

TWO-WAY LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Feasibility Study



January 3, 2013

Feasibility Study of Two-Way Language Programs

Background Information

During the period 1998 to 2007, Hartford had dual language programs mostly funded through a 5 year Title VII Comprehensive School grant in some elementary schools. The programs were typically implemented in grade K and continued in some schools to grade 4 or 5. However, some schools only implemented grade K-2 and then discontinued the program. Schools that participated during these years were: Moylan, Sanchez, M.D. Fox, Parkville, Betances, Burns, McDonough and Dwight. 2006-07 was the last year of these programs.

On December 20, 2011, the Board of Education passed a resolution authorizing a feasibility study of two-way language programs in the Hartford Public Schools. The feasibility study was to begin by September 2012 and report the results of the study to the Board of Education by January 2013. In addition to two-way language, or dual language, programming, the study was to include information on World Languages and Multicultural Programs in Hartford Public Schools.

Feasibility Study Methodology

To conduct the feasibility study a workgroup was formed which was comprised of staff involved with language programs, multicultural programs, parent engagement and the hiring of staff for language programs. The workgroup met for several meetings including one all day retreat workshop. The workgroup included:

Dianna Roberge-Wentzell, Assistant Superintendent PreK-12
Carole Collins-Ayanlaja, Chief Academic Officer
Eddie Genao, Assistant Superintendent of Learning Support and Parent Engagement
Jennifer Allen, Chief Talent Officer
Dee Cole, Executive Director of Parent Engagement
Natasha Durrant, Director of Staffing
Marta Bentham, Director of the Welcome Center
Mary Beth Russo, ELL Facilitator
Teresita Galarza, Acting Director for the Office of English Language Learner Services
Alicia Willett, Director of Humanities, PreK-12
Bryan Daleas, World Languages Teacher-in-Residence
Melissa Wlodarczyk Hickey, Director of Literary Arts
Alex Nardone, Chief of Staff

This report contains the following:

- **Definitions**
- **Positives and Challenges of Implementing a Two-Way Language Program in HPS**
- **Recommendations**
- **Next Steps**
- **Brief HPS World Language Status Report**
- **Status of Multicultural Programs in HPS**

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KEY DEFINITIONS

English language learner (ELL)

An active learner of the English language whose dominant language is other than English and whose proficiency in English is not sufficient to assure equal educational opportunity in the general education program. ELLs may benefit from various types of language support programs. This term is used mainly in the U.S. to describe K-12 students. (NCTE, 2008 and Bilingual Education Statute: Section 10-17e-j, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes)

Note: In many federal and state documents the term limited-English-proficient (LEP) is used to describe ELLs. In Hartford, we use the term English language learner (ELL).

English as a Second Language (ESL)

A program of techniques, methodology and special curriculum designed to teach ELL students English language skills, which may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, content vocabulary, and cultural orientation. (USDE)

Connecticut describes ESL as a program that uses only English as the instructional language for eligible students and enables such students to achieve English proficiency and academic mastery of subject matter content and higher order skills, including critical thinking, so as to meet appropriate grade promotion and graduation requirements. (Bilingual Education Statute: Section 10-17e-j, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes)

Note: We refer to students as ELLs and a program of language instruction for ELLs as English as a Second Language (ESL).

Transitional Bilingual Education Program (TBE)

This program utilizes a student's primary language in instruction. The program maintains and develops skills in the primary language and culture while introducing, maintaining, and developing skills in English. The primary purpose of a TBE program is to facilitate the ELL's transition to an all English instructional program while receiving academic subject instruction in the native language to the extent necessary. (USDE)

Connecticut explains that a program of bilingual education:

- makes instructional use of both English and the student's native language;

- enables eligible students to achieve English proficiency and academic mastery of subject matter content and higher order skills, including critical thinking, so as to meet appropriate grade promotion and graduation requirements;

- provides for the continuous increase in the use of English and corresponding decrease in the use of the native language for the purpose of instruction within each year and from year to year and provides for the use of English for more than half of the instructional time by the end of the first year;

may develop the native language skills of ELLs; and

may include the participation of English proficient students if the program is designed to enable all enrolled students to become more proficient in English and a second language.

(Bilingual Education Statute: Section 10-17e-j, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes)

Dual Language (Two-Way Language) Program

Also known as two-way, the goal of these bilingual programs is for students to develop language proficiency in two languages by receiving instruction in English and another language in a classroom that is usually comprised of half native English speakers and half native speakers of the other language. (USDE)

Dual language program or two-way bilingual immersion integrates native speakers of English with non-native speakers of English with the goal of developing bilingual, biliterate, and multicultural competencies among all students.

