MAKING SECONDARY SCHOOL MANDARIN IMMERSION PROGRAMS WORK

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In collaboration with CELIN at Asia Society

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Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network: CELIN at Asia Society

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http://asiasociety.org/china-learning-initiatives/chinese-early-language-and-immersion-network
Mission

Support the growth and sustainability of Chinese early language and immersion programs in and outside the United States to ensure that students have opportunities to develop high-level multilingual and intercultural competency for advanced study and work in an interconnected world.
Making Middle and High School Mandarin Immersion Work

Introduction
Effectively engaging adolescents and nurturing their academic, cognitive, and social development is a challenge for any educational program. Doing so in a bilingual program can even be more challenging. With over 200 Mandarin immersion programs emerging in elementary schools over the past decade in a variety of contexts (Weise, 2018; also see CELIN Online Directory of Student Programs, https://asiasonline.org/china-learning-initiatives/find-or-document-program), a virtual tidal wave of Mandarin immersion students are moving into the secondary school grades (6-12). During this transitional time, many Chinese immersion programs are struggling to retain students, keep them focused on school, and continue to develop a high level of language proficiency, cultural knowledge, and ability to grapple with more abstract and rigorous content in both languages (Chinese and English).

Mandarin immersion can overcome the challenges and reach the goals that educators and families aim to achieve.

Developing Immersion Programs in Middle and High School

Beginning a Mandarin immersion program at an elementary school generates significant and focused excitement and energy. Parents making the decision to enroll their five-year-old child in a program that promises a unique bilingual educational experience, with long-term cognitive, academic, and economic benefits, clamor to complete lottery applications. Staff at both the school and district level dedicate considerable time to developing the curriculum and overall program. Community members and organizations, possibly along with the local media, heighten awareness of and interest in this innovative educational program that moves away from a conventional monolingual approach to language learning to an international and forward-looking investment in the community’s future. English-speaking parents are awed by how quickly and easily their children seem to acquire this difficult tonal and character-based language. Chinese-speaking parents are thrilled that their children are learning the academic language and literacy skills of their home language/mother tongue.
Presenters:

Michael Bacon
Director, Department of Dual Language
Office of Teaching and Learning
Portland Public Schools, OR

Jeffrey Erickson
Principal
Minnetonka High School
Minnetonka Public Schools, MN
Making Secondary Immersion Program Work

Jeff Erickson, Minnetonka Public Schools
Opportunities
Writeable walls, visible learning, writeable walls/see through glass into classrooms or learning spaces - allows everyone to be a part of learning even if they are not in the room, they can see it.

Access to technology to realize, present, and collaborate on the work

Criteria for Learning Spaces for Tomorrow
Middle School (2012-13)

Both of the district’s middle schools introduced language immersion in the 2012-2013 school year, and the high school welcomed its first cohort of Spanish and Chinese immersion students in the 2015-2016 school year. At the secondary school level, students reach an age of maturity when they are more involved in academic decisions and may want to spend more of their academic day mixing with students from other programs. After significant discussion and debate about the appropriate amount of time for target language instruction, the district chose to design a middle school immersion program with one period of Immersion Language Arts/Social Studies that would extend into an advisory period. This extended period would allow the teachers to cover two content areas in what would essentially be only one instructional period. The prevailing theory was that middle school students would leave the immersion program unless they believed that they had ample time to mix socially with non-immersion students. Although it is difficult to know whether or not this theory has been proven to be true, target language achievement has continued to grow, and enrollment in the program has stayed constant.
During the 2015-2016 school year, Minnetonka’s language immersion program entered Minnetonka High School (the district’s only high school), with a cohort of approximately 120 Spanish immersion students and 60 Chinese immersion students. As the immersion program extends into the high school years, district staff are continuously challenged by the complexity of the scheduling process and the high demands of staffing and competing student interests. High school students can choose between a wide range of engaging and impactful opportunities, including the VANTAGE program (a profession-based immersive program where language immersion students have the opportunity to use their target language skills as they work on authentic business problems provided by local and national corporate partners), performing and visual arts programs, and the Minnetonka Research program. Throughout their high school years, students choose between their immersion coursework and these other attractive options. Therefore, expansion into high school required a number of improvements and additions, including designing and launching three new courses at Minnetonka High School in each language, Mandarin and Spanish. In addition to this expansion, the program was improved through the refinement of curriculum and assessments and introduction of new immersion staff members.
Elementary

• Full Immersion Program
• Spanish and Chinese: Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies
• English: Music, P.E., Art, Media
• Grades 3-5: English Language Arts Block
Middle School

**Grade 6:** Immersion Social Studies (World History and Minnesota Studies) and Language Arts for 85 minutes

**Grade 7:** Immersion Social Studies (US History) and Language Arts for 85 minutes each day. Immersion Culture and Arts for one quarter.

