

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Welcome!



The purpose of the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish is to engage native Spanish-speaking students in early preparation for college success. Since 2000, the program has grown from a small experiment at seven sites to a growing statewide initiative that serves more than 1,000 Spanish-speaking middle school students across Texas each year. As the original program pilot and scale-up sites established and expanded their programs, the Texas Education Agency was able to capture the unique approaches that different communities have taken in tailoring the program to local needs. This website is designed as a place to share this wisdom and experience and to provide an overview of the program and resources so that other educators can design and implement their own middle school programs for AP Spanish.

Quick Links

[See update on changes to the 2007 AP Spanish Language exam](#)

- [Español](#)
- [Program Brochures](#)

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish is designed to enhance the academic performance of Spanish-speaking students.

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)
[History](#)
[Implementation](#)
[Evaluation](#)
[Participants](#)
[Links](#)
[Contacts](#)
[Home](#)

Program Summary

Research shows that the rigor of academic coursework that a student undertakes in school is key to predicting whether or not that student will go on to college and succeed there. Yet, historically, minority students have not been well represented in college-preparatory courses. To open up opportunities for college success for the state's Spanish-speaking students, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) created the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish in 2000 with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

"Students experienced increased confidence in themselves and in their academic abilities. Parents of participating students became more involved in their children's schools, and teachers involved in the pilot project felt rejuvenated and more motivated in the classroom."

The basic format of the program is to offer AP Spanish Language to students whose heritage language is Spanish while they are still in middle school. The underlying idea is to turn these students' native language into an academic asset, allowing them to take advanced courses early in their school careers. By introducing students to a more challenging academic standard in middle school the program opens up pathways to college.

Demonstrating the program's extraordinary success, each year an overwhelming majority of participating middle school students score high enough on the AP Spanish Language examination to be eligible for college credit. Students also experience:

- Increased confidence in themselves and in their academic abilities;
- Fewer disciplinary problems and absences;
- Improved performance in other classes;
- Increased enrollment in other honors and AP courses in high school;
- Enhanced perceptions of college as an attainable, realistic goal; and
- Improved skills that transfer to other test-taking experiences, including the state testing program.

In addition, parents of participating students became more involved in their children's schools, and teachers involved in the pilot project felt rejuvenated and more motivated in the classroom.

As schools and districts have refined and expanded their programs, they have found it beneficial to involve a broad range of school staff at both the middle and high school levels thus widening the potential impact of the program. For example, Spanish teachers at all levels have worked together to vertically align the Spanish curriculum, to design Pre-AP* classes in sixth and seventh grade, and to examine language offerings at the elementary level. Middle and high school counselors have worked with participating students and their parents to shape coherent four-year high school plans. Administrators—whose support is critical to program success—have worked with teachers, staff, and school board members to promote the Texas Middle

School Program for AP Spanish districtwide and to shape local policy related to the program.

Building an inclusive and supportive program implementation team is one critical component for program success. However, one of the lessons learned through the pilot and project scale-up is that there is no single formula for program success. Early implementers of the program represented a diverse range of communities across the state—large, suburban, metropolitan, small, and rural. These districts tailored the program guidelines and recommended approaches to their own unique situations. As the population of Spanish-speaking students continues to grow, our hope is that middle schools across the state will recognize the tremendous value of the program and use the [program implementation resources](#) to create a Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish tailored to their own local needs and contexts.

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)
[History](#)
[Implementation](#)
[Evaluation](#)
[Participants](#)
[Links](#)
[Contacts](#)
[Home](#)

History

In 2000, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to implement the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish. The project was designed to encourage the teaching of the AP Spanish Language course at the middle school level for native Spanish speakers who were also identified as economically disadvantaged. The goal was to promote student success and self confidence and support student aspirations and preparation for college.

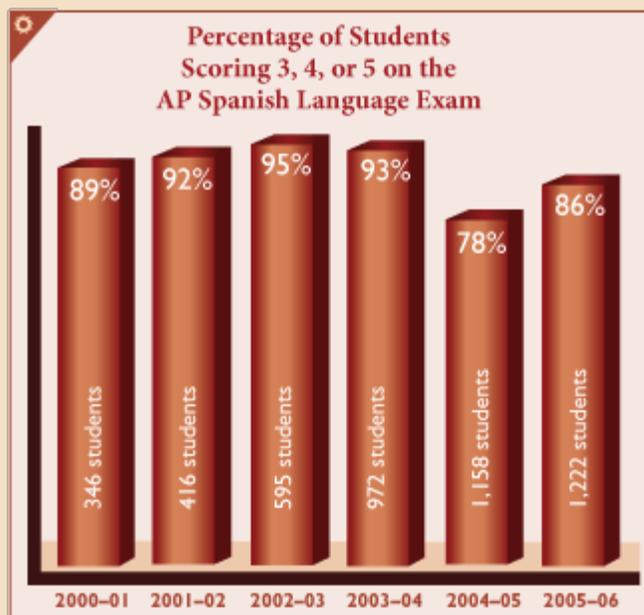
In 2003, 95% of participating students received scores of three or above on the AP Spanish Language exam, with almost 300 students receiving the highest exam score possible.

The [original seven pilot school districts](#) established programs in seventeen middle schools across the state. These pilot districts varied greatly in resources, student population, size, and location.

In May of 2001, 356 students in the pilot schools took the AP Spanish Language examination and did extremely well. On the AP exam scale of one to five, one being the lowest, 89% of students received a score of three or above on the exam, making them eligible to receive college credit for the course at most colleges and universities. In May of 2002, a second cohort of 400 middle school students took the AP Spanish Language examination and more than 92% received scores of three or above. In 2003, 95% of participating students received scores of three or above on the AP Spanish Language exam, with almost 300 students receiving the highest exam score possible.

Building on the success of the pilot program, in 2002 TEA applied for additional funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Advanced Placement Incentive Program to expand the project to [13 additional scale-up sites](#).

The new scale-up districts did not have to start from scratch. The original seven pilot sites, many of which had expanded their programs to include most of the middle schools in their districts, agreed to act as mentors to the new scale-up sites. Additionally, as part of the scale-up effort, TEA developed an [implementation guide](#), drawing heavily on the wisdom and sample resources of the districts that piloted the program. By the 2003-04 school year, fifteen additional middle school programs were up and running with more than 1,000 students participating in the program statewide.



Source: District-reported data.

In 2005, TEA awarded planning grants to an additional 59 campuses to implement programs. [These 59 Phase II scale-up sites](#) began offering the program in Fall 2006.

Surveys about the program conducted with participating students, teachers, and parents have been overwhelmingly positive. All of the teachers reported increased parental participation and noted that their students demonstrated increased self confidence. Ninety-six percent of the students said they would recommend the class to a friend. Most felt their grades had improved, and 95% felt they could be successful in college. Ninety-five percent of the parents surveyed felt that their child was doing better in school, and most reported that they played more active roles at their child's school as a result of their child's participation in the project.

Thanks to the commitment and contributions of these early implementers of the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish, a wealth of program implementation models, strategies, and resources is available for other schools interested in the program. Please visit the [Implementation](#) section of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Program Implementation

- [Implementation Guide](#)
- [Sample Resources](#)
- [Program Implementation Training](#)
- [Program Insights for Spanish Teachers & LOTE Coordinators](#)
- [Evaluation Plan Format](#)
- [Enrolled Student Spreadsheet](#)
- [Sample Program Implementation Timeline](#)
- [Program Budget Consideration](#)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Evaluation

- [Program Participation 2000-2006](#)
- [Exam Performance 2000-2006](#)
- [Executive Summary: Implementation Case Studies](#)
- [Summary of Success \(1.8 MB, PDF\)](#)
- [Executive Summary: Long-term Impacts Evaluation](#)
- [Long-term Impacts Evaluation](#)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Participants

- [Original pilot districts](#)
- [Scale-up districts](#)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Links

- [Texas Education Agency Advanced Academic Services](#)
- [Texas Education Agency Languages Other Than English](#)
- [College Board](#)
- [AP Central](#)
- [National Association for Bilingual Education](#)
- [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages](#)
- [Languages Other Than English Center for Educator Development](#)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Contacts

Texas Education Agency

Debbie Smith

Statewide Coordinator
Gifted/Talented Education
Phone: (512) 463-9581

debbie.smith@tea.state.tx.us

Region XIII Education Service Center

Marilyn Peebles

Associate Director
Texas Initiatives
Phone: (512) 919-5392

marilyn.peebles@esc13.txed.net

Erin Midgley Romero

Coordinator
Texas Initiatives
Phone: (512) 919-5489

erin.midgley@esc13.txed.net

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) |
[Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Welcome!



The purpose of the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish is to engage native Spanish-speaking students in early preparation for college success. Since 2000, the program has grown from a small experiment at seven sites to a growing statewide initiative that serves more than 1,000 Spanish-speaking middle school students across Texas each year. As the original program pilot and scale-up sites established and expanded their programs, the Texas Education Agency was able to capture the unique approaches that different communities have taken in tailoring the program to local needs. This website is designed as a place to share this wisdom and experience and to provide an overview of the program and resources so that other educators can design and implement their own middle school programs for AP Spanish.

Quick Links

[See update on changes to the 2007 AP Spanish Language exam](#)

- [Español](#)
- [Program Brochures](#)

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish is designed to enhance the academic performance of Spanish-speaking students.

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)
[History](#)
[Implementation](#)
[Evaluation](#)
[Participants](#)
[Links](#)
[Contacts](#)
[Home](#)

Resumen del Programa



La investigación muestra que el rigor académico de los estudios que un estudiante cursa en la escuela es clave para predecir si ese estudiante asistirá o no a la universidad y si tendrá éxito una vez que haya ingresado. Sin embargo, históricamente los estudiantes de grupos minoritarios no han sido bien representados en los cursos de preparación para la universidad. Con el fin de ofrecer oportunidades para lograr éxito en la universidad para los estudiantes del estado cuya lengua materna es español, la Agencia de Educación de Texas (TEA por sus siglas en inglés) creó en el año 2000 Programa de AP* en español para escuelas intermedias en Texas o sea cursos avanzados para el estudio de la lengua española en las escuelas intermedias a través de una subvención del Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos.

"Los estudiantes demostraron un aumento de auto-estima así como en sus capacidades académicas. Los padres de los estudiantes participantes estuvieron más involucrados en las escuelas de sus hijos, y los maestros involucrados en el proyecto piloto se sintieron rejuvenecidos y más motivados en el salón de clases".

El formato básico del programa es de ofrecer Programa de AP en español para escuelas intermedias en Texas para los estudiantes cuya lengua materna es el español mientras aún están en la escuela intermedia. La idea fundamental es de convertir la lengua materna de estos estudiantes en una ventaja académica permitiéndoles tomar cursos avanzados al inicio de sus carreras académicas. Al introducir a los estudiantes a un estándar académico más exigente en la escuela intermedia, el programa abre caminos hacia la universidad.

Las escuelas intermedias que han implementado el programa piloto han encontrado que más del 90% de los estudiantes participantes obtuvieron calificaciones lo suficientemente altas en el examen de AP de la lengua española como para ser elegibles para recibir crédito universitario. Los estudiantes también demostraron:

- Un aumento de auto-estima así como en sus capacidades académicas;
- Menores problemas de disciplina y de ausentismo;
- Mejor desempeño en otras clases;
- Mayor número de inscripciones en otros cursos de honores y de AP en la secundaria;
- Una mejor percepción de la universidad como una meta realista y alcanzable; y
- Mejoría en sus habilidades, las cuales se pueden aplicar a otras experiencias para presentar exámenes, incluyendo el programa de exámenes del estado.

Además, los padres de los estudiantes participantes estuvieron más involucrados en las escuelas de sus hijos, y los maestros involucrados en el proyecto piloto se sintieron rejuvenecidos y más motivados en el salón de clases.

Así como las escuelas y los distritos han refinado y ampliado sus programas, han encontrado útil incluir a un rango muy extenso de personal escolar tanto al nivel de escuela intermedia como de secundaria y así podrán extender el impacto potencial del programa. Por ejemplo, los maestros de español de todos los niveles han trabajado conjuntamente para alinear verticalmente el plan de estudios de español, diseñar clases Pre-AP para los grados sexto y séptimo y para examinar programas principiantes al nivel de escuela primaria. Los consejeros de la intermedia y la secundaria han trabajado con cada estudiante participante y con sus padres para formular un plan académico coherente de cuatro años en la secundaria. Los administradores, cuyo apoyo es fundamental para el éxito del programa, han trabajado con maestros, personal y miembros de la junta directiva de la escuela para promover el programa de AP de la lengua española en las escuelas intermedias a través del distrito y para dar forma a la política local relacionada con el programa.

Un componente crítico para el éxito del programa es la formación de un equipo inclusivo y de apoyo que implemente el programa. Sin embargo, una de las lecciones aprendidas a través del piloto y avance del proyecto es que no existe una fórmula única para el éxito del programa. Las personas que implementaron el programa en sus inicios representaban un diverso rango de las comunidades a través del estado - grandes, de suburbios, metropolitanas, pequeñas y rurales - todas sirviendo a grandes porcentajes de estudiantes cuya lengua materna es el español. Estos distritos adaptaron los principios del programa y recomendaron propuestas para cada situación específica. La población de hispanoparlantes sigue creciendo, y nuestra esperanza es que las escuelas intermedias en todo el estado reconozcan el enorme valor del programa y utilicen los [recursos de implementación](#) del programa para crear un programa de AP de la lengua española para escuelas intermedias adaptado a sus propias necesidades y contextos locales.

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) |
[Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Information for Parents & Administrators



[Download
the *Administrative Overview brochure*
\(PDF\)](#)



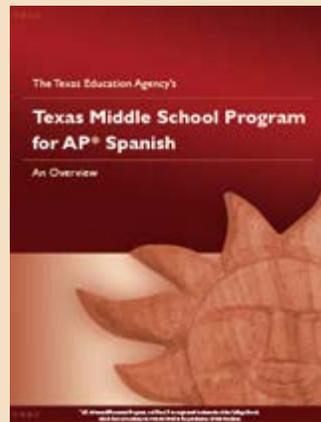
[Download the *Parent brochure \(English\)*
\(PDF\)](#)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)



[Download the *Folleto para padres \(Español\)* \(PDF\)](#)



[Download the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish Overview Booklet \(PDF\)](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Site Map

- Home
 - Program Summary
 - History
 - Program Implementation
 - = Program Implementation Guide
 - = Program Implementation Resources
 - Participants
 - Links
 - Contacts
 - Join Listserve
 - Español
 - Site Map

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Original Pilot Districts

- Austin ISD
- Brownsville ISD
- Irving ISD
- McKinney ISD
- Tyler ISD
- Valley View ISD
- Ysleta ISD

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Scale-up Districts

[Phase I](#)

[Phase II](#)

Phase I scale-up districts:

- Aldine ISD
- Canutillo ISD
- Comanche ISD
- Fabens ISD
- Garland ISD
- Harlandale ISD
- Hidalgo ISD
- Houston ISD
- Los Fresnos CISD
- Northside ISD
- Spring Branch ISD
- Tyler ISD
- Waco ISD

[Back to Top](#)

Phase II Scale-up districts:

- Aldine ISD
- Alief ISD
- Alvin ISD
- Amarillo ISD
- Athens ISD
- Beaumont ISD
- Carrizo Springs ISD
- Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD
- Corsicana ISD
- El Paso ISD
- Everman ISD
- Fort Bend
- Ft Worth ISD
- Garland ISD
- Grand Prairie ISD
- Houston Gateway Academy
- Houston ISD
- Hurst-Euless Bedord ISD
- Klein ISD
- LaJoya ISD
- Lancaster ISD
- Laredo ISD
- Lewisville ISD
- Little Elm ISD
- Mansfield ISD

Quick Links

- [Español](#)



Marble Falls ISD

- Mesquite ISD
- New Summerfield ISD
- North East ISD
- Northside ISD
- Pflugerville ISD
- Plano ISD
- San Antonio ISD
- Spring Branch ISD
- Uvalde ISD
- West Oso ISD
- Willis ISD

[Back to Top](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) |
[Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)
[History](#)
[Implementation](#)
[Evaluation](#)
[Participants](#)
[Links](#)
[Contacts](#)
[Home](#)

Program Implementation Guide

Implementation Guide

This guide is designed to provide information that should help schools and districts implement the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish in their schools. The content of the guide is based on the wisdom and experiences of the committed teachers and administrators who originally piloted the program in their districts and schools. In early 2004, participants from each of the [original pilot and scale-up sites](#) got together to revise a draft version of this guide so that other educators could benefit from their experience in establishing programs for AP Spanish Language at their middle schools.

While the administrators and teachers in these districts have over the years created successful, now institutionalized programs, they initially experienced the growing pains normal to most fledgling ventures. This guide will help new program staff be aware of potential challenges and address early implementation issues.

[Download the Implementation Guide \(PDF\)](#)
[Link to the Sample Resources](#)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)
[History](#)
[Implementation](#)
[Evaluation](#)
[Participants](#)
[Links](#)
[Contacts](#)
[Home](#)

Program Implementation Resources

Sample Resources

These sample resources—letters, brochures, permission forms, policy documents—were developed by pilot districts as they established their programs. The samples provided are for your use and adaptation.

- [Board Policy Statement](#)
- Credit Policy Memos [1](#), [2](#)
- Program Brochures [1](#), [2](#) (Spanish, English)
- AP Course Description and Contract ([Spanish](#), [English](#))
- Benefits of AP Program ([Spanish](#), [English](#))
- Parent Letter ([Spanish](#), [English](#))
- [Application for Admission to Pre-AP/AP Program](#)
- [Pre-AP/AP Program Expectations and Course Agreement](#) (Spanish, English)
- [Placement Review](#)
- Progression of Spanish Courses [1](#), [2](#)
- [Spanish Language Course Options at Middle School](#)
- [Course Listing Handbook Changes](#)
- [Middle and High School Course Sequences](#)
- [Placement in High School](#)
- [Sample Pre-AP Syllabus](#)
- Sample AP Syllabi [1](#), [2](#)
- [Sample Technology-based Lesson Plans](#)
- [Writing Rubric](#)
- [Teaching Resources](#)
- [Sample Summer Institute Syllabus and Lesson Plan](#)
- [Permission Form to Attend Tutoring Sessions](#) (Spanish)
- Student Survey ([Spanish](#), [English](#))
- [Student Program Questionnaire](#) (English)
- [Parent Program Evaluation](#) (Spanish)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Program Implementation Training

Download Training Materials

Directions for downloading: Click on a link below and choose File-->Save As. Save the file to your computer. Rename the file and customize if necessary.

[Download the *Training of Trainers* Presentation](#) (PowerPoint)

[Download the *Common Questions and Answers* document](#) (Microsoft Word)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Evaluation Plan Format

Download Document

Directions for downloading: Click on a link below and choose File-->Save As. Save the file to your computer. Rename the file and customize if necessary.

[Download the *Evaluation Plan Format*](#)
(Microsoft Word)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

[Program Summary](#)

[History](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Participants](#)

[Links](#)

[Contacts](#)

[Home](#)

Enrolled Student Spreadsheet

Download Document

Directions for downloading: Click on a link below and choose File-->Save As. Save the file to your computer. Rename the file and customize if necessary.

[Download the *Enrolled Student Spreadsheet*](#) (Microsoft Excel)

Quick Links

- [Español](#)

[Program Summary](#) | [History](#) | [Program Implementation](#) | [Evaluation Findings](#) | [Participants](#) | [Links](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Home](#) | [Español](#) | [Site Map](#) | [TEA Web Policy](#) | [TEA Home](#) |

Copyright 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this website.

SAMPLE TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR AP* SPANISH

SEPTEMBER

- Establish your middle school and high schools teams for each participating school
- Identify each team member's responsibilities
- Make sure each team member has a thorough understanding of the program
- Set team meeting schedule
- Register to attend a one-day or two-day AP Overview Conference for LOTE during the fall

OCTOBER

- Outline specifics for the program
- Begin determining budget items
- Begin development of student survey and placement exam or evaluate placement exams available for purchase
- Begin development of student and parent brochures
- Set placement testing on the calendar for February

NOVEMBER

- Finish local development of survey and placement exam or decide which publisher test to purchase
- Plan January parent meeting
- Write generic parent invitation letter
- Complete parent brochure

DECEMBER

- Print surveys, placement exams, and parent brochures
- Outline process as to how surveys will be disseminated
- Outline process for administering placement exams

JANUARY

- Distribute surveys to identify eligible students
- Review surveys and identify possible course candidates
- Hold parent meeting to explain program
- Notify parents their students have been identified for program through survey
- Inform parents of placement testing

FEBRUARY

- Administer placement exams
- Select students for program
- Notify parents and students
- Establish parent/student contract for course if desired
- Register Spanish AP teacher(s) for summer AP institute

MARCH

- Work with counselors on student placement
- Research use of equipment (tape recorders/MP3 players) for testing and determine amount for budget
- Begin planning summer institute – location, transportation, instructional materials, guest speakers, field trips, etc.

APRIL

- Team meeting
- Work with textbook coordinator to order Spanish 4 books – free from the state if district selects from approved list
- Determine additional program materials and instructional materials that the teachers will need, plan for budget, and order instructional materials
- Have all summer institute materials ready for printing

MAY

- Final parent meeting of the year to discuss summer institute, transportation, etc.
- Determine curriculum writing team

JUNE

- Summer Institute
- Curriculum writing – Same as high school with MS age-appropriate activities (District may choose to write curriculum during the school year)

AT FIRST MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF MEETING, ANNOUNCE PROGRAM TO ALL STAFF.

Copyright © 2006 Texas Education Agency

***AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this document.**

TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR AP* SPANISH INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

If a district does not currently have a middle school Spanish program, the district's major budget item would be the salary for the teacher.

Instructional materials and other information available to districts at no charge.

- State adopted Spanish 4 textbooks
- Textbook related website
- TEA website for general LOTE information and TEKS – www.tea.state.tx.us
- Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish website – www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org
- Contact list for networking with other MS AP campuses
- TEA and Region 13 personnel – contact for information
- College Board AP Central website – <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/Controller.jpf>
- Languages other than English Center for Educator Development website – www.sedl.org/loteced
- Other internet resources

Instructional materials available for purchase and recommended by districts which have implemented this program

- *Español para el Hispanohablante* – Contains information in teaching Spanish to Spanish-speakers, sample survey for student selection, and sample placement test. Available through the TEA Publications Division. (one for each team member)
- *Repaso Cuaderno de Gramática y Cultura* (classroom set)
- *Album Libro y Cinta* (classroom set)
- *Entrevistas Introducción al Idioma y Cultura* (classroom set)
- *Composición: Proceso y Síntesis* (classroom set)
- *AP Spanish Language: Preparing for the Language Exam* (classroom set)

Budget for additional resources

- Community guest speakers (honorariums)
- Educational videos
- AP Spanish language consultants (for staff development)
- Tape/CD players, MP3 players, language lab or such similar devices for recording students
- Classroom incidentals

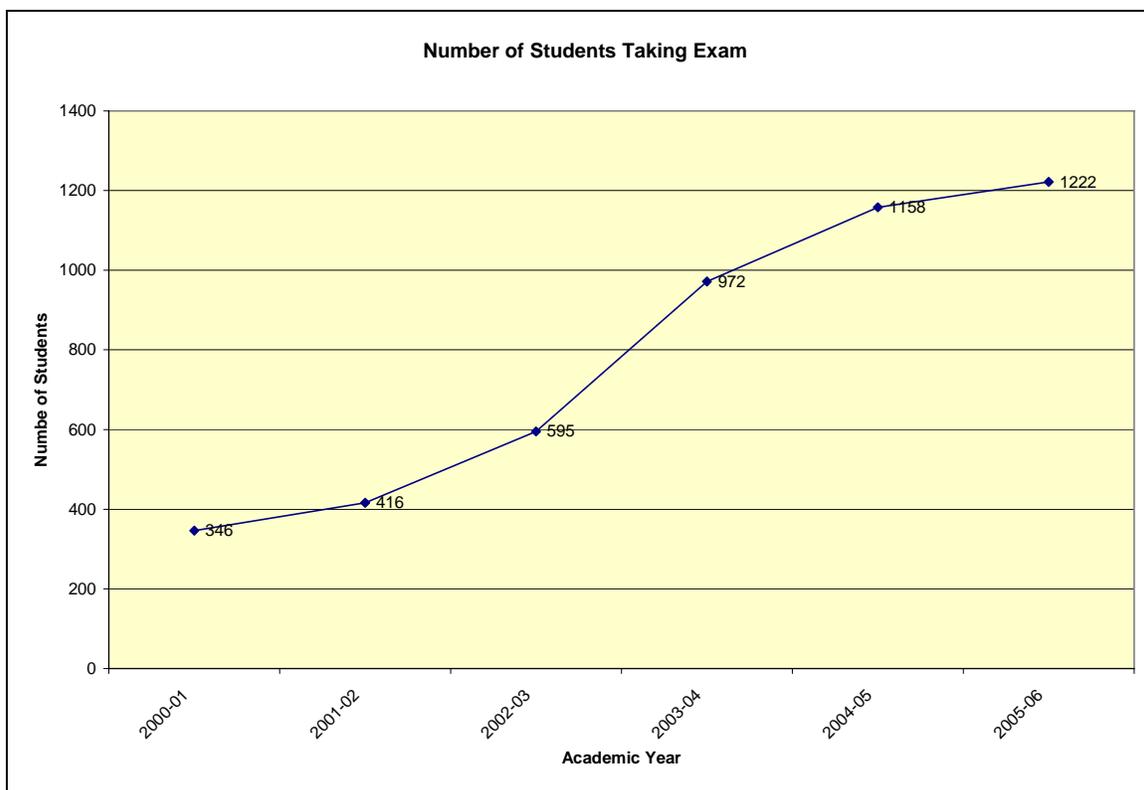
Copyright © 2006 Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this document.

The Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

Program Participation 2000-2006

The first year of the program, 346 participating 8th graders took the AP Spanish Language exam in seven pilot districts. Since then, pilot sites have continued to expand the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish within their districts. An additional 13 sites received grants from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and offered the course in 2003-04. By 2006, over 1,200 Spanish-speaking middle school students participated in the exam in program districts. In 2006-07, with planning grants from TEA, an additional 59 sites implemented the program.



Source: District-reported data

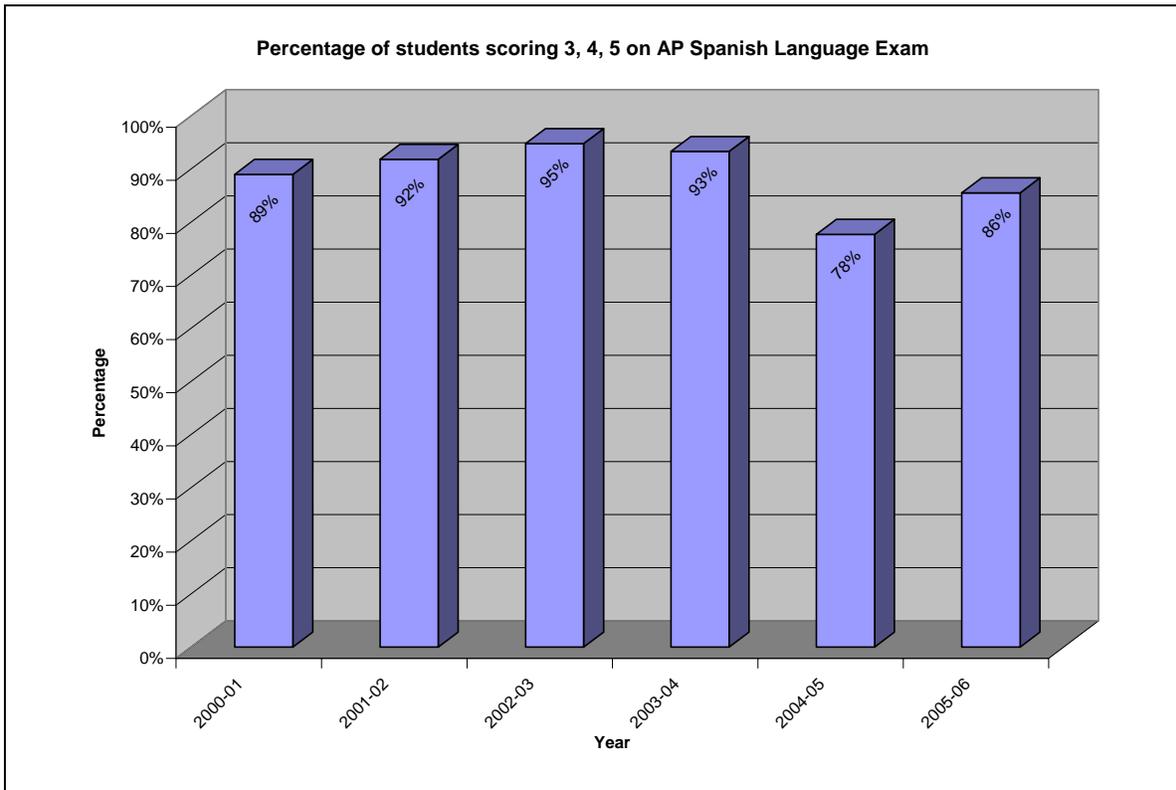
Copyright © 2006 Texas Education Agency

AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this document.

The Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

Program Participation 2000-2006

Demonstrating the program's extraordinary success, each year an overwhelming majority of participating middle school students score high enough on the AP Spanish Language examination to be eligible for college credit.



Source: District-reported data

Copyright © 2006 Texas Education Agency

AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this document.

Executive Summary

Case Studies of Schools Implementing

the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

2003-04

Prepared by

Resources for Learning, LLC

for the

Texas Education Agency

August 2004

© 2004 by the Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this document.

Copyright © Notice. The Materials are copyrighted © and trademarked ™ as the property of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and may not be reproduced without the express written permission of TEA, except under the following conditions:

- 1) Texas public school districts, charter schools, and Education Service Centers may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for the districts' and schools' educational use without obtaining permission from TEA.
- 2) Residents of the state of Texas may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for individual personal use only, without obtaining written permission of TEA.
- 3) Any portion reproduced must be reproduced in its entirety and remain unedited, unaltered and unchanged in any way.
- 4) No monetary charge can be made for the reproduced materials or any document containing them; however, a reasonable charge to cover only the cost of reproduction and distribution may be charged.

Private entities or persons located in Texas that are **not** Texas public school districts, Texas Education Service Centers, or Texas charter schools or any entity, whether public or private, educational or non-educational, located **outside the state of Texas** *MUST* obtain written approval from TEA and will be required to enter into a license agreement that may involve the payment of a licensing fee or a royalty.

For information contact: Office of Copyrights, Trademarks, License Agreements, and Royalties, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701-1494; phone 512-463-7004; email: copyrights@tea.state.tx.us.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2000, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to implement the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish. The program was designed to encourage the teaching of AP Spanish Language at the middle school level for Spanish-speaking students who were also identified as economically disadvantaged. The goal was to promote student success and self-confidence and support student aspirations and preparation for college.

Seven districts piloted the program and established AP Spanish Language courses in 17 middle schools across the state. These pilot districts varied greatly in resources, student population, size, and location. Building on the success of the pilot program, in 2002, TEA applied for additional funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Advanced Placement Incentive Program to expand the project to 13 additional scale-up sites. The campuses selected to participate in the scale-up project received one-year planning grants to lay the groundwork for implementation in the 2003-04 school year.

In April and May of 2004, Resources for Learning, LLC, (RFL), an Austin, Texas-based education consulting company, conducted case studies at three of the scale-up campuses implementing the program. The purpose of the case studies was to gain insight into implementation issues as campuses with differing characteristics worked to establish programs at their schools.

Each case study provides a brief profile of the campus and district and includes data outlining individual campus programs obtained from interviews, student focus groups, and a review of campus program documents. A summary of findings highlights key issues schools and districts might consider carefully as they work to create and implement similar programs for their students.

Study Sites

TEA program staff selected case study sites to represent different geographic locations across the state as well as a variety of campus types and sizes. The campus sites chosen for the case study were located in a rural school district (School 1), a suburban school district in a major urban area (School 2), and a school in a central Texas city (School 3).

TEA classifies School 1's district as Non-Metro: Stable—districts that have a number of students in membership that exceeds the state median but do not meet the criteria for Urban, Suburban, Central City, Independent Town, or Non-Metro: Fast Growing.¹

School 2's district is classified as Major Urban—districts that serve the state's six metropolitan areas. Major urban districts are districts with the greatest membership in

¹ The Texas Education Agency classifies districts as “community types” ranging from Major Urban to Rural based on factors such as size, growth rates, student economic status, and proximity to urban areas. Source: *Snapshot 2002—2001-02 School District Profiles published by the Texas Education Agency and available on the web at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/snapshot/2002/pdf/snap02.pdf>*

counties with populations of 650,000 or more and more than 35% of the students are identified as economically disadvantaged.

School 3's district is classified as Other Central City—a major school district in a large, but not major, Texas city. These districts are usually the largest districts in counties with populations between 100,000 and 650,000 and are not contiguous to any major urban districts.

Methodology

An RFL researcher visited each selected campus for two days to conduct interviews and focus groups with staff and students and to obtain relevant documentation.

Interviews. The researcher conducted interviews at each campus with key individuals involved with the program. Participants at each campus were identified in advance with the assistance of school and district personnel and included principals, AP Spanish teachers, middle school counselors, and students enrolled in the AP Spanish Language classes. Other individuals interviewed varied from site to site depending upon their involvement in the program. The researcher conducted 19 individual interviews during the three site visits using interview guides with structured, open-ended questions. Separate interview questions were created for administrators and teachers, and interviews were usually one hour in length. The researcher recorded interviews manually and through audio recording. Audiotapes of selected interviews were transcribed; however manual field notes served as the primary data record used for analysis.

Focus groups. Focus group sessions at each campus involved three to five students (12 students total were interviewed), and each student provided a parental and individual consent form. The focus groups were taped, were approximately one hour in length, and were conducted around tables with everyone seated facing each other to facilitate conversation.

Document review. School and district staff provided relevant documentation—program brochures, copies of board policies, parent meeting information, and newspaper articles—about program activities at each of the case study sites. Documentation clarified information gained from interviews and corroborated the researcher's understanding of local policies and procedures.

Site Summaries

School 1 is in a rural district serving a small student population and an even smaller Hispanic student group. The school had difficulty finding a teacher to teach the course and did not have a well-developed Spanish program at either the middle or high school. They selected a first-year teacher to lead the AP course who enjoyed a close rapport with the high school Spanish teacher, and who, despite the challenge of teaching the AP course in her first year of teaching, found the overall experience rich and rewarding. All of the district's first class of students received a passing score on the AP exam making them eligible for college credit at most colleges and universities. Parent involvement in the program at School 1 was high. A major strategy used to reach out to parents was

inviting them to parent meetings of the Future Hispanic Leaders of American chapter at the district high school.

School 2, located in an affluent suburb of a major urban area, serves a high percentage of Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students with a high mobility rate. The school started with a strong Spanish program and a large pool of eligible students, but it experienced difficulty with teacher motivation and parent involvement. The program benefited, however, from an extremely involved and dedicated program team comprised of a campus counselor and assistant principal with interest and support from the campus principal. All participating students in the first year of the program at School 2 scored a 3, 4, or 5 on the AP Spanish Language exam. A major benefit reported by program staff was the improved English skills of recent immigrant students who participated in the program.

Despite having an inexperienced teacher with a district-level permit, students in School 3's program performed well on the AP Spanish Language examination with all but one student scoring 3 or better on the exam. The school's program benefited from the experience of another campus in the district that had implemented the program previously, from district-wide commitment and administrative support for the program, and from strong parental involvement.

Findings

Despite the differences between the case study campuses, there were a few findings that bridged all implementation efforts.

- Teacher experience does not seem to be a precondition for program success.
- Program staff often sought input from other academic staff in determining credit policy for the course.
- Program staff supported regular meetings between middle and high school teachers as a primary strategy for curriculum alignment.
- A strong Spanish curriculum and/or tradition of offering AP Spanish in the district did not appear to be pre-conditions for program success. Rather, an expanded and aligned Spanish program at both the middle and high school levels resulted from participation in the AP Spanish Language program at the middle school.
- Increased interest in the Spanish program at both levels was also a consistent outcome at all the sites.
- The course requires a great deal of time and dedication from both students and teachers, and burnout is a potential challenge.
- A strong program team and the enthusiastic involvement of administrators in program implementation can overcome challenges, such as teacher inexperience or a lack of resources at the campus or district level.
- Case study campuses planned to continue and expand their programs with significant interest in the program from other middle schools in their districts.

Findings in terms of key areas of implementation are as follows.

Teacher selection. Some case study schools reported that they had difficulty finding Spanish teachers in general and had to assign teachers with little to no teaching experience to teach the challenging AP course. It does not appear, however, that teacher inexperience inhibited program success.

Student identification, recruitment, and selection. Campuses used myriad approaches in the identification and selection of students for enrollment in the AP course. These methods included home language surveys, student interest, proficiency tests, teacher input, and state test scores. While one district recruited students at an assembly of 200 Spanish-speaking students, another campus that served a relatively small Spanish-speaking student population conducted one-on-one interviews and counseling with prospective students. Some sites used the student identification process to also identify sixth and seventh graders for Pre-AP courses offered at the campus.

Policy development. At one site, campus policy related to the awarding of high school credit for a middle school course was determined at a meeting between the principals of the middle and high school. Another school used existing policy about AP credits and GPA where appropriate. Another sought recommendations from a range of other school staff to create official policy relating to credit for the course. In most cases, recommendations were subsequently sent to district committees and school boards for review and final approval.

