

Virtual English Learner (EL) Workgroup Meeting  
Maryland State Department of Education  
September 30, 2021  
4:00-5:30 PM

Meeting Notes

Workgroup Members in Attendance: Superintendent Mohammed Choudhury (Chair), Ms. Geraldine Duval (on behalf of Delegate Washington), Dr. Drew Fagan, Ms. Anne Marie Foerster Luu, Ms. Libia Gil, Mr. Sam Jackson (on behalf of Senator Kagan), Mr. Diego Juarez, Ms. Niki Hazel, Dr. Eric Louers-Phillips, Dr. Kia McDaniel, Ms. Paula Moore, Dr. Anjali Pandey, Mr. Matthew Peters, Ms. Judy Walker, Dr. Conor Williams

MSDE Staff in Attendance: Ms. Ary Amerikaner, Ms. Julia Chavez, Mr. Amir François, Ms. Susan Spinnato, Mr. Jonathan Turner, Ms. Laurel Williams, Ms. Ilhye Yoon

Guest Speakers:

- Dr. Jennifer Steele: Associate Professor in the School of Education, American University
- Carmen Henninger and Jane Tarwacki: Prince George's County Public Schools
- Andy Gomez and Tamara Hewlett: Montgomery County Public Schools

The meeting started at 4:00 p.m.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Superintendent Choudhury, the workgroup chair, delivered welcome remarks and shared the guiding question.

Guiding question:

- What are the benefits of dual language programs for all students?

Ms. Williams introduced Dr. Steele.

**The Dual Language Immersion Education (See the attached PowerPoint)**

Dr. Steele gave a congratulatory remark about the EL workgroup in Maryland and shared that she had served as a member in the EL workgroup in District of Columbia Public Schools. She shared the following information during her presentation:

- Research on dual language immersion in the past decade
- Information from the two causal studies of dual language immersion effects
- Portland's longitudinal evidence of dual language program study
- Utah's dual language immersion programs: one-way and two-way programs
- Utah's different effects of one-way and two-way programs

Workgroup members had a chance to ask some questions.

**Local School System Highlights: Prince George's and Montgomery County Public Schools (See the attached PowerPoint)**

Ms. Spinnato spoke about which school systems in Maryland are offering two-way dual language programs. She also introduced Prince George's team.

Ms. Henninger and Ms. Tarwacki from Prince George's County Public Schools shared the following information during their presentation:

- Benefits of dual language programs and some challenges
- Background information of two schools with dual language programs
  - Cesar Chavez Dual Spanish Immersion School: Schoolwide program (K-5)
  - Cool Spring Elementary School (K-4)
- Successes of two schools
  - Reading proficiency data on MAP-R and Spanish proficiency rate
  - Kindergarten literacy data
- Challenges of having the dual language program

Ms. Spinnato introduced the Montgomery team. Ms. Hewlett shared the following information:

- How the two-way immersion is structured in Montgomery County
- Montgomery County two-way immersion programs grade rollout plan
- Successes of the program
- Interventions and professional plans
- Challenges
  - Staffing
  - Funding
  - Measure of reading levels
  - Lack of consistency in programs and across districts
  - Local certification programs

Workgroup members had a chance to ask questions to presenters.

**Data Dive: Opportunities for Dual Language Learning in Maryland (See the attached PowerPoint)**

Mr. François shared preliminary data analysis of where and how Maryland can expand dual language programs.

**Discussion and Recommendations**

Workgroup members talked about opportunities for Maryland to grow and offered recommendations regarding policies and practices. They had a chance to add their recommendations to the shared Google document.

**Closing**

Superintendent Choudhury and Ms. Spinnato delivered closing remarks.

The meeting ended at 5:32 p.m.