

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY  
MEETING AGENDA ITEM**

**TITLE:** HCPSS World Language Program Report **DATE:** June 12, 2014  
**PRESENTERS:** Leslie Grahn, Acting Coordinator of World Languages  
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**OVERVIEW:**

This report begins with an overview of the goals, philosophy, and current state of the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) World Language Program and then goes into detail about the Elementary World Language program. It highlights the PreK-5 WoRLD program, a new pathway through which students begin gaining language skills at the earliest grades.

**RECOMMENDATION/FUTURE DIRECTION:**

- Phase-in daily Spanish instruction for grades 3-5 at Ducketts Lane Elementary School and implement the PreK-5 WoRLD Program at five additional schools.
- Continue the Elementary World Language Program pilot at Laurel Woods and Waverly Elementary Schools for the 2014-2015 school year.
- Plan to implement the PreK-5 WoRLD Program at Laurel Woods and Waverly Elementary Schools beginning in the 2015-2016 school year.
- Develop a plan for expanding the PreK-5 WoRLD Program to additional elementary schools.
- Develop a plan for providing articulation for PreK-5 WoRLD 5<sup>th</sup> graders transitioning to middle school.

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## Introduction

In alignment with the HCPSS Strategic Plan, “Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation,” the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) World Language Program has established a system goal:

*“In addition to proficiency in English Language Arts, every student will graduate with intermediate level proficiency in at least one other world language.”*

According to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines (2012), speakers at the Intermediate level are distinguished primarily by their ability to create meaning with the language when talking about familiar topics related to their daily life. They are able to recombine learned material in order to express personal meaning. Intermediate-level speakers can ask simple questions and can handle a straightforward survival situation. They produce sentence-level language, ranging from discrete sentences to strings of sentences, typically in present time.

This goal supports the HCPSS Strategic Plan outcomes of developing robust world language instruction and international learning opportunities K-12 (1.1.6) and of providing equitable access to rigorous coursework PreK-12 (1.2.1). To achieve our system goal, it is necessary to build multiple pathways, or “Pathways to Proficiency,” by which students may attain language proficiency during and beyond the school day.

One new pathway that has been established is the *PreK-5 WoRLD* (World-Readiness through Language Development) Program, an initiative that allows students to begin study of a world language in the earliest grades. The program was begun in the 2013-2014 school year at Ducketts Lane Elementary School (DLES) in kindergarten through grade two. This report will provide background information about the current state of the world language program in HCPSS and more specifically, will share information regarding what World Language Office staff members have learned through the new program and how it assists us, along with other efforts, in meeting the goal of intermediate language proficiency in at least one world language for every student.

### **Philosophy of the HCPSS World Language Program**

The HCPSS World Language Program is anchored in the ACTFL World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (see Appendix A) and the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The ACTFL standards are organized into five categories, otherwise known as the “5 C’s”: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. Language learners gain communicative skills in the interpersonal (speaking and writing), interpretive (listening and reading), and presentational (speaking and writing) modes. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines outline the characteristics of language learners along a continuum, ranging from novice to superior skills.

Using those guidelines as a foundation, the HCPSS World Language Program has adopted a list of guiding principles around language learning:

- Language is best learned in an immersion setting.
- Language function takes precedent over language form.
- Language learning should begin as early as possible.
- Language learning should be available to all students.
- Language learners are diverse and grow at varying rates in their language learning.
- Language learning aligns with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and contributes to college and career readiness.
- Language skills are best measured by proficiency level.

It is an expectation that world language teachers conduct their classes in the target language 90-100% of the time, as recommended by ACTFL. Target language immersion provides a rich language learning environment for students, provides rigor, and leads to gains in proficiency in the language skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

During the 2013-2014 school year, the HCPSS World Language Program implemented common rubrics to be used by teachers when measuring student performance toward proficiency. These rubrics mirror the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and have offered teachers and students the opportunity to evaluate and discuss student growth in language skills using the language of proficiency (see Appendices B and C).

## **Current State of the HCPSS World Language Program**

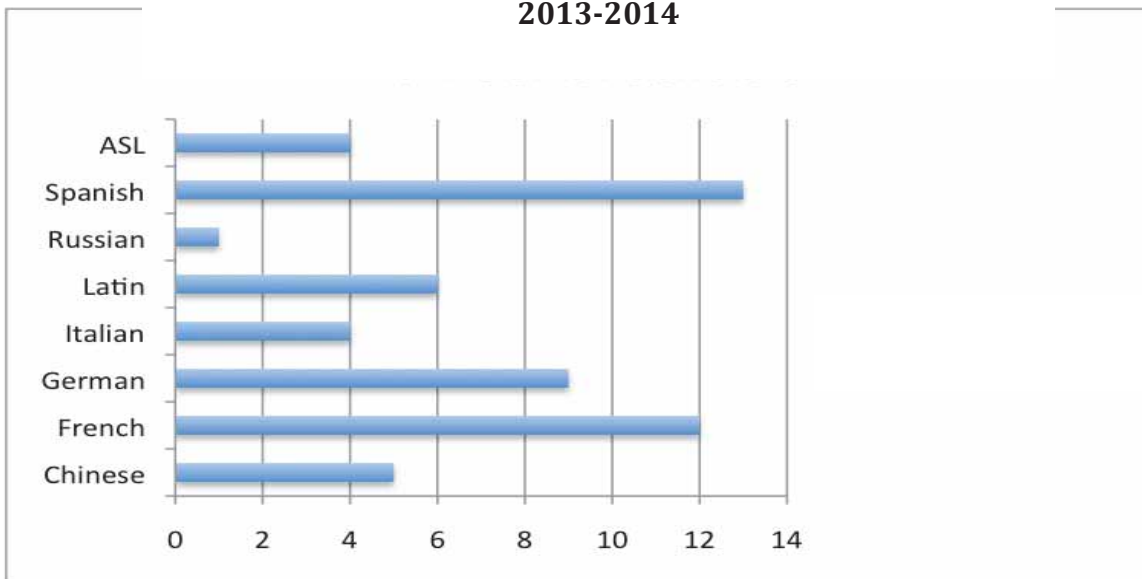
### **Secondary Program**

Most students begin their language study at grade seven where they may select between French I or Spanish I, which they study over two years. Mount View and Murray Hill Middle Schools offer Chinese I, French I, and Spanish I in grades six through eight.

