

World Languages Program Evaluation (2015-16 to 2019-20)



Arlington
Public
Schools

Spanish for Fluent Speakers Program Enrollment, Student Outcomes, and Teacher Focus Groups

This section of the program evaluation provides an in-depth look at the Spanish for Fluent Speakers program. The data below is part of the sections on Secondary Enrollment, the Secondary Learning Environment, and Secondary Student Outcomes.

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Spanish for Fluent Speakers Program Description and Enrollment

The Spanish for Fluent Speakers (SFS) program is designed for native and heritage speakers of Spanish. SFS I begins with basic literacy skills as many of the students in SFS I have not had academic instruction in Spanish. Teachers of SFS focus on Spanish Language Arts skills with a heavy emphasis on reading and writing. SFS courses are high school credit-bearing courses beginning in 7th grade. Because some students come to SFS with academic language development in Spanish, the program serves a full range of proficiency levels and requires extensive differentiation to meet the needs of beginning to intermediate proficiency levels. Upon completing SFS III, students move into Advanced Placement levels in language and literature.

APS offers a semester Spanish for Fluent Speakers class for 6th Grade; however, it does not make-up at all schools.

Middle school student enrollment in SFS courses was stable at 6% of all APS middle school students and 9% to 10% of the total middle school enrollment in World Languages courses.

Table 1 - Middle School SFS Students Enrollment

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
# of Students	260	330	338	389	402
% of World Languages Students in SFS	8%	9%	9%	10%	10%
% of APS MS Students in SFS	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%

High school student enrollment in SFS courses declined from 5% to 3% of all high school students and from 8% to 5% of the total high school enrollment in World Languages courses.

Table 2 - High School SFS Enrollment

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
# of Students	299	324	244	231	207
% of World Languages Students in SFS	8%	8%	6%	6%	5%
% of APS HS Students in SFS	5%	5%	4%	3%	3%

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Spanish for Fluent Speakers Enrollment by Demographics

Enrollment by Gender

At the secondary levels, there was a higher enrollment in SFS courses for females than males when comparing the overall demographics of APS students. At the middle school level, the highest enrollment gap was in 2016-17 at 9% and has declined each year, ending at 3% in 2019-20. At the high school level, the enrollment gap was small each year.

Figure 1 - Middle School SFS Enrollment by Gender

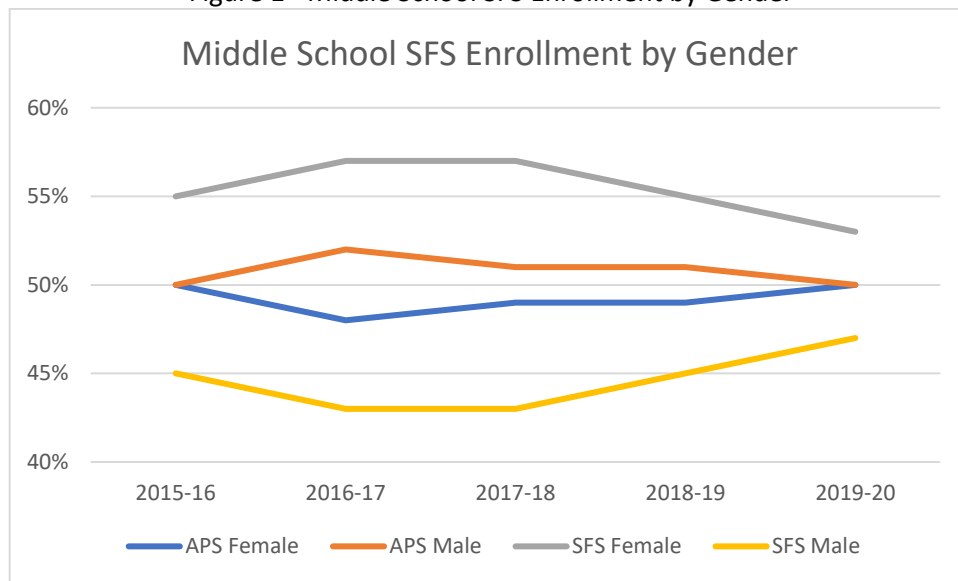
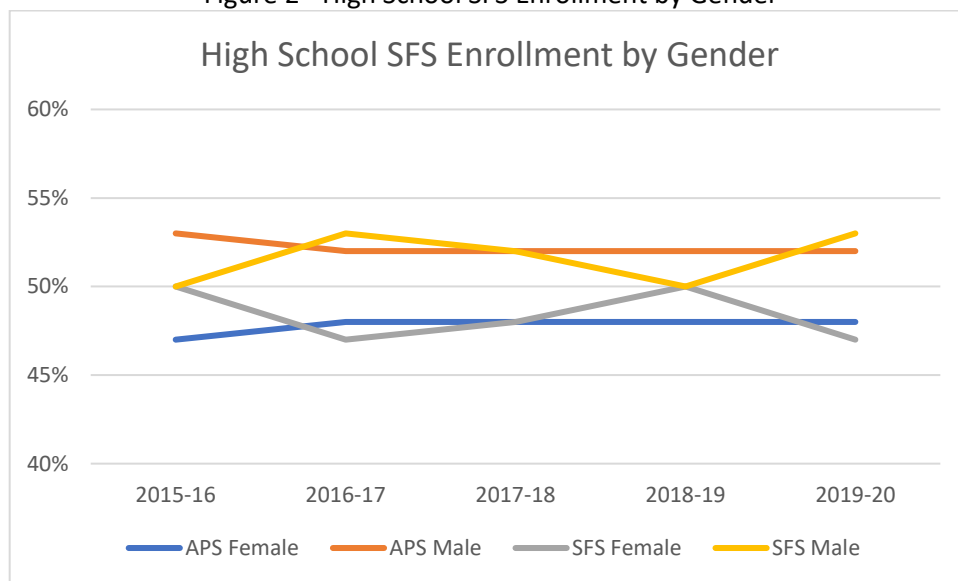


Figure 2 - High School SFS Enrollment by Gender



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Enrollment by English Learners

EL student enrollment in SFS courses was more than double the population of the overall EL student population in APS. The blue bars represent the percentages of APS students who are EL. The orange bars represent the percentage of SFS students who are EL.

