

World Language Education Report

November 16, 2015

Background

During the last budget process, February, 2015, the Board of Education heard requests from parents to add Mandarin to the middle school world language choices, for implementation in the 2015-2016 school year. Given the timing of the request and the need to process the complexities of such a decision, the administration set out the following timeline for studying the issues involved:

May, 2015: Formation of K-12 World Language Review Committee

- A committee was convened that included teachers and administrators from elementary, middle, and high school levels:
 - Ken Bonamo, High School Principal
 - Larry Chatzinoff, Middle School Assistant Principal
 - Sylvie Corten, High School World Language Coordinator
 - Shaun Johnson, World Language Teacher, Middle School and Heathcote
 - Michael McDermott, Middle School Principal
 - Sue Peppers, High School Assistant Principal
 - Chris Renino, High School Assistant Principal
 - Lynne Shain, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
 - Sarah Whittington, Elementary and Middle School World Language Coordinator
- The following charges were issued to the Committee:
 - Conduct a review of our world language programs, including the possibility of offering middle school Mandarin, starting in Grade 6, beginning in the 2016-2017 school year;
 - Consider requests from other parents to offer Urdu, Arabic, Italian, Hebrew, and other languages at the middle school and high school levels;
 - Develop surveys for parents and students to assess level of interest for adding additional world languages to middle school and high school; and
 - Make recommendations for future changes to the world language program offered in Scarsdale.

October, 2015: Survey Parents and Students were distributed.

- October 5-9 to parents of K-5 students
- October 11-16 to parents of K-11 students
- October 16-23 to students in grades 6-11
- October 26-28 to parents of grade 5 students

November, 2015: Present World Language Education Report, including survey data and recommendations to the Board of Education.

Review of Current World Language Program

Elementary

Spanish is offered in Grades 2-5, for two 40 minute periods, during each six day rotation.

Middle School

The Middle School offers students a choice of Spanish or French. Once students choose a language in grade 6, they study that language for all three years (grades 6-8).

Grade 6: World Language classes are taught one period every other day, alternating with reading.

Grades 7 and 8: World Language classes are taught one period each day. In most years, each of the four Middle School houses have three sections of Spanish and one section of French.

Spanish:

6th grade: 261

7th grade: 235

8th grade: 225

French:

6th grade: 87

7th grade: 73

8th grade: 86

High School

When students enter the High School, they have several choices:

- Students may choose to continue with the language they were studying at the Middle School at either Level 2, Level 2 Honors, or Level 3;
- Students may choose a different language to study, including French, Spanish, Latin, or Mandarin; or
- Students may choose to study two languages; either two different languages from the one they studied at Middle School, or continue with the same language and add a new one.

World Language courses meet four times per week. The total enrollment in each language during the 2015-2016 school year is as follows:

<u>Language</u>	<u>Number of students</u>	<u>Percentage of enrollment in all World Language courses</u>
Latin	49	3.7 %
Mandarin	61	4.6 %
French	295*	22.3 %
Spanish	919	69.4 %

*Please note, when this report was presented on November 16th, this figure was listed as 95. This was an error and has been adjusted accordingly.

Mandarin specific data:

For background, we have been offering Mandarin at the High School since 2011-12, so we are currently in our fifth year.

The Mandarin enrollment information for the 2015-2016 school year is:

Mandarin 313, two sections: 24 students. There are six heritage students* in the course.
Mandarin 323, one section: 17 students. There are five heritage students in the course.
Mandarin 334, one section: 13 students. There are six heritage students in the course.
Mandarin 344, one section: 7 students. There are no heritage students in the course.

*Heritage students refer to the language a child learns at home which is a minority language in society, but because of growing up in a dominant language, the speaker seems to be more competent in the latter and feels more comfortable communicating in that language.

Grand totals: Of the 61 students, 17 are heritage students.

One teacher (1.0 FTE) teaches all five sections .

The historical enrollment of first-year Mandarin students is as follows:

- 2011-2012: 50 students (open to all students in grades 9-12) [2%*, 14%**]
- 2012-2013: 18 students [6%*, 11%**]
- 2013-2014: 16 students [6%*, 18%**]
- 2014-2015: 27 students [0%*, 37%**]
- 2015-2016: [pending]

* Drop rate during the course.