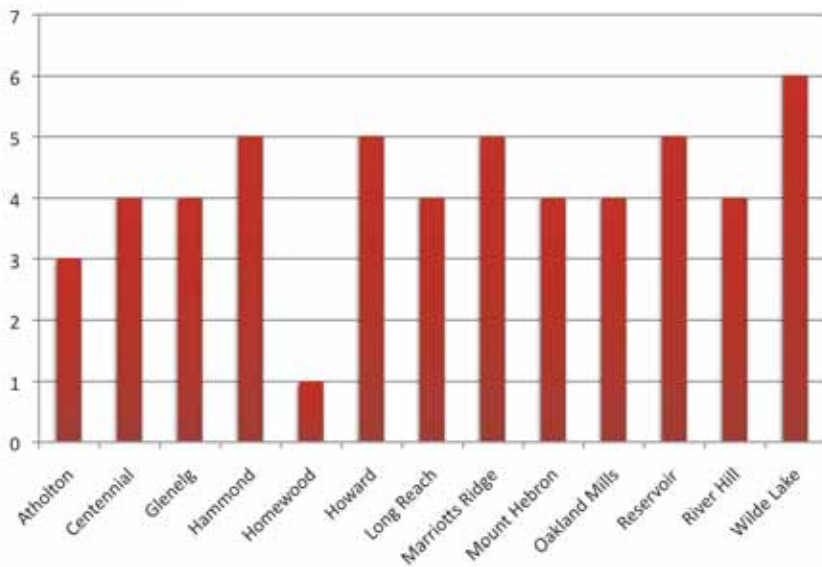
At the high school level, students either continue their study of French and Spanish in level two or two honors, or they begin the study of a new language. Along with French and Spanish, Chinese, German, Italian, Latin, and Russian are available. Students may continue their language study through the Advanced Placement level. American Sign Language is also a language option for students. The number of languages offered at each high school in any given school year depends heavily on student interest because world languages are elective courses and are only one pathway to high school graduation. Approximately 66% of all high school students are enrolled in a world language during the 2013-2014 school year.

The graph below (Figure A) illustrates the number of schools where each language is offered in the 2013-2014 school year. As indicated by the graph, thirteen high schools currently offer Spanish. This includes Homewood where students, for the first time, have access to world language study. Figure B shows the number of languages offered at each of the high schools during the 2013-2014 school year.

**Figure A**  
**Number of High Schools Where Each Language is Offered**  
**2013-2014**



**Figure B**  
**Number of Languages Offered at Each High School**



The chart below (Figure C) shows the 2013-2014 high school world language enrollment by level (based on an estimated enrollment of 10,902 students).

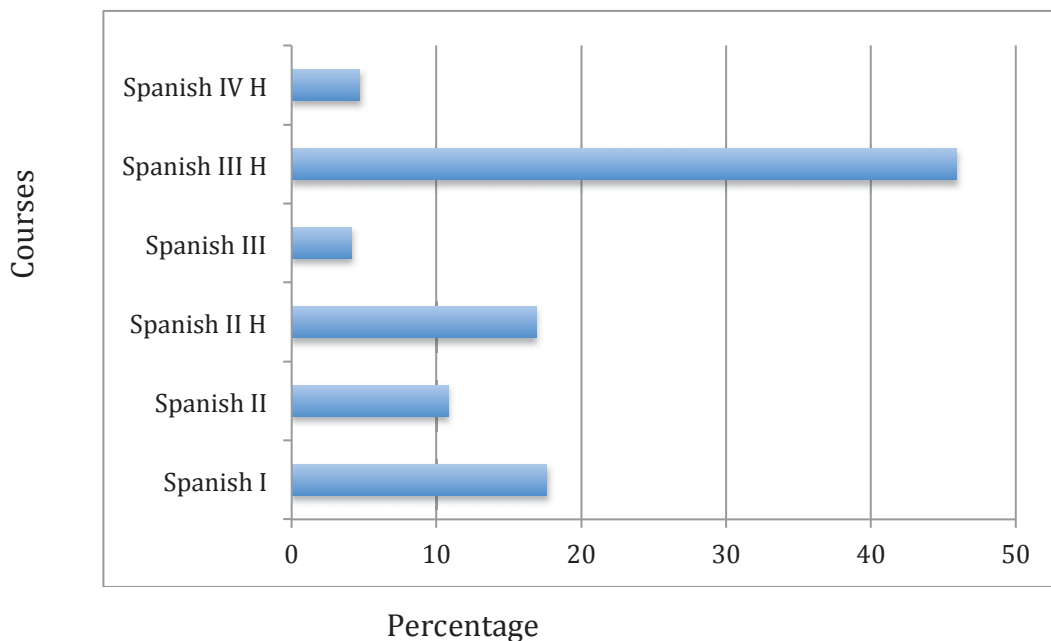
**Figure C**

Level	Number of students enrolled	Percentage of HS WL enrollment
Level 1	2315	21%
Level 2	3821	35%
Level 3	2751	25%
Levels 4+	1923	18%

Low enrollment rates in level one in high school are predictable, as most students complete level I French or Spanish at the middle school level. A source of concern is the attrition rates between levels 2 and 3 at the high school level which range from 19% (French) to 48% (Latin). The data shows that two out of five of our students enrolled in level two world language in high school typically end their study at a novice mid to novice high proficiency level, short of our system goal of intermediate proficiency.

