

Expanding World  
Language in the MURSD  
Elementary Schools



# *FLES*

FLES is an acronym for Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools. It refers to thematic, content enriched, proficiency oriented world language instruction.

# Purpose of our Spanish FLES program

- To foster 21st century global learning
- To encourage cultural awareness and appreciation
- To develop functional skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in Spanish.
- To provide a nurturing environment where students feel comfortable taking risks and learning a second language
- To develop proficiency in oral and written communication in Spanish through the integration of language skills and concepts taught in the content areas
- To increase the number of students with access to second language learning through the Spanish Immersion program and staff

# MURSD FLES Subcommittee Progression

- ▣ The district laid out the need for expanding world language programming in the strategic plan in 2012
- ▣ The FLES subcommittee was formed based on a recommendation of the Spanish Immersion Advisory Board in 2013
- ▣ The chair of the SI Board, Joan Scribner, headed the original FLES subcommittee with members *Bob Tremblay* and *Katie Cardamone*
- ▣ In fall of 2015 the FLES subcommittee continued with members: *Katie Cardamone, Mary Anne Moran, Maureen Cohen, Patty Lavoie, and Olga Grau* and elementary principals *Debra Swain* and *Janice Gallagher*.

# The FLES Committee's Process

1. Establish reasons and goals for a FLES program in MURSD

2. Survey the community and faculty to measure support and interest

3. Research FLES programs in other districts

4. Develop a Pilot program to build capacity and study feasibility

## **2. Community and Faculty Survey**

The FLES subcommittee developed survey questions which were reviewed by the board and sent out to families and staff in the district in March of 2014.

The following slides show some of the data collected from these surveys.

# 1. Reasons and Goals

Original reasons for the Board's Recommendation of FLES:

- ▣ Complement the SI program
- ▣ Eliminate divisiveness between SI and mainstream
- ▣ Allow students to transfer to SI in later grades
- ▣ Cognitive benefits
- ▣ Early language learned has proved to be most effective
- ▣ Improve global and cultural awareness

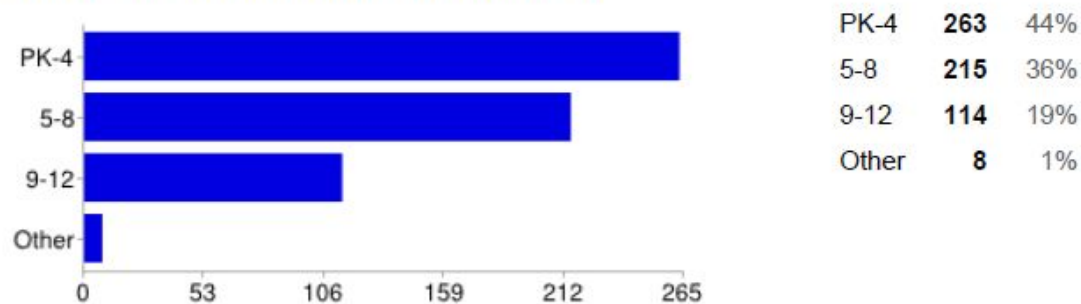
# 431 responses

[View all responses](#)

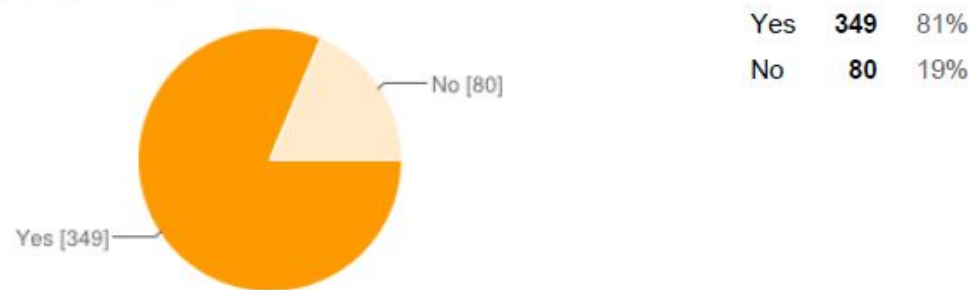
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## Summary

What is the grade level of your child(ren) ?



Do you think a language other than English should be taught at the elementary level?



Survey to families 3/6/2014



### **3. Existing FLES programs**

When the FLES committee reconvened in 2015, it was determined that more research on FLES programs needed to be done. The committee looked at programs in other districts and visited a new FLES program at the Chickering school in Dover.

# Following further research the FLES committee revisited the motivations and challenges for a FLES program

## *Motivation*

- ▣ Provide all students in elementary school with foreign language learning opportunities.
- ▣ Benefits of early exposure to a foreign language enhance the middle school and high school programs. Students enter the upper grades with pronunciation skills, more confidence speaking the language and a greater interest in pursuing higher level/AP courses.
- ▣ Exposure to other cultures.
- ▣ Parental interest in having foreign language instruction at the elementary level.

