

John Stanford International School Language Planning Committee Immersion Program Evaluation

Overview

In January, 2001, the Language Planning Committee of the John Stanford International School decided to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the Spanish Immersion Program that was launched in September, 2000. We prepared a plan based on recommendations from *Evaluating Second Language Education*, edited by J. Charles Alderson and Alan Beretta (Cambridge, Cambridge Applied Linguistics: 1992), a resource provided by Klaus Brandl, Ph.D., an applied linguist from the University of Washington serving on the Language Planning Committee.

We created our plan by identifying the various **Audiences** for the evaluation (from teachers to parents to community) and their **Purpose** for obtaining the information from the evaluation. (See Appendix A.) We then identified possible **Evaluators**, and defined the **Content, Method, and Timing** for the evaluations. (See Appendix B.) The next step was to **Match Content to Method**. (See Appendix C.) Finally, we looked at ways to obtain qualitative data about how well the immersion program did **Meeting the Expectations of Various Audiences**. (See Appendix D.)

During spring of 2001, we carried out a number of parts of the Program Evaluation Plan. This summary report briefly describes each component of the Program Evaluation:

- Early Language Learning and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA)
- K-1 Progress Reports
- Teacher and Staff Evaluations
- K-1 Family Surveys

Each of these components has its own separate report available for review.

Note: At this time, we have not yet surveyed the broader community or the school's partners. (We did send out a brief survey to the UW partners, but had almost none returned.)

Early Language Learning and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA)

During late May, a pair of evaluators from the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in Washington, DC, came to the John Stanford International School to conduct the Early Language Learning and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA) with all K-1 students. The ELLOPA included a Teacher Reporting Profile (ELLOPA-RP), and a Student Self-Assessment (ELLSSA). The final report indicates that our program is on track in terms of the children's language development in Spanish in the areas of speaking and listening (and understanding).

Note: We have not done any specific assessment of children's reading and writing skills in Spanish.

K-1 Progress Reports

A review of the K-1 progress reports provides data on the number of children who have met or not met the District Standards in Math and Science (which were taught primarily in Spanish), Reading and Writing (in English). *Not done yet*

Teacher and Staff Evaluations

We asked teachers and staff at an end of year staff meeting to comment on their experience of the language immersion program. Their comments are summarized in the Teacher and Staff Evaluations report. *(Provide highlights here.)*

K-1 Family Survey

With the help of a group of volunteers from among the K-1 parents, we were able to conduct quite thorough surveys of the kindergarten and first grade families. *(Provide highlights here.)*

Conclusions and Recommendations

What conclusions can be drawn from these evaluations? What recommendations do we have for the program? Tentative start...

Conclusions:

1. Despite frustrations about the difficulty of communicating with the immersion teachers, who were working hard to enforce the Spanish-only policy, parents recognized the value of teachers being consistent in using Spanish with the children. In addition, the language acquisition results point to the benefits of providing as much Spanish language input as possible.
2. Teachers at the upper grades or in other programs sometimes felt disconnected from the immersion program.

Recommendations:

1. Continue the Spanish-only policy for the language immersion teachers at all grades. Encourage teachers (and parents) to be creative in meeting their communications needs.
2. Provide each teacher in the school substitute time in order to spend at least a few hours visiting the immersion classrooms. (Make this a priority for the next grade in line, i.e. teachers of 3rd grade in school year 2002-2003.)

Appendix A: Audience and Purpose

Audience: <i>Who is the evaluation for? Who will use this information?</i>	Purpose: <i>Why is this evaluation required?</i>
Immersion Teachers at JSIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear on what the children have learned & not learned • Identify areas where we need to improve • Identify what we did well (so we can continue it!) • Be clear on perceptions of satisfaction (of parents/kids) vs. actual results (because we need to respond differently depending on the combination): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Satisfaction - High Results <i>[that's our goal]</i> High Satisfaction - Low Results Low Satisfaction - High Results Low Satisfaction - Low Results
Principal at JSIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at student achievement to see if the program works • Provide a model (intl school/language immersion) for the District to replicate in other schools • Provide rationale for having an international school (prove that “it works”)
Teachers and staff at JSIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track student progress in math (i.e. if achievement is initially lower, when does it catch up, and what interventions are needed?) • Be accountable for the results of the Spanish immersion program (this will increase confidence of staff at the school) • Show progress and identify where we need to go next • Compare how our school is doing vs. non-immersion schools
Students at JSIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how they’re doing in school • Want to feel they’re doing a “good job” and making progress
Parents and Families at JSIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out how their kids are progressing in school • Know if their kids are comfortable and liking the immersion class • Find out what they can do to support their children and the program • See the benefits of 2nd language learning
Partners to JSIS (esp. UW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support their research at JSIS (i.e. use as “lab school”) • See that their efforts and their students’ efforts (tutors/mentors) are making a difference
District (Central Admin & School Board)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See if they can use JSIS as a model school (to open two more) • Make Seattle Public Schools attractive to parents
Community organizations & businesses (Seattle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to know their efforts make a difference (help students succeed) • Get information to help them decide whether to continue supporting the school (if low satisfaction and low results, not much point in continuing the support...)
State (Washington)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See evidence for teaching languages early – does it make a difference?