In response to the current limits of the Middle School World Language Program, the World Language Office conducted placement testing from December 2013 through February 2014 of one hundred ninety-four eighth grade heritage speakers of Spanish in ten middle schools. The placement results are displayed in the chart below (Figure D).

**Figure D: Recommended 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Placement of Heritage Speakers of Spanish for School Year 2014-2015**



The placement results are shared with the student, the middle school guidance counselors, and the high school counselors, encouraging these rising ninth graders to leverage the power of the language proficiency they bring to accelerate to higher levels of language study, including Advanced Placement.

### **Elementary Program**

In the 2011-2012 school year, the first elementary world language pilot was launched at Laurel Woods and Waverly Elementary Schools in kindergarten through grade 5 where students have one semester each of Mandarin Chinese and Spanish for one hour per week. The world language curriculum at Laurel Woods and Waverly is STEM-based and is aligned to both the ACTFL Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. Students receive approximately forty-five hours of language instruction per year, divided evenly between Chinese and Spanish.

In the 2013-2014 school year, the *PreK-5 WoRLD* Program was implemented at DLES where students in kindergarten through grade 2 receive thirty minutes of daily Spanish instruction. The goal of the program is to build communicative skills in the target language, working toward intermediate level proficiency. Additional program goals include:

- supporting academic content area instruction
- enhancing literacy development in both English and the target language
- promoting global awareness and cross-cultural understanding.

The *PreK-5 WoRLD Program* is accessible to all students and the resources provide materials for differentiation of instruction based on student learning styles, interests, and readiness levels. The program offers differentiated materials to accelerate advanced and heritage learners and it includes assessments that track student progress in the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

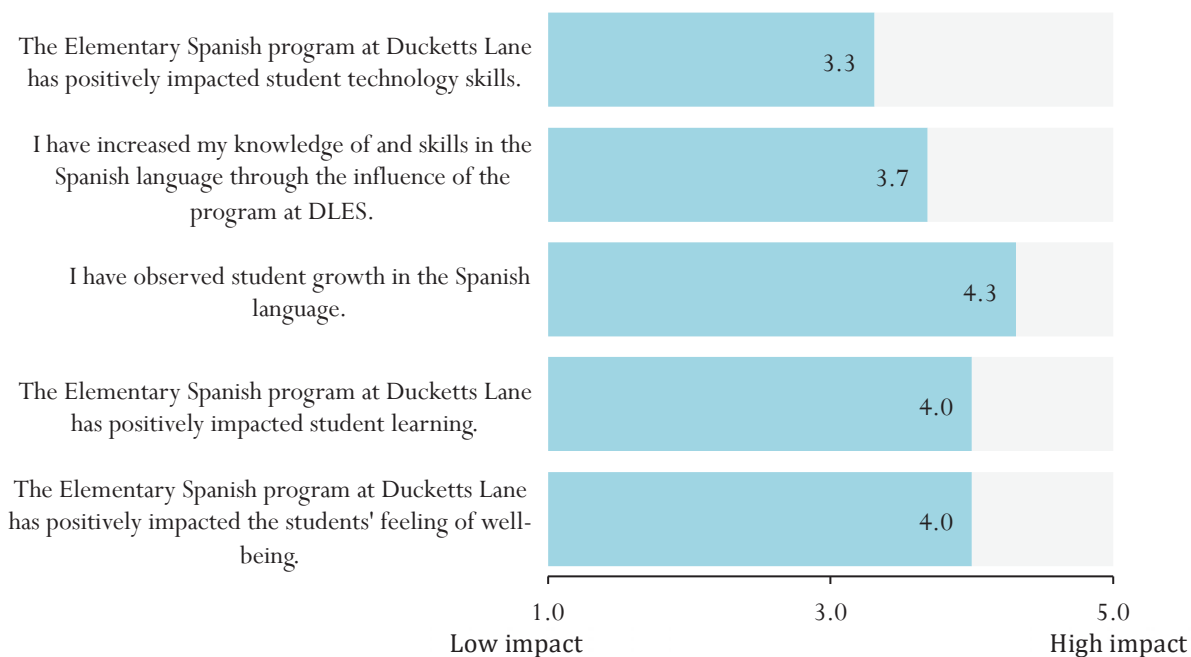
Students and parents have access to an e-text, which is compatible with a variety of platforms and devices. This resource allows parents to participate in and support their student's language learning beyond the school day.

In November 2013, feedback data was collected from DLES K-2 parents at parent conferences through a Google Form. One hundred fifteen parents responded to the survey. The parent survey collected data about the use of the digital tools, including the e-text. Parent responses indicated that only one-third of the parents had accessed the digital tools with their students as of November 2013. In response to that data, DLES world language teachers offered support sessions to families at after school and evening events such as "A Cozy Night of Reading". In addition, the DLES technology teachers had all students in kindergarten through grade 2 practice logging into their Spanish online materials during technology class. Other school responses to the data are:

- World language teachers have created a homework choice board that includes going online and using the digital resources.
- Reminders about the Spanish program and how to access the digital tools are included in the school's weekly newsletters
- Kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 homeroom teachers were given access to the digital materials so that they may assist students.

In December 2013, DLES staff in kindergarten through grade 2 and related arts teachers were asked to provide feedback on the elementary world language program. Sixteen staff members responded to the survey. The graph below summarizes their responses on a 1 (low)- 5 (high) point scale in terms of impact of the world language program on student technology skills, student learning, and students' feelings of well-being. The following data (Figure E) also captures staff feedback on their own language learning as a result of the program and observed growth in student learning of Spanish.