**Grade 8:** Immersion social studies (world geography) and language arts for 110 minutes each day. Immersion advisory for 25 minutes.
你好

**Chinese Immersion**

- **9TH**: Chinese Immersion Language Arts 9
- **10TH**: AP Chinese Language & Culture
- **11TH**: IB Chinese Language & Literature SL - Year 1
- **12TH**: IB Chinese Language & Literature SL - Year 2

Pathway:
- AP Chinese Language & Culture → Chinese Humanities Honors → IB Chinese Language & Literature SL - Year 1
- Elective Options
- IB Chinese Language & Literature SL - Year 2

* with Teacher Recommendation
World Languages Department

AP Language & Culture, Chinese/Spanish Immersion

- Analysis of authentic resources and literature related to the six AP themes
- Writing: format, organization, style, audience
- Student presentations and group discussions
- AP exam preparation
- Year long course, weighted grade
Chinese/Spanish Immersion Language Arts 9

- Focus on reading strategies, reading comprehension, and the analysis of authentic texts
- Further develop vocabulary and character recognition through reading, writing
- Student presentations and group discussions
- Review of major grammar topics
- Preparation for AP Chinese/Spanish Language & Culture
Student profile for success in AP Language & Culture

- Success in Middle School Immersion Language Arts courses*
- Student maturity, strong study skills, organization
- Linguistic ability (STAMP scores 5-6+ range)

*We encourage students and parents to speak with 8th grade immersion teachers for guidance.
Human Geography & Civics, Chinese Immersion

The course includes one semester of Human Geography and one semester of U.S. Civics.

- **Major themes covered in human geography:**
  - Diffusion, Migration, Demographics, Geopolitics, Industry, Development

- **Major themes covered in U.S. Civics:**
  - Citizenship, Principles of American Democracy, U.S. Constitution
  - Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches, Federalism

- Focus on strengthening our Chinese listening, writing, speaking, and reading skills.

- Content is analyzed in Chinese
Human Geography & Civics, Spanish Immersion

The course includes one semester of Human Geography and one semester of U.S. Civics.

- **Major themes covered in human geography:**
  - Diffusion, Migration, Demographics, Geopolitics, Industry, Development, etc.

- **Major themes covered in U.S. Civics:**
  - Citizenship, Principles of American Democracy, U.S. Constitution, Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches, Federalism, etc.

- Focus on strengthening our Spanish listening, writing, speaking, and reading skills.

- The class is 100% in Spanish!
Chinese/Spanish Immersion Elective Courses

Grades 9-12, Elective offerings (1 semester courses)

● Chinese/Spanish Film & Culture
● Tonka Online Chinese/Spanish Film & Culture
● Chinese/Spanish Immersion Careers and Professions
● Intro to Hispanic Linguistics & Culture (Spanish immersion)
● Intro to Chinese/Latin American Politics
● IB Global Politics, Sl (Spanish immersion)
World Languages Department

3rd Language and IB Ab Initio Courses

9th, 10th, 11th, 12th

Chinese, French, German, Spanish & ASL courses

2 year advanced language study
(Covers 3 yrs of traditional honors program in 2 yrs)

- IB Ab Initio French SL
- IB Ab Initio German SL
- IB Ab Initio Spanish SL
Looking ahead...
Grades 10-11-12

- Immersion Language Arts Pathways, Social Studies, Electives
- Study travel - China & Chile
- VANTAGE + Immersion experience
- IB Bilingual Diploma
- MN Bilingual Seal
VANTAGE + Immersion

Immersion students will have the opportunity to apply their target language skills in Global Business with VANTAGE.

Possible opportunities include: bilingual HR day, small-group discussions, bilingual mentor, incorporating the target language in semester project.
**IB Bilingual Diploma**

Immersion students will have the opportunity to earn an IB Bilingual diploma and showcase their ability in more than 1 language.

- IB Language & Literature, Chinese/Spanish
- IB Global Politics, Spanish

MHS IB Coordinator: Laura Herbst

IB info meeting: Feb. 12th, 6:00 MHS Forum
The Bilingual Seal - A national movement
Minnesota Bilingual Seal

How and when do I qualify and receive a MN Bilingual Seal?

- Students qualify with scores from Freshman-Sophomore-Junior-Senior years
  - Gold Bilingual Seal - Intermediate High (STAMP 6, or AP 4)
  - Platinum Bilingual Seal - Advanced Low (STAMP 7, or AP 5)
- Students receive the seal upon graduation - it will appear on transcript

Do I receive college credit?