Nation (U.S. Dept of Education, national orgs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know that federal grants were well spent (“worth it”)• See that grantees are sharing and disseminating information about their experience with others
International Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• See evidence that we (US) is committed to something beyond just English

Appendix B: Evaluator, Content, Method, and Timing

The Evaluator: *Who can conduct the evaluation?*

- **Internal Evaluator(s):** teachers, principal, staff, volunteers
- **External Evaluator(s):** from CAL (Center for Applied Linguistics), University of Washington, Seattle School District

Content: *What will we be evaluating?*

- Math Achievement – K-1 standards in Spanish and English
- Science Achievement – K-1 standards in Spanish and English
- Spanish Language Proficiency – understanding, listening, speaking, (reading, writing later)
- Social Studies (geographical and cultural awareness)
- English Language Literacy – reading and writing
- Satisfaction level (and comfort) of children, parents, teachers, and others

Method: *How will we carry out the evaluation?*

- Classroom-based assessments (District CBAs and teacher-created)
- Pull-out interviews or “probes” (in English or Spanish)
Note: K-1 Immersion Teachers already do this for the Progress Reports.
- Teacher anecdotal observations (“Running Record” with children’s names)
- Progress reports to families (each trimester)
- Surveys, focus groups, phone interviews, informal meetings

Timing: *When should we conduct the evaluation?*

- Progress reports are completed each trimester (Nov, Mar, Jun)
- Meetings (informal surveys) are done throughout the year
- ELLOPA (Spanish language assessment) administered in May
- Surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc. completed by June, 2001 (for input into next year)

Appendix C: Matching Content to Method

Here are some ideas for approaching these evaluations.

Content	Method	Timing
Math Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom-based assessments (as reflected in Progress reports) ▪ Pull-out interviews or “probes” in English and Spanish, as needed ▪ Teacher anecdotal observations 	Each trimester – Nov, Mar, Jun
Science Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom-based assessments (as reflected in Progress reports) ▪ Pull-out interviews or “probes” (in English or Spanish), as needed ▪ Teacher anecdotal observations 	Each trimester – Nov, Mar, Jun
Spanish Language Proficiency – understanding, listening, speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher anecdotal observations (Running Record) ▪ Outside observation (by English counterpart) ▪ ELLOPA (<i>External evaluation by CAL</i>) 	Each trimester – Nov, Mar, Jun ELLOPA – in May
Spanish Language Proficiency – reading, writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom-based evidence (sample work in a portfolio) 	May – June?
Social Studies (geographical & cultural awareness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outside observation (by English counterpart) ▪ Teacher anecdotal observations (Running Record) ▪ Pull-out interviews or “probes” (in English or Spanish)? 	May – June?
English Language Literacy – reading and writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluated by English counterpart, but incorporated into overall immersion evaluation ▪ Based on Progress Reports for Reading and Writing 	Each trimester – Nov, Mar, Jun
Satisfaction level (comfort) of children, parents, teachers, and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Surveys ▪ Focus Groups ▪ Phone Interviews ▪ Informal meetings 	See separate table

Appendix D: Meeting Expectation of Various Audiences

How well did the immersion program meet the expectations of ...

Audience	Method	Timing
Immersion Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May – June
Immersion Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Modified Paper Survey (per CAL model) ▪ Informal conversation (with Mrs. Kodama?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May – June
JSIS School Community (teachers/staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper Survey ▪ Focus group or Leadership Team? ▪ Survey or representative groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PTSA - Volunteer coordinator - BOC/ESL ▪ Staff meeting? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May – June
Parents/Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper Survey ▪ Focus group ▪ Phone interviews (selected) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May – June
Partners - UW - Seattle Children's Museum - International Children's Festival - Jalisco Sister City - Marilyn Hawkins - W Hotel - Starbuck's International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper Survey ▪ Focus group ▪ Phone interviews (selected) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May – June