** Discontinue rate at the end of the year (does not include graduates)

Survey Results

Survey #1: Parents of K-5 Students, October 5-9, 2015

Survey Purposes:

- To determine if adding additional languages to the middle school language offerings was important to parents
- To determine which languages parents would like to see added
- To determine the language choices by year, if Mandarin was offered

Current K-5 enrollment: 2101 students

Response Rate: 808 students (39%) were represented by 588 parents

Summary of responses:

Q. 1 How important is it to offer more world languages at Scarsdale Middle School? **(number of parent responses)**

Very Important	275	47%
Important	127	22%
Somewhat Important	84	14%
Not Important	79	13%
No Opinion	23	4%

Q. 2 If the District's world language offerings were expanded at the Middle School, which language would you like to see offered as your first choice? **(number of parent responses)**

Mandarin	327	55.6%
None	127	21.6%
Italian	43	7.3%
Hebrew	42	7.1%
Japanese	17	2.9%
Arabic	14	2.4%
Korean	8	1.4%
Urdu	7	1.2%
Cantonese	3	0.5%

Q. 3 If Mandarin was to be added as a world language option at the Middle School along with the current offerings of Spanish and French, please choose the one language you would like your child/children to study when they reach grade six? (**number of students**)

	<u>K</u>	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>	<u>5th</u>
Spanish	78	69	60	75	75	83
Mandarin	49	39	44	45	39	37
French	18	19	18	23	15	22

Of the **588 parents** who responded, **327 parents** indicated that Mandarin was their first choice for world language study at the middle school.

135 parents (23%) responded that their children currently study Mandarin outside of school. This represents **41.3% of the parents** who chose Mandarin as their first choice.

Survey #2: Parents of K-11 Students, October 11-16, 2015

Survey purpose:

- To determine whether parents would like additional world languages added to the high school program
- To determine if parents were interested in their children enrolling in more than one language at a time in their high school program

Current K-11 enrollment: 4416

Response Rate: 423 parents responded representing 753 students = 17%

Summary of responses:

Q. 1 How important is it for Scarsdale High School to expand the World Language offerings beyond Spanish, French, Latin and Mandarin?

Not Important:	187 parents	(44.2%)
Somewhat Important:	117 parents	(27.6%)
Very Important:	99 parents	(23.4%)
No Opinion:	20 parents	(4.7%)

Q. 2 If the High School's World Language offerings were expanded, which language would you like to see offered as a first choice?

None of these*	157 parents	(37.1%)
Other:	57 parents	(13.4%)
Italian:	55 parents	(13%)
Arabic:	52 parents	(12.2%)
Hebrew:	34 parents	(8%)
Japanese:	33 parents	(7.8%)
Cantonese:	13 parents	(3%)
Korean:	12 parents	(2.8%)
Urdu:	10 parents	(2.3%)

*Current offerings are sufficient

Q. 3 It is possible to study more than one World Language at Scarsdale High School. Does your child plan to study more than one World Language at SHS?

	First Child	Second Child	Third Child	Total
Yes	145	98	24	267 (35.4%)
No	278	163	45	486 (64.5%)

Q. 4 If the World Language offerings were expanded, how many years of study would your child complete in the newly offered language?

	First Child	Second Child	Third Child	Total
Does not apply	269	118	32	419
one year	26	8	1	35
two years	31	9	4	44
three years	24	15	4	43
four or more years	73	52	12	137

Parents did not include all of their children when responding to this question.

Survey #3: Students in Grade 6-11 October 16-23, 2015

Survey purpose: To poll students as to their interest in adding an additional world language program

Current 6 -11 enrollment: 2315

Response Rate: 219 (9%)

Summary of responses:

Q. 1 How important is it for Scarsdale High School to expand the World Language offerings beyond Spanish, French, Latin and Mandarin?

Somewhat Important	50%	107 students
Very Important	31.8%	68 students
Not Important	11.2%	24 students
No Opinion	9.8%	21 students

Q. 2 If the High School's World Language offerings were expanded, which language would you like to see offered as your first choice?

Italian:	63 students	(28.8%)
Other:	37 students	(16.9%)
Hebrew:	33 students	(15.1%)
Japanese:	31 students	(14.2%)
None of these:	28 students	(12.8%)
Arabic:	18 students	(8.2%)
Korean:	10 students	(4.6%)
Urdu:	5 students	(2.3%)
Cantonese:	4 students	(1.8%)

Q. 3 It is possible to study more than one World Language at Scarsdale High School. Do you plan to study more than one World Language at SHS?

No: 132 students (61%)

Yes: 83 students (39%)

Q. 4 If the World Language offerings were expanded, how many years of study would you complete in the newly offered language?

