

D303 Middle School Foreign Language Pathway- 2017-2018

On May 11, 2015, the Board of Education approved awarding high school transcript credit for courses successfully completed by a student at the middle school level. Credit will be awarded if the student receives a grade of “B” or better in the first semester and second semester in the subsequent level of foreign language instruction at the high school. The grades for the courses completed at the middle school level will not appear on the transcript, nor will the grades earned in those courses count towards the student’s high school GPA. The credit will be counted as an elective credit toward the 23 credits required for graduation. This opportunity will began with the (2014-15) 8th grade class.

Below you will find the district’s foreign language course pathways. The chart below outlines the pathways for students who start taking a foreign language in middle school.

	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade	9 th grade
Students first studying French, German, or Spanish in 6 th grade	Foreign Language A	Foreign Language B	Foreign Language II	Foreign Language III
Students first studying French, German, or Spanish in 7 th grade		Foreign Language A	Foreign Language B	Foreign Language II
Students first studying French, German, or Spanish in 8 th grade			Foreign Language I	Foreign Language II
Richmond FLES students studying French or Spanish for 3 years	Foreign Language I	Foreign Language II	Foreign Language III*** (See note below)	TBD

The courses offered in the middle school follow the same curriculum, use the same resources, and administer the same common assessments, including the final exam, as the high school, allowing us to offer credit to students. Students who do not successfully complete the courses, as determined by the final exam and teacher recommendation, will be given the option to retake the course in high school. Students who have successfully completed a course during their 8th grade year may choose to repeat the same level course in high school, but will not receive credit for both courses. Parents should request a Change of Placement form via e-mail from the high school lead teacher at your respective high school.

*** For students who are currently taking Foreign Language II in 7th grade, by the end of this year we will assess where the students are. For students who are recommended to go to Spanish III, the curriculum will be slightly different. We will start the school year by reviewing and reinforcing the skills from their Foreign Language II curriculum that the students need so they have a solid foundation of the second language. We will then begin the Foreign Language III curriculum and take the students as far as they can go. We are not guaranteeing completion of level III as at this point we are unsure what skills the students will need. The Foreign Language III curriculum is challenging, and we want to insure that our students are developmentally and academically prepared for the additional rigor. *Students who continue will be enrolled in Foreign Language III with the understanding that we will make a recommendation for each child as to where they should be placed the following year.*

FAQs about Foreign Language

How many years of foreign language are required to graduate from high school?

Taking a foreign language is not required for high school graduation. Students have many options for meeting the state graduation requirements and may do so by taking one year chosen from any of the following: art, music, foreign language, or vocational education.

How many years of foreign language are required for college admissions?

There is not a universal foreign language requirement for admission to colleges and universities. The requirements vary from school to school. Students should consult the foreign language requirements for the schools and departments to which they are considering applying. In general, competitive colleges require at least two years of foreign language classes in high school. Many of these same schools recommend that students take three or more years of foreign language. These classes should be in the same language as colleges would much prefer to see proficiency in one language than a superficial understanding of multiple languages. Most colleges will infer that if a student is enrolled in a Level II course and Level I does not appear on the high school transcript that the course was successfully completed prior to high school. Generally, colleges are more interested with the highest level of a foreign language completed as opposed to the actual number of years taken.

Can my child receive high school credit for foreign language classes taken at the middle school? (updated May 2015)

High school transcript credit for courses successfully completed by a student at the middle school level will be awarded if the student receives a grade of "B" or better in the first semester and second semester in the subsequent level of foreign language instruction at the high school. The grades for the courses completed at the middle school level will not appear on the transcript, nor will the grades earned in those courses count towards the student's high school GPA. The credit will be counted as an elective credit toward the 23 credits required for graduation. This opportunity will begin with the current (2014-15) 8th grade class.

Can my child retake a foreign language class at the high school that they have taken at the middle school?

The Foreign Language Level I and Level II courses offered at the middle school are the equivalent of the Foreign Language Level I and Level II courses offered at the high school. The courses follow the same curriculum, use the same resources, and administer the same common assessments, including the final exam. Students who do not successfully complete the courses, as determined by the final exam and teacher recommendation, will be given the option to retake the course in high school. Students who have successfully completed a course during their 8th grade year may choose to repeat the same level course in high school, but will not receive credit for both courses. Parents should request a Change of Placement form via e-mail from the high school lead teacher at your respective high school.

Will the transition to the foreign language courses offered at high school be too difficult for my child?

The foreign language curriculum is designed to teach students a progression of skills that will prepare them to be successful in the next level. Since the courses offered at the middle school use the same curriculum, resources, and assessments as the high school, students are exposed to the same level of rigor in the middle school as they would in high school. In addition, there is a natural review built into the foreign language courses. For example, concepts that have been taught in Level I courses will be reviewed in the Level II courses and then connected to new concepts.