## *Challenges*

- ▣ Obtaining a long term commitment for funding the programs as an integral part of the educational instruction provided by the districts.
- ▣ Establishing clear program goals with stated targets that feed into the middle/high school programs.
- ▣ Developing a curriculum that meets both language proficiency goals and reinforces skills from other classes.
- ▣ Incorporating the instruction within the school day and having administrators and teachers “buy in” to the program.

## 4. Pilot Program Proposal



An After School k-4 Spanish FLES pilot proposal was submitted to the Spanish Immersion Advisory Board at the November 18, 2015 meeting.

## 4. Pilot Program Proposal



The FLES subcommittee sent a letter to Clough and Memorial families to explain FLES and gauge the interest of student participation kindergarten through fourth grade. The responses were used to organize the logistics of the Spanish after school classes.

# Number of Families who replied to the Surveys

	K-2	3-4	Total
Clough	18	6	24
Memorial	22	13	35

# Number of Students who Registered

	Total Registrants
Clough k-2	28
Clough 3-4	9
Memorial k-2	34
Memorial 3-4	25



# Pilot Program Implementation

(First class February 12th, 2016)

# Pilot Program Implementation



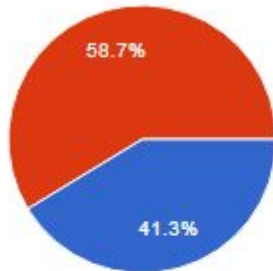
The Spanish After School Pilot runs from 3:30-4:30 on Tuesday and Thursdays at Clough and Memorial. The first session is seven weeks and is for third and fourth graders and the second session is for kindergarten through second graders starting in April.



# Data from After School FLES Pilot Program

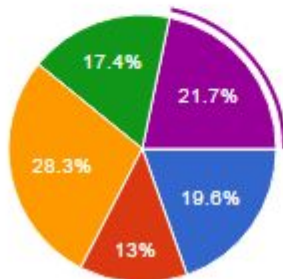
## 2015-2016

My child attended the FLES program at



Clough Elementary (Mendon)	19	41.3%
Memorial Elementary (Upton)	27	58.7%

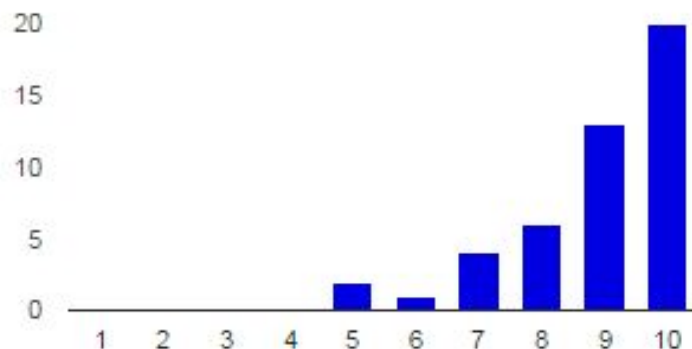
My child is currently in



first grade	9	19.6%
second grade	6	13%
third grade	13	28.3%
fourth grade	8	17.4%
kindergarten	10	21.7%
Other	0	0%

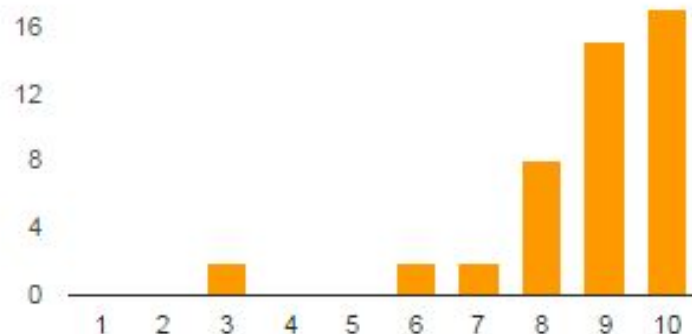
Responses from 46 parents of students who attended FLES Pilot Program

**Please rate your child's overall experience in the FLES program.**



Poor: 1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	0	0%
4	0	0%
5	2	4.3%
6	1	2.2%
7	4	8.7%
8	6	13%
9	13	28.3%
Outstanding: 10	20	43.5%

**Please rate your child's level of comfort in learning Spanish through the FLES program.**



Not comfortable: 1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	2	4.3%
4	0	0%
5	0	0%
6	2	4.3%
7	2	4.3%
8	8	17.4%
9	15	32.6%
Very comfortable: 10	17	37%

**If there was a second session for FLES, would you have your child continue in the program?**



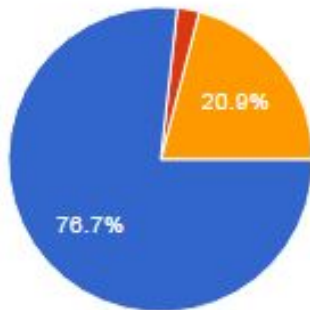
**If this was a tuition based program, would you still participate?**



