IMPLEMENTING AN ELEMENTARY FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAM
IN YOUR SCHOOL,

MASTER'S PROJECT

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by

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The labor of many people goes into a project of this sort.

A sincere THANK YOU to:

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* Diane Ging who gave me the gentle NUDGE to grow professionally.

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MUCHAS GRACIAS
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Background and Justification of the Problem

It was in the early eighties when this teacher realized that her high school Spanish students could not speak Spanish. The students were being blamed because they refused to study grammar rules and draw, what seemed to be, logical conclusions. Stephen Krashen (1978) had written that there was much evidence to support the concept of formal grammar instruction for adult learners of a second language. All of the required rules of the Audio-lingual Method of foreign language education were being followed. Still, only the bright, mature students dared to speak the language, even though most students in the class completed all the written assignments.

It was during a foreign language convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, this same teacher attended a workshop concerning the Bilingual Program in the Cincinnati Public Schools. After an explanation by the district supervisor, six five-year-old students entered the room and spoke meaningful Spanish with the teacher for eleven minutes. The students were not Hispanic! Five-year-olds were doing exactly what this teacher wanted fifteen and sixteen-year-olds to do — speak Spanish!

The early eighties were difficult times for foreign language education in Columbus Public Schools. The foreign language classes in middle and high school
showed as high as fifty percent failure rate. While most foreign language teachers believed that anyone "could" learn a foreign language, they felt bound by a curriculum which had to be "covered" in nine months and students who "weren't the students we used to get."

It was in the eighties, then, that this teacher became interested in teaching foreign language in the elementary grades. The research of the times indicated that, in order to achieve any measure of communitive competence during K-12 schooling, foreign language study must begin early. The findings published in A Nation At Risk (1983) indicate 1) achieving proficiency in a foreign language requires four to six years and should be started in the elementary grades, 2) since there has been a national focus on integrating a global perspective into the teaching of all subjects, what better way than to introduce foreign language at an early age.

Still further research indicated that after age ten or eleven, social attitudes of young people are less open to change and more rigid (Lambert and Klineberg, 1967). The period before age ten is especially open to intercultural input since children have not developed preconception and stereotypes. Piaget added to the notion that early foreign language education is important when, in 1967, he reported that there are critical periods in children's lives when learning takes place. In the case of language, that critical period is between ages two and seven.

It was in 1985, then, that this former high school teacher became an elementary foreign language teacher. For more than six years the questions have rolled in. How does my school get foreign language in the elementary grades?
How do the classroom teachers react? Who studies the language? How do you schedule it? How does it fit in with the curriculum? Who pays for it? Questions and questions have poured in and been answered in some haphazard manner.

There is a need, then, for a document that would answer these questions and others for any educator interested in having foreign language in the elementary grades.

Problem Statement

Since many educators have expressed an interest in implementing a foreign language program in their elementary school, the purpose of this handbook was to give them a document for quick reference when trying to implement such a program.

Procedures

Subjects

This handbook will be used by educators, from teachers to superintendents, who wish to start an elementary foreign language program in their school. This handbook will be used for implementing only elementary foreign language programs.

Setting

This handbook will be used in any rural, urban, or suburban elementary school.
Data Collection

Information for this handbook was obtained from articles from foreign language journals, books about foreign language education and second language acquisition, conference lectures, and elementary foreign language teachers.

Design

The format of the handbook includes sections with the following titles: Philosophy, Goals, Budget, Staffing, Support of Existing Staff (Administrators, Classroom Teachers, Language Teachers), Choice of Language, Who Should Study Language, Scheduling, Curriculum, Articulation with Middle and High School, Building Public Relations, Program Evaluation, and Establishing a Timeline.

Results

The result of this study is a handbook designed to help educators implement any elementary foreign language program in their school.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

If one truly believes that foreign language in the elementary school is important in children’s lives, then one must fully understand how children learn a second language.

One must only examine a first grade foreign language class in order to see the basis for success in elementary foreign language. The foreign language objectives match the first grade curriculum created for the regular classroom setting. What the children are learning in the foreign language curriculum is within their experience. The foreign language objectives, like the classroom objectives, are based on sound developmental theory.

Upon closer look into an elementary foreign language classroom, anyone would see principles of immersion being used. Immersion, the most ambitious of the elementary foreign language programs, is an approach to second language instruction in which the curriculum is conducted in the second language. The second language is the means of instruction, not the object of it (Curtain, 1988). Immersion uses as its basis first-language learning principles. The most common goals of immersion are communicative fluency and mastery of curriculum at the appropriate grade level. Students will be able to communicate in the second language almost as well as the children their own age in a foreign country. They
continue to develop skills in their own language, as well as learn what they need at the appropriate grade level.

For anyone visiting an immersion school, it is interesting to see children in total immersion beginning in kindergarten or first grade. Bilingual students are not normally accepted into the program. The new language is the only means of communication and the teacher speaks only the second language. Children acquire the second language through play and work situations that are related to meaningful communication. The children show little frustration with regard to second language learning because what they are learning is within their experience (Curtain, 1988). Initially, the students communicate with each other in English. They also communicate with the teacher in English, but the teacher responds in the second language. Many students do not move into real speech until the sixth month of the program. This silent period is normal because children must first develop comprehension skills.

After two years in immersion, students are introduced to formal English language skills. The amount of English usage depends on the philosophy of the school. In the Cincinnati immersion program, students receive English instruction in reading and language arts, while science, social studies, and math are taught in the target language. Math is reinforced during the day in English so that the students actually get a "double dose" of math. As students pass to middle grades, English instruction increases until the day's instruction is fifty percent in English and fifty percent in the target language. Unified Arts such as art, music, and physical education can be taught by the classroom teacher, who teaches in the
target language, but often, there is a special teacher who teaches these courses in
the target language.

How is it, then, that foreign language education has arrived at immersion?

What Has Been Tried Before

Before 1900 there was very little attention given to the study of foreign
language. Language learning was limited to the classical languages for scholarly
or religious purposes. By the early 1900's, however, there was a new interest in
teaching foreign language for speaking purposes. A popular method of the time
was the Direct Method. All classes were conducted orally and directly in the
foreign language without translation. François Gouin (who initially used the
direct method) began to question the routine of classical foreign language study
when he, a language teacher, could not learn German, yet his three-year-old
nephew learned the language in a matter of months (Gouin, 1880). Gouin felt
that a person should learn to speak a foreign language by the same methods that
a child uses to learn his native language. Was this immersion? Probably, but
Gouin was a man ahead of his times, and the idea of teaching language in the
"academy" was lost. Not until 1924 was there a return to the classical method of
foreign language education called the Grammar-Translation Method. It was
recommended that schools and universities concentrate on reading foreign
languages more than speaking them. During pre-World War I days, all oral work
was de-emphasized and it was considered un-American to speak a foreign
language.
By the 1950's, there had been great advances in the worlds of linguistics and psychology. Structural linguistics had provided the tool for taking language apart bit by bit and for contrasting language. Behavioral psychology had provided a model for teaching nearly everything by operant conditioning. The ALM Method, Audio-lingual Method of teaching, was the ideal approach according to the two philosophies. ALM stresses speaking activities through very carefully selected dialogues and conversations. The activities are varied and correct responses are highly praised. Repetition of the desired responses is a key to this method.