Figure 3 - Middle School SFS Enrollment by English Learners

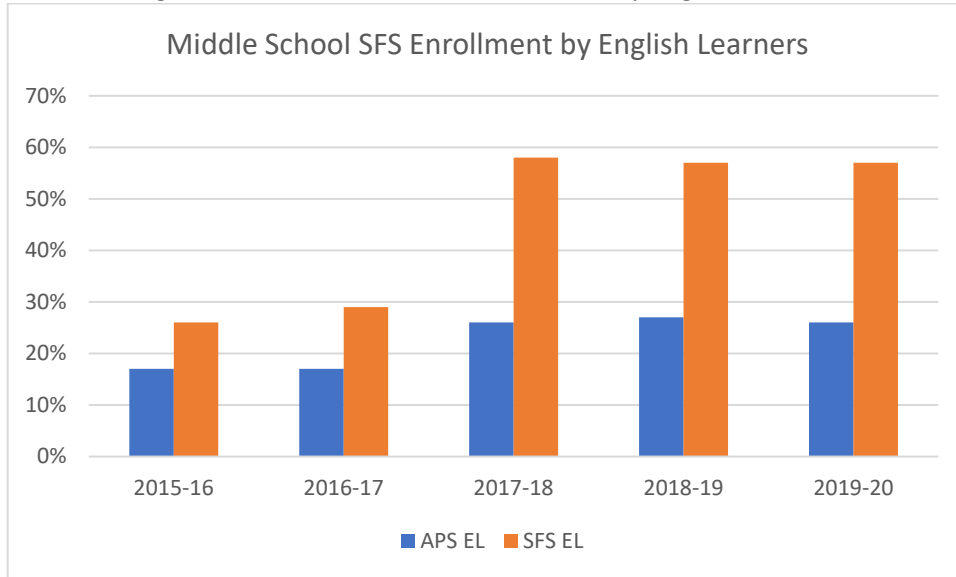
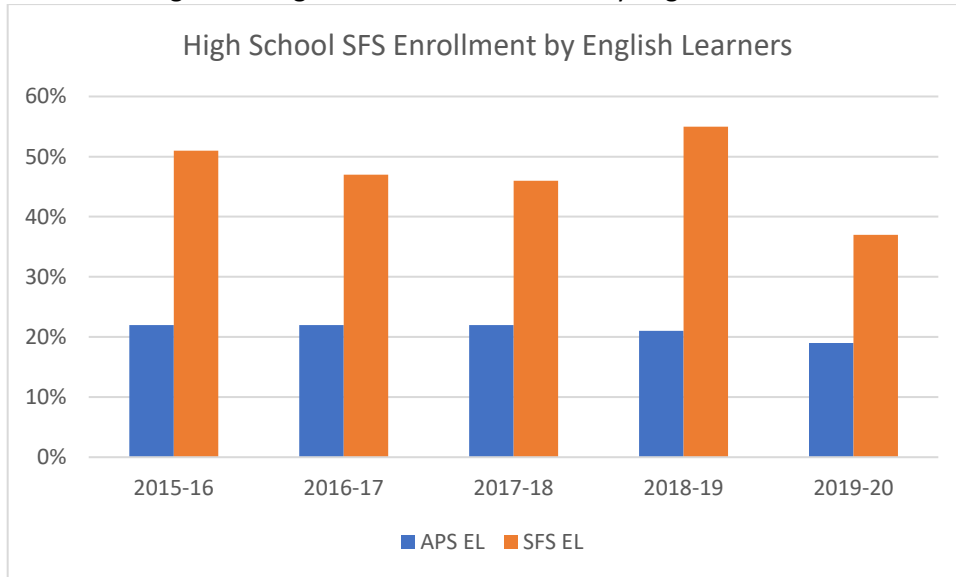


Figure 4 - High School SFS Enrollment by English Learners



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EL enrollment differed at the secondary levels. At both levels, most students were WIDA Level 6, Proficient, or Non-EL; however, a larger percentage of students from WIDA Levels 1-4 were enrolled in SFS courses at the high school level and fewer students were enrolled at the WIDA Level 6. (WIDA reporting changed in 2017-18. Accordingly, analysis below begins with that year.

Table 3 - Secondary SFS Enrollment by WIDA Level

	Middle School (2017-18 to 2019-20)	High School (2017-18 to 2019-20)
WIDA Levels 1-4	8% to 14%	25% to 36%
WIDA Level 6	43% to 49%	12% to 18%
Proficient & Non-EL	43%	43% to 63%

Figure 5 - Middle School SFS Enrollment by WIDA Level

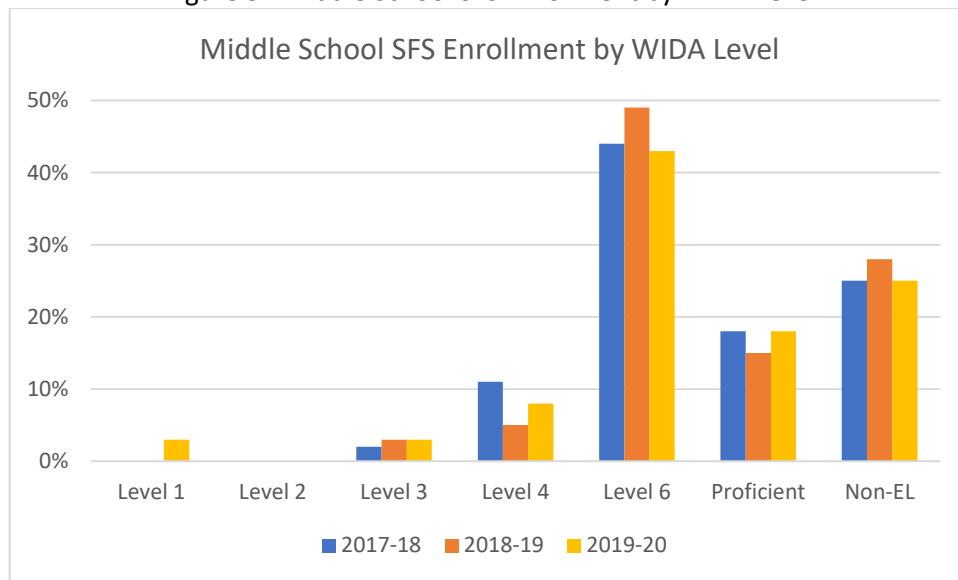
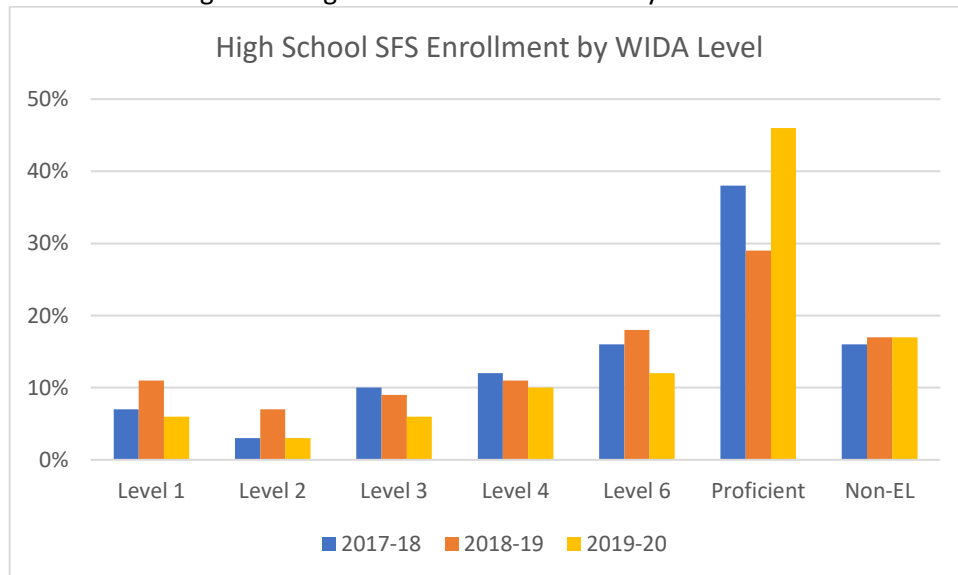


Figure 6 - High School SFS Enrollment by WIDA Level



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Enrollment by Economically Disadvantaged Status

Disadvantaged students represented a significant percentage of those enrolled in SFS. About one third of secondary students were disadvantaged, while SFS enrollment for disadvantaged students was more than two thirds.