- Total immersion, 90-10 or 80-20, models provide more instructional time in the minority language in the lower grades (90% or 80%), with instruction in English increasing until students receive equal amounts of instruction in both languages in the upper grades.
- Partial immersion, 50-50, model provides equal amounts of instructional time in both languages at all grade levels. (Soltero, 2011)

Foreign Language – a language other than one’s native language. In the U.S. this has historically meant any language other than English.

World Language – can apply to any language, including English, though typically “world language” is used in place of “foreign language”. Many language professionals prefer “world” over “foreign” because it is more inclusive. Additionally, as the U.S. has become more ethnically and linguistically diverse, it is possible that students may be earning world/foreign language credit by taking coursework in their heritage language. For example, students in Hartford with some Spanish language background may be pursuing Spanish language/literature coursework and this would not accurately be described as “foreign” for such students. Some professional language associations and the federal government still use “foreign language” because it is more widely understood than “world language”.

Native Language Speaker – a speaker of a language who speaks that language not only as their first language, but has been educated in the culture/country that speaks that language, and has received formal education in that language.

Heritage Language Speaker – a speaker who has had exposure to a language as part of their cultural heritage, regardless of where the speaker was born and raised. The exposure may be limited to what is spoken at home by relatives, and the term “heritage speaker” includes a wide range of linguistic competency (e.g. the “speaker” may understand spoken language, but has limited oral proficiency and cannot read or write the heritage language.) Heritage language speakers have minimal or no formal education in their heritage language.

Feasibility Study of Two-Way Language Programs

SUMMARY

Positives:

- Cognitive benefits to children. Research has indicated children who grow-up bi-lingual, bi-literate, and multi-culturally competent surpass their non-bilingual peers in academic competencies and language skills.
- Global awareness at an early age
- Prepare high school graduates for college and career readiness
- Bilingual citizens
- Students who learn their first language in school make positive connections between home and school life
- Supports the Portfolio Schools vision
- Stakeholders with local agencies (Community and business support)
- Potential state interest and funding
- Hartford would be a model for other districts
- Supports family engagement through socioculturally supported classrooms
- Addresses all goals of the SOP: Early Literacy, Middle Years Redesign, College and Career Ready
- Gives Hartford staff cultural competencies
- Creates a Lab School with embedded professional development opportunities
- Promotes cultural and social integration

Challenges:

- Requires more concentrated district support and resources
- Staffing/certification/qualifications implications as certified staff are difficult to find- currently HPS has 28 bilingual teachers in 11 elementary schools
- Funding implications for adding the pre-school if not a magnet
- Sustainability of the model: to ensure long-term sustainability will need to partner with higher education institution
- Student and staff mobility/stability from grades PreK-8
- Transportation costs (if students are drawn from all over city)
- High school implications. Implications for advanced study at the high school level. Where students will go in high school? Selected feed to high school?
- Ample time needed to identify staff, administration and offer PD prior to the school opening.
- Time is needed to show success of program (8 years) with measurable growth indicators annually
- Cost for materials (e.g. science text in Spanish and English...books, technology, etc.)
- Need student qualifications for entry
- Curriculum creation by staff
- Keeping native speakers engaged while not overwhelming the language learners in the classroom

Recommendation:

Continue investigation and planning for a Two-Way Language Program to begin in the 2014-15 school year.

Next Steps:

- Determine parent interest via survey and Focus Groups
- Develop a detailed cost analysis
- Create the design components
- Develop a timeline
- Research a potential school site based on the results of a Parent Interest Survey
- Explore State funding support
- Visit Two-Way Language Schools and their models both in and out of Connecticut
- PD opportunities for administration exploring levels of integrating multicultural content into the curriculum
- Identify grades and phase-in schedule
- Consider as a school within a school

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WORLD LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN HPS

Summary of Draft Report: November 28, 2012

A report on the history and current status of World Languages in the Hartford Public Schools, currently in draft form, is being completed and it is recommended that the completed report be reviewed at a BOE Workshop in the near future. The following are highlights from the draft report.

