

World Languages in Cape Elizabeth Schools

**Report to the Cape Elizabeth School Board
February 11, 2020**

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Section 1: Program Goals

Our classrooms are active places in which students are immersed in authentic speaking, listening, reading, and writing situations. Our goal is to give every child the tools they need to communicate in a second language at some degree of proficiency and to have all children experience the cultural practices, products and perspectives connected to the people who speak that language.

The skills and cultural understanding students gain while learning a language are directly transferable to other disciplines . In addition, research has shown that second language study offers many benefits to students in terms of improved communicative ability, cognitive development, cultural awareness, and job opportunities. World languages prepare learners to be competitive in their post-secondary plans - whether pursuing further education or a career, builds global awareness, and develops global citizenship.

Section 2: Strengths of the Program

1. A strong elementary program with a 32 year history that offers an opportunity for an extended sequence of language learning necessary to develop fluency.
2. A long history of vertical coordination and collaboration among all language teachers in the district.
3. A clear focus on communication 1-12 to support the development of fluency.
4. Proficiency based instruction and assessment that incorporate a variety of instructional methods in order to allow students with different learning styles the opportunity for language learning.
5. Integration of technology into the language classroom.
6. Diverse course offerings in the high school language program.
7. High percentage of students who graduate with three or more years of language.
(Data to support this statement will be available during the presentation. Appendix B)

Section 3: Recommendations and Rationale

1. Funding of a level 1 and a Foundations course for French at the High School.
2. Funding for assessing students for the Seal of Biliteracy.
3. More frequent instructional meeting times for the elementary grades.
4. Updated technology for the elementary school World Language teachers: updated (Apple TV compatible) computer for teacher, OS compatible document camera, dedicated iPads for World Language.
5. Adequate resource funding for the elementary program.

Section 4: Program Descriptions at Each Grade/Level

Grades 1-4

Students begin their language study in the district in first grade. In alternating years students begin language instruction in either French or Spanish. Students stay with the same language through sixth grade.

The Pond Cove schedule is structured for two World Language contact times over the course of six school days. During an average school year, classes meet approximately five times per month. Class lengths have varied from 30 minutes in grades 2-4 and 20 minutes in grade 1 to this year's rotation of one 45 minute and one 30 minute class. ACTFL (American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language) recommends three 60 minute classes every five days for minimal beginning second language proficiency at the elementary level.

In 2017 a dedicated instructional space was established for Pond Cove World Language, significantly enriching the authenticity of the language environment available to students of Spanish and French. Prior to 2017, World Language teachers followed an itinerant schedule, carrying materials and traveling to as many as 48 grade 1-4 classroom sessions throughout the six day Pond Cove rotation.

The district does not currently have a Kindergarten language program, although the original 1988 proposal did recommend a K-4 program as research clearly shows that the younger language learning begins, the greater the benefits. The compromise was to start in fourth grade and add the

lower grades over the years. Third grade language classes were added in 2000. Second grade was added in 2013, and first grade in 2014.

If a Kindergarten language level were to be added, it would be essential to work closely with grade level teachers to offer content-based language instruction that complements developmentally appropriate themes and learning goals, and which integrates storybooks, games, songs, and cultural activities that develop listening comprehension, speaking skills, and emerging literacy awareness.

Grades 3 & 4

In grades 3 and 4 students begin to develop skills in French or Spanish. The Pond Cove FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools) curriculum emphasizes listening comprehension, speaking skills, and emerging literacy awareness. Students are exposed to the written form of many words and gradually start to develop reading skills. The classes promote a positive attitude toward other cultures and learning a language.

Communication: greetings and leave-takings, simple questions and responses, likes and dislikes, commands, simple descriptions and expressions

Culture: songs, arts and crafts, children's stories, celebrations, and awareness of cultural landmarks

Vocabulary: colors, numbers, feelings, body parts, family, animals, weather, calendar, clothing, classroom objects, alphabet, country names where the language is spoken, fruits and vegetables, transportation

Connections: similarities and differences between English and French or Spanish, cognates, letter sounds, basic numeracy, awareness of Spanish or French in real-world print and media, use of French or Spanish with family, friends, and in public settings, mechanics of writing and conventions of spelling, awareness of countries or cultural landmarks associated with French or Spanish

Financing for staff would be the main expense for providing a K-4 World Language program. Since the curriculum uses teacher-made materials, additional funding would primarily be for an updated teacher laptop that is Apple TV compatible, as well as for an OS compatible document camera, and iPads dedicated for use in the World Language classroom.

