-46.org) with current information, dual language research articles, and useful links to dual language websites. The link also includes the Dual Language Interest Survey that parents of English speakers are required to fill out for their children to be considered for two-way immersion programs.

²⁷ In U-46, dual language includes developmental bilingual or two-way immersion models. No foreign language immersion programs are offered.



School District U-46 2011-2012 District Improvement Plan.
 URL: http://www.edline.net/files/oCG4v/4c16a341699
 51e673745a49013852ec4/DIP2011-12Powerpoint.pdf
 School District U-46 2015-16 organizational chart at: http://www.ludaschools.org/orgcharts/charts/Elgin%200rg%20Chart%20.pdf

Schools announced the program to families through school-wide Connect-ed (automated phone call) notifications (coupled with districtwide announcements to pre-K students). In addition, schools were encouraged to announce informational meetings on marquees and through their PTA/PTOs. Flyers were sent to private preschool centers and were placed in libraries and district parks. Announcements were placed on the Univision TV network and Spanish-language radio stations, and information was conveyed through webinars and school newsletter reminders. The messaging involved presenting the program not only on its merits but also as endorsed under legal and policy frameworks to provide equitable services to ELLs.

In SY2017 U-46 rolled out the 7th grade, thus effectively closing its first elementary PreK-6 cycle and moving into middle school. In anticipation of the 7th grade roll-out, parents of students in 5th and 6th grade were invited to a series of informational meetings to prepare them for the transition to middle school. Currently, there are plans to launch 8th grade in SY2018, and to roll out high school beginning in SY2019.

Professional Development Plan (Milestone 6): Perhaps the most critical professional development was designed for principals in order to produce a collective paradigm shift from perceiving students as the source of achievement gaps, to conceiving opportunity gaps and a need to realign district and school resources as the source of disparities in achievement. To ensure the highest quality of professional development, the district organized a three-day retreat for principals and teachers facilitated by DLENM, a national leader in professional development for dual language. Training focused on re-examining the allocation of resources within existing budgets for various district departments while prioritizing dual language programming. Subsequent training, provided by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in addition to DLENM, continued focusing on training principals to advocate for dual language within their buildings, and with parents in the community. Teachers, on the other hand, are given access to presentations available through the Intranet and are encouraged to participate in national conferences and in institutes offered by the district.

Curriculum Alignment Plan (Milestone 7): ELL office staff helped align instruction and assessment in Spanish²⁸ with the district's Curriculum Roadmap, "a prioritized, baseline curriculum framework in literacy and math developed to provide consistency regarding instructional priorities across grade levels and schools."²⁹ This online resource provides access to Curriculum Alignment Plans for each grade level. Parents receive a guide for each grade level specifying skills in math and literacy that children are expected to develop by the end of each grade in Spanish. ³⁰ Illinois is a member of the WIDA Consortium and as such uses its Spanish Language Development (SLD) standards.

EQUITABLE ACCESS

As previously mentioned, equitable access to dual language in Elgin U-46 is conceived differently for ELLs than for English speakers. Because bilingual education is a requirement in Illinois whenever 20 students in a school building are ELLs who speak the same language, all Spanish-speaking ELLs must be accommodated in the district's dual language programs. ³¹ Neighbor-

³¹ Unlike other districts in Illinois, there are no transitional bilingual programs in U-46; rather, the district meets its obligation to provide bilingual education exclusively through dual language programs. Parents retain the right to opt out of bilingual services in favor of English-only programming.



²⁸ Dual language instruction is not merely teaching some or all of the general education curriculum in a partner language; rather, specific language and content integration, partner language grammar and skills, and reinforcement of concepts across languages must be included in an aligned dual language curriculum.

²⁹ School District U-46 (n/d). "Overview CI" at http://www.edline.net/pages/SDU46/About Us/District Improvement Plan/Previous District Improvement/200 8-09/Pillars Areas of Work 2008-

^{09/}Curriculum_Instruction_and_As/Overview_CI
30 See for example, the Pathways document in Spanish for
2nd

grade:http://www.edline.net/files/wWLGK_/ed9e86979 0f957503745a49013852ec4/Pathways Grade 2 March 20 13 SP_Revised.pdf

hood programs launch with the one-way developmental bilingual model for ELLs only and are expanded to two-way immersion if the number of English-speaking applicants adds up to at least 33% of all students. Whenever dual language seats for Spanish-speaking ELLs are not available at their neighborhood school, they are referred to nearby satellite programs with transportation.

For English-speakers, dual language is a form of enrichment, similarly to the foreign language immersion programs at MCPS and PPS. Where two-way programs are offered, or where one-way developmental bilingual programs can be converted to two-way programs, English speakers are encouraged to apply, but the district does not guarantee seats for all applicants. Rather, English speakers are served on a first-come-first-served basis, first at their neighborhood schools, and then at satellite schools (without transportation). Lotteries are conducted in very limited cases. As previously mentioned, the district has designed a detailed and extensive Communications Plan to reach out to more isolated families. In addition, principals receive ongoing training and support by the Office of English Language Learners on strategies to actively recruit parents.