In the 1960's, Humanistic Psychologists had begun to show that aspects of human behavior such as linguistic behavior could not be drummed into an individual by means of rote repetition. People were not learning to communicate in the foreign language! It was precisely at this point that there was a new surge in foreign language education in the United States. Sputnik had been launched and foreign language education was a national priority. FLES programs, Foreign Language in the Elementary School, popped up everywhere and the United States saw its first immersion school. Education experts had returned to the idea that language is best learned in a manner similar to the way in which young children acquire their first language. Acquisition, rather than learning, was what distinguished language immersion from other methods of foreign language education.
First Language Acquisition and Immersion — Simplified

There appear to be at least two schools of thought in the study of first language acquisition. The behaviorists believe that children come into the world with a "tabula rasa" or clean slate, with no preconceived notions about the world (Locke, 1660). The child is shaped by his environment and builds up a chain of stimulus-response conditions (Pavlov, 1928). Complex behaviors are built by constructing many of these chains. It was later added that the child operates on the environment and the reinforcement that follows the child-initiated stimulus is what shapes his behavior (Skinner, 1938). Behaviorists are interested, then, in performance and observable responses.

On the other end of the spectrum are nativists who believe that language acquisition is innately determined, that we are born with some device that dishes out language to us. According to Noam Chomsky (1959), this knowledge is found in a little black box called a language acquisition device, or LAD. Eric Lenneberger (1967) says that language is "species-specific behavior," and that certain language tools are biologically determined. Lenneberger says that the LAD explains at least four previously unexplained points: 1) a child's ability to distinguish speech sounds from other sounds, 2) the ability to organize speech events into categories (things that happen today from things that happened yesterday), 3) the ability to know that only certain kinds of linguistic systems are possible and others are not, 4) the ability to change those systems. (Children often invent words based on general rules of construction. HISSELF is used by children based on the rule of adding a possessive pronoun to the word SELF.)
Even though the word is incorrect, the child was still working within a certain linguistic system. He was clearly not responding to an outside stimulus because most adults would not present this to a child as an accurate stimulus. He changes the language system and irons out the irregularities on his own.

In 1964, Jean Piaget added to the nativistic approach his cognitive theory of learning. He suggested that a child can learn only when there is interaction between existing knowledge in the child and knowledge of the environment. In order for the child to know the environment, he must act upon it. Piaget also cited critical periods for learning, and in the case of language learning, periods during which language can be easily acquired. This period, the preoperational stage of learning, takes place between ages two and seven (Piaget, 1967). After this critical period, it is increasingly difficult to acquire language. Neurological research during this same time showed that the brain assigns certain functions to the right side and others to the left side. Language functions appear to be controlled by the left hemisphere. Lateralization, or the assignment of right or left functions, is completed at an early age, as early as age five, says Stephen Krashen (1965). Since lateralization is what allows a child to acquire a second language, then Piaget’s critical periods for language learning extend into second language acquisition as well.

Each of the theories has its strengths and weaknesses. The immersion approach to language acquisition has taken points from all of these theories and presents the following rationale: 1) Students learn their new language in a natural setting in which they can act and react to the environment. They are learning at a
level in which they can decipher the age-appropriate information since they are not asked to read or write the language. 2) Students are rewarded and receive constant reinforcement which shapes their behavior. 3) Children are exposed to the language at an early age, during the process of lateralization.

It seems that the immersion concept in second language acquisition is a sound one. Extensive studies have shown that children benefit from such an approach to second language acquisition and do not lose native language skill development. In Cincinnati, according to Carolyn Andrade, Supervisor for the Cincinnati Bilingual Program, "Our students in the bilingual program consistently perform better in reading and math than do other students in the regular elementary programs in Cincinnati. Part of the reason is attributed to the high motivation on the part of the students and staff. But clearly, the developmental research shows that what we are doing is sound."

Apart from the Cincinnati program, other immersion programs have been established in the United States. All have been established for a number of reasons, most of which seek a successful approach to second language learning for children.

The first immersion program in the United States was established in Culver City, California, in 1971. Other programs were added in Montgomery County, Maryland; San Diego, California; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Rochester, New York. The majority of these programs are French and Spanish, but the Milwaukee and Cincinnati programs are German, too. The
programs were established at neighborhood schools with neighborhood enrollments or at magnet schools (Rhodes, 1981).

Beginning with 1986-87 school year, Columbus Public Schools (Columbus, Ohio) established two elementary immersion schools, one French school, one Spanish school. Both are magnet schools. The credit for their implementation in Columbus goes to Diane Ging, Supervisor of Foreign Languages in Columbus from 1986-1990. She realized that foreign language education was in need of change in Columbus schools.

According to the current Supervisor for Foreign Languages, Dr. Robert Robison, the goals of the Columbus program are modeled on goals of the California project (Robison, 1991). The goals state that students who complete grades kindergarten through five in the immersion program will:

1) Communicate in the second language with the same ability as a pupil of the same age who is native to the language.

2) Perform in English language as well as their peers who do not speak a second language.

3) Acquire a greater understanding and appreciation of other cultures.

4) Achieve skills in all subject areas equal to their peers who do not speak another language.

Test results from Columbus students show that immersion students score at or above citywide and national averages in standardized tests in English language arts and mathematics. The following are true of immersion students in the Columbus program according to Ron Leithe, Principal of the Spanish Immersion School:
1) Students in the immersion programs are achieving at or above ability level.

2) Students at every grade level are performing much better than citywide or national scores.

3) Students' test scores are increasing grade by grade.

Dr. Robison, much like Carolyn Andrade in Cincinnati, agrees that, "What we are doing in immersion is working because what we do is on target, it's sound!"