Figure 7 - Middle School SFS Enrollment by Economically Disadvantaged Status

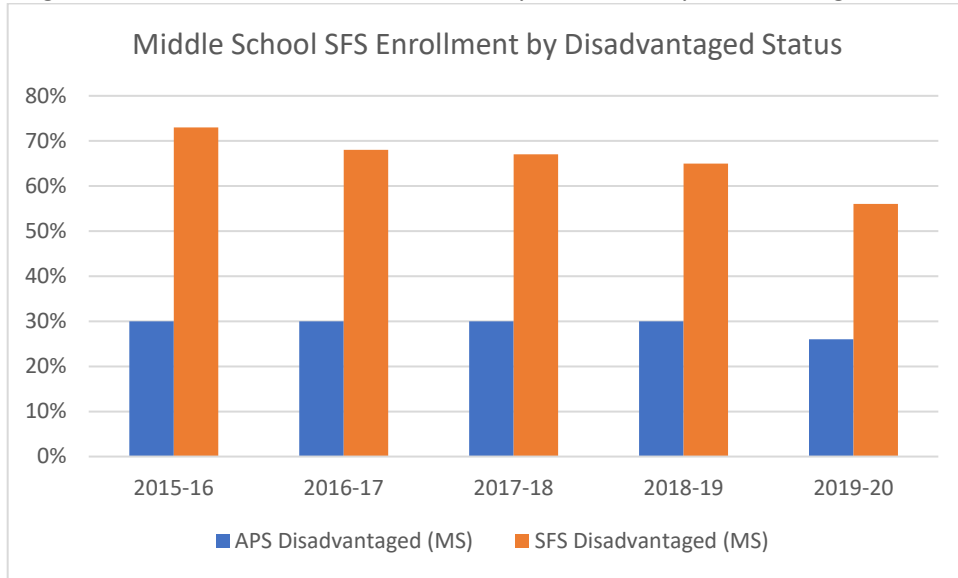
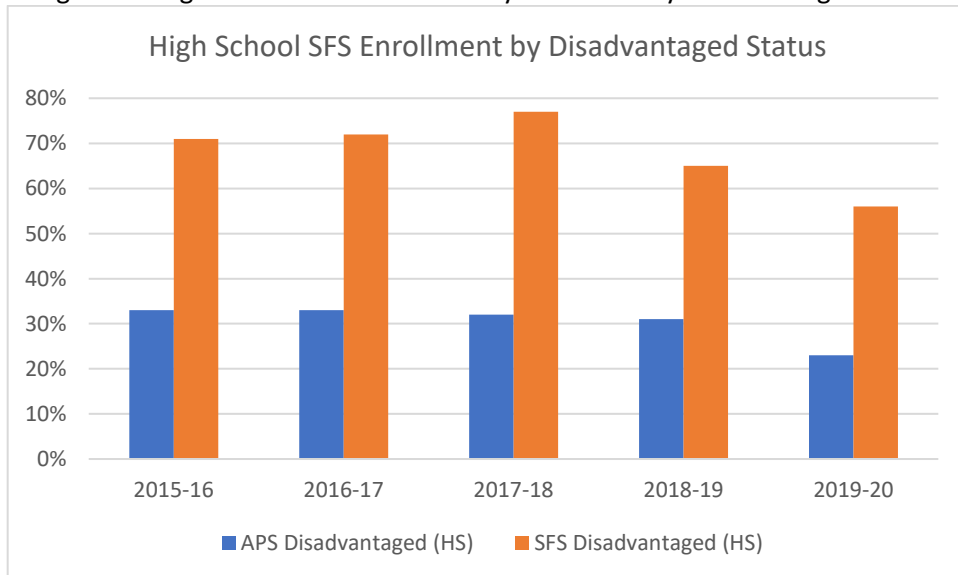


Figure 8 - High School SFS Enrollment by Economically Disadvantaged Status



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Enrollment by Students with Disabilities

Students with Disabilities were underrepresented in SFS enrollment. The enrollment gap was 4% to 7% at the secondary levels.

Figure 9 - Middle School SFS Enrollment by Students with Disabilities

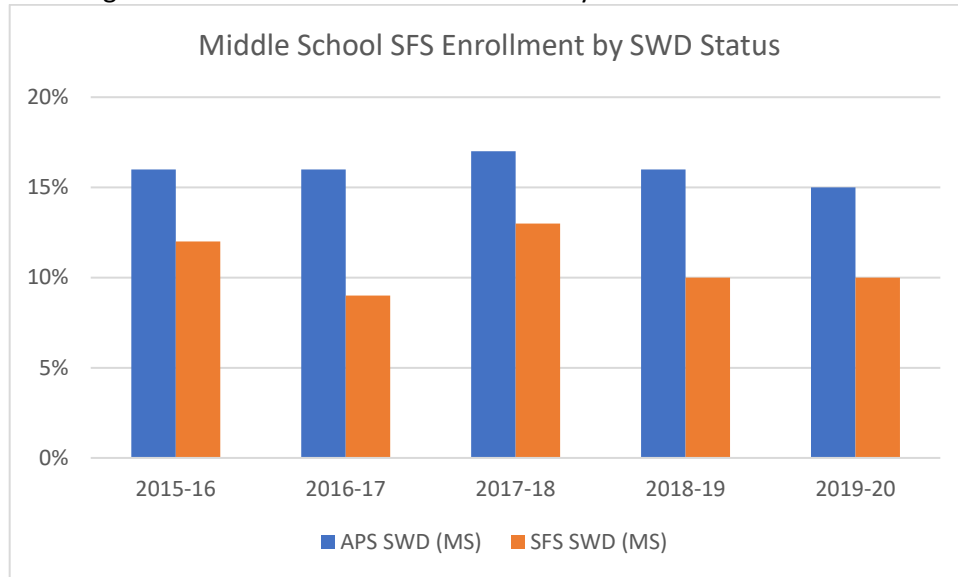
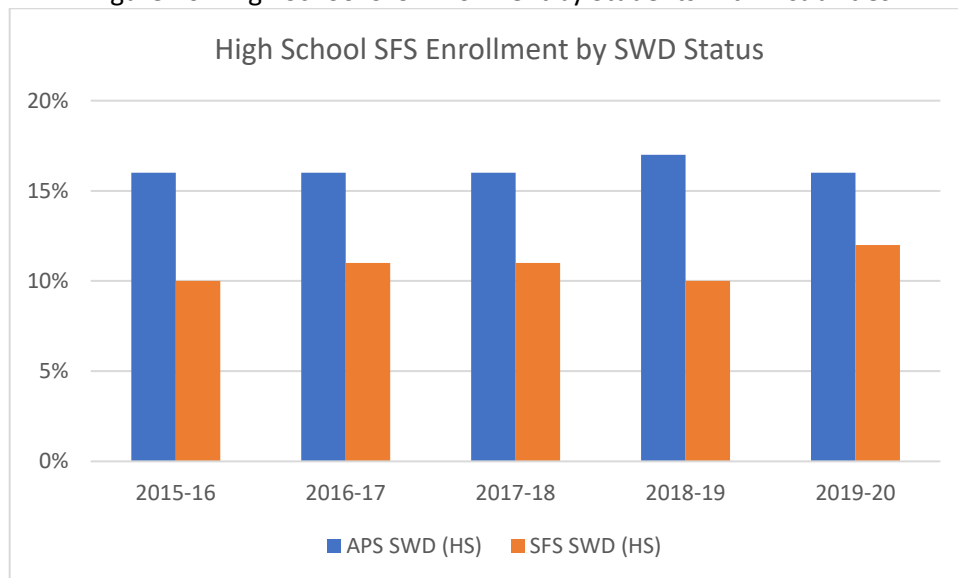


Figure 10 - High School SFS Enrollment by Students with Disabilities



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Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic students represented most of SFS enrollment, representing 82% to 93% of students at the secondary levels.

