

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Harford County Public Schools Receives Grant to Expand World Language Program in High Military-Connected Schools

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) is thrilled to announce that it has been awarded a grant from the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) to support the establishment and expansion of world language programs in military-connected public schools. Emmorton Elementary School, located in Harford County, will serve as the pilot program's launch site, with the primary objective of enhancing access to and utilization of world language instruction to bolster academic success, achievement, and post-graduation opportunities for students.

The pilot program is known as "Two-way Immersion in Elementary Schools (TIES)." Two-Way Immersion education (TWI) refers to programs that provide grade level content and literacy instruction to all students through two languages. These programs typically begin in kindergarten or first grade and aim to promote bilingualism and biliteracy, high levels of academic achievement and cross-cultural competence.

By providing a well-rounded and rigorous Spanish language learning experience, TIES will equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to pursue specialized secondary and post-secondary experiences and employment opportunities.

As the English Learner (EL) population continues to grow within Harford County Public Schools, there is a heightened need for early world language acquisition opportunities. TIES will enable HCPS to address this need head-on and transform the way world languages are offered within the district. This five-year grant will provide the necessary resources and support for the planning, development, and implementation of the program.

The grant timeline includes a mandatory planning year for the 2023-2024 school year. Implementation of the TIES program will commence with the establishment of a Kindergarten Spanish Immersion classroom in the 2024-2025 school year. Subsequently, each school year will see a phased-in approach, adding the next grade level, with the goal of reaching 3rd grade by the 2028-2029 school year.

HCPS is committed to using this pilot program to collect data, evaluate its effectiveness, and make necessary refinements before expanding it to other schools within the district. The overarching objective is to provide students with a comprehensive and enriched educational experience that prepares them for success in a globally interconnected world.

Superintendent Sean Bulson expressed his excitement about the grant, stating "I am a strong supporter of world language education and am excited for what this opportunity will bring to Harford County Public Schools. This grant from the Department of Defense Education Activity is a tremendous opportunity for the students of our district to become global citizens. We are dedicated to ensuring that

all our students have access to a high-quality education, and the TIES program will provide a vital role in achieving that goal. We are grateful for the support of DoDEA and look forward to the positive impact this program will have on our students' futures. With world languages being taught in all middle schools this school year for the first time ever in HCPS, the opportunity to provide this tremendously effective approach for world language learning to elementary school students is exciting!"

HCPS invites the community to join in celebrating this significant achievement and looks forward to a future where students across the district will benefit from enhanced world language instruction and expanded opportunities for success.

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