

World Language PTO Parent Forum

Wednesday, January 27, 2016, 7 pm Ridge Lecture Hall B

Katherine Stotler, Supervisor of World Languages

With

Diane Reilly, Ridge High Spanish Teacher

Joshua Gebhardt, Ridge High Latin Teacher

Power Point Presentation by Katherine Stotler

(<http://bernardsboe.yncoursesystems.com/websites/13463>)

Focus of the presentation:

1. Why study a second language?
2. How Bernards Township Approaches World Language Study
3. Specific Examples:
 - a. Upper Level Non-AP Electives, Diane Reilly
 - b. Latin, Joshua Gebhardt

WHY STUDY A WORLD LANGUAGE?

Truism: Most other countries in the world are educating their students in English at a young age.

Native English speakers still need to learn foreign languages for 2 reasons:

1. Culture: To understand why people act the way they do based on their backgrounds
2. Career: The list of careers that require facility with other languages is long and growing:
 - a. Law
 - b. Medicine
 - c. Politics
 - d. Military
 - e. Travel Industry
 - f. Hotel Management
 - g. Foreign Civil Service
 - h. Education
 - i. Editing
 - j. Publishing

Foreign Language Study also produces additional corollary benefits:

1. Language study correlates with higher academic achievement on standardized test measures, including SAT and ACT scores.
2. Literacy, especially beneficial in developing reading abilities
3. Transference of skills from one language to another, improving abilities in English
4. Heritage language learners become better able to help their families.
5. Improved college performance.

6. Improved memory skills.

RECENT GLOBAL EXPERIENCES IN BERNARDS TOWNSHIP

1 –Hearts for Honduras Spanish Cultural Exchange:

- Originally sponsored through Liberty Corner Presbyterian Church
- Ridge teacher Diane Reilly travelled to Honduras with the goal of teaching pedagogy to teachers at a disadvantaged school for the poorest of the poor, who could not participate in Honduras' public education system due to lacking funds for basic supplies like paper and the need to work in the mornings to help their families earn money.
- The mission evolved into also:
 - Teaching classroom management
 - Raising funds for books
 - Cultural exchange by Skype with Ridge High Spanish students
 - Visit to Ridge High from Honduran native Spanish speakers

2 –Quebec French Immersion Trip:

- 30 sophomore, junior, and senior students missed one day of school to take a long weekend trip to Quebec
 - Required to speak only French after crossing the border into Canada
 - Discovered their nascent French-speaking abilities were genuine

3 –Italian Exchange Student Visits:

- Italian students stayed with local host families and bonded in a short stay
 - Students discovered many commonalities with the visiting students

4 –Japanese Teacher and Students Visit

- Stayed with host families in town and visited at Ridge High

WORLD LANGUAGE COURSE OFFERINGS IN OUR DISTRICT

Languages currently being taught: French, Italian, Spanish, Latin and Japanese

Japanese is being phased out due to class size falling below 15 students

For 2016-2017: Along with **French, Italian, Spanish** and **Latin**

- **American Sign Language** will be added at Ridge only
- **Mandarin** will be added, starting at William Annin and at Ridge High

Program sequence at William Annin:

- Students take the same world language all 3 years (6th-8th grades) except:
 - Late entrants without a prior world language may begin accelerated Spanish in 7th grade and still complete the 3 year middle school curriculum in 2 years
 - Students arriving in 8th grade without prior world language experience may take:
 - “Foundations of Language” 8th grade elective, as preparation for World Language level I study at Ridge High School

Program at Ridge High:

- Requirement: 2 consecutive years of the same world language due to requirements by universities accepting many applications from Ridge students:
 - Johns Hopkins University (4 years)
 - Syracuse University (3 years)
 - George Washington University (2 years) (4 years recommended)
 - Rutgers University (2 years)
 - The College of New Jersey (2 years) (3 years recommended)
 - University of Delaware (2 years)
 - Villanova University (2 years) (3 years recommended)
- Course sequence retitled to I-V for better correlation to other schools, better alignment for transfer students
- AP level courses or electives for junior/senior year, after the 2 year requirement is met