Immersion, however, is not for everyone. It is understood that not every child can attend an immersion school. FLES, Foreign Language in the Elementary School, is "a concept whose time has come . . . again," according to Nancy Rhodes of The Center for Applied Linguistics. Rhodes feels that the elementary foreign language programs of the 1950's declined abruptly for many reasons. Among the reasons for the decline Rhodes cites:

1) Lack of qualified teachers

2) Shortage of instructional materials

3) Lack of specific goals

The goals of FLES include an emphasis on developing second-language speaking and listening skills, as well as developing each student's cultural awareness. Unlike immersion, FLES cannot develop all four skills, speaking, listening, reading, and writing, to a high degree. Since most FLES classes meet once, twice, or three times a week, expectations must be set accordingly. It is not fair to expect that a child will be able to speak a language with a high degree of proficiency after only three years of classes given once a week!
Materials for FLES are more available than ever before! Many materials have trickled down from immersion programs, but there are several programs available from popular textbook companies which have been designed especially for FLES. That is not to say that there is no need for new materials, or that the teacher will find everything needed. It does, however, seem easier than ever before to find somewhere to start.

Major universities are changing foreign language certification in order to include certification in grades kindergarten through twelve. The Ohio State University has added course work in child development and elementary foreign language education to its foreign language certification requirements. Foreign language education graduates from Ohio State, then, are certified to teach foreign language in kindergarten through grade twelve.

What can one expect to see in a FLES class? A FLES class meets once, twice, or three times a week with a certified language teacher. It is decided in the planning stages who in the school will have foreign language classes, all grades, fourth and fifth only, or first, third, and fifth. It is best if teachers have their own classroom so that students perceive the location as the place where they go to speak the foreign language. Much like immersion, language is not taught in isolation but in meaningful context. Children learn to talk about objects they see in the classroom, about family members, their hobbies, pets’ colors, telling time, and other things that are psychologically close to them (Rhodes, 1981). Activities include songs, games, dances, and dialogue. Since the emphasis is on speaking and listening, writing is kept to a minimum. There is often no textbook, but a
curriculum guide with supplemental materials. The teacher speaks only the foreign language for instructional purposes but children may speak in English in the beginning. As in immersion, children must first develop listening and comprehension skills before they begin to speak. (It is important to remember that FLES does not promise a high degree of proficiency.)

In cases where there is no qualified instructor who is proficient, FLEX, Foreign Language Experience, is another alternative to immersion. FLEX programs introduce elementary students to words, phrases, and simple conversation in a foreign language. The objectives of FLEX are:

1) To develop careful listening skills to form a firm foundation for later language study.

2) To allow students to acquire a cultural understanding of the people whose language they are learning (Curtain, 1980).

FLEX expects the least foreign language proficiency of all the programs. Because of the limited objectives of FLEX, students can be introduced to more than one language during a school year. It is believed this varied experience gives students a strong basis for choosing which language to study in the future.

What can one expect to see in a FLEX classroom? Since a high level of proficiency in a foreign language is not required, FLEX can be taught by the regular classroom teacher, a high school or college student, or parents or others from the community. The children have been prepared to try foreign language in connection with social studies, art, music or language art. There is a need to create the foreign environment which will enhance the learning of any language. The ordinary classroom can be transformed into such an environment by hanging
brightly colored posters from foreign airlines or embassies. A special bulletin board can be set aside for postcards from vacations in foreign countries or for pictures from magazines. From there, it is a matter of starting with basic topics in foreign language such as greetings, weather, clothing, parts of the body, and so on. FLEX, too, meets once, twice, or three times a week, and goals should be written accordingly. It is important to remember that FLEX, like FLES, does not purport a high degree of proficiency in the target language.

Ohio boasts of hundreds of FLES and FLEX programs! From large cities like Cleveland, Columbus, and Toledo to smaller cities and suburbs such as Canal Winchester and Worthington, FLES programs abound!

The FLES program in Columbus Public Schools began in 1979 at Easthaven Elementary School. Since the principal at the time, Ron Leithe, loved the Spanish language, he decided that all students at Easthaven would learn to speak Spanish. Parents, college students, and community volunteers taught Spanish to all students at Easthaven. There was no written philosophy, no written goals, and the Parent Teacher Association paid for teachers who came with a fee. The classroom teacher was given a notebook full of phrases and vocabulary to enhance the weekly thirty minute lesson. Since there was no written curriculum, it was up to the discretion of the language teacher what would be taught each week. The teacher did not grade or evaluate students in any way. Children were learning things within their own experiences, often things which matched the elementary curriculum such as numbers, colors, community helpers, or animals that live in the sea. There was no articulation with the middle and high schools,
so that students who left Easthaven after six years could not necessarily continue their foreign language education. Parents were involved in many aspects of the program from actual teaching or sharing slides to sewing costumes for a Hispanic performance. There was much publicity generated from the program, especially when the children performed at festivals or principals’ meetings. Other than word of mouth, the program was never evaluated by parents, teachers, or students. There was never any doubt that the students themselves loved learning Spanish! They looked upon the thirty minutes as one of the best times of the week.

In 1986, under the direction of the Foreign Language Supervisor, Diane Ging, the Columbus Board of Education approved a full-time teacher for the Easthaven program. The Foreign Language Supervisor, the principal, Ron Leithe, and staff members interviewed prospective teachers for the FLES program. The PTA was no longer responsible for paying the Spanish teacher!

The "new program" took all of the solid foundation from the previous program and continued to build an even stronger FLES program. During the 1990-91 school year, a curriculum, philosophy, and rationale were developed and approved. The old resources were kept and new ones found. By 1988, several popular book companies had developed programs and kits for elementary foreign language programs. Complete with puppets, films, books, and visuals, the programs became a good place to start since many programs led teachers day by day through foreign language teaching. Most of the programs were pedagogically sound and based on good second-language acquisition theory. Many knew resources had to be developed specifically for the elementary learner, and a
teacher always needed new visuals for a particular lesson. The Easthaven program was modeled after other FLES programs throughout the United States where the level of proficiency varies with the amount of time available for language instruction (Curtain, Pesola, 1988). Since the administrator initiated the program, there was no problem with administrative support in 1986, but teacher expectations had to be set from the start. It was agreed that classroom teachers would do one thirty minute follow-up per week.

The new program was stronger, but there were still gaps in this FLES model. There still was no place for students who had finished six years at Easthaven to continue their foreign language study. There were two magnet foreign language middle schools, but openings in those schools were filled by lottery. Most middle school students from Easthaven still found a gap from sixth to eighth grade where foreign language was concerned. In addition, there had been no evaluation of the program by administrators (other than required teacher evaluations), parents, or classroom teachers. Other than word of mouth, there was no documentation concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the FLES program. Since there was not a certified Spanish teacher, follow-up lessons by classroom teachers had all but vanished. Parents continued to praise the program, but their involvement was diminished by the certified teacher.

The Easthaven program continues today! There is a concentrated effort by the teacher and the new supervisor to implement a program evaluation by the end of the 1991-92 school year. There is better articulation between the elementary
program and the two magnet schools, but there are still too few openings in middle school foreign language programs, due, in part, to budget constraints.