**We are investigating integrating Middlebury Languages or Rosetta Stone into the FLES program. If there was an online component would you consider enrolling your child in for the below amounts?**



**Would you prefer world language learning to occur during the school day, after school or before school?**



during the school day	33	71.7%
before school	1	2.2%
after school	9	19.6%

# After School FLES Pilot Program 2015-2016

## Greatest benefit(s) experienced by your child as a result of the FLES program

- ★ “I thought that this program provided great **exposure** to the Spanish language and culture.”
- ★ “My son was so **excited to learn** Spanish words and phrases and to practice at home.”
- ★ “My daughter loved the program and **wished it was longer**. It did pique her interest in learning Spanish. My concern now is how to help her to grow her skills as well as retaining what she learned since I am not a fluent speaker of Spanish and if she doesn't use what she learned she'll lose it.”
- ★ “**Excitement** for learning”
- ★ “**Interest** in learning Spanish”
- ★ “He really didn't want to attend when we told him we signed him up, but after day 1 he loved it! **Loved hearing him use his Spanish words at home.**”

- ★ “My son came home **excited to try out the new words** that he learned in class. I was afraid he'd feel like it was just more 'school' and would have trouble paying attention and learning on a Friday afternoon, but he truly enjoyed the experience. It sounds like the teachers made it a **fun experience** and got the kids moving and playing while they learned, which is particularly important for active young boys who have already had to sit in school all day!”
- ★ “Learning a new language and **being exposed to new cultures.**”
- ★ “It was a **fun learning experience** and she was able to get a good sense of the culture.”
- ★ “The program has **sparked my child to learn Spanish.**”
- ★ “Well, he is very quiet, so he didn't tell me much about it honestly, but I truly want him to have the exposure and get comfortable with additional languages early on so I love the program for him even if he doesn't yet see the benefits I **know it will benefit him and his life long learning.**”

# After School FLES Pilot Program 2015-2016

## Feedback about the FLES program

- ★ “In order to be truly effective, this program should be offered **more than once a week.**”
- ★ “It would be so beneficial to have the FLES program **during the school day!**”
- ★ “It would be great if this could somehow be incorporated throughout the week **during school hours.**”
- ★ “My 1st grade daughter is upset she can't take the second class because of a prior commitment.”
- ★ “I know other districts that offer a **similar program as a special like gym and art.**”
- ★ “It would be helpful to have a **longer program** that allows time to grasp the language.”
- ★ “I would love to see it **longer throughout the year.**”

- ★ “I would love for this program to be offered during the **regular school day to all students**. Full Spanish immersion was too much of a commitment for my family, but I do think the kids could benefit from having Spanish offered in the same way as music, library, etc. My son is also very involved in sports after school, so the juggling between Spanish and his athletics was usually tricky.”
- ★ “It would be awesome if this could be **offered all year or better yet, as part of the child's regular school day.**”
- ★ “With each class, she appeared to be more and more interested. I think there is a learning curve with getting comfortable with a new class/teacher, so I'd just **recommend that it be a half-year offering at a minimum.**”
- ★ **The program is amazing my child loved learning in such an energetic environment.**
- ★ It would be great if the program was **longer in weeks.**



- ★ My only recommendation would be that the children have the option to **continue learning Spanish throughout the school year**. I would like to see Spanish as a class option. There is no mechanism in place to help children sustain what they have learned in class. Spanish is currently not an option.
- ★ I think if he could do this **after school for an entire year** he would really get so much out of it. 6 weeks was a great intro but he will lose it if he doesn't continue.
- ★ “The program had **too many kids/teacher ratio as well as age gaps**. It age gap can be rather large from Kindergarten to 2nd grade. I would rather see a kindergarten program alone and one session for 1&2 grade. The length of the program for this age group is short so the classes need to be small in order to see significant improvement.”
- ★ **“Offer program all year.”**
- ★ “Would like to see this program included as a **part of the curriculum during the school day**. However, I would still sign my daughter up for the class if it were an after school program. Other than that, great program!!!”

A group of children are gathered in a classroom, holding up small photographs. A girl in the center, wearing a striped shirt and a pink headband, holds up a photo of a person. To her right, a girl in a pink hoodie holds up a photo of a building. In the foreground, a girl in a green shirt holds up a photo of a sunset. Other children are visible in the background, some holding up photos. The classroom has desks, chairs, and a whiteboard. The text "FLES 2016-2017" is overlaid on the image.

**FLES 2016-2017**

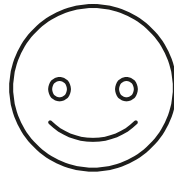
# Number of Students Registered 2016-2017

	Total Registrants
Clough k-2	12
Clough 3-4	13
Memorial K-2	25
Memorial 3-4	25

# The FLES subcommittee's next steps....



1. Evaluate/implement the curriculum for a FLES pilot program
2. Collect/share data from students and families participating in the afterschool program
3. Determine future plans for FLES in MURSD
4. Look at feasibility for implementing a program during the school day



*thanks!*

# Any questions?

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