CURRENT WORLD LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS

Teaching of world languages has changed since parents went to school

- Formerly, foreign language vocabulary was taught more randomly
 - Illustrated with anecdote from children's book "Miss Holly is Too Jolly"
- Communication skills are improved in 3 distinct aspects:
 1. Interpretive (reading and listening)
 2. Presentational (speaking and writing)
 3. Interpersonal (reading, listening, speaking, and writing)
- Communication focuses on 4 areas:
 - Communities
 - Cultures
 - Comparisons
 - Connections

Method changes include:

- Immersion
- Less translation, more proficiency
- Authentic materials – readings in the target language by 4th marking period of level I
- Increased reading
- Integrated Performance Assessments in the 3 skill areas
 - Interpretive Communication
 - Presentational Communication
 - Interpersonal Communication (spontaneous)

Accomplishments of Bernards Township World Language Students:

- William Paterson Poetry Recitation Competition winners
- Rank nationally on the National Italian Exam
- Place on the ITANJ Essay Contest

- Host World Language Month annually at Ridge
- Utilize their language skills when traveling with their families
- AP Test Results (2015)
 - 100 % passing on French, Spanish, and Italian
 - 97 % passing on Latin
 - 62 % passing on Japanese (affected by small number of students taking)
- Middle School language attracts visits from other districts as a model, benefits from meeting daily

UPPER LEVEL (NON-AP) WORLD LANGUAGE ELECTIVES (Diane Reilly)

Goal: to produce “Citizens of the World”

Culture and Society electives taught in the target language in alternate years:

- Spanish Culture and Society; Latin American Culture and Society
- Francophone Culture and Society A; Francophone Culture and Society B
- Italian Regionalism; Topics in Italian Culture

These CP-level courses teach topics in the target language:

- Geography
- History
- Literature
- Cinema
- Art, including
 - Fine Art
 - Architecture
 - Music
 - Dance
 - Culinary Arts

Examples from the Spanish language culture courses:

- Literature (novels and plays) of:
 - Gabriel Garcia Marquez
 - Pablo Neruda’s odes, love sonnets
 - Miguel de Cervantes
- Cinema, treat for seniors at the end of the 4th marking period
 - Tambien La Lluvia
 - Diarios de Motocicleta
 - La Lengua de las Mariposas
 - !Ay, Carmela!
 - Como Agua Para Chocolate

LATIN (Joshua Gebhardt)

All World Language study, including Latin, breaks down borders.

Latin study focuses on:

- Language and Literature of Ancient Rome
- History, Culture, Art, Daily Life of Ancient Rome
- Legacy and influence of Ancient Rome on modern society, medicine, law, and government

Teaching method starts with a reader – a story- so that grammar and vocabulary taught enable students to understand the story.

Examples of activities in Latin classes:

- Develop a Facebook profile for a Roman God or Goddess
- Re-enact an ancient Roman wedding
- Re-enact an ancient Roman battle
- Listen to Finnish radio broadcast in Latin
- Devise a new entry in Latin for Latin Wikipedia (Vicipaedia)
- Conduct a campaign for political office from a Roman tip book still appreciated by modern politicians

Latin study acts as “Vitamins for the Brain”

- Improvements in SAT and ACT critical thinking and reading scores
- Improved English skills (60 % of English vocabulary derives from Latin)
- Facilitates later acquisition of other languages as “Mother of the Romance languages”
- Increases understanding of history, culture, and politics

Accolades of the Bernards Township Latin Program

- 1st in NJ Certamen 12 of the past 14 years
- Majority excel on the National Latin Exam
- NLE Scholars hips (8 students in the past 10 years)
- Students have served on the state board of the NJ Junior Classic League
- Ridge Junior Classic League –Latin Club
 - attracts over 100 members
 - Hosts annual banquet and siege weapon battle for the community

Ridge High will host the NJ Junior Classic League State Convention April 23rd, 2016 for over 500 students from across the state.

Ridge High students will travel to Italy this summer to further their knowledge in classics.

Q & A

1. Q: May students begin a new language at Ridge High?

A: Yes, and may also start a new or additional Level I language as upperclassmen

2. Q: Does Ms. Stotler recommend taking 2 years of 2 different languages or 4 years of the same language?

A: Definitely 4 years of the same language is preferred by colleges. At least 3 years would be preferable with the option to try a different language for one year as a senior.