World Languages Forum Topic
January 11, 2026

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide equitable access to world languages programs across FCPS.
- Ensure alignment of World Languages programs with the Strategic Plan.

CONTEXT

- There is inequitable access to World Languages programs.
    - 9 HS pyramids have no ES language immersion programs: Chantilly, Fairfax, Falls Church, Hayfield, Lewis, Madison, Marshall, South County, and Woodson.
    - Some HS have 6 or more language offerings, but others have only 3 (Annandale, Herndon, Justice, Lewis, Madison, and Mount Vernon).
    - Both Regions 1 and 2 have FLES/LTC at over a dozen schools, but Region 6 has only 4.
- FCPS has not evaluated or updated World Languages programs since 2014.
    - World Languages programs should be aligned with the Strategic Plan.
        - Immersion students outperform peers in reading by 7 months in Grade 5 and by 9 months in Grade 8.[1]
        - Immersion students demonstrate superior executive functioning skills, such as selective attention (ignoring distractions), inhibitory control (stopping an automatic response), and task switching (mental flexibility).[2]
        - Language immersion "is the only program for English learners that fully closes the [academic achievement] gap."[3]
    - FCPS has not established any ES language immersion programs since 2018, and it has not evaluated whether new languages should be added to the current mix (1 French, 1 German, 1 Korean, 2 Japanese, and 11 Spanish), such as Arabic or American Sign Language.

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[1] Steele, J. L., Slater, R. O., Zamarro, G., Miller, T., Li, J., Burkhauser, S., & Bacon, M. (2017). Dual-Language Immersion Programs Raise Student Achievement in English. RAND Corporation.
[2] Bialystok, E. (2011). Reshaping the mind: The Benefits of Bilingualism. Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology, 65(4), 229–235.
[3] Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2004). The Astounding Effectiveness of Dual Language Education for All. NABE Journal of Research and Practice, 2(1), 1–20.

QUESTIONS

1. Should the School Board hold a **work session** to discuss how to ensure equitable access to World Languages programs and alignment with the Strategic Plan?
2. Should the Superintendent establish a **working group** of staff and community members to develop ideas for promoting equitable access to World Languages programs and alignment with the Strategic Plan?

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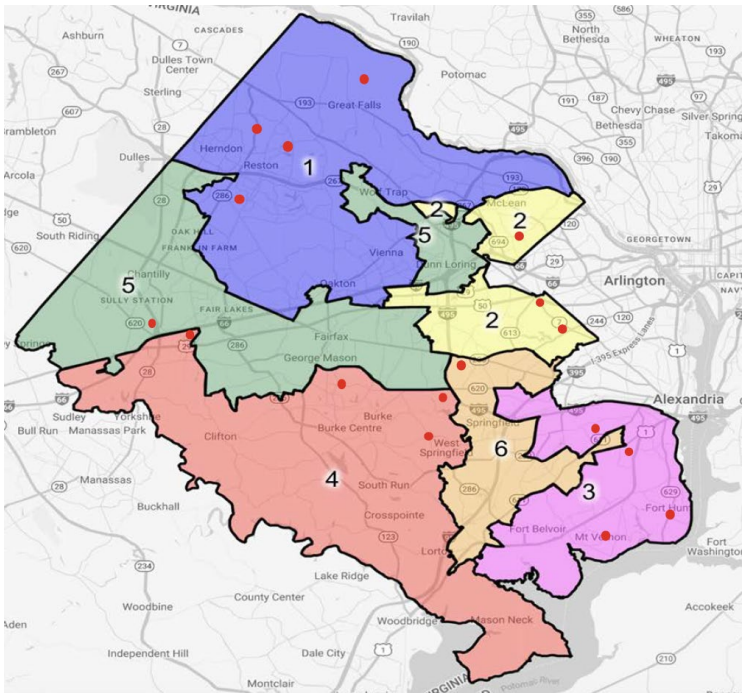
Map of Immersion Programs



Immersion Programs by Region and Pyramid

Region	Pyramid	School
1	Herndon	Herndon ES
	Langley	Great Falls ES
	South Lakes	Fox Mill ES, Lake Ann ES
2	Justice	Bailey's ES and Upper ES
	McLean	Kent Gardens ES
3	West Potomac	Fort Hunt, Groveton ES, Washington Mill ES
4	Centreville	Powell ES
	Lake Braddock	Ravensworth ES
	Robinson	Laurel Ridge ES
	West Springfield	Orange Hunt ES
Region	**Pyramid**	**School**
5	Westfield	London Towne ES
6	Annandale	Braddock ES