Second Language Acquisition Initiative

2016 Final Report
Passport Program
Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools

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“[Spanish] is very fun. [My teacher] always puts together little PowerPoints and characters so it shows us like a different way so we can learn . . . and it just sticks into our brain files.”

Fourth grade BCPS student studying Spanish

“It’s like some Spanish people learning English here. I had a friend who wasn’t being treated nice because he didn’t speak English but I helped him. [I want to continue learning Spanish] just because I want to help people who come to new schools and if they don’t speak this language I can talk to them.”

Fourth grade BCPS student studying Spanish

“I think having Spanish class has helped me read it and write it better because we have missions and we need to write the words only in Spanish, no English.”

Fourth grade BCPS native Spanish-speaking student studying Spanish
In an effort to promote proficiency in a second language for all students, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) is taking steps to implement a blended learning Spanish program in all elementary schools. In 2014–2015 (Year 1), BCPS piloted the Passport Program with fourth graders in 10 elementary schools. For the 2015–2016 school year (Year 2), the Passport Program continued in the 10 original pilot schools in Grades 4 and 5 and expanded into 15 additional schools in Grade 4. Each week, students receive 25–30 minutes of face-to-face Spanish instruction with a fluent Spanish-speaking teacher and approximately 40 minutes of online instruction through Middlebury Interactive Languages (MIL). At the request of BCPS, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) has conducted an evaluation of the program to identify strengths as well as areas that could be improved upon during implementation. First year and interim second year reports of progress were submitted. The first year report is available on the BCPS website.

The purpose of this report is to document the status of the rollout and implementation of the Spanish program during Year 2, provide an overview of progress during the first two years, and recommend adjustments for consideration for the 2016-17 school year and beyond.

The evaluation addresses the strengths and potential areas of improvement for the Spanish program in the following areas: program scheduling, program rollout and technology, curriculum planning, program implementation, instruction, teacher perception, student engagement, student satisfaction, and language proficiency. Data were collected through classroom teacher surveys; interviews with principals, assistant principals, Spanish teachers, students, and Office of World Languages (OWL) staff; instructional materials review; and classroom observations conducted at 10 schools.

Careful examination of Year 2 data has confirmed that the second year has continued the successes of Year 1. The following strengths were identified for Year 2: students continue to participate and actively engage in the face-to-face Spanish classes, students are engaged in the MIL online activities, Spanish teachers are highly qualified and dedicated, the MIL program is better aligned with Spanish class instruction than last year, the revised Student Passport book activities are having a positive influence on instruction and learning in Year 2, schools are infusing Spanish throughout their buildings, active support from classroom teachers is helping students focus on learning Spanish, and implementation of the program in new schools and in the fifth grade at returning schools generally went more smoothly than in Year 1.

The following recommendations are designed to address program challenges and build on successes of the first two years:

- Follow up with classroom teachers and Spanish teachers to ensure that all issues with BCPS One and MIL, and other technology issues, are being resolved in a timely fashion;
- Where teachers are not able to actively monitor MIL, they should give students clear directions and expectations for what they need to accomplish. Observed best practices include classroom teachers actively monitoring students during MIL;
- For best results, create a structure to encourage all classroom teachers to actively support and participate during face-to-face Spanish instruction so they are co-creating the learning experience with the Spanish teacher. Many teachers are already doing this and can serve as mentors for other teachers;
For overall consistency in MIL program implementation, ensure that all classroom teachers provide an average of 40 minutes or more per week with MIL, so that all students are provided with the minimum amount of online instruction, even in the Spring semester when scheduling is more challenging;

- Work with Middlebury to ensure that MIL usage data is accurate and complete so the information can be used to monitor student participation and help identify potential implementation issues at the schools;
- Work with Middlebury to continue to align MIL online instruction with best practices for teaching languages to children (e.g., ensure all language is introduced in context; present nouns with articles; decrease amount of English used);
- Continue to provide summer MIL teacher training for new teachers (data show that the two items critical to helping build teacher confidence in facilitating MIL are training and practice with MIL implementation); and
- In an effort to increase student proficiency by the end of Grade 4 and Grade 5, increase instructional time with the Spanish teacher in fourth grade (as has been planned for fifth grade for Year 3) to align with best practices.

Developing a plan to address the recommendations during Summer 2016 and the next school year will be an important step in helping the Passport Program team build on its successes and adjust goals and procedures as needed. Overall, the second year of the pilot ended positively. With the addition of student language assessment data, the program can be expected to expand and show marked progress in developing a rich blended learning model, showing measurable success in increasing students’ Spanish proficiency levels each year.
Second Language Acquisition Initiative – 2016 Final Report
Passport Program, Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools

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I. Introduction

In an effort to promote proficiency in a second language for all its students, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) is taking steps to implement a Spanish program in all elementary schools beginning in fourth grade. BCPS selected elementary school as the starting point because of compelling research on the benefits of early language learning (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2016) and the desire for all BCPS students to be globally competitive, including proficient in a second language, by graduation. Fourth grade was selected because it allows the district “to build carefully and deliberately, while giving future students a three-year head start on current students who started learning a second language, at the earliest, in Grade 7” (BCPS Elementary World Languages FAQ, 2015).

The Passport Program that has been developed makes use of a blended learning setting that includes both classroom instruction by a qualified Spanish teacher and online digital content (Middlebury Interactive Languages—MIL) accessed either through computers in a computer lab or laptops/tablets in the classroom. The program goal is for students to develop Spanish language proficiency by the end of fifth grade and be ready for Grade 6 Spanish.

During the 2014-2015 school year (Year 1), BCPS piloted the Passport Program with fourth graders in 10 elementary schools: Bear Creek, Hampton, Johnnycake, Padonia, Pleasant Plains, Prettyboy, Reisterstown, Sussex, Vincent Farm, and West Towson. Each week, students received 25-30 minutes of Spanish instruction with a fluent Spanish-speaking teacher, along with approximately 40 minutes of online instruction during the school day through MIL.

In the 2015-2016 school year (Year 2), the Passport Program continued in the 10 original pilot schools and was expanded to 15 additional schools. The Year 1 pilot schools implemented the program in both Grades 4 and 5. The 15 additional schools implemented the program in Grade 4: Franklin, Fullerton, Glenmar, Glyndon, Halethorpe, Hernwood, Lyons Mill, Mars Estates, Perry Hall, Pine Grove, Randallstown, Seneca, Shady Spring, Warren, and Woodbridge.

At the request of BCPS, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) conducted an evaluation of the program over the two years of implementation to help BCPS identify strengths as well as areas that could be improved upon for future years. CAL provided a comprehensive report of findings and recommendations for Year 1 (August 6, 2015), which can be found on the BCPS Passport Program Final Report, Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, July 8, 2016.
website, and an interim report for Year 2 (February 22, 2016). The current report serves as the final report for Year 2 and compares Year 1 and Year 2 results when appropriate.¹

a. Evaluation Model

The evaluation model for this study, referred to as a “logic model,” is “a systematic and visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships” among the program resources, planned instructional activities, and the changes or results desired (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004, p.1). In program evaluations, the logic model can be used for organizing, explaining, and analyzing the evaluation, and it emphasizes the tight link between program goals, instructional services, and measurement plans. BCPS developed the visual model for the study (See Figure 1 provided by BCPS). To capture the longitudinal nature of program development, the model starts with the planning and logistics leading up to Year 1 in terms of scheduling, technology rollout, curriculum planning and development. This is followed by measurable outcomes for Year 1 and beyond (program implementation, instruction, teacher perception, student engagement, and student satisfaction), and Year 2 goals: language proficiency and Spanish II readiness (now called Grade 6 Spanish readiness).

Figure 1. Evaluation Model

¹ The evaluators would like to express their appreciation to Dr. Annie Calderon and Eileen Lorenz for their assistance, collegiality, and guidance in various aspects of the evaluation and report writing and to Dr. Meg Malone and Dr. Donna Christian for reviewing the draft report. In addition, special thanks go to Annie Donovan, John Chi, and Abigail Dawson for their invaluable assistance with the survey data analysis and data presentation.
b. Methodology

The Year 1 evaluation, conducted from March-June 2015 and summarized in the Year 1 report, addressed four major areas: program scheduling, program rollout and technology, curriculum planning and instruction, and student satisfaction and outcomes. Data were collected through classroom teacher surveys, school websites, principal and technology specialist interviews, Spring 2015 classroom observations, Spanish teacher and student interviews, review of curriculum and other instructional materials, and review of usage data, demographic data, and assessment data.

The Year 2 evaluation includes two reports – an interim report and this final report. The interim report looked at the status of the Passport Program as of November 2015 and noted any issues that needed to be addressed. The overall Year 2 evaluation addresses the following areas: program scheduling, program rollout and technology, curriculum planning; program implementation, instruction, and teacher perception; student engagement and student satisfaction; and language proficiency and Grade 6 Spanish readiness. Note that student engagement, student satisfaction, language proficiency, and Grade 6 Spanish readiness were addressed only in the final report since related data were collected at the end of Year 2. Data were collected through classroom teacher surveys; interviews with principals and assistant principals, Spanish teachers, students, and Office of World Languages (OWL) staff; instructional materials review; MIL usage data; and Spanish class observations conducted at 10 of the schools. BCPS identified the sample of 10 schools for this year’s study as representative of BCPS as a system based on principal characteristics and demographic data, and as representative of the program as a whole: 5 returning schools (Bear Creek, Johnnycake, Padonia, Reisterstown, and West Towson) and 5 new schools (Glenmar, Glyndon, Seneca, Warren, and Woodbridge). Table 1 shows the questions posed in the evaluation and data sources used to address those questions.
Table 1. Evaluation Questions and Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Questions</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Program scheduling</td>
<td>Classroom teacher surveys (MIL usage data not available for Fall 2015 or Spring 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. How much time was spent on the MIL and face-to-face components of instruction?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. What factors influenced time and scheduling?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rollout and technology</td>
<td>Principal interviews, classroom teacher surveys, interviews with OWL staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. What electronic resources were used for the online portion of the program (types of devices used in computer labs, classrooms, and at home)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. What technological glitches did new programs experience at the time of the rollout?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. What technology issues arose at individual schools? (for new and returning schools)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. What (additional) technical training is required for staff who facilitate the use of MIL?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Curriculum planning and instruction</td>
<td>Site visits (classroom and computer lab observations, interviews with Spanish teachers), review of instructional materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. What is the nature of the MIL program and face-to-face instruction? (for grades 4 [returning and new schools] and Grade 5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. How are face-to-face and online learning goals aligned?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. What differentiation and grouping strategies are used during face-to-face sessions to account for varying levels of proficiency?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The evaluation can also be viewed as a review of the program in terms of four measurement constructs: mechanics, teacher practice, satisfaction, and early outcomes. Table 2 shows the constructs and methods used to collect related data.

Table 2. Measurement Constructs and Methodology (Data Sources)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Classroom teacher survey items on program scheduling, rollout, and technology MIL usage data and statistics (not available in Fall 2015 or Spring 2016) Interviews with OWL staff and Spanish teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Practice</td>
<td>Classroom observations Interviews with OWL staff and Spanish teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>Interviews with students, teachers, and principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Outcomes</td>
<td>Program effectiveness measured via MIL usage data and statistics Program effectiveness measured via curriculum development and school demographic studies Student engagement measured via student interviews and MIL usage data Student language proficiency measured by assessment Grade 6 Spanish readiness measured by assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To place this report in context with the previous phases of the evaluation, the Passport Program’s strengths, challenges, and recommendations outlined in the Year 1 report and in the Year 2 interim report are summarized here. The Year 1 report stated: “Based on classroom observations, interviews with teachers and administrators, a survey of classroom teachers, and a review of curriculum documents and the schools’ websites, the CAL evaluators noted that the pilot Spanish program has had strong support from every level of administration in the district, starting with the superintendent, in the planning and implementation of the program.”

The following were identified as the key strengths of the program after one year: strong vision and mission, strong districtwide support, a well-organized 10-school pilot rollout, student enjoyment of learning Spanish, excellent/dedicated Spanish teachers, weekly collaborative meetings, collaborative fourth grade teachers, and useful interactive technology.