Curriculum alignment. A strong Spanish curriculum and/or a tradition of offering AP Spanish were not pre-conditions for program success. In fact, an expanded and aligned Spanish program at both the middle and high school levels seemed to be a consistent outcome of implementing the program at the middle school. For example, case study sites that previously had limited Spanish offering are now offering a full sequence of courses for both native and non-native speakers.

To accomplish curriculum alignment, regular meetings and extended cooperation between middle and high school teachers was the common strategy. Teachers also seemed to benefit from the teacher-to-teacher support.

Parental involvement. Sites experienced a range of parent involvement in implementation from “standing room only” at program meetings to less participation than was expected or desired. Staff at all the campuses felt that parents, many of whom are new to the country or who have had limited educational opportunities themselves, support or approve of the program because they want success for their children. Strategies for initiating parental involvement included invitations to events conducted in Spanish, course-related festivities, college awareness sessions, and inclusion as chaperones on class field trips.

Supplemental activities. Common activities offered to complement the course included field trips (which seemed very important to students) and community service activities such as tutoring for community members who were learning English or Spanish. Formal

after-school tutoring and Saturday sessions to complete work from both the AP course and students' other classes were also a common program feature.

Challenges and benefits. Participants often cited the amount of work required of both teachers and students to teach and take the course as a common challenge. "I studied every night like they did," said one beginning teacher assigned to teach the course in her first year of teaching. Due to the rigor of the course, student motivation and burnout were common. Understanding the AP exam administration process was another oft-cited issue.

Chief among the reported benefits at the case study sites were the credit provided by the course; the incentive for students to take more advanced courses; the expanded Spanish curriculum and broadened interest in the Spanish program; the transfer of skills learned in the AP Spanish course to English, especially for recent immigrants; and increased self-confidence, interest in academic performance, and enhanced "status" of participating students among their peers.



The Texas Education Agency's

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish Summary of Success

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this brochure.



*“It helped me make better choices
that will affect my future.”*



THE GOAL of the

Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish

is to support academic achievement and

COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS for

a growing population of **TEXAS STUDENTS**

currently **UNDERREPRESENTED**

in **HIGHER EDUCATION.**

THE TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR AP SPANISH is designed to encourage the teaching of the AP Spanish Language course at the middle school level for students whose heritage language is Spanish. The purpose of the program is to use these students' first language as an academic asset to boost student success, promote self confidence, and support aspirations and preparation for college.



Program Description

The program is simple and easy to implement. It builds on student strengths and promotes academic achievement. Since its inception in 2000, the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish has positively impacted the early academic success and educational aspirations of one of the state's largest underserved school populations.

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish grew out of an initiative of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Advanced Placement Incentive Program. The middle school program was originally piloted in seven school districts across the state in 2000. A scale-up effort in 2003 included replication of the program in 12 additional districts. In 2005, TEA awarded program planning grants to another 59 campuses across the state to implement the program in the 2006–07 school year.

The program can
be established and
sustained without
extensive funding or
infrastructure.

Texas has a growing population of Hispanic public school students—many of whom will have learned Spanish at home as a first language. We have an opportunity to design school programs and academic options aligned with the knowledge and skills these students will bring to school.





“I received college hours so I decided that maybe I could do well in college.”

Summary of Success

Demonstrating the program's extraordinary success, each year an overwhelming majority of participating middle school students score high enough on the AP Spanish Language examination to be eligible for college credit.

In addition, a program evaluation confirmed reports from district staff that participating students demonstrated:

- increased confidence in themselves and in their academic abilities;
- improved skills and knowledge that transfer to other test-taking experiences, including the state testing program;
- increased enrollment in AP courses in high school; and
- enhanced perceptions of college as an attainable, realistic goal.

Parents of participating students also became more involved in school, and teachers involved in the project felt rejuvenated and more motivated in the classroom.

“Most of my students start out thinking that . . . college is a dream. . . . Teaching AP Spanish is a joy, teaching my students how to go that extra mile . . . putting them closer to college is very satisfying.”



PROGRAM IMPACTS

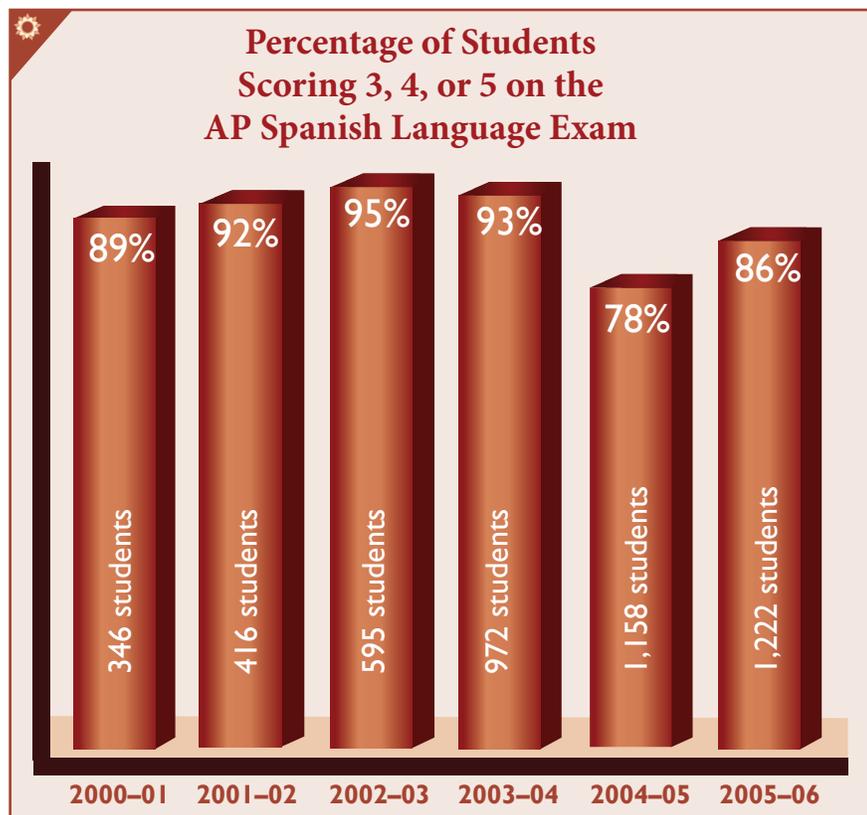
Findings from the program evaluation suggest that participation could impact performance on state tests. The evaluation also indicates that participating students take more advanced courses in high school, including AP English, and graduate with distinction at a higher rate than their peers.*

Participating students—many of whom are still learning English—achieved the same or better scores on state examinations in high school than their peers, especially in reading/English language arts.

*Peer groups used in the study consisted of Hispanic, Spanish-speaking students in the same grade at the same campuses as program participants. A complete report of evaluation findings is available from the Texas Education Agency.

PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY TO EARN COLLEGE CREDIT

EACH YEAR, THE MAJORITY OF PARTICIPATING 8TH GRADERS EARN A 3, 4, OR 5 ON THE AP SPANISH LANGUAGE EXAM MAKING THEM ELIGIBLE FOR COLLEGE CREDIT.



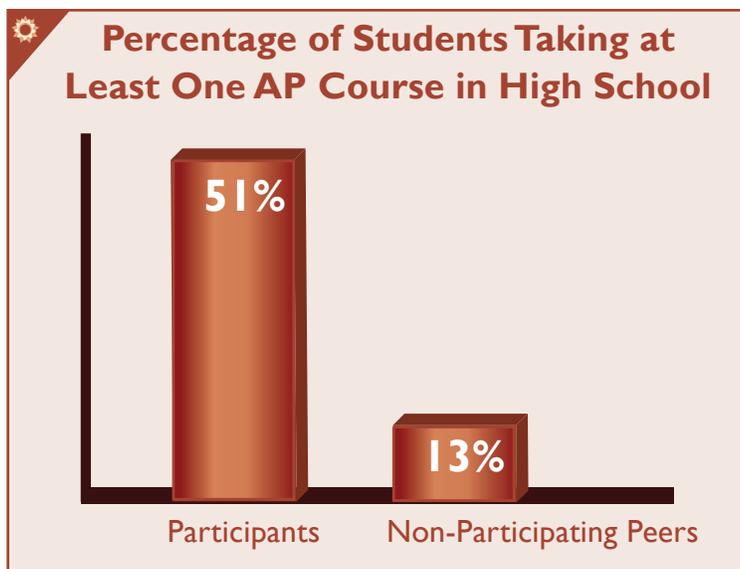
Source: District-reported data

ENCOURAGES ADVANCED COURSE TAKING IN HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM ARE MORE LIKELY THAN THEIR PEERS TO COMPLETE ONE OR MORE **AP** COURSES IN HIGH SCHOOL.

Fifty-one percent (51%) of students who participated in the first year of the program took at least one **AP** class in high school compared to 13% of their peers.

Students who participate in the program also are more likely than their peers to complete the **AP** course in English Language and Composition in high school.

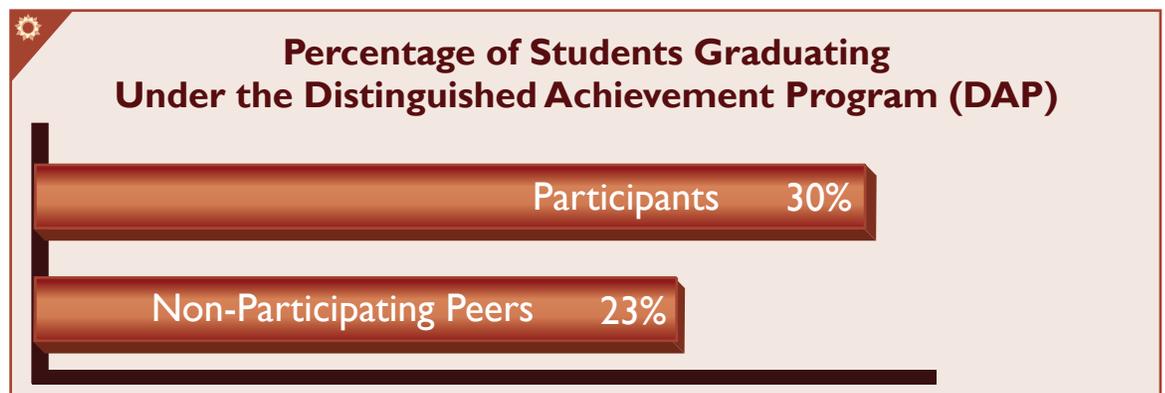


PROMOTES GRADUATION UNDER THE DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS GRADUATE EARLY OR GRADUATE UNDER THE STATE'S MOST RIGOROUS GRADUATION PLAN—THE DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM—AT A HIGHER RATE THAN THEIR PEERS.

Seven percent (7%) of students who participated in the first two years of the program graduated early compared to 2% of their peers.

Over 30% of participants in the first year of the program graduated under the Distinguished Achievement Program compared to 23% of their non-participating peers.



Source: Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)



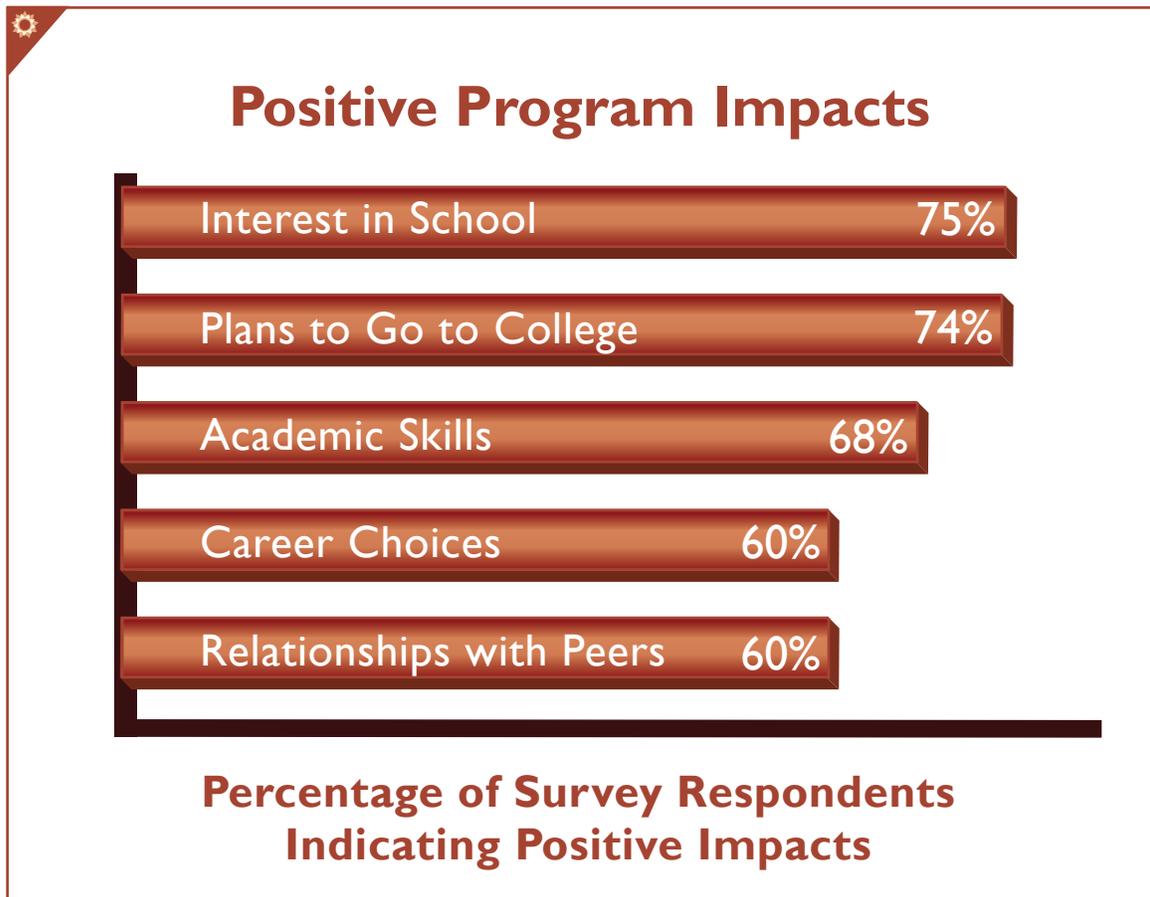
“It showed me I was capable of passing any class I wanted.”



Student Perceptions

In surveys of program participants, students reported increased interest and involvement in school and higher confidence and motivation levels as a result of taking the 8th-grade AP Spanish course. Students also said higher expectations, dedication to working hard, and language development helped them to improve their academic skills. The program also improved their relationships with teachers and other students and broadened student perspectives on career opportunities.

“I became more focused on my grades at school.”



Source: Surveys of students who participated in the program in 2001–02.

“Taking the class helped me to advance, which led me to meet other [students] with higher academic skills.”



INCREASES FOCUS ON ACADEMICS AND THE FUTURE

Students reported positive impacts on their academic lives. Surveyed students perceived program participation to have positively affected their interest in school, plans to go to college, and academic skills.

Research shows exposure to the skills and values associated with high achievement has a significant influence on student engagement and success in school.

IMPROVES RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEACHERS AND OTHER STUDENTS

Survey data indicates that participation in the program improves student-to-teacher and student-to-student relationships. This finding suggests that the program helps build some of the social scaffolding in school that research shows supports the academic success of low-income, language-minority students.

“I think [teachers] realized I was trying hard; they appreciated it.”

BUILDS STUDENT CONFIDENCE AND MOTIVATION

Participants reported they felt more capable, confident, and motivated and wanted to “do better” in school because they were encouraged and supported.

ENCOURAGES HIGH EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

The majority of survey respondents aspired to advanced degrees and planned to go to college immediately after high school. Approximately 25% felt they would finish a four- or five-year college degree, 20% identified a master’s degree or equivalent as a target, and 30% of respondents indicated they hoped to obtain a PhD, MD, or other advanced degree.

Numerous studies suggest that providing higher level instruction and a rigorous curriculum enhances the performance of all students, especially those who have not previously demonstrated high academic achievement.



VALIDATES THE IMPORTANCE OF BILINGUAL SKILLS

Surveyed students valued the development of their bilingual skills, especially in terms of future careers.



*“Being bilingual gives me many
career choices.”*



PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS HAVE BUILT A PARENT COMMUNITY AROUND THE PROGRAM, SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGING SPANISH-SPEAKING FAMILIES IN PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.

“We have 100% support from [parents]. . . . They are now taking ownership of the route that their children are going to be taking in high school.”

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish is relatively easy to implement, sustainable once established, and replicable in diverse school communities.

To Find Out More

Visit the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish website at
www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org

or contact

Texas Education Agency
Division of Curriculum
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us





“Now I know I can.”

Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish

Evaluation of the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish
Executive Summary

February 2007

© Texas Education Agency 2007

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this report.

CREDITS

Resources for Learning, LLC

Resources for Learning (RFL) specializes in the development, implementation, and evaluation of standards-based reforms in education. RFL works with state and regional education agencies; universities, districts, and campuses; and other entities engaged in the education of young people.

For additional information about RFL research, please contact:

Linda Wurzbach, President
Resources for Learning, LLC
206 Wild Basin Road
Building A, Suite 103
Austin, TX 78746
Phone: 512-327-8576
Fax: 512-327-8577
www.resourcesforlearning.net

This report is available at www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org

Contributors

Tracy Laughlin, MFA
Judy Jennings, PhD
Ali Callicoatte Picucci, MA
Lorena Lopez-Gonzalez, PhD
Linda Wurzbach, MEd
Dorian Martin, BA
Emily Sartain, BA

Prepared For

Advanced Academics Unit
Division of Curriculum
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701-1494
Phone: 512-463-9581

Research Funded By

Texas Education Agency

Copyright © Notice The materials are copyrighted © and trademarked ™ as the property of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and may not be reproduced without the express written permission of TEA, except under the following conditions:

1. Texas public school districts, charter schools, and Education Service Centers may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for the districts' and schools' educational use without obtaining permission from TEA.
2. Residents of the state of Texas may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for individual personal use only without obtaining written permission of TEA.
3. Any portion reproduced must be reproduced in its entirety and remain unedited, unaltered and unchanged in any way.
4. No monetary charge can be made for the reproduced materials or any document containing them; however, a reasonable charge to cover only the cost of reproduction and distribution may be charged.

Private entities or persons located in Texas that are not Texas public school districts, Texas Education Service Centers, or Texas charter schools or any entity, whether public or private, educational or non-educational, located outside the state of Texas MUST obtain written approval from TEA and will be required to enter into a license agreement that may involve the payment of a licensing fee or a royalty. For information contact: Office of Copyrights, Trademarks, License Agreements, and Royalties, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701-1494; phone 512-463-9270 or 512-936-6060; email: copyrights@tea.state.tx.us.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The state demographer of Texas predicts that by the year 2040 approximately 66% of public elementary and secondary students in Texas will be Hispanic (Murdock, 2006). While not all of these students will speak Spanish as a first language, increases of over 180% in the demand for programs serving English language learners are projected by 2040. In addition to possible language barriers, the low-income status of many of these students will present further challenges to their potential for academic success. Driscoll (1999) found that family income is one of the key contributors to high school graduation.

A broad base of research points to structural inhibitors such as the practices of schools that limit the academic success of poor and minority students. Because many of these students are enrolled in low-resource schools and/or are trapped in remedial programs or non-college preparatory classes, they do not always have access to the “opportunity” infrastructure of schools (Conchas, 2001). Numerous studies suggest that providing higher level instruction and a rigorous curriculum enhances the performance of all students, especially those who have not previously demonstrated high academic achievement (Learning Point Associates, 2004). Expectations regarding a student’s academic potential and exposure to the skills and values associated with high achievement have also been shown to have a significant influence on student engagement and success in school (American Educational Research Association, 2004; Learning Point Associates, 2004).

This report provides information on the evaluation of a program developed and piloted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) designed to promote the academic success of low-income, Spanish-speaking students.

Program History

With a grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s (USDE) Advanced Placement Incentive (API) program, TEA established the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish¹ in 2000. The project was designed to encourage the teaching of the AP Spanish Language course at the middle school level for students whose home language was Spanish and who were identified as economically disadvantaged. The goal was to use these students’ first language as an academic asset to boost student academic success, promote self-confidence in school, and support aspirations and preparation for college.

Seven school districts broadly representing most regions of the state piloted the program in the 2000–01 school year. With another grant from API, in 2002 TEA supported the replication of the program at 13 additional scale-up sites across the state. In March 2005, TEA seeded a statewide expansion of the program with planning grants to an additional 59 sites.

Study Overview

In 2005, the Advanced Academics Unit of the Division of Curriculum at TEA contracted with Resources for Learning, LLC (RFL), to conduct an evaluation of the longer term impacts

¹ *AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this report.

associated with participation by low-income, Spanish-speaking eighth graders in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. Participating students consistently performed well on the AP Spanish Language examination, and, in addition, anecdotal reports from staff at the pilot and scale-up sites suggested that as a result of participation, student absenteeism and disciplinary infractions declined; students' overall grades improved; and upon entering high school, students enrolled in more advanced classes and performed better on state tests than students from this population typically did. This study was designed to investigate these claims. Because a primary focus of the study is the long-term outcomes of program participation, analysis focused primarily on the pilot program, which began in 2000.

The purpose of this evaluation was to

- identify relationships between program participation for students participating in the program at the pilot campuses and long-term, school-related student outcomes;²
- document student perceptions of impacts; and
- provide ongoing statewide program implementation information and statistics related to participation and performance that could inform the future of the program.

Evaluation Questions

1. Did students who participated in the program have higher attendance rates in high school than their non-participant peers?
2. Did students who participated in the program perform better on state tests in high school than their non-participant peers?
3. Did students who participated in the program complete AP courses in high school in higher numbers and at a higher rate than their non-participant peers?
4. How did students who participated in the program perform on AP exams in high school?
5. Did students who participated in the program graduate early or on the Distinguished Achievement Plan at a higher rate than their non-participant peers?
6. Did students who participated in the program feel the program impacted them positively in terms of academics, future opportunities, and relationships?
7. What are some issues that are likely to impact the program in the future?

Participants

The evaluation focused on data for three cohorts of students at the pilot campuses, those who participated in the program in 2000–01 (346 students), those who participated in 2001–02 (416 students), and those who participated in 2002–03 (595 students). Participating districts provided student identification information. The study also included peer groups composed of all other Hispanic, Spanish-speaking students at the same campuses in seventh grade who did not participate in the program and who had a Grade 7 score on the state assessment. This allowed evaluators to compare the outcomes for participating students to school averages for the group of students who were very similar demographically.

² It should be noted that discipline-related outcomes were excluded from the evaluation design due to the unreliability and variability of discipline-related data primarily because of inconsistency in reporting by school districts.

Methods

Data collection methods included requests for student identification and AP exam performance information from pilot districts. Data on student outcomes were collected from the appropriate divisions at TEA. Surveys were administered at pilot campuses by local coordinators, and the evaluators conducted a document review of program information. Data on student performance on the AP Spanish Language exam were collected from both the pilot districts and the scale-up districts and College Board score distribution reports provided by TEA.

Student Data

Based on the student identification information provided by districts, the evaluators requested student performance data on the student assessment required by the State of Texas during the years of the study. Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) data for the years 1999–2002 and Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) data for subsequent years were requested from the Student Assessment Division of TEA. Data on student characteristics, attendance, course taking, and graduation were requested from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Division of TEA.

For the analysis of participating student characteristics and long-term outcomes (attendance, TAKS performance, AP course taking, and graduation), participant group data were compared to peer group data. In those outcome areas for which a test of statistical significance was appropriate, i.e., where a prior-year value (attendance, TAKS performance) was available, additional comparisons were conducted with similarly sized subsets of the peer groups so that difference in group size did not affect the results of the statistical testing. Regression analyses adjusted for previous performance in these areas.

Surveys

Surveys were used to assess student perceptions of program impacts, including perceived changes in academic performance, relationships at school, college expectations and aspirations, and plans for the future. Through PEIMS data received from TEA, the evaluators identified students who participated in Year 2 of the program who were still enrolled in the district and attending high school. A total of 230 students were identified for participation. Surveys were sent to local program coordinators for administration in Winter/Spring 2006, and 111 surveys were returned for a response rate of 48%. Surveys included items extracted from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) and the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS).³ Survey questions selected from these instruments were primarily related to academics and future plans. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze survey data.

³ The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) is a representative study that explores the causes of health-related behaviors of adolescents in grades 7 through 12 and their outcomes in young adulthood. Add Health seeks to examine how social contexts (families, friends, peers, schools, neighborhoods, and communities) influence adolescents' health and risk behaviors. For more information, see <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth>. The National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS 88) is a major longitudinal effort by the National Center for Education Statistics designed to provide trend data about critical transitions experienced by students as they leave middle or junior high school and progress through high school and into postsecondary institutions or the work force. For more information, see <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/nels88/>.

Program Data

This portion of the evaluation included historical, district-reported program participation and exam performance information from both the pilot and scale-up sites, College Board score distribution reports provided by TEA, and progress reports to TEA from the 59 sites receiving planning grants. Descriptive statistics were used to report information on program participation and examination performance.

Study Limitations

The evaluation was dependent on district provision of student identification numbers. This data was incomplete and/or irregular in some cases, so the group identified for inclusion in the evaluation was smaller than the originally reported participant group. Also, little is known about the initial grant awards and requirements or local program development and decision-making processes. Thus, this investigation does not benefit from information about local circumstances at the time of participation that can be linked to students, including local context, selection processes for student participation, or differentiation in services provided. Because all of these factors could have influenced the long-term outcomes, it is important to recognize that the evaluation describes trends overall that are likely attributable to program participation but that are subject to considerable variation at the local level. Analysis of characteristics of participating students indicates that participating districts were more selective in identifying students for participation in the program in the first year of implementation than in Years 2 and 3, particularly in terms of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status and prior performance on state examinations. The evaluation methodology was designed to control for prior performance issues that could have influenced long-term, school-related outcomes for participants. However, other factors could have come into play, the identification and measurement of which were beyond the scope of the evaluation. Finally, the first group of students participating in the program (Participant Group 1) was the only group for which complete data on course taking and graduation through Grade 12 were available. Most findings for Participant Group 1 were substantiated by analysis of data for students who participated in the second year of the program (Participant Group 2). While Participant Group 2 was more representative of the target group (low-income, Spanish-speaking students), data were only available through 11th grade, so findings should be read with these circumstances in mind. Survey data might also contain positive bias. Other limitations with specific data are discussed in the relevant chapters of this report.

Summary of Findings

Characteristics of Participants

- In the pilot year of the program, while the participant group reflected the economic status of its peer group, grantees appeared to be selective in identifying higher performing students (as measured by prior performance on state examinations) and fewer Limited English Proficient (LEP) students to participate.
- Overall, in the second and third years of the pilot program, eighth-grade students enrolled in the program tended to be more representative of their Hispanic, Spanish-speaking peers.
- In Years 2 and 3, in comparison with peer groups, the program served a higher percentage of “LEP exempt” students who were identified for exemption on statewide examinations.

- Schools/districts tended to select more females than males for participation in the program.

Relationships Between Program Participation and Long-Term, School-Related Student Outcomes

- Data do not suggest that attendance over the long term is impacted by program participation.
- It is possible that program participation positively impacts TAKS performance in reading/English language arts.
- Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to complete one or more AP courses in high school.
- Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to complete an AP course in English Language and Composition in high school.
- The most frequently taken AP examinations in high school by participating students were English Language and Composition, U.S. History, AP Spanish Literature and Composition, English Literature and Composition, and Calculus AB.
- Information on AP exam performance by participants in high school was limited, but data suggest that participating students as a group do not perform well on AP exams in high school in subject areas other than Spanish.
- Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to graduate early and/or graduate under the Distinguished Achievement Program.

Student Perceptions of Program Impacts

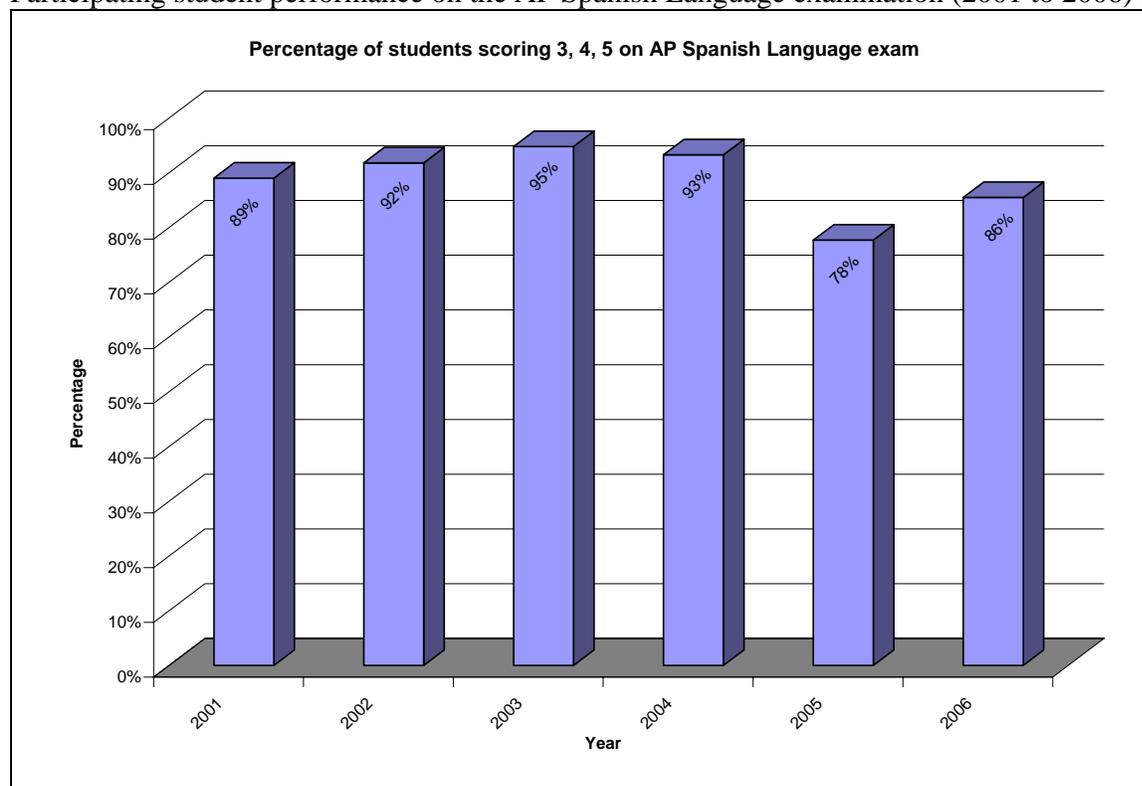
- The majority of students reported positive impacts on their academic lives.
- Relationships and career awareness represented other areas in which students were positively impacted.
- Students did not perceive English language skills or relationships with counselors to be areas of high positive impact.
- The majority of participating students aspired to advanced degrees.

Trends and Issues With Potential Future Implications

- Schools and districts implementing the program tended to continue and expand the program at the original campuses and at additional campuses in the district.
- Program growth was most consistent in districts serving a majority Hispanic student population.

- The majority of participating eighth graders earned a 3, 4, or 5 on the AP Spanish Language examination making them eligible for college credit.

Participating student performance on the AP Spanish Language examination (2001 to 2006)



Source. District-reported data

- Changes to the exam format could impact student performance.
- Statewide participation in the program should increase in 2006–07 to approximately 2,000 students with new program implementation at an additional 59 campuses.

Conclusions

- Schools and/or districts tended to be more selective in program enrollment the initial program pilot year. Student participants were less representative of their Hispanic, Spanish-speaking peers and most were already higher performing students (in terms of performance on state assessments). In subsequent years, sites tended to open up enrollment to a broader group of students that was more representative of the eligible pool of Spanish-speaking students on their campuses. Findings from Year 1, when districts were more selective, were generally supported by Year 2 findings, when selection was more representative.
- Data suggest that participating students performed better in high school reading TAKS than their peers.

- Participating students took more advanced courses (specifically AP courses) in high school than their peers and graduated early and/or having met requirements for the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP).
- Survey data indicate that student self-confidence and motivation and academic self-image were positively affected by program participation.
- Survey data indicating that participation in the program improved student-to-student and student-to-teacher relationships suggests that the program helps to build some of the social scaffolding in school that research suggests supports the academic success of low-income, language-minority students.
- Enhanced bilingual skills are of value to participating students on a variety of levels.
- Only about a third of survey respondents reported participation in college preparatory programs. Further, limited data suggesting poor performance on AP exams by participants could be indicative of underpreparedness for the rigors of college. This is important as survey data indicate many participants plan to pursue advanced degrees at four-year colleges and universities.
- Overall, data indicate that the program is sustainable once established and is replicable both within districts and across a range of types of school communities.
- Eighth-grade participants consistently scored well on the AP Spanish Language examination. The drop of 15% in exam scores of 3 or better associated with changes to the exam in 2005 has possible future implications. With changes expected to the 2007 exam, teachers at the existing program sites need to be made aware of exam changes and adjust their strategies to better prepare their students for success.
- Finally, while this study has shown some interesting preliminary findings about the possible impacts of the program on participating students broadly speaking, it also has raised some provocative questions about the context for the program at individual schools and the impacts on individual participants or types of participants.

Recommendations

- The Texas Education Agency (TEA) should investigate ways to support programs that provide continued support to participating students as they move into high school including integration with established programs that promote college readiness for students underrepresented in higher education.
- TEA should investigate ways to provide ongoing or periodic supplemental training or support a network for AP teachers in existing middle school programs to keep them up-to-date with course and exam requirements.
- TEA should investigate funding sources or establish partnerships to continue the program and support for schools offering it.

- TEA should support continued research on program approaches and impacts to identify best practices in local program implementation and develop a greater understanding of the impacts on individual students and different types of student groups.

References

- American Educational Research Association. (2004). Closing the gap: High achievement for students of color. *Research Points: Essential Information for Education Policy*, 2(3).
- Conchas, G. (2001). Structuring failure and success: Understanding the variability in Latino school engagement. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(3), 475-504.
- Driscoll, A. K. (1999). Risk of high school dropout among immigrant and native Hispanic youth. *International Migration Review*, 33(4), 857-75.
- Learning Point Associates. (2004). *All students reaching the top: Strategies for closing the achievement gap*. Naperville, IL: Author.
- Murdock, S. H. (2006, July 7). *Population change in Texas: Implications for human and socioeconomic resources in the 21st century*. Presentation to the Texas State Board of Education. Retrieved February 2, 2007, from http://txsdc.utsa.edu/download/pdf/presentations/2006_07_07_State_Board_of_Education_Austin.pdf

Evaluation of the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish
Full Report

February 2007

© Texas Education Agency 2007

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this report.

CREDITS

Resources for Learning, LLC

Resources for Learning (RFL) specializes in the development, implementation, and evaluation of standards-based reforms in education. RFL works with state and regional education agencies; universities, districts, and campuses; and other entities engaged in the education of young people.

For additional information about RFL research, please contact:

Linda Wurzbach, President
Resources for Learning, LLC
206 Wild Basin Road
Building A, Suite 103
Austin, TX 78746
Phone: 512-327-8576
Fax: 512-327-8577
www.resourcesforlearning.net

This report is available at www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org

Contributors

Tracy Laughlin, MFA
Judy Jennings, PhD
Ali Callicoatte Picucci, MA
Lorena Lopez-Gonzalez, PhD
Linda Wurzbach, MEd
Dorian Martin, BA
Emily Sartain, BA

Prepared For

Advanced Academics Unit
Division of Curriculum
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701-1494
Phone: 512-463-9581

Copyright © Notice The materials are copyrighted © and trademarked ™ as the property of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and may not be reproduced without the express written permission of TEA, except under the following conditions:

- 1) Texas public school districts, charter schools, and Education Service Centers may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for the districts' and schools' educational use without obtaining permission from TEA.
- 2) Residents of the state of Texas may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for individual personal use only without obtaining written permission of TEA.
- 3) Any portion reproduced must be reproduced in its entirety and remain unedited, unaltered and unchanged in any way.
- 4) No monetary charge can be made for the reproduced materials or any document containing them; however, a reasonable charge to cover only the cost of reproduction and distribution may be charged.

