Proposal for
French/Spanish Immersion Programs
at
Herndon Elementary School
General Information

Program Models:
French: World Languages Immersion Program K-6
Spanish: Two-Way Dual Language Immersion Program K-6

Goal: Student Achievement Goal 1 / 1.2 Communicate in Two Languages

Proposed Languages: French and Spanish

Funding

Funding Sources:
French:
- FCPS staffing ratios and per pupil allocations for math and science content materials
- Additional FCPS staffing allocation for French Immersion

Spanish:
- FCPS staffing ratios and per pupil allocations for math and science content materials
- Title III grants for supplementary materials for Two-Way Spanish Immersion Program

Time Allocations:
- 50% in target language (Portion of language arts, math & science)
- 50% in English (Language arts, social studies, health and specials)

Estimated Cost:

French Immersion Program:
The French Immersion Program would be estimated with the same cost as currently implemented. Funding is allocated:
- 1.0 FTE
- 1.0 IA
- $385 staff development, $500 materials

Two-Way Immersion Spanish

The Spanish Two-Way Immersion program will be funded through current staffing allocations, and per pupil materials allocation for math and science. Additional staffing may also be needed after grade 2 or 3 when attrition begins to impact scheduling of Spanish classes.

School Enrollment

- Herndon has had growing enrollment over the past years. Seven year projection is based on rising 1st grade class (see attached chart)
- Projection is based on current state class size limits and FCPS class size limits
  - 24 for lower ES (state)
  - 30 for upper ES (FCPS)
- If current enrollment trends continue, Herndon will have:
  - 7 classes at the lower elementary levels (K-3)
6 classes at the upper elementary levels (4-6)
- French immersion program is projected with current enrollment trends (two classes per grade level in grades 1-2, one class per grade level in grades 3-6) with the addition of 2 K classes
- Spanish immersion program is projected to have some attrition but students can be added to the program for a longer period of time, balancing county staffing ratios and attrition
- Implementation of both French and Spanish immersion programs would allow for 3-4 classes taught entirely in English

**Approach**

**Option 1: International School Approach**

An International School Approach (to include programs such as IB PYP or Model UN education) will be necessary in order to be inclusive of all programs/students at the school (French, Spanish, English). The size of all programs (French, English, Spanish) should be fairly equal to allow for balanced program administration.

Challenges:
- Challenges not to develop schools within a school but one international community of language learners.
- Balancing two immersion programs French/Spanish within the same school while including international education for students not enrolled in immersion
- Students not participating in immersion will not be able to receive any language instruction in the short term (but should receive international competency instruction) until FLES is introduced.
- Introduction of FLES will pose additional challenges as it would need to be balanced with French/Spanish as well.
- Herndon is an immersion school and a neighborhood school at the same time. Research has shown that existing programs with several languages at the same school are either private schools (e.g. Washington International School) or charter schools (Denver Language School or Global Village Academy) where all students enrolled at the school are involved in immersion education.
- Scheduling

**Option 2: Immersion Magnet Approach**

With this approach all students enrolled at Herndon Elementary School will participate in either Spanish or French immersion, similar to Key Elementary School in Arlington, VA. Students not participating in the immersion program at Key Elementary School attend a neighboring school within close proximity (walking distance).

Challenges:
- Herndon currently is a neighborhood school housing the French immersion program. Herndon offers at least three classes for students not participating in immersion. Students would not be able to opt out of immersion education at the school site.
- Students who wish to opt out would need to be transported to a neighboring school.
Impact study on neighboring schools has not been conducted

**Existing Programs and Initiatives Considered:**

**Private Schools:**
- Rock Creek International School (closed due to budget shortfalls)
- Denver International School (35 years).

**Public Schools:**
- Denver Language School and Global Villages Academy, founded 2007: Public charter schools in the Denver area – Colorado is a school choice state. Charter schools are not neighborhood schools. If families decide not to continue in an immersion program, they will need to go to a different school. No assessment or attrition data available on their websites.
- Key Elementary School in Arlington, VA- Spanish immersion school with all students participating in the program. Another neighborhood school is within walking distance for students opting not to participate in immersion education.

**State initiatives:**
- Several states (Department of Education in Utah and Delaware) have proposed immersion education initiatives for their public school systems. All proposals are based on the one target language per school approach.

**Other initiatives:**
- International School Approach is projected to be tried in Columbus Ohio merging a French Immersion Program from a neighborhood school and a Spanish Immersion Program from another neighborhood school, but plans are currently on hold.

**Final Recommendations:**
- Postpone proposal to allow more time to study impact and financial implications of both options (1 and 2 above).
- While enrollment numbers at Herndon would theoretically allow for an International School Approach more study of long term implications is recommended.
- The Immersion Magnet Approach would require further study with regard to potential enrollment and implications on surrounding schools.
- Discussion with existing programs should be pursued.
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*Projection based on current enrollment and class sizes

# of CL = Total number of classrooms
F = French
E = English
S = Spanish

Office of Language Acquisition & Title I
World Languages Team