The recommendations, designed to build on the success of the Year 1 pilot program and help increase alignment with best practices, included: (1) increase coordination between the teacher-led and MIL components, focusing on curriculum content and proficiency-based goals; (2) enhance MIL student activities to better align with teacher-led instruction; (3) plan for pilot teachers (Spanish teachers and fourth grade teachers) to train new teachers; (4) fine-tune Spanish program goals for Grades 4 and 5 so that all stakeholders will know what the language and culture goals are; and (5) increase the amount of face-to-face Spanish instruction to help students attain a proficiency level by the end of fifth grade roughly equal to that of students who have completed Spanish I.

By the Fall of 2015, the first three of the Year 1 recommendations were being implemented, while recommendations four and five continued to be under discussion. The 2016 interim report identified the following program strengths: students are participating in and enjoying Spanish classes; students are enjoying the MIL online activities; the Student Passport book and Missions seem to be having a positive impact on instruction and learning; schools are doing an excellent job of infusing Spanish throughout the school; and implementation of the program in new schools and in fifth grade of returning schools had gone more smoothly than the initial implementation in Year 1.
Recommendations for program enhancement in the interim report included: follow-up with classroom teachers and Spanish teachers to address any technology issues in a timely fashion; teachers should provide clear directions and expectations for what students need to accomplish in MIL when they are not able to actively monitor students; consider providing Spanish language assistance to students while on MIL (e.g., online help); create structure to allow classroom teachers to actively support and participate during Spanish class; work with MIL to align online instruction with best practices in teaching languages to children; and increase instructional time with the Spanish teacher to increase student proficiency by the end of fourth and fifth grade.

d. About this Report

This report presents the findings of the two-year evaluation study, with a focus on Year 2 results and trends and comparisons with Year 1 data. The findings are followed by a discussion of program strengths and challenges, recommendations, and an overall summary. The appendices include: student interview methodology, teacher comments from the survey, data gathering instruments, a transcript of one teacher’s lesson, examples of BCPS- and teacher-developed materials, and Spanish assessment materials.

II. Findings

This section presents the findings from the Spring 2016 study and, where relevant, references the findings from Spring and Fall 2015. Evaluation data for each study were gathered through classroom teacher surveys, observations of MIL sessions facilitated by classroom teachers, observations of face-to-face Spanish instruction using a protocol focused on best instructional practices, and interviews with OWL staff, principals, Spanish teachers and students (See data gathering instruments in Appendices B1-B6).

Survey Data Participation. Table 3 shows the number of classroom teachers (respondents) who participated in the Baltimore County Passport Schools Teacher Survey (see Appendix B4) at each of the schools included in the study in Years 1 and 2. The table shows that teachers from the five schools that have been in the program for both Years 1 and 2 participated in all three surveys. Teachers from the five schools that joined the program in Year 2 participated in two surveys (Fall 2015 and Spring 2016).
Table 3: Survey Respondents at Study Schools Spring 2015, Fall 2015, and Spring 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bear Creek</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenmar</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glyndon</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnnycake</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padonia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Plains</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prettyboy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reisterstown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seneca</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vincent Farm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Towson</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbridge</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: "--" indicates schools that were not included in the evaluation for a particular year.

The teacher survey addressed issues concerning MIL implementation, training, technical issues, and program rollout over the two years (See Appendices A2-A5 for teacher comments). Findings concerning the technology rollout will be presented first followed by scheduling, curriculum and instructional planning, program implementation, and instruction (teacher practice).

a. Technology Rollout

The biggest challenge in the implementation of Year 1 of the pilot program related to technology rollout issues with the MIL program. There were major issues regarding installing Chrome® browsers on all computers, providing training to teachers and students on headphone usage, resolving problems with laptop logins, and difficulties with older computers and wireless systems at some schools. Most of those issues were resolved prior to the start of Year 2, so it was anticipated that the Year 2 technology rollout would go more smoothly. In Fall 2015 and again in Spring 2016, the OWL Director, OWL staff, principals, and Spanish teachers at the 10 schools all concurred that this year’s rollout of the MIL program went well overall. In Fall 2015, the OWL Director reported that there had been far fewer calls to the Office of Technology for technical assistance than in the previous year. He explained that technology liaisons and Students and Teachers Accessing Tomorrow (STAT) teachers at the schools had been able to
help with many of the issues that had arisen and that those issues had been relatively minor (e.g., activating microphones, learning the procedure for recording). When interviewed in Spring 2016, the OWL Director reported that technical issues had been limited to problems with headset maintenance/care and lingering challenges with students’ recording with the headset microphones. In addition, he reported that they had provided some additional training for classroom teachers since Fall 2015 and would be creating classroom posters with instructions to further assuage the issues for next year (Year 3). For details on technical issues with MIL not related to rollout, see Section II d.3 below, “Technical Issues with MIL in School Settings.”

In addition to the technical issues discussed later in the report, a few Year 2 classroom teachers did report issues with BCPS One. In Fall 2015, the OWL Resource Teacher reported that, based on her visits to the schools, technology issues this year, such as login procedures or determining which browser to use, were minor and resolved quickly. There were two teachers, however, from different schools who described the rollout in Year 2 as being more difficult than the first year’s. One teacher commented, “It seemed there were more internet connectivity issues, not associated with MIL per se, but more of a BCPS One connectivity issue (the internet down).” CAL evaluators noted in which schools the difficulties occurred and shared the information with OWL staff so they could check in with the schools to determine if support or additional teacher training were needed. In a follow-up interview in Spring 2016, the OWL Director explained some of the reasons for BCPS One issues. In Year 2, they had to create a more complicated login process for Grade 5 so students could access the digital content that OWL had created in lieu of some of the MIL content. This resulted in students having to navigate from MIL to BCPS One and back more frequently, resulting in more issues with logging in and remembering which browser to use to access MIL and BCPS One. Next year, with fully integrated, co-developed content, this process should be seamless and students will not need to go back and forth between MIL and BCPS One.

Although responses on the Spring 2016 teacher survey and interviews with OWL staff indicated that there were fewer technical issues related to accessing MIL and BCPS One, issues remained with accessing MIL usage data. In both years, accurate and complete MIL usage data were not available and thus the amount of time students actually spent on MIL could not be determined.
As in the Spring 2015 and Fall 2016 reports, information concerning how much time students spent on MIL was based on estimates reported by classroom teachers on the survey.

b. Scheduling

1. Spanish Language Teacher Scheduling

There are five Spanish teachers: two returning (they taught fourth grade students in the first year of the program) and three new ones. As in Year 1, each Spanish teacher taught at five schools, spending one day at each school. The teachers spent 25-30 minutes a week with each class. The three new Spanish teachers taught Spanish to all of the fourth grade students at their schools. The two returning Spanish teachers taught both fourth and fifth grade students at their schools. The Spanish teachers usually go into the students’ classroom for instruction, while in some schools the instruction takes place in a vacant room (an all-purpose room in one case). There is dedicated wall space for Spanish materials in the schools, and the Spanish teachers are able to decorate these wall spaces with colorful posters, student work, and Spanish materials for the students. In a number of schools, fourth and fifth grade classroom teachers created bulletin boards displaying Spanish language and cultural materials in their classrooms.

In addition to the five Spanish teachers, the OWL Coordinator reported that they added an “overstaff” teacher (a teacher hired over and above the allocated number of positions) in January 2016, who worked with all five of the Spanish teachers. In April, when one of the Spanish teachers left on maternity leave, the overstaff teacher was able to fill in for her and get on-the-job training; she will work as a Spanish teacher in Year 3. OWL has asked for additional overstaff teachers from Human Resources for Year 3, not only for the elementary program, but also for four of their secondary programs as well. Two of these secondary overstaff teachers will be placed in a middle school where a majority of fifth grade Passport students will continue next year. These efforts are all part of building capacity and familiarity with the Passport Program.

2. MIL Scheduling

In Spring 2016, when asked to indicate how often MIL was implemented in their schools, the majority of classroom teachers reported 40 minutes or more per week with a range of 20 to 100 minutes a week for an overall average of 51 minutes per week. However, when classroom
teachers were asked how *consistently* they were able to offer their students access to MIL for at least 40 minutes per week between January and April 2016, teacher responses ranged from 25% to 100% of the time, with an average of 77% (See Table 4). When the results are compared with previous time periods, there was fluctuation in teachers’ consistency in offering MIL 40 minutes/week (79% in Spring 2015; 84% in Fall 2015). In both Spring 2016 and 2015 teachers reported that students were less able to consistently access MIL due to standardized testing and other challenges in the schedule. An important continuing goal for Year 3 is for all teachers to consistently reach 40 minutes or more per week with MIL.

Table 4. Consistency of Classroom Teachers’ Offering MIL for Minimum of 40 Minutes/Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of survey</th>
<th>Range of percentage of time MIL offered 40 minutes/week</th>
<th>Average percentage of time students received minimum amount of MIL (40 minutes/week)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>25-100%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>50-100%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>10-100%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. Curriculum and Instruction Planning

1. Curriculum and Instructional Materials

The OWL Director, OWL staff, principals, and Spanish teachers at selected schools were interviewed in Fall 2015 and again in Spring 2016. In Fall 2015, OWL staff and Spanish teachers confirmed that they had revised the fourth grade curriculum, created the fifth grade curriculum (See Appendix C4 for a sample Grade 5 unit and activity), and enhanced Student Passport books for each grade level in Summer 2015. All cited improvements to the fourth grade curriculum and supplemental materials for both grades as contributing to the continued success of the face-to-face program. For example, the Student Passport books introduced in the first year of the program in the fourth grade had been expanded to four sections, with versions for both fourth and fifth grade. Both new versions now consist of Middlebury notes and practice, class notes, Missions, and *Middlebury para Hispanohablantes*. The Middlebury notes and practice section requires students to write down and illustrate vocabulary they are learning in MIL and then complete an activity sheet related to the unit. Students can also write down and illustrate vocabulary in the “class notes” pages and must complete Mission activities (See Appendices C2
and C3), that require them to integrate what they have learned in class and with MIL. The final section includes activities for Spanish-speaking students designed to help them get more enrichment from MIL material. The changes to the Student Passport books were designed to provide a stronger bridge between face-to-face instruction and MIL than in Year 1, and more opportunities for students to apply what they learn from both face-to-face instruction and MIL.

In Spring 2016 interviews, OWL staff and Spanish teachers described how they had worked on enhancing student learning based on feedback from the schools and teachers and the recommendations of the Year 2 interim report. The fourth and fifth grade curricula have moved increasingly towards a more personalized, customized, and flexible format in recognition that the interdisciplinary connections Spanish teachers make between a Passport unit and science, social studies, and math will differ from school to school. Some schools teach social studies and science all year long while other schools teach social studies in the first semester and science in the second. Thus, connections to content in one school may not occur at the same time or same way in another school. Determining which interdisciplinary connections to emphasize is then left to the Spanish teacher’s discretion when she meets with the fourth or fifth grade instructional team. Passport teachers now access the curriculum in a learning management system which is designed to be fluid and to change as needed. The system includes many resources for teachers including videos, infographics, and other shared materials. The fourth and fifth grade curricula will undergo additional revisions this summer. In addition, as they look to bridge from fifth to sixth grade, some of the sixth grade curriculum writers this summer will be elementary Spanish teachers, so as new resources are identified, they can be used in fourth and fifth grade as well.

The OWL Director confirmed that fifth grade Spanish instruction will increase from 25 to 50 minutes a week in Year 3 and be taught as a “special” (like art, music, and physical education), so efforts are underway to expand the fifth grade curriculum. Spanish teachers focused on the revision of the curriculum during a three-day academy in July. The curriculum will emphasize all three modes of communication (interpretive, presentational, and interpersonal) with increased opportunities for small group work. The small group work will increase opportunities for students’ Spanish interaction as well as allow teachers to differentiate instruction.
Some returning teachers will have time in their schedule to mentor and support new Passport teachers. The two Spanish teachers with secondary experience will provide support at the middle schools for the Passport students as they matriculate into sixth grade. Since fifth grade Spanish will be considered a “special,” the classroom teacher will not be required to be present in the classroom during Spanish instruction, even though teacher presence is a factor that has been reported previously as having a positive impact on student learning. The OWL Director, while acknowledging that the change will decrease the role that classroom teachers play, believes that with the additional time and new schedule, the fifth grade Spanish teachers will have more time to build community within the school. He also pointed out that the fourth grade classes will still have classroom teacher involvement. He suggested that involving students and doing cross-curricular activities will allow the team “to capture a bit of what we will be losing [in fifth grade] by not having the classroom teacher present during face-to-face instruction.”