Private entities or persons located in Texas that are **not** Texas public school districts, Texas Education Service Centers, or Texas charter schools or any entity, whether public or private, educational or non-educational, located **outside the state of Texas** *MUST* obtain written approval from TEA and will be required to enter into a license agreement that may involve the payment of a licensing fee or a royalty. For information contact: Office of Copyrights, Trademarks, License Agreements, and Royalties, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701-1494; phone 512-463-9270 or 512-936-6060; email: copyrights@tea.state.tx.us.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary _____	1
Introduction _____	1
Program History _____	1
Study Overview _____	2
Evaluation Questions _____	2
Participants _____	2
Methods _____	3
Study Limitations _____	4
Summary of Findings _____	4
Conclusions _____	6
Recommendations _____	7
Chapter 1: Introduction and Project Background _____	8
Context _____	8
History _____	9
References _____	15
Chapter 2: Study Approach and Methodology _____	16
Evaluation Questions _____	16
Participants _____	17
Evaluation Scope and Period of Analysis _____	19
Methods _____	19
Limitations _____	24
Terminology _____	26
Chapter 3: Characteristics of Participating Students _____	27
Economic Status _____	28
Limited English Proficiency Status _____	28
Prior Performance on State Tests _____	29
Gender _____	29
Chapter 4: Relationships Between Program Participation and Long-Term, School-Related Student Outcomes _____	31
Attendance _____	31
Performance on State Tests _____	32
AP Course Taking _____	34
Performance on AP Exams in High School _____	37
Chapter 5: Student Perceptions of Program Impacts _____	40
Academic Profiles of Survey Respondents _____	40
Reported Impacts of Participation _____	43
Future Objectives _____	48

Chapter 6: Trends and Issues With Potential Future Implications for the Program _____	50
Participation and Expansion Trends and Projections _____	50
Student Exam Performance and Changes in the AP Spanish Language Exam _____	53
Chapter 7: Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations ____	55
Summary of Findings _____	55
Conclusions _____	59
Recommendations _____	61
Appendix A: 2005 Expansion Program Grantees _____	63
Appendix B: Survey _____	67

TABLE OF TABLES

Chapter 1: Introduction and Project Background	
Table 1.1. Pilot district profiles (2000–01)	10
Table 1.2. Scale-up district profiles (2003–04)	13
Chapter 2: Study Approach and Methodology	
Table 2.1. Comparison of AP exam scores between cohorts and participant groups	18
Table 2.2. Numbers of students in participant, peer, and subset groups used for regression analysis	19
Table 2.3. Survey responses	24
Chapter 3: Characteristics of Participating Students	
Table 3.1. Economic status of participating students compared to peers	28
Table 3.2. LEP status of participating students compared to peers	28
Table 3.3. Participants and peers identified for LEP exemptions on state examination	29
Table 3.4. Prior-year test scores	29
Table 3.5. Gender of participating students compared to peers	30
Chapter 4: Relationships Between Program Participation and Long-Term, School-Related Student Outcomes	
Table 4.1. High school attendance rates of participant, peer, and subset groups compared to state averages	32
Table 4.2. Participant Group 1 TAAS/TAKS performance in Grade 7 (prior to program participation) and grade 10	33
Table 4.3. Participant Group 2 TAAS/TAKS performance in Grade 7 (prior to program participation) and grade 11	33
Table 4.4. Participant Group 3 TAAS/TAKS performance in Grade 7 (prior to program participation) and Grade 10	34
Table 4.5. AP courses taken in high school	35
Table 4.6. Percentage of students taking AP English Language and Composition	36
Table 4.7. Most frequently taken AP courses	36
Table 4.8. Reported scores on most frequently taken AP exams by participants in high school	38
Table 4.9. Comparison of DAP graduation rates	39
Chapter 5: Student Perceptions of Program Impacts	
Table 5.1. Participation in gifted and talented and ESL programs	41
Table 5.2. Participation in types of high school programs	41
Table 5.3. Student placement in ability groups	42

Table 5.4. Positive impacts on academic life _____	43
Table 5.5. Completed or planned participation in college entrance exam _____	49

Chapter 6: Trends and Issues With Potential Future Implications for the Program

Table 6.1. Student participation in pilot districts, 2000 to 2006 _____	50
Table 6.2. Student participation in scale-up districts, 2003 to 2006 _____	51

TABLE OF FIGURES

Chapter 1: Introduction and Project Background	
Figure 1.1. Student performance on AP Spanish Language exams (2001 to 2003) _____	11
Figure 1.2. Student performance on AP Spanish Language exams (2001 to 2006) _____	14
Chapter 5: Student Perceptions of Program Impacts	
Figure 5.1. Enrollment in advanced, enriched, or accelerated courses by subject area _____	42
Figure 5.2. Educational aspirations _____	48
Chapter 6: Trends and Issues With Potential Future Implications for the Program	
Figure 6.1. Growth in program participation (2001 to 2006) _____	52
Figure 6.2. Student performance on AP Spanish Language exams (2001 to 2006) _____	54

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The state demographer of Texas predicts that by the year 2040 approximately 66% of public elementary and secondary students in Texas will be Hispanic (Murdock, 2006). While not all of these students will speak Spanish as a first language, increases of over 180% in the demand for programs serving English language learners are projected by 2040. In addition to possible language barriers, the low-income status of many of these students will present further challenges to their potential for academic success. Driscoll (1999) found that family income is one of the key contributors to high school graduation.

A broad base of research points to structural inhibitors such as the practices of schools that limit the academic success of poor and minority students. Because many of these students are enrolled in low-resource schools and/or are trapped in remedial programs or non-college preparatory classes, they do not always have access to the “opportunity” infrastructure of schools (Conchas, 2001). Numerous studies suggest that providing higher level instruction and a rigorous curriculum enhances the performance of all students, especially those who have not previously demonstrated high academic achievement (Learning Point Associates, 2004). Expectations regarding a student’s academic potential and exposure to the skills and values associated with high achievement have also been shown to have a significant influence on student engagement and success in school (American Educational Research Association, 2004; Learning Point Associates, 2004).

This report provides information on the evaluation of a program developed and piloted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) designed to promote the academic success of low-income, Spanish-speaking students.

Program History

With a grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s (USDE) Advanced Placement Incentive (API) program, TEA established the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish¹ in 2000. The project was designed to encourage the teaching of the AP Spanish Language course at the middle school level for students whose home language was Spanish and who were identified as economically disadvantaged. The goal was to use these students’ first language as an academic asset to boost student academic success, promote self-confidence in school, and support aspirations and preparation for college.

Seven school districts broadly representing most regions of the state piloted the program in the 2000–01 school year. With another grant from API, in 2002 TEA supported the replication of the program at 13 additional scale-up sites across the state. In March 2005, TEA seeded a statewide expansion of the program with planning grants to an additional 59 sites.

¹ *AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this report.

Study Overview

In 2005, the Advanced Academics Unit of the Division of Curriculum at TEA contracted with Resources for Learning, LLC (RFL), to conduct an evaluation of the longer term impacts associated with participation by low-income, Spanish-speaking eighth graders in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. Participating students consistently performed well on the AP Spanish Language examination, and, in addition, anecdotal reports from staff at the pilot and scale-up sites suggested that as a result of participation, student absenteeism and disciplinary infractions declined; students' overall grades improved; and upon entering high school, students enrolled in more advanced classes and performed better on state tests than students from this population typically did. This study was designed to investigate these claims. Because a primary focus of the study is the long-term outcomes of program participation, analysis focused primarily on the pilot program, which began in 2000.

The purpose of this evaluation was to

- identify relationships between program participation for students participating in the program at the pilot campuses and long-term, school-related student outcomes;²
- document student perceptions of impacts; and
- provide ongoing statewide program implementation information and statistics related to participation and performance that could inform the future of the program.

Evaluation Questions

1. Did students who participated in the program have higher attendance rates in high school than their non-participant peers?
2. Did students who participated in the program perform better on state tests in high school than their non-participant peers?
3. Did students who participated in the program complete AP courses in high school in higher numbers and at a higher rate than their non-participant peers?
4. How did students who participated in the program perform on AP exams in high school?
5. Did students who participated in the program graduate early or on the Distinguished Achievement Plan at a higher rate than their non-participant peers?
6. Did students who participated in the program feel the program impacted them positively in terms of academics, future opportunities, and relationships?
7. What are some issues that are likely to impact the program in the future?

Participants

The evaluation focused on data for three cohorts of students at the pilot campuses, those who participated in the program in 2000–01 (346 students), those who participated in 2001–02 (416 students), and those who participated in 2002–03 (595 students).

Participating districts provided student identification information. The study also included peer groups composed of all other Hispanic, Spanish-speaking students at the

² It should be noted that discipline-related outcomes were excluded from the evaluation design due to the unreliability and variability of discipline-related data primarily because of inconsistency in reporting by school districts.

same campuses in seventh grade who did not participate in the program and who had a Grade 7 score on the state assessment. This allowed evaluators to compare the outcomes for participating students to school averages for the group of students who were very similar demographically.

Methods

Data collection methods included requests for student identification and AP exam performance information from pilot districts. Data on student outcomes were collected from the appropriate divisions at TEA. Surveys were administered at pilot campuses by local coordinators, and the evaluators conducted a document review of program information. Data on student performance on the AP Spanish Language exam were collected from both the pilot districts and the scale-up districts and College Board score distribution reports provided by TEA.

Student Data

Based on the student identification information provided by districts, the evaluators requested student performance data on the student assessment required by the State of Texas during the years of the study. Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) data for the years 1999–2002 and Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) data for subsequent years were requested from the Student Assessment Division of TEA. Data on student characteristics, attendance, course taking, and graduation were requested from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Division of TEA.

For the analysis of participating student characteristics and long-term outcomes (attendance, TAKS performance, AP course taking, and graduation), participant group data were compared to peer group data. In those outcome areas for which a test of statistical significance was appropriate, i.e., where a prior-year value (attendance, TAKS performance) was available, additional comparisons were conducted with similarly sized subsets of the peer groups so that difference in group size did not affect the results of the statistical testing. Regression analyses adjusted for previous performance in these areas.

Surveys

Surveys were used to assess student perceptions of program impacts, including perceived changes in academic performance, relationships at school, college expectations and aspirations, and plans for the future. Through PEIMS data received from TEA, the evaluators identified students who participated in Year 2 of the program who were still enrolled in the district and attending high school. A total of 230 students were identified for participation. Surveys were sent to local program coordinators for administration in Winter/Spring 2006, and 111 surveys were returned for a response rate of 48%. Surveys included items extracted from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) and the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS).³ Survey questions

³ The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) is a representative study that explores the causes of health-related behaviors of adolescents in grades 7 through 12 and their outcomes in young adulthood. Add Health seeks to examine how social contexts (families, friends, peers, schools, neighborhoods, and communities) influence adolescents' health and risk behaviors. For more information, see <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth>. The National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS 88) is a major

selected from these instruments were primarily related to academics and future plans. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze survey data.

Program Data

This portion of the evaluation included historical, district-reported program participation and exam performance information from both the pilot and scale-up sites, College Board score distribution reports provided by TEA, and progress reports to TEA from the 59 sites receiving planning grants. Descriptive statistics were used to report information on program participation and examination performance.

Study Limitations

The evaluation was dependent on district provision of student identification numbers. This data was incomplete and/or irregular in some cases, so the group identified for inclusion in the evaluation was smaller than the originally reported participant group. Also, little is known about the initial grant awards and requirements or local program development and decision-making processes. Thus, this investigation does not benefit from information about local circumstances at the time of participation that can be linked to students, including local context, selection processes for student participation, or differentiation in services provided. Because all of these factors could have influenced the long-term outcomes, it is important to recognize that the evaluation describes trends overall that are likely attributable to program participation but that are subject to considerable variation at the local level. Analysis of characteristics of participating students indicates that participating districts were more selective in identifying students for participation in the program in the first year of implementation than in Years 2 and 3, particularly in terms of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status and prior performance on state examinations. The evaluation methodology was designed to control for prior performance issues that could have influenced long-term, school-related outcomes for participants. However, other factors could have come into play, the identification and measurement of which were beyond the scope of the evaluation. Finally, the first group of students participating in the program (Participant Group 1) was the only group for which complete data on course taking and graduation through Grade 12 were available. Most findings for Participant Group 1 were substantiated by analysis of data for students who participated in the second year of the program (Participant Group 2). While Participant Group 2 was more representative of the target group (low-income, Spanish-speaking students), data were only available through 11th grade, so findings should be read with these circumstances in mind. Survey data might also contain positive bias. Other limitations with specific data are discussed in the relevant chapters of this report.

Summary of Findings

Characteristics of Participants

- In the pilot year of the program, while the participant group reflected the economic status of its peer group, grantees appeared to be selective in identifying higher

longitudinal effort by the National Center for Education Statistics designed to provide trend data about critical transitions experienced by students as they leave middle or junior high school and progress through high school and into postsecondary institutions or the work force. For more information, see <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/nels88/>.

performing students (as measured by prior performance on state examinations) and fewer Limited English Proficient (LEP) students to participate.

- Overall, in the second and third years of the pilot program, eighth-grade students enrolled in the program tended to be more representative of their Hispanic, Spanish-speaking peers.
- In Years 2 and 3, in comparison with peer groups, the program served a higher percentage of “LEP exempt” students who were identified for exemption on statewide examinations.
- Schools/districts tended to select more females than males for participation in the program.

Relationships Between Program Participation and Long-Term, School-Related Student Outcomes

- Data do not suggest that attendance over the long term is impacted by program participation.
- It is possible that program participation positively impacts TAKS performance in reading/English language arts.
- Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to complete one or more AP courses in high school.
- Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to complete an AP course in English Language and Composition in high school.
- The most frequently taken AP examinations in high school by participating students were English Language and Composition, U.S. History, AP Spanish Literature and Composition, English Literature and Composition, and Calculus AB.
- Information on AP exam performance by participants in high school was limited, but data suggest that participating students as a group do not perform well on AP exams in high school in subject areas other than Spanish.
- Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to graduate early and/or graduate under the Distinguished Achievement Program.

Student Perceptions of Program Impacts

- The majority of students reported positive impacts on their academic lives.
- Relationships and career awareness represented other areas in which students were positively impacted.

- Students did not perceive English language skills or relationships with counselors to be areas of high positive impact.
- The majority of participating students aspired to advanced degrees.

Trends and Issues With Potential Future Implications

- Schools and districts implementing the program tended to continue and expand the program at the original campuses and at additional campuses in the district.
- Program growth was most consistent in districts serving a majority Hispanic student population.
- The majority of participating eighth graders earned a 3, 4, or 5 on the AP Spanish Language examination making them eligible for college credit.
- Changes to the exam format could impact student performance.
- Statewide participation in the program should increase in 2006–07 to approximately 2,000 students with new program implementation at an additional 59 campuses.

Conclusions

- Schools and/or districts tended to be more selective in program enrollment the initial program pilot year. Student participants were less representative of their Hispanic, Spanish-speaking peers and most were already higher performing students (in terms of performance on state assessments). In subsequent years, sites tended to open up enrollment to a broader group of students that was more representative of the eligible pool of Spanish-speaking students on their campuses. Findings from Year 1, when districts were more selective, were generally supported by Year 2 findings, when selection was more representative.
- Data suggest that participating students performed better in high school reading TAKS than their peers.
- Participating students took more advanced courses (specifically AP courses) in high school than their peers and graduated early and/or having met requirements for the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP).
- Survey data indicate that student self-confidence and motivation and academic self-image were positively affected by program participation.
- Survey data indicating that participation in the program improved student-to-student and student-to-teacher relationships suggests that the program helps to build some of the social scaffolding in school that research suggests supports the academic success of low-income, language-minority students.
- Enhanced bilingual skills are of value to participating students on a variety of levels.

- Only about a third of survey respondents reported participation in college preparatory programs. Further, limited data suggesting poor performance on AP exams by participants could be indicative of underpreparedness for the rigors of college. This is important as survey data indicate many participants plan to pursue advanced degrees at four-year colleges and universities.
- Overall, data indicate that the program is sustainable once established and is replicable both within districts and across a range of types of school communities.
- Eighth-grade participants consistently scored well on the AP Spanish Language examination. The drop of 15% in exam scores of 3 or better associated with changes to the exam in 2005 has possible future implications. With changes expected to the 2007 exam, teachers at the existing program sites need to be made aware of exam changes and adjust their strategies to better prepare their students for success.
- Finally, while this study has shown some interesting preliminary findings about the possible impacts of the program on participating students broadly speaking, it also has raised some provocative questions about the context for the program at individual schools and the impacts on individual participants or types of participants.

Based on the study findings and conclusions, the evaluators present the following recommendations.

Recommendations

- The Texas Education Agency (TEA) should investigate ways to support programs that provide continued support to participating students as they move into high school including integration with established programs that promote college readiness for students underrepresented in higher education.
- TEA should investigate ways to provide ongoing or periodic supplemental training or support a network for AP teachers in existing middle school programs to keep them up-to-date with course and exam requirements.
- TEA should investigate funding sources or establish partnerships to continue the program and support for schools offering it.
- TEA should support continued research on program approaches and impacts to identify best practices in local program implementation and develop a greater understanding of the impacts on individual students and different types of student groups.

CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT BACKGROUND

Context

Projecting a rapid growth scenario for Texas over the next 30 years, Dr. Steve H. Murdock, the state demographer of Texas, predicts that by the year 2040, approximately 66% of public elementary and secondary students in Texas will be Hispanic (Murdock, 2006). While not all of these students will speak Spanish as a first language, Murdock projects increases of over 180% in the demand for programs serving English language learners by 2040.⁴ Students of “limited English proficiency” as defined by Texas Education Code (TEC § 29.052), many of whom are recent immigrants to the U.S., are considered by the state to be “at risk” of dropping out of school (TEC § 29.056). The low-income status of many of these students will present further challenges to their potential for academic success. Driscoll (1999) found that family income, in addition to educational expectations and past academic performance, are key contributors to high school graduation.

In addition to achievement barriers presented by student language and socioeconomic status, a broad base of research points to structural inhibitors such as the practices of schools that limit the academic success of poor and minority students. Enrolled in low-resource schools or trapped in remedial programs or non-college preparatory classes as many poor and minority students are, these students neither understand nor have access to the “opportunity” infrastructure of schools (Conchas, 2001). Mehan, Hubbard, Lintz, and Villanueva (1994, p. 1) described the success of programs for previously low-achieving students that teach the “implicit culture of the classroom” and “the hidden curriculum” of the school without which these students are unlikely to experience academic success. In his study of why some Latino students succeed while others fail, Conchas found that “Latino students’ experiences and perceptions of schooling differed according to the program in which they were enrolled, and the subsequent sociocultural process to which they were exposed” (p. 487). Both researchers highlight social networks and supportive relationships built around academic success as key to student achievement.

Numerous studies support this research suggesting that providing higher level instruction and a rigorous curriculum enhances the performance of all students, especially those who have not previously demonstrated high academic achievement (Learning Point Associates, 2004). Expectations regarding a student’s academic potential and exposure to the skills and values associated with high achievement also have been shown to have a significant influence on student engagement and success in school (American Educational Research Association, 2004; Learning Point Associates, 2004).

⁴ In Texas, over the last five years, the number of students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) by public schools has increased approximately 25%, from 570,603 students in 2000–01 to 711,737 in 2005–06. The vast majority of this group is Hispanic and speaks Spanish as a first language (Texas Performance Education Information Management System, 2005). Nationally, over the last several decades, the population of school-age children in the United States who do not speak English as a first language has more than doubled from 9% to 19% with native Spanish speakers representing the largest subpopulation of that group (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005).

Over the next 25 years, the Texas public school system will be challenged to address the educational needs of a changing student population. Research on programs that improve the success of low-income, Spanish-speaking students should be of considerable interest to policymakers, the education community, parents, and students. This report provides information on the evaluation of one such program developed and piloted by the Texas Education Agency.

History

In 2000, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education through the Advanced Placement Incentive (API) program to implement the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish.⁵ The project was designed to encourage the teaching of the AP Spanish Language course at the middle-school level for students whose home language was Spanish⁶ (including students identified by districts as Limited English Proficient or LEP) and who were identified as economically disadvantaged (eligible for free-and-reduced-price lunch). The goal was to use these students' first language as an academic asset to boost student academic success, promote self-confidence in school, and support aspirations and preparation for college.

AP courses and examinations, which are offered by the College Board, are staples of college preparatory programs in 60% of American high schools (College Board, nd). Over 35 AP courses in 20 subject areas are offered. In 2005, 2.1 million AP exams were administered worldwide. The curriculum for AP courses is developed by the College Board in collaboration with committees of teachers and college faculty. Thousands of College Board consultants nationwide provide training in the use of the curriculum and instructional strategies to teachers identified to teach AP courses. Completion of an AP exam with a passing score of 3 or better (on a 5-point scale) is recognized as the equivalent of college-level proficiency by 90% of colleges and universities. Thus, students scoring 3 or better on AP exams are usually eligible for college credit for these courses upon entering postsecondary education. (For more information on AP courses and exams, visit the AP Central website at: www.apcentral.collegeboard.com.)

Pilot Program (2000)

Seven districts applied for and were awarded program grants from TEA to pilot the program in the 2000–01 school year. Detailed information on the grant application process and requirements, award amounts, and local implementation processes was not available for this report.⁷ Available information was limited to the names of the districts awarded grants, the number of middle schools in those districts establishing pilot programs, and limited student participation information.

⁵ The original program name was the Texas Advanced Placement Spanish Language Middle School Program, which was officially changed in 2006 to comply with guidelines of the College Board, the owner of the trademark "Advanced Placement."

⁶ A student's home language is usually determined by the home language survey, which is administered at the district level and reported to the state.

⁷ Staff changes at TEA since the program began resulted in limited historical knowledge of the program and lack of access to complete program documentation.

Pilot districts included the following.

- Austin Independent School District
- Brownsville Independent School District
- Irving Independent School District
- McKinney Independent School District
- Tyler Independent School District
- Valley View Independent School District
- Ysleta Independent School District

Grantee districts broadly represented most regions of the state, with the exception of the Panhandle. Grantees also represented a range of community types, sizes, and student populations, from a large, major urban district (Austin) to several mid-sized cities (Brownsville, El Paso, Irving) to small communities such as Pharr, which is the location of Valley View ISD. Student populations at the pilot sites also varied in size and composition. Some participating districts serve students who are primarily Hispanic and economically disadvantaged (Brownsville, Valley View, Ysleta), while other sites have an Hispanic student population that is sizeable among student groups (Austin, Irving, Tyler). Other participating districts have Hispanic subpopulations that are small minority groups representing a quarter or less of the student population (McKinney, Tyler).

Table 1.1. Pilot district profiles (2000–01)

District	Community Type	Total Enrollment	% Hispanic	% Economically Disadvantaged	% Limited English Proficient
Austin	Major urban	77,816	47.8%	48.0%	17.8%
Brownsville	Major suburban	40,898	97.4%	91.9%	44.1%
Irving	Major suburban	29,097	48.8%	55.3%	29.5%
McKinney	Other central city	12,000	19.7%	20.6%	7.2%
Tyler	Other central city	16,626	26.7%	52.5%	14.3%
Valley View	Independent town	2,280	99.9%	94.8%	53.7%
Ysleta	Major suburban	46,394	88.1%	73.4%	22.1%

Source. Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)

Note. Community type categories are defined by the state and are classified on a scale ranging from major urban to rural.

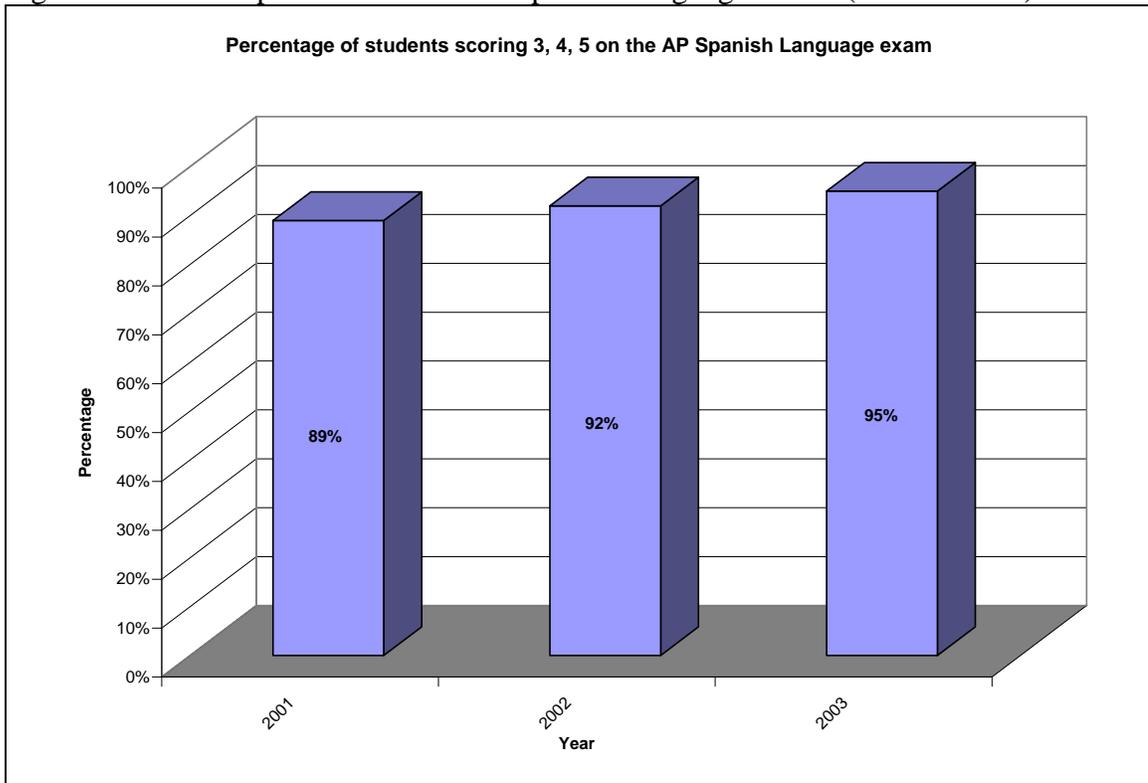
The seven pilot school districts established programs in 17 middle schools. In addition to offering the course, TEA documents indicate that most campuses developed pre-course summer institutes for enrolling students and additional support services such as tutoring, parent engagement strategies, and college awareness activities. Some also implemented

Pre-AP* Spanish programs in sixth and seventh grades for eligible students. Processes for selecting students to participate in the course were locally defined but data collected for this and another evaluation suggest that many districts targeted the highest performing Spanish-speaking students for participation, especially in the first year of implementation.

In the first year of course implementation at the pilot sites, districts reported that 346 eighth-grade students in the pilot schools took the AP Spanish Language examination in May 2001. On the AP exam score scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest, 89% of the eighth-grade students received a score of 3 or above on the exam, making them eligible to receive college credit for the course at most colleges and universities.

In the second year of implementation, districts reported that 416 eighth-graders took the AP Spanish Language examination, and 91.9% received scores of 3 or above. In 2003, districts reported that 94.8% of the 595 participating students received scores of 3 or above.

Figure 1.1. Student performance on AP Spanish Language exams (2001 to 2003)



Source. District-reported data

A program evaluation of the pilot project was conducted by the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University and described implementation models, examination performance, and anecdotal reports from survey data (Public Policy Research Institute, 2002). This information was used by TEA to develop plans for a scale-up of the program.

Scale-Up Program (2002)

In 2002, TEA applied for another grant from the U.S. Department of Education's API program to replicate the middle school AP Spanish program at additional scale-up sites across the state. All Texas school districts received applications, and 65 campuses applied. TEA awarded 13 two-year grants (\$20,000 for a planning year and \$25,000 for the first year of program implementation). Awardee districts, called scale-up districts in this report, were the following.

- Aldine Independent School District
- Canutillo Independent School District
- Comanche Independent School District
- Fabens Independent School District
- Garland Independent School District
- Harlandale Independent School District
- Hidalgo Independent School District
- Houston Independent School District
- Los Fresnos Consolidated Independent School District
- Northside Independent School District
- Spring Branch Independent School District
- Tyler Independent School District⁸
- Waco Independent School District

As with the pilot program, these districts represented most of the regions of the state, again with no representation from the Panhandle.⁹ As indicated in Table 1.2., scale-up districts represented a range in types and sizes of communities served by participating schools.

As part of the scale-up effort, TEA developed an implementation guide based on information provided by the pilot districts, offered annual summer professional development institutes for program teachers and administrators, and developed a program website. The original seven pilot sites also received small grants to allow key program staff to serve as mentors to the new scale-up sites and to design and participate in professional development for the new grantees.

Again, the grant allowed for broad local decision making in the design and implementation of programs. Grant requirements were that the majority of participating students be economically disadvantaged and that grantees establish procedures to ensure that all students enrolled in the course take the AP exam. Further, a key program component added to the scale-up initiative was the requirement that participating middle schools coordinate their efforts with at least one district high school so that participating students could take the AP Spanish Literature course by 10th grade. This additional requirement was designed to provide some continuity in support for participating students between middle and high school, to facilitate the articulation of middle and high school

⁸ Hogg Middle School in Tyler ISD participated in the pilot program.

⁹ According to TEA staff, few applications were received from this region despite a targeted effort to provide information about the grant opportunity through the state's regional education service centers.

Spanish programs, and to ensure that student focus on advanced courses and program goals were not lost when students moved to high school. Only about half of the scale-up districts complied with this requirement implementing high school AP Spanish Literature courses offered over two years (in Grades 9–10) in at least one high school.¹⁰

Table 1.2. Scale-up district profiles (2003–04)

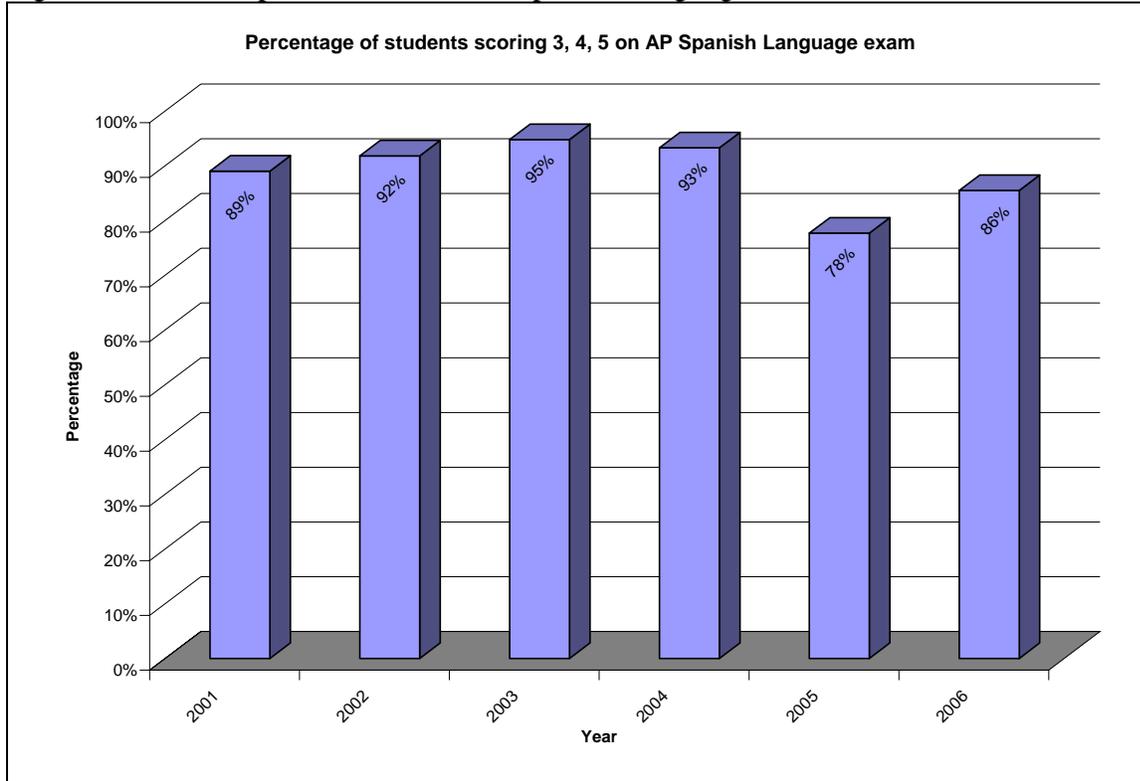
District	Community Type	Total Enrollment	% Hispanic	% Economically Disadvantaged	% Limited English Proficient
Aldine	Major urban	56,127	58.0%	76.6%	24.9%
Canutillo	Independent town	4,820	95.8%	82.7%	40.7%
Comanche	Non-metropolitan stable	1,400	39.3%	56.4%	9.6%
Fabens	Non-metropolitan fast-growing	2,757	97.7%	93.0%	44.6%
Garland	Major urban	54,925	34.9%	40.6%	22.1%
Harlandale	Other central city	14,072	94.8%	89.4%	15.0%
Hidalgo	Independent town	3,156	99.7%	92.2%	54.1%
Houston	Major urban	211,157	58.1%	81.7%	29.0%
Los Fresnos	Other central city suburban	7,506	93.2%	85.5%	26.4%
Northside	Major urban	71,307	58.7%	43.4%	6.1%
Spring Branch	Major suburban	32,920	52.7%	54.1%	30.5%
Tyler	Other central city	17,273	31.6%	55.0%	16.5%
Waco	Other central city	15,591	45.7%	80.8%	11.6%

Source. AEIS

The 13 scale-up grantees offered the eighth-grade AP Spanish Language course for the first time in the 2003–04 school year to 246 students. In 2005, participation at the scale-up sites reached 350, and in 2006, the number of students at the scale-up sites participating in the exam was 380. AP Exam performance of students at both the pilot and scale-up districts is captured in Figure 1.2.

¹⁰ The first group of students from the scale-up sites should have completed the two-year high school AP Spanish Literature course in those districts in which it was offered in 2005–06.

Figure 1.2. Student performance on AP Spanish Language exams (2001 to 2006)



Source. District-reported data

Note. See Chapter 6 for discussion of drop in percentage of students scoring 3, 4, or 5 in 2005.

Evaluation of the scale-up program by the external evaluator was ongoing through December 2006. The focus of this other evaluation was on the collection of program data for the pilot and the scale-up programs as well as the statewide expansion program described in the next section.

Statewide Expansion Program (2005)

In March 2005, TEA administered a planning grant program to seed a statewide expansion of the program. Grants of up to \$10,000 were awarded to 59 sites at either the district or campus level. (See Appendix A for a full list of the 2005 Expansion Program grantees.) TEA sponsored a professional development workshop for grantees at the beginning of the grant to support program planning. Grant requirements stipulated that campuses offer the course to eighth grade students beginning in 2006–07. Limited information about these additional sites was available during the period of the evaluation and is discussed in Chapter 6.

In addition to the high student performance on the AP Spanish Language examination, anecdotal reports from staff at the pilot and scale-up sites suggested that as a result of participation, student absenteeism and disciplinary infractions declined; students' overall grades improved; and upon entering high school, students enrolled in more advanced

classes and performed better on state tests than students from this population typically did. This study was designed to investigate these claims.

The next chapters of this report describe the study approach and methodology and characteristics of participating students. The following chapters report findings associated with the research questions. The final chapter provides a summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

References

- American Educational Research Association. (2004). Closing the gap: High achievement for students of color. *Research Points: Essential Information for Education Policy*, 2(3).
- College Board. (n.d.). *The Advanced Placement Program*. Retrieved February 2, 2007, from <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/program/index.html>
- Conchas, G. (2001). Structuring failure and success: Understanding the variability in Latino school engagement. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(3), 475-504.
- Driscoll, A. K. (1999). Risk of high school dropout among immigrant and native Hispanic youth. *International Migration Review*, 33(4), 857-75.
- Learning Point Associates. (2004). *All students reaching the top: Strategies for closing the achievement gap*. Naperville, IL: Author.
- Mehan, H., Hubbard, L., Lintz, A., & Villanueva, I. (1994). *Tracking untracking: The consequences of placing low track students in high track classes*. (National Center for Research on Education, Diversity, & Excellence, NCRCDSSL Research Reports. Paper rr10). Santa Cruz, CA: University of California, Santa Cruz.
- Murdock, S. H. (2006, July 7). *Population change in Texas: Implications for human and socioeconomic resources in the 21st century*. Presentation to the Texas State Board of Education. Retrieved February 2, 2007, from http://txsdc.utsa.edu/download/pdf/presentations/2006_07_07_State_Board_of_Education_Austin.pdf
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2005). Language minority school-age children. *Condition of Education 2005*. Retrieved February 2, 2007, from <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2005/section1/indicator05.asp>
- Public Policy Research Institute. (2002). *Evaluation of the Advanced Placement Spanish Language middle school pilot project*. College Station, TX: Author.

CHAPTER 2—STUDY APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

In 2005, the Advanced Academics Unit of the Division of Curriculum at the Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted with Resources for Learning, LLC (RFL), to conduct an evaluation of the longer term impacts associated with participation by low-income, Spanish-speaking eighth graders in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish.¹¹ In addition to high student performance on the AP Spanish Language examination, anecdotal reports from staff at the pilot and scale-up sites suggested that as a result of participation, student absenteeism and disciplinary infractions declined; students' overall grades improved; and upon entering high school, students enrolled in more advanced classes and performed better on state tests than students from this population typically did. This study was designed to investigate these claims.

Because a primary focus of the study is the long-term outcomes of program participation, analysis focused primarily on the pilot program, which began in 2000.

The purpose of this evaluation was to:

- collect participation statistics;
- identify relationships between program participation for students participating in the program at the pilot campuses and long-term, school-related student outcomes;¹²
- document student perceptions of impacts; and
- provide ongoing statewide program implementation information and statistics related to participation and performance that could inform the future of the program.

Evaluation Questions

1. Did students who participated in the program have higher attendance rates in high school than their non-participant peers?
2. Did students who participated in the program perform better on state tests in high school than their non-participant peers?
3. Did students who participated in the program complete AP courses in high school in higher numbers and at a higher rate than their non-participant peers?
4. How did students who participated in the program perform on AP exams in high school?
5. Did students who participated in the program graduate early or on the Distinguished Achievement Plan at a higher rate than their non-participant peers?
6. Did students who participated in the program feel the program impacted them positively in terms of academics, future opportunities, and relationships?
7. What are some issues that are likely to impact the program in the future?

¹¹RFL served as the external evaluator for TEA's second API grant described in chapter 1. This evaluation included information from interim and annual district progress reports on program planning activities and enrollment and performance data at the scale-up sites for inclusion in TEA reports to the U.S. Department of Education.

¹² It should be noted that discipline-related outcomes were excluded from the evaluation design due to the unreliability and variability of discipline-related data primarily because of inconsistency in reporting by school districts.

Participants

The evaluation focused on data for three cohorts of students at the pilot campuses. For the purpose of this study, a cohort is defined as the group of students who participated in the eighth-grade AP Spanish Language course at the pilot campuses in a given year of the program.

- Cohort 1: Students participating in the 2000–01 AP Spanish Language middle school course (estimated total students=346). These students were scheduled to graduate from high school in May 2005.
- Cohort 2: Students participating in the 2001–02 AP Spanish Language middle school course (estimated total students=416). These students were scheduled to graduate from high school in May 2006.
- Cohort 3: Students participating in the 2002–03 AP Spanish Language middle school course (estimated total students=595). These students were scheduled to graduate in May 2007.

