TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Mohammed Choudhury

DATE: December 7, 2021

SUBJECT: Blueprint Deep Dive: English Learner Workgroup Update

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to provide an update on the Workgroup on English Learners in Public Schools.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

The EL Workgroup was established by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act during the 2020 Maryland General Assembly session. The workgroup met seven times from August through November and prepared an interim report to the Governor and General Assembly due on December 1, 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This presentation will provide background information on the EL Workgroup's legislative requirements, its membership, and the structure and details of its meetings. An update on the preliminary recommendations based upon existing state practices and opportunities for growth will be introduced. In addition, success with dual language education at Cesar Chavez Dual Spanish Immersion School will be highlighted.
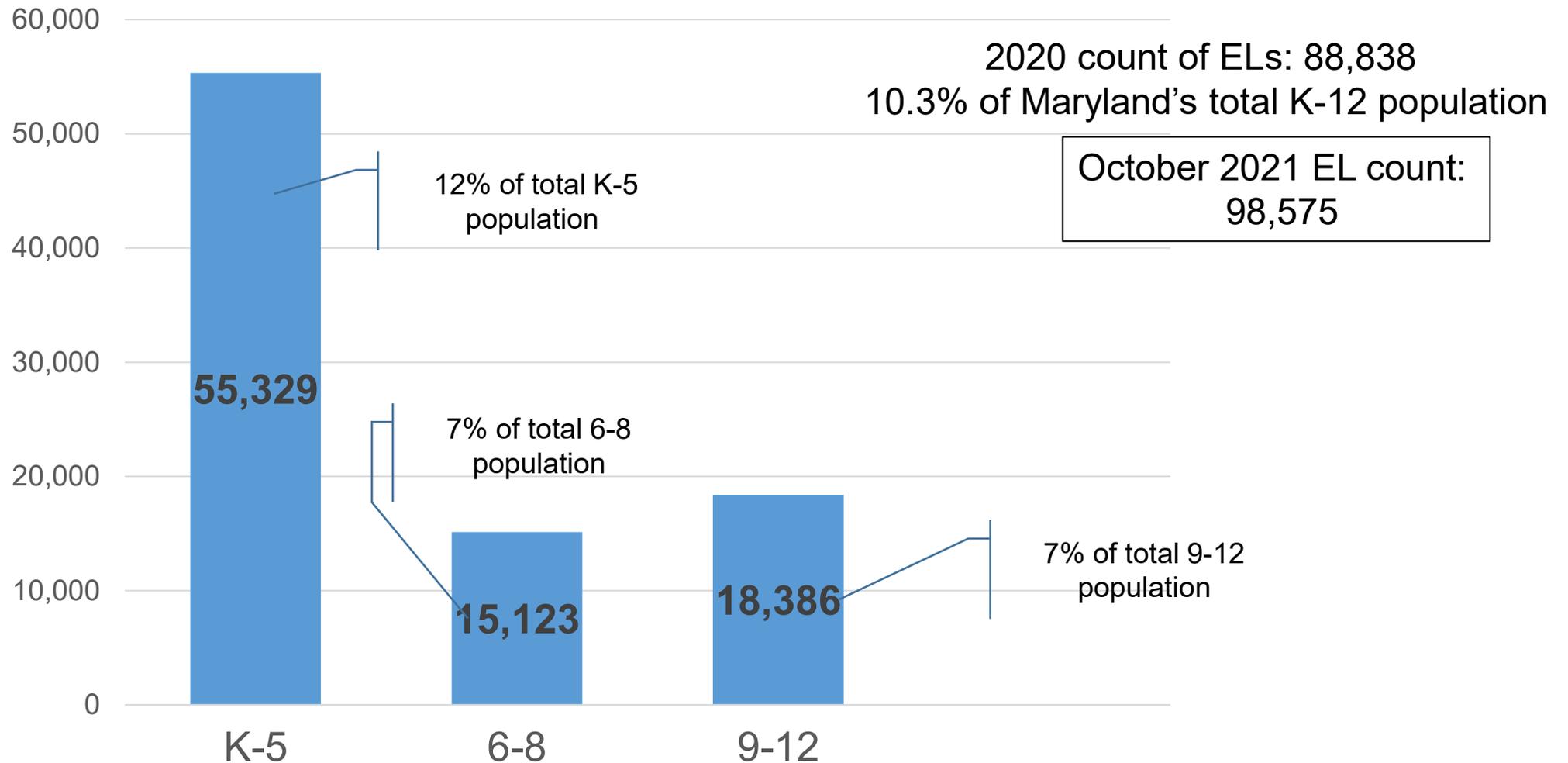
ACTION:

For discussion only.