Table 4 - Middle School SFS Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Middle School Demographic	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
APS Asian	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
SFS Asian	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
APS Black	11%	10%	10%	10%	10%
SFS Black	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
APS Hispanic	27%	27%	28%	28%	29%
SFS Hispanic	91%	82%	88%	87%	88%
APS White	47%	49%	48%	48%	46%
SFS White	7%	12%	9%	10%	10%
APS Other	6%	7%	6%	7%	7%
SFS Other	0%	2%	2%	2%	1%

Table 5 - High School SFS Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

High School Demographic	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
APS Asian	10%	9%	9%	9%	8%
SFS Asian	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%
APS Black	12%	11%	11%	11%	10%
SFS Black	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%
APS Hispanic	31%	32%	32%	30%	30%
SFS Hispanic	89%	89%	93%	87%	91%
APS White	42%	42%	43%	44%	45%
SFS White	8%	7%	4%	10%	4%
APS Other	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%
SFS Other	2%	3%	< 1%	2%	2%

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Enrollment by Gifted Status

Students Identified as Gifted enrolled in SFS courses at lower rates than the overall demographic group. The enrollment gap ranged from 6% to 12% at the middle school level and from 3% to 19% at the high school level.

Figure 11 - Middle School SFS Enrollment by Gifted Status

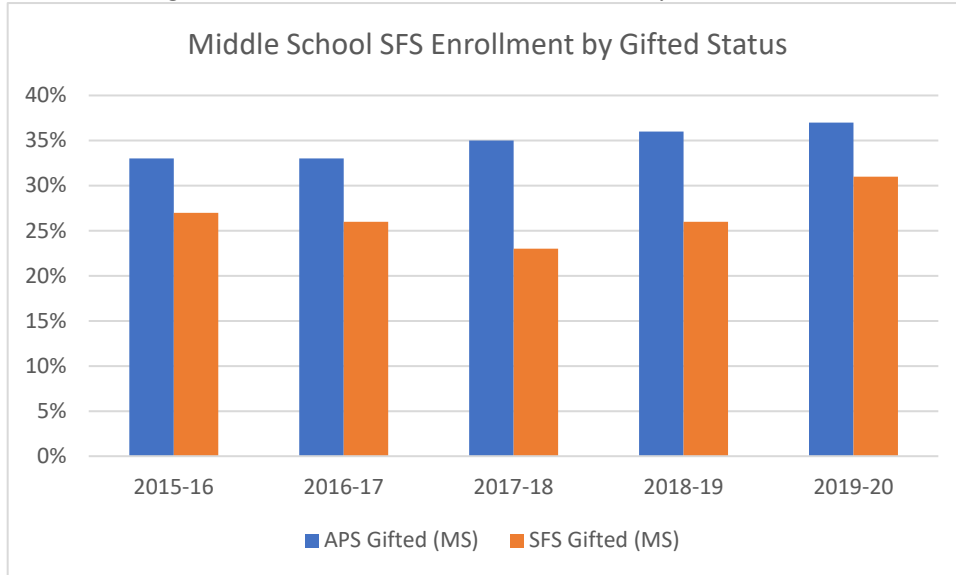
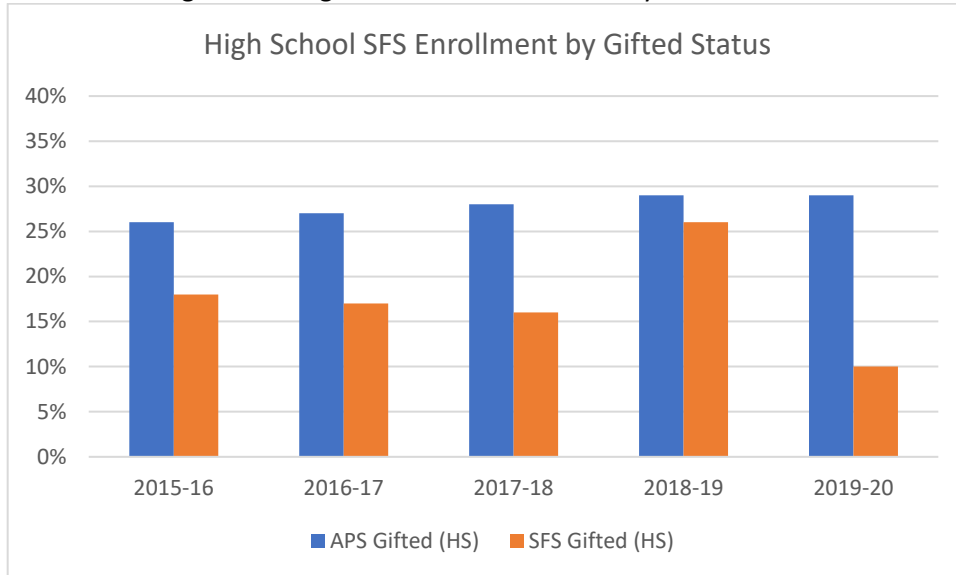


Figure 12 - High School SFS Enrollment by Gifted Status



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High School AP Enrollment by Middle School SFS Cohorts

Three cohorts of SFS students were tracked from Grade 8 through four years of high school, looking at enrollment in an AP Spanish course.

- Enrollment in an AP course by the third year of high school has decreased from 66% to 61% to 40%.
- Enrollment in an AP course by the fourth year of high school has decreased from 69% to 63% to 41%.

Table 6 - High School Enrollment in AP Spanish – Students Who Took SFS in Grade 8

Grade 8 Year	Enrolled in AP Course by Year 3 in HS		Enrolled in AP Course by Year 4 in HS	
	N	%	N	%
2014-15	79	66%	75	69%
2015-16	101	61%	94	63%
2016-17	89	40%	36	41%

Cohort Enrollment by Year

Table 7 - High School Enrollment in AP Spanish – Students Who Took SFS in Grade 8 (2014-15 Cohort)

	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Percent enrolled in an AP course	92	3%	83	54%	80	21%	78	9%

Table 8 - High School Enrollment in AP Spanish – Students Who Took SFS in Grade 8 (2015-16 Cohort)

	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Percent enrolled in an AP course	115	1%	112	47%	101	31%	96	3%

Table 9 - High School Enrollment in AP Spanish – Students Who Took SFS in Grade 8 (2016-17 Cohort)

	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Percent enrolled in an AP course	94	1%	90	33%	91	14%	88	1%

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Standards of Learning Results – English Learners Enrolled in SFS

