

# Language Immersion Programs

A Roadmap for Success

# Why Language Immersion

## **Research**

Current research shows major academic and cultural advantages for students of all backgrounds.

## **Parent Interest**

Through parent surveys, conversations and current waiting list, we understand the interest and demand for more language programs exist.

## **District Goals**

Our goal to further academic achievement, engage parents and increase student engagement are all enhanced by language immersion.

# Our Current Situation

## Dual Immersion Spanish:

Washington Elementary. Each year, three Kindergarten classes begin at Washington. Two of the three are **Dual Immersion** and there is a 30 student waiting list to get into the program

Stewart Elementary. Of the 2 Kindergarten classes at Stewart, one class is **Dual Immersion**.

There are over 300 students in “Transitional Bilingual Programs” (TBE) in our district showing continued demand by parents to have students learn the native language.

Note: TBE programs differ from Immersion as they aim to help students transition into Academic English through Spanish rather than build full literacy and fluency in two languages.

# Our Goal

Due to the factors listed above, our goal is to significantly increase the Immersion offerings over the coming 2-3 years.

Increasing these offerings will support academic achievement, cultural awareness and meet the growing demand among families.

Increase language offerings in Mandarin (and also potentially other languages) is also part of that plan.

# Our plan - An overview of the current roadmap

1. Open an Immersion Mandarin program in the 2017-2018 school year starting with Kindergarten.
2. Open additional Kindergarten Dual Immersion Spanish seats for the 2017-2018 school year at existing schools.
3. Open an additional full school Dual Immersion Spanish school in 18-19. Location TBD.
4. Explore the possibility of making Immersion program schools K-8 as research shows the benefits of this model for

## Spanish-Details and next steps

We currently have three classes: two at Washington and one at Stewart.

We plan to open a third class of Dual Immersion at Washington to accommodate demand for the 2017-2018 school year.

We are still exploring the possibility of adding a second Dual Immersion class at Stewart for the 2017-2018 school year.

## Spanish-Details and next steps

For the 2018-2019 school year, we would look to open one more whole school Dual Immersion model in the Richmond/San Pablo corridor.

This is due to the current TBE classes and parent demand in this part of the district.

# Mandarin-Details and next steps

Next year in 2017-2018, we would accept Kindergarten students at a NEW Mandarin immersion school with the plan of growing this to a full elementary and a possible K-8. Enrollment would be open to everyone in the district. If there is a major demand, we would go to lottery. The program would be single immersion as to create more spaces for all. As a result, we would not hold 50% of the spaces for families of native speakers.



## Mandarin-Details and next steps

Portola is emerging as the top site for consideration and we are exploring other options as well. Portola is the leading candidate for location due to its ability to accommodate three classes right now.

There is one time short term cost involved to pay for staffing (allocated from fund balance) and small facilities upgrades.

There would be little to no facilities put into this school as there is other, greater need around the district. Aside from meeting the Kinder requirements, we would use the current facility to

## Board Direction

*We are asking the Board to approve our current plan to expand Immersion Programs across the district including a new Mandarin program for 2017-2018.*