Grades 5-6

The language program acknowledges the importance of language, culture, and geographical understanding. The goal is for students to develop usable language skills and to perceive themselves as successful language learners. The learning targets identify the goals of our units and

enable the students to be more actively involved in their learning. In addition, the program endeavors to enhance students' interests in the diversity of cultures of the global community.

Curriculum Grades 5 & 6

In grades 5 and 6 students continue to develop skills in French or Spanish. The curriculum emphasizes listening comprehension and speaking skills. Our focus is on comprehensible input (CI). Students begin to practice reading and writing skills while expanding their awareness of cultural connections.

The grades 5-6 curriculum includes the following:

- Developing skills in another language: listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing.
- Integrating language with content areas.
- Developing awareness of culture and the importance of language in a global setting.
- Making connections to English such as identifying cognates, word order, and word origins.

Time: 5th & 6th graders have language every other day for 45 minutes.

Communication: greetings/courtesy expressions, simple questions on familiar topics, oral directions and commands, brief guided conversations related to a variety of everyday topics.

Culture: choral reading, songs, authentic children's stories, French/Spanish first names, simulated cultural events, comparison of cultural products and practices, appropriate forms of address and courtesy.

Vocabulary: sports, seasons, adjectives, emotions, foods, pets, numbers, community, directions, house, professions, time, subject pronouns and verbs. The students also read from our large collection of comprehensible input (CI) books.

Connections: similarities and differences between English and French/Spanish, identification of the target language in print and media encountered in everyday life, use of reading and writing strategies, use of French/Spanish with family and friends, and basic math facts in the target language.

Grades 7 & 8

In grades 7 and 8 students continue to develop skills in French or Spanish. In seventh grade students have the option to switch languages if they wish. The curriculum expands to incorporate more reading and writing skills, in addition to strengthening listening comprehension and conversational skills. The learning targets identify the goals of our units and enable students to be more actively involved in their learning. Students learn writing conventions, and they read and

write short narratives. Our focus is on comprehensible input (CI). Students continue to develop an awareness of cultural connections.

Time: 7th and 8th graders have 45 minutes of French or Spanish daily.

Communication: greet, answer questions on familiar topics, respond to directions and commands, discuss a variety of everyday topics, use the language in meaningful ways to express simple opinions and ideas, and use technology to present information and communicate in French or Spanish.

Culture: songs, authentic children's stories, festivals and holidays, seek information on Spanish or French websites, compare cultural products and practices, geography, and authentic foods.

Vocabulary: food, restaurant, animals, family, geography, shopping, travel, pastimes, sports, clothing, body parts, likes and dislikes, technology-related words, schedule, time, school, and community. The students also read from our large collection of Comprehensible Input (CI) books.

Connections: research and discuss similarities and differences between English and French or Spanish, comprehend or identify language in print and media, use of reading and writing strategies.

Grades 9-12

In January of the 8th grade year, language students take a proficiency assessment. The score on this summative assessment in connection with grade and teacher recommendation determine high school placement. Entering ninth graders can begin their high school language studies in levels 1, Foundations, level 2 or level 3. Students can reach up to level 6 depending on the level in which they enter.

Level 1, Foundations, and level 2 are considered introductory courses, level 3 is an intermediate course; and levels 4, 5, and 6 are advanced courses with level 4 being honors and 5, 6 offered at both the honors and AP levels. Both French and Spanish offer levels 1-5 yearly and level 6 every other year. For college admissions the goal is for students to have as many consecutive years in the same language as possible. (See Appendix B: Sequence of courses)

The goal of the high school language department is that all students taking a language at Cape Elizabeth High School will be proficient in speaking, listening, reading and writing their respective languages, as well as being able to view cultural diversity with insight and understanding.

Time:

At the high school, foreign language classes meet for 50 minutes 3 to 4 times per week depending on the schedule rotation.

Section 5: Integration with Technology**TECHNOLOGY**

Technology is consistently integrated in world language classes.