Does not apply*	62 students	(29%)
Four or more years:	50 students	(23.8%)
Two years:	45 students	(21.4%)
Three years:	31 students	(14.8%)
One year:	27 students	(12.9%)

*Only plan to study Spanish, French, Latin, or Mandarin

Survey #4: Parents of Grade 5 Students October 26-28, 2015

Purpose: To get a more accurate count of probable 6th grade world language choices from parents of current 5th grade students

Current 5th grade enrollment: 372

Response rate: 202 out of 372 students' parents responded (54%)

Survey prompt:

Q. 1 Please indicate your child's first choice of world language to study in 6th grade:

Spanish	131	64.9%
Mandarin	36	17.8%
French	32	15.8%
No Language (LRC/ESL)	3	1.5%
Total	202	

Programmatic, Logistical and Financial Considerations:

- In order to offer Mandarin at the middle school and staff and schedule this program efficiently and effectively, the optimal minimum enrollment would need to be approximately 60 students, with a distribution of 15 students per house. This allows the District to hire a full time Mandarin teacher (one per year) during the three year implementation, rather than a part time teacher. This maximizes the possibility of attracting top quality applicants. While it is possible to set a lower minimum enrollment number, there are a number of additional questions that arise: (1) Is the staffing cost for a 1.0 FTE

justifiable with a lower number of Mandarin students; (2) How strong the applicant pool would be if the District decided to hire a part time Mandarin teacher; and (3) In order to hire FTE for a Mandarin program, there would need to be a corresponding reduction in other language programs . There are additional costs for administering a RIF (reduction in force). Would the combined costs of new FTE and costs associated with RIF be justifiable for the low enrollment in this program?

- Students must continue the study of the chosen World Language for all three middle school years. If High School data informs this work, there have been significant drop out and discontinuance rates for High School students taking Mandarin.
- World Language classes will not be leveled to accommodate incoming students with prior learning in a particular language. If High School data informs this work, there are a number of heritage students who may not find the rate and pace of the class appropriate to their comprehension, reading, writing, and speaking skills.
- To further elaborate on the above considerations, please note that given the complex organizational structure at the middle school, adding a third world language cannot be considered in isolation as it will impact many aspects of the middle school program. The explanations are lengthy to share, but here are two as illustrations:

1. Why is it necessary to have all four houses offer a language class?

The House placement process ensures that each Team is balanced by elementary school, world language enrollment, music class enrollment, gender, overall enrollment and academic level. If students enrolled in Mandarin were not placed in all four houses, it would limit our ability to effectively balance the four Teams. For example, if a disproportionate number of students from one elementary school enrolled in Mandarin and only one House was designated the Mandarin House, then the elementary schools would not be balanced across all four houses. The major concern of parents and their children when House placements are sent home is “how many students from their elementary school are in their House.” In addition, it restricts the subset of students that can be moved from one House to another House for purposes of balancing the gender, the music classes, and the academic levels.

There have been instances in the past where parents have tried to influence the house placement process by requesting to have their child placed in the same House as their friends. Parents would be able to accomplish this by having their child enroll in the Mandarin class, if it was offered in one House.

In summary, balancing the Teams is critical to the emotional, social, and academic growth of each student. We work very hard to make sure that Houses don’t become labeled, i.e. the French house, the band house, etc. Setting a minimum number of Mandarin students at 60 for 6th graders beginning Mandarin would allow a distribution of 15 Mandarin students per house.

2. Why do all introductory students have to be in the same grade?

The master schedule is built to support the House structure so that the students develop relationships with fellow students and teachers on their Teams. Each grade level within each house has a unique schedule. There is one period for each Team where the students attend their World Language class. Many schedules do not coincide with each other. Students would have to miss classes to accommodate their World Language class. This is a very different model than the High School or a Junior High where students are enrolled in courses across grade levels.

Another major reason why this request is not feasible is the impact on staffing. If we offered leveled classes for Mandarin students, we would have to offer this option to Spanish and French students. The Middle School World Language Department does not have enough staff to support students enrolling in classes a grade or two ahead of their current grade level.

Parent/Student Comments

Below is a sampling of representative parent and student comments. A full set of all parent and student comments can be found in the **Appendix**.

“Besides English, I think Spanish is the second important language in US. And it is not very important for kids to learn many languages, because as the technology improve, the phone will translate languages very easily in the future. It is very important for us to open some classes that may related to how to making translate easier in the future, like technology class.”

“We strongly support teaching additional languages as early as possible, ideally in Kindergarten.”