It is always a long road from theory to practice and the Easthaven program, which the author has described, is no exception. Any elementary school that wants to implement a foreign language program must be willing to endure the process and plan wisely. Planners, who truly understand the goals of the elementary school and the potential of foreign language in those goals, will reap the benefits tenfold.

In the spirit of sharing, then, this teacher offers a handbook for administrators and teachers alike the step-by-step process for an elementary foreign language program.
FLES
in your school
IT'S ELEMENTARY!
One of the most significant trends in the elementary curriculum is the opportunity for children to begin foreign language study in the elementary grades. To date, five states require foreign language instruction in the elementary grades, and several more will require it soon. These states and many other school systems are recognizing that early foreign language instruction benefits students cognitively, academically, contributes multiculturally, and meets national needs.

Studies have confirmed earlier research which showed that students who begin to learn another language as a child score better on cognitive tests than their peers who have had no foreign language study. Those same students outperform peers on standardized achievement tests, also.

About forty-five percent of all elementary foreign language programs are FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary School) programs (Rhodes, 1989). This program may begin in any grade, K-6, and meets between two and five times per week. The time of each class varies from twenty to seventy minutes, with ninety minutes per week suggested as a minimum.

There are a number of networks and organizations which can help planners, teachers, and parents who wish to begin programs of foreign language study in their elementary school.

This handbook is written for just that purpose — to help parents and educators implement an elementary foreign language program in their school.
Planning a FLES program is the most important part of the whole process. Those who plan the program should include language teachers, classroom teachers, administrators from elementary, middle, and high school, and parents. It is essential that an elementary program include a well-articulated program at the middle and high school levels. This planning group will present the plan to the administration who is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the FLES program.

In her book, Languages and Children: Making the Match, Helena Anderson offers a checklist of components of the planning process (Anderson, 1985, pg. 85):

- Philosophy
- Goals
- Budget
- Staffing
- Support of Existing Staff
  * Administrators
  * Classroom Teacher
  * Language Teachers
- Choice of Language
- Who Should Study Language?
- Scheduling
- Curriculum/Resources
- Articulation with Middle and High School
- Building Public Relations
- Program Evaluation
- Establishing a Timeline

Each facet of the checklist is examined here in more detail.

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of any FLES program will serve as a springboard for the other elements of the planning process. It is important that this statement match...
Citizens of today's complex world need to understand and communicate with peoples of different cultures. Foreign language study is the key element for understanding these cultures.

The study of foreign languages serves to break down prejudices and barriers between cultures and peoples, both by emphasizing those traits and cultures which are universal and by creating an awareness of and an appreciation for those traits and customs which distinguish one culture from another.

It further enables students to understand the influence of languages on modern cultures and present-day civilizations. Hence, knowledge of a foreign culture and its language increases self-awareness and the understanding of one's own culture.

Such knowledge of foreign languages enhances one's personal growth and expands one's potential for the future and helps every educated person live more purposefully in today's world.

The study of a foreign language develops the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The application of grammatical structures and vocabulary development leads to the acquisition of these communicative competencies. An integral aspect of this skill development involves cultural studies that help to formulate positive attitudes about our multicultural world.

Proficiency in a foreign language requires effective instruction. Effective instruction recognizes that:

- the process of learning a foreign language requires hours of intensive study for long periods of time
- foreign language study is cumulative and each consecutive level incorporates previously learned skills and concepts
- the process of learning a foreign language requires daily opportunities to listen to, speak, read, and write the target language
- students should be provided the opportunity to learn the structures and mechanics of the target language to enable them to communicate
- students learn best when exposed to a variety of teaching methods (visual, auditory, and tactile)
- students should be evaluated according to established goals and objectives
- travel in foreign countries and direct contact with native speakers provide highly desirable experiences
Salaries

Salaries for FLES include the cost of a foreign language specialist. As the program grows, there will be a need to hire more language specialists.

Staff Development Time

Staff development time at the elementary level allows teachers to meet regularly with other FLES teachers and with secondary language teachers. This time should not interfere with regular planning time allotted the FLES teacher.

Curriculum Development

Curriculum development time will be necessary to meet the particular needs of a program. The entire language department should be involved in curriculum development to insure articulation from elementary to middle and high school.

Materials

Once the program is in place, there will be expenses for worksheets, workbooks, visuals, food tasting, crafts, and realia. These costs will be ongoing.

Items which are imported from the target country (countries) are more expensive than items found locally.

In programs where textbooks are used, start-up costs and book renewal costs should be included in the budget. Where there is no textbook, higher copying costs should be expected.
Miscellaneous

Other miscellaneous costs to be expected are travel for teachers assigned to more than one school, mailing costs for foreign contacts, and food and craft activities.

STAFFING

The availability of teachers in a particular community is an important consideration for staffing FLES programs.

The final selection of the FLES teacher is one of the most important decisions which will affect the entire foreign language program. The FLES teacher must possess excellent language skills as well as training in working with young children. Secondary teaching skills are not easily adapted into the elementary setting and additional training is required. On the other hand, elementary teachers who are proficient in a foreign language should be trained in foreign language methodology. Excellent oral language skills are a must since most of the elementary instruction is oral and the teacher is the only model for the children.

SUPPORT OF EXISTING STAFF

In order for the FLES program to thrive, it is mandatory that the principal, parents, and teachers participate in the planning of the program and share the commitment.
The school using a foreign language specialist needs to explain from the onset what is expected from the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher can extend language learning into other parts of the school day or into other school activities. Vocabulary can be reinforced and developed by the classroom teacher. Displays and bulletin boards in the classroom can serve as models of interest and enthusiasm.

If the classroom teacher is the language specialist, it is important that foreign language fit into an already demanding schedule. The need for real commitment is important using this model.

It is important that foreign language teachers in middle and high schools be willing to work with students from FLES programs when they arrive in middle and high school. An elementary program can fail if teachers at the middle and high school levels are not supportive. There needs to be ongoing communication among all three levels so that everyone has the same expectations for children. This ongoing communication will avoid problems for elementary programs that appear to be "having too much fun" or suggest that language learning is "all fun and games."

**CHOICE OF LANGUAGE**

What language is offered in a FLES program? The answer depends on why children are studying the language. Myriam Met, Foreign Language Coordinator for Montgomery County Public Schools, suggests the following reasons for studying a foreign language (Met, 1975):

- To communicate in the marketplace including communication with prospective buyers
• To communicate in a global society and live and work in an interdependent world
• To live in a multiethnic and multilingual society
• To achieve intellectual and personal benefits

Each of these political, social, and individual needs should be considered when deciding which language is offered in a FLES program.