**Figure E: DLES Staff Survey Feedback, December 2013**



Some of the most powerful data collected from DLES staff regarding impact was through the examples they provided. Some of their comments included:

- “We have many students who speak Spanish at home. They enjoy seeing their classmates learning their language.”
- “Learning a second language seems to increase self-esteem. Students are very proud to demonstrate what they have learned.”
- “I believe that foreign language can sometimes promote positive risk taking in the classroom. The students are willing to explore their thought processes more freely. Also promoting confidence in the learner.”
- “Students who speak Spanish are able to excel and use their language skills.”
- “I think that the program has increased the student's awareness that there are people who are from different cultures and speak a different language.”
- “Spanish instruction has overlapped with CCSS helping students master and practice standards they are learning in other subject areas.”
- “I am a special education teacher in first grade. I have observed one of my students who has limited spontaneous language besides scripting and repeating, participate in Spanish, especially in the songs, without prompting. This student uses Spanish spontaneously to greet individuals, and will repeat what he has learned at home in Spanish. This exceeded my expectations for this student! Fantastic job. (This is just one example, too. I could go on and on!)”

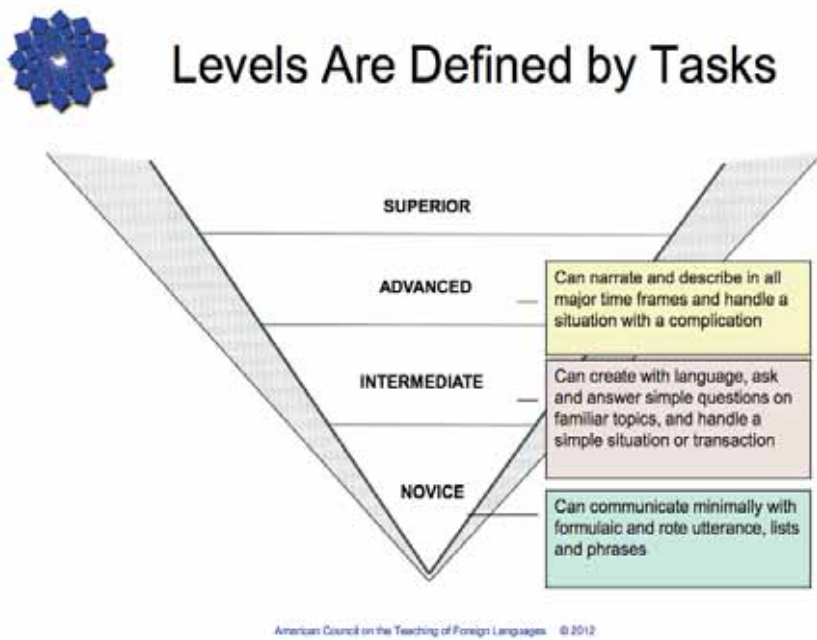


- “Our students who are native Spanish speakers appear extremely excited to have Spanish class and Spanish teachers to speak to and relate to. I have also seen relationships evolve and questions being asked amongst students who are trying to learn more about each other based on their native languages. Students feel comfortable with their differences and feel like it is "cool" to speak more than one language.”

### Measuring Language Proficiency

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines outline a range of abilities, from novice to superior levels and the tasks that a language learner can demonstrate through those levels (Figure F).

Figure F



Formally measuring students’ language proficiency can be achieved in a variety of ways, some of which involve interviewers in a face-to-face setting and others that are web-based. Widely used world language assessments are listed in the chart below:

Proficiency Assessments Appropriate for Grades PreK-5	
Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA)	SOPA is an interactive listening and speaking assessment designed for children who are learning a second language in a school setting. It includes hands-on activities and are conducted entirely in the second language for grades 2-8, is done in pairs with two trained test administrators and students who are encouraged to interact with each other as well as with the interviewers

Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA)	ELLOPA is the same as SOPA, but for grades PreK-2
Proficiency Assessments Appropriate for Grades 5-Adult	
Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)	The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, or OPI, is a live 20-30 minute conversation, taking place over the phone, between a trained, certified ACTFL tester and the candidate. It is a valid and reliable test that measures how well a person speaks a language. The procedure is standardized in order to assess global speaking ability, measuring language production holistically by determining patterns of strengths and weaknesses.
Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP)	The STAMP Assessment is a web-based and computer-adaptive, with real-world questions that engage foreign language students and help them understand their own proficiency levels. Facilitated by a proctor, STAMP assessments have been validated by field testing and expert panels.
ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)	The AAPPL Assessment is a web-delivered assessment of standards-based language learning that reflects best practices in pedagogy and assessment

Measuring language proficiency in the early grades is challenging due to the need for involvement of a human interviewer and limited timeframes. Plans are underway to have staff trained in the administration of the ELLOPA and SOPA assessments which will be used to inform and shape future locally-developed summative assessments.

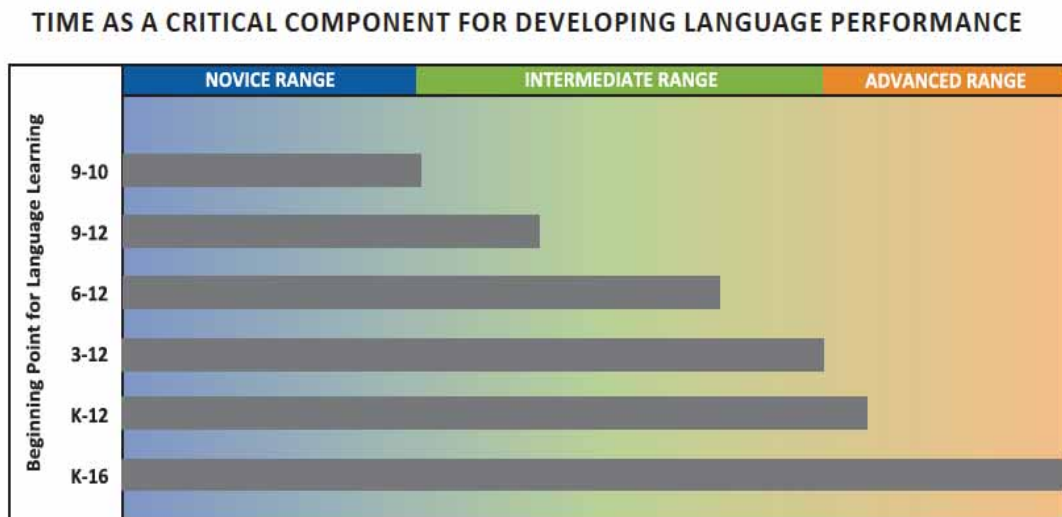
The Office of World Languages has developed a summative assessment for the kindergarteners at DLES. The DLES kindergarteners will be our first cohort to complete the K-5 sequence of the elementary model. This will allow collection of proficiency data throughout the course of their language study.