Blueprint Deep Dive:
English Learner (EL) Workgroup Update
State Board of Education Meeting
December 7, 2021

Presentation Overview

- Maryland's K-12 English Learners (ELs)
- Legislative Requirements
- Membership of EL Workgroup
- Structure of Meetings
- Meeting Details
- Existing Practices and Opportunities for Growth
- Preliminary Recommendations
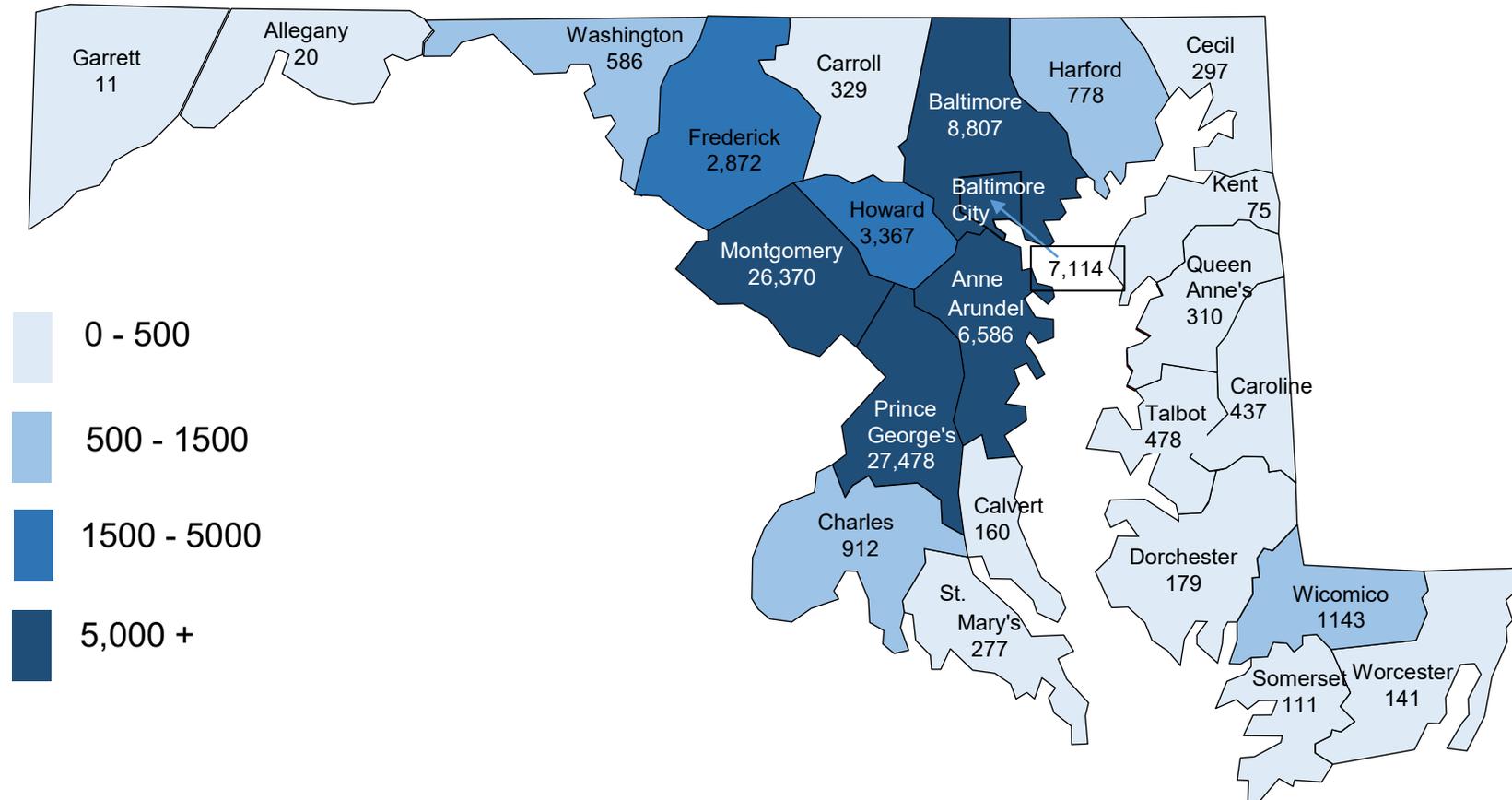- Spotlight on César Chávez Dual Language Spanish Immersion School