However, one must also remember that proficiency is gained through several years of a well-articulated program. Any elementary foreign language program must logically lead to foreign study in middle and high school. In choosing which language will be offered, then, consideration should be given to languages which could be offered in middle and high school.

Consideration must be given, too, to the availability of teachers and materials in any particular language.

Truly, it would be hard to make a WRONG decision regarding which language to offer in a FLES program. As children learn a foreign language, they are also learning HOW TO LEARN a foreign language and can use these strategies to learn ANY foreign language.

**WHO SHOULD STUDY A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?**

Elementary foreign language teachers must believe that any child can learn a foreign language. The attitudes of the '50s and '60s, that only the gifted should learn a foreign language, are being replaced with inclusive education (Curtain, 1988). There is much evidence to support the idea of foreign language education for all elementary students.
Masciantonio in 1977 found that students with poor skills gained the most from foreign language education. Besides feeling success, some for the first time, many students with poor skills improved skills after foreign language study. Self-esteem was bolstered.

Since there is little or no reading or writing in elementary foreign language, students who are weak in those areas can be successful.

Children who speak one language have demonstrated that they are candidates for learning a second language in the same manner. Through acquisition, anyone can become proficient in a second language to some degree.

**SCHEDULING**

Scheduling elementary foreign language is another important concept to insure a strong program.

For maximum learning to take place, elementary foreign language programs should meet twenty to thirty minutes a day, five days a week according to Helena Anderson, author of *Languages and Children: Making the Match* (1988). There should not be too much time between classes because there will always be a need for extensive review.

How will the program fit into the school day? How can teachers possibly add one more thing to an already full schedule? What about state minimum requirements in other subjects?
Many school districts allow foreign to full language arts or social studies requirements. Other districts take a little time from each subject in order to put in foreign language.

If a school adopts a content-based curriculum, there is no problem with finding time for foreign language because the regular elementary curriculum is taught in the foreign language.

At Easthaven Elementary in Columbus, Ohio, where foreign language classes meet once a week for thirty minutes, teachers were asked how they "fit" foreign language into their lesson plans. The answers varied:

"I take five minutes from every subject."

"I look at the foreign language curriculum and see where it fits into my grade curriculum. I mean, what difference does it make if I introduce telling time or they learn it in Spanish? It's the same concept . . . they get a double dose."

"I use Spanish as Social Studies."

"We no longer have morning recess one day a week."

**CURRICULUM**

Any adopted curriculum must meet the philosophy and goals of the FLES program. Curtain and Pesola (1988) suggest three ways of approaching development of curriculum:

- Choosing already-written curriculum
- Adapting curriculum
- Writing curriculum from scratch
Choosing Already-Written Curriculum

There are many locally developed materials for FLES. By writing to local publishers or other school districts, these materials can be used to start a FLES program and are great sources. The Education Resources Center (ERIC) has information concerning FLES programs and can be accessed at most libraries and universities. When choosing materials and curriculum which have already been adopted, keep in mind:

- Age appropriate materials. Do not adapt high school or college materials for elementary foreign language. These materials are not interesting for children and contain too much grammar.

- Matching materials with the philosophy and goals of the program. No one publisher can meet the needs of all FLES programs. Check each program and pick and choose!

- Publication dates. Be sure that materials reflect current research and practice.

Adapting Curriculum

Remember that in adapting curriculum, materials written for a daily program may not fit a two-day-a-week program. Give special consideration to programs with large numbers of special education students or with large numbers of gifted children. Consideration, too, should be given to the priorities of the school and community. Will children in the district be attending college? Will some have travel experiences? The curriculum must include materials which reflect what the children will do with the language.
It is always good to remember the interests of the staff when adapting an elementary foreign language curriculum. Can Mrs. Brown show slides of Colombia? Is Colombia included in the curriculum?

Writing Curriculum

Any elementary foreign language writing team should include teachers who are knowledgeable in principles of second language acquisition, child development, and curriculum development. One native speaker should check for accuracy in language and culture.

Curriculum writing is expensive! Teachers need to be appropriately compensated for this difficult task.

No curriculum can be final until it is tested. After testing, there is revision and more testing. Once the process is completed, however, the new program can contribute greatly to the existing elementary curriculum.

The following sample copy of an elementary foreign language curriculum comes from Columbus Public Schools. This curriculum is based on a foreign language class which meets once a week for thirty minutes.
Grade K  Foreign Language
Subject Objectives

Culture
• Sings at least one authentic song in the second language
• Recognizes at least one significant holiday in the second culture
• Tastes at least one authentic food of the second culture

Vocabulary
• Counts from 1 through 31 aloud
• Identifies the number words 1 through 15
• Identifies and names basic colors: red, blue, green, black, yellow, and white
• Identifies and names common pets: dog, cat, bird, and fish
• Identifies and names the days of the week
• Identifies and names major body parts
• Identifies and names zoo animals: elephant, lion, tiger, gorilla, giraffe, and monkey
• Identifies and names geometric shapes: circle, triangle, square, and oval

Listening
• Responds to simple oral commands
• Responds to basic movement commands: stand up, sit down, come here, turn around, jump, stop, right, left, raise your hand, listen, go to the _________, touch, open, and close

Writing
• Writes his or her first name

Speaking
• Uses expressions of courtesy in spoken language: "thank you," "please," and "you're welcome"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 1 Foreign Language Subject Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sings at least one authentic song in the second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognizes at least two significant holidays in the second culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tastes at least one authentic food of the second culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identifies the number words 1 through 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identifies and names the colors brown, purple, pink, and gray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identifies and names snakes, bears, zebras, and camels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identifies and names farm animals: cow, horse, pig, duck, chicken, and sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses vocabulary related to the weather: &quot;it’s hot,&quot; &quot;it’s cold,&quot; &quot;it’s raining,&quot; &quot;it’s windy,&quot; &quot;it’s sunny,&quot; &quot;it’s snowing,&quot; and &quot;it’s cloudy&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identifies and names family members: mother, father, sister, brother, grandmother, and grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identifies and names people and places in the school: students, teacher, custodian, principal, secretary, office, gym, cafeteria, playground, bathroom, and hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Labels simple pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses simple oral expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Orally identifies the location of objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses greetings in spoken language: &quot;hello,&quot; &quot;goodbye,&quot; &quot;see you later,&quot; &quot;good morning,&quot; &quot;good afternoon,&quot; &quot;good evening,&quot; and &quot;how are you&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Answers simple oral questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Vocabulary** | - Counts from 1 through 100 aloud<br>- Identifies the number words 1 through 50<br>- Identifies and states the date, using the day, month, and year<br>- Identifies and names fruits and vegetables<br>- Identifies and names modes of transportation: boat, train, plane, car, truck, and bus<br>- Tells time to the hour and half-hour<br>- Uses vocabulary related to feelings and states of being: "I'm happy/sad," "I'm hot/cold," "I'm hungry/thirsty," and "I'm calm"
- Recognizes his or her phone number when read aloud<br>- Recites his or her birthday and tells his or her age | |
| **Listening** | - Distinguishes between questions and statements in oral language<br>- Recognizes adjectives in oral language | |
| **Writing** | - Copies and illustrates complete sentences<br>- Produces simple spoken sentences | |
| **Speaking** | - Orally describes objects, using color words<br>- Talks about a pet<br>- Gives accurate oral information about the daily school schedule<br>- Orally describes the weather | |
| **Reading** | - Distinguishes between questions and statements in written language | |
### Grade 3

