

The IAKSS

Lingo Tutorial-

Assessments-

Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). System of testing and accountability used in Kentucky to hold schools accountable for student learning; created by the 1998 General Assembly to replace the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS).

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Bienvenidos to Our New Schools

Our program is growing! Over the past year the Fayette County Spanish Immersion Program is lucky to claim two additional schools; Russell Cave and Liberty Elementary.

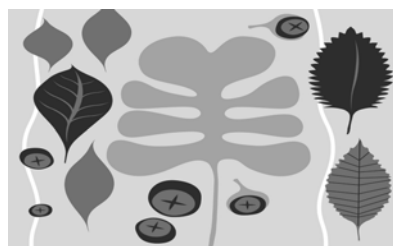
Both schools have committed to the use of Spanish immersion education principles with one kindergarten class this year. The path that brought them to Spanish Immersion and the approach differ slightly, however.

The decision to make Russell Cave a Spanish Immersion school was informed by the receptiveness of incoming kindergarten parents as well as a sizable number of Latino ESL learners at Russell Cave. As a result, Russell Cave will actually be Fayette County Public School's first dual immersion program.

Another exciting addition to the SIP program is Liberty Elementary. The decision to join the program was partially a response to the high volume of

applicants to Maxwell, many from the Liberty school area, but also from a high level of interest from Liberty Principal, Vickie Burke.

"My son-in-law is Dutch, and he and my daughter had been researching what they need to do, so that their children are bilingual. They shared with me the significant impact that this



process has on intelligence and academic achievement. I knew then that I wanted to offer this opportunity to the Liberty school community."

For now, the schools have one Spanish Immersion class in the kindergarten.

The goal is to grow incrementally by grade. Next year there will be a Spanish Immersion Kindergarten and first grade and will continue until there is a class in every grade.

Like the other SIP schools, the Sibling Preference Policy will apply but selection will remain by district not lottery. The Spanish Immersion program option in both of these schools are only open to students within the geographic school district. Like Maxwell, the two schools will feed into the SIP programs on the Bryan Station campus.

The SIP program parent groups, Los Amigos and SIPport will expand their focus to include support for the new schools as well. The addition of Liberty and Russell Cave indicate the continued growth and possibility of the program. Welcome to all of our new SIP families and staff!

Immersion Education-What's the Difference?

Confused on the different types of immersion programs? Here's a brief breakdown.

Full Immersion-

Students in lower primary (grades K-2) are taught exclusively in the foreign language. Instruction in English gradually increases in upper primary (grades 3-6) until 20%-50% of content is taught in English (depending on program design). There is no full immersion program in Fayette County.

Partial Immersion-

These programs teach up to 50% of the curriculum in the foreign language. In some programs, the curriculum taught in the foreign language may be reinforced with English though no long term benefit has been determined. Maxwell and Liberty Elementary schools as well as Bryan Station Middle and Senior High are considered partial immersion.

Dual Immersion-

Both languages receive equal instructional emphasis. One third to half of the student population are native Spanish speakers while the remainder of students are English speakers. Russell Cave is a dual immersion school.

These definitions were taken from the Center of Applied Linguistics
<http://www.cal.org/resources/immersion/>

Los Amigos-Letter from the President

Dear Spanish Immersion Families,
 The Spanish Immersion Program is well into its eighteenth year, and what an exciting year it is. For the first time ever, the program has expanded to include two new immersion “threads” at Russell Cave Elementary and the new Liberty Road Elementary. Both schools have two classes of immersion kindergarteners, while the rest of the school is a neighborhood school. Russell Cave offers a dual immersion program, which includes native Spanish and English-speaking students. Liberty is a partial-immersion program like Maxwell, with the majority of the students being native English speakers.

In addition to offering more opportunities for immersion education to Fayette County families, these two new immersion schools are important for another reason – they are evi-

dence of the growth of the SIP. Stu Silberman and other IAKSS administrators recognize the value of the SIP and support its growth, and research continues to indicate that immersion education is valuable for second language acquisition as well as for achievement in other subject areas. Our students excel in standardized tests because of their immersion education, not in spite of it!