Participant Groups

Participating districts provided identification information on the first three cohorts of students participating in the program in 2000–01, 2001–02, and 2002–03. These data were used to identify participant groups for the study. Not all districts provided identification numbers that could directly identify students in PEIMS and assessment databases and reports. Where possible, these student names and/or local identification numbers were used to match participating students with demographic and outcome data from TEA databases. Of the originally reported cohort, a smaller number of students than actually participated are included in each participant group for analysis purposes (see Table 2.1.). Participant groups included all students with identification numbers, including those who were still in the same district and those who had moved from the district but were still in the state school system and whose data were included in the TEA databases used for any analysis. This means that participants who dropped out of school at some point after completing the eighth-grade course were not included in the study participant groups.

As stated above, participant groups were identified based on the availability of data for analysis. To ensure that the participant group used for analysis was representative of the original cohort group in terms of scores on the AP Spanish Language exam, scores were compared for the entire cohort and the subset of identified students in the participant group. The comparison showed that the scores for the subset of identified students were representative of the scores of the entire cohort. For example, the percentage of the entire cohort that received a 3, 4, or 5 on the exam in 2000–01 was 89% compared to 88% for the identified participant group. Similarly, in 2001–02, districts reported that 92% of the second-year cohort received a score of 3, 4, or 5 compared to 91% of the identified participant group. In the third year, the percentages between the two groups were also within one percentage point of each other.

Table 2.1. Comparison of AP exam scores between cohort and participant groups

Year	Group	% scoring 1	% scoring 2	% scoring 3	% scoring 4	% scoring 5	% scoring 3,4,5
1	Cohort N=346	3	8	20	40	29	89
	Participant N=267	3	9	20	40	27	88
2	Cohort N=416	1	7	22	40	30	92
	Participant N=299	2	7	24	39	28	91
3	Cohort N=595	.01	4	19	36	40	95
	Participant N=554	1	5	21	37	36	94

Source. District-reported data

Note. Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

For the remainder of this report, the term “participant group” is used to describe the groups of students included in the analysis.

Peer Groups

The study also included peer groups composed of all other Hispanic, Spanish-speaking students at the same campuses in seventh grade who did not participate in the program and who had a TAAS or TAKS score in Grade 7. As will be seen in chapter 4, this allowed evaluators to compare the outcomes for participant students to school averages for the group of students at the same campuses who were very similar demographically to participating students. Peer groups were used for comparative purposes in describing participant characteristics as well as for analysis of AP course taking and graduation data. Smaller similarly sized comparison groups were randomly selected from the peer groups and used for analysis of those impact areas for which a test of statistical significance was relevant, such as attendance and performance on state tests in high school; therefore, a prior-to-participation value was available to use as a statistical control. These subset groups were used for comparison of attendance rates and state assessment scores in high school adjusted for seventh-grade rates or scores when examining high school differences. Matching of students for a control group was not possible because not enough students from the peer groups had equivalent seventh-grade scores on TAAS, indicating that districts chose the highest performing students for participation in the course. Thus, regression analyses controlling for prior performance were run comparing participant and a similarly sized subset of the peer group for those study areas for which there was a prior-to-participation score.

Table 2.2. Numbers of students in participant, peer, and subset groups used for regression analysis

Year	Number of students in participant group	Number of students in peer group	Number of students in subset of peer group
1	267	2,010	300
2	299	2,278	355
3	554	2,153	500

Evaluation Scope and Period of Analysis

This evaluation focuses on student data from the 1999–2000 academic year through 2004–05 using the latest available data from districts and TEA. Some program participation and performance data provided by districts for 2004–05 is included in the discussion of the future of the program in chapter 6. Some projections about 2006–07 activities and program statistics are provided from district reports but are based on best available information and should be considered as predictions only.

Methods

Data collection methods included requests for student identification and AP exam performance information from pilot districts. Participating student attendance and performance data were collected from the appropriate divisions at TEA. Surveys were administered at pilot campuses by local coordinators, and the evaluators conducted a document review of program information. Pilot districts received compensation for provision of requested data. Compensation was based on a per-student basis. Not all pilot districts provided all data requested (as indicated within relevant chapters) and, thus, not all districts were compensated. Data on student performance on the AP Spanish Language exam were collected from both the pilot districts and the scale-up districts, and College Board score distribution reports were provided by TEA.

Student Data

Data Sources and Collection

A portion of the evaluation used student identification information provided by districts. Based on the student identification information provided, the evaluators requested student performance data on the student assessment required by the State of Texas during the years of the study. Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) data for the years 1999–2002 and Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) data for subsequent years were requested from the Student Assessment Division of TEA. Data on student characteristics, attendance, course taking, and graduation were requested from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Division of TEA.

Data collected on identified students from TEA (and districts as appropriate) were the latest available data (through Spring 2005) and included the following:

Cohort 1:

- TAAS data for 1999–2000 (the year prior to enrollment), 2000–01, and 2001–02
- TAKS data through Spring 2005
- High school attendance data through Spring 2005
- High school course completion data through Spring 2005
- Graduation data through Spring 2005 including Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) and Recommended High School Program (RHSP) data
- AP examination scores for all AP courses completed in high school
- PEIMS demographic data

Cohort 2:

- TAAS data for 2000–01 (the year prior to enrollment) and 2001–02
- TAKS data through Spring 2005
- High school attendance data through Spring 2005
- High school course completion through Spring 2005
- Graduation data through Spring 2005 including DAP and RHSP data
- AP examination scores for all AP courses completed in high school
- PEIMS demographic data

Cohort 3:

- TAAS data for 2001–02
- TAKS data through Spring 2005
- PEIMS demographic data

To collect data on AP examination scores for all completed AP courses in high school for Participant Groups 1 and 2, the evaluators provided district program coordinators with AP course completion spreadsheets based on PEIMS course completion data.

To identify and analyze performance of peer groups, the evaluators also collected from TEA:

- TAAS and TAKS data for 1999–2000 through Spring 2005 for Hispanic students
- Attendance data through Spring 2005 for Hispanic students
- Course completion data through Spring 2005 for Hispanic students
- Graduation data through Spring 2005 for Hispanic students including DAP and RHSP data
- PEIMS demographic data for Hispanic students

Analysis

For the analysis of participating student characteristics and long-term outcomes data (attendance, TAKS performance, AP course taking, and graduation), participant groups were compared to peer groups comprised of the school average for Hispanic students whose home language was Spanish. In those outcome areas for which a test of statistical significance was appropriate, i.e., where a prior-year value (attendance, TAKS performance) was available, additional comparisons were conducted with similarly sized subsets of the peer groups so that the difference in group size did not affect the results of

the statistical testing. Regression analyses adjusted for previous performance in these areas.

Characteristics. Participant groups were compared to peer groups and findings were reported with descriptive statistics.

Attendance. Descriptive statistics of comparisons between participant and peer groups were reported. Regression analyses were then conducted for each participant group, calculating differences between the participant and a similarly sized subset of the peer group in attendance in Grade 11 (Participant Groups 1 and 2) or Grade 12 (Participant Group 1) after adjusting for seventh-grade attendance rates.

TAKS performance. Student performance on statewide examinations was analyzed for Participant Groups 1, 2, and 3 compared to performance of peers and reported with descriptive statistics.

Regression analysis comparing performance of the participants to similarly sized subsets of the peer groups was then performed separately for scores in mathematics and reading/English language arts on state tests. For students in Participant Groups 1 and 2 the initial assessment (Grade 7) was TAAS and the final high school assessment was TAKS. In all cases, when looking for differences between the groups on the high school assessment, the scores were adjusted for the students' seventh-grade assessment scores. This was appropriate to address issues of selection bias related to identification of students by schools for enrollment in the course. In other words, if only students who performed well on seventh-grade TAAS were selected for participation in the course, then comparison with others who had not previously performed as well would be inappropriate. Thus, comparisons made between the participants and a subset of the peer group were adjusted statistically for prior performance on the statewide assessment. However, it should be noted that some students in each group (participant and peer) did not have a TAAS score in mathematics and/or reading/English language arts in seventh grade due to exemptions from participation in state exam related to their LEP status.

Comparison with the subset of the peer group was done with a regression equation. The regression equation allowed researchers to adjust for differences in the students' test scores the year before the program and then determine if there were differences between the groups on their high school test scores. To accomplish this, test scores in the year before the program and group membership were used to predict test scores in the high school year. For each participant group, test score differences are reported for the last year in which high school testing data were available. Results were then reported with a "p-value" which identifies the statistical likelihood that the same results—in this case, differences between the participant and the peer group on their final assessment scores—could have been obtained by chance. For purposes of this evaluation, a p-value of .05 or less is considered statistically significant, indicating that the results discussed almost certainly could not have occurred by chance.

It should be noted that the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) was administered to students in Grades 3–8 and 10th grade (exit level) through 2002. Beginning in 2003, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) was administered to students in Grades 3–11 (exit level). For all participant groups, data from the years through 2002 are TAAS results; data from 2003 and after are TAKS results. These are two different examinations, and scoring is reported on different scales. Scores on the TAAS test were reported on a scale of 1 to 100, whereas scores on the TAKS are reported on a scale of 1000 to 3200, according to TEA.¹³ Because of the differences in the scales used to report TAAS scores and TAKS scores, it is not possible to compare differences between the groups by subtracting the average score in seventh grade from the average score in 10th or 11th grade. However, it is possible to compare differences in average score using a regression equation which predicts a high school TAKS score using the seventh-grade TAAS score.

For purposes of using a regression equation, raw scores on the TAKS test are analyzed rather than scale scores. This is because the raw scores are closer in scale to those of the earlier TAAS test, and no attempt is being made to convert those raw scores to a passing standard, which would require the use of the scale score.

AP course taking and AP examination performance in high school. Data on completion of AP courses in high school for all participant groups were compared with peer group completion rates, and results were reported with descriptive statistics. In addition, scores on AP exams taken in high school as reported by districts for Participant Groups 1 and 2 were summarized.

Graduation. Participant groups were compared with peer groups, and results were reported with descriptive statistics.

Please note: Most of the student identification numbers, as well as exam participation and performance data, used for this portion of the evaluation were collected as part of the ongoing external evaluation associated with the API scale-up grant and were not collected separately for this evaluation. However, as a function of this evaluation effort, some districts were asked to provide clarification on previously supplied data in cases where they were incomplete. As noted above, not all districts provided student identification information that could be matched with state databases.

Surveys

Surveys were used to assess student perceptions of program impacts, including perceived changes in academic performance, relationships at school, college expectations and aspirations, and plans for the future.

Survey Instrument

Student surveys included items extracted from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) and the National Education Longitudinal Study

¹³ *Texas Student Assessment Program Technical Digest for the Academic Year 2002–2003.* Available at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/techdig/index.html>.

(NELS).¹⁴ Survey questions selected from these instruments were primarily related to academics and future plans. Questions related specifically to student perceptions of impacts of participation in the program were added. (See Appendix B, Participant Survey.)

Data Sources and Data Collection

Through PEIMS data received from TEA, the evaluators identified students in Participant Group 2 (original cohort=416) who were still enrolled in the district and attending high school, and the evaluators worked with a local program coordinator at each of the pilot sites to administer a survey in Winter/Spring 2006.¹⁵ The evaluators distributed materials to program coordinators in Fall 2005 for local survey administration and provided paper surveys, instructions, consent forms for parents and students, and a confidential spreadsheet that provided: 1) names of identified students in Participant Group 2 who were still enrolled in the district; and 2) the high schools they attended. District program coordinators worked with staff at the individual high schools that students were attending at the time to distribute information, obtain parental consent, and administer the survey.

Of the original district-reported program participation of 416 students in the second year the program was offered, a total of 230 students for whom the district had provided identification information were identified as still attending school in the same district.¹⁶ Surveys were sent to districts, and 111 surveys were returned for a response rate of 48%. One district did not return surveys. District program coordinators were either middle school or district-level personnel, and several districts reported difficulty locating students that attended any one of a number of district high schools. This was complicated by the fact that the process involved two rounds of contacting students through various means: first, to distribute information about the survey and parental consent forms; and then, to collect consent forms and administer the survey. Minor students who did not return a parental consent form were not allowed to take the survey. According to program coordinators, this requirement contributed to the low response rates in some districts as some students forgot to return the signed forms.

It is important to note the sample of students surveyed was not selected using a probability sampling method. It is a convenience sample or a sample chosen based on the availability of being able to locate program participants. Because the sample was selected using a non-probability method, it cannot be inferred that the survey findings presented in

¹⁴ The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) is a representative study that explores the causes of health-related behaviors of adolescents in grades 7 through 12 and their outcomes in young adulthood. Add Health seeks to examine how social contexts (families, friends, peers, schools, neighborhoods, and communities) influence adolescents' health and risk behaviors. For more information, see <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth>. The National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS 88) is a major longitudinal effort by the National Center for Education Statistics designed to provide trend data about critical transitions experienced by students as they leave middle or junior high school and progress through high school and into postsecondary institutions or the work force. For more information, see <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/nels88/>.

¹⁵ Participant Group 1 was not included in this component of the study as students in this group had already graduated by the time the study was initiated.

¹⁶ It was beyond the scope of the evaluation to compare information on students who stayed in the district and those who moved to other districts within the state during high school.

chapter 5 are entirely representative of Participant Group 2, of all the program participants, or of the larger Hispanic, Spanish-speaking student population.

Table 2.3. Survey responses

Number of students in Participant Group 2	Number of students identified as still in district (Surveys sent)	Number of respondents	% return
416	230	111	48.26

Source. District-reported data

Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze survey data.

Program Data

This portion of the evaluation included historical, district-reported program participation and exam performance information from both the pilot and scale-up sites and College Board score distribution reports provided by TEA. Limited information on the 59 expansion sites receiving 2005 planning grants also was included from review of grantee progress reports. Additional information on AP Spanish Language examinations was collected from the College Board website.

Data Sources and Data Collection

The evaluators collected the following information from districts.

- Historical AP Spanish Language exam participation and score data for 2004–05 (pilot and scale-up sites)
- Projected enrollments for 2006–07 (2005 planning grant sites)

Information about changes to the AP Spanish Language examination in 2005 and 2007 was collected from the College Board website. Exam performance data for 2006 was collected from the College Board Score Distribution Report for Texas, which provides exam performance by school.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to report information on program participation and examination performance data. Document review of progress reports from 2005 expansion sites were used in the development of projections for 2006–07 enrollment.

Limitations

- The purpose of this evaluation was to investigate some of the long-term student outcomes associated with participation in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. Because the evaluation began in 2005 and the program was initiated in 2000, student participation data was collected retroactively for the first three groups of students who participated in the program. It should be noted that in some cases district-reported data was irregular and/or inconsistent. Adjustments and strategies

used to compensate for data irregularities are described earlier in this chapter. Further, little is known about the initial grant awards and requirements or local program development and decision-making processes. Thus, the focus of this evaluation is limited to investigation of possible long-term outcomes to the extent possible. In other words, this investigation does not benefit from complete participant data or information about local circumstances at the time of participation that can be linked to individual students including local context, selection processes for student participation, or differentiation in services provided. Because all of these factors could have influenced the long-term outcomes, it is important to recognize that the evaluation describes trends overall that are likely attributable to program participation but that are subject to considerable variation at the local level.

- The evaluation methodology was designed to control for prior performance issues that could have influenced long-term school related outcomes for participants. However, other factors could have come into play, the identification and measurement of which were beyond the scope of the evaluation.
- Analysis of characteristics of participating students indicated that participating districts were selective in identifying students for participation in the program in the first year of implementation by selecting more students who were not identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) or LEP exempt and who had previously performed better than their peers on state examinations from the larger pool of eligible students (low-income, Spanish-speaking). This group (Participant Group 1) is the only group for which complete data on course taking and graduation through Grade 12 was available. Most findings for Participant Group 1 were substantiated by analysis of student data for students who participated in the second year of the program (Participant Group 2). While Participant Group 2 was more representative of the target group (low-income, Spanish-speaking students), data was only available through 11th grade, so findings should be read with these circumstances in mind.
- The number of students for whom scores were reported on the AP Spanish Language exam in eighth grade is the number used to determine annual program participation. While original course enrollment figures from each district were requested, irregular reporting of the number of students enrolled (and frequent omissions of students who dropped the course) guided the decision to use the number of students taking and receiving scores on the AP examination as the number in the cohort. Because of the tendency for students to take AP courses but not participate in the exam, a condition of the TEA grant was to require students who took the AP Spanish Language course to participate in the examination. Thus, the evaluators believe the cohort figures used are relatively close to the actual enrollments in the course. Throughout this report, discussions about program participation use figures determined from exam performance data.
- Survey results, as noted above and in the chapter on survey findings (chapter 5), need to be read with care as results could be biased due to student mobility and willingness

to respond to the survey. Selecting a probability sample was beyond the scope of the evaluation.

- In all cases, analysis of outcomes was based on students for whom data was available through graduation for Participant Group 1 and through 11th grade for Participant Group 2. Students dropping out in Grade 9 or 10 were not included in the analysis of final TAKS scores or graduation type, for instance. Only students who stayed in school and participated in TAKS testing had final outcomes available for analysis.

Terminology

TEA records indicated that participation in the program has been 100% Hispanic and because this is the term used in state databases, this is the term used in this report to describe the ethnicity of participating students. In addition, because some participating students were identified at the time of program participation (locally and in state records) as Limited English Proficient (LEP), this term is also used in this report to specifically describe characteristics of participating students as indicated in state data. Further information on definitions is provided in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER 3—CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

The evaluation included analysis of the characteristics of participating students to determine who participated in the program and how representative these students were of their peers. This information is important for the subsequent analysis of long-term, school-related outcomes discussed in chapter 4.

In describing the characteristics of participating students, the makeup of participant groups was compared to peer groups in terms of economic status to provide the percentage of students identified as economically disadvantaged. For purposes of this evaluation, students were considered economically disadvantaged if they were identified as such in the TEA PEIMS dataset.¹⁷

Characteristics of participating students also were analyzed in terms of percentage identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) in seventh grade in the TEA PEIMS dataset. A student identified as “Limited English Proficient,” according to Texas Education Code (§ 29.052), is “a student whose primary language is other than English and whose English language skills are such that the student has difficulty performing ordinary classwork in English.” These students are identified for enrollment in bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs unless their parents refuse such services. District language proficiency assessment committees annually review data, such as home language surveys and English language proficiency assessments, to determine the language proficiency status of students. When LEP students pass the reading/English language arts section of the TAKS examination, they are no longer identified as LEP in state databases, and they exit bilingual or ESL programs.

The percentage of students in participant and peer groups identified as LEP-exempt from state assessments is also included. LEP exemptions were included in data collected from the TEA Student Assessment Division. According to Texas Administrative Code “certain immigrant LEP students who have had inadequate schooling outside the U.S. may be eligible for an exemption from the assessment of academic skills during a period not to exceed their first three school years of enrollment in U.S. schools.” The term “immigrant” is defined as “a student who has resided outside the 50 U.S. states for at least two consecutive years.”¹⁸ Thus, some LEP students who are recent immigrants are not required to take state examinations.

In addition, average Grade 7 scores on statewide examinations (TAAS or TAKS) were compared with averages for the peer groups to determine characteristics of participating students in terms of prior performance on state assessments. Gender was also analyzed and distributions of male and female participants were compared to peer groups for each year included in the analysis.

¹⁷ Students identified as economically disadvantaged are those eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program.

¹⁸ Commissioner's Rules Concerning the Participation of Limited English Proficient Students in State Assessments, Texas Administrative Code §101.1007.

Economic Status

Districts receiving TEA grants to pilot the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish were required to target economically disadvantaged students for participation in the program. Not all participants in the program, however, were low income.

The percentage of students in the participant groups that were identified as economically disadvantaged was compared to peer groups for each of the first three years of the program (Participant Groups 1, 2, and 3). Of Participant Group 1, 93% were economically disadvantaged compared to 95% of their peers. Students participating in the program in the second year of the program (Participant Group 2) were more similar to their peers than Participant Group 1 students in terms of economic status—95% of participants and 95% of the peer group were identified as economically disadvantaged. In the third year of the program, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in Participant Group 3 dropped slightly to 90%, compared to 93% of economically disadvantaged students in the peer group.

Table 3.1. Economic status of participating students compared to peers

Group	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Participant	93%	95%	90%
Peer	95%	95%	93%

Source. TEA PEIMS

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Status

LEP Identification

The percentage of participating students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) also was calculated for each group. In Participant Groups 2 and 3, students were more similar to their peers than in Participant Group 1 in percentage of students identified in the PEIMS database as LEP. In the first year of the program (2000–01), 32% of participating students were LEP compared to 45% of their peers. In the next two years of the program, however, participants more closely reflected the peer groups in percentages of students identified as LEP. This data suggests a degree of selectivity in choosing students for participation in the first year of program implementation which might affect the comparison between groups.

Table 3.2. LEP status of participating students compared to peers

Group	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Participant	32%	38%	35%
Peer	45%	39%	37%

Source. TEA PEIMS

LEP Exemptions

The percentage of participating students receiving an exemption from participation in the state examination due to LEP status in the seventh grade also was calculated. For the initial program year, the percentage of participants who were eligible for a LEP

exemption—i.e., had been in the U.S. for three or fewer years and had previously received inadequate schooling—was approximately representative of Hispanic, Spanish-speaking students at the participating campuses. In the second and third program years, increasing numbers of new immigrant students participated.

Table 3.3. Participants and peers identified for LEP exemptions on state examination

Group	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Participant	8%	18%	20%
Peer	9%	11%	10%

Source. TEA Student Assessment Division

Prior Performance on State Tests

Average Grade 7 scores on statewide examinations were compared with peer group averages for all participant groups. These prior scores were then used to statistically adjust for different initial performance among students when comparing statewide examination scores in high school for the participants and the subset of peers. Differences between the initial scores for participants and the subset of peers will be discussed in chapter 4. Because students in either group identified as LEP-exempt did not take state assessments in seventh grade, they were not included in the regression analysis.

Participant Group 1’s prior-year test scores were 14 points higher in reading and 12 points higher in mathematics than average scores for the peer group. During the second and third years of the program, participants were more similar, though still slightly higher performing, than their peers. The average of seventh-grade scores for Participant Groups 2 and 3 was only four points higher in reading and two points higher in mathematics. Prior performance for all participant and peer groups was below state averages for both reading and mathematics.

Table 3.4. Prior-year test scores

Group	Year 1 Grade 7 Average Scores (2000)		Year 2 Grade 7 Average Scores (2001)		Year 3 Grade 7 Average Scores (2002)	
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math
Participant	76	76	73	72	72	71
Peer	62	64	69	70	68	69
State Average	83.5	88.1	89.4	89.6	91.3	92.2

Source. TEA Student Assessment Division

Gender

Districts tended to select a disproportionate number of females for participation in the program compared to the peer groups. Over the first three years of the program, more females than males were selected for program participation. In fact, the proportion of

females selected for program participation increased each year, with a commensurate decrease in the proportion of male participants. For the peer groups, the proportion of males (52%) and females (48%) in the Hispanic, Spanish-speaking population stayed the same.

Table 3.5. Gender of participating students compared to peers

Group	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Participant	41%	59%	40%	60%	35%	65%
Peer	52%	48%	52%	48%	52%	48%

Source. TEA PEIMS

Overall, analysis of characteristics of participating students suggested a high degree of selectivity in identifying students for participation in the pilot year of the program. Although the evaluation was not informed by local selection criteria for participation, in year 1, schools and districts tended to select students who were not identified as LEP and who, compared to their Hispanic, Spanish-speaking peers, were higher performing on state tests. In years 2 and 3, however, selection appeared to be more representative. Across all years analyzed, a disproportionate number of females were selected for participation over males.

CHAPTER 4—RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND LONG-TERM, SCHOOL-RELATED STUDENT OUTCOMES

Evaluation Questions:

- Did students who participated in the program have higher attendance rates in high school than their non-participant peers?
- Did students who participated in the program perform better on state tests in high school than their non-participant peers?
- Did students who participated in the program complete AP courses in high school in higher numbers and at a higher rate than their non-participant peers?
- How did students who participated in the program perform on AP exams in high school?
- Did students who participated in the program graduate early or on the Distinguished Achievement Plan at a higher rate than their non-participant peers?

In this chapter, students in Participant Groups 1, 2, and 3—those who participated in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish in 2000–01, 2001–02, and 2002–03—are compared to their Hispanic, Spanish-speaking peers¹⁹ in the same schools across a range of impact areas aligned with the evaluation questions. These areas of focus included attendance, TAKS performance, AP courses taken in high school, and graduation data. Peer groups were used for comparison on AP courses taken in high school, AP exam performance, and graduation patterns. In those outcome areas for which a test of statistical significance was appropriate, i.e., where a prior-year value (attendance, TAKS performance) was available, additional comparisons were conducted with similarly sized subsets of the peer groups so that the difference in group size did not affect the results of the statistical testing. Regression analyses adjusted for previous performance in these areas.

Attendance

This section provides findings from analysis of high school attendance rates for participating students as compared to peer groups for Participant Groups 1 and 2.

Staff in participating districts reported anecdotally that student attendance improved as a result of participation in the program. However, analysis showed that attendance rates of the participant students across Participant Groups 1 and 2²⁰ did not differ statistically or practically from the average student attendance in the peer groups in either eighth grade or in high school. Further, high school attendance for the participant group did not differ statistically from the average attendance of a randomly selected, similarly sized control group of peer students. Attendance rates for both participant and peer groups were at or slightly above the state average in Grade 8 but decreased over time throughout high school.

¹⁹ Students who, according to home language survey data in the PEIMS database, reported Spanish as the language spoken at home.

²⁰ Analysis of Participant Group 3 attendance data was not conducted after ascertaining there were no impacts in this area for Participant Groups 1 and 2.

Table 4.1. High school attendance rates of participant, peer, and subset groups compared to state averages

Participant Group 1					
	Grade 8 (2001)	Grade 9 (2002)	Grade 10 (2003)	Grade 11 (2004)	Grade 12 (2005)
Participant	97%	95%	94%	93%	91%
Peer	95%	94%	92%	91%	91%
Similarly sized subset	96%	94%	92%	92%	92%
State Average	95.5%	95.6%	95.6%	95.7%	95.7%
Participant Group 2					
	Grade 8 (2002)	Grade 9 (2003)	Grade 10 (2004)	Grade 11 (2005)	Grade 12 (2006)*
Participant	97%	95%	94%	93%	N/A
Peer	96%	94%	93%	92%	N/A
Similarly sized subset	96%	95%	93%	93%	N/A
State Average	95.6%	95.6%	95.7%	95.7%	N/A

Source. TEA PEIMS

*Grade 12 attendance data (2006) was not available for Participant Group 2 at the time of the study.

Performance on State Tests

This section looks at performance on state assessments. TAAS (where applicable) and TAKS data in mathematics and reading were used for Participant Groups 1, 2, and 3 and compared with peer groups.

Average Grade 7 scores on statewide examinations were compared with overall peer group averages for all participant groups. Prior scores for the similarly sized peer group were then used to statistically adjust for previous performance on the state examination among students when statistically comparing statewide examination scores in high school. Again, students identified as LEP-exempt did not take state assessments in Grade 7 and were not included in the regression analysis.

Because of the differences in the scales used to report TAAS scores and TAKS scores, it is not possible to compare differences between the groups by subtracting the average score in seventh grade from the average score in 10th or 11th grade. However, it is possible to compare differences in the average score using a regression equation which predicts high school TAKS scores using seventh-grade TAAS scores.

Participant Group 1

Participant Group 1 was required to take the state exam through Grade 11. The year that Participant Group 1 was in 10th grade (2003) was the last year for which large numbers of student scores were available.²¹ Participant performance on tests was first compared to

²¹ After discussion with TEA staff, no explanation was found for this fact.

the overall peer group. Of the 267 students in the participant group, 226 students had scores in seventh grade—the year prior to program participation. Their average score was 76, whereas the peer group had an average mathematics score of 65. Averages on the reading/English language arts test in seventh grade were 77 for the participant group and 62 for the peer group. Differences in Grade 10 performance on state tests between Participant Group 1 and its similarly sized subset of peers were not statistically significant for either mathematics or reading/English language arts.

Table 4.2. Participant Group 1 TAAS/TAKS performance in Grade 7 (prior to program participation) and grade 10

Grade	Year	Math*			Reading*		
		AP	Peer	Similarly sized subset	AP	Peer	Similarly sized subset
7	2000	76	65	63	77	62	61
10	2003	32	30	30	42	39	40

Source. TEA Student Assessment

*Because the two tests were scored on different scales, TLI²² was used for TAAS scores (2000); raw scores were used for TAKS (2003). Average scores cannot be compared across years because of differences in the scales used to report scores.

Participant Group 2

Participant Group 2 was required to take the state exam each year through Grade 11. Of the 317 students in Participant Group 2, a total of 278 students had scores. This group had an average mathematics test score of 72 in seventh grade, whereas the overall peer group had an average mathematics score of 70. The participant group students had an average reading score of 73, and the peers scored an average of 69. A randomly selected subset of 355 peers showed a statistically significant difference from the participant group ($p=0.02$) on reading/English language arts raw scores on the TAKS test in Grade 11. For mathematics, differences between participants and the randomly-selected peer group were not statistically significant in Grade 11.

Table 4.3. Participant Group 2 TAAS/TAKS performance in Grade 7 (prior to program participation) and grade 11

Grade	Year	Math*			Reading*		
		AP	Peer	Control	AP	Peer	Control
7	2001	72	70	69	73	69	67
11	2005	39	37	38	42	41	41

Source. TEA Student Assessment

*Because the two tests were scored on different scales, TLI was used for TAAS scores (2001); raw scores were used for TAKS (2005). Average scores cannot be compared across years because of differences in the scales used to report scores.

Participant Group 3

Data was available through 10th grade for Participant Group 3. Of the 554 students in Participant Group 3, 466 students had an average mathematics score in Grade 7 of 71

²² Texas Learning Index (TLI) is the scale score used to report TAAS scores and ranges from 1 to 100.

compared to an average of 69 for their peers. In reading, the participant group average was 72 compared to the peer group average of 68. Grade 10 performance differences between the participant group and a randomly selected, similarly sized subset of the peer group were statistically significant for mathematics and reading/English Language Arts. Two years after being enrolled in the AP Spanish course, students performed at a higher rate in both mathematics and reading. In both cases, the differences between the participant group and the randomly selected peer group subset were highly statistically significant at $p < 0.01$.

Table 4.4. Participant Group 3 TAAS/TAKS performance in Grade 7 (prior to program participation) and Grade 10

Grade	Year	Math*			Reading*		
		Participant	Peer	Similarly sized subset	Participant	Peer	Similarly sized subset
7	2002	71	69	67	72	68	67
11	2005	35	33	33	41	40	40

Source. TEA Student Assessment

*Because the two tests were scored on different scales, TLI was used for TAAS scores (2002); raw scores were used for TAKS (2005). Average scores cannot be compared across years because of differences in the scales used to report scores.

AP Course Taking

This section provides findings from analysis of high school AP course-taking patterns. This section also includes findings from limited data on student performance on AP exams taken in high school.

Records of course completion from the PEIMS dataset were used to analyze course-taking data for students in high school. Course-completion data were analyzed for Participant Groups 1 and 2 and compared to peer groups to determine differences in AP course taking in high school.²³

Courses included in the analysis were AP courses. It should be noted that the latest data available during the period of analysis included course completion data through 12th grade for Participant Group 1 and through 11th grade for Participant Group 2. Comparisons included: the percentage of students taking at least one AP course in high school and the number of AP courses taken in Grades 10, 11, and 12; and the percentage of students taking AP English Language and Composition in high school.

Number of AP Courses Taken

Course-taking data was analyzed to show the percentage of students in both Participant Groups 1 and 2 taking at least one AP course in high school and the percentage taking

²³ Participant Group 3 was not included in this portion of the study as students in this group were only in the 10th grade during the period of analysis, and typically, though not always, students take most of their AP courses in 11th and 12th grades.

one, two, and three AP courses in Grades 10, 11, and 12. Grade 12 data were available for Participant Group 1 only.

Overall, across the high school grades, a higher percentage of students in Participant Groups 1 and 2 took at least one AP course in high school compared to their peers. Specifically, 51% of students in Participant Group 1 took at least one AP class in high school, compared to 13% of their peers. By 11th grade, 46% of Participant Group 2 students had taken at least one AP class, while 17% of their peers had taken at least one.

In 10th grade, for Participant Group 1, 8% of students took an AP course in Grade 10, compared to 2% of their peers. Nine percent of Participant Group 2 students took at least one AP course in Grade 10, compared to 2% of their peers.

In 11th grade, 21% of Participant Group 1 students took an AP course, compared to 9% of their peers. Twenty-six percent of Participant Group 2 students took at least one AP course 11th grade, compared to 16% of their peers. The percentage of Participant Group 1 students taking two AP courses in 11th grade was only 13%, but was still higher than the percentage of peer group students (4%). Only 3% of Participant Group 1 students took three AP courses in Grade 11, compared to 1% of their peers. One student in the peer group took four AP courses in 11th grade.

Compared to Participant Group 1, a slightly higher percentage of students in Participant Group 2 and its peer group took one, two, and three AP courses in 11th grade. In 11th grade, 26% of Participant Group 2 students took one AP course, compared to 16% of their peers. The percentage of Participant Group 2 students taking two AP courses in 11th grade was 16%, which was higher than the percentage of peer group students (9%). Only 3% of Participant Group 2 students took three AP courses in Grade 11, compared to 2% of the peer group. One Participant Group 2 student and five peer group students took four AP courses in 11th grade.

Grade 12 course-taking data was only available for Participant Group 1. In Grade 12, 16% of these students took one AP class, compared to 7% of their peers. Also, more Participant Group 1 students (5%) took two or more AP classes than their peers (2%).

Table 4.5. AP courses taken in high school

	Grade 10	Grade 11			Grade 12	
Group 1						
	1 course	1 course	2 courses	3 courses	1 course	2 courses
Participant	8%	21%	13%	3%	16%	5%
Peer	2%	9%	4%	1%	7%	2%
Group 2						
Participant	9%	26%	16%	3%	n/a	n/a
Peer	2%	16%	9%	2%	n/a	n/a

Source. TEA PEIMS

AP English Language and Composition

Participating students in both Participant Groups 1 and 2 began taking AP English Language and Composition in 10th grade. Overall in all grades analyzed (Grades 10–12), 14% of Participant Group 1 and 17% of Participant Group 2 students (Grades 10–11) took the AP English Language and Composition course in high school. Overall, only 5% of the Peer Group 1 and 9% of the Peer Group 2 took the AP English Language course in high school.

Table 4.6. Percentage of students taking AP English Language and Composition

Group	% students taking AP English Language and Composition
Year 1	
Participant	14%
Peer	5%
Year 2	
Participant	17%
Peer	9%

Source. TEA PEIMS

Most Frequently Taken AP Courses in High School

Because of the larger percentages of participant group students taking AP courses in high school, evaluators were interested in which courses they took. Course completion data showed that English Language and Composition was the AP course most frequently taken by participating students in high school, followed by U.S. History. AP Spanish Literature and Composition was the third most frequently taken course by participating students. Most students who completed the AP Spanish Literature and Composition course did so in ninth or 10th grade.

Table 4.7. Most frequently taken AP courses

Course	Number taking course		
	Participant Group 1 (Grades 9–12)	Participant Group 2 (Grades 9–11)	TOTAL
English Language and Composition	56	52	108
U.S. History	43	59	102
Spanish Literature and Composition	40	35	75
English Literature and Composition	33	21	54
Calculus AB	20	4	24

Source. TEA PEIMS

Performance on AP Exams in High School

Districts were supplied with spreadsheets of AP course completion data for participating students (Participant Groups 1 and 2) and asked to provide scores on AP exams.²⁴ Not all districts provided the requested data, and the data that was reported, in some cases, was inconsistent or otherwise contained some anomaly or confusing information. Because of this incomplete and erratic reporting, the limited findings reported here should be interpreted with extreme caution. However, this data is included because it could be indicative of participating students' level of preparedness for advanced courses in high school (and for college) and the need for additional academic support in high school in other subject areas.

Based on the district-reported data AP courses for which students most often took exams were the following.

- English Language and Composition
- U.S. History
- Spanish Literature and Composition
- English Literature and Composition
- Calculus AB

Typically, students scoring a 3, 4, or 5 on an AP exam are eligible for credit at most colleges and universities. (While some institutions give credit for scores of 2, it is not common.) With the exception of AP Spanish Literature and Composition, the majority of students for whom scores were reported received scores of 1 or 2 on the AP examinations they took. Only 8-10% of reported scores were 3 or above. In terms of performance on the AP English Language and Composition exams, out of 67 reported scores, only five students (8%) received a score of 3 or above. In U.S. History only four of the 50 students (8%) for whom scores were reported would be eligible for credit at most colleges and universities.

Though fewer students took AP Spanish Literature, exam performance was better. Twenty-two of the 49 students (45%) for whom scores were reported received scores of 3, 4, and 5.

²⁴ Because it was beyond the scope of the evaluation, AP exam scores were not requested for peer groups.

Table 4.8. Reported scores on most frequently taken AP exams by participants in high school

AP Course	Number of students completing course/Number of students with reported scores	Exam score					Of reported scores, % scoring 3, 4, 5
		5	4	3	2	1	
English Language and Composition	108/67	0	0	5	30	32	8
U.S. History	102/50	0	2	2	4	42	8
AP Spanish Literature and Composition	75/49	2	4	16	7	20	45
English Literature and Composition	54/30	0	0	3	13	14	10
Calculus AB	24/18	0	1	0	1	16	12

Source. District-reported data

Graduation

This section describes graduation-related information on participants in terms of early graduation and participation in the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP).