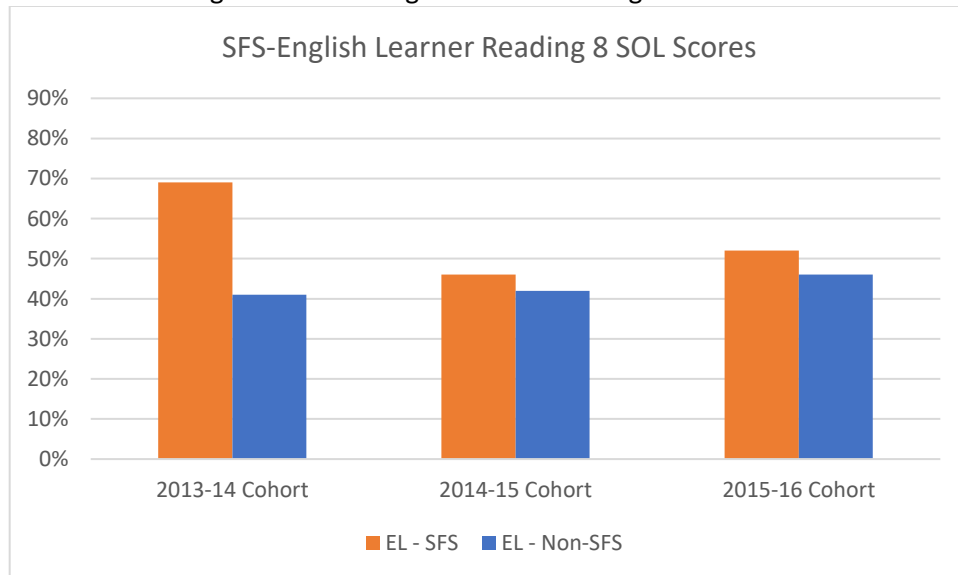
Three cohorts of Grade 8 English Learner students were tracked into high school to compare SOL Test Scores. The data was disaggregated into students who were enrolled in SFS in Grade 8 and students who were not enrolled in SFS in Grade 8.

Table 10 - SOL Tests - English Learners

Cohort	Group	Reading 8	Science 8	World Geography	Writing 8	Reading EOC
2013-14	Non-SFS	218	243	177	189	156
	SFS	39	40	36	40	31
2014-15	Non-SFS	226	263	184	182	152
	SFS	28	29	25	24	20
2015-16	Non-SFS	182	205	148	132	129
	SFS	21	22	17	22	16

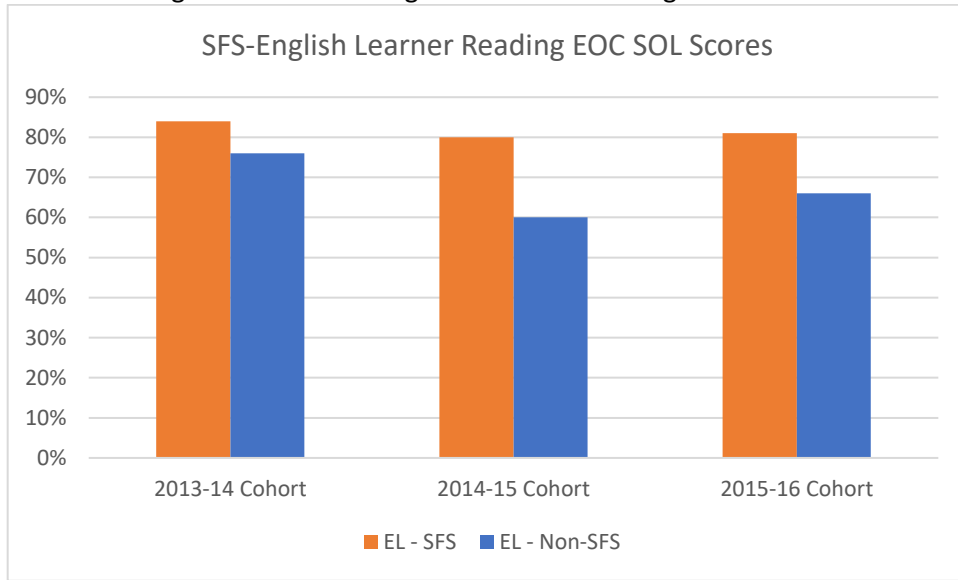
Reading SOL Test scores were higher for all EL students who took SFS in Grade 8. This was true for both the Reading 8 SOL Test as well as the Reading End of Course SOL Test. Note that the difference in performance fluctuated by large margins (Reading Grade 8 – 28%, 4%, 6%; Reading EOC – 8%, 20%, 15%).

Figure 13 - Reading 8 SOL Scores - English Learners



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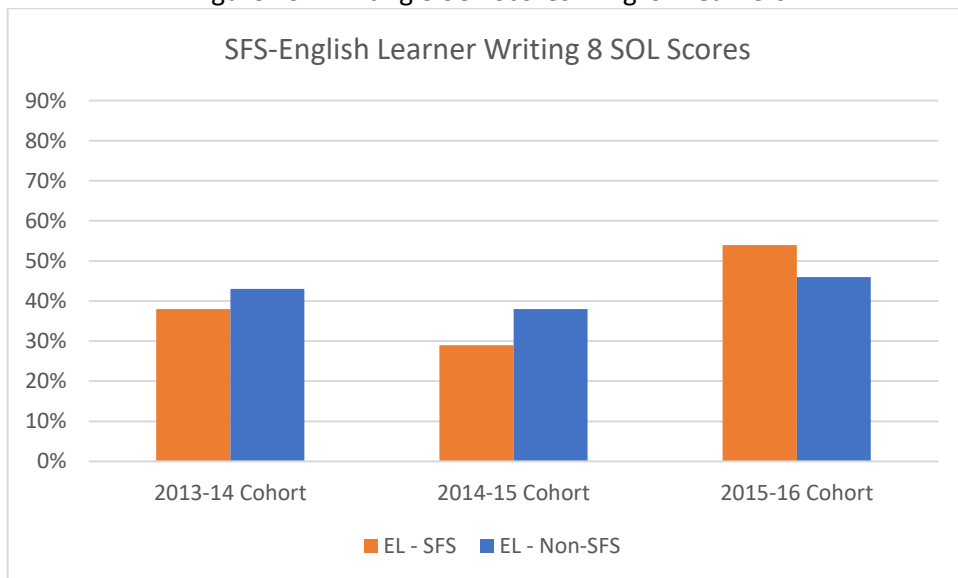
Figure 14 - HS Reading EOC SOL Scores - English Learners



Writing 8 SOL Test scores were not as strong for EL students who have taken SFS courses as they were for the SOL Reading Tests. Only one of the three cohorts of students scored higher on the Writing 8 SOL Test.

- 2013-14 Cohort SFS students scored 5% below Non-SFS students.
- 2014-15 Cohort SFS students scored 11% below Non-SFS students.
- 2015-16 Cohort SFS students scored 8% above Non-SFS students.