**Foreign Language**

**Subject Objectives**

| Culture | • Sings at least four authentic songs in the second language  |
|         | • Recognizes at least four significant holidays in the second culture |
|         | • Tastes at least one authentic food of the second culture |
|         | • Recognizes differences and similarities in family customs of the second culture |
| Vocabulary | • Identifies the number words 1 through 100 |
|           | • Identifies and names food items: bread, milk, meat, cake, cookies, ice cream, butter, and eggs |
|           | • Identifies and names the seasons |
|           | • Identifies and names musical instruments |
|           | • Identifies and names places in the city: fire station, police station, school, house, apartment, church, store, park, post office, factory, and building |
|           | • Identifies and names occupations: doctor, firefighter, police officer, nurse, teacher, minister, cook, waiter, waitress, and worker |
|           | • Recites his or her phone number |
| Listening | • Discriminates among the consonant sounds |
|           | • Follows verbal commands, using prepositions of location |
| Writing | • Writes words to identify and/or describe |
| Speaking | • Answers routine oral questions spontaneously |
|           | • Answers oral questions related to time |
|           | • Uses the numbers 1 through 50 in spoken language |
|           | • Describes his or her health orally, using vocabulary for parts of the body |
|           | • Talks about his or her family |
|           | • Expresses feelings orally |
|           | • Uses adjectives in spoken language |
| Reading | • Associates pictures and numerals with the written words |
Grade 4

Foreign Language

Subject Objectives

**Culture**
- Sings at least five authentic songs in the second language
- Identifies several second-culture dining customs
- States basic geographical information about second-language countries
- Demonstrates a dance from the second-language culture

**Vocabulary**
- Counts from 100 to 1,000 by hundreds aloud
- Identifies and names the four directions: North, South, East, and West
- Identifies and names leisure-time activities: reading, watching television, going to a movie, swimming, skating, and playing
- Identifies and names vocabulary related to stores and shopping
- Identifies and names vocabulary related to articles of clothing: jacket, shoes, socks, pants, blouse, shirt, sweater, and "I am wearing . . ."
- Identifies and names fast foods: hamburger, french fries, Coca-Cola, pizza, and hot dog

**Listening**
- Discriminates among the vowel sounds
- Recognizes comparative and superlative forms of adjectives in spoken language
- Distinguishes between masculine and feminine gender forms of nouns and adjectives in spoken language
- Distinguishes between singular and plural forms of nouns and adjectives in spoken language

**Writing**
- Expresses simple thoughts and ideas in writing

**Speaking**
- Uses simple questions
- Uses action words in oral language
- Uses the numbers 1 to 100 in spoken language
- States personal information about likes and dislikes
- Orally describes leisure-time activities
- Uses food and clothing vocabulary in a shopping situation orally

**Reading**
- Identifies and names the letters of the alphabet
- Reads new and familiar words in sentences
Subject Objectives

**Culture**
- Listens to second-language popular music
- Identifies significant second-culture food shopping customs
- Differentiates among the forms of address in the second-language culture
- Identifies major second-language artists and their works

**Vocabulary**
- Identifies the number words 1 through 1,000
- Identifies and names vocabulary related to being at home and personal grooming: living room, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, to cook, to bathe, to sleep, to get dressed, to brush one's teeth, and to brush one's hair
- Identifies and names objects related to the classroom: chair, desk, blackboard, table, pencil, paper, crayons, scissors, and glue
- Recognizes and uses ordinal numbers when talking about order: first, second, third, fourth, and fifth
- Recognizes and uses expressions and gestures when meeting and greeting people

**Listening**
- Listens for specific information

**Writing**
- Writes complete sentences
- Uses prepositions of location in written language
- Uses punctuation marks correctly
- Participates in writing group experience stories

**Speaking**
- Expresses thoughts and ideas orally
- Orders food from a menu
- Talks about his or her daily routine
- Orally communicates classroom needs: "May I sharpen my pencil?"; "May I go to the bathroom?"; and "May I speak in English?"
- Uses prepositions of location in spoken language
- Uses the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives in spoken language
- Uses the correct gender of nouns and adjectives in spoken language
- Uses the correct singular and plural forms of nouns and adjectives in spoken language

**Reading**
- Uses appropriate emphasis when reading aloud
- Reads transportation schedules, using a 24-hour clock
ARTICULATION

Elementary foreign language students must be assured of a middle school program which is a planned continuation of the grade school program. One of the best ways to doom any FLES program is to ignore articulation with middle school or junior high.

Middle school programs need to be different from elementary programs. Children entering middle school should not be forced to start over in a middle school foreign language program nor should their oral proficiency be ignored. The middle school focus is different in that there is more reading and writing, more grammar, and more new settings in which to function in the new language. That does not mean, however, that oral proficiency is suddenly not important. There must be tremendous cooperation and communication between elementary and middle school language teachers. Compromises will be necessary in order to have a well-articulated program and to insure the students' continued language development.

BUILDING PUBLIC RELATIONS

Planning a foreign language program means involving parents, community, the entire school staff, appropriate central administration, and businesses in each step of the process. There is a much greater chance of success with a broad support base. The Easthaven FLES program uses the following public relations ideas to sustain its current program:

- Makes use of the media including radio, TV, and local publications.
• Takes trips to other schools where foreign language is taught including immersion schools.

• Invites parents and other significant adults to class.

• Sends out newsletters and in 1992-93 school year will initiate the Fles Press.

• Puts on special programs such as the annual Cinco de Mayo celebration.

• Sings in Spanish during holiday programs.

• Tape records and videotapes classes.

• Allows the FLES Specialist to visit other schools for mini-lessons.

**EVALUATION**

**Student Evaluation**

When students are being evaluated in an elementary foreign language program, it is important that any type of grade match the goals and philosophy of the program. If the FLES program emphasizes oral skills, children should be tested orally rather than with paper and pencil. Classes where writing is emphasized can use the standardized FLES Spanish assessment, available through the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

Some FLES programs have chosen not to give grades to students. Children and parents may perceive such classes as unimportant and "not counting" as much as other classes.

