

Timberlane Regional School District  
FLES Program Overview  
Foreign Language in Elementary School



*¡BIENVENIDOS!*

## **Program Description:**

FLES is an acronym for Foreign Language in Elementary School. It is an approach to learning that allows students to develop basic communicative skills in the target language while reinforcing and enriching content in other disciplines.

FLES is delivered in an encouraging learning environment where the language directly relates to the students, reflecting their needs and everyday life.

## **Mission:**

Our mission is to provide high quality foreign language instruction at a developmentally critical time in a student's language development. Exposing young children to a second language optimizes their learning potential, and capitalizes on the brain's capacity for language acquisition in the early years. Elementary grades are crucial years for acquisition of vocabulary and the development of life-long foreign language proficiency, communicative skills and cultural awareness.

## **Goals:**

The goals of the Timberlane Regional School District FLES program are to:

- Provide students with language learning opportunities, knowledge and skills to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Support academic achievement in other disciplines, through clearly articulated units tied to grade level standards.
- Enhance reading development in both English and Spanish.
- Positively promote global awareness and cross-cultural understanding.
- Improve students' understanding of their own language.
- Give students the skills that allow them to develop in the three modes of communication: Interpersonal, Presentational and Interpretive.
- Develop functional proficiency in Spanish at the beginning stage of language acquisition.

## **Timberlane FLES Model:**

The FLES model in the Timberlane Regional School District will be based on the National Standards for Foreign Languages (supporting the five areas of communication, connections, comparisons, communities and cultures) and the Timberlane Regional School District curriculum. The model will develop students' language proficiency by a content-connected and standards based program that uses an interdisciplinary approach to deliver both language and content-rich instruction through communication. The program will have thirty minutes of instruction three times per week. The model is based on research from The American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL). The research shows that students are not only able to learn the language, but are also highly engaged in learning content through the language. Spanish will be used by the teacher and students for a minimum of 90% of the FLES instruction time (unless safety concerns require the teacher to speak English).

## **Program Implementation:**

The FLES program is currently being implemented in preschool- grade 2 in all five TRSD elementary schools. Program continuation and expansion to grade 5 will continue until 2020.

## **FLES Methodology:**

The following are characteristics of our FLES methodology:

- Words and expressions are taught in context, not in isolation
- Wide range of instructional materials used to express meaning through visuals, gestures, manipulatives, mime and context, not through translation
- Continual positive reinforcement
- Low-stress correction of student errors through modeling and by example
- Meaningful 21<sup>st</sup> Century communication through situationalized activities, such as conversations, small group work, role-playing, learning games, songs, poems and stories; short questions and comments about everyday activities: in-class recognition of birthdays, achievements, and other events important to students; positive comments on and display of students' work; etc.
- Systematic review, re-entry, and reinforcement of previously taught material
- The content-based instruction reinforces the core knowledge taught in other academic areas
- Abundant use of TPR (Total Physical Response) in all aspects of learning
- All instructions are given in the target language and the children are expected to respond in the target language
- A stimulating, flexible agenda in which the students are actively participating in the communication process throughout the class period
- Informal Assessments are done in three modes: interpersonal, presentational and interpretive, as per the most recent ACTFL guidelines

In short, an encouraging learning environment in which the language directly relates to the students and their surroundings, reflecting their needs, interests and everyday life.

## **Assessment:**

FLES teachers conduct periodic formative evaluations to determine students' progress in Spanish. The results of these assessments are used to modify instruction. Students' language development is assessed more formally twice a year (mid-year and end of the year) and a summative report will be sent home with the report card.

All grade 5 students who have had the FLES program for a full K-5 sequence, will participate in the STAMP 4se (Standard-based Measurement of Proficiency, from Avant Assessment) as part of the ongoing evaluation of World Languages. The STAMP 4se is an online proficiency-

based assessment aligned to the ACTFL Standards for listening, speaking, reading and writing in the target language.

### **Articulation:**

#### **Spanish Instruction at the Middle School:**

Students who have successfully completed all five years at the elementary level are placed in Spanish 1-B at the middle school. Thanks to the elementary Spanish FLES Program, students are able to complete the equivalent of two years of high school Spanish at the middle school.

Spanish students and other students entering middle school may also choose French as their language.

#### **Spanish at the High School:**

Students who complete three years of Spanish in middle school will have completed the equivalent of two years of high school Spanish and will generally enter Spanish 3. All students may also elect to take a second foreign language during their four years at the high school. Students who began studying in the elementary schools may also be placed in year two of a second foreign language. Students who are motivated and have studied one foreign language for a number of years are generally able to successfully transfer their linguistic skills to the study of another language.

#### **The Role of the Classroom Teacher:**

The classroom teacher is not expected to remain in the classroom while the FLES teacher delivers the language lesson. However, communication between the FLES teacher and the classroom teacher is essential and strongly recommended to allow for effective integration of content and language.

#### **Professional Development:**

The Timberlane Regional School District will provide training to all FLES teachers at least three times per year. The goal of the professional development is to assure fidelity of implementation, enhance best practices in the FLES classroom and allow for professional collaboration and dialogue between FLES teachers.