Both new immersion threads will feed into Bryan Station Middle and Bryan Station High, further boosting our numbers there. Even now, we are enjoying the largest immersion populations ever at both schools. The middle school SIP added a ninth teacher to the team this year to accommodate the growing SIP population, and the high school has reached a milestone of more than 100 immersion students. Both programs

continue to graduate high-achieving, bilingual and bicultural students who serve in leadership positions, excel in sports, and earn prestigious awards and scholarships for college.

I invite all of you to join Los Amigos to support the SIP at all levels (K-12) and at all five schools. The remaining meetings will be March 22, April 26, and May 18.

Best regards,
 Kay Saffari
 President, Los Amigos



Word Play!

Try to use some of these words when talking about the changing seasons and the coming holidays!

Autumn– Otoño

Trees-los arboles

Leaves-las hojas

Change-cambiar

Cold-frio(a)

Wind-viento

Family-familia

Snow-nieve

Winter-Invierno

Holidays-celebraciones

SIPPORT-

No report was submitted for the Autumn/Winter period. Information regarding the organization and meeting times may found at www.sipport.us



Parent Organization Meeting Schedule-

Fayette County Public Schools Board- 2nd and 4th Mondays, 5:30/6:00 pm

Maxwell SBDM Council- 2nd Tuesday of the month, 4:30 pm

Liberty SBDM Council- inactive until 2009-2010 school year

Russell Cave SBDM Council- 3rd Thursday, 4:00 pm

Bryan Station Traditional Middle School SBDM- see website

Bryan Station Senior High School- 2nd Monday, 5:30 pm

Los Amigos– 2nd Tuesday of month, 7:00 pm (alternating SIP schools)

SIPport- see website

Maxwell PTA- 2nd Tuesday of the month, 6:00 pm

LibertyPTA- 2nd Thursday, 6:30 pm

Russell Cave PTA 3rd Thursday, 3:00 pm

BSTMS PTA- 1st Thursday, 6:00 pm

BSSH PTS- 2nd Thursday, 4:30 or 7:00 pm (see PTSA website)

*All meetings are located at the on school sites except SIPport. Meetings are held at Temple Adath Israel, 124 N. Ashland Ave. SBDM and or PTA committee meeting times may be located on the school websites or by asking your child’s school office.

Felicidades!

National Merit Participants:

Congratulations to Spanish Immersion students **Zachary Davis, Laura Edwins, and Jeremy Kline!** Their 2007 PSAT scores met the requirements to enter the 2009 National Merit Scholarship Program. These students are among the 50,000 highest-scoring participants out of 1.5 million program entrants. These students have been invited to be referred to two colleges or universities in the U.S. in which they are interested.

Governor's Scholars: Congratulations to the following Spanish Immersion Bryan Station High students for being selected to participate in the Governor's Scholars program this past summer: **Laura Edwins, Lizzie Engel, and Caroline White.**

Governor's School for the Arts:

Congratulations to Spanish Immersion students **Zoe Snider** (Creative Writing) and **Anna Tussey** (Creative Writing), who were selected for the 2008 Governor's School for the Arts (GSA). Over 1,500 high school sophomores and juniors auditioned at four regional sites across the Commonwealth. From this number, only 241 from the nine artistic disciplines were invited to attend Kentucky's premier summer arts program.

Leadership Lexington

The Leadership Lexington Youth program, sponsored by Commerce Lexington, is an educational program that provides a unique opportunity for 10th and 11th grade students enrolled in Fayette County public, private, parochial, and home schools to interact with community leaders, talk about issues, careers, business and post-secondary institutions. Throughout the program, students participate in interactive exercises providing real life hands on experience. The program motivates the students to think seriously about the role they would like to play and the difference they can make in the Lexington community.

During the 2007-2008 school year, the following Bryan Station High Spanish Immersion students were selected to participate in Leadership Lexington: **Lucy Arthur-Paratley, Laura Edwins, Elizabeth McCorvey, Cyrus Saffari, and**

Shelby Taylor. These students attended monthly all-day field trips to various business and government operations in Fayette County.

Congratulations to **Cyrus Saffari** for winning the Distinguished Leader Award among all the graduates of this year's Leadership Lexington program. Cyrus will be presented with a \$1,000 scholarship during the Commerce Lexington Annual Dinner in February.