**Program Evaluation**

One of the top priorities of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) during their 1989 meeting was evaluation. Program
evaluation is important to identify problems in the FLES program, while at the same time providing ongoing information about the program. FLES program evaluation can bring about positive change while verifying the benefits of the program.

The FLES Program Evaluation Inventory (FPEI) is based on the research of historical FLES programs as well as current research in FLES education. There are five forms in the FPEI: the FPEI for students, for teachers, for the FLES teacher, for the administrator, and for the parents. The FPEI forms, found here, are easy to administer and tabulate. It is important to insure confidentiality when administering all of the FPEI's.
FLES PROGRAM
EVALUATION INVENTORY
FOR
CHILDREN (K-2 GRADES)

DIRECTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

Hand out one evaluation form to each child. Read the following questions, and ask the children to circle on their paper the happy face if they answer "yes," the frowning face if they answer "no" to the question. All responses are anonymous. Please return the forms in the envelope provided to the foreign language teacher. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Do you like your (Spanish, French, etc.) class?

2. Do you like your (Spanish, French, etc.) teacher?

3. Is (Spanish, French, etc.) fun?

4. Do you want to learn more (Spanish, French, etc.)?

---

1  😊  😞  1  😊  😞  2  😊  😞  2  😊  😞  3  😊  😞  3  😊  😞  4  😊  😞  4  😊  😞
FLEX PROGRAM EVALUATION INVENTORY FOR FLES TEACHERS

Please answer the following questionnaire concerning the Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) program in your school. Please return this survey in the envelope provided no later than one week after receipt. Your opinion is important. All responses are anonymous.

After reading each statement carefully, circle the one response that best represents your own opinion. The abbreviated coding is: STRONGLY AGREE = SA; AGREE = A; DISAGREE = D; STRONGLY DISAGREE = SD; NO ANSWER/NOT APPLICABLE = NA.

1. I am aware of the goals and objectives of our FLES program.
   SA A D SD NA

2. The goals and objectives of our FLES program are realistic.
   SA A D SD NA

3. The students have achieved the objectives of the FLES program for this year.
   SA A D SD NA

4. Our FLES philosophy is written and available for all interested parties.
   SA A D SD NA

5. My FLES students receive a foreign language grade on their report card.
   SA A D SD NA

6. When appropriate, I assign my students homework.
   SA A D SD NA

7. My "at-risk" students are doing well.
   SA A D SD NA

8. I get along with the regular classroom teachers.
   SA A D SD NA

9. The principal(s) of my building(s) are supportive.
   SA A D SD NA

10. The parents of my students are supportive.
    SA A D SD NA

11. The FLES coordinator (if one exists) is supportive of the program.
    SA A D SD NA

12. Opportunities are provided to network with other colleagues.
    SA A D SD NA

13. In-service programs are provided.
    SA A D SD NA

14. The in-service programs are informative and useful for my job.
    SA A D SD NA

15. Sufficient resources are available to allow me to adequately do my job.
    SA A D SD NA

16. Time is provided to work on materials.
    SA A D SD NA

17. My teaching load is reasonable.
    SA A D SD NA

18. I feel good about my FLES teaching.
    SA A D SD NA

19. My job is rewarding to me.
    SA A D SD NA

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: If you feel this questionnaire did not allow you to adequately express your opinion, or if you care to elaborate on a point(s), please do so on the back of this sheet.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.
FLES PROGRAM
EVALUATION INVENTORY
FOR
CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Please answer the following questionnaire concerning the Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) program in your school. Please return this survey in the envelope provided no later than one week after receipt. Your opinion is important. All responses are anonymous.

After reading each statement carefully, circle the one response that best represents your own opinion. The abbreviated coding is: STRONGLY AGREE = SA; AGREE = A; DISAGREE = D; STRONGLY DISAGREE = SD; NO ANSWER/NOT APPLICABLE = NA.

1. The students are enjoying the foreign language instruction.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

2. The students appear to be learning the foreign language.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

3. The FLES teacher has the students actively involved in language learning.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

4. The FLES teacher keeps the students on task.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

5. The foreign language lessons are organized.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

6. The foreign language teacher is knowledgeable in his/her field.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

7. The foreign language activities are at the appropriate age level for the child.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

8. The foreign language teacher is enthusiastic.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

9. The foreign language class is lively and varied in activities.
   SA  A  D  SD  NA

10. The foreign language is the main language of instruction.
    SA  A  D  SD  NA

11. The foreign language curriculum enhances and reinforces the regular curriculum.
    SA  A  D  SD  NA

12. I agree with the methodology used to teach foreign language to elementary students.
    SA  A  D  SD  NA

13. The FLES teacher is courteous, friendly, and polite toward the regular classroom teacher.
    SA  A  D  SD  NA

14. There is communication between the foreign language teacher and the regular classroom teacher.
    SA  A  D  SD  NA

15. I understand the goals or expectations of our FLES program.
    SA  A  D  SD  NA

16. I am well informed about our FLES program, its goals and techniques.
    SA  A  D  SD  NA

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: If you feel this questionnaire did not allow you to adequately express your opinion, or if you care to elaborate on a point(s), please do so on the back of this sheet.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.
FLES PROGRAM EVALUATION INVENTORY FOR PRINCIPALS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Please answer the following questionnaire concerning the Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) program in your school. Please return this survey in the envelope provided no later than one week after receipt. Your opinion is important. All responses are anonymous.

After reading each statement carefully, circle the one response that best represents your own opinion. The abbreviated coding is: STRONGLY AGREE = SA; AGREE = A; DISAGREE = D; STRONGLY DISAGREE = SD; NO ANSWER/NOT APPLICABLE = NA.

1. I have personally observed the FLES teacher in my building.
   SA A D SD NA

2. The FLES teacher is liked by the other teachers in my building.
   SA A D SD NA

3. The FLES program is liked by the other teachers in the building.
   SA A D SD NA

4. The parents seem pleased with the FLES program.
   SA A D SD NA

5. The students seem pleased with the FLES program.
   SA A D SD NA

6. The students participate enthusiastically.
   SA A D SD NA

7. The "at-risk" students are performing well in the foreign language classroom.
   SA A D SD NA

8. The FLES class is organized.
   SA A D SD NA

9. The FLES teacher is enthusiastic.
   SA A D SD NA

10. The FLES lessons are interesting and age-appropriate.
    SA A D SD NA

11. The study of foreign language is reinforcing the other content areas of the curriculum.
    SA A D SD NA

12. I support the notion that foreign language is important for all students.
    SA A D SD NA

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: If you feel this questionnaire did not allow you to adequately express your opinion, or if you care to elaborate on a point(s), please do so on the back of this sheet.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, INPUT, AND COOPERATION.
FLES PROGRAM EVALUATION INVENTORY FOR PARENTS

Please answer the following questionnaire concerning the Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) program in your school. Please return this survey in the envelope provided no later than one week after receipt. Your opinion is important. All responses are anonymous.