In addition to working on the curriculum for face-to-face instruction, OWL staff and teachers and Middlebury staff worked together this summer to co-develop and completed content for fifth grade MIL for the 2016-2017 school year. In interviews that OWL conducted with students, some students said that fourth grade was “more fun” than fifth grade, at least in part due to the fact that MIL is not new anymore. By creating the new content and related activities, the OWL Director believes that fifth grade students will be more engaged and motivated to learn.

d. Program Implementation

Fourth grade teachers (at five new Passport schools) and fourth and fifth grade teachers (at five existing Passport schools) responded to an online survey to provide information on MIL program implementation at their schools. The following discussion of program implementation is informed by the teachers’ responses to the survey questions, interviews with the Office of World Languages Director and other OWL resource staff, and discussions with principals and Spanish teachers. Overall survey results will be presented first followed by a discussion of teachers’ comments by grade and time in program.

Spring 2016 survey results show that Passport schools were continuing to offer the MIL program in a variety of ways and sometimes in more than one way in a school. Table 5 shows the ways the teachers provide students access to MIL. Students access MIL most frequently in the Passport Program Final Report, Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, July 8, 2016
classroom during English Language Arts (ELA) rotations (67.9%), followed by the computer lab during scheduled MIL time (60.7%), the classroom in a whole class setting (28.6%), the classroom during recess or free choice time (28.6%), and the computer lab at any other time (10.7%). Four teachers (14.3%) indicated that their students were accessing MIL in other ways. Three of those reported that their students access MIL during arrival time and/or morning work, and a fourth teacher reported usage during ELA when other subject work was completed. (It should also be noted that students can access MIL outside of class on home or library computers, although little data is collected on that usage.)

When compared to Fall 2015 data, the responses were similar except that in Spring 2016 there were more teachers using a wider variety of modes for offering MIL, e.g., response percentages were higher for almost all categories (Fall 2015 responses: ELA 52.9% (18); computer lab 41.2% (14); class in whole class setting 26.5% (9); classroom during recess or free choice time 14.7% (5); computer lab at any other time 11.8% (4); and other 11.8% (4)).

Table 5. Where Students Access MIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the classroom during ELA rotations</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the computer lab with the whole class during scheduled MIL time</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the classroom in a whole-class setting (e.g., using laptops or tablets)</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the classroom during recess or free choice time</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the computer lab at any other time (not during a scheduled MIL period)</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>answered question</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>skipped question</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Table 6 for data on teacher views on MIL program scheduling. Overall, 22 out of 28 teachers (78.6%) indicated that MIL is working well at their school. The six who disagreed cited inadequate technology or support as a reason that MIL was not working well: “We did not have the technology after our computer cart was pulled because it had issues. This was a major concern that was not addressed. The computer lab was maxed out with testing. Also, the headsets
broke and were not replaced. We asked several times to get the headsets replaced but no one helped us with this problem. The students were unable to listen or talk into the microphone," “Availability of computer lab was limited...,” and “We need to have devices for our fifth graders before MIL can be effective.” Two teachers also mentioned that standardized testing was an issue that interfered with scheduling: “... There were many times when scheduling was difficult due to testing and other interruptions to our weekly schedule...,” and “It was hard to get into the computer lab with all the testing that must be done.” Twenty-three out of 28 (82.1%) agreed that they could voice concerns about the scheduling of MIL. The five that disagreed did not provide any explanation.

Sixteen out of 28 teachers (57.1%) agreed that MIL should be scheduled the same way next year and ten disagreed (35.7%). One teacher who disagreed provided this comment and a solution, “We tried various arrangements, and all teachers and administration wanted to make MIL a priority, however, there were many times when scheduling was difficult due to testing and other interruptions to our weekly schedule. We will be discussing what worked and what can be improved upon to make the scheduling more consistent for the next year.” Another teacher commented, “We do not have the computer resources at my school to be able to get on MIL each week twice a week.” Three teachers indicated that new technology resources should change how they schedule MIL for next year: “I disagree [that we should schedule MIL the same way] because next year we will have access to the devices and I would like this to be a morning activity for them to complete for 20 minutes two days per week,” “I wish students could work on MIL on their own devices in the classroom as well as the time allotted in the computer lab,” and “Fourth graders will have 1-1 devices next year, so we won’t need the computer lab time.” Table 6 shows the number and category of responses for each question as well as the response count.

Table 6. Teacher Attitudes toward MIL Program Scheduling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The way MIL was scheduled at our school worked well. (N=28)</td>
<td>78.6% (22)</td>
<td>21.4% (6)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt that I could voice concerns about the scheduling of MIL. (N=28)</td>
<td>82.1% (23)</td>
<td>17.9% (5)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think we should schedule MIL the same way next year that we did this year. (N=28)</td>
<td>57.1% (16)</td>
<td>35.7% (10)</td>
<td>7.1% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Passport Program Final Report, Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, July 8, 2016*
1. MIL Fourth Grade

Twenty-one fourth grade classroom teachers responded to the Spring 2016 survey. There are two groups: the twelve fourth grade teachers who were in their first year of facilitating MIL at four out of five of the new Passport schools, and the nine fourth grade teachers who were in their second year of facilitating MIL at five returning Passport schools. Challenges related to scheduling and implementation during Year 2 at new and returning schools are presented first for the new fourth grade teachers and then for the returning teachers.

i. New Fourth Grade Teachers

New fourth grade teachers’ open-ended responses indicated that standardized testing taking place in the computer lab and technical problems impacted the amount of time students spent on MIL. One teacher (who offered MIL for 75% of the targeted time) indicated that her students were not able to get 40 minutes of MIL each week due to testing. “It was hard to get into the lab with all the [PAARC and MAP] testing that must be done.” Another teacher commented, “I have had issues with the headsets not working. While this is not an issue for me [now], my colleague had many because she didn’t know how to troubleshoot. For example, restarting the computers solved a lot of issues. Perhaps some training on ideas for troubleshooting would be beneficial.” A third teacher, who implemented MIL for 80% of the targeted time, shared, “I did not feel comfortable with the MIL program at all. When students asked me questions I didn’t feel that I could answer anything other than technology issues. I did not have any issues with my students accessing MIL or any technology issues, however, I did not feel comfortable with the program. Sending Missions was also an issue for many of my students and I had to pull up my email account on their computer each time and send it through my email which was very time consuming.” Lastly, a fourth teacher (who offers MIL 90% of the targeted time) explained how they were addressing the challenge: “MIL is very effective and powerful for students. My only concern is the loss of other instructional time. We will continue to look for creative ways to plan for this.”

ii. Returning Fourth Grade Teachers

Returning fourth grade teacher’s comments also related mostly to technology. One teacher shared, “I appreciated how the expectation for MIL technology was more realistic this year than
in the pilot year. During our pilot year, students were expected to begin MIL immediately. This year, however, students and teachers were given a full week to acclimate to the routines of the new year.” At the same time, some of the returning teachers and their students encountered challenges. One fourth grade teacher at a returning school who was able to implement MIL 60% of the targeted time explained: “We voiced our concerns about not having headsets numerous times. Our students were unable to listen and talk to record the answers in Spanish. I’m not sure how they can be evaluated if they can’t record their answers.” Another teacher who was able to implement MIL 75% of the targeted time commented: “Availability of the computer lab was limited and transitioning to and from the computer lab took up a lot of instruction time.” One other teacher indicated that some of her students accessed MIL 100% and some only 75% of the targeted time. She is looking forward to next year’s changes: “I look forward to seeing how the program works with the fourth graders having 1:1 devices next year. I am hopeful that the implementation percentage will increase.”

When asked how effective the MIL program had been this year (2015-16) compared to last year, almost all teachers responded that it had been more effective. One teacher replied, “I think with the increase of teacher confidence, the program has flourished. Teachers are more confident with trouble shooting as well as basic expectations and communication with the human teacher.” Another teacher commented, “We were better able to support the students from the beginning because of the background we had from last year.” Three other teachers indicated that the program had been just as effective as the previous year. One teacher reported that it had been less effective, but for reasons outside of the program: “We have an overall low group of students this year. These students needed more time to learn Spanish. There was no extra time in the day.”

While Spring 2016 new and returning fourth grade teachers’ comments mostly centered on technology and the impact of standardized testing, the Fall 2015 fourth grade teachers’ comments mostly centered on training needs. The OWL Director reported that staff responded to this need after the Fall 2015 report by offering additional training and support to teachers to help them become proficient in facilitating MIL.

2. MIL Fifth Grade
Seven fifth grade teachers responded to the survey from three returning schools. Although most
of their students became familiar with MIL in fourth grade, all of the teachers were in their first year of facilitating MIL. One fifth grade teacher, who was able to implement MIL 75% of the targeted time, expressed concern over wasted time during fifth grade MIL:

Fifth grade MIL was very challenging for some students—new students and others. It was very hard to motivate these students to persevere and it becomes wasted class time. Forty minutes on MIL is not all of the time—consider transition to getting computers and headphones and getting them turned on and actually working (and transition to putting everything away). Even with the best classroom routines, this is likely to take 5 minutes before and 5 minutes after. So each day MIL is accessed, there are an additional 5-10 minutes of lost time. These minutes add up!

Another teacher who facilitated MIL 75% of the recommended time, had a similar concern, “MIL 2 [for fifth grade] is hard. Students who were struggling lost interest. New students should have been able to access MIL 1.” In a similar vein, other teachers commented: “My students don't like missing the ELA independent work to work on MIL,” “I had to eliminate Friday as an option for MIL because I needed to be able to have all of the children available for standard ELA learning,” and “It does cut into our ELA time, but it is also nice because it is a built in rotation and students enjoy that rotation.” During a site visit to a returning school, one CAL observer heard similar comments from a fifth grade classroom teacher who perceived that fifth graders preferred to focus more on their other subjects for which they received grades since they would be transitioning to middle school. S/he added that some students would prefer to do their other course work during ELA rotation rather than MIL and that s/he has seen them switch out of MIL to work on their assignments for graded subjects.

Four fifth grade teachers had the following suggestions: “Teachers should have access to how much time a student is on [MIL] so we can see who is focused and who is not. We cannot see all screens while they are working and are with another group so it is difficult to monitor who is productive.” And similarly, “It is hard to evaluate how helpful it is when I don't have access to their performance statistics.” One teacher also commented that having the new devices next year should make implementing MIL easier. Another indicated that they still do not feel confident facilitating MIL because they never received training. Since six teachers reported not receiving training in the Fall 2015 survey, it is a positive sign that only one mentioned this issue in the
Spring survey—most of these teachers have either received training in the interim or learned how to facilitate MIL through hands-on experience.