The assessment is modeled after the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), given to English Language Learners. Because young language learners first develop the receptive skill of listening on their journey toward proficiency, the summative assessment to be given in June 2014 to DLES kindergarteners will assess student proficiency in listening skills. Additional skills areas will be assessed as students complete later grades in the program.

## Plans for Expansion of the *PreK-5 WoRLD* Program

In order to meet the goal of intermediate proficiency in at least one world language in addition to English for all HCPSS students, it is important that HCPSS offers a well-articulated PreK-12 world language program. Time is a critical component of developing language proficiency as indicated by the chart below from ACTFL (Figure G).

**Figure G**



In addition to time, intensity is another factor for ensuring the building of language skills toward intermediate proficiency. Having daily instruction in the language is the optimal state. The chart below (Figure H) compares the instructional time in Spanish that the students at Laurel Woods and Waverly have had over the three years of the pilot to the Spanish instructional time the K-2 students at Ducketts Lane have been afforded in the 2013-2014 school year.

**Figure H: Instructional time**

2011-2014 (3 years)	LWES/WaES	54 hours of Spanish instruction
2013-2014 (1 year)	DLES	90 hours of Spanish instruction

In the 2014-2015 school year, the *PreK-5 WoRLD* Program has been embedded into the Elementary School Model and is slated to be expanded to include grades PreK through five at Ducketts Lane and five additional schools. Those schools are:

- Bryant Woods
- Phelps Luck
- Running Brook
- Stevens Forest
- Talbott Springs

### **Staffing Considerations**

World Languages is a critical needs area for finding highly qualified, certified staff. The Office of World Languages, in collaboration with Office of Human Resources has taken a multi-pronged approach to attracting high quality staff to teach in Howard County. Some of the efforts include:

- Offering open contracts to highly qualified candidates
- Conducting on-site interviews with interns at the University of Maryland College Park
- Holding an Elementary Spanish Teacher Interest session in February 2014 for HCPSS staff who are not currently teaching Spanish, but may be certified in world languages or have the language skills and/or credits to add the endorsement to their teaching certificates
- Offering a three-credit graduate course, “Engaging Young Learners in the World Language Classroom,” in Spring 2014 through a partnership with the Towson Learning Network
- Posting of job openings on world language professional sites
- Holding a curriculum interview day on June 3, 2014.

### **Why Spanish?**

When considering language choice, Spanish is a very practical one. The United States is the fourth largest Spanish-speaking country in the world and Spanish is an official language of the United Nations, the European Union, and the World Trade Organization. Spanish is the third most commonly used language on the Internet.

The six schools who will implement the *PreK-5 WoRLD* Elementary Spanish program during the 2014-2015 school year have sizable percentages of heritage learners of Spanish (ranging from 12% to 33%). The chart below (Figure I) shows the percentages of heritage learners for the six schools in the 2013-2014 school year.

**Figure I**

School	Heritage Learners of Spanish
Bryant Woods	12%
Ducketts Lane	13.9%
Phelps Luck	31.4%
Running Brook	13.7%
Stevens Forest	33.2%
Talbott Springs	21.7%

Research shows that the strategic use of students' native language serves as a vehicle for the development of higher order thinking skills. When an English Language Learner's native language is valued as an asset for academic achievement, they are more likely to have increased self-esteem and greater self-efficacy.

In addition, K-12 heritage speakers of Spanish often demonstrate intermediate to advanced proficiency levels in the skills of listening and speaking, with lower proficiency levels in reading and writing.

Spanish as the language choice is also directly related to the availability of high-quality, 21<sup>st</sup> century materials and resources. The instructional materials being used in the *PreK-5 WoRLD* program are entitled "*Descubre el español con Santillana*" (Discover Spanish with Santillana). They were developed in close alignment with the national foreign language standards and the Common Core State Standards. The structure of the *Descubre* materials affords multiple entry points for students. At each level, the student book begins with an introductory unit, assuming students enter the program with zero knowledge of Spanish, and the remaining units are sequential, spiraling within the grade level.

Each level of the program moves at a faster pace, allowing for the recycling and expansion of acquired vocabulary and skills. Also, the cultural perspective of the material changes from level

to level, so students who are in a second or third year of World Language will be able to recycle and master previously-learned vocabulary, while still being exposed to new vocabulary and cultural perspectives. Units of instruction are as follows:

- Unit 1: Nos conocemos (Getting to know each other)
- Unit 2: Como vivimos (Our daily lives)
- Unit 3: Vamos a aprender (Let's learn!)
- Unit 4: Los animales (Animals)
- Unit 5: Nos cuidamos (Taking care of ourselves)
- Unit 6: Nuestro ambiente (Our environment)
- Unit 7: Profesiones/Como funciona (Professions and how things work)
- Unit 8: Nuestras celebraciones (Our celebrations)

### **Recommendations for Laurel Woods/Waverly Elementary World Language Pilot**

As HCPSS moves toward an articulated PreK-12 world language program whose goal is intermediate proficiency for every student, it is critical that the system have elementary programs that help students develop true language proficiency. It is recommended that the Laurel Woods/Waverly pilot continue as is for the 2014-2015 school year, with those two schools being brought into the *PreK-5 WoRLD* program (the world language component of the Elementary School Model) in 2015-2016.

