

September 29, 2016



Dear Dual Language Immersion Spanish and Mandarin Families at Mercer Intl MS,

We hope that you and your children have had an excellent start to the new school year. For 8th grade families, you are probably already giving thought to plans for high school. We appreciate the fact that you chose to place your children in Beacon Hill International School in a Dual Language Immersion Program in Spanish or Mandarin based on the understanding that the district would be offering a K-12 pathway for your children to continue their study of the language over their entire K-12 education career in this district.

As you may know, Seattle Public Schools initiated a process last spring for studying the impacts, risks, and benefits of sustaining and expanding Seattle's International Schools and Dual Language Immersion programs through the establishment of an **International Schools / Dual Language Immersion Task Force**. The role of the task force is to gather, analyze, review, and consider information and data and to prepare a report to the Superintendent of Schools regarding Seattle's International Schools and Dual Language Immersion programs. The intention is for the Superintendent to use this report, along with other important data, to make recommendations to the School Board for potential changes in the 2017-18 school year.

The Task Force issued their Recommendations Part 1 in August, 2016. Although the full document is quite lengthy, we would like to share the portion that relates to the specific issue of the high school pathway for students in the SE region (your children).

Recommendation A1: SE High School Pathway Completion

Options:

The Task Force offers two options for SPS Facilities and Enrollment Planning to consider for 2017-2018 in order to accommodate the immediate needs of Dual Language Immersion Continuation students who will be entering high school in Fall 2017:

1. Designate one of the SE high schools for Dual Language Immersion Continuation in 2017-2018 (without designating it as an "International School" until the school community has an opportunity to explore and consider that option, which is a two-year process of pre-planning year, then planning year). Evaluate the pros and cons for each school.

School	Pros	Cons
Franklin High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large Asian population to support Mandarin program;• Current feeder high school for most Mercer Intl Middle School students;• Could increase enrollment	(none identified at this time)
Cleveland High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Closest high school to Mercer;• Could share staffing with Mercer;• STEM is an attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currently Option school (not feeder school for Mercer)
Rainier Beach High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IB Program already in place;• Could increase enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not feeder school for Mercer


2. **OR Short Term:** Allow students from Mercer International Middle School to attend Chief Sealth International High School until a SE International High School Pathway is ready.

School	Pros	Cons
Chief Sealth International High School (SW Region)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established IB level Spanish and Mandarin language programs Established Dual Language Immersion Continuation for Spanish Heritage and DLI students (with Social Studies in Spanish all 3 years and AP Spanish at 9th grade) Could increase enrollment (Chief Sealth is projected to have capacity) Could “buy time” for Facilities and Enrollment to research the impact of designating a SE International High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not feeder school for Mercer; Would require special allowances by Enrollment Services Not a permanent solution Small additional transportation cost

The Task Force has now begun the conversation with the three high schools available to Mercer International Middle School students (Franklin, Cleveland, and Rainier Beach), as well as the alternative option of allowing the current cohort of 8th grade Dual Language Immersion students to attend Chief Sealth International High School if they prefer. The goal is to identify the school and language programs that will be able to welcome your children into 9th grade with an effective Dual Language Immersion continuation program in Spanish or Mandarin.

There will be more meetings scheduled this fall with Facilities and Enrollment Services around the question of Student Assignment Plan and International/DLI pathways. We appreciate your patience and hope to provide definitive answers to your questions as soon as possible. You can view the complete set of Recommendations Part 1 http://www.seattleschools.org/students/academics/international_education/international_dual_language_task_force/.

Sincerely,



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