I. Students use technology in the following ways:

- Websites for access to authentic culture, holidays, music, restaurant menus
- Audio recording applications, such as Garageband, Word, Voice memos, Flipgrid
- Smartboard
- Movie-making apps, such as iMovie, Clips, Photobooth
- Podcasting
- On-line sites, such as Quia, Conjuguemos, Sr. Wooly, Alice Ayel
- Web resources for research and graphics.
- Listening activities with sites such as YouTube, Spotify, & other online media apps
- Online resources to practice reading
- PowerPoint/Google slide presentations

II. Because at the high school we are 1:1 with iPads, they have replaced the use of textbooks. The iPads are used everyday in our language classes.

Section 6: Outside Classroom Resources and Programs Utilized in the Content Area

Various programs in which CEMS world language students have participated to expand their language skills and to develop global awareness.

World Wise Schools - World Wise Schools promotes the Peace Corps' "*third goal of teaching Americans about the world by providing educational resources to promote global competence*". It's a free program in which teachers can sign up to be partnered with a Peace Corps volunteer. CEMS has had partnerships with volunteers in Paraguay, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Honduras, Peru, and Panama. Activities are varied, depending on the volunteer and the site needs. We've had letter and video exchanges, art exchanges, story writing, and service projects.

Global Collaboration Week

Global Collaboration Week is an initiative that started in 2014. It's a free program that virtually connects students and schools all around the world and it takes place in September. CEMS was a host school in 2014-2018, and has been a participant every year, 2014-2019.

Global Collaboration Week. "How-to", by S. Dana, 2018

In September 2018 we hosted **Back to School Traditions Around the World** and invited other students from around the world to post their traditions. We checked it every day during Global Collaboration Week and we had responses from students in Virginia, Colombia, Russia, Egypt, Mexico, Tennessee and more.

United Nations Global Goals Initiative

CEMS students have studied the United Nations Global Goals and some have collaborated with other schools, focusing on a specific goal. For example, Global Goal #12, Responsible Use and Production, was our project goal in 2017-2018. [Funded by a CEEF grant]

Journey North Symbolic Butterfly Project, a 5th grade global project, Spanish classes

"The Symbolic Migration unites children across North America through the migration of symbolic ambassador butterflies. In the fall 20,000 students across the globe will create symbolic monarch butterflies and send them to Mexico. Children who live beside the monarchs' winter sanctuaries in Mexico will protect the paper butterflies and return them in the spring." Source: Journey North

Pulsera Project, new this year, Dec. 2019

The Pulsera Project is a nonprofit that connects Central American artists with students in more than 3,000 U.S. schools through the sale of colorful hand-woven bracelets, or "pulseras". It's a community service project that was very received by the CEMS students in December. Through the pulsera sales, 7th graders raised more than \$2,000 to donate to the project.

Bookmarks, Thomas Memorial Library

CEMS students make Spanish and French bookmarks for Thomas Memorial Library patrons as a community outreach activity. Most recently, students made bookmarks to commemorate the 100th Birthday Celebration of TML

Pen pal exchanges

We have had numerous pen pal exchanges with numerous schools in Spain and Uruguay. Students send snail mail letters, virtual letters, video letters and collaborate on Flipgrid projects, Skype calls and more.

Outside speakers

When possible we bring in outside speakers to talk about their experiences using language for work, study or travel. Also, we invite native speakers to share their native countries and cultures. CEHS alumni are a great resource and they have an immediate connection to MS students because they're from Cape. Recent visitors have been a CE grad who studied in Spain, another grad who is studying bats in Panama through the Smithsonian and a grad pursuing a PhD in Spanish.

Valentine's project with Pond Cove, outreach and collaboration between schools

Every year the CEMS students make Spanish and French valentines to give to Pond Cove students, from a secret admirer. We collaborate with the Pond Cove world language teachers to be sure all students receive a card. This is a simple outreach project which the MS students enjoy because they remember having received a card when they were at PC.

Section 7: Cross-curricular Connections

In our classes we not only teach our language content, but we also teach students essay writing, public speaking, and reading comprehension as well as cross-disciplinary vocabulary in the areas of health, science, history, art, careers, current events, etc.

Section 8: Assessment Tools

8th Grade Placement Exam

The 8th Grade Placement Exam was developed about 30 years ago by the Modern Language staff in the High School and the Elementary/Middle School. It has been revised twice, most recently in the past year. Students are placed into a 9th grade course based on their results on this test of speaking, reading, and writing, and on basic knowledge of grammar. Although a student may appeal his/her placement, the score on the assessment has been a highly reliable predictor of student success in a four-year sequence of courses at the High School.