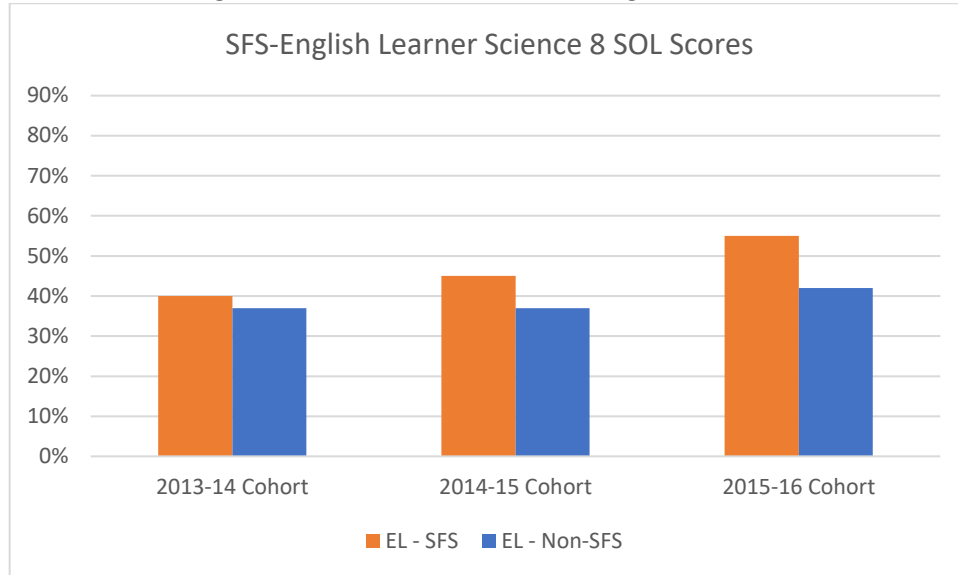
Figure 15 - Writing 8 SOL Scores - English Learners



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Science 8 SOL Test scores for EL students were higher for those enrolled in SFS courses. SFS EL performance increased from 3% to 8% to 13%.

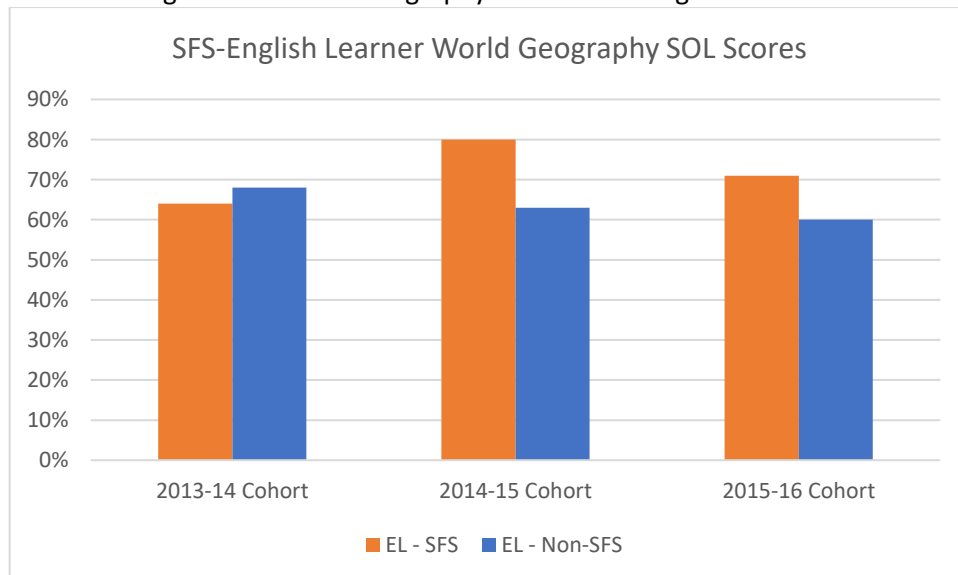
Figure 16 - Science 8 SOL Scores - English Learners



World Geography SOL Test scores were higher for EL students enrolled in SFS courses for two cohorts.

- 2013-14 Cohort SFS students scored 4% below Non-SFS students.
- 2014-15 Cohort SFS students scored 17% above Non-SFS students.
- 2015-16 Cohort SFS students scored 11% above Non-SFS students.

Figure 17 - World Geography SOL Scores - English Learners



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STAMP Scores – SFS Level III

STAMP Scores for students in Spanish for Fluent Speakers III at the Intermediate-Mid through Advanced-High are shown below.

- Writing was the highest scoring language skills in 2017-18 and 2018-19, with scores at or above 95%.
- Speaking showed scores of 90% in 2017-18 and 86% in 2018-19.
- Listening achievement was 82% in 2017-18 and 74% in 2018-19.
- Reading lagged the other language areas at 78% in 2017-18 and 71% in 2018-19.

Table 11 - STAMP Tests Taken (SFS Level III)

Language Skill	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Reading	89	146	107
Speaking	85	143	106
Listening	88	146	107
Writing	88	146	107

Table 12 - Intermediate-Mid and Above STAMP Scores (SFS Level III)

Language Skill	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Reading	75%	78%	71%
Speaking	79%	90%	86%
Listening	72%	82%	74%
Writing	87%	98%	95%

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Table 13 - Overall STAMP Score Distribution Comparisons (SFS Level III)

Reading Scores	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Novice-Low	0%	0%	0%
Novice-Mid	0%	1%	0%
Novice-High	6%	5%	5%
Intermediate-Low	19%	16%	24%
Intermediate-Mid	20%	24%	20%
Intermediate-High	20%	14%	22%
Advanced-Low	24%	30%	16%
Advanced-Mid	11%	9%	13%
Advanced-High	0%	1%	0%

Listening Scores	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Novice-Low	1%	0%	0%
Novice-Mid	0%	0%	0%
Novice-High	11%	8%	13%
Intermediate-Low	16%	11%	13%
Intermediate-Mid	17%	21%	21%
Intermediate-High	18%	17%	18%
Advanced-Low	24%	29%	23%
Advanced-Mid	13%	14%	10%
Advanced-High	0%	1%	2%

Speaking Scores	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Novice-Low	0%	0%	0%
Novice-Mid	1%	1%	0%
Novice-High	4%	1%	2%
Intermediate-Low	15%	8%	12%
Intermediate-Mid	42%	29%	26%
Intermediate-High	29%	49%	40%
Advanced-Low	8%	11%	19%
Advanced-Mid/High	0%	1%	1%

Writing Scores	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Novice-Low	0%	0%	0%
Novice-Mid	1%	0%	0%
Novice-High	0%	0%	1%
Intermediate-Low	13%	3%	4%
Intermediate-Mid	65%	32%	24%
Intermediate-High	16%	47%	39%
Advanced-Low	6%	19%	29%
Advanced-Mid/High	0%	0%	3%

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General Finding – Enrollment and Student Outcomes

The Spanish for Fluent Speakers Program is centered around a strategic plan goal and three performance objectives. Compared to the overall APS secondary student population, SFS courses enroll greater percentages of English Learners, Economically Disadvantaged students, and Hispanic students. Each of these demographic groups have opportunity gaps that APS is working to eliminate.

Of note was Standards of Learning Test performance for English Learners enrolled in Spanish for Fluent Speakers:

- Reading test results were consistently higher at both secondary levels.
- Science 8 test results were consistently higher and performance was increasing.
- World Geography test results were higher for the two most recent cohorts.
- Writing 8 test results were lower for two of three cohorts. The most recent cohort was higher.

STAMP test scores at Spanish for Fluent Speakers students were a strength overall, with students scoring at or above the Intermediate-Mid level in high percentages.