Did you Know?

A study of over 17,000 students applying for college admission revealed that students who had completed a foreign language course in high school tended to have higher scores on the ACT exams in English and math regardless of their ability level.

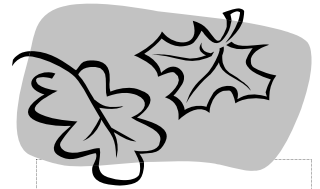


High School SIP Students Excel

Zachary Davis, class of 2008, was valedictorian and the recipient of the prestigious Otis A. Singletary Scholarship for the University of Kentucky. This full scholarship pays for four years' tuition, room and board and fees, in addition to providing a stipend. Only 22 Singletary scholarships were awarded to UK's freshman class. Congratulations, Zach!

Caroline White, class of 2009, was named outstanding Key Club member for Divisions 10 and 11 and outstanding all-around Key Clubber in the district, which is the most coveted award for members of this respected service organization. Congratulations, Caroline!

Marylynne Anderson-Cooper, class of 2011, won first place in the High School Engineering Division of the 2008 Regional Science Fair. She received the U.S. Metric Associations' award and the Stockholm Junior Water Prize Award of Excellence. In addition, she won a spot at the International Sustainable World Project Olympiad in Houston Texas May 1 to May 5, 2008. Congratulations, Marylynne!



Maxwell Elementary SBDM

There are several items that I would like to share with you. I attended a seminar hosted by the Prichard Committee called The Missing Piece. During this training session, the importance of communication between parents and administration was a topic that surfaced on several of the rubrics. In the future, you will receive surveys concerning the effectiveness of communications between faculty and parents. It is important to know if the communication is helpful to you and if there is enough free flowing information. Please think about the various forms of communication that you receive from school and the effectiveness of those communications. In addition, the importance of

forming partnerships with our community was a discussion topic. To that end, if we build relationship and develop community partners, the possibilities and opportunities that may arise from those relationships are endless. Those established partnerships may serve as resources for teaching units in class, funding sources or providing professional development opportunities for staff. In an effort to increase Spanish outside of the classroom there have been several changes; a Speaker of the Month has been instituted, Spanish greetings are being used during morning drop off and signs written in Spanish are being utilized throughout the school. These are just a few of the items that are being implemented

to enhance the use of the Spanish language outside of class and there are more to come. If you have ideas or suggestions that you may feel will enhance the Maxwell life, please feel free to share those ideas. Again, we urge you to become a part of an SBDM committee or to attend an SBDM meeting to keep informed about what is happening at Maxwell.

Yavon L. Griffin
Parent Representative
Weathers14@hotmail.com

Bryan Station Senior High-

No report was submitted for the Autumn/Winter Council period.

Liberty-

There is no SBDM report for Liberty because presently there is no SBDM. Elections for parent representatives will be in March.

Russell Cave-

No report was submitted for the Autumn-Winter Council period.

Bryan Station Traditional Middle SBDM

The issue of devoting time to the English language writing portfolio during Spanish classes came up in the October meeting. Ms. Haggerty explained the situation in the following way: The state requirements demand that one third of the writing pieces for the portfolio be done outside of language arts classes. When the curriculum was changed to have Math taught in English and Social Studies in Spanish, this change disrupted the production of portfolio pieces outside of Language Arts Classes. Rather than trying to have the Math teacher focus on writing, the teachers decided to allow Social Studies classes to write their pieces in English.

The pieces are written first in English because last year's students had difficulty with idea development when the pieces were written first in Spanish. Ms. Haggerty and other

teachers assured me that it was only the few portfolio pieces that would be treated in this special way and the rest of the writing in the Social Studies class would be in Spanish.

I objected that if we stopped them from writing in Spanish because they didn't do it well, then they would never learn to do it well, and the teachers agreed in principle. I spoke with Ms. Hill and Ms. Callebs (the instructional coaches) after the meeting and they assured me that they are working with the Spanish language arts teachers to enhance Spanish writing instruction.

Karen Petrone
Associate Professor of History
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40506-0027
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petrone@email.uky.edu

By Popular Demand: SIP T-Shirts!