STAFFING AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In Elgin-U-46, the ELL office responsible for implementing dual language is well staffed with high quality, bilingual/biliterate, highly dedicated personnel, including a program director, five coordinators (three responsible for ELL initiatives, one for data and compliance, and one for the Family Welcome Center), three ELL/dual language instructional coaches, one coordinator for Family and Community Engagement (FACE), and one full-time, in-house Spanish interpreter.

Administrators in U-46 echoed the statements made by their colleagues in Portland: dual language does not require additional teaching staff. The number of ELLs entering pre-K through grade 1 generates the number of full-time (FTE) teachers the district must provide. However, there are differences in qualifications. All teachers

must have ESL certification or a bilingual endorsement. The district has partnerships with local colleges to develop teachers, not all of whom are required to hold bilingual credentials as the 80:20 model requires classroom teachers to be bilingual in grades pre-K to 3 only. After that, when instruction in each language takes up 50% of the time, the district uses a team teaching approach, whereby an English teacher and a Spanish teacher work collaboratively. Still, whenever possible, fully bilingual and biliterate teachers are hired in the upper elementary grades, as the staff's commitment to bilingualism is essential for the program's success.

"We were teachers ... and we believed that the system is there to support teachers. So, we were killing ourselves, sometimes working until 11 pm. We had an excellent team and when principals saw how hard we worked, they'd say 'What can we do to support you?'... Quality of instruction and building leadership is what facilitates collaboration. General education teachers want curriculum alignment plans like the ones we have done in Spanish for ELLs."³²

- Wilma Valero, Former ELL director

Resource Reallocation

One major difference between Illinois and other states is that supplemental funding for ELLs comes in the form of cost reimbursement to help local school districts meet the extra cost of providing language instruction in bilingual programs. At least 60% of state transitional bilingual education funding must be used for instructional costs. The district also has access to federal funds under Title III (Language Instruction Programs for Limited English Proficient Students) and the Immigrant Education Programs. U-46 ensures that all funding is used as efficiently as possible to meet the needs of all of its programs for ELLs.

³² Statement made at La Cosecha Conference presentation, November, 2016.



ARTICULATION BETWEEN ELEMEN-TARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL

Although the first cohort of students who enrolled in the dual language immersion program in U-46 (who were in Pre-K through first grade in SY 2012) has not reached Grade 12 yet, by 2016-17, all elementary programs were feeding into 7th grade in five middle schools. The curriculum has been articulated in alignment with state and district standards. Students take two courses in Spanish: Spanish Language Arts (SLA) and Social Studies. The Spanish language arts curriculum continues the district's standards-based K-6 thematic units and focuses on "people, places, and environments." The focus is on literacy skill development that builds proficiency to attain the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy and to pass the Diploma

de Español como Lengua Extranjera (DELE), an international exam administered by the Ministry of Education in Spain. The social studies (estudios sociales) curriculum is offered in the Spanish language block, and uses authentic materials. All other subjects are offered in English. Social studies is deemed a more appropriate subject to conduct in Spanish than math or science because it lends itself to discussion, or production of oral language, which is essential to build second language skills. The district is prepared to launch the 8th grade in SY2018, and is planning to roll out the high school program subsequently, with the office of ELLs spearheading program and curriculum design, as well as alignment with district standards, and with standards for attaining the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy.



RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXPAND PROGRAMS IN AN EQUITABLE MANNER

RECOMMENDATION 1

Develop a clear vision for how dual language and foreign language immersion programs support or should support MCPS's focus on racial equity. Use a tool such as Portland's "Racial Equity Policy Lens" (Appendix A) to raise awareness about deficit assumptions and necessary paradigm shifts for increasing equitable access to an education that promotes bilingualism, biliteracy, and high academic outcomes for all.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Establish a dual language expansion committee. This committee should include diverse parent representatives, and should be charged with developing expansion goals (number of programs, number and types of students, geography), set an implementation timeline, and support MCPS in determining how current and new dual language programs fit with applicable state and federal laws—i.e. the Every Child Succeeds Act, Maryland Seal of Biliteracy.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Conduct an assessment of community needs and assets to teach different partner languages. As a starting point, identify elementary schools with the largest population of ELLs of the same language group; bilingual/biliterate teachers at these schools or county-wide who can be trained to teach in dual language classrooms; the availability of existing partner language materials, curriculum, and assessments; and parental interest in enrolling children in these programs.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Develop a comprehensive, districtwide plan for diversifying and expanding dual language programming to create racially integrated classrooms and schools and narrow achievement gaps. Based on the findings from the community needs and assets assessment (recommendation #3), plan for expansion in all elementary schools where it would be feasible to implement at least two classrooms per grade of a dual language program, preferably a two-way program. The establishment of two-way programs is especially recommended in schools with a high proportion of ELLs. This may require converting foreign language into two-way immersion programs. Overall, the placement of new two-way immersion programs should allow for all current foreign language immersion students to be placed in either a foreign language or a two-way immersion program.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Develop a Communications Plan with cross-departmental input to ensure adequate outreach to under- represented families. Work with personnel responsible for family and community engagement, International Admissions Office, pre-k and Head Start, ESOL, health, and other services who interact with under-represented families. Develop a comprehensive list of targeted audiences—i.e. teachers, administrators, parents, and community. Develop strategies for reaching each target audience, including professional development events, community venues, foreign language media, brochures, websites, newsletters, flyers, automated phone calls, school marquees, webinars, and so forth. This plan will also serve to increase equitable access to dual language programs.



RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD SYSTEM-WIDE CAPACITY AND CONTAIN COSTS

RECOMMENDATION 6

Develop a dual language professional development plan with comprehensive training for administrators and office staff. Just as with teachers, administrators and office staff must develop sufficient knowledge of dual language essentials in order to know how to advocate for the program inside and outside of the school. Ensure ongoing training for principals to recruit under-represented parents to the program, and provide principals with regular and on-going feedback as to whether or not they meet expectations for leadership over dual language programs.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Establish a Department of Dual Language. Dual language programs require a dedicated group of professionals knowledgeable of world and dual language perspectives, and capable of building cross-departmental collaborations. Dual language administrators must be well versed in civil rights laws pertaining to the education of ELLs. They must also have collaboration skills to build fruitful inter-departmental partnerships that support equitable access and high quality implementation of dual language programs, including the development of standards-aligned curriculum, and identification of authentic materials in the partner language.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Establish capacity-building pipelines to develop the district's own corps of dedicated bilingual/biliterate teachers. Districts committed to expanding dual language capacity usually work to establish dual language courses in existing teacher training programs offered by local colleges and universities. Districts must also train in-service teachers when switching program models (e.g. from foreign language immersion to two-way). In addition, as teacher demand expands, it may be necessary to consider innovative recruiting strategies, such as securing transitional licenses for educated, highly bilingual/biliterate individuals while they receive on-the-job teacher training, expert mentoring, and taking courses towards earning teaching licenses.



RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD QUALITY AND PREVENT ATTRITION

RECOMMENDATION 9

Evaluate program quality in the partner language. The Choice Study reported outcomes in English, but not in partner languages. Assess and report instruction and performance in partner languages to parents and the district. Parents who fully understand the learning standards for the second language are more likely to support the program.

RECOMMENDATION 10

Develop curriculum alignment plans in English and in the partner language. Current and future programs, in order to be high quality and narrow achievement gaps, will require clear, high language and content standards, fair assessment, instructional resources, support and interventions in two languages, and aligned cultural and linguistically responsive instruction.

RECOMMENDATION 11

Design admissions policies that maximize equitable enrollment, student and parental satisfaction, and reduce attrition. This recommendation favors the continuance of sibling links, as their elimination may limit access and continued enrollment for working families, reduce parental satisfaction and commitment to the programs, contribute to attrition which, beyond the second grade, can threaten viability if the balance of students from each language group is disrupted.

RECOMMENDATION 12

Plan for similar attrition rates to those currently observed in foreign language immersion programs. Launch at least two classrooms per program to ensure that—with the attrition that is expected in all dual language programs—that there can be at least one full classroom throughout the elementary grades. As the program expands district-wide, in order to ensure sufficient students in middle and high school, create feeder patterns that combine multiple elementary cohorts into a single middle school, and multiple middle school cohorts into a single high school.

RECOMMENDATION 13

Broaden admission standards for middle and high school dual language programs. Heritage speakers should be able to gain access to dual language programs at middle school with some initial support (e.g. summer courses), and through instructional differentiation. This would also offer a way of offsetting attrition between elementary and middle school that is bound to occur, even with careful planning.

RECOMMENDATION 14

Create incentives for students to continue through middle and high school. Develop elective offerings and service learning opportunities to encourage students to seek secondary dual language courses as desirable. Align language learning benchmarks so that elementary grade coursework develops the language skills needed to do advanced, college-level coursework in high school. Publicize the Seal of Biliteracy as a marker of a rigorous education, advantageous for college and the workforce.



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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Portland's Racial Equity Policy Lens

- 1) Who are the racial/ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice or decision? And what are the potential impacts on these groups?
- 2) Does this policy, program, practice or decision ignore or worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?
- 3) How have you intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected by this policy, program, practice or decision? Can you validate your assessments in (1) and (2)?
- 4) What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)
- 5) How will you (a) mitigate the negative impacts and (b) address the barriers identified above?

APPENDIX B

PPS Dual Language Immersion Programs

SPANISH (90:10)						
K-5	6-8	9-12				
Ainsworth	West Sylvan	Lincoln				
Atkinson	Mt. Tabor	Franklin				
Rigler	Beaumont	Madison				
Beach	Beach	Roosevelt				
Bridger	Bridger	Franklin				
Cesar Chavez	Cesar Chavez	Roosevelt				
James John	George	Roosevelt				
Sitton	George	Roosevelt				
Lent	Lent	Franklin				
Scott	Scott	Madison				
	RUSSIAN (90:10)				
Kelly	Lane	Franklin				
J	APANESE (50:5	0)				
Richmond	Mt. Tabor	Grant				
MANDARIN (50:50)						
King	King	Jefferson				
Woodstock	Hosford	Cleveland				
VII	ETNAMESE (50:	50)				
Roseway Heights	TBD	TBD				