

World Languages Committee Status Report – Executive Summary – 19 January 2020

Items Listed in priority order following upon close consultation with the APS World Language Office:

- Status:** This year, continuing from an APS decision made last year, more than half the 23 elementary FLES schools (“Foreign Language in Elementary School) are providing fewer than the minimum 90 minutes/week of Spanish language instruction that are recommended by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Ten schools do provide the recommended 90 minutes to each grade level. This curriculum inconsistency contradicts the School Board’s previously approved 2016 WLAC Recommendation to adhere to that recommendation in every FLES school, and it will necessarily result in students having unequal preparation to succeed in secondary school.

Solution: Every FLES school needs to return to providing a consistent 90 minutes per week of Spanish language instruction for every elementary class, as was done in previous years.
- Status:** In fall 2018, the WLAC recommended steps to enhance and improve the learning of Spanish and English literacy. World Language Instruction has adopted a standards-based Learning Framework with new scope and sequence for elementary learners in the FLES program, and a new Learning Framework for the elementary immersion program. Both frameworks are being used to assess student learning and provide constructive feedback to the students and their parents. New report cards for students incorporate these standards.

Need: Provide FLES and Immersion teachers with formal training in the new standards-based frameworks and the use of standards-based assessment to provide feedback to students and parents.
- Status:** Also in response to the 2018 WLAC Recommendation referenced above and using internal analysis, APS has sent faculty the last two years to participate in a national Dual Language Conference and this year to the annual ACTFL conference. APS has arranged for collaborative work between the two elementary immersion schools to build a framework to instruct literacy in both languages. Elementary immersion teachers plan and collaborate to intentionally provide proficiency-based instruction in Spanish language arts. In addition, teachers of Spanish for Fluent Speakers have also changed the focus on instruction and are using a framework that emphasizes Spanish language arts instruction.

Need: Elementary immersion teachers on the Spanish side need additional resources for Spanish literacy learning and time to continue to work in collaboration with English language arts teachers to use the newly created shared literacy framework and ensure literacy instruction in both languages. At the secondary levels, teachers of Spanish for Fluent Speakers need professional learning in effective strategies for teaching language arts to both native and non-native speakers.
- Status:** APS began offering instruction in American Sign Language (ASL) five years ago, and those classes are very popular among students. They are especially popular among students with learning differences that make it hard for them to learn modern spoken languages. At present, however, only Jefferson, Williamsburg and H-B Woodlawn among the middle school programs provide instruction in ASL. Gunston, Kenmore, Hamm, and Swanson middle schools do not yet provide such instruction. This inconsistency across schools is not equitable for the students at the different schools.

Solution: Over the next two years, provide ASL instruction to every middle school in grades 7-8 by adding it to the offerings at Gunston, Hamm, Kenmore and Swanson middle schools.
- Status:** Following collaborative recommendations three years ago between the WLAC and ASEAC, an official APS memo was issued to encourage world language study for elementary students with learning disabilities and the Special Education and World Language Offices have

provided teachers and counselors with focused professional learning in how to help such students learn a language successfully. More such training is still needed.

Need: Continue professional learning for all language teachers and school administrators to further their understanding of the expectation that they support the learning of students with disabilities, the resources available to improve instruction and accommodate students in second language acquisition, and the up-to-date research findings for how students with learning disabilities can best learn a spoken language.

6. **Status:** In partial response to a Fall 2018 WLAC recommendation to build synergies across the curriculum by having world language teachers and curriculum writers collaborate with teachers of Social Studies and other subjects, several steps have been taken to introduce reading materials in Spanish into the instruction of immersion and Fluent Speakers classes that focus on science and social studies. The Wakefield high school program is also providing 9th and 10th grade immersion students with instruction of Biology and Chemistry in Spanish. Other similar cross-curriculum opportunities are also being sought for the teaching of the other languages.

We do not refer in this summary to the fall 2018 WLAC recommendation for APS to administer the STAMP proficiency test to every fifth grade FLES class, because the official APS response has indicated that there is insufficient budget to implement it. The World Language Office has decided to administer the test to half the schools each year as a tool for program evaluation.

DRAFT:

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