- There are currently 48 World Language teachers in 20 schools.
- World Languages are taught in all high schools except Opportunity High School.
- Only 5 PreK-8 schools offer World Languages: Breakthrough Magnet, Breakthrough II, Burns, Bellizzi and Global.
- 3 themed schools exist that teach World Languages: Bellizzi (Mandarin); Burns (Spanish); Classical (Greek and Latin.)
- Spanish and French are taught by instructors while HMTCA students can take German and Italian on-line.
- Rosetta Stone on-line is a method used by students at Renzulli Academy.
- There are currently no immersion programs in HPS.
- World Language teacher concerns include the absence of a consistent curriculum and common assessments.
- World Language teachers would like more PD and more technology.
- In the district, there is currently only 1 language lab at Bulkeley and 2 are being developed at Burns.

Recent Steps Taken to Support World Languages

- Hired a Director of Humanities who supervises both Social Studies and World Languages.
- Hired a Teacher-in-Residence for World Languages in 2012-13.
- World Language teachers are participating in curriculum writing and review.
- Curriculum writing teams have been formed for Spanish I and II.
- Conducted a needs assessment survey of all HPS World Language Teachers.
- Developed PD opportunities for teachers including state and national conferences.

Dual Language Programming for HPS

- Dual Language is a type of immersion program also known as two-way immersion.
- Two target languages are used- typically English and Spanish (based on demographics.)
- Model maintains a balance of 50% English speakers and 50% native other language speakers.
- Academic content is taught and mastered through each of the target languages.
- Goal is to have students become functionally proficient in their second language while continuing to build their native language skills.

- Research indicates that students in dual-language programs (PreK-8) achieve far greater proficiency in both languages than students in other models.
- A dual language program can be designed as either a magnet school or a non-magnet choice school.

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MULTICULTURAL PROGRAMS

Definition of Multicultural Programs

Multicultural programs are planned and implemented programs that integrate curriculum, instructional practices, resources and assessments which are designed to engage all learners and reflect their heritages and cultural backgrounds including social, racial, linguistic, economic and gender, with the intention of:

- developing sensitivity among the participants to differences in cultural backgrounds and diverse familial settings
- improving 21st century skills and an understanding of equity and social justices issues
- learning about culture as within our culture
- exploring, acknowledging, honoring, and validating other cultures
- developing awareness and respect of other cultures
- enhancing connectedness, positive school climate and
- supporting and strengthening family engagement.

Based on research by Banks and Banks (2010), there are four levels of integrating multicultural content into the curriculum:

Level One: The Contributions Approach

Focuses on heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements (such as monthly celebrations, study of cultural food, dance, and music, and/or by focusing on someone like Pocahontas, Martin Luther King, Jr. or Cesar Chavez

Level Two: The Additive Approach

Content, concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure. (such as adding a book like the Color Purple to existing curriculum or studying Japanese Americans at the time you study WW II)

Level Three: The Transformation Approach

The structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspectives of several diverse ethnic and cultural groups (such as when studying the Revolution, students explore the perspectives of the Anglo revolutionaries, the Anglo loyalists, African Americans, Indians, and the British)

Level Four: The Social Action Approach

Students make decisions on important social issues and take actions to help solve them (such as actions to reduce prejudice in the school).

Current Status of Multicultural Programs in HPS

Steps are being taken to identify current district needs and to develop a framework pertaining to the levels of integrating multicultural content into school-based curriculum and instruction for district principals. The Hartford Heritage and Celebration Ad-Hoc Committee is meeting to frame-out a guide for principals to design and grow their own school based programs and have their own repository of resources. A recent Office of Academics curriculum audit will provide curriculum writers with information that will assist in creating a curriculum that moves along the four tiers.

Based on Banks and Banks (2010), the following are examples of multicultural opportunities currently occurring in the Hartford Public Schools:

Level One: The Contributions Approach (focuses on heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements)

- Pot lucks
- Extended hour grant programs
- Sankofa (Kwanzaa)
- Partnership with Wadsworth (monthly: second Saturdays)
- Bulletin board holiday displays
- School-based activities and monthly celebrations
- School activities around people such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and/or Cesar Chavez
- District Observances: such as National Hispanic Month, essay contests, poster contests
- Day of the Dead

Level Two: The Additive Approach (content, concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing its structure)

- Adding books like the Color Purple to existing curriculum
- Individuals studying Japanese Americans at the time they study WW II
- Extended hour grant programs

Level Three: The Transformation Approach (the structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspectives of several diverse ethnic and cultural groups)

- Asian Studies school design trip to China
- Sanchez school design

Level Four: The Social Action Approach (students make decisions on important social issues and take actions to help solve them)

- Capital Prep school design
- Law and Government: Some components are a Level 4