Modern Language Choice at BLS

Or, how do I know which Modern Language is best for my Sixie?

January 2020

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.

- Nelson Mandela
Languages offered at BLS and anticipated enrollment for 2020-2021

➢ Chinese (225)
➢ French (270)
➢ German (220)
➢ Italian (350)
➢ Spanish (760)

ML = Graduation Requirement

➢ Students must take 4 years of a Modern Language to graduate.
➢ Sixies start in grade 8 and continue in grades 9, 10 and 11.
➢ Bsies start in grade 9 and continue grades 10, 11 and 12.
➢ Juniors can also start a new language as an elective for a two-year track their junior and senior years.
Choosing a language is a 4 year commitment.

Please help your children think carefully about the language they want to study, and consider a strong second choice.

How does it work?

➢ Students will receive a paper form in homeroom to bring home by Monday, January 27, 2020.
➢ Students are asked to rank their preference of which language they want to study.
➢ Forms are due back to homeroom teachers by Friday, February 7, 2020.
➢ Scheduling starts once all of the forms are turned in.
Important!

Please help your child make a decision about two languages to study as the first choice may not be available.

Important!

If no form is returned to school by the deadline, the Registrar places your student where there is space and where it fits the schedule.
Reasons to choose a particular language over another?

➢ Curiosity about the language and culture
➢ Friends are going to take it
➢ Connections to family/community/cultural identity
➢ Perception that one language may be easier or more practical than another

To help you and your child make an informed choice

www.bls.org Under the Modern Foreign Languages tab, you will find articles and links about each language. Go to the tab “Why study this language?”

Before the end of January, the language clubs will hold an informational fair before school in the Sixie hallway so students can talk to students about each language.

Brochures are handed out in every Sixie homeroom in January explaining the benefits of each language.
So can my child switch languages?

➢ Students may not switch languages at BLS, as they are required to take four years of the same language.
➢ Lower level classes are often at maximum capacity of 28 or 31 students and there is not enough room to move.
➢ We would not be able to make adjustments when the school year began for all students who seek a change.

Every effort is made to give students their first choice on their preference sheet, but it is not always possible.

Number of sections next year for Level 1 classes

Chinese = 2  (28-31 students per section per BTU Contract)
French = 2
Italian = 4
German = 2
Spanish = 7
Heritage Language Learners of Spanish and Mandarin

We are exploring one year courses for heritage speakers of Spanish and of Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin) next year. This class would be focused on students who are speakers of the language at home and want to continue working on their proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening in way that better meets their needs. We must determine enrollment numbers before we know if we can implement these classes.

Who is a heritage language learner?

Language educators use the term to refer to a language student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English.

(ftp://www.cal.org/heritage/pdfs/briefs/Who-is-a-Heritage-Language-Learner.pdf)
Heritage Language Learners of Spanish and Mandarin

Students who are interested will take the STAMP test to see where their proficiency levels stand in each area. Testing would be paid for by BPS, and would take 2-3 hours one afternoon after school, or if there is need, on a Saturday at BLS. The STAMP test adjusts to the student’s level and gives us a proficiency level at the end.

Testing Up for non-heritage language learners

Some students come to BLS with prior study of a language they want to continue studying. Our level 1 courses are intended for students who have no background with the language. For Sixies, we offer two days after school before mid-March to take the BLS level 1 final and give a speaking and writing sample. If students can pass our exam with an 80 or above, they can start in level 2.
## Possible Tracks starting in grade 8: Spanish

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Test Up</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>8</td>
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### Possible Tracks: Heritage Language Learners: Spanish

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Supports available

- Teachers offer extra help after school
- The after-school tutoring program has teachers and students who can tutor
- AP students can often be found to work with younger students
- Teachers share tons of online resources with students for practicing listening, grammar, vocabulary--there are lots of resources out there for free and easily available.

Are there opportunities every year for each language to travel abroad?

It depends on whether or not a teacher is able to travel and lead a trip.

Teachers usually volunteer to travel during school vacation weeks in February or April. Due to family obligations, not all teachers are able to give up their vacations every year.

Also, due to the amount of time, work and planning needed, teachers will often plan trips every other year.

Other opportunities are available through a partnership with Council on International Educational Exchange (sophomores, juniors and seniors) to go abroad in the summer. Other trips that are not language-focused also may be available.
Partnerships with BLS

Consul Generals of France, Germany, Italy, Spain
Goethe Institut (Germany)
Confucius Classroom (China)

Exchanges
➢ Beijing, China (April)
➢ Grenoble, France (February)
➢ Hamburg, Germany (August)

Planned trips for 2019-2020
➢ Italy (February)
➢ Costa Rica (April)
➢ Quebec (May)

Goals of the MFL Department after four years of study

Language use
➢ Have students leave BLS with an intermediate mid to high level of proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking

Cultural Competency
➢ Develop a curiosity and enthusiasm for learning about, understanding and experiencing other cultures

Travel
➢ Develop a curiosity about traveling to other countries or consider study abroad programs
Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy!

Massachusetts approved the Seal of Biliteracy and BPS participated for the first time last year. Students who show proficiency in English plus another language can earn a seal on their diploma showing that they are biliterate. They need Proficient score on MCAS plus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAMP Assessment</th>
<th>AP Exam results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate High = Seal</td>
<td>4 = Seal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Low = Seal with Distinction</td>
<td>5 = Seal with Distinction</td>
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OR

Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy: more information

Go to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s website for their FAQ page

http://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/biliteracy/faq.html

Another resource: https://sealofbiliteracyma.org/
Knowing any language in addition to English is a huge bonus!

General questions?

➢ If you have any specific questions related just to your child, follow me to the Electronic Classroom, or email me!
Gracias Grazie Merci Danke Xie Xie!

Please contact me at ckelley2@bostonpublicschools.org

Christine Kelley, Program Director, Modern Foreign Languages

SlidesCarnival icons are editable shapes.

This means that you can:

➢ Resize them without losing quality.
➢ Change fill color and opacity.
➢ Change line color, width and style.

Isn’t that nice? 😊

Examples:
Now you can use any emoji as an icon!
And of course it resizes without losing quality and you can change the color.

How? Follow Google instructions
https://twitter.com/googledocs/status/730087240156643328

and many more...