Spanish Immersion Program t-shirts and sweatshirts are now available through Los Amigos. The new design includes all of the SIP school, including the two new threads of Liberty and Russell Cave. Show your support for the program by wearing one of the new shirts! Mr. Thomas, Principal at BSTMS has approved the t-shirts and sweatshirts to be worn as a part of the school dress code.

To order or for more information contact:

Amy Medina
English as a Second Language
English Language Learners
Jessie Clark Middle School
(859) 381-3036 (ext. 2202)

SBDM-Assessment Committee

Although the formation of the language assessment committee took place fairly recently, the need to consistently, systematically, and validly track immersion program students' current foreign language proficiency and projected development over time has been discussed many times over the last several years not only at the local site-based level (i.e., Maxwell Elementary, Bryan Station Middle School, and Bryan Station High School), but also at the central office level. With the expansion of the Spanish immersion program in Fayette County and the simple desire among parents, teachers, and administrators to objectively determine how well students speak the foreign language, it became necessary to form a committee that would address this issue directly and expeditiously.

Ms. Carol Hiler and Ms. Alicia Vinson from Fayette County Public Schools serve as facilitators for the committee, which is comprised of teachers from each respective SIP school. The committee has met three times and has as its primary objectives the following:

- 1) establish minimal standards of language proficiency and accompanying competencies for each grade level; 2) outline a long-term plan for systematic assessment of SIP students' foreign language ability, both formative (on-going during school year), and summative (end of year); 3) identify, or design, (an) evaluation instrument(s) of satisfactory validity and reliability that match(es) well with agreed upon proficiency objectives.

The committee meets monthly and has begun by closely considering minimal competencies, curriculum maps, and assessment instruments adopted by other reputable immersion programs across the country.

The committee hopes to make concrete recommendations to Central Office and to corresponding SBDMs before the end of the current school year.

Alan V. Brown, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Spanish Applied Linguistics/Liberty
Parent-e-mail: Alan.Brown@uky.edu

The International Classroom:

Maxwell Principal Heather Bell Shares her experience at the International Spanish Academy Conference

Gladys Peoples, Alicia Vinson and I were fortunate enough to spend an incredible week of learning in Valencia, Spain as guests of the International Spanish Academy Program. While there we attended Professional Development sessions, presented information about our K-12 program, networked with other Immersion Administrators from the United States, Canada, and Spain, and visited schools. It was a wonderful growing opportunity for me and opened my eyes to many new discoveries about the power of immersion education. We were also able to experience many Spanish cultural elements first-hand, including a chamber music concert at the University of Valencia, a tour of Old Town, and of course, some of the most delicious cuisine. I know that the experience will help me as we continue to work together to make Maxwell the best possible learning environment for our students.

Global Exchange-SIP Students Visit Europe

Lucy Arthur-Pratley and Cyrus Saffari (both class of 2010) had the opportunity to visit Europe this past summer. Lucy participated in Lexington's Sister Cities program, and Cyrus went on the Bryan Station High trip to France and Spain. Read about their experiences abroad!