- Students can receive college credit through MnSCU schools
### Grades 6, 8, and 10 Sub-Test Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grade 6 Total Chinese Immersion (N=93)</th>
<th>Grade 8 Total Chinese Immersion (N=78)</th>
<th>Grade 10 Total Chinese Immersion (N=42)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>Prof Level</td>
<td>Mean Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rdg</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Int Low</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Int Mid</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Int Low</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spkg</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Int Low</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AP Results

In the Chinese Exam, among the 54 Chinese Immersion students,

25 students scored a 3,

10 students scored a 4, and

14 students scored a 5, which is up from 5 students from two years ago and one from last year.
Study Abroad Opportunities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award Type</th>
<th>ACTFL Proficiency Levels (STAMP Test)</th>
<th>AP Language Exams</th>
<th>IB Diploma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MN World Language Proficiency Certificate</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (STAMP score 4)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (AP score 3)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (IB score 3 on Standard Level exam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Seal</td>
<td>Intermediate High (STAMP score 6)</td>
<td>Intermediate High (AP score 4)</td>
<td>Intermediate High (IB score 4 or 5 on Standard Level exam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platinum Seal</td>
<td>Advanced Low (STAMP score 7)</td>
<td>Advanced Low (AP score 5)</td>
<td>Advanced Low (IB score 4 or above on Higher Level exam) (IB score of 6 or 7 on Standard Level exam)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Challenges

Recruiting and Hiring Secondary School Teachers

As the immersion program has moved into the secondary schools, Minnetonka has struggled to find highly qualified teachers in core content areas who are also highly proficient in the immersion languages. This has resulted in personnel changes in each of the six years that the program has been implemented at the secondary school level. In Year Four, the district has finally reached a high level of satisfaction with the team of immersion teachers who deliver instruction at the secondary school level. As the program grows, however, and eventually reaches 400-500 immersion students (1/3 of whom are Chinese immersion) at each grade level, the district will require more than twice the number of secondary school immersion teachers than it currently employs.
Program Challenges

Despite its numerous high-quality components and successes, the Minnetonka Public Schools immersion program faces a number of challenges.

**Providing a Wide Range of Pathways for Diverse Learners**

As students move into the secondary school years, the range of ability levels widens, as well as competition with other interests for academic time slots. Therefore, Minnetonka has made it a priority to differentiate instruction in the middle school classes and to offer a range of pathways at the high school. District administrators work closely with students to determine their satisfaction with specific elective courses and pathway options, so that improvements can be made and new opportunities can be created. As much as possible, Minnetonka focuses on the student experience and makes adjustments based on student input.
Making Secondary Immersion Work (Part 2)

Michael Bacon, Portland Public Schools
Why do parents put their children into Mandarin immersion?

Share with a partner
Adolescents in Immersion

One word to describe adolescents

What are your challenges?

What are our challenges?
So how do we make secondary Mandarin immersion work?

Overcoming our challenges
Context: Portland Public Schools

- Large Urban Public School system (50,000 students)
- Over 33 years of immersion; 5 languages; 31 schools involved
- Mandarin Immersion - over 20 years
- One of the first Mandarin immersion programs in the public schools in the US - pros and cons of being first
- Language Flagship Grant Goal: Learning Model
- Time and Content Allocation:
  - Elementary: 50:50 All Content Areas Shared
  - Middle: 33:66 Social Studies and Language Arts
  - High: 20:80 Advanced Level Language (IB)
    - Global Sustainability
    - Research and Exploration
    - IB SL (Capstone Development and Implementation)
    - IB HL (Capstone Presentation)
    - Online Bridging Course (UO CASLS)
Our journey...

“The important thing is to keep stumbling in the right direction.”
(Bill Clinton)
Making Learning Meaningful, Purposeful and Real

• Research on Motivation: Meaningful, Relevant, and Real
• Contextualized language learning vs. focusing on form
• Experiential Learning:
  • 8th Grade China Research Residency
  • High School Summer Institute in Yunnan
The Long Journey...

任重道远。。。
Setting Clear Learning Targets and Empowering Students

- Fostering intrinsic motivation
- Language acquisition vs. learning
- Intentional & Explicit
- Assessment FOR Learning (3 Q’s)
  - Setting Clear Targets
  - ACTFL aligned scoring rubrics/assessments
  - Specific feedback
- Empowering students
STAMP 4S and OPI/WPT

Immersion students reach intermediate partner language proficiency by grade 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>4th Grade</th>
<th>7th Grade</th>
<th>8th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced mid</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced low</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate high</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate mid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Novice high</td>
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<td>Novice mid</td>
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<td>Novice low</td>
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</table>

- **Reading**
- **Listening**
- **Speaking**
- **Writing**

**Spanish** (n=701) **Mandarin** (n=235) **Japanese** (n=323)

12th Grade: OPI 100% IH or above; 50% AL/AM
WPT 71% IH or above; 11% AL/AM
Explicit Milestones and Tangible Rewards

• 4th Grade STAMP 4SE
• 8th Grade STAMP 4S
  • High School WL Credit
  • Communication
• AP/IB
  • College Credit
  • Integrated Curriculum
• Oregon Seal of Biliteracy
  • Intermediate High
  • Recognition
• Academic Success (Steele, et al 2017)
• Connecting to Chinese Flagship
Continuing Challenges - Possible Solutions

Continuing Challenges:

1. Limited time - one class per year at high school
2. One teacher for all 4 years
3. Differentiating for wide range of proficiency levels and motivation levels

Possible Solutions:

1. University Flagship Mentors: relevant relationships and differentiation
2. Capstone Experience: real impact; real audience
3. Other?
Thank you!

Contact us:

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