3. Technical Issues with MIL in School Settings

Survey data provided evidence that technical issues were less frequent and less important in Year 2 than in Year 1. In Spring 2015, Fall 2015, and Spring 2016 surveys, classroom teachers were asked to indicate which technical issues caused problems in their class when they were facilitating MIL. Table 7 shows teacher responses related to technical issues for each of the surveys. Overall, a smaller percentage of teachers reported having problems with these various

Table 7. Technical Issues Reported Over Three Time Periods*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Survey</th>
<th>Internet connectivity</th>
<th>Students unable to log in</th>
<th>Students forget log-in information</th>
<th>Computer crashes/freezes</th>
<th>Headsets do not work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This was a major or frequent problem throughout the year</td>
<td>This was a minor or occasional problem throughout the year</td>
<td>This was a major or frequent problem only at the beginning of the year</td>
<td>This was a minor or occasional problem at the beginning of the year</td>
<td>This was not a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>11.1% (3)</td>
<td>51.9% (14)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>37.0% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>14.7% (5)</td>
<td>67.7% (23)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>17.7% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>3.6% (1)</td>
<td>35.7% (10)</td>
<td>10.7% (3)</td>
<td>7.1% (2)</td>
<td>42.9% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students unable to log in</td>
<td>22.2% (6)</td>
<td>59.3% (16)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>18.5% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>17.7% (6)</td>
<td>50.0% (17)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>32.4% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>3.6% (1)</td>
<td>28.6% (8)</td>
<td>25.0% (7)</td>
<td>14.3% (4)</td>
<td>28.6% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students forget log-in information</td>
<td>24.0% (6)</td>
<td>28.0% (7)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>48.0% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>5.9% (2)</td>
<td>17.7% (6)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>76.5% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>25.0% (7)</td>
<td>14.3% (4)</td>
<td>14.3% (4)</td>
<td>42.9% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer crashes/freezes</td>
<td>18.5% (5)</td>
<td>66.7% (18)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14.8% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>5.9% (2)</td>
<td>52.94% (18)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>41.18% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>3.6% (1)</td>
<td>46.4% (13)</td>
<td>7.1% (2)</td>
<td>3.6% (1)</td>
<td>39.3% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headsets do not work</td>
<td>40.7% (11)</td>
<td>44.4% (12)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14.8% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>17.7% (6)</td>
<td>47.1% (16)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>35.3% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>21.4% (6)</td>
<td>28.6% (8)</td>
<td>3.6% (1)</td>
<td>14.3% (4)</td>
<td>32.1% (9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Fall 2015 survey question was worded, “Which of the following technical issues have caused problems for your class so far this year?” The other surveys were worded, “Which is the following technical issues have caused problems?”
technical issues in Spring 2016 than in Spring 2015. In Spring 2015, with regard to internet connectivity, 11% of teachers reported major or frequent problems, 52% reported minor or occasional problems, and 37% reported that there were no problems. In contrast, in Spring 2016, only 4% of teachers reported that internet connectivity was a major or frequent problem, 36% a minor or occasional problem, and 43% reported that it was not a problem. When all three time periods were compared, the percentage of teachers who reported issues as a major or minor problem in Spring 2016 was much lower than in the other two time periods. The slightly higher percentage of teachers reporting problems with internet connectivity in Fall 2015 (versus Spring 2015) may be related to internet outages that were experienced around the time the survey was completed.

In Spring 2016, issues with headsets, although reported less than in Spring or Fall 2015, continued to be reported as a major or frequent problem throughout the year by six teachers and as a minor and occasional problem by eight teachers. The OWL Director indicated that, while other technical issues were largely resolved, issues with headsets continued to be reported, although less frequently than in Fall 2015. Additional training was offered regarding headset maintenance and recording with the headset microphones. For Year 3, in addition to offering more training, posters showing procedures for using headsets and microphones will be placed in all fourth and fifth grade Passport classrooms.

In Spring 2016, fourth grade teachers who had facilitated MIL in Year 1 were asked to compare Year 1 and Year 2: “How effective has the MIL program been this year (2015-16) compared to last year?” (See Figure 2). A total of seven returning fourth grade teachers responded to the question. Two of the teachers responded that the program was more effective, four thought it was just as effective, and one thought it was less effective. Four teachers offered explanations for their responses. The teacher who responded that the program was more effective explained, “We were better able to support the students from the beginning because of the background we had from last year.” One of the two teachers who thought it was just as effective stated, “I feel it is about the same as last year.” The teacher who thought the program was less effective explained, “With[out] having head phones that work, this year was very disappointing. We told the Spanish teacher and administrator about this problem numerous times and it was never addressed.”
4. Teacher Training

Training on how to facilitate MIL was offered to classroom teachers in Summer 2015. In the Fall 2015 survey, classroom teachers were asked how quickly they felt confident facilitating MIL.

Six teachers out of 34 (18%) felt confident immediately, 17 teachers (50%) after a few weeks of working with it, six teachers (18%) after a few months, and five teachers (15%) from three different schools were still not confident facilitating MIL in November. Four of these teachers from two schools did not attend the MIL training. The fifth teacher, from the third school, who missed the training because s/he joined the program after the start of the year, added: “I am becoming more familiar with the program daily.” CAL shared the information with OWL staff about the teachers who needed training in Fall 2015 so they could follow up with them with training as needed.

These data showed that two items are critical to helping teachers build confidence in MIL implementation: training on how to facilitate MIL, and practice with MIL implementation in the classroom/lab with students (with the value of the latter dependent upon the participation in the former). The teachers who participated in the training reported more confidence than those who did not, and after a few months of working with MIL all the teachers reported feeling confident (except those who had not participated in the training). Those who had not participated in the

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**Figure 2: Program Effectiveness**

![Pie chart showing program effectiveness](chart.png)

How effective has the MIL program been this year (2015-16) compared to last year (2014-15)?

- More effective: 29% (2 responses)
- Just as effective: 57% (4 responses)
- Less effective: 14% (1 response)
training were still not confident with facilitating MIL three months after program implementation.

In the Spring 2016 survey, classroom teachers were asked the same question again. Figure 3 lists the answer options and the percentages for each response. Consistent with the Fall 2015 survey, the Spring survey showed that six teachers (21.4%) were confident facilitating the use of MIL immediately after roll-out. Fourteen teachers in the Spring and 17 teachers in the Fall (both representing 50% of respondents to each survey) answered that they were confident facilitating the use of MIL after a few weeks of working with it. Four teachers in the Spring survey (14.3%) and six teachers in the Fall survey (17.6%) answered that they were confident facilitating the use of MIL after a few months. In the Fall survey which was administered two months into the school year, five teachers (14.7%) indicated that they still did not feel confident facilitating the use of MIL. When the Spring survey was administered 6 months later, two teachers (7.1%) indicated that they did not feel confident until at least six months of working with MIL. In addition, two teachers (7.1%) indicated that they still did not feel confident facilitating MIL.

**Figure 3. Confidence in Facilitating MIL, Spring 2016**

A closer look at the responses of the two groups of fourth grade teachers and fifth grade teachers provides insight into different responses on the Spring 2016 survey. Responses of 12 “new”
fourth grade teachers to this question showed that one teacher (12%) felt confident facilitating MIL immediately after rollout, seven out 12 (58%) felt confident after a few weeks of working with it, and two teachers after a few months of working with it. The nine returning fourth grade teachers reported positive results as well with two out of nine (22%) feeling confident immediately, three (33%) feeling confident after just a few weeks, two (17%) feeling confident after a few months, and just one (11%) still not feeling confident when surveyed in Spring 2016. The teacher who was still not feeling confident encountered frequent technology problems at the school and would like additional training on the Missions that students need to complete. The teachers who did not feel confident until after at least six months included one teacher who was new to the program and the school (so technically was not a returning teacher) and another that reported that s/he had not received any training.

The seven fifth grade teachers included one teacher who was still not confident, four (57%) who were confident after a few weeks, and two (29%) who were confident after a few months. The teacher who was still not confident had not participated in training and indicated that s/he had not received sufficient training on how to use the MIL technology/software, how to troubleshoot technology issues, and how to help students use the MIL content, again confirming that the value of classroom practice for students is dependent to a large extent on teacher participation in MIL training. The Fall 2015 and the Spring 2016 fifth grade responses concerning training suggest that confidence in facilitating MIL may correlate with reflection on whether training was sufficient, though it is difficult to make generalizations because of the small sample size.

When asked about training and support for facilitating MIL in 2016, 20 out of 28 fourth and fifth grade teachers (71%) indicated that they had had sufficient training to facilitate MIL. Nineteen out of 28 (68%) reported that they could voice concerns about MIL technology or other aspects of MIL. Lastly, 18 out of 20 teachers (90%), for whom the question was applicable, reported that OWL staff had responded in a timely, clear, and helpful way to their questions and concerns. This is comparable to the excellent support teachers received from OWL staff in Fall 2015 – 19 out of 20 teachers (95%), for whom the question was applicable, had the same positive response.

When asked what additional MIL training they would like to have, ten teachers in Spring 2016 provided a number of suggestions including additional training in how to troubleshoot problems
or monitor student progress, familiarization with “Missions” and/or the Spanish program curriculum and lessons, and a request for training at a time more convenient for classroom teachers. Eleven teachers skipped the question, and two indicated that they did not need any additional training. One teacher also suggested that it would be helpful if classroom teachers could access how much time students were on MIL so they could see who is on and who is not. The OWL Director has confirmed that staff will offer training and mentoring to classroom teachers in the summer to address these issues.

5. Principal Interviews

Principal and assistant principal interviews were conducted at ten schools; a total of nine principals and three assistant principals participated in interviews and one principal provided responses via email. All expressed that they were very pleased with the Spanish program. They had all observed the Spanish classes at their school, and two had even participated in the Spanish classes. Overall, the information obtained falls into five categories: the role of the Spanish teacher, the role of the classroom teacher, parent and student responses, differentiation for all students, and challenges.

All the principals and assistant principals interviewed praised the Spanish teachers and their work. Many mentioned their energy and ability to actively involve all students. A principal from a returning school described a food truck activity the Spanish teacher facilitated: “[It] was so motivating that the kids couldn’t wait to work on them and present them…If you can really know what kind of things fourth and fifth graders like, what their interests are… [you] can adopt pedagogy and practices as well as the curriculum that are going to meet the needs of our students.” A principal from a new school said that the Spanish teacher even attended school events not specific to the Spanish program in order to increase interest and this teacher “made herself part of the school, and she is only here one day a week.” Another principal from a new school described how the Spanish teacher was aligning the Spanish goals to the standard curriculum goals: “for example, the fourth graders had to create an infographic based upon their ELA block, so one of her rotations was to analyze an infographic in Spanish.”

The majority of principals/assistant principals reported that the classroom teachers had been actively involved in the face-to-face Spanish instruction. Many said they had made it clear to Passport Program Final Report, Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, July 8, 2016
classroom teachers that they should walk around the room, help students, and participate in class instead of looking at the Spanish class as their planning time. A principal from a returning school added that in one of the classrooms, the Spanish teacher and the classroom teacher almost co-taught due to the classroom teacher’s fluency in Spanish and active involvement in the class. Two principals specifically mentioned that their classroom teachers reinforced Spanish throughout the school day. However, there were two instances in which principals mentioned a lack of involvement from a small number of classroom teachers.

Both the student and parent response to the Spanish program has been very positive, according to the principals. Several principals said that they had received only positive feedback from parents; none reported negative feedback. All principals reported that the students have been very excited about learning Spanish. Some mentioned that students’ interest waned late Fall but that the Spanish teachers adjusted their strategies and drew students back in. Most principals explained that they included a Spanish portion in their morning announcements and had signs in Spanish around the school.

According to several administrators, the Spanish program successfully provided differentiation to many types of students. Some mentioned that MIL allowed students of different learning abilities to work at their own pace. Furthermore, the program also addressed the needs of students who already spoke Spanish at home. A principal from a returning school explained that the Student Passport books serve as a great differentiation tool for these students. An added benefit of the Spanish program, as mentioned by several administrators, was the validation it provides to the Spanish speakers. An assistant principal from a returning school said that the Spanish speakers “can really shine when they serve as language role models for the other students.”

The main challenges that the principals reported were technological in nature. Almost all mentioned that there were problems with the computers, BCPS One, the headphones, and/or MIL at the beginning of the first year of the program, however all said that these initial problems had been resolved. Some principals expressed that they and the teachers felt frustrated with the MIL gradebook: it was common that students completed MIL activities on the computer but those activities did not appear as completed in the teacher view. There was one non-technological issue
reported: one principal from a returning school said that she felt there could be more of a
correlation between the content in the face-to-face Spanish class and the MIL program.

6. Student Interviews

A total of 40 fourth and fifth grade students participating in the Passport Program were
interviewed individually for approximately 10 minutes each. (The final sample size was 39
because one student who did not answer any of the questions was coded “no response.”) Of these
students, 21 were in the fourth grade and 18 were in the fifth grade. The interview questions
focused on the students’ overall views of learning Spanish, their opinions of the teacher-based
and computer-based instructional components, and their views on the content topics in the
curriculum. (See Appendix A1 and B6, for a description of the methodology and protocol
questions.) The following summary of the student interview results focuses on: demographic
information, student attitudes toward Spanish, student views about the Spanish class with the
teacher, student views about the MIL program, student attitudes towards learning Spanish and
favorite topics, perceived benefits of language learning, greater social awareness, and heritage
and native Spanish speakers’ views of the program.

i. Student Demographic Information

The demographic information showed that of the 39 students, three (8%) were heritage speakers
of Spanish and three (8%) were native Spanish speakers\(^2\). There were 15 students (38%) who
spoke a language other than English or Spanish at home and therefore Spanish was their third (or
subsequent) language. The rest of the 18 students (46%) were monolingual English speakers.
With the exception of the native Spanish speakers, all of whom had formal education in Spanish

\(^2\) The three Spanish heritage speakers are defined here as those who reported home languages as both English and
Spanish. Typically they said that at least one parent “sometimes” speaks to them in English and the child typically
either answers back in both English and Spanish or mostly in English. The three native Spanish speakers had arrived
in the US within the last three years and were enrolled in ESOL classes. All spoke only Spanish at home and all
parents speak to them only in Spanish. All three preferred to speak Spanish during the interview. Languages spoken
by the other students speaking a language other than English at home included Uzbek, Russian, Amharic, Farsi,
Vietnamese, Yoruba, Cantonese, and others.