“I think the current choices are fine for my son because the real hurdle will be getting him interested in learning a language in general, but for others I think more choice is better than less, and offering a non-European language would give the students a more diverse choice.”

“Mandarin is an incredibly important language to understand and to speak in a modern business and political world.”

“It's critical for Scarsdale Middle School to expand the world language options in order to live up to the district's reputation and attract families who values high-quality education. With surrounding districts and nearby private schools in competition, we cannot afford to overlook this important curriculum issue any longer.”

“China is the now the largest trading partner of United States and will continue to grow. Learning Chinese at a young age will provide students a lifetime edge to succeed in the future economy. President Obama has recently urged a million americans to learn the Chinese language by 2020. Scarsdale has a well educated and successful Chinese population and we should leverage our resources to provide world class forward looking education to our students.”

“I am against offering Mandarin. It is a waste of district funds. Those who are interested in Mandarin know it already outside of the school program. My children know other foreign language and are almost fluent in it, but we are not pushing our language on the community.”

“I would rather resources be put into other areas of education. Music & Arts & PE. Addition of another language is minimally important to me.”

“I believe adding additional languages will dilute focus on excellent teaching of languages we already have in the system.”

“There are not enough resources to offer more languages, and it would only add more burden to the school's budget. The languages offered now are sufficient. Students who want additional offerings can do it outside of the school.”

“I strongly feel that the languages offered are sufficient and that no additional tax dollars should be spent on new language programs outside the ones currently offered.”

“Mandarin should be offered at as many levels (advanced, intermediate) as French or Spanish. Mandarin should also be expanded to earlier grade levels, such as 6th grade (middle school) or 4th grade (upper elementary school). Some other school districts are already offering Mandarin in middle schools.”

“Languages can be studied in different ways not necessarily through school curriculum.”

“A great effort. In today's global economy having a working knowledge of other languages opens doors and facilitates business. Numbers and foreseeable future trends favor Arabic, Urdu, Korean and Japanese in more or less that order.”

“American sign Language is my first choice for an expanded program. It offers a unique opportunity for students to learn a non verbal language and exposes them to another form of communication. I do feel the language dept needs a larger infusion of choices. Thank you.”

“The languages at SHS are limited: do a survey like this and then actually introduce a new WH program-- German/Finnish/Serbian/Russian-- other great languages! Let students choose and then just guide them!!”

“Scarsdale Schools should definitely expand their world language options to more eastern languages such as Hindi (or Urdu), Korean, and Japanese, because a significant number of people from these countries live in the United States.”

“The world language offerings are fine. Adding new offerings would be a luxury, but not a necessity. Personally, I'd focus on expanding in the STEM fields. However, I love the world language I am taking right now(Spanish), and I think it is important to maintain a good quality standard.”

“Mandarin class offered at middle school is very important for my children since they will take Mandarin at high school. It lays out the foundation at middle school so that it is easier for them to pick up the language at high school.”

Recommendation

We concluded that, based on the low response rates to the surveys, the majority of the parents and students are satisfied with the current world language offerings at the middle school and high school.

Survey #1: Parents of K-5 Students	Response Rate	39%
Survey #2: Parents of K-11 Students	Response Rate	17%
Survey #3: Students in Grade 6-11	Response Rate	9%
Survey #4: Parents of Grade 5 Students	Response Rate	54%

Specifically, in terms of offering Mandarin at the middle school, the data from **Survey # 1 Parents of K-5 Students**, reflects that 41.3% of the parents who chose Mandarin as their first choice also reported that their children currently study Mandarin outside of school. The data:

Of the **588 parents** who responded, **135 parents (23%)** responded that their children currently study Mandarin outside of school.

Of the **327 parents** who indicated that Mandarin was their first choice for world language study at the middle school, **135 parents** responded that their children currently study Mandarin outside of school. This represents **41.3% of the parents** who chose Mandarin as their first choice.

Furthermore, as previously noted, the middle school organization, staffing, and scheduling structure is based upon the understanding that:

World Language classes are not leveled to accommodate incoming students with prior learning in a particular language.

If we offered leveled classes for Mandarin students, we would have to offer this option to Spanish and French students. The Middle School World Language Department does not have enough staff to support students enrolling in classes a grade or two ahead of their current grade level.

Given that the survey showed that 41.3% of parents who chose Mandarin as their first world language choice for their children to study at the middle school also reported that their children currently study Mandarin outside of school, the data raises the question of whether these children would be best served by a middle school Mandarin sequence that starts with a beginners level in grade six.