Maryland's K-12 English Learners

2020 count of ELs: 88,838
10.3% of Maryland's total K-12 population

October 2021 EL count:
98,575

12% of total K-5 population

7% of total 6-8 population

7% of total 9-12 population

55,329

15,123

18,386

60,000

50,000

40,000

30,000

20,000

10,000

0

K-5   6-8   9-12

Source: 2020-21 October EL enrollment survey

Legislative Requirements

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future established the Workgroup on English Learners in Public Schools and requires the workgroup to:

- Collect demographic data on ELs and services provided

- Review methods of teaching and providing other services to ELs

- Make recommendations on improving the education of ELs in public early childhood, primary, or secondary schools in the State, including whether additional funding should be provided

- Measure and make recommendations to address learning loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic for ELs

- Submit an interim report (on or before December 1, 2021) and a final report (on or before December 1, 2022) of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly

Membership Requirements

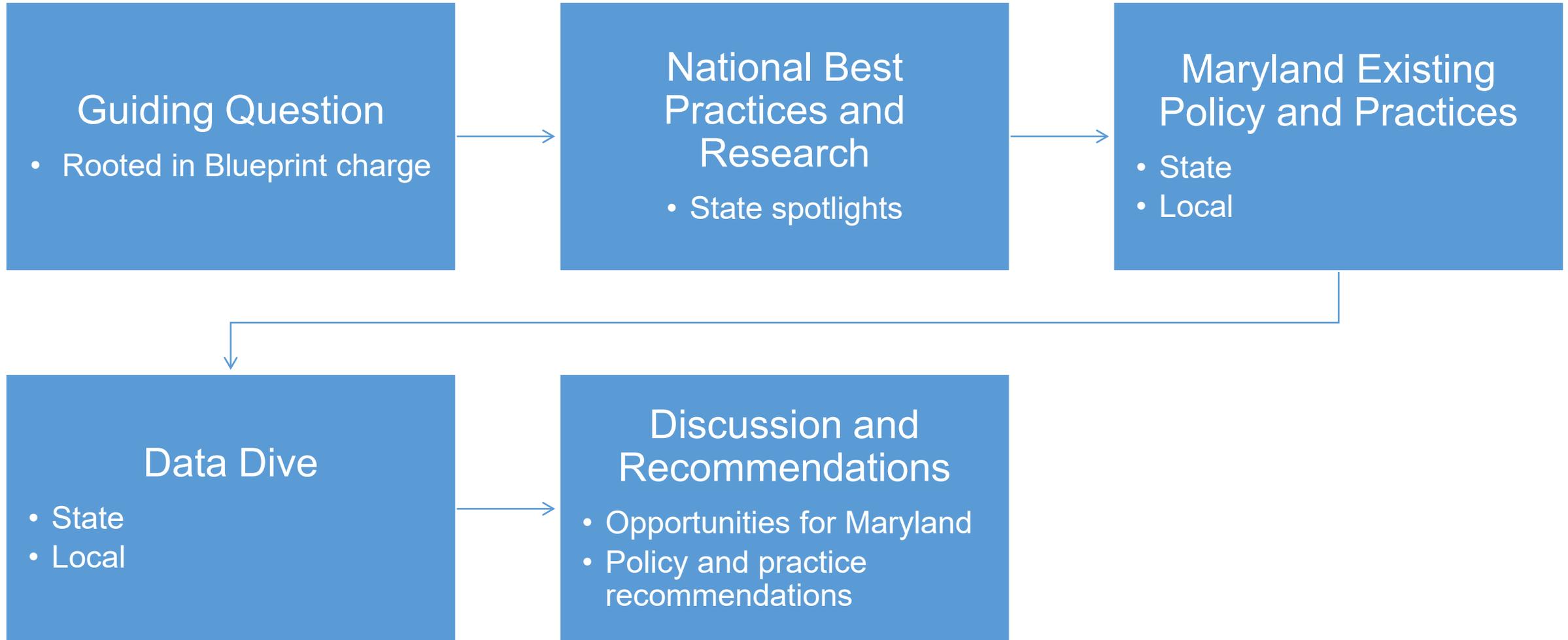The workgroup consists of the following members:

- Chair

- Member appointed by Senate President

- Member appointed by House Speaker

- At least one advocate for English learners

- At least one multilingual leader in the education field

- At least one expert in education from a diverse area of the state

- Additional members appointed by State Superintendent of Schools

Membership Representation

- Baltimore County Public Schools

- César Chávez Dual Language Spanish Immersion School

- Chesapeake Multicultural Resources Center

- Former Assistant Deputy Secretary and Director for Office of English Language Acquisition at the US Department of Education

- Frederick County Public Schools

- Graduate of Anne Arundel County Schools

- International Student Family Outreach, Howard County Public Schools

- Maryland General Assembly

- Maryland State Department of Education

- Maryland State Education Association

- Maryland TESOL Association

- Montgomery County Public Schools

- Prince George's County Public Schools

- Salisbury University

- The Century Foundation

- University of Maryland, College Park

- Washington County Public Schools

Structure of Meetings

Guiding Question
- Rooted in Blueprint charge

National Best Practices and Research
- State spotlights

Maryland Existing Policy and Practices
- State
- Local

Data Dive
- State
- Local

Discussion and Recommendations
- Opportunities for Maryland
- Policy and practice recommendations

Meeting Details

Topic	Guest Speakers/State Spotlight
The State of English Learners in MD	• MSDE EL/Title III Office • MSDE Office of Research and Strategic Data Use
ELs in Early Childhood Settings	• MSDE Division of Early Childhood • Lorena Mancilla, Director of WIDA Early Years
Access to ELD-Trained Teachers and Multilingual Staff	• MSDE Division of Educator Certification and Program Approval • Jennifer Love, Prince George's County Public Schools • Sarah Neville-Morgan, Alesha Moreno-Ramirez, Elena Fajardo, Marcella Rodriguez, California Department of Education
Initiatives in Dual Language and Bilingual Education	• Jennifer Steele, American University • Tamara Hewlett, MCPS • Carmen Henninger, PGCPS

Meeting Details

Topic	Guest Speakers/State Spotlight
National Perspective on EL Policies and Best Practices	• Kristin Percy Calaff, Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction • Elisa Alvarez, New York State Education Department
National Perspective on EL Policies and Best Practices	• Julie Lara, Texas Education Agency
National Perspective on EL Policies and Best Practices	• Olivia Hernandez, San Antonio Independent School District

[MSDE EL Blueprint Workgroup Website](#)

- **Standards and Assessments**
  - Maryland joined the WIDA Consortium in 2011 and adopted the WIDA English language development standards and the WIDA English language proficiency assessments, ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.
- **Identification of Young Dual Language Learners**
  - Maryland has no policy or procedure in place for identifying and serving DLLs enrolled in public PreK programs
- **Bilingual Certification**
  - Although Maryland does not, twenty states offer bilingual education certification or endorsement.
- **ESOL Teacher Preparation**
  - Maryland's nine approved ESOL teacher preparation programs and two approved alternative teacher preparation programs will not meet the staffing need for ESOL and bilingual teachers in the state.

- **Multilingual Family Communication**
  - Beyond Federal and state mandates regarding equal access to public services for individuals in a language they can understand, MSDE has no regulation or policy in place. Communication that is not linguistically and culturally appropriate is a barrier to parent engagement.

- **Access to Assessments**
  - Maryland is taking steps to translate and transadapt several of its state assessments; however, there is a need to continue evaluating best practices for providing equal access to assessments for more ELs.

- **Dual Language Immersion Programs**
  - Montgomery County Public Schools has five two-way immersions elementary schools; Prince Georges County has one.
  - There are seven LSSs where the language ratios support opportunities for these programs.