The evaluation compared participant and peer group students in terms of early graduation rates (graduation in 11th grade) and graduation under the DAP. Students successfully completing the AP Spanish Language course acquire all the foreign language credits required for graduation under the Recommended High School Program (RHSP), now the required graduation plan in Texas as well as the DAP. Further, by scoring a 3 or better on the examination, students may earn one of the four advanced measures required for graduation under the DAP.

Students in Participant Group 1 were scheduled to graduate in the 2004–05 year on a traditional schedule. However, of those students, 14 students (5%) graduated in 11th grade. Only 3% of the peer group graduated early.

Twenty-five students (8%) in Participant Group 2 had enough credits to graduate after 11th grade and graduated early. Only 2% of their peer group graduated early.

Higher percentages of graduates from Participant Groups 1 and 2 graduated under the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) in either 11th or 12th grade than their peers.

Table 4.9. Comparison of DAP graduation rates

Grade	Group	DAP
11	Participant (n=39)	12 (31%)
	Peers (n=103)	15 (15%)
12	Participant (n=149)	49 (33%)
	Peers (n=884)	215 (24%)

Source. TEA PEIMS

While no long-term impacts of program participation are indicated for attendance, performance on state tests (particularly in reading), AP course taking, and graduation are school-related outcomes areas that appear to be affected by participation in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. Generally, participants performed better on state tests in reading/English language arts than their peers and took more AP courses in high school. The AP courses most frequently taken in high school by participating students were English Language and Composition, U.S. History, and Spanish Literature and Composition. Limited data indicate that participants did not score well on AP exams in subject areas other than Spanish. In terms of graduation, participating students graduated early and under the DAP at a higher rate than their peers.

CHAPTER 5—STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF IMPACTS

Evaluation Question:

- Did students who participated in the program feel the program impacted them positively in terms of academics, future opportunities, and relationships?

The evaluation included surveys of students who had participated in the program in eighth grade in 2001–02 (Participant Group 2)²⁵ and who were scheduled to graduate from high school (on a traditional schedule) in May 2006. The evaluators identified students who had been enrolled in the same district from middle through high school for participation in the survey. Local program coordinators administered and returned program surveys. To assist district coordinators in locating Participant Group 2 students, the evaluators provided the name of the high school at which the student was enrolled. At the time of the survey, Participant Group 2 students were in Grade 12.

A total of 230 of surveys were distributed, and a total 111 completed surveys were returned by six of the seven pilot districts.²⁶

It should be noted in reading this section that the student perception data is only representative of a small portion (35%) of the group that participated in the program in year 2. Further, the students who the evaluators and district coordinators were able to locate for participation in the survey were students who were still in school and who attended school in the same community from eighth grade through high school. Not only did the survey respondents not include students who dropped out of school, but these respondents were not affected by academic disruption and other issues commonly associated with mobility. Thus, this group might be expected to provide more positive perspectives on educational outcomes generally.

Academic Profiles of Survey Respondents

Time Spent on School and Other Activities

In terms of the time spent on academic-related activities, 43% of survey respondents reported that they spent the same amount of time as their peers, and 38% said they spent more time than their peers. The majority of respondents said they spent the same amount of time as their peers on homework (59%) and non-academic activities (53%). The school clubs and organizations in which participants most frequently participated as members were focused on academics or athletics.

About half of the respondents (51%) reported they had not worked for pay during high school; 31% reported they worked 21 or more hours per week. The remaining 18% reported working between 1 and 20 hours per week. When asked to compare themselves to their peers in terms of how much they worked, 46% of respondents reported that they worked at jobs less than their peers, 30% worked the same amount as their peers, and 24% worked more than their peers.

²⁵ The evaluation was initiated after Participant Group 1—students who had participated in the program in 2000–01—had already graduated.

²⁶ One district did not return surveys.

Types of Academic Programs

Forty-four percent of survey respondents reported that they were enrolled in gifted and talented classes. Sixty-six percent indicated they had not been enrolled in the past in programs or services designed for non-native speakers of English.

Table 5.1. Participation in gifted and talented and ESL programs

Program/services	Yes	No
Gifted and talented	44%	55%
Special instruction for those whose first language is not English	34%	66%

Source. Survey data

Respondents were asked to identify the type of high school program in which they were enrolled. Thirty-five percent of students indicated they were in enrolled in college preparatory or academically oriented programs, while 21% indicated they were enrolled in a “general high school plan.” Eight percent of respondents reported participating in a specialized high school program, 8% reported enrollment in “other” programs, and 18% of respondents didn’t know in what type of high school program they were enrolled.

Table 5.2. Participation in types of high school programs

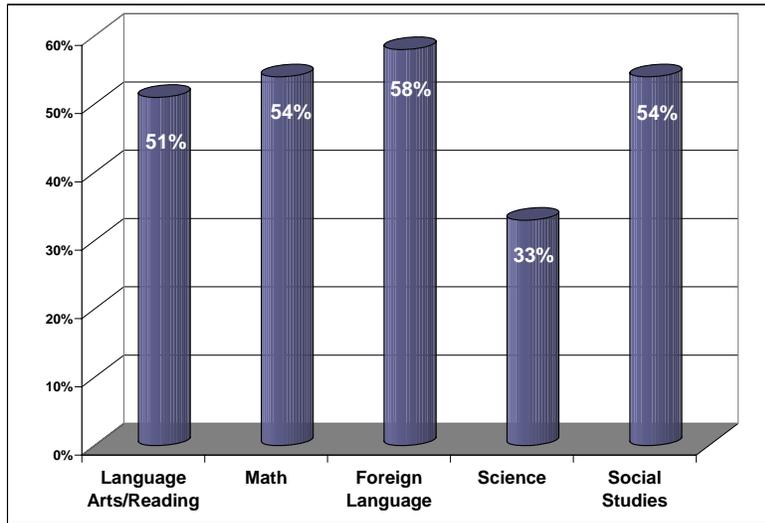
High school program type	% enrolled
College prep, academic, or specialized academic (such as science or mathematics)	35%
Vocational, technical, or business and career	10%
General high school plan	21%
Other specialized high school (such as fine arts)	8%
Other	8%
Don’t know	18%

Source. Survey data

Advanced Course Taking

Students were asked if they were enrolled in “advanced, enriched, or accelerated courses” in a variety of subject areas. Just over half of respondents (51%) reported they were enrolled in advanced courses in language arts/reading, mathematics, and foreign languages. Only about a third of students (33%) were enrolled in advanced science courses, and just over half (54%) said they were enrolled in advanced social studies courses.

Figure 5.1. Enrollment in advanced, enriched, or accelerated courses by subject area



Source. Survey data

Most students (71%) reported that their high schools offered all the courses they wanted to take in high school. In responses indicating desired courses that were not offered, language-related courses (especially French) were cited most often, followed by mathematics and computer-related courses.

Ability Groups

Students reported they were grouped in high ability groups most often in “foreign language” (66%) and language arts/reading (43%). In mathematics, science, and social studies, higher percentages of students reported being placed in middle-level ability groups (42%, 57%, and 49%, respectively). In each subject area, a small number of students reported they were placed in low ability groups. Just under 20% of students in each subject area indicated that they were not grouped or did not know what group they belonged to.

Table 5.3. Student placement in ability groups

Subject area	Ability group			
	High	Middle	Low	No groups/ Don't know
Mathematics	37%	39%	6%	18%
Science	23%	52%	6%	19%
Language Arts/Reading	43%	37%	4%	16%
Foreign Language*	60%	20%	2%	18%
Social Studies	34%	45%	5%	16%

Source. Survey data

*(i.e. Spanish, French)

Academic Performance

Over half the respondents (54%) indicated they felt that they had better grades than their peers. Student reports of grades in various subject areas were mostly in the A–B range. Most students reported grades of A in languages (63%). In language arts/reading, students reported mostly As (43%) and Bs (45%), with a few Cs (12%). Grades in mathematics fell primarily across the A–B range (36% and 40%, respectively); however, more students reported grades of C (22%) and D (2%) in mathematics than in other subject areas. Science and social studies grades were more solidly in the A–B category (54% and 53%, respectively) with a low number of Ds (1%). No failures in any of these subject areas were reported.

Reported Impacts of Participation

Students were asked to identify in which areas they were positively affected by participation in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish.

- Interest in school
- Relationships with teachers
- Teachers’ attitudes toward students
- Counselors’ attitudes towards students
- Time teachers spent with students
- Time counselors spent with students
- Academic skills
- English language skills
- Association with peers
- Plans to go to college
- Plans for career choices

The most frequently cited areas—those areas in which more than half the respondents indicated positive impacts—were: interest in school (75%); plans to go to college (74%); academic skills (68%); association with peers (60%); plans for career choices (60%); relationships with teachers (54%); and teachers’ attitudes towards students (53%).

Table 5.4. Positive impacts on academic life

Area of impact	% reporting positive impacts
Interest in school	75%
Plans to go to college	74%
Academic skills	68%
Association with peers	60%
Plans for career choices	60%
Relationships with teachers	55%
Teachers’ attitudes towards you	53%
Counselors’ attitudes towards you	45%
Time teachers spent with you	41%
English language skills	38%
Time counselors spent with you	32%

Source. Survey data

The majority of students did not report positive impacts in terms of the time that counselors spent with the student (68%), English language skills (62%), the time that teachers spent with the student (59%), and counselors' attitudes towards the student (55%).

Students also were asked to provide information on ways that they were impacted for those areas they identified as having positive impact. Summaries of these responses with some examples are provided below.

Interest in School

Respondents indicated that the high school/college credit they received for participation in the program, the impact on their grades, and the ability to get ahead and take more advanced classes or to graduate early were major positive impacts.

"The credits I got interested me more in school."

"I became more focus[ed] on my grades in school."

"I was more interested in school because I had better grades."

"I wanted to get ahead in courses!"

"Had space for other classes."

"It changed my interest by wanting to take more AP classes."

"Gave an interest for high school knowing I would finish early."

Other identified impacts focused on enhanced engagement in learning.

"It made me want to attend school frequently."

"Broadens awareness in the diverse things to do."

"I like being able to know more about our Spanish language."

"I was more dedicated."

Students also reported they felt more confident and motivated because they were encouraged or supported, felt more capable, and wanted to "do better."

"I received college hours so I decided that maybe I could do well in college."

"I proved to myself I can do it and [it] got me motivated."

"It showed me I was capable of passing any class I wanted."

"I was encouraged to do better because I had the support."

“I thought more about that Latinos could go to college too.”

“I felt more comfortable with my classes.”

College Plans

The ability to get ready early for high school and the college credit students received were frequently cited by students as positive impacts of the program. Students also reported feeling more capable of getting into and succeeding in college. Students indicated that course participation helped them understand they had more options and opportunities and focused them on future choices.

“I was glad to know I would get college credit for taking the class in eighth grade.”

“Made my transcript look better.”

“Got more interested in college opportunities.”

“I have thought of going to college because now I know I can.”

“My interests [in college] are higher.”

“I have more interest in what I want to do [in the future].”

“It helped me make better choices that will affect my future.”

Academic Skills

Students identified improved academic skills as being positive impacts of program participation. They also cited improved focus and motivation as enhancing academic skills. Broadly, students identified exposure to AP expectations as impacting student skills as well as grades and GPAs. General academic skills such as analytic ability, test-taking, and speaking and writing skills were improved by participation students said. Students also reported they learned to study and “work hard.” Language-related improvements in both first and second languages were mentioned as well.

“I developed an interest in upper-level courses (exposed me to the AP world).”

“Made me accustomed to working hard to get what I want.”

“It made my academic skills higher and had more choices in high school.”

“I learned to study.”

“My writing skills and speech skills improved.”

“Even though Spanish was my first language, I learned things I wasn’t aware of.”

“I would apply the skills I learned in Spanish for my English.”

“Understand language in a deeper way.”

Relationships with Peers

While some respondents reported improved relationships with peers in the middle school AP Spanish class, others identified impacts applicable to a broader peer community. Students cited camaraderie and identification with others in the class as positive. With other Spanish speakers outside of the class, respondents described better relationships and more frequent communication, more friendships, and opportunities to mentor or tutor others in Spanish. They cited improved speaking ability as facilitating relationships with others.

“Camaraderie was strengthened by learning from each other.”

“Taking the class helped me to advance, which led [me] to meet others with higher academic skills.”

“I found people like myself, and we identified with one another.”

“I made more friends that [spoke] Spanish.”

“Better relationships with Spanish-speaking friends.”

“People with limited English feel more comfortable around [me].”

“I give them advice about taking Spanish AP.”

“I helped others.”

Career Plans

Students frequently cited an expanded perspective on future career opportunities as a positive impact of program participation. In general, students reported a heightened interest or focus on future career choices. They understood they had more choices and were more confident about possibilities for good paying jobs. Many had already identified specific career choices. Students also reported a heightened understanding of the value of being bilingual in expanding career options with several students identifying specific careers that would take advantage of their Spanish skills.

“It brought many ideas and plans for life.”

“I discovered new interests.”

“I have more choices for careers.”

“Helped me to understand that away from home, I would be a good candidate for better paying jobs.”

“Being bilingual gives me many career choices.”

“Now I know what can go on if you speak both languages.”

“I may end up being a Spanish instructor.”

“My career pathways are in the medical field and knowing how to speak better does help in order to understand the patients.”

Relationships with Teachers

Students reported improved relationships with their teachers both in the middle school AP Spanish class and in high school. Some student comments indicated that their improved speaking and communication skills specifically helped in their relationships with teachers. Some students reported they felt less inhibited in communicating with teachers—more confident and comfortable—and that teachers were more understanding and helpful and had more respect for and interest in students as a result of their participation in the middle school AP course.

“I had a great teacher, and my relationship with her helped my relationships with other teachers.”

“I have more confidence to talk to them.”

“There was more communication.”

“Teachers were more helpful when needed.”

“They like a student with a five in an AP exam.”

“Got interested in what teachers thought of me or cared about my grades.”

“Teachers appreciated my bilingual skills.”

Teachers’ Attitudes

Respondents said that as a result of their participation in the class, they felt that teachers’ attitudes about them as students had improved. They said teachers thought they were more serious students and more hardworking, and teachers had greater respect and faith in their abilities. Increased teacher interest, support, and attention were commonly mentioned.

“I think they realized I was trying hard; they appreciated it.”

“Made me stand out because I wanted to learn.”

“Many teachers were impressed I had taken [an] AP course in eighth grade.”

“Teachers would talk to me with a lot more respect.”

“They supported me more.”

“They thought of me as smarter because I was bilingual.”

Future Objectives

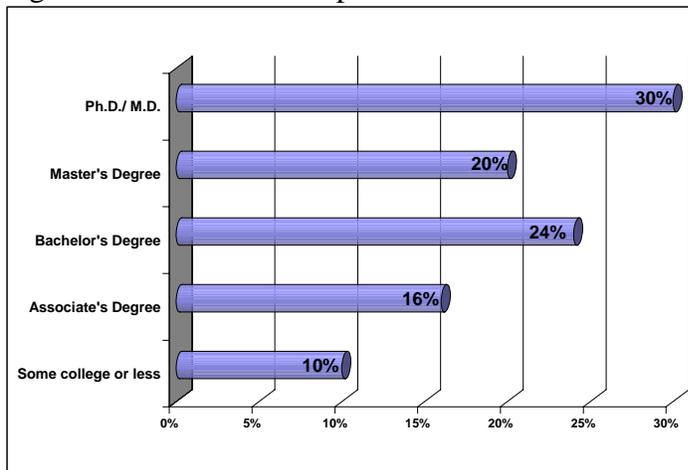
The survey included questions about student goals and plans for the future. Students identified providing quality opportunities for their children, pursuing an education, and work and career issues as their top four most important future considerations. “Being able to give my children better opportunities than I’ve had,” was ranked most frequently as “very important” by respondents (96%). Ninety-three percent of respondents felt pursuing an education was “very important.” Both “being successful in my line of work” (92%) and “being able to find steady work” (88%) were also cited frequently as “very important” to respondents.

College Plans

The majority of students (88%) reported they planned to apply to college. Students were further asked to identify colleges or universities to which they had or would apply. Most identified Texas public and private institutions that were primarily four-year universities, including both flagship and satellite campuses. Relatively few students reported they would apply to community colleges or out-of-state institutions.

Half of the surveyed students aspired to advanced degrees, and almost 75% planned to go to college immediately after high school. Approximately 25% felt they would finish a four- or five-year college degree, while 20% identified a master’s degree or equivalent as a target. Additionally, 30% of respondents indicated they hoped to obtain a Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced degree. Only 16% of respondents thought they would complete two or more years of college only (including a two-year degree), and under 10% indicated they expected to complete less than two years of post-secondary education.

Figure 5.2. Educational aspirations



Source. Survey data

In preparation for applying to college, more than 64% of respondents reported they had taken or planned to take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), and a total of 68% either planned or had already taken the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) during the

2005–06 academic year. Over half the students reported that they had taken or planned to take the American College Testing (ACT) exam in 2005–06.

Table 5.5. Completed or planned participation in college entrance exam

Exam	% taking or planning to take
Pre-SAT	64%
SAT	68%
ACT	54%

Source. Survey data

About half of the students indicated that their parents had participated in college-related workshops with them.

Careers

Students were also asked to predict the job or occupation they planned to have right after high school and also when they were 30 years old. Jobs planned for after high school were scattered across categories ranging from clerical to professional and including most sectors (agriculture, military, education, sales, service, and technical). By the age of 30, over half of the students anticipated they would be in professional positions.

Students who participated in the program indicated they were positively impacted in terms of their interest in school, plans to go to college, academic skills, associations with peers, plans for career choices, relationships with teachers, and teachers' attitudes towards students. Most participating students were actively planning to attend college, many aspired to advanced degrees, and over half planned to pursue careers in professional fields.

CHAPTER 6—TRENDS AND ISSUES WITH POTENTIAL FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROGRAM

Evaluation Question:

- What are some issues that are likely to impact the program in the future?

This chapter looks at participation and exam performance trends in participating districts and provides information related to issues that could influence program continuation, growth, and student impacts at both the pilot and scale-up sites, as well as at the new group of 59 campuses that began offering the AP Spanish Language course to eighth graders in 2006–07.

Participation and Expansion Trends and Projections

Pilot and Scale-Up Districts

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish, which was first implemented in the 2000–01 school year, has been continued in each of the seven districts involved in the pilot. The number of middle school campuses offering the course in most of these districts has expanded as well. In fact, in two of the pilot districts that serve majority Hispanic student populations, all or most of the middle schools in the district now offer the program.

In four of the seven pilot districts, student participation in the program has doubled or tripled between 2000 and 2006. All of these districts were or have become majority Hispanic. Of the pilot districts serving more diverse student populations, participation has remained relatively constant or declined slightly. In one of these districts, however, participation doubled in the first three years of the program but decreased after a shift to block scheduling in 2004–05, according to the district program coordinator.

Table 6.1. Student participation in pilot districts, 2000 to 2006

District	% of Hispanic students in district 2000–01	% of Hispanic students in district 2005–06	Number of participating students					
			00–01	01–02	02–03	03–04	04–05	05–06
Austin	48	55	49	28	31	31	17	15
Brownsville	97	98	132	144	195	278	239	283
Irving	49	60	27	63	93	159	168	171
McKinney	20	22	30	39	79	49	16	17
Tyler	27	38	13	22	17	25	10	13
Valley View	100	100	43	50	70	76	82	65
Ysleta	88	91	52	71	110	118	276	278
TOTAL			346	416	595	726	808	842

Source. District-reported data

For the group of 13 scale-up sites, the number of campuses offering the program and student participation increased slightly overall in the second and third years of implementation. A few scale-up sites expanded participation by offering several sections of the course at some campuses, and several districts expanded the program to additional middle schools. Compared to the original pilot sites, however, growth in these sites has not been nearly as dramatic, even in districts serving mostly Hispanic student populations. One campus dropped out of the program entirely. While it was beyond the scope of the evaluation to determine causes for the comparative modest program growth at these sites as compared to the pilot sites, several possibilities exist. The lower expansion rate could be due to the lack of continued funding to promote program expansion.²⁷ However, growth at some campuses and not others could indicate that local factors, such as leadership and commitment to the program, in addition to student demographics, are more influential.

Table 6.2. Student participation in scale-up districts, 2003 to 2006

District	% of Hispanic students in district 2003–04	% of Hispanic students in district 2005–06	Number of participating students		
			03–04	04–05	05–06
Aldine	58	61	27	31	21
Canutillo	96	95	18	14	32
Comanche	39	42	13	10	12
Fabens	98	98	20	20	17
Garland	35	39	16	30	30
Harlandale	95	95	7	13	9
Hidalgo	98	100	24	29	42
Houston	58	58	17	19	22
Los Fresnos	93	94	13	22	40
Northside	59	61	16	38	39
Spring Branch	53	52	21	53	59
Tyler (Dogan)	32	34	10	17	*
Waco	46	48	44	54	57
TOTAL			246	350	380

Source. District-reported data; AEIS; College Board May 2006 AP Score Distribution Report: Texas

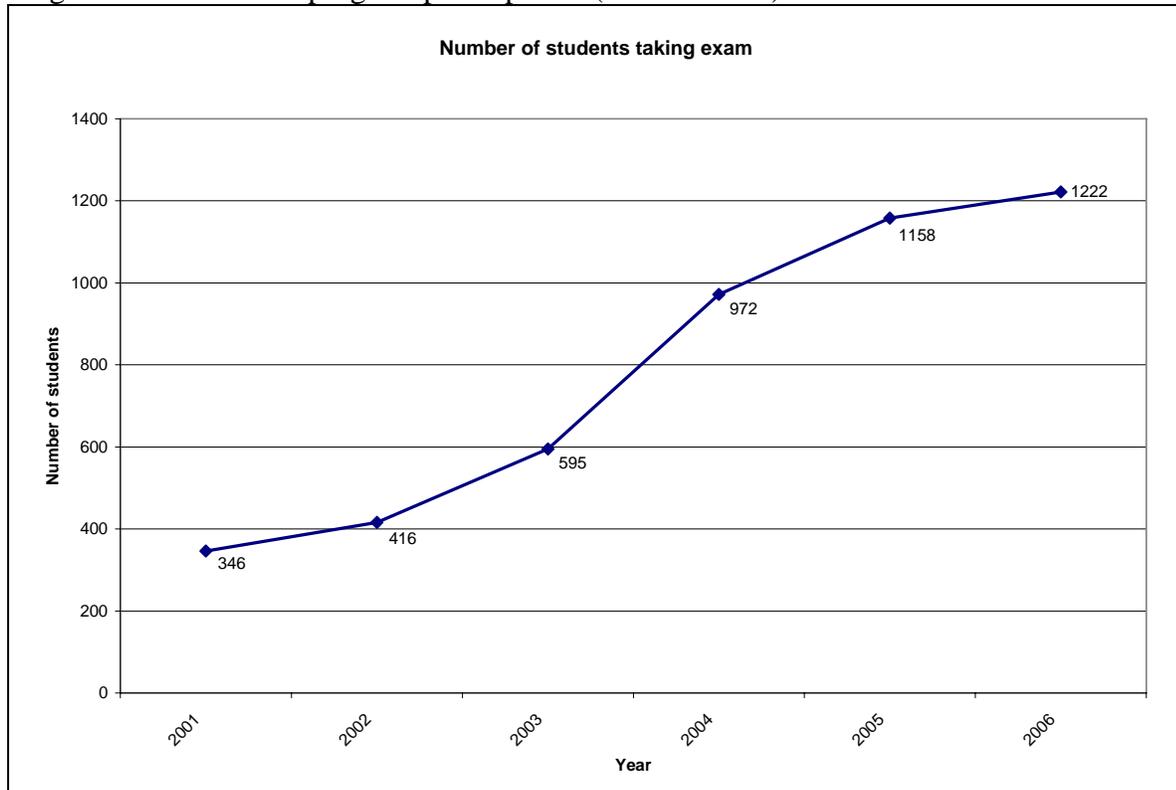
*Program discontinued at the Dogan Middle School campus.

Statewide, participation increased by 17% between the first and second years of the program, by 30% between the second and third years, by 39% between years 3 and 4 (when the scale-up districts implemented new programs), by 16% between 2003–04 and 2004–05, and by 5% between 2004–05 and 2005–06. Overall, after a five-year period of significant expansion—both through local expansion efforts and the scale-up efforts

²⁷ Pilot districts received small grants to serve as mentors and expand program as part of the scale-up project.

promoted through the state grant program—growth in participation seems to be leveling off at the existing campuses.

Figure 6.1. Growth in program participation (2001 to 2006)



Source. District-reported data

Statewide Expansion Program

In March 2005, TEA awarded \$10,000 planning grants to an additional 59 campuses to implement the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. Some of the campuses applying for funds were in districts that had participated in the pilot or scale-up program and were already operating programs in one or more middle schools. Other districts that had not previously offered the program applied on behalf of one or multiple campuses in the district. (See Appendix A for a list of 2005 expansion sites.)

Grantees in this second phase of expansion began offering the class to eighth graders in fall 2006. As of April 1, 2006, most grantees returning planning grant progress reports to TEA indicated they had completed or almost completed student identification for 2006–07 enrollment in the course. Based on this district-reported data, a broad estimate of enrollment in the course at these campuses would be around 850 students.

While enrollment projections for 2006–07 were not requested from the seven pilot and 13 scale-up districts, participation in these districts over the previous two years totaled above 1,000. Thus, a conservative estimate for 2006–07 statewide enrollment in the eighth-

grade middle school course including all sites receiving TEA program grants at some time since 2000 would be 1,850 to 2,000 students.²⁸

Student Exam Performance and Changes in the AP Spanish Language Exam

Student performance on the AP Spanish Language has been consistently high. For four continuous years (2001 to 2004), approximately 90% or more of participating students who took the test received a score of 3, 4, or 5 on the exam. Generally, students who receive a score of 3 or better on AP exams are eligible for college credit at most colleges and universities. In the second and third years of the program when students selected for program participation became more representative of their peers, the number of students receiving scores of 3 or better on the AP Spanish Language examination increased. Further, in 2003–04, when enrollment increased by almost 40% with the addition of the scale-up districts to the program, the percentage of students scoring 3 or better on the exam only decreased 2% from the previous year. (See Figure 6.2.)

In May 2005, however, the percentage of students scoring 3 or better on the AP Spanish Language exam dropped considerably (15%) across all schools and districts participating in the program, from 93% scoring 3 or above in May 2004 to 78% in 2005. This drop coincided with changes to the AP exam. According to the College Board website, these changes involved the following: “the number of multiple-choice question types was reduced. Specifically, the cloze and error recognition parts no longer appear. While there will be an increase in the number of questions in the remaining types, the number of multiple-choice questions will decrease overall.”²⁹

In response, TEA initiated an awareness and professional development effort to inform program staff about the exam changes. In 2006, exam performance improved from 78% scoring 3 or above in 2005 to 86% in 2006.

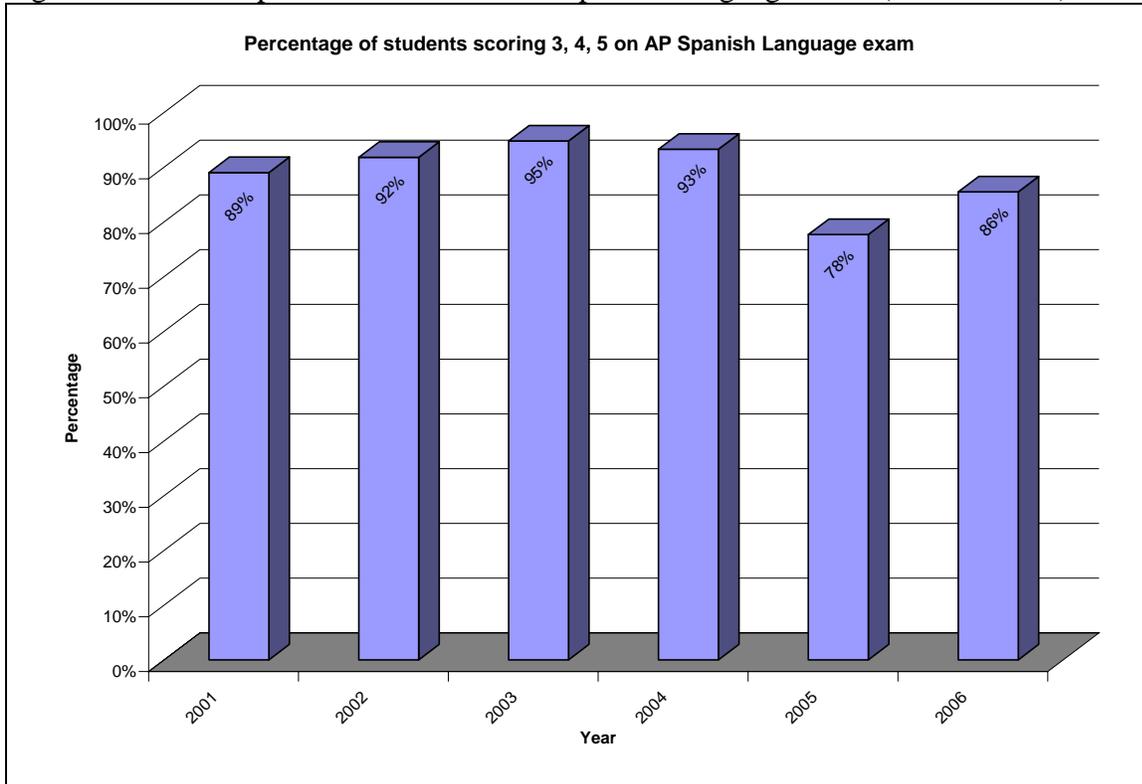
While it is beyond the scope of the evaluation to definitively link performance on the exam to the changes in the exam format or awareness of the changes, it is possible that changes in the exam could impact performance. In May 2007, additional changes to the exam will be implemented. According to the College Board AP Spanish Language course description, the changes will again reflect a new format for the exam and new question types will be introduced.³⁰

²⁸ Please note, these enrollment projections do not include the number of students enrolled in Pre-AP Spanish courses in sixth and seventh grade at many of the participating campuses.

²⁹ See http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/repository/ap05_2006_exam_format_46933.pdf. Cloze testing is common in language testing. In a cloze test passage, words are left out of the text, usually every fifth or seventh word, and readers are asked to fill in the blank.

³⁰ See <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/members/article/1,3046,151-165-0-50015,00.html#changes>.

Figure 6.2. Student performance on the AP Spanish Language exam (2001 to 2006)



Source. District-reported data

Since its inception, the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish has grown from serving approximately 350 students in the program pilot to over 1,000 students per year. The program has continued at almost of all of the original sites that implemented it during the pilot and scale-up programs. With a 2005 expansion program and distribution of planning grants to 59 additional campuses, student participation in 2006–07 could reach 2,000 students. The first four years of the program, performance on the AP Spanish Language examination reflected a high level of student success with over 90% of students receiving a score of 3 or better. These scores usually qualify students for college credit at most colleges and universities. In 2005, however, a drop in student performance on the exam coincided with changes to the exam. In 2006, exam performance improved from 2005 scores but did not reach the 90% level of previous years. Changes to the exam in 2007 also could impact student performance.

CHAPTER 7—SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of findings including the characteristics of participating students; the relationship between program participation and long-term, school-related outcomes for students at the pilot districts; student perceptions of program impacts; and trends and issues that could impact the program in the future. Conclusions and recommendations follow.

Summary of Findings

Characteristics of Participating Students

The evaluation compared the characteristics of students selected for program participation during the first three years of the program (2000–01, 2001–02, 2003–04) with peer groups of all Hispanic, Spanish-speaking students at the same campuses. The analysis looked at income status, identification as Limited English Proficient (LEP), prior performance on statewide examinations, and gender. Grant guidelines stipulated that all students identified for program participation be Hispanic and Spanish-speaking (as determined by local home language survey or other means). No information was available to the evaluators about additional selection criteria or processes for identifying students for participation in the program. These decisions were made locally by schools and districts implementing the program. The findings on characteristics of participating students are important for understanding the longer term outcomes data presented in this report.

- *In the pilot year of the program, while the participant group reflected the economic status of its peer group, grantees appeared to be selective in identifying students to participate in terms of LEP status and prior performance on state examinations.*
 - In the first year of the program, 93% of participating students were economically disadvantaged compared to 95% of their peers.
 - Also in Year 1, 32% of participants were identified as LEP compared to 45% of their peers.
 - Eighth-grade students enrolled in the program in Year 1 had higher average seventh-grade statewide examination scores than their peers—14% higher in reading and 12% higher in mathematics.
- *Overall, in the second and third years of the pilot program, eighth-grade students enrolled in the program tended to be more representative of their Hispanic, Spanish-speaking peers.*
 - In Year 2, 95% of participants and 95% of their peers were economically disadvantaged; 90% of participants were economically disadvantaged compared to 93% of the peer group in Year 3.
 - In Year 2, 38% of participants were identified as LEP compared to 39% of their peers. In Year 3, 37% of participants were LEP compared to 37% of their peers.

- For both Years 2 and 3, the average of participants' scores on seventh-grade state assessments was only 4% higher in reading and 2% higher in mathematics than the average of scores for their peers.
- *In Years 2 and 3, in comparison with peer groups, the program served a higher percentage of “LEP exempt”—LEP students identified for exemption on statewide examinations. Representation in the program group was 7-10% higher than representation of these students in the peer groups.*
- *Schools/districts tended to select more females than males for participation in the program. Student participation data reflect a disproportionate number of female participants in comparison with peer groups.*

Relationships Between Program Participation and Long-Term, School-Related Student Outcomes

The evaluation looked at three groups of eighth-grade students who participated in the pilot program in 2000–01, 2001–02, and 2002–03 and compared them with peer groups across a range of longer term outcomes in high school. Specifically, participants were compared with non-participating peers in terms of high school attendance, performance on TAKS, AP course taking, and graduation.

- *Data do not suggest that attendance over the long term is impacted by program participation. Throughout high school, attendance rates for participant groups did not differ statistically or practically from those of peer groups.*
- *It is possible that program participation positively impacted TAKS performance in reading/English language arts. Comparing students who participated in the second and third years of the program with peers, differences in high school TAKS performance in reading were statistically significant. No impacts on TAKS performance in either subject area were found for Year 1 participants. Impacts on mathematics performance were only statistically significant for the group of students who participated in Year 3 of the program.*
- *Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to complete one or more AP courses in high school. Fifty-one percent of students who participated in Year 1 of the program took at least one AP course in high school compared to 13% of their peers. AP course-taking data through 11th grade for students who participated in Year 2 of the program supported this finding: 46% took at least one AP course compared to 17% of their peers.*
- *Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to complete an AP course in English Language and Composition in high school. Of those students participating in the first and second years of the program, 14% and 17% respectively took the AP English Language and Composition course in high school compared to 5% and 9% of their peers.*

- *The most frequently taken AP examinations taken in high school by participating students were English Language and Composition, U.S. History, AP Spanish Literature and Composition, English Literature and Composition, and Calculus AB.*
- *Information on AP exam performance by participants in high school was limited, but data suggest that participating students do not perform well on AP exams in high school in subject areas other than Spanish. While 22 of the 49 students for whom scores on AP Spanish Literature exam were available received scores of 3 or better on a 5-point scale, most students for whom scores were reported for AP exams in other subject areas received scores of 1 or 2.*
- *Students who participated in the program were more likely than their peers to graduate early and/or graduate under the Distinguished Achievement Program. Of those students participating in the first year of the program, 5% graduated early (in 11th grade) compared to 3% of their peers. Of those students who participated in the second year of the program, 8% graduated early, compared to 2% of their peers. Overall, higher percentages of participating students graduated under the Distinguished Achievement Program than their peers.*

Student Perceptions of Program Impacts

Surveys of one group of students—those participating in the second year of the program in 2001–02 (Participant Group 2)—were designed to capture student perceptions of areas in which they were impacted by participation in the program. Students who participated in the survey were those who were still enrolled in the same district as the middle school they attended. It should be noted that student mobility and student willingness to respond to the survey could have biased survey results.

- *The majority of students reported positive impacts on their academic lives. Students perceived program participation to positively affect their interest in school, plans to go to college, and academic skills.*
 - Increased student interest in school was related to opportunities for advancement, enhanced engagement in learning, and increased confidence and motivation.
 - Plans to go to college were enhanced by advanced course/college credit, awareness of opportunities, and increased confidence.
 - Academic skills were developed by exposure to higher expectations, dedication to working hard, and language-related skill improvement.
- *Relationships and career awareness represented other areas in which students were positively impacted. Communication and identification with peers, plans for career choices, relationships with teachers, and teachers' attitudes towards students were other areas in which over half the respondents reported positive impacts.*
 - Students identified and bonded with classmates in the middle school AP course.
 - Students were better able to communicate with peers and strengthen relationships with other Spanish speakers.
 - Student perspectives on career opportunities were broadened.
 - Student confidence and aspirations in terms of career choices were enhanced.

- Students valued the development of their bilingual skills, especially in terms of future careers.
- Students were better able to communicate with their teachers.
- Students felt their teachers respected them more.
- *Students did not perceive English language skills or relationships with counselors to be areas of high positive impact.*
- *The majority of participating students aspired to advanced degrees.*

Trends and Issues With Potential Future Implications

Several issues that could inform or influence the continuation of the program were investigated. These include program expansion and student participation trends, new program implementation, performance on the AP Spanish Language examination, and future changes on the AP Spanish Language exam.