Based on all the aforementioned data and feedback, the administration recommends continuing the current world language offerings at the middle school and high school for the 2016-2017 school year.

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Appendix

Disposition of Students Who Enrolled in First-Year Mandarin, 2011 - November 10, 2016					
Year	First-year course title	# of students starting in the first-year course	# of students who dropped the course	# of students who finished the course but didn't continue studying Mandarin	# of students who finished the course and continued studying Mandarin
2011-12	Mandarin 312	50	1	7 discontinued Mandarin, 1 left SHS, 11 graduated from SHS	30
2012-13	Mandarin 312/313	18	1	2 discontinued Mandarin, 1 left SHS, 3 graduated from SHS	11
2013-14	Mandarin 312/313	16	1	3 discontinued Mandarin, 2 left SHS, 4 graduated from SHS	6 (plus 3 who entered the program in 2014-15 at the 323 level)
2014-15	Mandarin 313	27	0	10 discontinued Mandarin, 1 left SHS, 3 graduated from SHS	13 (plus 3 who entered the program in 2015-16 at the 323 level)
2015-16	Mandarin 313	27	3	course is ongoing	course is ongoing

OFFICE OF NEGOTIATIONS CLEARINGHOUSE SERVICES

Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES

WORLD LANGUAGE IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Name of District	Does your district have a foreign language program in your elementary schools?		In which elementary grades do you have a foreign language program?	What language(s) do you teach?	Do you have a FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary School) Program? FLES programs are designed to provide a sequential language learning experience aiming for some degree of language proficiency.		Do you have an Immersion program? Immersion programs combine foreign language instruction with content learning from the regular curriculum.		Do you have a FLEX (Foreign Language Experience/Exploratory) Program? FLEX programs are designed to provide limited exposure to one or more foreign languages for pre-secondary students.	
	Yes	No			Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Ardley		X								
Blind Brook	X		K-5	Spanish		X		X	Yes	
Byram Hills Central Schools		X								
Carmel		X								
Cedar Knolls		X								
Clarkstown	X		K-5 in one building	Spanish	X					
Croton-Harmon UFSD		X								
Eastchester UFSD		X								
Elmsford UFSD	X		K, 1, 2, 3	Spanish	X		X			X
Garrison UFSD	X		Grades 4 and 5	Spanish	X			X		X
Harrison CSD		X								
Irvington		X								
Lakeland CSD		X								
Mount Pleasant CSD		X								
New Rochelle	X		Kindergarten - grade 5	Spanish, Italian, Mandarin.	X		X			X
Pearl River		X								
Peekskill City School District	X		We have dual language (2 way) in grades K-5	Spanish		X	X			X
Pelham		X								
Pleasantville			Grade 6	French, Spanish and Italian	X					
Port Chester-Rye UFSD		X								
Rye City	X		Grades 1 thru 5	Spanish	X			X		X
Rye Neck UFSD		X								
Scarsdale	X		2-5	Spanish	X			X		X
Somers CSD		X								
Tarrytown		X		Dual language program English/ Spanish			X			
Tuckahoe UFSD		X								
White Plains	X		6	French, Italian, Mandarin, Spanish, Spanish for Spanish Speakers, Spanish Language Arts		X		X		X

Survey #1: Comments from Parents of K-5 Students, October 5-9, 2015

Is there any other input, which you would like to tell us regarding the addition of other World Language offerings at Scarsdale Middle School?

Students should be able to opt out of a world language in middle school if they are taking language classes at an accredited program outside of school.

I think there should be more effort put in to doing a better job teaching Spanish at Greenacress. Many Greenacres kids feel like they have to switch languages once they enter middle school since they don't know any spanish and the kids from the other elementary schools do. Mandarin should not replace spanish. It could be offered after school for those interested.

Offer language option for after school club/extracurriculum would be another option.

In addition, the levels of language would be very different by children, split student by levels would be beneficial to the language study.

Perhaps Latin in the middle school to strengthen vocabulary skills by understanding Latin roots.

I don't think another language at all necessary and too expensive

German

There should be an ability for children to take more than one language in middle school.

Also, although I put Japanese and Italian as possible language offerings, I feel that German and Russian should be offered.

Would like Latin to be offered.

Spanish is the most useful language, by far, in NYC & the USA. Mandarin is second globally.

Believe Spanish and french are enough. Spanish is second language and widely spoken. Children should learn and master spanish

English, Spanish, and Mandarin are all you need in this century. All others are boutique endeavors. Nice to learn and speak, but not vital.

