

Español para Hispanohablantes K-12 Program

Background Information

Institution: Egg Harbor Township High School

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Type of institution: High School

Grades taught: 9-12

Languages/dialects taught: Spanish

Courses:

Hispanohablantes 1

Hispanohablantes 2

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: To provide an appropriate course of study for Spanish-speaking students who wish to further their knowledge of the language and culture.

Type of program: This is an academic Spanish course that meets 5 days a week. It is intended for heritage speakers of Spanish who have traditionally been placed in a Spanish 1 foreign language course.

Program origin: The program was founded in 1998.

Parents' expectations for the program: Parents expect that their children will learn more about Latino culture and customs. They also expect their children to learn about their country of origin.

Instructors' and administration's expectations for the program: The teachers expect that students will improve their ability to read and understand literature and poetry, that they will improve their written expression in the language as well as their knowledge of correct grammar, and finally, that students will be motivated to continue their study of the language by taking Honors Spanish 4 and AP Spanish.

Students

Countries of origin: Approximately 45% of the students are first generation immigrants from Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and Puerto Rico. The remaining 55% of students are second or third generation immigrants.

Total student enrollment:

Hispanohablantes 1: 50 students

Hispanohablantes 2: 17 students

How the program identifies heritage speakers: The Guidance Department and the teachers identify heritage speakers by speaking with the students when they begin the registration process. When the courses begin in September, the Spanish teachers help identify any students who have been incorrectly placed in a traditional Spanish class. The course is open to students with all levels of Spanish proficiency.

How the program determines the language background and language proficiency of students: A Spanish teacher or the Supervisor speaks with the student briefly in Spanish to determine the student's level. There is no standardized interview because we do not want to turn away any heritage speaker who wishes to expand his/her knowledge by taking the course.

Percentage of students who complete the program: Approximately 85% of students complete the 1st year and approximately 40% of students elect to take the 2nd year of the course.

Percentage of students who continue to study the heritage language after completing the program: 8-10% of students elect to take Honors Spanish 4 after completing the 2 years.

Possible reasons for student withdrawal: Students who drop the course often do so when they learn that they will have to work much harder than they would in a traditional Spanish 1 course. Occasionally a student has to drop the course due to a scheduling conflict. Students who elect only to take the first year of the course may do so because New Jersey only requires 5 credits of a language as a graduation requirement.

Students' attitudes toward the language varieties they speak: Students have a positive attitude when introduced to the existing varieties the language has in their native countries. However, they have the need for their regional words or expressions to be recognized and respected. They are proud to share those words with the rest of their classmates even when the textbook might not present those particular varieties.

Instructors

Number of instructors in the program: 2

Languages in which instructors are proficient: Spanish and English

Proficiency level: Both teachers are native Spanish speakers

Credentials: Teachers have bachelors degrees in Spanish and are certified (in New Jersey) in Spanish.

Professional development opportunities for instructors: Teachers attend regional conferences and local workshops.

Professional development opportunities instructors need: Teachers need more opportunities to attend workshops on teaching heritage language courses.

Instruction

Total contact hours per week: 3 hours and 45 minutes

Times per week: 5 times a week (41 minutes per class)

Student grouping: First year students are grouped in either a college preparatory course or a standard course. Second year students must take the college preparatory level.

Language skills

Heritage language skills: listening/speaking/reading/writing

Levels of language proficiency reached by the end of the program: Students' specific language proficiency is not measured upon exit from the course.

Culture

Aspects of culture taught:

- History
- Literature
- Festivals
- Customs
- Traditions/beliefs
- Folktales
- Dances
- Songs
- Social and cultural norms
- Cultural appropriateness

Kind of student identity fostered by program: The courses foster a respect for diversity.

Methodologies

Methodologies and instructional strategies used in the program:

- Collaborative learning activities
- Class discussions
- Oral and technological presentations
- Individual guided practice

Materials

Textbooks used for instruction: *Tu mundo*. 1997, McDougal Littell

Other materials used for instruction: McDougal Littell's Nexttext Spanish readers.

Technology: Power point presentations, the Internet, and DVDs are used as applicable.

Assessment

Assessments used to evaluate students' progress:

- Weekly quizzes
- Chapter tests
- Mid-term tests

- Final exams
- Teacher observations
- Performance-based tasks

Articulation

Connections: The program is closely related to the Hispanic-American Club.

How the program develops home school connections: Teachers maintain communication with parents via telephone and email.

How the program promotes parent involvement: The Hispanic-American Club sponsors "International Night." Parents cooperate by bringing in food, sharing their talents, and volunteering their time for this event.

Opportunities for using the heritage language and developing cultural knowledge outside the program: Students can use Spanish and develop cultural knowledge through the after-school activities of the Hispanic American Club.

Special challenges

Challenges the program has experienced: Trying to differentiate instruction so that the needs of all students are met has been very challenging. The heritage language students in this school come to the course with a range of ability levels and proficiencies in Spanish.