



PGUSD Spanish Language Committee

9/16/2021

World language at PGUSD

- PGUSD's ***lack*** of a second language program at elementary and middle school has been mentioned as a concern by incoming families to the district.
- Conducted elementary survey on after school enrichment interest with 140 respondents, most representation from 2nd grade parents.
- The majority of respondents preferred a 2 or 3 day a week model for a class. Several Spanish speaking parents also volunteered to help develop and/or teach the class.
- One presented option was including native Spanish speaking students into After School Enrichment classes (at no cost) where they could have the opportunity to be “the expert” and help co-teaching.

Importance of language instruction early

- Providing second language study is not just a minor enrichment in a curriculum; it can alter the culture of a school and open opportunities that would not exist otherwise.
- Designating second language study as one of these core subjects is essential for a successful program.
- Students who learn a second language early improve their primary language skills and improve their chances for native-like pronunciation and a high level of proficiency later on.

Language/bi-literacy as a life skill

- Many careers out of high-school are opened by learning a second language: Translation, Foreign service, Global business, Teaching, and on and on...
- In multiple work sites all across Monterey County and all over the US prefer to hire bilingual Spanish staff.
- Strengthening exposure and learning at elementary and middle school will help our students graduate high-school with a State Seal of Bi-literacy on their Diploma and even a Translation certificate.
- An expanded foreign language curriculum also will support **Global California 2030** goals of having 50% of high school graduates achieving bi-literacy.

Multiple pathways to implementation

- a. **Exploratory goals:** Gain general exposure to language and culture, learn basic words and phrases, and/or develop an interest in second language for future study. Portions of this program may be taught in English. (Often called **FLEX**—foreign language experience/exploratory).
- b. **Language focus goals:** Acquire listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills; gain an understanding of and appreciation for other cultures. Focus of instruction can be on language and/or subject content. (Often called **FLES**—foreign language in the elementary school.)
- c. **Immersion goals:** Be able to communicate in the language with a high level of proficiency and acquire an understanding of and appreciation for other cultures. At least 50% of the school day is taught in the second language, including academic subjects. (Called partial, total, or two-way immersion, depending on the amount of foreign language used and the make-up of the student body.)

We are requesting/suggesting:

- **This year - Exposure:** Create short and long range strategic plans (for grades K-5) starting with an After School Enrichment Spanish program.
- **Next year - Proficiency:** Adding a Spanish section at the Middle School with the support of Principal Roach. Working backwards from HS, we want students to have the opportunity to graduate with the Seal of Biliteracy, and potential for a CTE track Translation Certificate.
- **Next year - Proficiency:** Developing a pull-out Spanish program (ideally two elementary FTEs) with Carmel Elementaries as an example to offer Spanish proficiency at both Robert Down and Forest Grove.
- **Next year - Planning:** Hiring a consultant to evaluate our curriculum and frame our options and pathways from ***exposure*** to ***proficiency***.

Quotes from PGUSD parents:

"I believe that learning a second language is not only about learning to communicate in that language, it is also about learning the culture of the places where that language comes from. Exposing our children to different ways of being, doing, learning and communicating by learning about a different culture via language learning, can help create an environment of inclusivity." - Kristy Markowitz

"Learning multiple languages has many benefits and contributes significantly to childhood development and our society, broadly defined." - Jeremy Goldbogen

"Another benefit of learning another language is for the benefit of pluralism and appreciating other cultures around the world. Proximity and communication with people of different ethnic backgrounds is an excellent way to combat racism and small-mindedness." - Julia Freeman

"Upon my son starting at RHD four years ago, I was very surprised to learn a Basic Aid district like ours isn't already providing foreign language in the lower grades—like our neighbor Basic Aid district, Carmel Unified School District. I hope this can change."—Heather Lazare" -

Heather Lazare

Quotes from PGUSD Parents

Learning multiple languages helps build community and fosters new friendships and connections with peers.” - Megan McKenna

“With the opportunity to learn new languages, at the same time as learning a primary language, we can lock in those skills that will serve our children into adulthood, it will also provide for better, more well rounded community members and provide empathy, compassion and a better understanding of the sociological circumstances of others in the global community.” - Erin Conway

“Learning a foreign language exposes children to other ways of thinking, other cultures, diversity, and more than anything, fun. It is not only a window to the world but a mechanism through which two create connections and become a global citizen.” - Tally Helfont

“Being bilingual is a very valuable skill- it builds relationships and makes connections that would have otherwise been missed. As a community member, parent, and educator, I feel it would be a disservice to our youngest learners to ignore the need for Spanish language development in Monterey County schools.” - Kim Stone

Quotes from PGUSD Parents

I am writing in support of foreign language education at PGUSD to not only produce multilingual students that are ready to compete in a global economy, but that also possess cultural citizenship. The creation of class offerings (as early as TK) in addition to regular opportunities outside of class to learn about, understand and build connections with other cultures would be very beneficial to our students and our community. I am happy to support this effort in any way needed. Sandra Jones (Bilingual Parent/Robert Down and Forest Grove)