Although HCPSS will discontinue the Laurel Woods/Waverly Elementary World Language Pilot in 2015-2016, staff in the Office of World Languages will continue to investigate curricula, resources, and materials for Chinese. The Office of World Languages is interested in having Chinese as a viable world language option at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

### **Plans for Providing Additional Pathways to Proficiency**

In addition to implementing the *PreK-5 WoRLD* Program in selected schools, the Office of World Languages is exploring other pathways by which students can reach intermediate proficiency. Options that are currently being explored include:

- Information gathering and planning for implementation of the MSDE World Languages Credit for Proficiency Model Policy (see Appendix D)
- Implementation of distance learning options for less commonly taught languages
- Increasing the number of language choices at the middle school level
- Proficiency testing at grades 5 and 8 to ensure appropriate placement and allow for acceleration and access to rigor.

The HCPSS World Language Program strives to emulate our school system mission of “preparing students to thrive in a dynamic world” by creating global citizens who are world-ready to participate in a multi-lingual environment that values other cultures, with the goal of developing functional proficiency in world language. Elementary world language is part of a PreK-12 program that puts all students on the pathway toward world-readiness from the earliest grades.



# WORLD-READINESS STANDARDS FOR LEARNING LANGUAGES

GOAL AREAS	STANDARDS	
<p><b>COMMUNICATION</b></p> <p>Communicate effectively in more than one language in order to function in a variety of situations and for multiple purposes</p>	<p><b>Interpersonal Communication:</b></p> <p>Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.</p>	<p><b>Interpretive Communication:</b></p> <p>Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.</p> <p><b>Presentational Communication:</b></p> <p>Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or viewers.</p>
<p><b>CULTURES</b></p> <p>Interact with cultural competence and understanding</p>	<p><b>Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives:</b></p> <p>Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.</p>	<p><b>Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives:</b></p> <p>Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.</p>
<p><b>CONNECTIONS</b></p> <p>Connect with other disciplines and acquire information and diverse perspectives in order to use the language to function in academic and career-related situations</p>	<p><b>Making Connections:</b></p> <p>Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines while using the language to develop critical thinking and to solve problems creatively.</p>	<p><b>Acquiring Information and Diverse Perspectives:</b></p> <p>Learners access and evaluate information and diverse perspectives that are available through the language and its cultures.</p>
<p><b>COMPARISONS</b></p> <p>Develop insight into the nature of language and culture in order to interact with cultural competence</p>	<p><b>Language Comparisons:</b></p> <p>Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.</p>	<p><b>Cultural Comparisons:</b></p> <p>Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.</p>
<p><b>COMMUNITIES</b></p> <p>Communicate and interact with cultural competence in order to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world</p>	<p><b>School and Global Communities:</b></p> <p>Learners use the language both within and beyond the classroom to interact and collaborate in their community and the globalized world.</p>	<p><b>Lifelong Learning:</b></p> <p>Learners set goals and reflect on their progress in using languages for enjoyment, enrichment, and advancement.</p>



# WORLD-READINESS STANDARDS FOR LEARNING LANGUAGES

The five “C” goal areas (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) stress the application of learning a language beyond the instructional setting. The goal is to prepare learners to apply the skills and understandings measured by the Standards, to bring a global competence to their future careers and experiences.

The National Standards for Learning Languages have been revised based on what language educators have learned from more than 15 years of implementing the Standards. The guiding principle was to clarify what language learners would do to demonstrate progress on each Standard.

These revised Standards include language to reflect the current educational landscape, including:

- Common Core State Standards
- College and Career Readiness
- 21st century skills

These Standards are equally applicable to:

- learners at all levels, from pre-kindergarten through post-secondary levels
- native speakers and heritage speakers, including ESL students
- American Sign Language
- Classical Languages (Latin and Greek)

The 2011 report, *A Decade of Foreign Language Standards: Impact, Influence, and Future Directions*, provided evidence of and support for the following concepts which influenced these revisions:

- The National Standards are influencing language learning from elementary, through secondary, to postsecondary levels.
- The integrated nature of the five “C” goal areas has been accepted by the profession.
- Educators asked for more description of what language learners should know and be able to do in the goal areas of Connections and Communities.

- Over 40 states have used the five “C” goal areas to create state standards for learning languages (identifiable even if configured in slightly different ways).
- Some state documents are beginning to describe cultural outcomes in terms of processes of observation and experience.
- Many local curricula are also aligned with the five “C” goal areas and the details of the 11 standards.

Based on this consensus from all levels of language educators, **the five goal areas and the 11 standards have been maintained.** The World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages clarify and better illustrate each goal area and standard in order to guide implementation and influence assessment, curriculum, and instruction.

Responses to the online feedback survey gave overwhelming support to the proposed revisions:

- **93.4%** of respondents said the “refreshed” Standards describe **appropriate** (39.1%) or **very appropriate expectations** (54.3%) for language learners.
- **94.9%** of respondents said the “refreshed” Standards provide **equally clear** (10.9%), **somewhat clearer** (26.8%), or **much clearer direction** (57.2%) for language educators and learners.

In response to additional suggestions from the feedback and comments received, specific descriptions of performance at each level (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior), sample indicators of progress, and sample learning scenarios will be the next areas addressed in this revision process.