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in their home countries, only one non-native Spanish, non-heritage student reported having taken any Spanish class prior to the Spanish program at the elementary school\(^3\).

ii. **Student Attitudes toward Spanish**

Most (95%) of students interviewed reported that they liked learning Spanish; one student did not like it and another was not sure (See Table 8). A total of 36 students (92%) answered that they wanted to continue learning Spanish; two fourth graders (5%) did not and one fifth grader (3%) was not sure. A total of seven students from non-Spanish-speaking homes (21%) volunteered\(^4\) that they share new Spanish words they have learned with family members. As one student noted, “I’m teaching my family and my little sister Spanish and it’s easier to teach when they’re younger.”

**Table 8. Student Attitudes toward Spanish**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you like learning Spanish?</td>
<td>95%(^5) (37)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you want to keep learning Spanish?</td>
<td>92% (36)</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you want to learn other languages?(^6)</td>
<td>82% (32)</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 32 students (82%) indicated that they wanted to learn other languages. Of the five (13%) who did not want to learn another language, three (60%) already spoke a language other than English at home. Regarding perceived level of difficulty, 13 students (33%) said that learning Spanish was easy, 10 (26%) said that it was difficult, and 19 (16%) said that it was both difficult and easy. It appears that learning Spanish has helped some students to develop an increased linguistic awareness; one fourth and two fifth grade students (8%) volunteered information on comparisons between languages. One fifth grader explained, “It’s really fun to speak [Spanish] because most words are similar to the languages I speak at home and at school. Like…they say tú, in my country it’s like saying someone is smaller than you.”

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\(^3\) This student was unable to remember any details about this formal education in Spanish.

\(^4\) By saying that students “volunteered” information, it is meant that the interviewer did not specifically ask the student to provide information on a certain topic.

\(^5\) Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

\(^6\) One student (3%) had no response.
iii. Student Opinions of Spanish Class with Teacher

All of the 39 students shared something that they liked about class with their Spanish teacher. Many students said that Spanish class is fun, the teacher is nice, and that they enjoy the games and activities. The following are some representative comments:

Yes it’s very fun. She always puts together little PowerPoints and characters so it shows us like a different way so we can learn…and it just sticks into our brain files.

She can make it fun for us to learn and once she gave us a board game to help us learn it better. She gave us questions and we had to answer it and it helped me do better with my Spanish lessons. (fourth graders)

A total of 13 students (33%) volunteered information on the Student Passport books, an instructional tool. One fifth grader shared, “We can write down [activities] in the passport, they give you a lot of pages and after you write the words and the picture…I show it to [Señorita]. It gives me more of a clear mind of what I’m supposed to do.” In addition, another 13 students (33%) volunteered positive comments on the interactive nature of the class; they expressed positive feelings about working with their classmates. As another fifth grader explained, “[I] interact with other classmates. We usually do projects together sometimes and activities, like…speaking about ourselves.”

Ten students (26%) identified negative aspects of Spanish class. Two fourth graders expressed difficulty in understanding the teacher, one said it gets too noisy in class, and another wishes the teacher would speak more English. Two fifth grade students said the pace is too fast, one said the class is too long, one does not like the scheduled time of Spanish class, and another reported that not everyone contributes equally in group work. One fifth grade student suggested, “I wish it was a little longer so that some kids could understand more. To do things and play with things.”

iv. Views of Middlebury Interactive Languages Program (MIL)

All students interviewed (100%) identified something that they liked about the MIL program. Many students cited the videos, songs, and quizzes as useful components; a few also mentioned the continuity between MIL and the face-to-face instruction. Representative comments follow:

It’s very nice just seeing it all put together, learning it step-by-step, especially when we have a great teacher helping us.
I like it. I’m on Unit 11 but it teaches you how to learn clothes, how to count, colors, but it goes step by step…and then you get to watch videos that help you understand.

That it improves me when I’m in Spanish class, it helps me understand. It helps me know the words better in Spanish. (fourth graders)

Furthermore, many students found useful the voice recording feature of MIL: a total of 13 students (33%) volunteered positive information on this feature. One fifth grader said, “I like how we can record ourselves talking and for Señorita to see how we are doing when we don’t have Spanish class. I think it’s cool.”

A total of 15 students (38%) mentioned something that they did not like about MIL. Four students said that sometimes the microphones do not work, two said they do not like the long responses required, two said that they cannot always understand the content, and two more, both fourth graders, said that MIL is too difficult. Two additional students said that the Missions are either too hard or there are too many while another wishes MIL provided hints. Additionally, two more students said they wish MIL had more content to help them expand their Spanish knowledge.

v. Student Learning and Favorite Topics

All 39 students (100%) in the sample indicated that they had learned something in their Spanish class over the past school year. When asked to list what they had learned, students gave between one and seven examples; the average was 4.1 topics listed. Students commonly mentioned topics like colors, numbers, greetings, weather, and animals.

A total of 38 students (97%) were able to name their favorite topic in Spanish class. Furthermore, approximately half (20) of the students (51%) volunteered that a certain topic was their favorite because they have a personal interest in it or are able to find a real-life application for it, thus arguably demonstrating that they are connecting Spanish class with their personal lives and interests. As one fourth grader explained,

[My favorite topic was] animals. Because I think animals are good to me and I like to talk about animals a lot. So learning about animals in a different language helps me a lot because if I speak to a friend that only speaks Spanish and I go to the zoo, the signs are in English and I can tell my friend what it means.

Many students specifically mentioned a food truck activity, an obvious favorite:
This year we learned some food and...we did a project where we did a food truck and write [sic] about our food truck. We had to give it colors and give it a name and food and we’d go to Spanish restaurants and remember the food. (fifth grader)

vi. Perceived Benefit of Language Learning

Over half (21) of all students interviewed (54%) volunteered how knowing Spanish is useful in their everyday lives or more specifically, in their social interactions. This perceived benefit is exemplified by a fourth grader who said, “I did have one friend who spoke Spanish and I couldn’t understand her. But now from writing it I can understand what she is saying and I can talk to her.” The future benefits of speaking Spanish also appear to be clear to many students: an additional 19 students (49%) volunteered that speaking Spanish can help them gain future employment and be able to communicate with others while traveling. As one fourth grader shared:

If you have a job and another person wants a job and there’s only one space for the job, if you know another language, they will pick you because you know more languages than the other person.

Only seven (four fourth grade and two fifth grade) students (18%) did not voluntarily share any perceived benefits during their interviews.

vii. Greater Social Awareness

Some of the student answers to questions throughout the interview hinted at a deeper social awareness through having learned Spanish. Two student comments are highlighted here:

It's like some Spanish people learning English here. I had a friend who wasn’t being treated nice because he didn’t speak English but I helped him. Yes, [I want to continue learning Spanish] just because I want to help people who come to new schools and if they don’t speak this language I can talk to them. (fifth grader)

If I have a friend that speaks that language, I should learn to speak that language too. (fourth grader)

viii. Heritage and Native Spanish Speaker Student Views

The six heritage students and Spanish native speaker students interviewed all indicated that they had learned something in Spanish class over the past year. One heritage student shared that he
has learned “words that my family never uses,” while another said “I think having Spanish class has helped me read it and write it better because we have Missions and we need to write the words only in Spanish, no English.” Furthermore, one native Spanish speaker shared that some Spanish words are difficult for him even though it is his first language, and that having Spanish class has helped him.

Several of the native and heritage students also expressed feelings of self-validation due to their experiences in Spanish class. One heritage student shared:

My favorite topic was the food truck because my sister just helped me at home to write some words that I didn’t know how to spell and when I wrote it in a paragraph, I was really proud of myself that I could do it in a paragraph and describe [it].

Seeing their native English-speaking classmates learning Spanish has also had a positive effect on the heritage and native speakers; two of the three native speakers volunteered that this makes them happy.

From student comments, the Spanish teachers appear to be successfully differentiating instruction to address the needs of students who speak Spanish at home and those who do not. Two students volunteered information on how students are paired in class; according to these comments, heritage and native speakers are sometimes paired with non-Spanish speakers and other times paired with other heritage and native speakers, depending on the activity. One heritage speaker also shared the unique experience she had had through her Spanish class of reading books in Spanish to the Kindergarteners:

Since I’m in a group with Spanish speakers, I learned how to read to the kindergarten. I can learn more how to read and help them understand more so when they are grown up they can learn Spanish, they will already know some words.

ix. Comparison of School Year 1 and Year 2 Student Interviews

The information obtained from interviews in Year 2 was similar in many ways to the information obtained in Year 1 interviews. The vast majority of students (100% in Year 1; 95% in Year 2) liked learning Spanish and wish to continue. Many shared their new knowledge with family members at home. In addition, data from both academic years showed that all students were able
to explain aspects of their face-to-face Spanish class and the MIL program that they like. Again, many had voluntarily shared the perceived personal benefits of learning Spanish.

There are some slight differences between the student interview data from Year 1 and Year 2. First, only 13% of students (3) from Year 2 made mention of the total physical response (TPR) method that the Spanish teachers use to teach certain vocabulary. In comparison, 42% of students (16) volunteered information on TPR in the Year 1 interviews. One possible explanation for this difference may be that as students advance in their Spanish skills, the vocabulary becomes less concrete and therefore is more difficult to represent with body movements. In addition, knowing more Spanish may make them more comfortable with verbal explanations.

Students from Year 1 regularly volunteered that they had difficulty remembering words in Spanish (10, 26%), however only one student from Year 2 made this comment. This may be partially explained by the students from the continuing schools having had developed more effective strategies for learning lexicon. Furthermore, information from the principal interviews revealed that Spanish was being used throughout the school, such as on posters and the morning announcements; it may be that students are now more accustomed to basic Spanish vocabulary.

Fewer students from Year 2 (4, 10%) than from Year 1 (9, 25%) reported technological difficulties while using the MIL program. This is most likely due to the returning schools already having addressed most technological problems during the first year of the program. In the case of the new schools in Year 2, it may be explained by experiences and information shared by the returning schools.

x. Student Interviews Summary

In summary, the results of the Year 2 student interviews revealed several commonalities. First, most students indicated that they liked learning Spanish and wished to continue their Spanish studies. All students reported enjoying their face-to-face Spanish class, citing elements such as the games, interactive nature, and the Student Passport books as especially enjoyable. Furthermore, all students said that they liked the MIL portion of their Spanish class; many specifically mentioned the voice recording feature as especially helpful. Some students shared aspects of MIL that they would like to change, among them being some technical problems. All
students also reported that they had learned something in Spanish class over the past year; many were able to list up to seven topics. Over half of the students interviewed volunteered a personal social benefit to learning Spanish while a little less than half were able to see how Spanish could benefit their future. Finally, all heritage speakers said that they liked Spanish, they had learned something this past year, and they wanted to continue with Spanish study. Some students made comments hinting at a greater sense of social awareness due to their language learning, and an additional benefit to this group has been self-validation regarding their home language.

e. Instruction (Teacher Practice)

1. Classroom Observations

CAL evaluators observed face-to-face instruction with the five Spanish teachers at ten schools, two returning Year 1 teachers and three teachers who started with the program in Year 2. All the Spanish teachers speak Spanish fluently and are committed to making the program a success. Each Spanish teacher was observed teaching two or more classes. Consistent with best practices, the evaluators saw Spanish teachers implementing a standards-based, thematically organized curriculum and conducting the class in Spanish 80% or more of the time. Interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational modes of communication were evident in their lessons. The teachers generally paced lessons well, used a communicative approach, integrating colorful, illustrated PowerPoint® slides, gestures, expressions, jazz chants and/or voice modulation (high-low, fast-slow) and age-appropriate classroom routines to ensure that students understood and remained engaged. These teachers were also observed providing opportunities for native Spanish-speaking students to serve as language models and leaders in small group work.

