

SRC Questions from the Audience

1. What is being done to ensure students are protected by school police and have access to nurses at schools?

School Police:

- School police work closely with the Principal and Philadelphia Police to coordinate safety supports for the schools
- Principals and school police are trained on the policies and procedures outlined in the Code of Student Conduct:
<http://philasd.org/offices/administration/policies/118.html>

Translations of the Student Code of Conduct can be downloaded here:

<https://webapps.philasd.org/tdm/search/any/conduct>

- For immediate concerns regarding bullying, you can contact the Bullying and Safety Hotline at 215-400-7233. You can access online bullying incident report forms in different languages by following the link below:

<http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/offices/t/translation/allegation-of-bullying>

** It is of critical importance that students report any problem they might be having immediately. Students can turn to the ESOL Teacher, the Bilingual Counseling Assistant (BCA), or the school counselor, if they need help in communicating their concerns.*

School Nurses:

- Every student has access to a school nurse; however, this access may not be daily. The School District of Philadelphia follows the guidelines set by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) of 1 nurse per 1,500 students.
- Schools are provided with the First Aid Policy flipchart and all staff members are responsible for following the guidelines provided in the flip chart.
- For students with specific health needs, a care plan is created by the school nurse in collaboration with the entire school team. To identify students with specific health needs, parents must complete the “Student Emergency Form” and submit to school principal. This form in different languages can be downloaded from:
<https://webapps.philasd.org/tdm/search/any/wyzyEmerg#results>

2. What steps can be taken to formally expand and support partnerships between the School District of Philadelphia schools and multicultural/multilingual community organizations?

- The Multilingual Family Support Office of the Office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) has developed and maintains a close working relationship with immigrant/refugee serving organizations; participates in individual (community and faith-based leaders) and collective (collaborative) meetings; and corresponds with immigrant/refugee organizations and community stakeholders keeping them abreast of District news, resources and opportunities, as well as city, state and national resources. Through its *Welcome Wagon Activities*, the Multilingual Family Support Office on its own and in conjunction with community and faith-based organizations provides trainings to parents, stakeholders and community partners. In its goal to use multiple vehicles to reach the limited-English proficient parent community and its service providers and advocates, the Translation and Interpretation Center of the Office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) continues to expand its menu of services that includes an archive of translated documents (<https://webapps.philasd.org/tdm/view#results>), and websites in the nine (9) languages of greatest diffusion in the District that provide language-specific information.

Collectively at: <http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/offices/t/translation/multilingual-webpages/multilingual-webpages>

Or individually at:

Albanian: www.philasd.org/language/albanian
Arabic: www.philasd.org/language/arabic
Chinese: www.philasd.org/language/chinese
French: www.philasd.org/language/french
Khmer : www.philasd.org/language/khmer
Nepali : www.philasd.org/language/nepali
Russian: www.philasd.org/language/russian
Spanish: www.philasd.org/language/spanish
Vietnamese: www.philasd.org/language/vietnamese

- Currently, the Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs (OMCP) partners with several organizations to provide after-school and summer programs for English Language Learners (ELLs). For more information on these programs and/or how to partner with OMCP, please contact Diane J. Kim (dkim@philasd.org).

- Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) can reach out to OMCP if they wish to meet with representatives of the office. OMCP will soon be hosting community meetings in various parts of the city in the coming months.

3. How can we expand BCA hiring and availability in all of our schools?

The hiring of Bilingual Counselor Assistants (BCAs) is completely tied to the operating budget and federal funds available through Title III. Since the major District cuts of 2011, BCA positions have not been restored to its previous number (103). Currently there are 57 BCAs.

4. Is it a priority of the SRC to hire more BCAs (many schools have BCA only once a week) and ESOL tutors?

The assignment of BCAs is done by using District data on home language (parent self reports of home and document language during enrollment), as well as demographic changes indicated by the arrival of refugees to the city. However, ideally, more so than the hiring of BCAs, to resolve the critical issues being faced by the multilingual families, the expansion of multilingual support must extend beyond BCAs. All educators in the District share the responsibility of educating and supporting multilingual students and families.

5. What is your stand on bilingual education? A lot of research has shown that these bilingual students progress efficiently and quickly. Wouldn't this also strengthen partnerships since the students and schools are using native languages?

The Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs is working to improve and expand the bilingual education programs in the school district. Currently, there are five bilingual education programs—four Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) programs and one Dual Language program. This year, the Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs partnered with Dr. Nelson Flores at the University of Pennsylvania to provide professional development to bilingual education teachers in all of our bilingual education programs. This professional development includes Saturday seminars where teachers are introduced to recent innovations in bilingual education and on-site support as they begin to implement self-identified goals aligned with the content of the seminars.

All of our current Dual Language and Transitional Bilingual Education programs are Spanish/English.

The following schools offer Transitional Bilingual Education:

Alexander McClure School
600 W. Hunting Park Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19140
Phone: 215-456-3001

Cayuga School
4344-4358 N. 5th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19140
Phone: 215-456-3167

Lewis Elkin School
3199 D Street
Philadelphia, PA 19134
Phone: 215 291-4701

Bayard Taylor School
3698 N. Randolph Street
Philadelphia, PA 19140
Phone: 215-227-4435

The following school offers the Dual Language Program:

Hon. Luis Muñoz-Marin School
3300 North 3rd Street
Philadelphia PA, 19140

6. In addition, what is your idea of community? We say we engage the parents, but I rarely see this, usually the parents engage the school.

The Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs will begin holding regular meetings open to all stakeholders. Information about the first stakeholder meeting is here (**link to PDF of flyer**). During these meetings we will work to develop ways that the District can more proactively engage parents and community partners.

7. Is it a priority of the SRC to reduce the caseload of ESOL teachers? Some have over 50 students.

The Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs allocates ESOL teachers to schools based on the number of ELLs in the school and the language proficiency level of the ELLs in the school. ESOL teachers work in collaboration with classroom and content teachers to foster and support ELLs' academic learning—it is a shared responsibility. More information on the role and responsibilities of ESOL teachers is available in The ELL Education Program Handbook, which can be downloaded here: <http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/offices/m/multilingual-education/policies--procedures>

8. Please explain the graph on ACCESS Test data. Why is the District decreasing in the percentage of ELLs attaining proficiency and growth in English?

While we have exceeded the targets set by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for the past three years, our district-wide ACCESS data shows that the number of students attaining proficiency in English and making progress in learning English has declined slightly. In response to this decline, the Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs works with principals and teachers to analyze ACCESS data in relation to other data points to inform instructional practices and school-level programmatic decisions. In addition, ACCESS data is used at the district level to inform decisions regarding professional development for teachers as well as district-wide instructional policies.

9. Particularly in terms of assessment, when will we continue the conversation on ELLs and appropriate assessment?

The Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs will begin holding regular meetings open to all stakeholders. Information about the first stakeholder meeting is here (link to PDF of flyer). At this meeting, we will review all of the topics of concern raised during the SPP meeting. Our plan is to continue the conversation through regular stakeholder meetings and also gather input that will inform decisions made by the Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs.

10. How can the school district take concrete steps to view and treat ELLs and multilingual students as assets to our district and community rather liabilities?

There are many educators across the school district that value and embrace the cultural and linguistic assets that multilingual students bring to our schools and communities. However, for a variety of reasons, some educators are overwhelmed by the challenges of meeting the needs of ELLs and fail to recognize these assets. To address this concern, teachers are invited to attend a variety of professional development sessions offered by the Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs and the Multilingual Family Support office. These sessions allow teachers to learn more about bilingualism, cultural diversity, and a resource-oriented approach to serving ELLs and multilingual learners. Another step the school district can take to address this concern is to partner with community organizations that are eager to share their cultural and linguistic expertise with school personnel. We hope that through upcoming community and stakeholder meetings, such partnerships can be fostered.

11. What is being done to improve school lunch?

The Office of Food Services has detailed information about school lunch. This office also provides advice to parents and students who are interested in improving school lunch. For more information and frequently asked questions, please visit http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/uploads/ZF/2S/ZF2SPZ7dfD4mv1adSc_3mg/Nutrition-Program-FAQs.pdf

Audience Comments:

1. Tonight, everyone – students, and adults – spoke of the importance of relationships with ELLs. I hope that the SRC Commissioners and Mr. Kihn keep this in mind as they continue to move teachers around and break these relationships as they create transformations schools and more Renaissance charters.
2. I am very concerned for the Vietnamese families because they don't get enough support from the Vietnamese BCAs. Students are very limited to get help because Vietnamese BCAs are only at schools one day a week. We need more days for the Vietnamese BCA to be in one school. Only 5 Vietnamese BCA in the entire Philadelphia School District.

**Please see the answers provided to question 3 regarding BCAs.*