**WORLD LANGUAGES: HOLISTIC SPEAKING RUBRIC FOR STUDENT GROWTH**

<b>I CAN</b>	<b>Intermediate High</b>	<b>Intermediate Mid</b>	<b>Intermediate Low</b>	<b>Novice High</b>	<b>Novice Mid</b>	<b>Novice Low</b>	<b>Beginner</b>
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> <i>What language do I use?</i></p>	<p>Use expanded words and expressions from a wide range of topics</p> <p>Use some idiomatic expressions with details and elaboration</p>	<p>Use words and expressions from a wide range of topics and begin to use expanded words within a topic</p> <p>Provide details and elaborate</p>	<p>Use a variety of learned words and phrases on a range of familiar topics</p> <p>Begin to give more details and elaborate</p>	<p>Use learned words and phrases on familiar topics</p> <p>Elaborate a little</p>	<p>Use a limited number of memorized words and phrases that are repetitive</p>	<p>Use a small number of memorized words and phrases that are repetitive</p>	<p>Produce a few words or none at all</p>
<p><b>Functions &amp; Structures</b> <i>How do I use the language?</i></p>	<p>Use connected sentences to narrate, argue, or explain</p> <p>Implement basic target language structures and a variety of advanced structures with multiple time frames</p> <p>Combine sentences using connector words to begin to communicate in paragraph length</p>	<p>Use strings of sentences to describe or explain</p> <p>Implement basic target language structures with variety in time frames and increased use of advanced structures</p> <p>Combine sentences using connector words to create original sentences</p>	<p>Use strings of simple sentences to describe or explain</p> <p>Implement basic target language structures with variety in time frames and occasional use of advanced structures</p> <p>Combine words and phrases to create original sentences</p>	<p>Use phrases and simple sentences to provide basic information</p> <p>Implement basic target language structures with some variety in time frames</p> <p>Begin to combine words and phrases to create original sentences</p>	<p>Use words, phrases, and simple sentences to provide information</p> <p>Begin to implement basic target language structures</p>	<p>Use a few memorized words and phrases to provide basic information</p>	<p>Provide no information in response to questions nor ask questions of others</p>
<p><b>Comprehensibility</b> <i>How well am I understood during this task?</i></p>	<p>Be understood easily and speak with clarity</p> <p>Attempt to apply conventions of native speech</p>	<p>Be understood easily and speak with clarity</p> <p>Make some errors in pronunciation during the use of novel sentences</p>	<p>Be understood easily</p> <p>Pronounce most sounds unique to the target language, but make some errors during the use of novel sentences</p>	<p>Be understood with little difficulty</p> <p>Pronounce in isolation many sounds unique to the target language with little to no English influence</p>	<p>Be understood with little difficulty</p> <p>Pronounce in isolation some sounds unique to the target language with little English influence</p>	<p>Be understood with effort</p> <p>Pronounce very few sounds unique to the target language with some English influence</p>	<p>Produce no sounds unique to the target language</p>

Adapted from the *Jefferson County Public Schools World Languages: Performance Assessment Rubrics (Kentucky)*, *Delaware Integrated World Language Performance Assessments*, the *PALS: Performance Assessments for Language Students (Fairfax County Public Schools)*, the *ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners*, and *LinguaFolio*.

**WORLD LANGUAGES: HOLISTIC SPEAKING RUBRIC FOR STUDENT GROWTH**

<b>I CAN</b>	<b>Intermediate High</b>	<b>Intermediate Mid</b>	<b>Intermediate Low</b>	<b>Novice High</b>	<b>Novice Mid</b>	<b>Novice Low</b>	<b>Beginner</b>
<b>Comprehension</b> <i>How well do I understand?</i>	Understand the main idea and most details in conversations on familiar topics	Understand questions and statements from real-life situations which take place face-to-face or electronically	Understand questions and statements, but sometimes need to hear things repeated again	Understand simple questions and statements, but sometimes need to hear things repeated again	Understand some simple questions and statements, but may need to hear things repeated	Understand some isolated words, but often need to hear things repeated	Understand nothing in the target language
<b>Interpersonal Speaking</b>							
<b>Quality of Interaction</b> <i>How well do I maintain the conversation?</i>	Speak easily on familiar topics, but haltingly on unfamiliar ones	Speak easily with few pauses and/or repetition	Speak easily with few pauses and/or repetition	Speak easily with few pauses and/or repetition	Speak easily with some hesitation, pauses, and/or repetitions	Speak haltingly with pauses and/or repetition	Sustain no part of a conversation in the target language
<b>Interpersonal Speaking</b>	Sustain and advance the conversation	Sustain the conversation	Manage to sustain the conversation	Somewhat sustain the conversation	Sustain formulaic or memorized conversation	Sustain some memorized conversation	

**WORLD LANGUAGES: ACROSS PROFICIENCY LEVELS**

	<b>Exemplary 4</b>	<b>Proficient 3</b>	<b>Developing 2</b>	<b>Basic 1</b>
<b>Language Control</b> <i>How accurate is my language?</i>	I do not make errors in grammar, word order, and word choice appropriate for this level	My errors in grammar, word order, and word choice for this level do not prevent communication	My errors in grammar, word order, and word choice for this level sometimes prevent communication	My errors in grammar, word order, and word choice for this level often prevent communication
<b>Content of Message</b> <i>How much of the message do I deliver?</i>	I complete more of the task than was required	I complete everything that was required	I complete most of what was required	I complete little of what was required

Adapted from the *Jefferson County Public Schools World Languages: Performance Assessment Rubrics (Kentucky)*, *Delaware Integrated World Language Performance Assessments*, the *PALS: Performance Assessments for Language Students* (Fairfax County Public Schools), the *ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners*, and *LinguaFolio*.