If a third option was available, I would want to see Latin added to help promote vocabulary building. It would also be interesting to have 6th graders get a sampling of 2 different languages. For example, 1/2 the year of one language and 1/2 a year of the other). The students would be exposed to 2 languages. Then, students could choose a language for 7th grade. Currently, students are exposed to Spanish and then have to choose without having any exposure to French. Personally, I think 2 languages in the middle school is sufficient.

There is no reason that Spanish was taken away from the 1st graders this year. Absolutely wrong to not start any language till 2nd grade. Every study out there shows how important language study is for brain development and how starting as young as possible is best. Scarsdale is an amazing school system with a huge flaw in it that we don't emphasize language study.

Please start Mandarin. You should have started it in elementary school. I'm surprised that this school district doesn't realize the benefits of learning the language spoken by over 1 billion people and used in almost every cross-border business transaction. I'm also surprised that this school district which touts its "Center of Innovation" and "excellence" doesn't organize itself to maximize a child's potential during the time period in a child's development when MOST learning (highest absorptive time in a human being's life) takes place from age zero to age seven. Children really should be given this opportunity to learn Mandarin from elementary school onwards. Please get on the ball with this! Thank you!

We think it is very important to increase the quality and depth of the foreign language experience in Spanish and it French at the K-5 level. The Spanish offered currently at K-5 is minimal. I think this is a priority over offering a large sampling of additional languages. We would not be interested in Mandarin at the elementary or Middle school level.

They should learn the relevant second and third languages for US citizens: Spanish and Mandarin.

All other languages are very nice from an aesthetic point of view, but useless in today's world. I am a fluent french speaker, I love it, but it is utterly useless in life.

Today's languages are English, Spanish and Mandarin. Period.

Also interested in Latin.

My husband and I stand ready to volunteer in whatever capacity to expand language choice in Scarsdale from elementary all the way to high school. Thanks for sending out the survey. Regards, Kirkendall-Rodriguez

German must be offered in addition to Spanish and French. It is my first choice, beating all options your have proposed. Please add it to the lineup. German fluency opens exceptional educational opportunities in science and engineering fields, and is very useful in high-tech industries.
Students should not be confined to studying one foreign language. Those able to learn multiple languages must be given opt-in opportunities to study multiple languages as soon as possible. Ample research shows that starting early - way before middle school - is highly beneficial for learning.
We would gladly put our children in German language classes.
Russian
Languages should be offered only based on their importance to world economy
More important than adding another language would be to change the curriculum and/or hire a new Spanish teacher at Greenacres. I am trying to teach my daughter Spanish at home to prepare her for SMS. She has learned embarrassingly little Spanish from the Greenacres teacher, but she has watched countless videos and done way too many word searches. She loves school but completely dislikes Spanish, as do most of her classmates. Why turn kids off to foreign language at such a young age?
I think that mandarin would be a great third choice in this day and age. The other options above are not that important.
Please offer Russian.
Latin?
If another language is going to be offered, Latin should be considered
Latin?
If the district has budget concerns, my ranking would be Spanish, Mandarin, Latin and French.
You can't please everyone! Good luck! I still think Spanish is most useful day-to-day if you live and work in the United States. Thanks!
In my opinion, the sooner the kids are exposed to a language, the higher are the chances for them to learn it better. To extent possible, it would also be great to differentiate the level of teaching based on kids knowledge or ability. Presently, in Elementary School, all kids are in the same language class - whether they are native Spanish speakers, have a decent background, or are (still) complete beginners. As a result, their advances are rather limited. Another option to help develop language would be to bring enthusiastic parents, who can help with fairs, trips, and just day-to-day language acquisition by making it more fun and engaging. The options you listed somehow omit German, which is another useful language. I would certainly put it ahead of Italian.
American schools do not teach foreign languages well, and unfortunately that includes Scarsdale. True fluency will never be achieved if one begins to learn a language in high school. Adding Mandarin in Middle School is the LEAST that we can do to remedy this. It is a step in the right direction. Ultimately students should be studying a language daily beginning in K or 1 - really learning conversational skills, not just singing songs and memorizing nouns. Spanish and French are important and lovely languages, but our kids should also be offered Mandarin and Arabic so that they may one day be competitive in a global job market.
When there are a couple children (now for example in Kindergarten 3, Second 4) children learn the language Dutch in the middle school time it would be great..... I'm a teacher and would love to do it in the middle time school time
We believe learning foreign languages (multiple!) are crucial to a child's development, and should be part of the curriculum in elementary, middle and high school. Very happy that Spanish is offered in elementary and the time spent on it could be expanded. In middle/high school, it would be great if students can choose between various languages - e.g., Spanish, French, Mandarin, German, Latin and (ancient) Greek (in particular the addition of Latin to other 'living' languages would have our interest).
German should be an option. That would have been my first choice.
I would like to see more Spanish given in Elementary than twice per week. I am fine with two languages in the middle school.
Not at this time
Foreign languages should be taught by native speakers. If a child already speaks the languages being offered, teachers should make arrangements to help that child learn at a faster pace. My sons speak both French and Spanish and when I asked the Spanish teacher in elementary school if my oldest son could learn to read