High School

The Modern Language Department at the High School has a variety of common assessments in both Spanish and French. These were originally developed in the course of our work with the Maine Learning Results. The different components assess a variety of skills, and grammar and vocabulary knowledge. We continuously refine the tests in light of the changing nature of the curriculum development process. Although teachers review the results informally to assess student achievement and the effectiveness of instruction, the process has yet to be formalized. With all common assessments, the department is using common speaking (conversation and presentation) and writing (email, essay and personal narrative) scoring rubrics. The American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has established descriptors of student achievement. We have used these descriptors to establish benchmarks for our curriculum.

Since 2011 we have been administering the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) for all seniors levels 4-6. This year the Modern Language Department gave the ACTFL Assessment of Performance towards Proficiency in Language (AAPPL), a nationally administered exam, which assesses reading, listening, writing and speaking. Students that obtain a score that meets the state of Maine's standard, in all four skills, are eligible to apply for the Seal of Biliteracy. This seal will be affixed to their diploma and noted on their transcript. Maine is one of thirty six states that offers the seal which is recognized by academic institutions as well as the business community.

The AP French Language and Spanish Language exams are available for levels 5 (AP) & 6 (AP). Few students take the exam as they are taking so many other AP exams and often private colleges require a score of 5 to grant only 3 credits or to waive the language requirement but give no credit. Frequently, colleges and universities ask students to take their own placement exam and do not give any credit or language waiver.

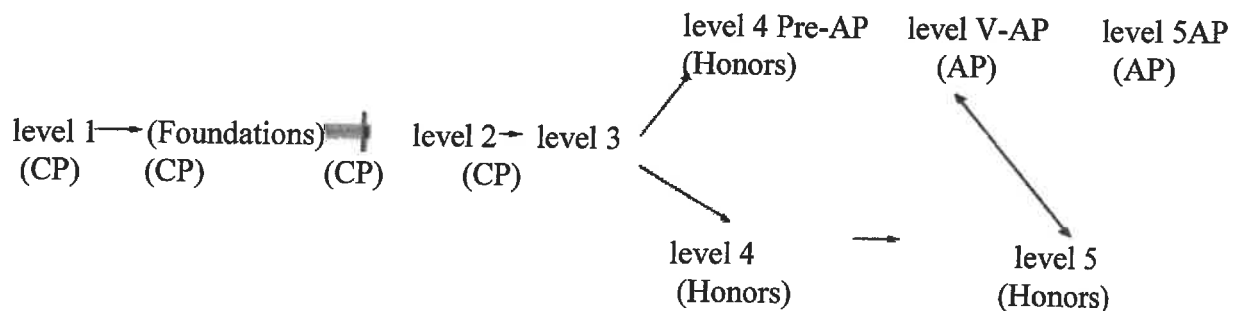
Section 9: Assessment Results

The ACTFL Assessment of Performance towards Proficiency in Language (AAPPL) was administered in December 2019 to 89 high school students in Spanish, French and Russian. We had 61 students qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy at this time with another 23 students who will retake one section in March to meet the State's standard and then qualify for the Seal.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

Flow chart of Spanish language offerings at the high school



An 89 or higher semester average is needed to move on to IV Pre AP, V AP and VI AP. Students with a semester average of 80-88 need to follow the appeals process which includes a proficiency test and teacher recommendation. Students with a semester average of 79 or below can not continue on to the AP level.

Flow chart of French language offerings

Level 2 to Level 3 to level 4 (Honors) to level 5 (Honors or AP) to Level 6 (Honors or AP)

An 89 or higher semester average is needed to move on to V AP and VI AP. Students with a semester average of 80-88 need to follow the appeals process which includes a proficiency test and teacher recommendation. Students with a semester average of 79 or below can not continue on to the AP level.

APPENDIX B

YEAR	% of Seniors taking a language
1994-1995 - The last year of graduating students who started Modern Language in Middle School (8th grade) ¹	20%
1995-1996 - First year graduating students who started Modern Language in the Elementary School	39%
2008-2009 - The last time the Modern Language teachers reported to the School Board (approximately 30 years since Modern Language had been introduced to the Elementary School)	67.7%
2019-2020 - Of these Seniors, 95% are in levels 4-6	70.5%

¹ From the late 70's until the inception of the Elementary School Program (1988), French and Spanish were offered as an elective beginning in 8th grade.