- Writing was the highest scoring language skills in 2017-18 and 2018-19, with scores at or above 95%.
- Speaking showed scores of 90% in 2017-18 and 86% in 2018-19.
- Listening achievement was 82% in 2017-18 and 74% in 2018-19.
- Reading lagged the other language areas at 78% in 2017-18 and 71% in 2018-19.

Also of note is the decrease in enrollment in AP Spanish courses by students who took Spanish for Fluent Speakers in Grade 8. Enrollment declined each year.

Impacted Strategic Plan Goals & Performance Objectives

- **Student Success: Multiple Pathways to Student Success**
Ensure that every student is challenged and engaged while providing multiple pathways for student success by broadening opportunities, building support systems and eliminating barriers. APS will eliminate opportunity gaps so all students achieve excellence.
 - **Performance Objectives**
 - Increased achievement for all reporting groups on district and state assessments shows progress toward eliminating the opportunity gap.
 - All students will make at least one year's worth of growth as measured by federal, state, and/or district assessments.
 - Historically over-represented and under-represented groups accessing services will be proportionate with student need and demographics.

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Spanish for Fluent Speakers – Teacher Focus Group

Purpose

A focus group of Spanish for Fluent Speakers (SFS) teachers was convened in January 2020. The purpose was to assess strengths and limitations of the current program, including learning about teachers' experiences in the SFS program and identify ways to strengthen it for both teachers and students.

Research Method

The focus group discussions lasted 90 minutes. Eight SFS teachers participated. The discussion explored:

- Experiences in SFS (e.g., pros and cons, any barriers experienced, factors that make a positive difference).
- Insights on why ELs students choose a particular pathway and how APS can help
- Thoughts on the degree to which APS shows the school system values students' heritage language
- Teachers suggestions for the World Languages program

Results

These teachers' main message was that they wish for more continuity and structure than they feel the program has today. Many believe SFS teachers across APS are doing *similar* lessons, readings, testing, etc., but still feel more unity would be helpful—both for more seamless transitions between schools (including when families move and when students advance to middle- and high school) and to help reduce teachers' workload. The fact that SFS teachers are typically working solo—as the only such teacher in their school—makes continuity and structure all the more important, they said.

We are like the USA. Every single "state" [meaning] every single school, has their own things that they teach. We have a pacing guide but if a student moves from one school to another school, it's completely different.—SFS Teacher

When asked to describe more specifically what would be helpful, the teachers said:

- **Ideally, SFS should have a curriculum.** A couple said one was attempted by a teacher team years ago, but the team ultimately produced a pacing guide. The guide is a necessary start, they said, but on its own is not as robust as a curriculum would be. A couple teachers in the group were careful to recognize the work of the teacher team and the fact that some guidance and resources are available to SFS teachers. A teacher who was present for the curriculum work said that the group specifically decided to *develop* a curriculum instead of adopting one. And, several agreed that even if having a curriculum is not possible, adding more structure and guidance would still be helpful. Two teachers gave the example of using a song to teach.

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- **They wish for a textbook.** Several made it a point to say, “We recognize a textbook is just a tool.” They explained that textbooks would provide structure and reduce their workload—for example, building grammar into the topics in the pacing guide without the teacher having to develop lessons and materials whole cloth. Likewise, a teacher who was present for discussions of an SFS textbook in the past acknowledged that several were reviewed and thought not to work well for fluent speakers, although the textbooks are useful for other language learners such as those in regular Spanish or Immersion.

I really love my language... I'm native speaker. I'm from [country] and I love my language. I love my culture. I love to teach Spanish and my culture. But I see that we don't have a curriculum here...we were working for a curriculum but we just did kind of pacing guide. That's it.—SFS Teacher

We have to be articulate in order that the students can move from any school in our district. Then, we don't have...We don't have a textbook then we don't have a way to teach the grammar, according with the topics that we are teaching them. It's more work for us. We have to spend a lot of time to teach

*[I agree], there **are** some things that were created. We have units, they have names. There are standards; there is a chart that says, “These are the 10 grammar points you're supposed to do.” But there are no unified readings and there's no cohesion between the unit theme, the readings, and the grammar...And also, the whole push of having pull-out sessions for students has to do with having standardized or some kind of unified tests, that you can kind of measure each other's actual results and figure out how your teaching changes. I mean that's what all of Arlington does. There's absolutely none of that happening between us. We give all different quizzes.—SFS Teacher*

... we can overlap. Then when we are planning something [we might want to say to a teacher who has students two years before us], “No, but I do this song... I'm using that song for Spanish Fluent Speaker Three.” And they may say, “But I'm sorry, I'm using also from a different perspective for Spanish Fluent Speaker One.” And, then we... We need desperate a textbook.—SFS Teacher

There are [resources] there [available to SFS teachers]. I can see it—like for each level, the grammar that you need to do. And I can see a lot of sample activities for the lessons. I know it's not everything, but at least it's a point to start.—SFS Teacher

[If not a curriculum], at least [specific guidance like], “These are the readings, these are the grammar points and these are the months that we use them in.”—SFS Teacher

- **Several teachers in the focus group proposed that an already professionally developed curriculum could be superior to a teacher-created one, although they thought that option would be more expensive.** They expressed the sense that while teachers could help design curriculum, experts whose entire vocation is curriculum design may be better suited to solve the current problem. For example, these experts may be better able to align curriculum with AP test expectations to help ensure students are well-prepared. They indicated that the possibility of adapting the curricula used for Immersion 9 and 10 to SFS 1 and 2 had been discussed, but that

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it would not work because SFS students need to focus on different skills—specifically grammar as well as writing skills such as developing a main idea and supporting points.

We need to move faster, speed the process [of curriculum development]. Doing the curriculum this way [developing it ourselves], we cannot compete as a district with companies who are investing tons of time developing... And I can tell you, we went to [a conference where curriculum developers were present] and they developed a lot of different strategies and they are well-developed and well-aligned.—SFS Teacher

I agree completely. Teaching is challenging and creating the curriculum is challenging, but there are some experts on curriculum. And we are not... I mean we are teachers, we know something about curriculum, we know something about everything, but we are not experts...I don't know, they might be very expensive.—SFS Teacher

- **The group was mixed on the question of quizzes and tests, with some saying having these provided would be beneficial and others, while agreeing, saying these items are a lower priority than items like curriculum and textbooks.**

I think what I hear everybody asking in most meetings is like, “Well, what are the readings, what are the grammar points?” I’ll make my own tests. It’s fine. But as long as I get the other stuff... because once we make a test we have it forever. [On the other hand] technically we should have some kind of unified tests, and the only unified tests we have are our midterm and final because this is a high school level class. That’s the worst part about it. This should be super structured. This going for college... For kids to go to college or whatever else, and it’s like we have a midterm and a final. The midterm and the final right now is a speaking proficiency and a writing proficiency, which I think is adequate and good. But we don’t have in-between quizzes and tests and so forth.—SFS Teacher

- **A few teachers made a point of noting that the issues they raised were specifically about SFS, and not about “regular” Spanish or Immersion.**

We’re only talking about Fluent Speakers.... Because the other ones follow a book. Regular Spanish follows a book. They have everything [provided]. And, Immersion, they follow a book also. In Fluent Speakers we don’t follow... We don’t use a book.—SFS Teacher

- **Some materials for SFS teachers on Google Drive are not filed and linked correctly, which it makes it hard to find what one needs.**