(instead of learning things he already knew), the answer was no. He had to follow the class's pace. It is a waste of children's time to teach a child to count in Spanish when Spanish is his mother tongue.
We strongly support teaching additional languages as early as possible, ideally in Kindergarten.
Yes--please offer different levels for the students at middle school, in particular with Spanish, the most common foreign language. My kids take both Mandarin and Spanish classes outside of school and have been doing so since 2 years of age. I would love to see Mandarin offered in middle school, mostly because it is such an important world language. That being said, I would not enroll my kids in it because their level would be too high for such a class (they learned Mandarin before English, although English is now dominant, and have been learning reading and writing since age 5 at a Sunday Chinese school). Also, my kids have been taking Spanish since 2 and 3 years old, in immersion programs. I really would like a program that would cater to their level. I can't expect that with Chinese because you would be starting a new program. Right now, I feel conflicted on whether I would let them stay in Spanish in middle school because they have invested so much time in it already and will likely be more advanced than the majority of their peers. Yet the biggest pity for me would be for them to not continue improving on their investment in language skills. It will also get continuously harder to invest out of school time in foreign language skills for our family as the kids' other extracurricular activities increase. Therefore, I would propose more levels for Spanish in middle school, and I also support adding Mandarin to the curriculum. Thank you.
Our children speak Spanish at home and take native Spanish classes outside of school. There are a number of native speakers in Scarsdale who would benefit from the academic side (e.g. grammar and literature) of an advanced class. Having bored native speakers in the same class creates disruption for the rest of the class (currently the case in elementary school). Absence a native Spanish class, the current middle school options limit these kids to French only, so it would be good to have an additional option. German was not included in the drop down list of alternatives to suggest. Thanks for running this survey.
I would like to see Russian as an option
I find it a shame that it cannot start earlier in the academic grades; studies have shown that earlier exposure to secondary languages are so beneficial to children
Cantonese is definitely not a world language. It is a dialect. This is a very basic fact. I am surprised that whoever designed this survey didn't know this.
Having only 2 Romance languages is not sufficient for the Scarsdale school district when even small NYC public schools offer 3 languages. With globalization, having students learning a language that is not Western European based would help them become the global citizens Scarsdaliens want their children to be. So much business is being done with China that having knowledge of Mandarin and an understanding of the customs would help our children better prepare for life after college graduation.
I am currently a Spanish teacher at SMS.
I am against offering Mandarin. it is a waste of district funds. Those who are interested in mandarin know it already outside of the school program. My children know other foreign language and are almost fluent in it, but we are not pushing our language on the community.
I think it's essential that teachers are native speakers if we want the kids to learn the correct pronunciation and accent.
I would like to see Latin offered as a choice.
Strongly support adding Chinese as US-China relation is the most important bilateral and global relationship in the 21st century. Chinese is also spoken by one-fifth of the world population. It's a strategic language that everyone needs to learn in the US.
Mandarin is an incredibly important language to understand and to speak in a modern business and political world.
None
Hindi
The only language that would interest my family besides French would be Latin.
You hired people for Spanish in Elementary grades less than 10 years ago, have already cut back their hours, and are planning on doing it again next year. You have no plan. These are people you are dealing with. First secure Spanish long term before starting anything new.
My child already speaks Spanish at home as his first language, which I think is a very important language to know living in the US. Based on this, I would be choosing a language different from Spanish and I believe Mandarin would be more useful due to the amount of people worldwide who speak Mandarin vs French.