Because of the very limited amount of face-to-face class time that students have with the Spanish teacher each week (only 25-30 minutes), the teachers have developed strategies for moving quickly through lessons and tasks and are adept at keeping up a fast pace throughout the lesson. One teacher’s two-minute fourth grade lesson on animal vocabulary (see transcript of lesson in Appendix C1) included the following strategies to keep things moving: (1) the teacher called on students by name to involve as many students as possible in a short amount of time; (2) she corrected errors in gender agreement (“la vaca es blanco”) by restating the sentence using the correct form, e.g., “Excelente, la vaca es blanca,” so as not to stop the flow of the interaction by.

*Passport Program Final Report, Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, July 8, 2016*
focusing on a minor error, (3) she requested choral repetition (all class) for new words, (4) she asked one-on-one questions on topics that students already had learned, and (5) she rewarded points (stickers) for correct and near-correct answers, handed out by a student assistant as the teacher kept the lesson moving.

Four salient characteristics of the observed Spanish classes will be addressed here: the use of the target language (Spanish) by the teacher for instruction, differentiation in instruction for native Spanish-speaking students, the role of the classroom teacher in the class, and a comparison of fourth and fifth grade classes. Lastly, the MIL class observations will be described.

i. Teachers’ Use of Spanish

One of the biggest challenges for language teachers is trying to speak the target language all the time in a class of students who are new to the language. It is also one of the most important aspects of a language teacher’s job. Without being immersed in the language for the entire class, students will be much less likely to learn the language as well as they could (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2016). These five teachers do an extraordinary job of using the target language the majority of the time in the classroom. In Fall 2015, teachers were observed using Spanish 90-100% of the time in the classroom (with 100% being observed in the fifth grade classes where students were at a higher proficiency level and were more comfortable in the language). By the Spring of 2016 the teachers were still using the target language the majority of the time (80-100% of the time), with some teachers using slightly more English. The slight increase in English use, however, was only observed in the more challenging classes where teachers felt that they needed to use English for purposes of discipline or detailed instructions for a task.

In a setting where the teachers are aiming to provide a language-rich environment and speak only in the target language, best practices show that teachers need to make a concerted effort to explain to students when and why they are switching into English. Two teachers use an engaging way of showing the students when they (the teachers) need to temporarily speak in English. They put on large white round-framed glasses, their “alter ego,” and then allow themselves to speak English for a specific purpose with students, teachers, or administrators. Otherwise, they speak Spanish. If they need to speak to another teacher in front of the students and do not have their
glasses handy, they find a native Spanish speaking student who can translate. The teachers make the extra effort to provide a language immersion environment for the students.

ii. Differentiation of Instruction for Native Spanish-Speaking Students

In each of the schools observed there were native Spanish-speaking students, and a core component of the Passport Program is to provide differentiated instruction for those students who already have strong Spanish skills. The Spanish teachers used a wide range of strategies to encourage the language development of native speakers, and the Student Passport book and the Missions have been designed to include lessons for their levels. The teachers were also observed providing opportunities for the native speakers to serve as language models and leaders in small group work.

In one fourth grade class, the Spanish speaking students finished an assignment more quickly than the others and were given an extra assignment, to write a description of two additional animals on the back of their paper. The teacher would then have to guess what animal they were describing. (Some of the native English speakers finished quickly too and were given the same extra assignment.)

In other classes, the teacher called on the Spanish speakers to model correct pronunciation and to demonstrate a communicative activity with the teacher. “It’s a real benefit for the Spanish speakers,” said an assistant principal. “They can really shine when they serve as language role models for the other students.” He mentioned that in one fourth grade class there were Spanish-speaking students who happened to have language-based IEP’s. That would suggest that they might have challenges in a second language class, but he reported that these students were doing well in Spanish and enjoying the challenge.

In some classes, the teachers assigned native Spanish speakers to work with small groups of students so that each group would have a native-speaker language model. One non-native Spanish-speaker reported that “collaborating with Spanish speakers makes it more fun to learn Spanish.” In another class, a teacher paired native Spanish-speaking students together to work on more advanced activities while other students were paired together to work on the classroom
activities. The other students sought out the Spanish speakers and asked for assistance in completing the activity.

In two classes about ordinal numbers at one school, native speakers of Spanish were challenging the teacher and would make comments such as, “Es bien fácil,” [it’s very easy] about the ordinal numbers lesson, but then the teacher explained in Spanish that the actual pair work activity was more difficult than it appeared. (And indeed all students seemed to be challenged with the activity, and most did not have time to complete it.) In the same lesson, one native speaker student tried to correct the teacher when she said “primera clase.” He said it should be “primer clase.” [The teacher was correct, however. “Primero” (not “primera”) becomes “primer” before a masculine singular noun.] The teacher acknowledged the student’s comments and continued the lesson.

One principal of a school with a large number of Spanish-speaking children described the Spanish program as “invaluable” in helping the Spanish-speaking students see the global importance of their language skills and noted that it is also having a positive impact on their families and the community.

iii. Role of the Classroom Teacher

The classroom teachers served various roles during face-to-face Spanish instruction in their classrooms. As observed in Fall 2015, in one setting, the teacher served as a co-teacher, assisting with activities, practicing the language along with the students, acting out adjectives as the Spanish teacher introduced them, and served as a language model for the students to emulate. Before the Spanish teacher arrived, the classroom teacher transitioned them to Spanish by playing a recording of a song and singing along with the children. During a writing activity, the classroom teacher and the Spanish teacher went from table to table to provide support in finishing an activity. This supportive classroom teacher role is the structure to strive for; the classroom teacher was observed actively supporting the students, and the students appeared to be more focused on learning than in classes where the teacher was less involved.

Two other classroom teachers monitored students as they completed projects and helped during small group work. Another teacher helped the Spanish teacher by asking students to get ready for
Spanish by taking out their Student Passport books and then she collected them at the end. Two other classroom teachers helped transition students to Spanish by telling them to put away their books and get ready to welcome their Spanish teacher. These teachers also circulated around the room, which seemed to help students focus better and be more attentive. In other settings the teachers helped when needed (passing out materials, helping individual students stay on task), but did not participate in the class. Although for the most part classrooms visited in the Spring were not the same as those visited the previous Fall, two of the same classrooms were visited on both occasions. One teacher was actively engaged in the Spanish class on both visits, repeating along with the students and helping during small group work. The other teacher was in the classroom both times but participated more in the Fall than in the Spring.

In one fourth grade class, the classroom teacher was participating as a student; she knew some Spanish and was repeating everything that the students repeated. That day the assistant principal was also participating in all the class activities as a student. In another Spanish class, the two teachers worked collaboratively—the classroom teacher circulated around the desks during the lesson helping out with assessment by noting on her iPad checklist students’ correct responses and active involvement.

One new Spanish teacher this year reported excellent relationships with the classroom teachers and was pleased that they could collaborate on the Spanish program. After every class she left a one page summary of the day’s activities with the classroom teacher for possible “morning work” for students on following days.

Not all classroom teachers played an active role in the Spanish class this Spring, however. In one fifth grade class, the teacher sat at a desk during the class. There was some banter and joking in English between the two teachers, but the classroom teacher did not play any visible role in the class. During another fifth grade class as the same school, the classroom teacher worked at a computer during Spanish time, but did speak some Spanish with the teacher during specific activities.

iv. Comparison of Fourth and Fifth Grade Classes

CAL observers had the opportunity to observe both fourth and fifth grade Spanish instruction at three returning schools in the fall and to interview the two returning Spanish teachers about how
fourth graders and fifth graders were responding to face-to-face instruction in the Fall of the second year of the program. Observations of fourth and fifth grade classes at the returning schools revealed differences in teacher language and student comprehension and language use at the two levels. In fourth grade classes in the Fall, the instructors spoke in Spanish 90 to 100% of the time, repeating words frequently, and using basic vocabulary and language structures. Students appeared to comprehend well and often responded with single words and phrases, and at the sentence level with support. In fifth grade classes, the instructors not only spoke in Spanish the entire time, but also used more complex vocabulary and language structures than in fourth grade classes. Students appeared to comprehend well and often responded in phrases or complete sentences, seeming at ease speaking in Spanish. Both fourth and fifth grade students were generally actively engaged in lessons and eager to use what they had learned in Spanish as demonstrated by their responses.

During the Spring observations, some of the fifth grade classes were spending more time on writing activities related to the lesson (in small groups) than they had in the Fall. However, because they did not have enough language to conduct the discussions in Spanish, they used English to talk with each other about written assignments. For example, when discussing an assignment about ordinal numbers and in what order to place classes on a worksheet, they might say, “Which class is first? Oh, it says después.” They were reading the paragraph description in Spanish as a group, and then, in English, figuring out how to list the courses in the correct order, practicing the ordinal numbers. (In the future, perhaps some prompts could be given to demonstrate how to ask questions in Spanish of group members, with a quick demonstration for the class with native speakers.) Some of the fifth grade students appeared to be less enthusiastic and focused than when observed in the Fall, though that could be attributed to testing and getting ready for the end of school, or the increased difficulty of the class due to the focus on writing in Spanish. The fourth graders, like in the Fall, appeared engaged and actively involved in the classes.

Based on CAL’s Spanish classroom observations over three time periods, it seems clear that highly qualified Spanish teachers are the key to the success of the program. Passport Program teachers were observed incorporating the following research-based best practices: using the
target language (Spanish) almost all the time in the classroom; providing comprehensible input through a variety of strategies (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, voice modulation, chants); integrating language and content (e.g., animal characteristics, actions, habitats) into instruction; and conducting formative performance-based assessments during the class.

v. MIL Session Observations

For MIL observations, CAL evaluators observed students working on the MIL program in 12 classes at eight schools. Five of the observations were in fifth grade classes and seven were in fourth grade classes. Two formats were used during MIL time. In the whole-class format, all students in the class worked individually on MIL (either in the computer lab or in the classroom on laptops and desktops) and the classroom teacher facilitated. In the ELA rotation format, small groups of four to six students rotated in and out of the larger group to work individually on MIL on laptops or desktop computers. In some cases, ELA rotations for MIL took place in one classroom for students from more than one class. Of the classes observed, seven used a whole-class format while five used the ELA rotation.

The majority of students in the whole-class format stayed on-task during their allotted MIL time; in the rotation format, there was a bit more wait time for assistance because of lack of a teacher directly monitoring their work. In general, the main hindrance to being on-task in both formats was technical problems with BCPS One: some students had difficulties logging on. They were observed requesting teacher assistance when encountering these problems; classroom teachers were able to respond and help in a timely manner when the whole-class format was used. In many of the ELA rotation format classes observed, the classroom teachers did not have the time or resources to both facilitate the class lesson and help students with MIL. In all whole-class formats observed, classroom teachers circulated among students.

Students were observed to have little difficulty using MIL. They began successfully working on each task almost immediately upon opening, thus demonstrating that the instructions were clear. Classroom teachers reported that only a small number of student questions were Spanish content-related; they said they were able to answer these questions by using their background knowledge of Spanish.
Fourteen students using MIL at the schools were randomly selected for five-minute observations. Of the 14 students, 13 were observed working on close-ended (e.g., matching, fill in the blank) activities. (These 13 students worked on a total of 20 close-ended activities.) Nine of the 14 students watched a total of ten videos. A total of three of the 14 students worked on one open-ended (short answer writing or speaking) activity each while an additional two students opened one open-ended activity each but made no attempt to work on it. Students worked on an average of 2.1 activities each during their five-minute observations.

During the MIL observations, the CAL observers also took time to review the content of the MIL activities the students were engaged in. The authentic folktales were engaging and graphics were well-designed. BCPS is currently working with MIL to incorporate best practices for online language instruction (minimize amount of English, correct introduction of isolated nouns [need to include articles with nouns], and ensure that all language is taught in context).

2. Teacher Interviews

Four of the five Spanish teachers were interviewed in person and one provided comments by email. All five teachers were working to make the Spanish program an integral part of each school by collaborating with the school administrators, publicizing the program with all the students, celebrating student work by posting it in the halls, and placing labels in Spanish around the school for the main office, nurse’s office, bathrooms, etc. Some of the teachers made the morning announcements (live with audio or video) in Spanish for the entire school every week on the days they were at the school. They announced the day of the week and month of the year and described the weather so that all students are introduced to Spanish, not just the fourth and fifth graders. In another school, the principal (who is learning Spanish through MIL) did the beginning of the daily morning announcements in Spanish (La fecha es … El tiempo es…).