Number of "Dual Language Opportunity" Elementary Schools
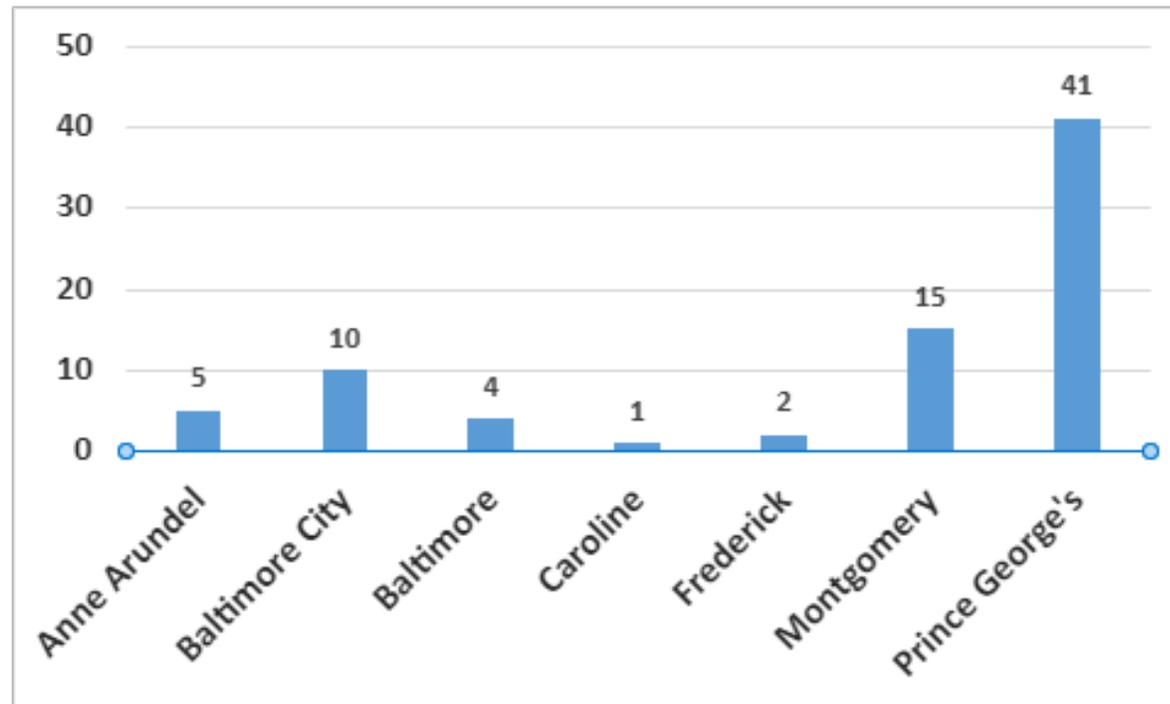
A dual language opportunity school has a range of 30% to 70% native speakers of Spanish.

Preliminary Recommendations

Preliminary Recommendation 1: Identification and support for young dual language learners (DLLs) and their families

To ensure early childhood education and care programs are responsive to the experiences and needs of DLLs, Maryland should adopt:

- (1A) A standardized, comprehensive method for collecting and sharing information about this population; and

- (1B) A statewide plan for supporting DLLs via early childhood educational opportunities.

Preliminary Recommendation 2: Maryland bilingual teacher certification

To ensure an adequate supply of effective bilingual teachers, Maryland should

- (2A) Adopt a bilingual certification; and

- (2B) Ensure that unnecessary barriers do not limit multilingual candidates from becoming certified teachers in Maryland.

Preliminary Recommendation 3: All teachers prepared to serve English learners

To ensure all teachers are prepared to serve English learners, Maryland should

- (3A) Require that all educator preparation programs provide training in EL-related teacher competencies and provide EL student clinical opportunities for pre-service educators;

- (3B) Expand dual certification offerings (English as a Second Language combined with another certification area); and

- (3C) Invest in training for all current educators focused on the assets of multilingualism and improving academic outcomes for ELs.

Preliminary Recommendation 4: Teacher pipeline

To ensure that all ELs have the benefit of certified ESOL and bilingual teachers, Maryland should

- (4A) Expand grow-your-own programs and other research-based efforts to recruit and train ESOL and bilingual educators; and

- (4B) Support local school systems in increasing the number of conditionally certified ESOL teachers who earn certification.

Preliminary Recommendation 5: Scale two-way immersion programs

- To maximize the number of students who can benefit from these research-based programs, Maryland should develop, fund, and implement a statewide approach to expansion of two-way immersion programs.

Preliminary Recommendation 6: Support and sustain multilingualism by promoting an asset-based approach

- To shift from a deficit mindset, Maryland should develop and implement a statewide strategy to promote asset-based perspectives regarding ELs at every level from the State Department of Education to individual educators and staff.

Preliminary Recommendations

Preliminary Recommendation 7: Equitable communication with multilingual families

- To ensure equitable communication with multilingual parents and guardians, Maryland should establish a comprehensive language access policy for MSDE and public schools.

Preliminary Recommendation 8: Inclusive and valid assessments for multilingual learners

- To ensure equity and inclusion in the state assessment program, Maryland should explore the expansion of assessments in multilingual students' dominant language(s) that will accurately demonstrate their academic achievement and language proficiency.

Spotlight on César Chávez Dual Language Spanish Immersion School

405 students

50% Spanish speaking at home

50% English speaking at home

157 English learners