- *Schools and districts implementing the program tended to continue and expand the program at the original campuses and at additional campuses in the district.* The number of schools offering the program and the number of students participating in the program has grown relatively steadily since its inception in 2000–01 from approximately 17 schools offering the program to 350 students in 2000 to approximately 50 schools offering the program to more than 1,000 students in 2005–06. Data indicate that this expansion trend could be leveling off.
- *Program growth was most consistent in districts serving a majority Hispanic student population.*
- *The majority of participating eighth graders earned a 3, 4, or 5 on the AP Spanish Language examination making them eligible for college credit.* Approximately 90% of participating students each year from 2001 to 2004 scored 3 or above on the exam.
- *Changes to the exam format could impact student performance.* In 2004–05, changes in the format of the AP Spanish Language examination coincided with a drop in the percentage of students receiving scores of 3 or better on the exam from 93% in 2004 to 78% in 2005. In 2005–06, performance of participating students improved from 2004–05 rates to 86% scoring 3 or better. Upcoming changes on the 2007 exam also could impact student performance.
- *Statewide participation in the program should increase in 2006–07 with new program implementation at an additional 59 campuses.* Projected statewide participation for 2006–07 is approximately 2,000.

Conclusions

- Schools and/or districts tended to be more selective in program enrollment the initial program pilot year. Student participants were less representative of their Hispanic, Spanish-speaking peers and most were already higher performing students (in terms of performance on state assessments). Perhaps grantees chose these students for the pilot year of the program because they were not certain eighth-grade students could handle the rigor of the AP course. In subsequent years, however, after the first group of participants performed well on the exam, sites tended to open up enrollment to a broader group of students that was more representative of the eligible pool of Spanish-speaking students on their campuses. Findings from Year 1, when districts were more selective, were generally supported by Year 2 findings, when selection was more representative.
- The program goal to promote the academic success of participating students was met in terms of improvements on TAKS, especially in reading. Data suggest that participating students performed better in high school reading TAKS than their peers. Participating students also took more advanced courses (specifically AP courses) in high school than their peers.
- Survey data indicated that student self-confidence and motivation and academic self-image were positively affected by program participation, which is another goal of the program. The program goal to support student aspirations and preparation for college also was met in the sense that survey data suggest some students who participate in the program began to think of themselves as “college material” as a result of being in the course and aspired not only to a college education but to advanced degrees. However, only about a third of survey respondents reported participation in college preparatory programs. Further, poor performance on AP exams could limit student access to competitive four-year colleges and could be an indicator of underpreparedness for the rigors of college. A need for continued academic support for some of these students in high school is indicated.
- Survey data indicating that participation in the program improved student-to-student and student-to-teacher relationships suggests that the program helps to build some of the social scaffolding in school that research suggests supports the academic success of low-income, language-minority students.
- Enhanced bilingual skills were of value to participating students on a variety of levels. Survey data indicated that students felt the course helped them communicate and have better relationships with other Spanish speakers. Further, students specifically reported their enhanced understanding of the value of being bilingual in terms of expanded career opportunities.
- Overall, data indicated that the program is sustainable once established and is replicable both within districts and across a range of types of school communities. All districts that piloted the program in 2000 continued it through 2006 and most, usually those serving high percentages of Hispanic students, expanded the program

significantly within the district. The viability of the program could be due to the existing infrastructure of the AP program. AP courses, with their established curricula, teacher training, state reimbursement for teacher training, and standardized exam administration can be integrated into the school without requiring a huge investment in new infrastructure or resources or large amounts of funding to establish or sustain.

- The drop of 15% in scores of 3 or better on the AP Spanish Language exam associated with changes to the exam in 2005 has possible implications for both the continued expansion of the program and student outcomes. First, it is likely that the high level of student performance on the exam is linked to the continued local commitment to the program in most districts and has contributed to its continuation and expansion at many sites. Most years of the program less than 10% of participating students received low scores of 1 or 2 on the exam. With the drop in performance, and the possible similar impacts of the 2007 changes to the exam, however, local staff may find it more difficult to “sell” the program even though exam performance is still high. Further, while analysis of the relationship between how well a participating student performed on the exam in eighth grade and high school outcomes was beyond the scope of this evaluation, the links in terms of student confidence and motivation are possible and indeed probable. Clearly, teachers at the existing sites need to be made aware of the changes on the exam in order to adjust their teaching strategies to better prepare their students for success on the exam.
- Finally, while this study has shown some interesting preliminary findings about the possible impacts of the program on participating students broadly speaking, it also has raised some provocative questions about the context for the program at individual schools and the impacts on individual participants or types of participants. For example, on the school level, how do schools select students for participation among a pool of “eligible” low-income, Hispanic, Spanish-speaking students? Which schools provide continued services that support student academic success and aspirations for college? What are the practices at the school level that result in higher rates of advanced course taking by participant students once they enter high schools? How are programs different at high poverty schools serving majority Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students than at more affluent schools serving smaller numbers of Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students?

At the student level, what else can we find out about the students who are participating in this program? Are there differences in program benefits between immigrant and U.S.-born, Spanish-speaking participants or between first and later generation immigrants? What individual outcomes are most likely for students with different backgrounds? What differences are there in outcomes for students with differing language abilities at the outset in English and/or Spanish? Different genders? What are the different high school academic trajectories of students who receive high, middle range, and low scores on the AP Spanish Language exam in eighth grade?

Based on the study findings and conclusions, the evaluators present the following recommendations.

Recommendations

- An emphasis in the program has been to help participating students identify themselves as high achievers and have greater access to the opportunities that schools can provide. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) should investigate ways to help deliver on this promise and find ways to provide continued support to participating students as they move into high school. Thus, additional research on TEA's scale-up program approach of middle school/high school collaborations to offer a two-year AP Spanish Literature course early in high school for students who participate in the eighth-grade course is warranted. With approximately half the scale-up districts offering such programs, a comparison of impacts on course taking and performance on AP exams between schools offering the program and those not offering the program could be conducted. Findings could be useful to the 50 plus sites that will be implementing the program with the two-year AP Spanish Literature course after 2006–07.

An alternative would be to implement transitional and ongoing support programs, such as AVID, for students as they move into and through high school.

- TEA should investigate ways to provide ongoing or periodic supplemental training or build and support a network for AP teachers in existing middle school programs to keep them up-to-date with course and exam requirements. This need is highlighted by the fact that middle school AP teachers might be outside the traditional community of AP teachers and not be aware of program changes.
- TEA should investigate funding sources or establish partnerships to continue the program and support for schools offering it. This could include:
 - Seeding additional program implementation at new schools using the planning grant model with supplemental web-based support and other delivery methods.
 - Continuing to pair new sites with mentor sites.
 - Supporting meetings or workshops, perhaps associated with annual professional association meetings for bilingual and other language teachers, to introduce the program and provide implementation information and resources to support schools offering the program. Alternatively, regular professional development or ongoing program support offered at the state level or regionally through the education service centers for program participants is another option.
 - Researching and piloting programs and strategies that provide expanded high school support services for participating students.

- Developing the program website as a more dynamic, professional assistance site for program implementation and networking.
- TEA should support continued research on program approaches and impacts to identify best practices in local program implementation and develop a greater understanding of the impacts on individual students and different types of student groups.

This preliminary look at the long-term outcomes associated with participation in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish suggests that the program has likely had a positive impact on the lives of participants in terms of academic success in school, self-confidence, and preparation for the future. The evaluation also suggests that overall there are a variety of opportunities to enhance the program by providing additional support to schools and students participating in the program. Further, the evaluation findings highlight the need for continued research to further identify promising practices and verify the viability and potential impact of the program as a statewide initiative geared to addressing the future dramatic growth of the Spanish-speaking population in Texas public schools.

Appendix A

Appendix A—2005 Expansion Program Grantees

District	Campus
Aldine ISD	Hambrick MS
Alief ISD	Alief MS
Alvin ISD	Harby JH
Amarillo ISD	Bowie MS
Athens ISD	Athens MS
Beaumont ISD	Odem Acacemy
Carrizo Springs ISD	Carrizo Springs JH
Carrolton-Farmers Branch	Fields MS
Corsicana ISD	Collins MS
El Paso ISD	Guillen MS
Everman ISD	Everman Jr. High
Fort Bend	Lake Olympia MS
Ft Worth ISD	Elder MS
Ft Worth ISD	McLean MS
Ft Worth ISD	Meachum MS
Ft Worth ISD	Rosemont MS
Garland ISD	Bussey MS
Garland ISD	Jackson MS
Garland ISD	MST Center
Grand Prairie ISD	Robert E. Lee MS
Houston Gateway Academy	
Houston ISD	Deady MS
Houston ISD	Hamilton MS
Houston ISD	Hartman MS
Hurst-Euless Bedord ISD	Hurst JH
Klein ISD	Wuderlich Intermediate
LaJoya ISD	Chavez MS
LaJoya ISD	DeZavala MS
LaJoya ISD	Garcia MS
LaJoya ISD	Memorial MS
LaJoya ISD	Richards MS
LaJoya ISD	Schunior MS
Lancaster ISD	Lancaster JH
Laredo ISD	Cigarro MS
Lewisville ISD	DeLay MS
Little Elm ISD	Lakeside JH
Mansfield ISD	Worley MS
Marble Falls ISD	Marble Falls MS
Mesquite ISD	Agnew MS
New Summerfield ISD	New Summerfields MS
North East ISD	Nimitz MS
Northside ISD	Sul Ross MS
Pflugerville ISD	Dessau MS
Pflugerville ISD	Westview MS
Plano ISD	Armstrong MS
Plano ISD	Bowman MS

Plano ISD	Carpenter MS
Plano ISD	Murphy MS
Plano ISD	Wilson MS
San Antonio ISD	Irving MS
San Antonio ISD	Lowell MS
San Antonio ISD	Tafolla MS
San Antonio ISD	Whittier MS
Spring Branch ISD	Cornerstone MS
Spring Branch ISD	Spring Woods HS
Spring Branch ISD	Westchester MS
Uvalde ISD	Uvalde JH
West Oso ISD	West Oso J H
Willis ISD	Brabham MS
Willis ISD	Lynn Lucas MS

Appendix B

**Advanced Placement Spanish Language Middle School Program
Participant Survey**

CONFIDENTIAL

This questionnaire will ask about your experiences related to participation in the AP Spanish Language Middle School Program and its impact. The questionnaire responses are confidential and will not be linked to specific individuals. All information we receive from participants will be summarized. If you would like to provide us with additional information, please feel free to add comments.

We recognize that your time is valuable and appreciate your help in gathering this information. Thank you for responding.

Date: _____

District: _____

Middle School: _____ High School: _____

Gender: _____ (M/F) Grade: _____

ACADEMICS

1. In which program did you enroll in high school? *Circle only **one** number.*

- College prep, academic, or specialized academic (such as Science or Math) (1)
- Vocational, technical, or business and career (2)
- General high school plan (3)
- Other specialized high school (such as Fine Arts) (4)
- Other (5)
- I don't know (6)

2. How often have you talked in the past to the following people about planning your high school program? *Circle **one** number on each line.*

	Not at all	Once or twice	Three or more times
a. Your father (or male guardian)	1	2	3
b. Your mother (or female guardian)	1	2	3
c. A guidance counselor	1	2	3

d. Teachers	1	2	3
e. Other adult relatives or friends	1	2	3
f. Friends or relatives about your own age	1	2	3

3. During your high school career, have you talked to a counselor at your school, a teacher at your school, or another adult relative or adult friend (other than your parents) for any of the following reasons? (ANSWER “YES” OR “NO” TO EACH QUESTION FOR COLUMNS A, B, AND C.)

	A		B		C	
	Counselor Yes	No	Teacher Yes	No	Other Adult Relative/Friend Yes	No
a. To get information about high schools or high school programs	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
b. To get information about jobs or careers that you might be interested in after finishing school	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
c. To help improve your academic work in school	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
d. To select courses or programs at school	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
e. Things you’ve studied in class	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N

Sometimes students are put in different groups so that they are with other students of similar ability. The next questions are about ability groups in certain school subjects.

4. What ability group are you in for the following classes? *Circle one number on each line.*

	High	Middle	Low	We aren’t grouped	I don’t know
a. Mathematics	1	2	3	4	5
b. Science	1	2	3	4	5
c. Language Arts/Reading	1	2	3	4	5
d. Foreign Language (i.e. Spanish or French)	1	2	3	4	5
e. Social Studies	1	2	3	4	5

5. For each of the school subjects listed below, mark the statement that best describes your grades for the eighth grade up till now? (Choose one letter grade for each subject.)

	A (90-100)	B (80-89)	C (70-79)	D (60-69)	Below 60
a. Language arts/reading	4	3	2	1	0
b. Mathematics	4	3	2	1	0
c. Foreign Language (i.e. Spanish or French)	4	3	2	1	0
d. Science	4	3	2	1	0
e. Social Studies	4	3	2	1	0

6. Are you enrolled in advanced, enriched, or accelerated courses in any of the following areas? (ANSWER “YES” OR “NO” FOR EACH LINE.)

	Yes	No
a. Language arts/reading	Y	N
b. Mathematics	Y	N
c. Foreign Language (i.e. Spanish or French)	Y	N
d. Science	Y	N
e. Social Studies	Y	N

7. Did your school offer all the courses you wanted to take in high school?

YES

NO

8. If no, which courses would you have liked to have taken that were not offered?

9. Are you or have you been enrolled in the past in any of the following special programs/services? (ANSWER “YES” OR “NO” FOR EACH LINE.)

Yes	No
-----	----

a. Classes for gifted or talented students Y N

b. Special instruction for those whose first language is not English Y N

10. Do you ever feel bored when you are at school? *Circle **one** only.*

- Never (1)
- Once in a while (2)
- About half of the time (3)
- Most of the time (4)

11. Were you ever held back (made to repeat) a grade in school?

YES NO

If yes, indicate at which grade level(s) you repeated:

- a. Kindergarten (0)
- b. Grade 1 (1)
- c. Grade 2 (2)
- d. Grade 3 (3)
- e. Grade 4 (4)
- f. Grade 5 (5)
- g. Grade 6 (6)
- h. Grade 7 (7)
- i. Grade 8 (8)
- j. Grade 9 (9)
- k. Grade 10 (10)
- l. Grade 11 (11)
- m. Grade 12 (12)

12. How many days of school did you miss over the past year?

- a. None (0)
- b. 1 or 2 days (1)
- c. 3 or 4 days (2)
- d. 5 to 10 days (3)
- e. More than 10 days (4)

13. Have you participated in any of the following **school** activities during the current school year, either as a member, or as an officer (for example, vice-president, coordinator, team captain)? *Circle **one** number on each line.*

Did not participate	Participated as a member	Participated as an officer
---------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------

a. Academic organizations/clubs	1	2	3
b. Vocational education organizations/clubs	1	2	3
c. Fine arts organizations/clubs	1	2	3
d. Athletic organizations/clubs	1	2	3
e. Religious organizations/clubs	1	2	3
f. Other organizations/clubs	1	2	3

14. Compared to your peers, how would you rate yourself on the following items? *Circle one number on each line.*

	Less/worse than peers	Same as peers	More/better than peers
a. Grades	1	2	3
b. Amount of time spent on homework	1	2	3
c. Amount of time spent in academic-related activities	1	2	3
d. Amount of time spent in non-academic activities	1	2	3
e. Amount of time spent on paid work	1	2	3

15. During high school, have you had a paying job, not counting chores around the house or summer jobs? On average, how many hours do you work/have you worked a week for pay? *Circle one only.*

- None, never work for pay (1)
- Up to 4 hours a week (2)
- 5-10 hours a week (3)
- 11-20 hours a week (4)
- 21 or more hours a week (5)

16. Which of the job categories below comes closest to the kind of work you do/did for pay on your current or most recent job? (Do not include work around the house. If more than one kind of work, choose the one that paid you the most per hour.) *Circle one only.*

- Have not worked for pay (1)
- Yard work (2)
- Waiter or waitress (3)
- Newspaper route (4)

- Babysitting or childcare (5)
- Farm or agriculture work (6)
- Other manual labor (7)
- Store clerk, salesperson (8)
- Office or clerical (9)
- Odd jobs (10)
- Other (11)

If other, describe:

17. Did your participation in the 8th grade AP Spanish program positively affect the following areas? (ANSWER “YES” OR “NO” FOR EACH LINE.)

	Yes	No
a. Interest in school	Y	N
b. Relationships with teachers	Y	N
c. Teachers' attitudes towards you	Y	N
d. Counselors' attitudes towards you	Y	N
e. Time teachers spent with you	Y	N
f. Time counselors spent with you	Y	N
g. Academic skills	Y	N
h. English language skills	Y	N
i. Association with peers	Y	N
j. Plans to go to college	Y	N
k. Plans for career choices	Y	N

For each letter to which you responded “yes,” please indicate in what ways you were positively impacted.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

- g. _____
- h. _____
- i. _____
- j. _____
- k. _____

18. During your high school career, did your parents/guardians participate in any of the following school sponsored activities? (ANSWER “YES” OR “NO” FOR EACH LINE.)

	Yes	No
a. Session about college financial aid	Y	N
b. Session about college admissions processes	Y	N

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

19. How important is each of the following to you in your life? *Circle one number on each line.*

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
a. Being successful in my line of work	1	2	3
b. Finding the right person to marry and having a happy family life	1	2	3
c. Having lots of money	1	2	3
d. Having strong friendships	1	2	3
e. Being able to find steady work	1	2	3
f. Helping other people in my community	1	2	3
g. Being able to give my children better opportunities than I’ve had	1	2	3
h. Living close to parents and relatives	1	2	3
i. Getting away from this area of the country	1	2	3
j. Working to correct social and economic inequalities	1	2	3
k. Having children	1	2	3
l. Having leisure time to enjoy my own interests	1	2	3

m. Getting away from my parents	1	2	3
n. Pursuing an education	1	2	3

20. What do the following people think is the most important thing for you to do right after high school? *Circle one number on each line.*

	Does Not Apply	Go to college	Get a full-time job	Enter a trade school or an apprenticeship program	Enter military service	Get married	They think I should do what I want	They don't care	I don't know
a. Your father	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b. Your mother	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
c. Your friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
d. A close relative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e. School counselor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
f. Your favorite teacher	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
g. Coach	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
h. Yourself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

21. As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will get?
Circle only one number.

- Less than high school graduation (1)
- High school graduation only (2)
- Vocational, trade, or business school after high school:
 - Less than two years (3)
 - Two years or more (4)
- College program:
 - Less than two years of college (5)
 - Two or more years of college (including two-year degree) (6)
 - Finish college (four- or five-year degree) (7)
 - Master's degree or equivalent (8)

Ph.D., M.D., or other advanced professional degree

(9)

22. Have you taken or are you planning to take any of the following tests this year? *Circle one number on each line.*

	I haven't thought about it	No, don't plan to take	Yes, this year	Yes, already took
a. Pre-SAT test	1	2	3	4
b. College Board (SAT) Scholastic Aptitude Test	1	2	3	4
c. American College Testing (ACT) test	1	2	3	4
d. Advanced Placement (AP) test	1	2	3	4
e. College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)	1	2	3	4
f. Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)	1	2	3	4
g. Preliminary American College Testing (PACT) test	1	2	3	4

23. If you have already taken one of these tests, what did you score?

- a. Pre-SAT _____
- b. SAT _____
- c. ACT _____
- d. AP _____ Subject Area: _____
- e. AP _____ Subject Area: _____
- f. AP _____ Subject Area: _____
- g. CLEP _____

24. Do you plan to go to college after you graduate from high school? *Circle only one number.*

- No, don't plan to go to college (1)
- Yes, right after high school (2)
- Yes, after staying out of school

- for one year (3)
- Yes, after staying out of school for over a year (4)
- Don't know (5)

25. If you plan to go to college after high school, which schools have you/will you apply to?

26. Which of the categories below comes closest to describing the job or occupation that you expect or plan to have right after high school and when you are 30 years old? Even if you are not sure, mark your best guess. *Circle one number for each column.*

	Job after high school	Job at 30
CLERICAL such as bank teller, bookkeeper, secretary, typist, mail carrier, ticket agent	1	1
CRAFTSMAN such as baker, automobile mechanic, machinist, painter, plumber, telephone installer, carpenter	2	2
FARMER, FARM MANAGER	3	3
HOMEMAKER OR HOUSEWIFE ONLY	4	4
LABORER such as construction worker, car washer, sanitary worker, farm laborer	5	5
MANAGER, ADMINISTRATOR such as sales manager, office manager, school administrator, buyer, restaurant manager, government official	6	6
MILITARY such as career officer, enlisted man or woman in the Armed Forces	7	7
OPERATIVE such as meat cutter, assembler, machine operator, welder, taxicab, bus, or truck driver	8	8
PROFESSIONAL such as accountant, artist, registered nurse, engineer, librarian, writer, social worker, actor, actress, athlete, politician, but not including a school teacher	9	9
PROFESSIONAL such as a clergyman, dentist, physician, lawyer, scientist, college teacher	10	10
PROPRIETOR OR OWNER such as owner of a small business, contractor, restaurant owner	11	11

PROTECTIVE SERVICE such as detective, police officer or guard, sheriff, fire fighter	12	12
SALES such as salesperson, advertising or insurance agent, real estate broker	13	13
SCHOOL TEACHER such as elementary or secondary	14	14
SERVICE such as barber, beautician, practical nurse, private household worker, janitor, waiter	15	15
TECHNICAL such as draftsman, medical or dental technician, computer programmer	16	16
NOT PLANNING TO WORK	17	17
OTHER	18	18
DON'T KNOW	19	19

Student Exam Performance

Participating students have consistently performed well on the AP Spanish exam.

Percentage of Students Scoring 3, 4, or 5 on the Exam



Source: District Reported Data

Course Credit

The number of Spanish language high school graduation credits awarded to students for taking this course while in middle school is determined by the local school district.

AP Spanish Language is the equivalent of Spanish IV. Thus, many districts award credit not only for Spanish IV but also for prerequisite Spanish courses. Some districts may require students to earn credit by examination before awarding high school credit for lower level courses. Other districts have developed validation or credentialing policies to award credit automatically for lower level courses when an upper level course is successfully completed.

The district should evaluate local course credit policies to determine whether or not modifications should be made to support the program. Local policies can promote the success and impact of the program.

The amount of college credit students earn based on exam scores is determined by individual colleges and universities.

Contact Information

Dalissa Brandenburg

Director of AP/IB Incentives
Texas Education Agency
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us

María Fierro-Treviño

Director of Languages Other Than English
Texas Education Agency
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us

Marilyn Peebles

Coordinator, Advanced Academic Programs
Education Service Center, Region XIII
Office of Statewide Initiatives
512.919.5392
marilyn.peebles@esc13.txed.net

Visit the Texas
Middle School Program
for AP* Spanish
website at
www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org
for additional information.

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

Administrative Overview

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this brochure.

Purpose

The purpose of the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish is to raise the academic expectations of Spanish-speaking students and engage them in early preparation for college.

Why Offer Advanced Courses to Spanish-Speaking 8th Graders?

- The research on college access and success supports it.
- The AP Spanish Language course prepares students to be successful in the Recommended High School and Distinguished Achievement graduation programs.
- The AP Spanish program supports the goals of No Child Left Behind.
- The AP Spanish program promotes learning opportunities for at-risk students and may contribute to drop-out prevention.
- Advanced courses help address the needs of an increasing Spanish-speaking population in Texas public schools.

AP Spanish Language

AP Spanish Language is a course that develops students' proficiency in all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students enrolled in this course should have a basic knowledge of Spanish language and culture as well as intermediate-low level proficiency in the language skills.

Students scoring 3 or better on the AP Spanish Language examination demonstrate performance equivalent to students who have completed several semesters of college Spanish language courses.

Curriculum

The curriculum for the middle school program follows the College Board guidelines and objectives outlined for the AP Spanish Language course. In addition, the curriculum covers the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Languages Other Than English, which are required state standards.

Participating middle school students take the same AP Spanish Language examination as students who take the course in high school.

Student Benefits

Pilot schools found more than 89% of the participating middle school students scored high enough on the AP Spanish Language examination to be eligible for college credit.

Participating students also reported

- increased confidence in themselves and in their academic abilities;
- fewer disciplinary problems and absences;
- improved performance in other classes;
- increased enrollment in other honors and AP courses in high school;
- enhanced perceptions of college as an attainable, realistic goal; and
- improved skills that transfer to other test-taking experiences, including the state testing program.

Innovative programs like the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish can positively impact Hispanic college-going rates in Texas.

Eligible Students

Students should consider taking this course if they

- are Spanish speakers;
- have an intermediate-low level proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; and
- are willing to participate in a challenging educational opportunity.



Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

Parent Brochure



Eligible Students

Students should consider taking this course if they

- are Spanish speakers;
- have an intermediate-low level proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; and
- are willing to participate in a challenging educational opportunity.

Course Credit

AP Spanish Language is the equivalent of Spanish IV. Thus, many districts award credit not only for Spanish IV but also for prerequisite Spanish courses. Some districts may require students to earn credit by examination before awarding high school credit for lower level courses. Other districts have developed validation or credentialing policies to award credit automatically for lower level courses when an upper level course is successfully completed.

Parents and students should review local district policy or talk to a knowledgeable school official about award of course credit.

The amount of college credit students earn based on exam scores is determined by individual colleges and universities.

Contact Information

Dalissa Brandenburg

Director of AP/IB Incentives
Texas Education Agency
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us

María Fierro-Treviño

Director of Languages Other Than English
Texas Education Agency
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us

Marilyn Peebles

Coordinator, Advanced Academic Programs
Education Service Center, Region XIII
Office of Statewide Initiatives
512.919.5392
marilyn.peebles@esc13.txed.net

Visit the Texas
Middle School Program
for AP* Spanish
website at

www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org
for additional information.

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this brochure.

Purpose

The purpose of the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish is to raise the academic expectations of Spanish-speaking students and engage them in early preparation for college.

Program Summary

Research shows that the rigor of academic coursework a student undertakes in high school is key to predicting whether or not that student will go on to college and succeed there. Historically, minority students have not been well represented in college-preparatory courses.

To open up opportunities for college success for the state's Spanish-speaking students, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) created the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish in 2000 with a grant from the United States Department of Education (USDE).

The program encourages districts to offer the AP Spanish Language course to Spanish speakers while they are still in middle school. The program is designed to turn these students' first language into an academic asset, allowing them to take advanced courses early in their school careers.

Curriculum

The curriculum for the middle school program follows the College Board guidelines and objectives outlined for the AP Spanish Language course. In addition, the curriculum covers the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Languages Other Than English, which are required state standards.

Participating middle school students take the same AP Spanish Language examination as students who take the course in high school.

AP Spanish Language

AP Spanish Language is a course that develops students' proficiency in all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students enrolled in this course should have a basic knowledge of Spanish language and culture as well as intermediate-low level proficiency in the language skills.

Students scoring 3 or better on the AP Spanish Language examination demonstrate performance equivalent to students who have completed several semesters of college Spanish language courses.

Student Benefits

Pilot schools found more than 89% of the participating middle school students scored high enough on the AP Spanish Language examination to be eligible for college credit.

Participating students also reported

- increased confidence in themselves and in their academic abilities;
- improved performance in other classes;
- increased enrollment in other honors and AP courses in high school;
- enhanced perceptions of college as an attainable, realistic goal; and
- improved skills that transfer to other test-taking experiences, including the state testing program.

Recommended High School and Distinguished Achievement Programs

Middle school students participating in the AP Spanish Language course are eligible for high school credit. In most districts, students successfully completing this course may acquire all the foreign language credits required for the Recommended High School and Distinguished Achievement Programs. Further, students scoring 3 or better on the AP Spanish Language examination may earn one of the four advanced measures required for graduation under the Distinguished Achievement Program.



Estudiantes elegibles

Los estudiantes deben considerar tomar este curso si ellos:

- hablan español;
- tienen proficiencia al nivel intermedio-bajo en las destrezas de comprensión auditiva, lectura, escritura y expresión oral; y
- tienen deseo de participar en una oportunidad educativa que constituye un reto.

Crédito para el curso

El curso de Español AP es equivalente al curso de nivel cuatro así que los distritos otorgan crédito por este nivel y muchos distritos otorgan crédito automáticamente por los cursos que son pre-requeridos. Algunos distritos requieren que los estudiantes tomen un examen de crédito para los cursos anteriores antes de conceder el crédito. Otros distritos implementan políticas que validan y otorgan el crédito automáticamente para los cursos anteriores cuando el curso avanzado se termina con éxito.

Padres y estudiantes deben revisar la política del distrito o deben hablar con un oficial de la escuela que tenga conocimiento acerca de la política de crédito para este curso.

El número de créditos universitarios que el estudiante recibe se determinará por el colegio o la universidad a la cual el estudiante asistirá.

Para más información, póngase en contacto con

Dalissa Brandenburg

Director of AP/IB Incentives
Texas Education Agency
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us

María Fierro-Treviño

Director of Languages Other Than English
Texas Education Agency
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us

Marilyn Peebles

Coordinator, Advanced Academic Programs
Education Service Center, Region XIII
Office of Statewide Initiatives
512.919.5392
marilyn.peebles@esc13.txed.net

Visite el sitio web del Programa de las escuelas intermedias en Texas para la Colocación Avanzada de Español www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org para obtener información adicional.

Programa de las escuelas intermedias en Texas para la Colocación Avanzada de Español (AP*)

Folleto para padres



*AP, Programa de Advanced Placement y Pre-AP son marcas registradas del College Board el cual no promociona ni estuvo involucrado en el desarrollo de este folleto.

Propósito

El propósito del Programa de las escuelas intermedias en Texas para la Colocación Avanzada de Español (Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish) es de elevar las expectativas académicas de los hispanohablantes y prepararlos para estudios universitarios a una edad temprana.

Resumen del programa

La investigación ha demostrado que los estudios académicos rigurosos en los cuales un estudiante de la secundaria se inscribe es clave para predecir si el estudiante continuará y tendrá éxito en estudios universitarios. Históricamente, los estudiantes minoritarios no han sido bien representados en cursos que los preparan para la universidad.

En el año 2000, la Agencia de Educación de Texas desarrolló el Programa de las escuelas intermedias en Texas para la Colocación Avanzada de Español con una subvención del Departamento de Educación de los Estados Unidos para darles oportunidades a los hispanohablantes del estado para que tengan éxito en la universidad.

El programa anima a los distritos que ofrezcan el curso de Colocación Avanzada de Español a hispanohablantes mientras están en la escuela intermedia. El programa se ha diseñado para utilizar el idioma nativo de los estudiantes y valorarlo académicamente permitiéndoles que tomen cursos avanzados al principio de sus carreras educativas.

Colocación avanzada de español

El curso de Colocación Avanzada de Español es un curso que desarrolla la proficiencia de los estudiantes en las cuatro destrezas de comprensión auditiva, expresión oral, lectura y escritura. Los estudiantes que se inscriben en este curso deben tener conocimiento básico del español y de la cultura hispana. También deben tener proficiencia al nivel intermedio-bajo en las destrezas.

Los estudiantes que sacan una puntuación de 3 o mejor en el examen de Español AP demuestran el equivalente a estudiantes que han terminado varios semestres de cursos en español en la universidad.

Currículo

El currículo para el programa de las escuelas intermedias sigue las directrices y los objetivos diseñados por el College Board para el curso de Colocación Avanzada de Español. Adicionalmente, el currículo cubre los Conocimientos y Destrezas Esenciales de Texas para idiomas que no son el inglés.

Los estudiantes de la escuela intermedia toman el mismo examen de Español AP que los estudiantes en la escuela secundaria.

Ventajas para los estudiantes

Las escuelas piloto encontraron que más del 89 por ciento de los estudiantes que participaron en el programa, sacaron una puntuación bastante alta en el examen de Español AP para tener el derecho de recibir crédito universitario.

Los estudiantes que tomaron parte en el programa reportaron:

- aumento en su propia confianza y en su aptitud académica;
- aumento en su desempeño en otras clases;
- aumento en la matriculación en cursos de honores y avanzados (AP) en la escuela secundaria;
- aumento en su percepción de poder asistir a la universidad como una meta realista y alcanzable; y
- mejoramiento de sus destrezas que se pueden transferir a otras experiencias incluyendo el programa de evaluación del estado.

Los programas de los diplomas Recomendado (Recommended Plan) y Logro Distinguido (Distinguished Achievement Program) en la secundaria

Los estudiantes de las escuelas intermedias que participan en el curso de Colocación Avanzada de Español tienen el derecho de recibir crédito por el curso en la escuela secundaria. En muchos distritos, los estudiantes que terminan el curso con éxito pueden cumplir con todos sus créditos de idiomas extranjeros requeridos para los diplomas Recomendado y Logro Distinguido. Además, los estudiantes que logran una puntuación de 3 o más en el examen de Español AP cumplen una de las medidas avanzadas que se requiere para graduarse bajo el diploma de Logro Distinguido.



The Texas Education Agency's

Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish

An Overview



*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was involved in the production of this brochure.

<i>What is the AP Spanish Language Course?</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>What are the Benefits of Offering an AP Program?</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Why Offer Advanced Courses to Spanish-Speaking 8th Graders?</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>How Do Districts Implement the AP Spanish Language Program?</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>What is the Suggested Timeline for Implementation?</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Other Frequently Asked Questions</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Contact Information</i>	<i>17</i>

What is the AP Spanish Language Course?

AP Spanish Language is a course that develops and expands students' Spanish proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students increase their knowledge of Spanish language and culture while exploring the Spanish-speaking world through various classroom and community activities.

The course follows the College Board AP curriculum and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Languages Other Than English (LOTE). The course offers students the opportunity to take the AP Spanish Language examination. Students scoring 3 or better on the AP Spanish Language examination demonstrate performance equivalent to students who have completed several semesters of college Spanish language courses.





“The Spanish-speaking student is the strongest linguistic and cultural resource available to Texas teachers of languages other than English and one which must be recognized and developed to its full potential.”

—Español para el hispanohablante

What are the Benefits of Offering an AP Program?

For students, the AP program

- provides an individualized education plan;
- introduces students to challenging courses;
- develops an expectation that college is a realistic goal;
- increases self-confidence, motivation, and academic skills applicable across the curriculum;
- provides potential college credit for courses taken in middle and high school;
- provides recognition for successful performance; and
- provides an educational cost savings for families.

For districts, the AP program

- emphasizes the significance of rigorous academic coursework;
- provides opportunities for teachers to participate in high-level professional development;
- provides teachers and administrators with student performance data based on nationally recognized curriculum standards;
- encourages vertical alignment of the local curriculum;
- encourages districts to expand information resources and the use of technology within the school; and
- improves the articulation of high school and college curricula.

Why Offer Advanced Courses to Spanish-Speaking 8th Graders?

The research on college access and success supports it.

Research shows that the rigor of the academic coursework a student undertakes in high school is the primary predictor of access to and success in postsecondary education. Studies on college completion consistently identify the academic intensity and quality of the high school curriculum, rather than a student's test scores, class rank, or grade point average, as primary indicators of whether a student will obtain a college degree. This is especially true for students from economically disadvantaged and/or ethnic minority backgrounds. Additionally, research suggests strong correlations between student success in AP coursework and college completion. Students who score 3, 4, or 5 on one or more AP examinations are more likely than their peers to complete a bachelor's degree in four years or less (College Board, 2005). Thus, the inclusion of low-income students, particularly those of ethnic and racial minority groups, in advanced level courses has become a nationwide priority.

In Texas, the concern is even more pressing as the state's current student population is over 50% Hispanic, and almost 50% of students are at the poverty level. This research, along with data indicating that Hispanic students lag behind every other population group in attaining college degrees (Fry, 2002), prompted the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop and implement the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish with funds received through a grant from the United States Department of Education (USDE).

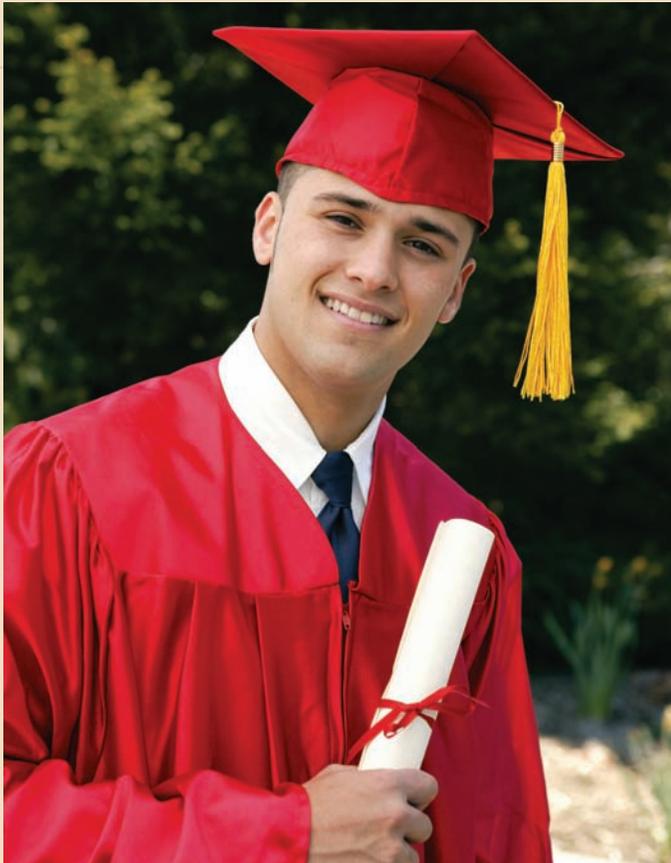
The AP Spanish Language course prepares students to be successful in the Recommended High School and Distinguished Achievement Programs.