Teachers and principals reported that the K-3 students especially love it. A principal commented that, “It makes them feel part of the school’s Spanish program.”

The returning Spanish teachers interviewed in Fall 2015 confirmed CAL’s observations (above) about the differences in the language comprehension and usage of the fourth graders compared with the fifth graders. They indicated that they were pleased to see how much language many of the fifth graders had retained and how well students were comprehending and speaking Spanish.
The teachers cited improvements to the fourth grade curriculum and supplemental materials (revised by OWL staff and Spanish teachers) for both grades.

One new Spanish teacher interviewed this Spring said that “students are excited that they are learning another language. They love being able to say vocabulary words.” She noted that the Spanish program’s greatest strength was that “we have the freedom to use our creative juices and use our own methods and ways of teaching.”

Two major topics in the interviews will be highlighted – Spanish teachers’ views of the role of the classroom teacher in the Spanish class (expanding on what CAL observers saw in the classes), and Spanish teachers’ views on the implementation of MIL.

i. Classroom Teacher Role during Spanish Class

Classroom research (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2016) tells us that “one of the most important ways the classroom teacher can support the language teacher is by being positive about the role of language in the curriculum.” (p. 306) One BCPS Spanish teacher described a correlation between student motivation and classroom teacher participation in her classes. She described the classroom teacher’s role as follows:

[In my fourth and fifth grade] classes, I have noticed that if a classroom teacher is excited to have Spanish class, then the students are excited to have Spanish class. If the classroom teacher participates in Spanish class, then the students participate more in Spanish class. I find it most enjoyable to teach in these classrooms because everyone wants to learn and I can interact with the classroom. I have also noticed a clear [correlation] between difficult classroom management and lack of classroom teacher participation. In other words, I have the most trouble with behavior management in the classes where the teachers are not excited about Spanish, ignore the lesson, or leave the room. The students feed off the attitude of their teachers. I can only imagine what I would be able to accomplish if all of my classroom teachers were positive about the program.

Another Spanish teacher agreed on the critical role of the classroom teacher, and explained that they can be very helpful in the Spanish class. “I tried to encourage collaboration at the beginning. It makes a huge difference.” In one class, the classroom teacher circulated during the class, checking on students’ work, and using iPad software to mark down when students have a correct response and when they are on task. This assistance with formative assessment helped the Spanish teacher maintain the pace of the class.

*Passport Program Final Report, Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, July 8, 2016*
Another teacher reported that having the classroom teachers help out during the lesson makes the classes go more smoothly. “The relationship between the Spanish teacher (me) and the classroom teachers is excellent.” One classroom teacher even gives Spanish homework once a week. She gets the Spanish teacher’s lesson plan for the week and makes a homework assignment from that.

ii. Spanish Teachers’ Views of MIL

Spanish teachers commented that the students remained enthusiastic about the MIL online component at the end of the year, although there continued to be challenges with MIL implementation. Spanish teachers reported that scheduling MIL time is still the program’s biggest overall challenge. One teacher suggested that “the MIL program is good when the students have time to do it.” The teachers all reported obstacles to student participation in the regularly-scheduled MIL activities, including when the computer lab is reserved for other uses, such as for PARCC testing during the month of May.

Although the students remained enthusiastic about MIL, the teachers reported that they are still not on a set MIL schedule and are concerned about the limited amount of time the students spend on it. One teacher reported, “The students are going at different speeds – some work on MIL at home and get very far ahead. Overall, the students are not getting enough MIL.” This confirms the classroom teachers’ responses to the survey that, on average, students were spending 77% of the recommended time on MIL.

The Spanish teachers offered suggestions for future monitoring of MIL. One teacher said, “Classroom teachers need to provide more specific guidance, e.g., ‘work on Lesson 7 this week [and the native Spanish speakers should work on Lesson 9].’” To help the students monitor their MIL progress, the Spanish teachers have designed a paper checklist to be used next year. They noted that even though it is an online program they thought it would be useful for the students to use a paper checklist to keep track of progress. This will also help the classroom teachers and Spanish teachers monitor progress.

The teachers agreed that MIL implementation is different depending on the school. At least one school had A/B scheduled days (a different schedule every other day), “so the schedule is very regulated, and the students definitely get 40+ minutes a week with MIL.”
MIL during morning work, “so it is not regulated.” The Spanish teachers agreed that “the challenge is keeping on top of MIL.” More than one teacher concurred with the view that “It’s becoming an overwhelming and almost impossible task to grade all the students’ oral samples.” Listening to audio recordings that students record of their Spanish MIL responses is time consuming for the teachers. They had backlogs of recordings to listen to; one teacher had a backlog of 800 recordings. Also, there still are a lot of blank recordings, e.g., students do not realize that they pressed “record,” so it is blank. (Although one classroom teacher said that she has not had problems with student recordings for “several months.”)

The teachers have found that the teacher-developed “Missions” have made a big difference this year by engaging the students in MIL and making sure that they work systematically through the lessons. Some teachers see them as a more important component than the students’ MIL recorded samples. “With the Missions we can tell if the students have learned the material,” a teacher concluded.

One teacher suggested that perhaps the current model should be changed since “it is hard for the classroom teachers to monitor MIL [since many of them don’t speak Spanish] – it would be better for a Spanish teacher to monitor it.” A new teacher felt that it took her a while to get accustomed to MIL this year, but expected it would be easier in the future, “Now that I understand the MIL program better, it will go more smoothly next year.”

The teachers are excited that in 2016-17, all fourth and fifth graders will have their own devices (similar to laptops), and they may be using them for MIL during morning time (the first 10-15 minutes of school when students first arrive, at different times, before announcements). They are also looking forward to Spanish being scheduled as a “special” for 50 minutes for fifth graders next year, so that will give the language teacher a regular slot in the curriculum (and an increase from the 30 minutes allotted this year).

3. Use of Materials

Spanish teachers in Fall 2015 and again in Spring 2016, commented that enhancements to the Student Passport books and the added structure of Missions, that students had to complete every four units, were helping students complete MIL lesson activities in a set sequence and making a
stronger link between face-to-face and MIL content. It was apparent that the enhanced student materials are helping the Spanish teachers and the classroom teachers collaborate in a more focused manner. In addition, during the site visits in both Fall 2015 and Spring 2016, Spanish was visible throughout the schools, on bulletin boards and special displays, on signage in the hallways and classrooms, and used during the morning announcements as well.

4. Teacher Perception

Some perceptions shared by Spanish teachers and classroom teachers on the topics of making Spanish a graded subject in fifth grade, starting Spanish instruction in earlier grades, and insights on MIL usage are included here to offer additional glimpses of teachers’ views.

One issue that Spanish teachers mentioned was that some students do not view Spanish as an important subject. A few of the teachers suggested that making Spanish a graded subject (like other core classes) would encourage students to take Spanish more seriously. One classroom teacher described the lack of accountability of the students while on MIL, along with the absence of grades, as contributing to some student lack of recognition of the importance of the class. One Spanish teacher agreed, suggesting that the fifth graders may be less committed to Spanish because it is not graded, like their other subjects. “They have pressure from their other subjects that are graded so are less committed to Spanish.” She also added that students’ developmental levels may also influence their commitment to Spanish.

Two of the Spanish teachers mentioned that they would like to see the program start in earlier grades (one teacher suggested starting in Kindergarten). “Many of the students have younger siblings who are eager to learn Spanish, but cannot start until Grade 4.”

Classroom teachers also had some interesting reflections that they shared. One classroom teacher recognized the benefit of her first year’s experience and was able to build on it in Year 2: “We were able to better support the students from the beginning because of the background we had from last year.” Another teacher observed a key component of the blended learning model was that “a dedicated MIL time is critical to [students] being successful.” Another suggested that being able to access their students’ MIL performance statistics would help them evaluate student learning and better monitor and motivate students.
f. Early Outcomes

1. MIL Usage Data and Statistics

The data and statistics from Middlebury on student usage of MIL (number of times students logged onto MIL, number of class sections with usable data, percentage of activities completed by class) were not in a form that OWL was confident to submit for this report. OWL staff reported receiving concerns from schools throughout the year about inaccuracies in these data. Much of the concern had to do with false zeroes listed or student submissions that were not being reported as “submitted.” OWL staff do believe, however, that student usage was in fact less in Year 2, especially in fifth grade. As part of the Office of World Languages final assessment they collected data on MIL usage from fifth graders, and reported that “many fifth graders in many schools reported that they were on MIL less frequently than they had been in fourth grade.” This confirmed data collected from classroom teachers that indicated that they were not able to consistently offer MIL for the recommended 40 minutes a week.

2. Assessment Data

As part of an effort to develop Spanish language assessments designed to measure student mastery of the Spanish language learning standards (the focus of instruction in Grades 4 and 5), BCPS contracted with Strategic Measurement and Evaluation, Inc. (SME) to collaborate on the creation of fourth and fifth grade mid-term and final assessments for reading and listening skills (See Appendix D1 for details on the test development process and sample can-do statements [performance indicators], rating forms, Grades 4 and 5 blueprints, item development plans, and writer assignments). This work has continued from 2014 to 2016, and test items were field tested in fourth and fifth grades in June 2016.

The development of valid, reliable, and fair assessment instruments is following an established process. For each of the two grades, Strategic Measurement and Evaluation, Inc., explains that:

. . . the process began with the identification of clear, age-appropriate, and measureable learning standards that were to be the focus of instruction. BCPS educators then worked to create a curriculum built around the teaching of those standards and to establish overall test blueprints for each assessment. These educators provided the seeds for item ideas, reviewed and refined new items, and
approved the accepted items for inclusion in field test forms. The field test forms were administered to students who participated in the BCPS Spanish classes built around the BCPS Spanish curriculum. The data from the field test were submitted for psychometric analysis and all data will be shared as part of a final item data review before final functional forms are created for the 2016-17 school year.

(Spanish Language Assessment Development: Grades 4 and 5, Strategic Measurement and Evaluation, Inc., p.1. See Appendix D1).

It is expected that the Spanish language assessment will be administered to students in Grades 4 and 5 during the 2016-17 school year, and results will then be available to serve as baseline data for the first cohort of students to have valid and reliable language proficiency data.

Currently, the following internal BCPS assessment procedures are used: daily formative assessments, MIL online component student feedback, quarterly Missions, and an end-of-year interview-style summative assessment of speaking and listening (see Appendix C5, BCPS Speaking Assessment with Rubric), with a writing component, designed to be administered and scored by a team of evaluators. This informal assessment was interview-based/human adaptive. The testers (not the students’ Spanish teacher) asked a series of questions with verbal prompts for students who couldn’t answer immediately. Students received a half point for indications of receptive language (e.g., they understood the question but couldn’t answer), and either 1 or 2 points based on the proficiency level of their response. The final speaking question requires students to ask the tester a question in Spanish, and there was a separate writing section. The assessment was also administered to four middle school Spanish I classes, including one gifted and talented section, using the same test and testers to ensure that it was aligned with Spanish I content. Results from the external and internal assessments were not available by the submission date for this report. Data from these reports are needed to assess student progress in language proficiency.

i. Program goals

Figure 4 outlines the Passport Program student language proficiency goals for the end of fourth and fifth grades, as well as goals for continuation in Grades 6-12, as of February 2016. The terminology used in the goals (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced) is from the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (2012), and describes “what individuals can do with language in terms of reading,
writing, listening, and speaking in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context” (p. 3). The major levels are subdivided into sublevels of High, Mid, and Low. The guidelines describe the levels of proficiency as ranges, and show what a student can and cannot do with the language at each level, “regardless of where, when, or how the language was acquired” (p. 3). In the current structure, the end of fourth grade goals are Novice Mid (with inconsistencies), though OWL staff has recently revised that target to Novice Low (with inconsistencies) to better match the curriculum.