I’ll click, “Okay Unit Two Fluent Speakers Two” on the Google Drive. That’s who-knows-where, and I search forever, and it’ll show me the same file that goes with Fluent Speakers One. They’re linked to old files, they’re not all linked correctly within the actual unit.—SFS Teacher

So what she’s saying, the pacing guide is a framework that we started and I understand that that’s how a curriculum has to develop. So there’s an overarching framework that is based on standards, right? So right now they’ve developed like three or four units for

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each Fluent Speakers, but...One is a little bit more developed and it has some readings underneath there. Once you find it, I don't know if anybody has access to that. Well, I know we all do, but it's difficult to find. And because most of us don't have another Fluent Speakers counterpart at our own school, we never have anyone to talk to about this.—SFS Teacher

- **When it comes to the question of how fluent speakers know SFS is available and any guidance they receive that helps them access the classes, teachers said:**
 - Morning announcements at school
 - Teachers identify students on an ad hoc basis and let them know
 - Students coming from an immersion setting are very likely to know about SFS because they were typically told at their previous school
- **These teachers acknowledged that one unique challenge of SFS is the diversity of students' abilities within each class.** One suggested a placement test to enter the class given her experience with students who can function at home speaking Spanish (e.g., asking for food), but haven't sufficient experience and skill to watch and understand a video in class or learn from a teacher who speaks only Spanish to the students. Another said her school does have a placement test—typically used when immigrant students arrive from Spanish-speaking countries—but, that the test is too simple. The group agreed that placement issues are more easily solved in high school—where a student may be able to move to a new class at the next level—than in middle school where a class at the next level may not be offered. One teacher had taught an 8th grade class of SFS 2 and SFS 3 together and had also taught SFS 1 and 2 together, saying effective teaching in those circumstances is “very difficult.” Teachers said that the schools' struggle is that the number of fluent speakers who could make up an SFS class in middle school is so small that splitting each level into its own class cannot be justified.

We need to know that students...if they are fluent, they can at least watch a video and they can understand. But they don't. They don't. They are completely lost. Then now, I have my Spanish Fluent Speaker One and I need to teach it like it is Spanish One regular. [Because] the thing is that I am speaking Spanish, and they barely understand Spanish. Then, there are other ones in class that are native speakers and it sucks for them. Then I have many levels, why? Because we don't have a placement test.—SFS Teacher

- **A couple teachers emphasized their concern that their struggles reflect a lack of true commitment on the part of APS to the SFS program.** They wished for improvements like curriculum and textbooks not just for their academic value, but to better convey to students who know Spanish that they are valued for what they know. One described her students' excitement at using a set of brand new books she had found in a school closet. They were amazed at the perfect books and interpreted receiving them as a nod to the value of the students themselves. Teachers said that students may be struggling in other classes and SFS is place to shine.

We need more leadership, not only in World Language, and county-wide, that really puts Latinos and fluent speakers and Hispanics in the top, or [if not] the top, the second [tier priority]. Invest some money in us about training, about books we need... [The students] they are the ones that are suffering because they deserve and they want a

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good quality of education. And if they know Spanish, personally I think they need to excel, they need to be outstanding in that. Because in math, in science, in the other classes, sometimes they are not that good...we need the resources, we need leadership, we need to help them to transition to this new world.

—SFS Teacher

I think the priority is they need to have the will to spend money in our program, one. Second thing is, we need [APS to] give us quality and quantity training. After that, we need a textbook...—SFS Teacher

This is a contradiction. We teach belonging and they don't feel they belong to their school system.—SFS Teacher

- **A few teachers shared concern that one barrier to elevating Latino students' concerns is cultural, namely that their parents do not aggressively advocate for change.** Rather, many feel grateful or are overworked or are unsure how to even approach making a demand for change. One warmly received suggestion was to offer a class for parents, especially those new to US schools, to cover topics such as the grading system, the school, the principal's role, who they need to talk to if they have a question or problem, and who they need to contact if their child will be out sick. The teachers also acknowledged that Spanish-speaking counselors had also been added to school teams and were helping strengthen communication with parents.

They need to educate those parents. Even offering a class for them will be nice even to show them... to teach the parents the system. When the report cards go home, what the [grading] letters mean, because one student tell me once, and I will never forget, "Oh I have an E, but I tell my parents as excelling."—SFS Teacher

General Finding – SFS Structure, Curriculum, and Materials

SFS teachers expressed a need for more overall structure for the SFS Program, a desire for a curriculum and textbook, a reorganization of materials provided by the World Languages Office, investment by APS in the program to the same degree as other programs, and examining how students are informed of the program.

- **SFS teachers wish for more continuity and structure than they feel the program has today.** Many believe SFS teachers across APS are doing *similar* lessons, readings, testing, etc., but say that more unity would reduce their workload, help them because they are usually the solo SFS teacher in their building, and also would help students with transitions between schools.
- **In particular, they wished for a curriculum and a textbook.** They debated the relative merits of a teacher-developed curriculum or one purchased by APS from professional curriculum developers. In general, they leaned toward the latter but were concerned about costs.

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- **Even an initial step of checking on any potential issues with organization and correct links for material provided on Google Drive would likely be helpful to the teachers.** The SFS teachers acknowledged that material is available, but found much of it difficult to unearth.
- **These SFS teachers voiced concerns about that APS is not investing in them and their students to the same degree as other programs, thereby sending the negative message that they are not as valued as others.** In keeping with the theme of structure and continuity, the investments they would like to see include curriculum, textbooks, training, and classes that are not combined. These teachers were understanding about the financial demands on APS and appreciative of the currently provided material, but they were also emphatic about their feelings and needs. Some speculated that part of the problem is that many Latino parents do not complain either for reasons based in culture, overall appreciation for the education being provided, or because they are unfamiliar with the system and the mechanisms for voicing problems.
- **When it comes to the question of how fluent speakers know SFS is available, these teachers said the typical routes include:**
 - Morning announcements at school
 - Teachers identify students on an ad hoc basis and let them know
 - Students coming from an immersion setting are very likely to know about SFS because they were typically told at their previous school

Impacted Strategic Plan Goals, Performance Objectives, and Strategies

- **Student Success: Multiple Pathways to Student Success**

Ensure that every student is challenged and engaged while providing multiple pathways for student success by broadening opportunities, building support systems and eliminating barriers. APS will eliminate opportunity gaps so all students achieve excellence.

 - **Performance Objectives**
 - Increased achievement for all reporting groups on district and state assessments shows progress toward eliminating the opportunity gap.
 - All students will make at least one year's worth of growth as measured by federal, state, and/or district assessments.
 - Historically over-represented and under-represented groups accessing services will be proportionate with student need and demographics.
- **Student Well-Being: Healthy, Safe, and Supported Students**

Create an environment that fosters the growth of the whole child. APS will nurture all students' intellectual, physical, mental, and social-emotional growth in healthy, safe, and supportive learning environments.

 - **Strategies**
 - Deliver curriculum through innovative and relevant instruction that is adaptable to the diverse needs of each student.

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- Implement an evidence-based curriculum that focuses on students' physical, social, emotional, and mental health needs and provides interventions when needed through APS and/or community partnerships.
- **Operational Excellence**
Strengthen and improve system-wide operations to meet the needs of Arlington's growing and changing community.
 - **Strategies**
 - Manage available resources and assets efficiently, cost effectively, and equitably.