**WORLD LANGUAGES: HOLISTIC SPEAKING RUBRIC FOR K-5 STUDENT GROWTH****Novice Range Performance**

	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Vocabulary</b> <i>What language do I use?</i>	Have sufficient vocabulary for making statements and asking questions	Use vocabulary centering on basic objects, actions, places, and common communicative expressions in familiar topic areas	Use specific words, high-frequency expressions, and other longer, memorized expressions in a limited number of topic areas	Recognize and uses words and expressions related to concrete objects and actions on familiar topics	Recognize and uses few or no words and expressions in the target language
<b>Functions and Structures</b> <i>How do I use the language?</i>	Discuss stories, issues, concepts  Give speeches, oral reports  Offer creative solutions to issues, problems	Formulate hypotheses, make predictions  Describe processes, procedures  Retell stories, events	Ask "why" and "how" questions  Describe pictures, events, objects, people in complete sentences or phrases  Restate facts	Name objects, people, pictures  Answer "who," "what," "when," "where," "which" questions with a single word or short phrase	Name objects, people, pictures with prompting and support  Answer "who," "what," "when," "where," "which" questions with prompting and support
<b>Comprehensibility</b> <i>How well am I understood?</i>	Be understood easily, but make some errors during use of novel sentences  Pronounce most sounds unique to the target language	Be generally understood by someone accustomed to language learners  Pronounce in isolation many sounds unique to the target language	Be understood with little difficulty by someone accustomed to language learners  Pronounce in isolation some sounds unique to the target language	Be understood with difficulty because of frequent errors  Pronounce very few sounds unique to the target language with some English influence	Produce no sounds unique to the target language



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**TO:** Members of the State Board of Education  
**FROM:** Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. *lmlowery*  
**DATE:** December 17, 2012  
**SUBJECT:** Model Policy: World Languages Credit for Proficiency

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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this item is to present a proposed model policy that, if adopted by local boards of education, would enable school systems to award high school credit to students based on demonstrated language proficiency.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:**

During the 2008 Maryland General Assembly session, the *Task Force for the Preservation of Heritage Language Skills in Maryland* was established to investigate current language preservation efforts and to develop new strategies in preserving world language skills in our State. The legislation creating the Task Force recognized that “while it is important for new Americans to learn and master English, there is also a critical shortage of Americans proficient in languages other than English.” The bill recognized that Maryland’s heritage language speakers “comprise a valuable and vastly underutilized linguistic resource.”

One of the recommendations of the Task Force’s January 2009 Report to the Governor and General Assembly was to “support and promote the awarding of high school credit by exam for students who attend non-public heritage language schools in Maryland.”

MSDE convened a statewide validation and standard setting study with key stakeholders and world language experts in Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, German, Korean, and Spanish to set the recommended proficiency levels equated to high school credit that are included in the model policy.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

COMAR 13A.03.02.05 already provides the option for local school systems to award credit by exam. The proposed model policy recognizes that Maryland’s diverse student population has opportunities to develop language skills outside the classroom and provides a framework for local school systems to award credit for demonstrated proficiency.

**ACTION:**

Recommend approval of the model policy.

Attachments: Model Policy: World Languages Credit for Proficiency; Summary of Validation Study

## Model Policy: World Languages Credit for Proficiency

### For Consideration by Local Boards of Education

**.01 Purpose and Scope:** In accordance with COMAR 13A.03.02.05, students may earn credit toward high school graduation through examination. Recognizing that Maryland's diverse student population has opportunities to develop language skills outside the classroom, local school systems may develop policies and procedures for awarding world language credits to students based on demonstrated proficiency across a range of language skills.

#### **.02 Definitions:**

- A. *World Language* means any natural language, including American Sign Language and languages no longer spoken (e.g., Latin and ancient Greek).
- B. *ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Proficiency Guidelines* means the global descriptions of five levels of integrated performance in listening, speaking, reading and writing: *Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, and Distinguished.*

#### **.03 Demonstrating Proficiency in a World Language**

- A. The student may select appropriate assessment instrument(s) from Maryland State Department of Education's approved list of assessments aligned to the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines.*
- B. Assessments must be offered in a proctored setting with appropriate technology.
- C. The cost of the assessment(s) shall be borne by the student.

#### **.04 Determining Proficiency and Credit Equivalencies**

The local school system may award one or more credits based on the student demonstrating an overall proficiency according to the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* as follows:

Novice Mid – 1 credit

Novice High – 2 credits

Intermediate Low – 3 credits

Intermediate Mid and above – 4 credits.

#### **.05 Reporting Results**

- A. The student will provide official test results to the local school system.
- B. The local school system will validate the assessment results and notify the student of the number of World Language credits awarded.
- C. The World Language credit(s) will be recorded on the official transcript.

## **SUMMARY OF MARYLAND VALIDATION AND STANDARD SETTING STUDY WORLD LANGUAGES CREDIT FOR PROFICIENCY**

The American Council of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Scales are global characterizations of integrated performance in listening, speaking, reading, and writing derived from the government language skill descriptions and adapted to academic context. Since 1986, these guidelines have been the national standard for language proficiency rating and testing.

Maryland and numerous other states use the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and the Written Proficiency Test (WPT) for teacher certification assessments in world languages. The qualifying proficiency score for Maryland teachers on both assessments is Intermediate High.

On September 16, 2011, ACTFL conducted a full-day validation study for Maryland that included world language experts, supervisors, public and community school teachers, and MSDE staff. ACTFL provided detailed information on the proficiency scale, the assessment, research findings, and qualifying proficiency scores in other states. Language specific teams studied the proficiency guidelines, the national and state standards for world languages, sample interviews, and writing samples at each proficiency level. After discussion across language groups, the panel recommended the level of competency students must attain in order to earn credit as follows:

Novice Mid – 1 credit

Novice High – 2 credits

Intermediate Low – 3 credits

Intermediate Mid and above – 4 credits

In addition to the American Council for Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and Written Proficiency Test (WPT), there are other widely available assessments that are aligned to the ACTFL proficiency scales. MSDE will maintain a list of national assessments in each language that are aligned to ACTFL.