**Figure 4. Passport Program Goals (Speaking and Listening)**
(from Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages BCPS PowerPoint presentation by Judy Opfer, Office of World Languages (OWL), February 2016)

Currently, the program goals state that by the end of fifth grade, students will be able to perform with consistency at the Novice High level of proficiency in speaking and listening. When interviewed in Spring 2016, OWL staff suggested a more realistic goal, to match the curriculum, of Novice Low, with consistency, or possibly Novice Mid. By the end of a Grade 4-12 sequential program, the goal is for almost all students to attain a proficiency level of Intermediate High/Advanced Low, as stated in Figure 4.
3. Curriculum Development and School Demographic Profiles

i. Curriculum Development

The curriculum development process is a primary determiner of program effectiveness. In the case of the BCPS Spanish Passport Program, the process began by developing a clear, shared vision of what would be feasible for face-to-face instruction and an online learning component. The fourth grade curriculum for the teacher-based component, consisting of 10 content-enriched units, was subsequently developed by Office of World Languages staff and Spanish instructors who had demonstrated abilities needed for the task. The curriculum process was iterative and responsive to the limitations of the online program, and additional instructional materials were developed throughout the year to connect MIL to the face-to-face instruction and enhance student independent learning through MIL. This same process was followed for revising the fourth grade curriculum in Summer 2015 and creating the curriculum for Grade 5 for Year 2. In Summer 2016 as in Summer 2015, Spanish teachers and OWL staff will collaborate to revise fourth and fifth grade curricula. In addition, new and returning teachers will work together to build the sixth grade curriculum and develop and strengthen the MIL materials for Grade 5.

ii. School Demographic Profiles

In selecting a representative sample of elementary schools for the project, BCPS balanced demographic factors carefully. Pilot schools were not only drawn from different parts of Baltimore County, but also reflect the range of populations and special programs offered. Tables 9 and 10 show the range of populations in the pilot schools and percentages of students in special programs in Year 1 of implementation. Tables 11 and 12 show the same demographic data for the 10 schools selected for evaluation in Year 2. These tables reflect a somewhat comparable range of populations and special programs as the Year 1 schools, though there is a decrease of white student population by about 12% and an increase of students on free and reduced-price meals by about 9%. By piloting the program in a wide range of locations and with varying populations, BCPS has received strong feedback on program effectiveness that will inform revisions and the rollout of the program to additional schools in the 2016-17 school year.
Table 9. BCPS Pilot School Enrollment by Ethnicity/Race, 2014-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pilot Schools</th>
<th>Enrollment 2014-15</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaskan</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black or African American</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific</th>
<th>Two or More Races</th>
<th>White</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Bear Creek</td>
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Table 10. BCPS Pilot School Enrollment in Special Programs, 2014-15

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<th>Pilot Schools</th>
<th>Enrollment 2014-15</th>
<th>Special Education</th>
<th>Free and Reduced-Price Meals</th>
<th>English Language Learners</th>
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Table 11. BCPS Pilot School Enrollment by Ethnicity/Race, 2015-16

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<th>Pilot Schools</th>
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Table 12. BCPS Pilot School Enrollment in Special Programs, 2015-16

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Pilot Schools</th>
<th>Enrollment 2015-16</th>
<th>Special Education</th>
<th>Free and Reduced-Price Meals</th>
<th>English Language Learners</th>
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<td>62.7%</td>
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<td>Glyndon</td>
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<tr>
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4. Student Interviews

Student interviews at each of the ten schools provided additional evidence of student engagement in the program. Thirty-nine students, of whom three were heritage students, three were native speakers of Spanish, and 15 spoke a language other than English or Spanish at home, participated in the interviews. All students indicated that they liked learning Spanish and wanted to continue their Spanish studies. They cited elements such as games, interactive activities, and
the Student Passport books as especially enjoyable. Furthermore, all students said that they liked the MIL portion of their Spanish class, and specifically mentioned benefiting from the voice recording feature. Over half the students interviewed volunteered a personal social benefit to learning Spanish. Finally, all heritage speakers and native Spanish-speakers said that they liked Spanish, they had learned something in the past year, and wanted to continue with Spanish study. These comments echoed feedback received from native Spanish-speaking students in Year 1 during interviews and at a “Spanish Lunch Group Meeting” organized by one of the Spanish teachers. The Spanish speakers liked the dramatic and playful nature of the class and enjoyed reading the stories in MIL, recording their responses, and learning new vocabulary. The positive feedback from this group of students both years provides strong evidence of student engagement as well as program effectiveness across diverse populations.

Overall, early outcomes in terms of program effectiveness and student engagement are positive in the areas of curriculum development, demographic data, and student attitudes, and provide insight into program strengths as well as challenges that affected the Year 2 results. In the areas of student proficiency assessment results and MIL usage data, it is important to gather and analyze the data in a timely manner, before the end of the school year, so that student language proficiency can be closely monitored and program goals and curricula can be adjusted as needed. This data was not available for the final report, so student language proficiency, student usage of MIL, and student readiness for middle school Spanish cannot be adequately assessed at this time.

III. Program Strengths and Challenges

a. Program Strengths

Careful examination of Spring 2016 data collected through classroom teacher surveys; interviews with principals, Spanish teachers, students, and Office of World Languages staff; classroom observations; and a review of curriculum materials; confirm that Year 2 of the Passport blended learning program has continued the strong trajectory of Year 1. The program continues to have strong support from every level of the district’s administration in the planning and implementation of the program. The OWL staff has shown untiring dedication to the implementation of all aspects of the program through strong collaboration with the pilot schools.
In general, the Year 2 data show that:

- **Students continue to participate and be actively engaged in the face-to-face Spanish classes.** Most (95%) of the students interviewed reported that they liked learning Spanish and wanted to continue learning it (92%). Students commented on the fun nature of the class, the engaging teacher, and the enjoyable games and activities.

- **Students are engaged in the MIL online activities.** All students interviewed identified something that they liked about MIL, including videos, songs, quizzes, and the connection to the Spanish teacher’s lessons.

- **Spanish teachers are highly qualified and dedicated.** All five Spanish teachers were working to make the Spanish program an integral part of each school by collaborating with school administrators, publicizing the program within the school and community, and infusing the building with Spanish language and cultures. The teachers demonstrated best practices in teaching languages to children, using the target language (80-100% of time) to provide comprehensible input for instruction, and integrating culture, subject content, and language into instruction.

- **The MIL program is better aligned with Spanish class instruction than last year.** OWL staff, working collaboratively with the Spanish teachers, have better aligned classroom instruction with the MIL program by redesigning the curriculum and reinforcing MIL content in the Spanish classroom. Administrators, classroom teachers, Spanish teachers, and even students commented on the increased alignment of the two components this year.

- **The revised Student Passport book activities had a positive impact on instruction and learning in Year 2.** The changes to the Student Passport books (expansions to include MIL notes and practice, class notes, Missions, and *Middlebury para Hispangeloablentes*) provide a stronger bridge between face-to-face instruction and MIL, and more opportunities for students to apply what they learn in both venues.

- **Schools are infusing Spanish throughout their buildings,** developing into multicultural communities. The minute a visitor walks into a Passport school it is obvious that there is Spanish instruction in the building – there will be a “¡Todos adelante! Moving Forward Together” Team BCPS poster welcoming you to the school, along with hallways decorated with Spanish work samples, drawings, and photographs.

- **Active support from classroom teachers is helping students focus on learning Spanish, both in MIL and face-to-face instruction.** Supporting best practices, Spanish teachers tell us that “if the classroom teacher participates in Spanish class, then the students participate more in Spanish class.”

- **Implementation of the program in new schools and in the fifth grade at returning schools generally went more smoothly than in Year 1.** Because of adjustments made to instruction and technology from lessons learned the first year, the second year implementation went more smoothly with fewer technology glitches.
b. Implementation of Year 1 Goals

To put the program strengths in perspective by reviewing Year 1 goals and accomplishments, all recommendations from the Year 1 evaluation have been addressed; some have been implemented fully while others are being addressed in stages. The recommendations and the status of implementation are included here: (1) increase coordination between the teacher-led and MIL components [Accomplished], (2) plan for pilot teachers to train new teachers [Accomplished], (3) fine-tune Spanish program goals [Programs goals for fourth and fifth grade have been set but are in the process of revision to better match program characteristics and middle school plan], (4) increase instructional time with Spanish teachers in both grades to align with best practices [Additional time has been allocated for Spanish instruction in fifth grade for Fall 2016, though not yet for fourth grade], and (5) adapt MIL activities to reflect best practices in teaching [BCPS and Middlebury are in the process of adapting the MIL activities to better match the face-to-face program curriculum and to incorporate more best practices such as making cross-curricular connections. BCPS is working with Middlebury on Common Cartridge integration which will make it possible to embed digital Spanish content in content curriculum.]

c. Program Challenges

The Spanish Passport Program, as with any new program, faced challenges and growing pains in its first two years. The limitations seen in Year 2 (some continuing challenges from Year 1) are addressed in the recommendations below, and revolve around the following needs:

- Helping classroom teachers support students with the MIL Spanish lessons and the necessary technology;
- Devising alternate ways to schedule MIL regularly during the school week. It is still a challenge for some schools to offer MIL on a regular basis;
- Increasing collaboration between Spanish teachers and classroom teachers for maximum success in face-to-face Spanish instruction;
- Continuing to revise MIL materials to incorporate best practices (minimize amount of English, correct introduction of isolated nouns [need to add articles to nouns], and ensure that all language is taught in context); and
- Increasing the amount of face-to-face Spanish instruction in Grade 4 (to match Fall 2016’s increased amount in Grade 5) to help students attain a level roughly commensurate with the completion of Spanish I by the end of fifth grade, and align with best practices in instruction.
IV. Recommendations

Overall, the BCPS Passport Program merits continuation and expansion. The feedback from teachers, principals, and students has been good, results are promising, and the benefits of an early start model are supported by research. The blended learning design provides a foundation for a program type recommended by existing research (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2004), though more class time with the Spanish teachers is essential in fourth grade to achieve the desired goals. Unfortunately, for this report, because of lack of availability of student language proficiency results and student MIL usage data, statements about student language proficiency gains and MIL usage cannot be made.

The following recommendations for the Baltimore County Public Schools elementary school Spanish program are designed to build on the successes of the first two years of the pilot; help set and achieve student language proficiency goals; and help increase alignment with best practices in curriculum, instruction, assessment, program design, and technology implementation:

- Follow-up with classroom teachers and Spanish teachers to ensure that all issues with BCPS One and MIL, and other technology issues, are being resolved in a timely fashion;
- Observed best practices include classroom teachers actively monitoring students during MIL. Where teachers are not able to actively monitor, students should be given clear directions and expectations for what they need to accomplish;
- For best results, create a structure to encourage all classroom teachers to actively support and participate during face-to-face Spanish instruction so they are co-creating the learning experience with the Spanish teacher. Many teachers are already doing this and can serve as mentors for other teachers;
- For overall consistency in MIL program implementation, ensure that all classroom teachers reach an average of 40 minutes or more per week with MIL, so that all students are provided with the minimum amount of online instruction, even in the Spring semester when scheduling is more challenging;
- Work with Middlebury to ensure that MIL usage data is accurate and complete so the information can be used to monitor student participation and help identify potential implementation issues at the schools;
- Work with Middlebury to continue to align MIL online instruction with best practices for teaching languages to children (e.g., ensure all language is introduced in context; present nouns with articles; decrease amount of English used);
- Continue to provide summer MIL teacher training for new teachers (data show that the two items critical to helping build teacher confidence in facilitating MIL are training and practice with MIL implementation); and
- In an effort to increase student proficiency by the end of Grade 4 and Grade 5, increase instructional time with the Spanish teacher in fourth grade (as has been planned for fifth
grade for Year 3) to align with best practices and recommendations of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). This alignment of the program with best practices in teaching languages to children will help students continue to develop their language skills and reach higher proficiency goals.

Developing a plan to address the recommendations during the summer and the next school year will be an important step in helping the team build on its successes and adjust goals and procedures as needed.

V. Summary

Consistent with its mission of creating a culture of deliberate excellence for every student, every school, and every community, Baltimore County Public Schools’ Passport Spanish Program is a positive step towards introducing languages to all students in the district beginning in fourth grade. BCPS has achieved what it set out to do in the first two years, so with this foundation, and with student language assessment data, the program can be expected to expand and show marked progress in developing a rich blended learning (teacher-based and technology-focused) model, showing measurable success in increasing student proficiency levels.
References


Passport Program Final Report, Baltimore County (MD) Public Schools, July 8, 2016

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