Middle school students participating in the AP Spanish Language course are eligible for high school credit. In most districts, students successfully completing this course acquire all the foreign language credits required for the Recommended High School or Distinguished Achievement Programs. Further, students scoring 3 or better on the AP Spanish Language examination may earn one of the four advanced measures required for graduation under the Distinguished Achievement Program.

Evaluation data collected from districts that piloted the program indicate that participating students graduated early at a higher rate (7%) than their peers (2%). Further, a higher percentage of participants graduated under the Distinguished Achievement Program (32%) than their non-participating peers (23%).

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish supports the goals of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

The Texas plan for district accountability required by NCLB establishes goals for English Language Learners (ELL) and at-risk students. This program is designed to enhance achievement for students identified as ELL and/or at risk. Additionally, NCLB defines languages other than English as core academic subjects. Thus, student success in the AP Spanish program can contribute to meeting district AYP requirements.



Participants graduated under the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) at a higher rate (32%) than their peers (23%).

The Spanish-speaking population is increasing in Texas public schools.

During the last two decades, the Hispanic population in Texas has increased dramatically. With this growth, the number of public school students who speak Spanish as a first language has increased as well. Just over the past five years the number of students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) by Texas public schools increased approximately 25%, from 570,603 students in 2000-01 to 711,737 in 2005-06 (Texas Performance Education Information Management System). Projecting a rapid growth scenario for the state over the next 30 years, the State Demographer of Texas, Dr. Steve Murdock, predicts that by the year 2040, approximately 66% of public elementary and secondary students in Texas will be Hispanic (Murdock, 2006). While not all of these students will speak Spanish as a first language, Murdock projects increases of over 180% in the demand for programs serving English Language Learners by 2040.

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish directly targets this growing student population.

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish provides learning opportunities aligned with Spanish-speaking students' knowledge and skills.

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish targets Spanish-speaking students, usually identified as those whose home language is Spanish. Generally, these students have a range of language abilities in Spanish and in English. Some are identified by local districts as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and, thus, according to Texas Education Code (TEC) §29.052(1), are considered at risk of dropping out of school.

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish is an example of a program designed to build on the knowledge and skills Spanish-speaking students bring to school. The program provides intensive intervention through students' first language to ensure their early academic success. The structure of the program, which includes family involvement and parental assistance, also promotes the likelihood of graduation for at-risk students.



Performance results and anecdotal data provide evidence of the effectiveness of the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish.

Over the first four years of the program, middle schools offering the AP Spanish Language course found that an average of more than 90% of the participating students scored high enough on the AP Spanish Language examination to be eligible for college credit.

Participating students also reported

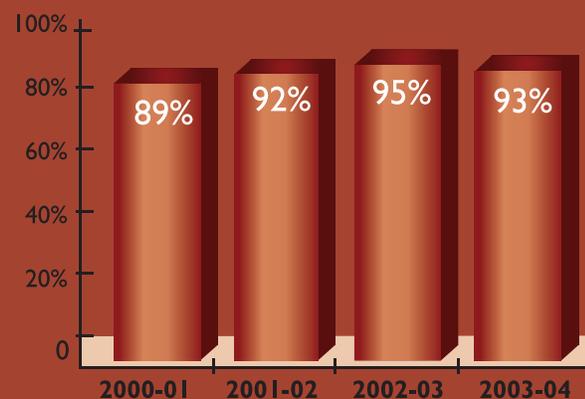
- increased confidence in themselves and in their academic abilities;
- improved performance in other classes;
- increased enrollment in other honors and AP courses in high school;
- enhanced perceptions of college as an attainable, realistic goal; and
- improved skills that transfer to other test-taking experiences, including the state testing program.

An evaluation of the pilot program indicates differences in subsequent high school course-taking patterns for participating students as compared to a non-participating peer group of Spanish-speaking students.

- An average of 22% of participating students took at least one AP course in 11th grade compared to an average of 12% of their peers.
- Five percent of participating students took two or more AP classes in 12th grade compared to 2% of their peers.
- An average of 16% of participating students took AP English Language and Composition compared to an average of 7% of their peers.

On average more than 90% of participating students have performed well enough on the AP Spanish Language exam to be eligible for college credit.

Percentage of Students Scoring 3, 4, or 5 on the AP Spanish Language Exam



Source: District-reported data

Resources

College Board. (2005). *Advanced Placement report to the nation 2005*. Retrieved August 15, 2006, from http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/ap/2005/ap-report-nation.pdf

Fry, R. (2002). *Latinos in higher education: Many enroll, too few graduate*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center. Retrieved August 15, 2006, from <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/11.pdf>

Murdock, S. (2006, July 7). *Population change in Texas: Implications for human and socioeconomic resources in the 21st century*. Presentation to the Texas State Board of Education. Retrieved August 11, 2006, from http://txsdc.utsa.edu/download/pdf/presentations/2006_07_07_State_Board_of_Education_Austin.pdf



How Do Districts Implement the AP Spanish Language Program?

Identify Team and Design Local Program

The identification of a core team of middle and high school Spanish teachers, middle and high school counselors, and key administrators to design and serve as advocates for the program is critical for success. An overall goal for the program should be to create a vertically aligned Spanish program across the middle schools and high schools. Creating and/or strengthening links between teaching staff in the middle and high school Spanish programs is especially important as this helps ensure curriculum alignment and continued support (and course offerings) for participating students after they move into high school. Counselors at both the middle and high school level are important in the student identification process for course participation, and, again, to continue support for students once they reach high school. Administrators are especially critical to lead policy-related decisions that support the program and to initiate program components that bridge middle and high school.

Suggested program components include

- a summer orientation institute for students;
- supplemental support for students such as tutoring, Saturday classes, exam preparation;
- parental involvement activities and college awareness training;
- mentor and guest speaker programs and cultural awareness activities; and
- the opportunity to take Pre-AP*/AP Spanish Literature by 10th grade.

For more information about designing and implementing the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish, please see the Guide for Program Implementation on the project website: www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org.



*Teachers, counselors,
and administrators
are all critical to
program success.*

Evaluate District Course Credit Policies

The number of Spanish language high school graduation credits awarded to students for successfully completing the AP Spanish Language course while in middle school is determined by the local school district.

AP Spanish Language is the equivalent of Spanish IV. Thus, many districts award credit not only for Spanish IV but also for prerequisite Spanish courses. Some districts may require students to earn credit by examination before awarding high school credit for lower level courses. Other districts have developed validation or credentialing policies to award credit automatically for lower level courses when an upper level course is successfully completed.

The district should evaluate local course credit policies to determine whether or not modifications should be made to support the program. Local policies can promote the success and impact of the program.

The amount of college credit students earn based on exam scores is determined by individual colleges and universities.

Identify Eligible Students

Students should consider taking this course if they

- are Spanish speakers;
- have an intermediate-low level proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; and
- are willing to participate in a challenging educational opportunity.

Use of multiple data sources is recommended for identification of students who may benefit from the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. ELL records indicating previous placement decisions, student or parent surveys to determine interest, teacher recommendations, and/or a testing process to determine language proficiency may prove helpful.

Administer Placement Tests

Districts may choose to use placement tests such as those provided with state-adopted textbooks. Teachers should review these tests to determine whether or not listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are assessed. Alternatively, districts may choose to develop a local placement test. Since districts know their student populations, a locally developed assessment may provide more meaningful data for placement decisions.

The evaluation of student performance should assess student proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing as related to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The TEKS designate levels 1 and 2 as Novice and levels 3 and 4 as Intermediate.



Participating schools have built a parent community around the program.

Engage Spanish-Speaking Families

Parental support is critical to student success in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. Making successful initial contacts with parents and maintaining communication and involvement is a key issue in program implementation.

Because participating students are identified as Spanish speakers, their parents often speak only Spanish or limited English. Informing parents about the program by providing written documents and conducting face-to-face meetings in both Spanish and English is critical. Schools should provide letters, brochures, and other documents that outline program requirements, explain benefits of student participation, and communicate grading and curriculum expectations to parents in both languages. Having additional translators at project meetings can also be helpful. To assist schools, TEA has produced parent brochures explaining the program in both English and Spanish. These are available free of charge at <http://www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org>.

Conduct Introductory, Counseling, and Progress Report Meetings with Parents and Students

Face-to-face introductory sessions for parents and students in which the AP Spanish Language teacher, along with administrators and counselors, provide information about the AP program, explain the details of program participation, and answer parent questions should be arranged prior to student enrollment in the course. Additional meetings for parents to discuss student progress and address questions and concerns as the course continues will also be beneficial.

Many parents of participating students may not be familiar with higher education and requirements for college. To encourage and support student aspirations and preparation for postsecondary education, additional programs for parents and students to learn about college, the application process, sources of scholarships, and financial aid may prove helpful. Arranging visits to local colleges and universities is another useful strategy.

TEA distributes videos to counselors at middle and high schools that explain the importance of a postsecondary education and the availability of financial aid. Many of these videos, which are from the GEAR UP program, are available in English and Spanish and can be used to provide information to parents.



What is the Suggested Timeline for Implementation?

YEAR 1

Planning – Summer/Fall Semester

- Assess local language programs in middle and high schools.
- Identify teachers for participation.
- Send teachers to appropriate College Board training.
- Evaluate instructional materials.
- Create strategies to disseminate information about the program to stakeholders.
- Create a program budget.
- Develop promotional materials.
- Initiate a promotional campaign for parents, students, school and district staff, and the community.
- Review grading and credit policies.
- Obtain AP exam school number and site code.

Student Identification and Program Development – Spring Semester/Summer

- Screen and enroll students for participation.
- Collect baseline student data.
- Contact parents.
- Schedule release time for vertical teams of middle and high school Spanish teachers to align the curriculum.
- Write curriculum.
- Investigate examination administration procedures.
- Order textbooks and audio equipment.
- Send teachers to AP Summer Institutes.

Orientation – Spring Semester/Summer

- Arrange an orientation for parents.
- Hold the student summer institute.

YEAR 2

Program Implementation – Fall Semester/Spring Semester

- Complete database of baseline student data for program evaluation.
- Monitor class implementation progress.
- Schedule release time for vertical teams of middle and high school Spanish teachers to align the curriculum.
- Schedule parent update meetings.
- Order AP examinations.
- Conduct practice exams.
- Redesign Spanish course offerings available to middle and high school students.
- Begin student identification for the following year.

Other Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: *Is the AP Spanish Language middle school course different from the AP Spanish Language high school course? What about the examination?*

A: The AP Spanish Language course follows the recommended curriculum as outlined by the College Board regardless of whether or not the course is offered to middle or high school students. It is recommended that teachers develop lessons that are age appropriate for middle school students but do not compromise the content of the course. All students take the official AP Spanish Language examination developed by the College Board.

Q2: *Which district and campus staff should be involved in the implementation of this program?*

A: A local team should be in place to provide leadership and direction for the program. Team members should include middle and high school Spanish teachers, middle and high school counselors, and central office and campus administrators. The coordination and dynamics of this team will ultimately determine program success in each district.



Q3: Does a school need an existing middle school Spanish program to implement AP Spanish Language in the 8th grade?

A: No. However, it is recommended that students enrolling in this rigorous program have an understanding of Spanish language and culture.

Q4: What textbooks and special instructional materials are available for the AP Spanish Language course?

A: Districts should contact the instructional materials division of the Texas Education Agency for the latest information on state-adopted textbooks available for this course. Teachers will want to evaluate different kinds of ancillary materials for integration into the instructional program for this course.

Q5: What staff development and activities are appropriate for the teachers of the AP Spanish Language and AP Spanish Literature courses?

The middle school and high school teachers involved in this program should attend the AP Spanish Language and AP Spanish Literature summer institutes offered through the College Board. To assist schools with the development of quality programs, Texas districts are reimbursed up to \$450.00 per teacher for approved AP training. Details about applying for this reimbursement can be found at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/gted>.

The coordination of middle and high school courses and the alignment of the curriculum will set the stage for positive program implementation and student performance. In addition to staff development, teachers should be provided numerous opportunities throughout the school year to vertically align the curriculum.

Q6: What are the budget considerations for a campus that wishes to implement this program?

Districts considering implementation of a middle school AP Spanish Language program should consider the following budgetary items:

- teaching unit (FTE), if no middle school Spanish teacher is available
- textbook purchase, if a state-adopted textbook is not selected
- staff development training for AP teachers
- College Board recommended AP instructional materials
- other instructional materials needed to develop the language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- tape recorders, MP3 recorders, etc.
- funding for a summer institute for identified students for the summer prior to enrollment
- field trips that enhance language skills and cultural awareness
- parent and family activities

Q7: Since participating students essentially start their language study with Spanish IV, are they skipping Spanish I, II, and III?

A: AP Spanish Language is the equivalent of Spanish IV. Thus, many districts award credit not only for Spanish IV but also for prerequisite Spanish courses. Some districts may require students to earn credit by examination before awarding high school credit for lower level courses. Other districts have developed validation or credentialing policies to award credit automatically for lower level courses when an upper level course is successfully completed.

Q8: *What credits do middle school students who complete the AP Spanish Language course earn? Do the credits count toward graduation?*

A: In addition to Spanish IV credits, the number of Spanish language high school graduation credits awarded to students for successfully completing this course is determined by the local school district. Parents and students should review local district policy or talk to a knowledgeable school official about course credits.

Q9: *Is this course included in the calculation of grade point average (GPA) for the student, and does the course carry extra GPA weight?*

A: Local districts determine grade points and weighted averages relative to GPA and class ranking. It is recommended that participating students receive appropriate recognition for successful completion of such a rigorous course.

Q10: *Can the credit that students earn in middle school on the AP exam count as an advanced measure for the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP)?*

A: Yes. Earning advanced measures is not restricted to grades 9–12.

Q11: *Will universities award students college credit for scoring a 3 or above on the AP Spanish Language examination?*

A: Most colleges award credit based on exam scores.

Q12: *Can the AP Spanish Literature course be offered over two years?*

A: Yes. Several of the districts piloting the program developed AP Spanish Literature as a two-year course in high school and adopted policies to ensure that students earned two full Spanish course credits.

Q13: *How are students identified and selected for participation in this course?*

A: Local districts develop their own processes for identification and selection of students for participation in the program. Students should be considered for participation if they are Spanish speakers, have intermediate-low level proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and are willing to participate in a challenging educational opportunity.

Q14: *Where can we find more information about the program?*

A wealth of resources to support program implementation is available on the program website (www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org). A comprehensive Guide to Program Implementation, compiled from the experiences of the districts and schools that initially piloted the program, provides an overview and history of the program, key policy issues to address, and implementation strategies. The website also offers a range of sample resources developed by local programs including letters to parents, brochures in Spanish and English, policy descriptions, sample syllabi, and recommended Pre-AP and AP course sequences for Spanish. A training presentation that can be adapted for use at the regional and district levels is also available on the website as well as tools to support local program evaluation.



Contact Information

Dalissa Brandenburg

Director of AP/IB Incentives
Texas Education Agency
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us

María Fierro-Treviño

Director of Languages Other Than English
Texas Education Agency
512.463.9581
curriculum@tea.state.tx.us

Marilyn Peebles

Coordinator, Advanced Academic Programs
Education Service Center, Region XIII
Office of Statewide Initiatives
512.919.5392
marilyn.peebles@esc13.txed.net

Visit the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish website at
www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org for additional information.*

**Texas
Middle School Program
for AP* Spanish**

Guide for Program Implementation

2004

The Texas Education Agency

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was it involved in the production of this product.

© 2004 by the Texas Education Agency

Copyright © Notice. The Materials are copyrighted © and trademarked ™ as the property of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and may not be reproduced without the express written permission of TEA, except under the following conditions:

- 1) Texas public school districts, charter schools, and Education Service Centers may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for the districts' and schools' educational use without obtaining permission from TEA.
- 2) Residents of the state of Texas may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for individual personal use only, without obtaining written permission of TEA.
- 3) Any portion reproduced must be reproduced in its entirety and remain unedited, unaltered and unchanged in any way.
- 4) No monetary charge can be made for the reproduced materials or any document containing them; however, a reasonable charge to cover only the cost of reproduction and distribution may be charged.

Private entities or persons located in Texas that are not Texas public school districts, Texas Education Service Centers, or Texas charter schools or any entity, whether public or private, educational or non-educational, located outside the state of Texas *MUST* obtain written approval from TEA and will be required to enter into a license agreement that may involve the payment of a licensing fee or a royalty.

For information contact: Office of Copyrights, Trademarks, License Agreements, and Royalties, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701-1494; phone 512-463-7004; email: copyrights@tea.state.tx.us.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
FOREWORD	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
PROJECT CONTACT	8
PILOT AND SCALE-UP DISTRICTS	8
MAP OF PILOT AND SCALE-UP SITES	9
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	10
Needs in Texas.....	10
Pilot Project	10
Scale-up	13
Future of the Program	14
POLICIES AT THE DISTRICT AND CAMPUS LEVEL	16
Grading.....	16
Credit	17
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	20
Program Models and Components.....	20
Establishing Program Goals and Objectives.....	22
Identifying and Supporting Teachers.....	23
Identifying and Recruiting Students.....	25
Program Expectations	27
Parent Involvement.....	29
Roles and Responsibilities	31
Program Funding.....	34
Vertical Alignment, Course Sequences, and Curriculum Development.....	35
Sample Syllabi.....	37
Textbook Selection and Additional Materials	38
Other Class Resources	40
Supplemental Support for Students	40
Administration of AP Exams	41
Evaluation.....	43
SUGGESTED TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	46
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	47
SAMPLE RESOURCES	48

FOREWORD

The purpose of the Texas Middle School Program for AP* Spanish is to raise the academic expectations of native Spanish-speaking students and engage them in early preparation for college success. Historically, this group of students has been at high risk for not completing high school. This program is designed to turn these students' first language into an academic asset by allowing them the chance to take advanced courses early and earn college credit in the eighth grade.

The program was originally piloted in seven school districts in Texas. The success of the students participating in the pilot led to a scale-up of the program in 2003 to include an additional 13 sites (see map page 7). To further expand the program, this guide provides information that should help other districts establish the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish in their middle schools.

While the administrators and teachers in the original districts have over the last several years created successful, now institutionalized programs, they initially experienced the growing pains normal to most fledgling ventures. This guide, which is based on the wisdom and experience of the early implementers of the program, will help new program staff address key issues and concerns, such as

- Awarding grades or credit for students who complete AP Spanish Language in middle school;
- Addressing skepticism on the part of counselors and other school staff that middle school students can handle the rigor of an Advanced Placement course;
- Finding teachers qualified and willing to teach the AP course in middle school;
- Dissolving resistance to the program by high school Spanish teachers who fear the loss of potential students to the middle school AP program thereby lessening demand for Spanish courses at the high school level;
- Communicating with parents;
- Providing the next level of AP Spanish to participating students; and
- Administering AP exams.

*AP, Advanced Placement Program, and Pre-AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which does not endorse nor was it involved in the production of this product.

Despite some initial resistance and seeming obstacles, schools and districts implementing the program have found the benefits to be tremendous. For example, in only the second year of the pilot project, more than 90% of the participating middle school students scored high enough on the AP Spanish Language examination to be eligible for college credit. In addition, pilot districts found that participating students demonstrated

- Increased confidence in themselves and in their academic abilities;
- Fewer disciplinary problems and absences;
- Improved performance in other classes;
- Increased enrollment in other honors and AP courses in high school;
- Enhanced perceptions of college as an attainable, realistic goal; and
- Improved skills that transfer to other test-taking experiences, including the state testing program.

Furthermore, pilot and scale-up districts reported that parents of participating students became more interested and involved in their children's education, and teachers involved in the project felt rejuvenated and more motivated in the classroom.

In the pages that follow, the guide describes the many creative strategies districts can use to implement their programs. Keep in mind that not every strategy will work in every district, and careful planning is essential as poor implementation can do a great disservice to the students this program is designed to help. Knowing the possible problems beforehand can help first-time implementers plan for and address potential barriers. These strategies also will help districts to include all the relevant stakeholders in the development of this unique program.

The guide provides project contact information, an overview and history of the program, key policy issues to address, implementation strategies, and a CD that contains sample resources (referenced in the text by the symbol of a CD player) that districts are free to use and customize to meet local needs. This guide and related materials are also available on the program website at www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org. Good luck!

Karol Howell
Former Director
Advanced Programs
Texas Education Agency

Kelly Callaway
Director
Gifted & Talented Education
Texas Education Agency

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Staff in Advanced Academic Services in the Division of Curriculum at the Texas Education Agency would like to acknowledge María Treviño, Director of Languages Other Than English (LOTE), TEA, and the dedicated project coordinators, teachers, and administrators at the program pilot and scale-up sites for their contribution to the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish.

Special appreciation goes to Evelyn Hiatt, former Senior Director of the Division of Advanced Academic Services at TEA. The program is a product of Ms. Hiatt's vision for improving access to challenging academic opportunities for all students. She wrote the original grant application for the project, saw it through its infancy, and set the course for statewide scale up. We appreciate Evie Hiatt's leadership and hard work in the service of this program.

PROJECT CONTACT

Texas Education Agency

Advanced Academic Services

1701 N. Congress Ave.

Austin, TX 78701

PHONE: 512-463-9581/FAX: 512-305-8920

PILOT AND SCALE-UP DISTRICTS

Pilot Districts

Austin Independent School District

Brownsville Independent School District

Irving Independent School District

McKinney Independent School District

Tyler Independent School District

Valley View Independent School District

Ysleta Independent School District

Scale-up Districts

Aldine Independent School District

Canutillo Independent School District

Comanche Independent School District

Fabens Independent School District

Garland Independent School District

Harlandale Independent School District

Hidalgo Independent School District

Houston Independent School District

Los Fresnos Consolidated Independent School District

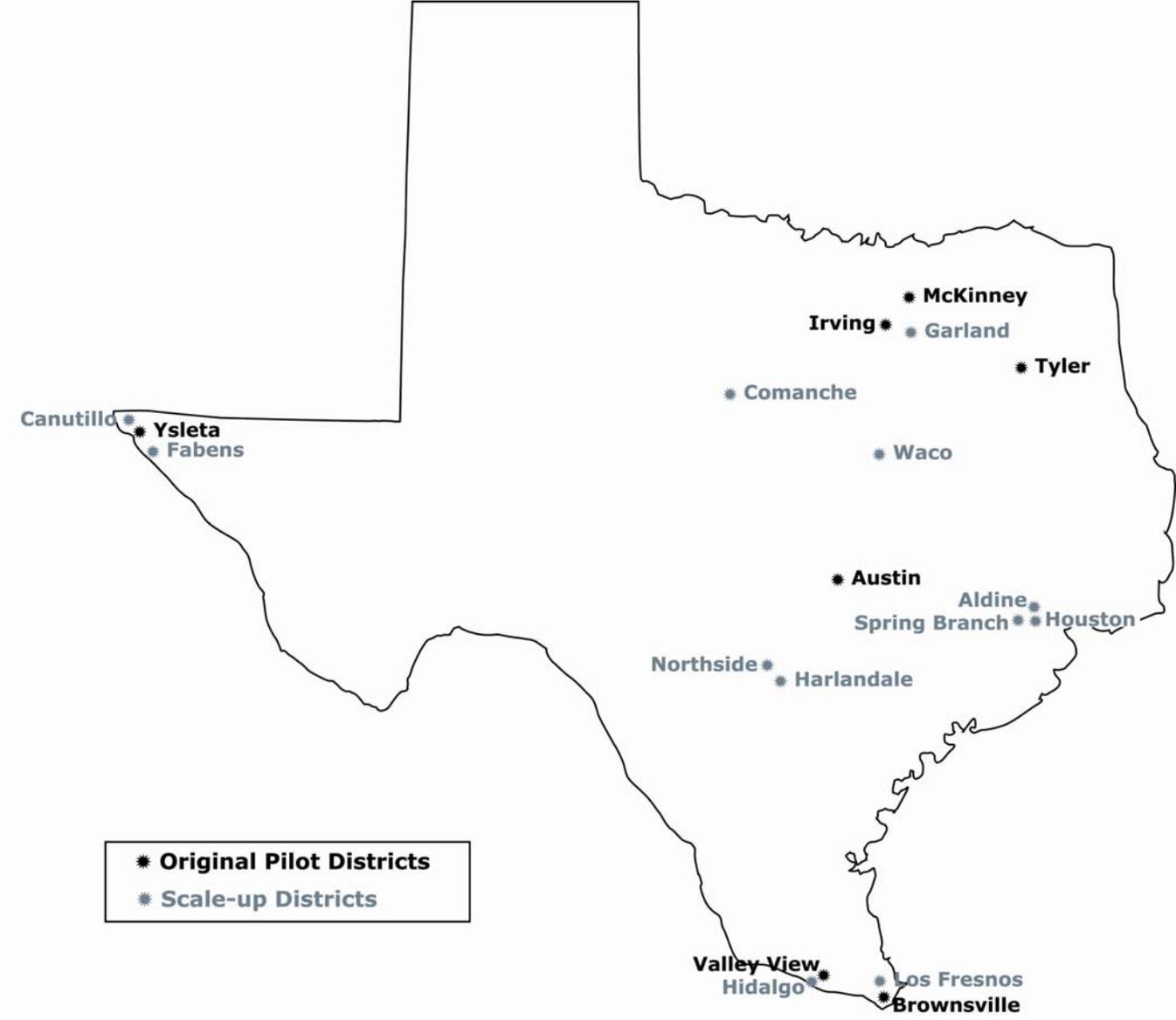
Northside Independent School District

Spring Branch Independent School District

Tyler Independent School District

Waco Independent School District

MAP OF PILOT AND SCALE-UP SITES



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Needs in Texas

Research shows that the rigor of the academic coursework a student undertakes in high school is the primary predictor of access to and success in post-secondary education. This finding is especially true for students from economically disadvantaged and ethnic minority backgrounds.¹ Thus, the inclusion of low-income students, particularly those of ethnic and racial minority groups, in advanced-level courses has become a nationwide issue. In Texas, the concern is even more pressing as the state's current student population is over 50% minority and almost 50% of students are at the poverty level. If Texas policymakers are to continue raising the educational bar for all students, they must also expand their efforts to find new ways to increase student interest in and access to challenging courses, including Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and convince educators and parents that the students have the potential not just to participate but to excel in challenging academic tasks.

Pilot Project

In 2000–2001, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to implement the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. The project was designed to encourage the teaching of Advanced Placement Spanish Language at the middle school level for native Spanish speakers who were also identified as economically disadvantaged. The goal was to promote student success and self confidence and support student aspirations and preparation for college.

¹ Adelman, C. (1999). *Answers in the tool box: Academic intensity, attendance patterns, and bachelor's degree attainment*. Washington, DC: National Institute on Post-secondary Education Libraries and Lifelong Learning (ED/OERI). Also, Horn, L. & Carroll, C.D. (2001). *High school academic curriculum and the persistence path through college* (NCES 2001-163.) Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

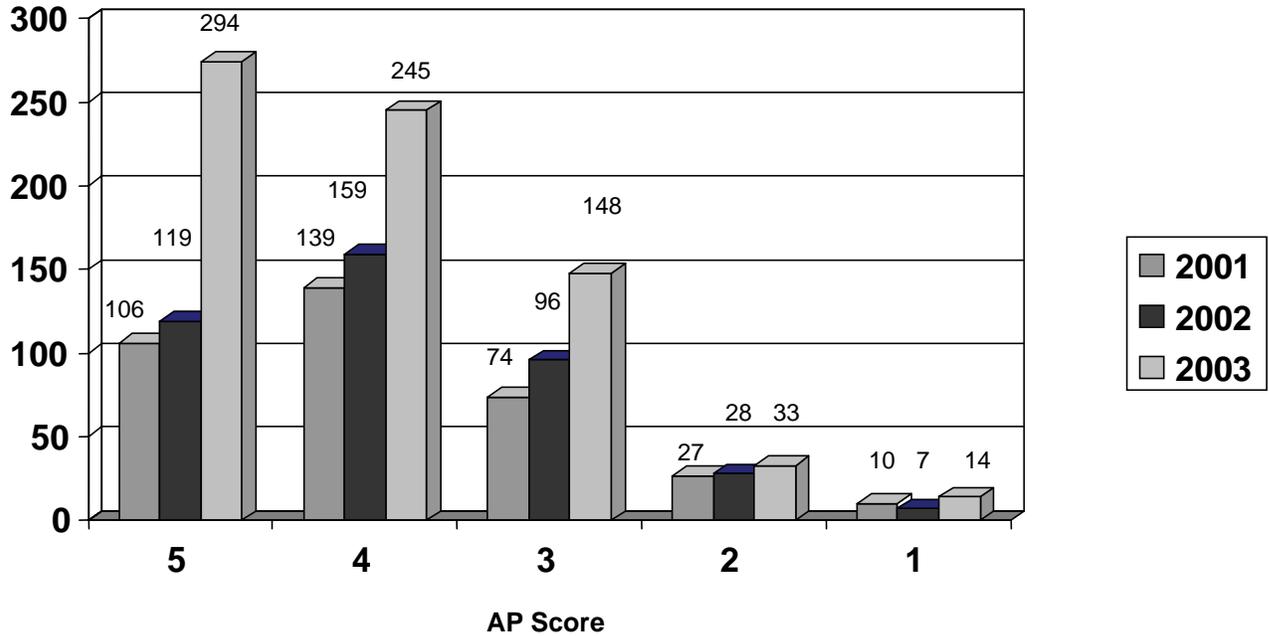
Seven school districts that met the grant criteria applied to participate in the pilot project, and all received funding from TEA, establishing programs in seventeen middle schools across the state. These pilot districts varied greatly in resources, student population, size, and location with Austin ISD by far the wealthiest and largest participating district and Valley View ISD the smallest district serving the most economically disadvantaged student population.

Staff at the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University conducted an external evaluation of the pilot and collected and analyzed the results of the project during the spring and summer of 2002. They gathered information from schools and districts, teachers, students, and parents. In addition to an analysis of student performance on the AP Spanish Language examination, the evaluation included teacher, parent, and student surveys. The project findings are outlined below.

In May of 2001, 356 students² in the participating pilot schools took the AP Spanish Language examination and did extremely well. On a scale of one to five with one being the lowest, 89.6% of students received a score of three or above, making them eligible to receive college credit for the course at most colleges and universities. In fact, only ten students received scores of one, and only 27 received scores of two; while 74 received threes, 139 received fours, and 106 received the highest score of five. (See Figure 1.) Additionally, over three-hundred of the students who took the AP Spanish Language examination in 2001 enrolled in the AP Spanish Literature course in high school. In May of 2002, a second cohort of four-hundred middle school students took the AP Spanish Language examination and more than 90% received scores of three or above. In 2003, 734 students took the exam and 687 of them received a score of 3 or above. Thus, almost 94% of participating students were eligible for college credit, with 294 of those students receiving the highest score possible!

² Only eleven of the original 367 students who began the program did not complete it.

Number of Students



Participating districts: Austin, Brownsville, Irving, McKinney, Tyler, Valley View, and Ysleta.

Additionally, over the course of the pilot project, district administrators and teachers reported that absenteeism and disciplinary infractions by participating students declined; students’ overall grades improved; and, upon entering high school, these students increasingly enrolled in honors, Pre-AP/AP, and Pre-International Baccalaureate/IB classes.

Teacher survey responses indicated that participating in the project was a positive teaching experience. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the teachers felt they “always” or “often” received the administrative support they needed to participate successfully. All of the teachers reported increased parental participation and noted that their students demonstrated increased self confidence.

The participating middle school students also responded positively about their experiences in the project. Of the 256 students who completed the survey, only

1% “never” liked being in the AP class, and 96% would recommend the class to a friend. Ninety-four percent (94%) of students indicated that their parents were pleased with their participation. Most felt their grades had improved, and 95% felt they could be successful in college. Some students reported that the course opened doors that didn’t seem to exist before, and college attendance had become an option that they previously might not have considered.

Surveyed parents were similarly positive. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the 161 parents surveyed felt that their child was doing better in school, and 98% noticed an improvement in their child’s self esteem. Nearly all of the parents indicated that they wanted their other children to participate in advanced courses in middle school. Most of the parents, 74% and 63% respectively, reported that they played more active roles at their child’s school and felt the school personnel showed them more respect as a result of their child’s participation in the project.

Scale-up

Building on the success of the pilot program, TEA applied for additional funding from the U.S. Department of Education’s Advanced Placement Incentive Program in 2002 to scale up the project to more Texas schools. All Texas school districts received applications and sixty-five campuses submitted proposals for evaluation. Priorities for selection of the new project districts included highest percentages of economically disadvantaged students, number of students to be served by the program, geographic representation based on Education Service Center regions, size of the district, and existing middle school Languages Other Than English (LOTE) services. Based on reviews of applications by educators, TEA selected thirteen districts to participate. These districts represented the diversity of Texas regions, from the Panhandle to East Texas.

To facilitate the development of the new programs at the scale-up sites, the original seven pilot school districts agreed to act as mentors to the new districts.

TEA provided planning grants, professional development for teachers and administrators, and a draft implementation guide. As a requirement for the TEA grant, scale-up districts were required to offer an AP Spanish Literature course by the tenth grade for students who took AP Spanish Language in middle school.

By the fall of 2003, fifteen additional programs at middle schools across the state were up and running. This scale-up, combined with the rapid expansion of the program in the original pilot districts, brought the total number of active programs in Texas to 42 campuses in 19 districts, serving approximately one-thousand students annually.

Future of the Program

The Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish did not disappear with the end of the federal grant. In fact, the program has been so successful at participating schools that all of the original districts offer or plan to offer the program at their other middle schools, even though grant monies have expired.

To help further expand the success of the program across the state, TEA has developed some rich resources for program implementation that capture what was learned from the initial experiment and several years of trying new and different approaches. This project implementation guide and CD of sample resources offers a comprehensive blueprint for getting a middle school program for AP Spanish up and running and should help districts develop a thorough plan for program implementation that addresses potential problem areas. In addition, TEA has provided program training to Advanced Academics and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) or LOTE staff at the regional education service centers to serve as a resource for districts and schools interested in the program. A DVD with an introductory video about the program can be used with parents, school staff and board members, and the community. TEA also hosts a program website available at www.teamiddleschoolspanish.org.

One of the lessons learned about the program through the pilot and project scale-up is that there is no single formula for success. Early implementers of the program represented a diverse range of communities across the state—large, suburban, metropolitan, small, and rural—all serving high percentages of native Spanish speakers. These districts tailored the program guidelines and recommended approaches to their own unique situations. As the population of native Spanish speakers continues to grow, our hope is that middle schools across the state will recognize the tremendous value of the program and use these resources to create a middle school program for AP Spanish tailored to their own local needs and contexts.

POLICIES AT THE DISTRICT AND CAMPUS LEVEL

Among the key implementation issues that all districts need to address are grading and credit policies related to participation in the Texas Middle School Program for AP Spanish. Districts should closely examine existing local policies concerning the award of student grades and credits to determine whether or not these policies should be modified to support the program. **The key issue to keep in mind is that, with few exceptions, policies that can promote or hinder the success and impact of the program are policies that are determined at the local level.** Hence, the involvement of key administrators in revising and shaping policy in support of the program is critical. Districts involved in the pilot and scale-up programs implemented a number of different policies examples of which are referenced below and on the Sample Resources CD.

Grading

Pilot districts implemented various grading policies for their AP Spanish Language middle school courses. Some based grades on overall class performance, while others based grades solely on students' performance on the AP examination. Additionally, some districts awarded grades based on pre-existing policies for students in honors and/or gifted-and-talented classes. Calculation of GPA is another local issue. Determining grading policy for the Middle school program for AP Spanish is a local process decided through careful planning and consideration.

Sample policy

AP exam scores will be assigned grades as follows:

- *A score of 3 earns an 86*
- *A score of 4 earns a 93*
- *A score of 5 earns a 100.*

Credit

Many districts implementing the program will not previously have faced the issue of awarding high school credit for classes taken in middle school. Districts will need to examine existing board policies and study the curriculum requirements for the AP Spanish Language course. Some of the pilot districts award four or six credits for participation in the middle school AP course, while others award middle school students one high school credit and a grade based on AP exam scores. (See Sample Resources for more examples.) How districts ultimately decide to award high school credit for the course will vary widely.

There are no TEA requirements in rule or law that dictate how districts award credit. However, it should be noted that Texas Administrative Code §74.26 states that “a course must be considered completed and credit must be awarded if the student has demonstrated achievement by meeting the standard requirements of the course including demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter, regardless of the time the student has received instruction in the course or the grade levels at which proficiency was attained.” In revising existing policy or developing new policy, it is important to note that the AP Spanish Language course addresses the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Spanish IV. Unlike the TEKS in the other subject areas, the TEKS for languages are not different at each level; rather, they are based on proficiency levels of the same skills. Thus, successful completion of AP Spanish Language (or Spanish IV) automatically ensures that students have met the TEKS objectives for Spanish I, II, and III.

Some districts will have existing policies that require students participating in the program to acquire credit by exam for each level of Spanish skipped using the two state-approved tests (the Texas Tech or UT Austin Credit By Examination), or a locally developed board-approved test. Other districts might use validation policies similar to those for home-schooled students to award automatic credit for lower levels of Spanish skipped. In cases where local policy requires participating

students to take additional exams to acquire credit after they have already been enrolled in the AP course, districts might want to consider revising the policy to address the fact that TEKS objectives for Spanish IV are met through participation in the AP course.