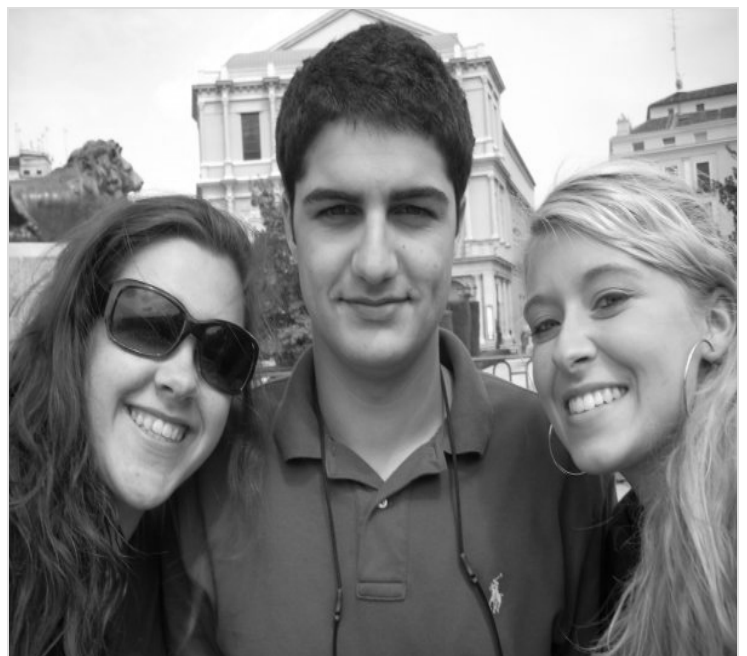
Cyrus Saffari

Bryan Station High offered a summer trip to France and Spain for any student taking Spanish or French, and I was one of the students that was able to go. Since I am in Spanish Immersion and I also study French, it seemed like the perfect trip for me. Unlike our 8th grade trip to Costa Rica, on this trip I was the only Spanish Immersion student.

We arrived in Paris first, and it was a beautiful city was delicious food. Every chance I got, I bought a croissant or pastry because they were unbelievably good. We saw all the typical sights in Paris and visited the Palace at Versailles, but what struck me the most was how interested the French people were in our politics. Posters and signs for Barack Obama were everywhere, and the French wanted to talk to us about politics whenever they could. In Spain we visited Madrid and Barcelona, and we saw many interesting sites there, too. The best thing about Spain was the fact that I could communicate with no problem. In France, I struggled to speak and was not close to being fluent, and I was really happy when the natives could speak English to help me out. But in Spain, I was completely comfortable with the lan-



guage. Ordering food or talking to people in stores was no problem. In Barcelona, I translated everything for my French teacher, including what the people were saying during a big street protest (they were protesting the high price of gasoline) and what the waiter and his manager were arguing about in a restaurant. Since I am a student of both Spanish and French, it was a great experience to visit countries where I could practice both languages. I look forward to the next time I can travel abroad.



Global Exchange-

High School Senior, Lucy Arthur-Pratley takes on French Immersion with the Sister Cities Student Exchange Program

This past summer I became good friends with a boy named Victor Laurelli. He was a little younger than me, very sweet, and still emails me with updates on his life. But I didn't meet him in one of my classes at school, I met him through Lexington's Sister Cities exchange program to Deauville, France. I lived with him and his wonderful family for four weeks in

June, after which he lived with me and my family here in Lexington. Before I went on the trip I had only taken French classes through level three. However, the Laurellis were wonderful about my butchering of the French language and taught me many good lessons about French grammar. They also taught me many things about French culture, history, geography, and customs. They took me to Paris, Mont Saint-Michel, Provence, and the D-Day beaches, among many other amazing places. I feel very lucky to have lived with the

Laurellis; I know that there will always be a home for me in France just as Victor knows there will always be a home for him here. In fact, he enjoyed his visit so much, and my family enjoyed having him so much, that he may be returning next summer. Because his English doesn't need much practice, his motivation was primarily to get an inside look at a foreign country. We both agree that our fondest memories are of the simple, satisfying conversations we had with people in the countries we visited. *After all, to communicate with other people from around the world is the true reason to learn a foreign language.*

"We both agree that our fondest memories are of the simple, satisfying conversations we had with people in the countries we visited."

For more information, visit the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government webpage -Sister Cities Commission, or call 258-3137. Applications for this year are due November 14, 2008.

Does it matter what language the homework is in?

For many families, homework time is a dreaded but necessary part of the work day. So it isn't surprising that many families when faced with the decision between the additional challenge of Spanish language homework or a version in English, they opt for the familiar. Does it matter which language the homework comes home?

Research on immersion education seems to suggest that it does matter. Immersion experts assert that homework in Spanish provides additional necessary practice and reinforces language study at home.

While the Spanish looks pretty intimidating to us, language experts reassure this approach is well within the abilities of immersion students. Homework is practice and/or extension of directions, language, and learning concepts that were introduced in the classroom earlier in the day or week. This means your child is going to be basically familiar with what is expected even if you are not. By third or fourth grade students are proficient enough

that they should be working fairly independently in either language.