After reading each statement carefully, circle the one response that best represents your own opinion. The abbreviated coding is: STRONGLY AGREE = SA; AGREE = A; DISAGREE = D; STRONGLY DISAGREE = SD; NO ANSWER/NOT APPLICABLE = NA.

1. My child talks at home about foreign language class.
   SA A D SD NA
2. My child's comments are positive about foreign language learning.
   SA A D SD NA
3. My child feels successful in the foreign language class.
   SA A D SD NA
4. My child likes the foreign language.
   SA A D SD NA
5. My child likes the foreign language teacher.
   SA A D SD NA
6. I am receiving enough information about the foreign language program at our elementary school.
   SA A D SD NA
7. I have seen my child participating in a foreign language school program.
   SA A D SD NA
8. I have visited my child's foreign language classroom.
   SA A D SD NA
9. My child brings home foreign language worksheets, song handouts, etc. that I feel are helpful.
   SA A D SD NA
10. My child uses the foreign language or talks about the foreign language class at home.
    SA A D SD NA
11. I am in favor of teaching a foreign language to children.
    SA A D SD NA
12. I feel that studying foreign language has not jeopardized my child's progress in the other subject areas such as math or reading.
    SA A D SD NA
13. ANSWER THIS QUESTION ONLY IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AN "AT RISK" STUDENT OR IS LEARNING DISABLED.
    My child is benefiting from the elementary foreign language program at our elementary school.
    SA A D SD NA

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: If you feel this questionnaire did not allow you to adequately express your opinion, or if you care to elaborate on a point(s), please do so on the back of this sheet.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, INPUT, AND COOPERATION.
TIMELINE

The following timeline was taken from Helena Anderson Curtain’s book, Languages and Children: Making the Match (1988). It is a useful tool when the decision to implement an elementary foreign language program has been made. The correct sequence of steps is not the focus of this timeline since the needs of each situation will vary.

Elementary Foreign Language Program Planning Checklist

1. _____ Hold district-wide planning meetings
   ____ Involve community
   ____ Involve classroom and language teachers, administrators

2. _____ Complete mission statement, program philosophy

3. _____ Select program model and goals
   ____ Identify pupils
   ____ Schedule plan for amount of instructional time: days per week, hours per day, years
   ____ Develop patterns of organization for staffing
   ____ Allocate budget for staff, materials, in-service and miscellaneous costs

4. _____ Identify staff

5. _____ Select language(s)

6. _____ Develop curriculum
   ____ Locate and adapt materials
   ____ Plan scope and sequence, classroom activities
7. ____ Plan articulation with secondary school programs
8. ____ Develop evaluation plan
9. ____ Design public relations activities
10. ____ Disseminate program information

AND SO . . .

There are many things which need careful thought and consideration when implementing an elementary school foreign language program. Only with the dedication of administrators, teachers, parents, and students can there be equal opportunity for all students to become proficient in a foreign language within today's school setting.

There are those, however, who believe the school setting as we know it is in need of change — now! In *The Atlantic* of May 1992, George Leonard states quite simply that "school as we know it is doomed." He feels that by the year 2000, children will have to learn in a variety of ways and that none of those new ways will involve a teacher leading twenty students seated at desks. Instead, Leonard feels that the key to good education is taking the viewpoint of the learner and focusing on the interaction between the learner and his environment. Students must be allowed to be active learners. Otherwise, school is doomed. Why?

According to Leonard, we are all aware that children learn at different rates. We don't believe that slow learners are less intelligent; they're just slower.
Yet, today's schools require children to learn at the same rate. Those who stay with the pack, pass. Those who don't may fail.

Leonard reminds us that children are naturally gregarious and look to others for help. The ability to cooperate and work together is one thing that sets us apart from larger animals. School, however, is set up to be nearly 100% competitive, rewarding the best, the most, and the highest.

Leonard's last point reveals research that indicates that self-confidence and self-respect are prerequisite to learning. School, as we know it, humiliates anyone who doesn't know the right answer.

Successful FLES programs can help eliminate doomed schools! Successful FLES programs allow all children to experience success at the child's own rate. Silence is accepted and children speak the new language when they are ready.

FLES programs are structured to be cooperative, not competitive. Children work in pairs or small groups to practice the new language and everyone helps each other in order for communication to take place.

FLES programs generate high self-esteem and lead to success for many children who have experienced little success in other areas. There is some research to suggest that high self-esteem leads to high achievement, more specifically, that high achievement rarely occurs without high self-esteem. One reinforces the other. Children of varying abilities can acquire a second language just like everyone else.

Implementing a foreign language program in the elementary school can help eliminate Leonard's "doomed school."
CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Foreign language education is a necessary component of a basic education for all children. In order for students to become proficient in a foreign language, it is necessary to offer an extended sequence beginning in the elementary grades.

This researcher became interested in elementary foreign language after visiting the Bilingual Program in Cincinnati Public Schools in 1984. Information about elementary foreign language was gathered from books written specifically about elementary foreign language, books about second language acquisition, journal articles, conference lectures and interviews with teachers and supervisors.

The result was a handbook which outlines important parts of any successful elementary foreign language program. The handbook can be used in any rural, urban or suburban elementary school, and should be used within a framework of cooperation and collaboration among teachers, administrators, and parents in the elementary, middle and high school settings. This handbook is offered as a tool for a strong beginning when implementing the elementary program, and should be followed by an ongoing process of evaluation and restructuring whenever necessary.

A letter to colleagues from Val Babb, Professional Issues Committee of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), states:
In 1991 The Council for Basic Education (CBE) published and distributed a wall chart containing outcomes in English, geography, history/social studies, mathematics, science, and the arts for students at the fourth, eighth and twelfth grades. The publication that accompanied the chart strongly urged the foreign language profession to produce similar standards.

ACTFL formulated the following standards for an extended language sequence beginning in grade three:

* 25 minutes per day of foreign language instruction in grades three and four
* an additional 25 minutes per day in grades five and six
* 50 minutes per day in grades seven and eight
* 50 minutes per day in grades nine through twelve

ACTFL included the following student outcomes:

* Students will communicate effectively in at least one language in addition to the student’s own.
* Students will be prepared to continue to grow in language studied and in additional languages.
* Students will be aware of the importance of effective communication in an increasingly global society.

This researcher would like to see ACTFL’s recommendations adopted as minimum standards in all elementary schools.
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