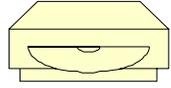
In examining local policy, it is also important to remember that students are taking a high-school (and college-level) course and the amount of credit students may earn for the course should take into account the rigorous curriculum provided to middle school students through this program. It is recommended that districts examine board policies relative to determining student class rank to ensure that courses taken in middle school, such as AP Spanish Language, are included in the calculations for class-rank purposes. Courses for which credit is awarded in grades 9–12 and courses designed for grades 9–12 but completed before grade 9 should be recorded for graduation purposes on the student’s official high school

Sample policy

A district may offer courses designated for grades 9–12 in earlier grade levels. A course must be considered completed and credit must be awarded if the student has demonstrated achievement by meeting the standard requirements of the course, including demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter, regardless of the time the student has received instruction in the course or the grade level at which proficiency was attained. The academic achievement record will reflect that the student has satisfactorily completed the course(s) at earlier grade levels than grades 9–12 and has been awarded state graduation credit(s). [TAC 74.26]

Academic Achievement Record (AAR.) All courses the student completes must be entered regardless of outcome [19 TAC §74.26(b)]. Existing policy outlining requirements for identification of valedictorian and salutatorian designations also need to be evaluated so that all courses completed, including the middle school AP course, are included in consideration for these awards. Addressing these issues with initial implementation ensures that participating students receive the

credit and recognition they deserve for their accomplishments and prevents future potential disputes and problems.



Board Policy Statement
Credit Policy Memos 1, 2

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Program Models and Components

Each district should develop an implementation model and strategies that best fit the unique needs of the student group that the Middle school program for AP Spanish serves. In the pilot and scale-up projects, districts used three basic models with varying degrees of success. Regardless of the model the district used, all the sites included several key components in their programs.

Extracurricular Model. In this model, the AP Spanish Language class met two times each week in two-hour blocks outside of regular school hours. The district that employed this model encountered many problems associated with student attendance, student attitude toward the course, and credit for coursework. The district found that many students were reluctant to attend an after-school academic program, so absenteeism was high. The demands of homework, studying, and the content level of such a rigorous course after students had already completed a full academic schedule affected student attitudes toward the course. Additionally, the district found that making decisions about awarding high school credit was difficult because the instruction took place after the regular school day.

Itinerant-teacher Model. In this model, a high school Spanish teacher was enlisted to teach the AP Spanish Language course at the middle school, requiring the teacher to travel between the middle and high schools. This model proved beneficial insofar as it allowed middle school campuses that did not have a qualified teacher to offer the class. This model also provided a link to the high school Spanish language program due to the assignment of the teacher and his/her assigned course responsibilities. However, disadvantages included the following:

- Time allotment for the Spanish teacher to travel between schools led to scheduling complications. Each school that needed the teacher was dependent on the other school's schedule.
- Students did not always have access to the teacher when they needed assistance because the teacher was often on the other campus.
- Parents had difficulty in meeting with the teacher to discuss student progress in the program due to the dual-campus assignment.

Expanded-classroom Model. In this most commonly used implementation model, qualified middle school Spanish teachers taught the AP Spanish Language middle school class in addition to other teaching assignments. This model allowed teachers to be available to offer additional support to participating students, including tutoring and test preparation. Districts experienced fewer problems with this model, although it became the middle school teacher's responsibility to ensure that a smooth transition in language courses at the high school took place for these students.

Key Components. Whichever model was used, all the pilot and scale-up programs had in common some key elements in their program design that were essential for the success of the program. These key program components were:

- Creation of a local **leadership team** to implement the program that included middle school and high school teachers, administrators, and counselors;
- Commitment to provide **vertical alignment** in course curriculum and offerings that led to a **Pre-AP course** in seventh grade;
- Development of an intensive **summer institute** for enrolling students that provided program orientation and an introduction to Advanced Placement; and
- Provision of an option for participating students to take **AP Spanish Literature by tenth grade.**

Establishing Program Goals and Objectives

Setting goals and objectives for local programs will help direct the implementation and growth of the program and provide measures of program success. The sample objectives below are modeled on TEA's goals for the scale-up project and could serve as a foundation for local program goals.

1. At least x (*number*) students will complete the AP Spanish Language class in middle school.

Schools should offer the course to as many students as is feasible.

Aligning Spanish offerings in sixth and seventh grade with AP Spanish Language course requirements will increase the number of students prepared for the course in eighth grade.

2. Students who participate in the AP Spanish Language course in middle school will take the AP Spanish Language exam at the end of the eighth grade.

All students will benefit from preparing for and taking the AP examination, even those who do not receive high scores. It is recommended that all students enrolled in the course take the exam. For a discussion of subsidies for examination fees for qualifying students, see the section entitled Program Expectations.

3. At least 75% of those students will receive a three or above on the AP Spanish Language examination.

Data from the pilot and scale-up districts shows this to be an achievable objective. In fact, the majority of students participating in the course so far have received 4s and 5s on the examination.

4. At least 75% of the students enrolled in AP Spanish Language in middle school will enroll in AP Spanish Literature by tenth grade.

Many pilot and scale-up districts have created a two-year AP Spanish Literature course option beginning in ninth grade with students taking the AP Spanish Literature exam in tenth grade. As a variation on this, another pilot district designed a Pre-AP Spanish Literature course for ninth-

graders. If this option is considered, different course numbers should be assigned for accurate PEIMS reporting so that students receive two credits for the courses taken.

Districts also need to develop additional goals and objectives that address the unique needs of their program. Examples from pilot districts include the following.

1. Hold intensive training sessions for students during the school day and in after-school programs. Summer institutes should be designed for students to increase preparation for and provide practice in test-taking skills for the AP Spanish Language examination.
2. Inform all middle school students about the benefits of the AP Spanish Language program to increase enrollment in the AP program at both the middle school and high school levels.
3. Disseminate information and develop publications about the advantages of the program to educate parents, students, community members, and staff about the program's success and potential benefits.
4. Apply and use technology to increase knowledge and gain understanding of the Hispanic culture.
5. Vertically align the curriculum for Spanish and LOTE courses at all grade levels not only to provide a foundation in the language in early grades but to enhance the instructional options for high school students.

Identifying and Supporting Teachers

Identification. Teacher selection is instrumental in determining the success of the program. Without talented Spanish teachers assigned to this program, the pilot project would not have achieved the high level of success that each district documented. Selected teachers should have advanced content knowledge—they should speak, read, write, and comprehend Spanish at advanced levels—and be flexible enough to adapt the traditional high school level AP Spanish Language

course to the learning styles and abilities of middle school students. Much of the student success experienced by pilot districts can be directly attributed to the selected teacher's willingness to develop the program at his/her respective campus. Program teachers should be passionate about improving educational opportunities for their students and should provide a strong academic focus with high expectations for the course. Assigning a reluctant or unwilling teacher to teach the course may have a negative effect on program implementation and, worse, negatively affect students' attitudes about learning languages or taking AP courses.

Support. Schools and districts implementing the program should provide professional development opportunities for identified teachers in order to support the AP Spanish Language program for middle school students. Participation in the AP Spanish Language Summer Institute, available through the College Board,³ should be mandatory for teachers assigned to the course and recommended for other teachers in the school/district Spanish program. It provides valuable information for new teachers teaching the AP Spanish Language course for the first time and insight into the course expectations for alignment with the courses leading up to middle school AP. Additional professional development opportunities should also be available for middle school AP teachers. For example, many teachers in the pilot and scale-up program participated in intensive Spanish language summer programs as well as in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and Texas Foreign Language Association (TFLA) conferences and workshops.

AP Spanish Language teachers may also benefit from extra planning time to prepare for the rigorous course. Vertical teaming opportunities with Spanish program teachers from the middle and high schools will allow teachers to plan, develop, and adjust the curriculum. Scheduling assignments should take into account that AP teachers may devote extra time to working with students,

³ See <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/teachers/development/>.

including one-on-one tutoring, Saturday sessions, and preparing and teaching the summer program for incoming students.

Additional ways to support middle school AP teachers include strategies for informing other staff members about the program, such as at staff orientation or through vertical team planning. Celebrating the program publicly on the school website, announcements, school board reports, and presentations to other teachers, staff, and community members will also serve to support the teacher in his/her efforts.

Identifying and Recruiting Students

Pilot and scale-up districts used several different methods and/or combinations of methods to identify and recruit students for participation in their programs.

Identification. For the purpose of the pilot project and scale-up grant, student eligibility for participation was determined by home language [native Spanish speakers or Limited English Proficient (LEP) students] and financial need. Home language surveys and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) class rosters can be useful in identifying potential students.

Selection. After identifying a pool of eligible students, some pilot districts used placement testing and other criteria to select students for the program. Districts employed existing published instruments as placement tests—the most commonly cited example was *Prueba de ubicación*—or developed their own tests.

Additionally, a set of possible testing questions can be found in the TEA publication, *Español para el hispanohablante*.⁴ Whichever placement test was used, district administrators and teachers determined specific score requirements

⁴ After the original free distribution to authorized institutions, additional copies of this publication may be purchased from the TEA Publications Distribution Office. See <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/publications/>. Most of the information included in this publication can be found online at the Texas Languages Other Than English Center for Educator Development. See <http://www.sedl.org/loteced/>.

for acceptance into the program. The American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines (<http://www.actfl.org>) and the LOTE TEKS (www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/index.html) may be useful tools for new districts when determining desired proficiency levels and skills for students in the program.

Additionally, some districts used other sources and criteria for selecting students for participation in the program, including:

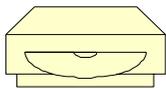
- Teacher and/or counselor referrals;
- Grades in the student's most recent Spanish class, or passing the Pre-AP Spanish class; and
- Passing all Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) areas tested to date.⁵

Selection criteria and screening processes should not be so rigorous as to exclude large groups of students who would benefit from the course. Keep in mind that even students who would get a 1 or 2 on the AP exam would still benefit greatly from having participated in the course, and some colleges and universities offer credit for a score of 2.

Recruitment. Once they identified prospective participants, pilot and scale-up districts determined that students and their parents needed further information about the program to understand the benefits, requirements, and challenges of taking the course before enrolling. Most pilot districts developed brochures and pamphlets and held meetings for qualified students and their parents to introduce them to the program. Some districts developed permission forms or applications for students and parents to submit before acceptance into the course.

⁵ Note: Districts should be aware that since implementation of the AP Spanish Language course is geared to middle school LEP students and native speakers of Spanish, TAKS scores may not be the best indicator of the students' academic abilities, especially if the students were assessed in English and not in Spanish.

Districts should consider beginning recruitment efforts for the program in the early grades. Possibilities include presentations on the program at orientation sessions in fifth and sixth grade, or earlier, to inform students and their parents about the program and create interest and demand. Additionally, building student, parent, and community awareness of the program through newspaper articles and awards ceremonies, and creating displays on school grounds and making announcements about program activities and accomplishments will also serve to heighten interest in the program.



Program Brochures 1, 2 (Spanish, English)

AP Course Description and Contract (Spanish, English)

Benefits of AP Program (Spanish, English)

Parent Letter (Spanish, English)

Application for Admission to Pre-AP/AP Program

Program Expectations

Performance expectations for students participating in the AP Spanish Language middle school course are high, and many students interested or qualified to participate in the program will not have encountered such demanding academic challenges in their previous schoolwork. Thus, it is important to provide both students and their parents with an understanding of the rigor and demands of the course, as well as to establish student expectations for participation. It is especially important that parents and students understand the requirement that participating students take the AP Spanish Language examination at the completion of the course. Districts should also think about developing guidelines for determining if students are not meeting program expectations and for exiting the course.

Signed Agreements. Some pilot districts created course participation agreement forms that students, parents, teachers, counselors, and principals had to sign. Some of these forms provided outlines of student, parent, and teacher

expectations. One course agreement that a pilot district developed articulated the following student expectations.

Students must:

1. Learn, analyze, synthesize, and manipulate knowledge and skills.
2. Think critically.
3. Budget time effectively and efficiently, as students should expect homework daily.
4. Develop effective study skills.
5. Develop advanced content-area vocabulary.
6. Utilize community and industry resources.
7. Develop multimedia and oral presentation skills.
8. Maintain a passing grade in the AP course.

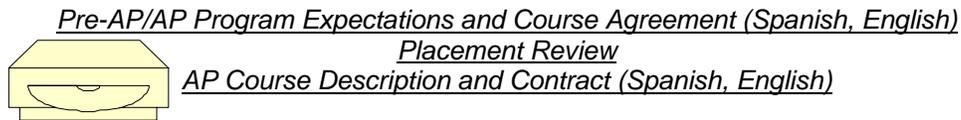
In addition, parents agreed to familiarize themselves with course requirements, support their child in organizing his/her study time, and notify the teacher of any concerns. Teachers agreed to teach the course at a college-preparatory pace and to notify students and parents if student work was unsatisfactory.

If students were at any point during the course at risk of failing, some districts sent home a placement review form to notify parents and give students the option of exiting the course.

Exam Taking. Pilot and scale-up districts were challenged with communicating to students and their parents the participation requirement that students enrolled in the AP Spanish Language middle school course take the examination for the course at the end of eighth grade. If students are allowed to opt out of taking the exam, or if teachers feel pressured to allow only students who they predict will do well to take the exam, many of the important benefits of the program will be lost.

While there is a fee for taking the AP exam, students who are identified as economically disadvantaged may be eligible for discounted test fees through the College Board and the Texas Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate

Incentive Program. For additional information about College Board fee reduction policies, see the AP Central website, <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com>. The Advanced Academics Services page on the TEA website will link to current information on the Texas AP/IB Incentive Program. If the fees are not waived or reduced for participating students, districts have the option to pay the remaining portion of the fees for students.



Parent Involvement

Parental support is critical to student success in the Middle school program for AP Spanish. Many districts reported that parents were the primary motivators for participating students and helped to keep their children enrolled and interested in succeeding in the program. Making successful initial contacts with parents and maintaining communication and involvement is a key issue in program implementation. Some of the strategies for informing and engaging parents are outlined below.

Communications in Spanish and English. Because participating students are identified as native Spanish speakers, their parents often speak only Spanish or limited English. Thus, providing information about the program to parents by providing written documents and conducting face-to-face meetings in both Spanish and English is critical. Provide letters, brochures, and other documents that outline the program requirements, explain benefits of student participation, and communicate grading and curriculum expectations and other requirements for students and parents in both languages. Having translators present at project meetings is another strategy for increasing parent comfort and empowerment. Because some parents previously may have had limited involvement at the school because of language or other issues and might possibly feel uncomfortable about

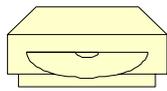
coming to meetings, some districts initially contacted parents by phone or home visits. The key is to make parents comfortable, engage them in the idea of the program, and find creative ways to involve them in program activities with their children and with other parents.

Introductory, Counseling, and Progress Reporting Meetings. Face-to-face introductory sessions for parents and students in which the AP Spanish Language teacher, along with administrators and counselors, provide information about the AP program, explain the details of program participation, and answer parent questions should be arranged prior to student enrollment in the course. Most pilot and scale-up districts arranged additional meetings for parents to discuss progress and address questions and concerns as the course got underway, at the mid-term, and as students prepared for the AP exam in May. One district arranged a meeting at which counselors met individually with parents and students to design four-year plans. These activities provided opportunities for the parents to meet program staff and other parents. This helps to build “community” around the program.

Additional Workshops on College Applications and Financial Aid. Many parents of participating students may not be familiar with higher education and requirements for college. To encourage and support student aspirations and preparation for post-secondary education, many programs included workshops for students and their parents on college selection, the application process, and sources of scholarships and financial aid. Some districts even arranged visits to local colleges and universities.

TEA distributes videos to each middle and high school counselor that explain the importance of post-secondary education and the availability of financial aid. These videos are from the GEAR UP program and are available in English and Spanish. Districts are encouraged to use these informational videos with students and parents in planning for post-high school educational experiences.

Other Strategies. Creating opportunities for parents to communicate with each other (e.g., parents calling parents) and to volunteer and participate in meeting planning or awards ceremonies is another strategy for increasing parent involvement. In arranging parent activities, programs should address childcare, refreshments, and transportation needs. Some districts allocated Title I funds to cover childcare for parents and arranged for school vans or local cab companies to get parents to program meetings.



Program Brochures (Spanish, English)

Benefits of AP Program (Spanish, English)

Pre-AP/AP Program Expectations and Course Agreement (Spanish, English)

Roles and Responsibilities

Middle School Teachers. To maximize program success, teachers selected to teach the program, as well as other participating staff where appropriate, should:

- Familiarize themselves with the AP program and requirements;
- Evaluate scheduling needs to determine instructional duties;
- Understand the differences between teaching middle school and high school students;
- Adapt the high school curriculum so that it is appropriate for middle school students;
- Create new materials as necessary to meet the needs of middle school students and enhance the writing requirements of the curriculum;
- Team with high school and middle school Spanish teachers to align the curriculum; and
- Familiarize themselves with teaching native Spanish speakers and develop strategies to engage them in the AP content.

High School Teachers. Some high school Spanish teachers might initially be resistant to the idea of the Middle school program for AP Spanish and feel that the program “steals” some of the students they traditionally teach in the upper grades. For new districts developing the AP Spanish Language program, building supportive relationships with high school staff by creating Spanish language vertical teams is critical.

Pilot and scale-up districts regularly shared data with high school Spanish teachers to illustrate student capabilities and the fact that participating students were prepared for the AP Spanish Literature course in high school. Despite some initial resistance, many districts reported that most high school teachers became advocates for the program. As high school teachers realized that more students would enroll in AP Spanish Literature courses and that the participating students would be academically prepared for the challenge of such courses, their resistance to the program was replaced with an endorsement.

Counselors. Because counselors play such important roles in advising and guiding students and because many parents contact counselors first when they have concerns or questions about their child’s education, the importance of including counselors at both the middle and high school levels in program development and implementation cannot be emphasized enough. Counselors should become essential members of the AP project team. Their responsibilities will range from assisting teachers in the identification of students for the program to encouraging younger prospective students to enroll in Pre-AP Spanish course sequences. Additionally, high school counselors can help participating students design a full college-preparatory program in high school and should be included in program development from the outset.

Early involvement of counselors is important for other reasons as well. In most cases the students who participate in the Middle school program for AP Spanish are not the typical students identified early for college-preparatory courses.

Counselors will have to overcome some skepticism about the students' abilities before placing them in a class normally reserved for high school juniors or seniors. Keeping the counselor informed of student progress throughout the course will be important in modifying his/her attitude about what these students can do. If it is not possible to work with both the middle and high school counselors together, be sure to have either a supportive counselor or another advocate begin discussions with both the high school counselor and the registrar.

Administrators. Securing administrative support for the program is essential to the immediate success, as well as to the long-term sustainability, of the Middle school program for AP Spanish. Middle school and high school principals should be involved from the outset in the development of program goals and objectives to provide support for class scheduling, grading and credit issues, extra planning time for AP teachers, vertical team meetings, study sessions, tutoring, special field trips for students, AP exam administration, and redesigning high school course options. Pilot and scale-up districts in which administrators were involved in planning and implementation and kept informed of student progress toward program goals and objectives reported more success and acceptance of their programs.

Strong administrative support should be evident from the beginning of the program. The success of participating students largely depends on a **collaborative effort between administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents.**

Administrators and counselors might use student success in Spanish to encourage students to enroll in Pre-AP courses in other disciplines. Librarians can start ordering more sophisticated reading material in Spanish and organize book clubs in which students can meet to discuss their work. Spanish and English teachers might select one book to read both in Spanish and in English translation and hold a joint class on language and culture. All of these options are possible if administrators clearly show their commitment to the program.

Other Personnel. Based on the experiences of the pilot and scale-up districts, it is recommended that additional staff be involved in program implementation as these individuals can figure prominently in the process. Additional staff include:

- LOTE/bilingual coordinators;
- textbook coordinators;
- PEIMS coordinators;
- registrar; and
- academic deans.

Program Funding

Districts are encouraged to seek out multiple funding sources to support their programs and to write the program into regular campus and district budgets and campus improvement plans. Options for funding include federal, state, and local sources. Examples include, but are not limited to, Title I and Title III monies, and gifted-and-talented funding.

Districts and schools can also take advantage of some funding from the Texas AP/IB Incentive Program for exam fees and other program support. Funding sources include:

- Awards for every student who scores a three or above on the AP examination;
- Reimbursement for teacher training for the AP Spanish Language and Literature courses if the AP middle school Spanish teacher also teaches AP in high school; and
- Reimbursement for AP textbooks.

For additional information on incentive programs and guidelines see the Advanced Academic Services page on the TEA website.

In budgeting for the program, districts will want to consider the following program costs.

- Teacher
- Textbook purchase, if not using state-adopted textbooks
- AP instructional materials
- Other instructional materials
- Tape/CD players or language lab
- Classroom incidentals not covered by regular school budget
- College Board training for the teacher
- Additional professional development
- Summer programs for students
- Guest speakers/program evaluators
- Field trips and awards
- Travel to conferences

Vertical Alignment, Course Sequences, and Curriculum Development

Districts interested in implementing the Middle school program for AP Spanish should include Spanish in vertical alignment activities. Administrators, teachers, counselors, curriculum specialists, and others will need to develop a coherent Spanish curriculum across grade levels that includes middle school AP Spanish Language. This planning will help to ensure vertical alignment in Spanish instruction across courses and grades by restructuring course offerings at both the middle and high school levels. Thus, teachers at the middle and high schools need to work together to develop and implement a coherent Spanish curriculum across the district and to provide the appropriate support for native Spanish speakers moving through the program.

Rethinking Pre-AP Spanish in the Lower Grades. To prepare middle school students to take the college-level AP Spanish Language course in eighth grade, districts should examine local Spanish programs available at the elementary and

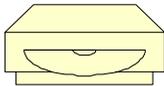
middle schools. Districts should consider aligning the curriculum to implement a Pre-AP Spanish program. Most pilot districts created a Pre-AP course sequence for native Spanish speakers in the sixth and seventh grades, while some extended this offering to fifth-graders. Pre-AP courses are not mandatory in order to implement the eighth-grade Middle school program for AP Spanish, but districts are encouraged to start such programs to provide a stronger foundation for students.

Placement in High School Courses. Districts should be prepared to offer an array of Spanish courses at the high school for those students who successfully complete the AP Spanish Language course in the middle grades.

AP Spanish Literature should be available to successful students in ninth or tenth grade. (This is especially important because some colleges won't accept AP credits that are over five years old, so students who take the AP Spanish Language course in eighth grade could need additional opportunities to gain college credit.) While some high schools may already offer AP Spanish Literature, additional sections of the class may have to be added to accommodate demand or offered earlier to provide students in the program with a more immediate follow-on course to AP Spanish Language. Districts may also consider offering the AP Spanish Literature class over two years to tailor the course to the needs of younger, native Spanish-speaking students. Some possible options for districts to consider include offering a Spanish V honors course or Spanish V Pre-AP course that could include some of the AP Spanish Literature content that students can take in ninth grade and then continue with the Spanish V AP Spanish Literature course in tenth grade. The district may designate the course with any local course title, but the PEIMS numbers should be unique in order for the students to receive two high school credits. If the district offers the first half of Spanish V AP Literature in ninth grade and the second half in tenth grade with the same course number, the student will receive only half of the credit per year for a total of only one credit instead of two credits.

Because participating students finish the AP Spanish offerings earlier in high school, schools also may want to consider offering additional advanced courses in Spanish, such as Spanish for Business Purposes, Spanish for Medical Personnel, or Spanish for Communications. Students could also study an additional language in preparation for college. Keep in mind that placement of participating students in high school courses may be tied to district grading and credit policies.

Course Sequences. As a result of the program, pilot districts redesigned Spanish course offerings at both the middle and high school levels for both native and non-native Spanish speakers. See examples of course sequences offered at pilot districts in Sample Resources.

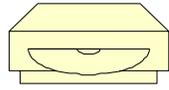


Progression of Spanish Courses 1, 2
Middle and High School Course Sequences
Spanish Language Course Options at Middle School
Course Listing Handbook Changes
Placement in High School
Board Policy Statement
Credit Policy Memos 1, 2

Sample Syllabi

The College Board provides sample syllabi for the AP Spanish Language course (<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com>), and teachers will want to create their own syllabi using these and other resources. When developing curriculum, be sure to use the TEKS for LOTE Level IV as a guide. Since the AP Spanish Language course and exam were specifically developed for non-native Spanish speakers, some pilot districts created a syllabus that is geared to younger, native Spanish-speaking students. Supplementing the writing portion of the curriculum is very important as this is the weakest language skill area for many students. Thus, the local curriculum should address all phases of the writing process. Sample syllabi

that some districts used for Pre-AP and AP courses are included in the Sample Resources. Also, see a sample rubric for scoring the writing portion of the AP curriculum.



Sample Pre-AP Syllabus

Sample AP Syllabi 1, 2

Sample Technology-based Lesson Plans

Writing Rubric

Textbook Selection and Additional Materials

Textbooks. Listed below are examples of some of the textbooks and other materials pilot schools used in their middle school AP Spanish Language programs. Even though some districts may choose to use the same (non-adopted) textbooks that are used for high school AP Spanish Language, it may not be possible to buy these texts for use in middle school using designated district textbooks funds (since they were not designated for use in middle school). In those cases, middle schools should determine the best source for the purchase of textbooks for the middle school program. Additionally, the policy for reimbursement for non state-adopted textbooks for AP is explained in the TEA correspondence included in Sample Resources.

At the state level, textbooks are available for Spanish IV, though these texts are not specifically designated for AP courses. During the last textbook adoption, the following books were approved for Spanish IV-VII: *Abriendo paso* (Heinle & Heinle), *Tesoro literario* (Glencoe McGraw-Hill), and *Galeria de arte y vida* (Glencoe McGraw-Hill). Any of these books may be selected for use in Spanish IV-VII. Textbooks submitted specifically for the Spanish IV AP Language adoption beginning with the 2005-06 school year are *Abriendo paso* by Pearson Education, Inc. and *De Paseo* by Thomson Learning/Heinle. With approval from the State Board of Education, these books will be available for adoption at no cost to the district. The book selected by new project districts for the Middle school

program for AP Spanish will depend on the textbook districts adopt for each respective level.

Another option new project districts may wish to consider when making textbook selections is choosing a different level text designated for students who are native speakers (from textbook adoption lists.) *Tu mundo* and *Nuestro mundo* published by McDougal Littell or *Sendas literarias* published by Heinle & Heinle may meet district program needs. These texts are considered level I and II books.

Additionally, most of these publishers provide native speaker supplemental materials that accompany textbook adoptions. When ordering these texts, districts may wish to consult the PEIMS division at the local district to select the appropriate PEIMS number to reference in the textbook request. Because these books are designated level I and II books and the class is a level IV course, districts will be required to pay for the books.

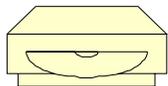
A final option for consideration in textbook selection is to choose a text for a Spanish IV AP that is not on any adoption list. TEA textbook division has established a waiver process to facilitate reimbursement for these books. If selecting this option for textbook selection, it is recommended that districts contact the TEA textbook division for clarification of this process.

Additional Materials. Additional materials some pilot districts used included:

- McDougal Littell’s *Tu mundo* and *Nuestro mundo* audio CDs, transparencies, tests, videos, and workbooks;
- AMSCO’s textbooks and workbooks for first-, second-, and third-year Spanish;
- Longman’s *AP Spanish—Preparing for the Language Examination*;
- Teacher’s Discovery’s *Spanish Accents Workbook*;
- Barron’s *AP Spanish*;
- College Board’s CD-ROM for AP Spanish Language; and

- College Board’s previously released AP Spanish Language exams and practice tests (<http://www.collegeboard.com/ap/apcd/html/apspanm.html>) and “Acorn” books.⁶

Additional textbooks and materials used by pilot districts are included in Sample Syllabi on the Sample Resources CD.



Reimbursement for Non State-Adopted AP and IB Textbooks

Teaching Resources

Book Order Request 2003–04

Books Ordered 2002–03

Other Class Resources

In addition to textbooks and workbooks, program developers should ensure that participating students have access to resources necessary for success in the AP Spanish Language course and exam. For example, tape recorders with headsets should be available to students, as they are required for the examination. Students should have access to such equipment on a regular basis for completing the listening requirements related to the course and to build their confidence and efficacy in using it. The supply of audio-listening equipment should be sufficient to accommodate the number of students enrolled. Scheduling time at campus language labs should also be evaluated.

Supplemental Support for Students

In addition to a summer preparatory workshop or institute for incoming middle school students, participants may wish to consider offering additional supplemental support for students participating in the AP Spanish Language

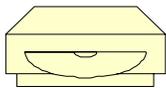
⁶ The “Acorn” books include information about AP examinations and sample syllabi specific to each AP course.

course. For example, most pilot districts offered after-school tutoring and/or Saturday academies. Districts also offered additional support and interventions for struggling students. Transportation and parent permission should be considered when planning for these activities.

Summer Institute. These intensive introductory workshops for students can be designed to introduce students to the AP course, expectations, materials, and standards; to gather baseline information about student knowledge; to provide practice on key grammar issues; to provide exposure to Spanish literature and cultural activities that will be a focus of the course; and to begin to build class identity and spirit.

Mentors and Guest Speakers. Many districts supplemented their programs by including student tutors from the high school (ideally former participants in the course), mentors from local colleges, and guest speakers to speak on the importance of Hispanic language and culture and the rewards and advantages of being bilingual.

Field Trips and Awards Ceremonies. Many pilot and scale-up districts provided extra incentives and rewards for their middle school AP Spanish Language students to make them feel part of an elite group. For example, some schools arranged special field trips, and some districts designed AP Spanish Language middle school tee shirts for the class.



Sample Summer Institute Syllabus and Lesson Plan
Permission Form to Attend Tutoring Sessions (Spanish)

Administration of AP Exams

Many middle schools will not have previously administered an AP examination but will become involved in the process through the development of the AP Spanish Language program at their schools. Pilot districts reported that middle

school students who took the exam at the high school administration said they felt uncomfortable and intimidated. Therefore, it is recommended that middle schools apply to the College Board to administer the AP exam. By doing so, middle schools can receive TEA campus awards for students who receive scores of 3, 4, and 5 on the exam. If middle schools elect to have students test at the high school administration and do not have a unique number code, the high school campus will receive the campus examination incentives.

It cannot be emphasized enough that schools new to exam administration should start investigating the requirements and steps in the process early. A detailed exam administration guide is available at AP Central (<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/>). This guide provides a timeline for preparation and information on all aspects of AP exam administration. AP Central registration is free. It is recommended that school program staff create a log-in password when they register so that all sections of AP Central, especially discipline-specific testing information which is not available to parents and students, are accessible. Other key steps in the process include the following.

Obtaining Site Number and Code for Test. Schools should begin this process as soon as they decide to offer the program. AP Central provides a number to call to obtain a school's site number and code.

Ordering Exams. Schools are required to report to the College Board the number of students that they expect to take the exam and to order the exams well in advance of test administration. The calendar for the exam schedule for the year and the due date for ordering exams are posted on AP Central.

Choosing a Test Administrator. The AP Spanish teacher is not allowed to administer the exam. Most schools have counselors or AP coordinators administer the exam. Because of the technology required for the exam, a second monitor knowledgeable about the equipment is advised for first-time administrations.

Training Test Administrator. There are many time-consuming procedures and logistics that need to be taken into account in administering the exam. Take advantage of the optional pre-administration session so that much of the paperwork can be completed before the actual exam day and consider conducting a practice session for the test administrator. The test administrator will want to become thoroughly familiar with the exam administration guide available at AP Central.

Preparing Students. Students will also need to be familiar in advance with the exam procedures, format, and content.

Evaluation

Districts and schools implementing the program are encouraged to conduct formative and summative program evaluations. This is not only important for mid-course corrections and overall program improvement but also to build evidence in support of the program and its continuation. Districts should consider long-term evaluation of the program from the outset and plan to track participating students' performance through high school and beyond. To facilitate this, districts are encouraged to create a district database of enrollment information to assist in the collection and recording of data and to develop relationships with the appropriate high school staff to facilitate tracking of students after middle school.

Information to collect could include the following.

1. Information about participating students, including age, gender, race/ethnicity, and financial need;
2. Participating students' scores on the AP Spanish Language examination taken in middle school and the AP Spanish Literature examination taken in high school;

3. Student grades, including the years previous to enrollment in the Middle school program for AP Spanish, the year the student takes the AP Spanish Language course, and the years the student is in high school;
4. Attendance and dropout figures;
5. Disciplinary referrals of the students before and during participation in the Middle school program for AP Spanish;
6. Records of courses the students take in high school; and
7. Performance on TAKS.

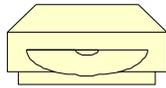
Additional tools for program evaluation could include benchmark testing and AP Spanish Language and Literature practice exams, student and parent surveys, and regular class-level assessments.

Benchmark Testing and AP Practice Exams. The College Board offers released AP practice exams for practice and benchmark testing (<http://www.collegeboard.com/ap/apcd/html/apspanm.html>). These or similar tests can be used to conduct pre- and post-tests to compare student abilities at the beginning of the course with their abilities near the completion of the course as they prepare to take the final examination. AP practice exams can also be used several times throughout the year to benchmark student progress and identify areas for improvement.

Parent Surveys. Some pilot districts surveyed parents of participating students twice during the year—once in the fall and once in the spring. These surveys consisted of questions about parent knowledge of the AP program and the AP Spanish Language course’s benefit to their child. School counselors, then, used the survey results to understand how best to communicate and share information with parents.

Student Surveys. Some districts surveyed students regularly over the course of the year with questions related to general information about the AP Spanish Language course and the students' future plans.

Additional Evaluation Tools. Some districts also used class-level ongoing assessments, such as weekly oral presentations and student research reports. The oral presentations provided excellent practice opportunities for the AP Spanish Language examination. Students also gave presentations at parent meetings—either AP project meetings or parent-teacher association meetings—where they recited poetry in Spanish or provided general information about the program. As part of their research reports, students had to develop brochures on Spanish-speaking countries. These projects gave students the opportunity to learn more about the culture of Spanish-speaking countries and enabled them to improve their research skills and use of technology. Student portfolios are an excellent method of performance-based assessment.



Student Survey (Spanish, English)
Student Program Questionnaire (English)
Parent Program Evaluation (Spanish)

SUGGESTED TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Year 1

Fall/Winter—Planning

- Assess language program in middle schools and high schools
- Identify teachers
- Send teachers to College Board and other training
- Evaluate materials
- Create informational documents
- Create program budget
- Spread the word about the program
- Address grading and credit policy issues
- Obtain AP exam school number and site code and guidebook

Spring—Student selection and program development

- Evaluate and select students
- Contact parents
- Write curriculum
- Order textbooks and audio equipment

Summer—Orientation

- Hold student summer institute
- Conduct public relations campaign
- Arrange orientation meeting for parents
- Collect baseline data on students
- Investigate exam administration

Year 2

Fall/Winter/Spring—Program implementation

- Collect baseline student data for program evaluation
- Monitor class implementation and progress
- Arrange vertical teams release time for middle and high school curriculum alignment
- Schedule parent update meetings
- Order AP exams
- Conduct practice exams
- Redesign course offerings in middle and high school
- Begin student identification for next year

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Will credit that students earn in middle school on the AP exam count as an advanced measure for the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP)?

A. Absolutely. Advanced measures are not restricted to grades 9–12.

Q. If the AP Spanish Literature course is offered over two years, what credit would participating students earn?

A. The awarding of credit for participation in the program is a local level policy that must be developed by administrators and approved by local school boards. This is why administrative support for the program is crucial.

Q. How much college credit will students who successfully complete the course and get a 3 or above on the exam receive?

A. How much credit a student receives will depend on the higher education institution. Keep in mind that some colleges and universities won't accept AP credit that is over five years old. However, students who take AP Spanish Literature and get a 3 or better on the exam automatically receive college credit for college courses relative to AP Spanish Language. Thus, it is important to encourage students participating in the middle school AP program to take AP Spanish Literature in high school to ensure that they receive credit for the Spanish Language course.

Q. How does AP Spanish address the language TEKS for Spanish I, II, and III?

A. The TEKS for Spanish I, II, and III are basically the same and only differ in terms of proficiency level. Therefore, because the AP Spanish class is equivalent to Spanish IV, it inherently addresses the TEKS for the previous levels. An intermediate proficiency learner subsumes the skills for a novice proficient learner.

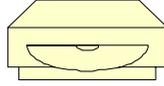
Q. Who is eligible for the program?

A. This is ultimately a local decision, but the program has historically targeted students whose home language is Spanish and who are economically disadvantaged.

Q. How do we select students for the program?

A. This is also a local decision, but a good place to start is with your ESL class rosters.

SAMPLE RESOURCES



The following sample resources, referenced throughout the implementation guide, are available electronically on the website or on the CD in the Implementation Guide binder. You are free to use any of these examples and tailor them to your own needs.

- Board Policy Statement
- Credit Policy Memos 1, 2
- Program Brochures 1, 2 (Spanish, English)
- AP Course Description and Contract (Spanish, English)
- Benefits of AP Program (Spanish, English)
- Parent Letter (Spanish, English)
- Application for Admission to Pre-AP/AP Program
- Pre-AP/AP Program Expectations and Course Agreement (Spanish, English)
- Placement Review
- Progression of Spanish Courses 1, 2
- Spanish Language Course Options at Middle School
- Course Listing Handbook Changes
- Middle and High School Course Sequences
- Placement in High School
- Sample Pre-AP Syllabus
- Sample AP Syllabi 1, 2
- Sample Technology-based Lesson Plans
- Writing Rubric
- Reimbursement for Non State-Adopted AP and IB Textbooks
- Teaching Resources
- Book Order Request 2003–04
- Books Ordered 2002–03
- Sample Summer Institute Syllabus and Lesson Plan
- Permission Form to Attend Tutoring Sessions (Spanish)
- Student Survey (Spanish, English)
- Student Program Questionnaire (English)
- Parent Program Evaluation (Spanish)