Occasionally, there are cases when it seems the student understands the cognitive concept but not the directions on the homework. The child is likely working through what researchers call the *transfer process*. Don't be too quick to assume your child doesn't understand. Let your child try and work through as much of it as possible independently. Cases like this may require a little more guidance. If assistance is needed, let your child to explain the concept as they understand it in English and then be language detectives together! Read the homework for words they do know and possible cognates (words that look or sound similar to words in English). Often, if you look at all of the words that are know and familiar the student can figure out meaning by from context. A Spanish-English dictionary (or internet) is a valuable resource as well. And don't forget about peers and parents! Make sure you have the phone number of a classmate. Students learn best from each

other. If problems persist, strong communication between parent and teacher can ensure a basic understanding of what is expected.

And don't forget this is just practice! It is a tool for your child to show how they are progressing. Too much help confuses this process. Homework should not adversely affect your child's grade. Teachers will send home directions in English for special assignments and projects if parents are needed for assistance.

If your kid is struggling with the cognitive concept, there is help available in English elsewhere. Lexington Public Library has excellent tutors available in both English and Spanish.

Trust the teachers. Your child won't be assigned more than they can handle. Provide enough time for child to work (with the occasional snags along the way) and avoid negative tones or language at home in relation to the homework. Acknowledge the challenges and expectations but remind them they do this at school everyday and praise the enormous accomplishment of learning a new language!

New SIP Teachers Join BSTMS Team

This year the Spanish Immersion Program at BSTMS has grown enough to warrant the addition of a ninth teacher to the SIP team. The team now includes six native Spanish-speaking teachers and three English teachers. In addition to our new 9th teacher, the team includes two other new teachers who replaced others who have moved on. Each Las Noticias issue this year will include introductions to our newest faculty members.

Thomas Reece

Students and parents alike are excited about Mr. Reece, the new math teacher for seventh and eighth grade (and Math Team coach). Mr. Reece taught previously at Berea Community School, but he is thrilled to be teaching in Fayette County and BSTMS now, especially because the school supports his philosophy of zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.

Mr. Reece views teaching in the SIP as “a blessing” and feels thankful to have landed his “dream job.”

His dedication to our students and to the SIP is evident as he offers morning and afternoon math tutoring to all who want extra practice. His popularity with the students motivates them to get to school by 7:30 (even though school doesn't start until 8:55) and/or stay late for all things, EXTRA MATH!

Mr. Reece seems to be as happy with our students as they are with him. He states, “The students are wonderful young men and women who I love to be around each day. I am amazed by the quality of character that so many of these students possess. Nothing compares to teaching these wonderful students in the SIP.”

Mr. Reece attended a small Catholic school (Saint Camillus Academy) for ten years before moving to California, where he met his wife. One reason Mr. Reece is so talented dealing with middle school children is that he has three of his own, all of whom attend the Quest program at Winburn.

Que Bueno!

- Maxwell has started a Spanish Speaker of the Month reward to recognize students using conversational Spanish around the school!
- Spanish Accelerated Reader is once again implemented through both the elementary and the middle schools!
- SIP students have logged well over 100 hours of social service just this year, much of it using their Spanish to contribute to our community!
- Starting next month, part of this newsletter will be written in Spanish for English Immersion families and for Spanish reading practice for English speaking SIP families!

Kroger Gift Card Fundraising Changes

Los Amigos continues to rely on the Kroger gift cards as our primary means of fundraising for the organization's general fund. If you are not already using a Kroger gift card issued by Los Amigos, we encourage you to do so.

Due to IRS regulations, Los Amigos can no longer award Kroger gift card earnings to specific students for their 8th grade trip. Earnings will be tracked by grade however, and the total class earnings will be used to offset the trip's cost for everyone. In other words, if a particular class earns \$8,000 and 20 students go on the trip, the trip cost will be reduced by \$400 for each student.

By using the gift card starting in elementary school, SIP families can reduce the cost of the trip for all.

If you are not already using a Los Amigos Kroger card, please contact Ann Armbruster (aearm@insightbb.com) to order your card.

This fundraising not only helps fund the 8th grade trip it also allows Los Amigos to help the SIP schools with needs specific to the program, such as Spanish Accelerated Reader books and Spanish classroom materials.