<p>Latin and Greek are foundational languages for English and Romance-language speakers. Our family believes these two languages would be more helpful to our students than most of the languages listed. For example, many of the languages listed are likely already spoken by some segment of the Scarsdale population. But Latin and Greek are classics that will not be taught in other settings. In addition, we're surprised to see Korean listed rather than German or Russian.</p>
<p>Latin</p>
<p>No, but we are very disappointed that Spanish was eliminated in the earlier grades in the elementary school. We feel as though MORE emphasis should have been placed on it as part of the elementary school curriculum -- not less (i.e., none in the early grades). In order for kids to actually pick up the language in any meaningful sense, they have to have more exposure to it than they're given.</p>
<p>No, just that I think we really should be teaching languages much more intensely at an earlier age.</p>
<p>Kids whose second language is Spanish should be taking a higher level. My kids find it unfair to their classmates and boring to them</p>
<p>Given the current global economy dependence on China, Mandarin is definitely one of the important world languages.</p>
<p>The introduction of any language at an early age enables children to learn that language with much greater facility. Offering Mandarin in the middle school is a logical step in maintaining Scarsdale's reputation for excellence in educating tomorrow's global leaders. We must be sure to evolve our curriculum offerings to keep with the times.</p>
<p>I am disappointed to say that I have found the Board of Ed's reception of the idea of Mandarin at SMS to be tepid at best. This survey is a step in the right direction and I am glad to see it.</p>
<p>If you are not going to offer Mandarin in the elementary school then what is the point in introducing it in 6th grade? It seems to me that the interest in adding Mandarin in the middle school is coming from the parents with this cultural background. If it is added I will not be persuaded to have my child take Mandarin since he was not introduced to it at an earlier age. I think he would be at a disadvantage in a class with children who have parents who may speak Mandarin at home and have been exposed to the language.</p>
<p>Would like mandarin to start in 3rd grade.</p>
<p>Languages should be started and focused on much before middle school. The addition of a reading specialist in place of Spanish for first graders was a terrible mistake.</p> <p>Children should be able to take two languages in middle school if desired vs having to choose one.</p>
<p>Studying a language is not just an academic exercise. The previous superintendent referred to the study of languages as academic. Languages are the way CULTURES communicate. There are many cultural aspects to learning a "foreign" language. I would only prefer my son to study French because a large number of my family members speak French - and we will go to France to visit with them. We also have some family members who speak Italian and live in Italy - and we plan on visiting them. We also focus on the cultural aspects of those countries, even from a distance. At least if our son learns French, he can use that language to work at the UN or at a Swiss bank. And we can support that language as a family, although we do have too many languages spoken to learn them all well. Very tricky subject. I learned three, myself, and many in my family spoke/speak four. I think only offering French and Spanish is a bit backward, although those are the languages spoken in North America and South America.... Tough to please everyone. English is still a VERY important language, to top it all off.</p>
<p>Consider adding Hindi</p>
<p>Would like to see foreign languages taught earlier than middle school.</p>
<p>We would like Russian offered.</p>
<p>I don't think French is a very useful language to offer. An analysis should be performed to see which languages are being spoken most and effort should be made to offer those choices. All choices offered should start from elementary till high school so that the language gets reinforced.</p>
<p>Coding or programming languages should be offered.</p>
<p>I would like to see Portuguese being offered as there are quite a number of Portuguese speaking households in Scarsdale as well.</p>
<p>I feel the greatest exposure children can get to another language at an early age, the better it is.</p>
<p>You didn't list Latin but I would like to see that as an offering.</p>

My son is in 6th grade at SMS. If a new world language is offered in 2016 would it be offered to him in 7th grade and could he switch from Spanish to it?
Why isn't German an option?
I hope students can have the option to choose more than one world language. I really wish my children will have the opportunity to study Mandarin at school, but I'd like them to learn French as well.
I think that Latin would be a great option since it is the base of all of the Romance languages.
Any new language introduced should be taught in a way that doesn't require additional tutors outside of school as it is currently for Spanish and French. Need for tutors may put undue financial burden on parents.
Would not support any additional language at the expense of the existing choices/programs.
I think children should be taught all 3 languages during middle school. That's how it is done in Europe.
What I would like to have my children study is VERY different than what my child would like to study. Not ever child is going to want to take Mandarin, my 4th grader included. I blame myself for this b/c I introduced him to the language when he was 3 and apparently he was very good except for the fact that he did not understand it and by the time he was 5 he said forget it, it's too hard! I do believe in a third language option but I think we should be have an open mind as to what the third language option could be. I do not want my children to take TWO Romance languages, I would prefer a different language family as a second foreign language. I put down Korean, Hebrew and Arabic b/c they are all alphabetic systems, not Romance languages, and useful. Scarsdale is and has always been a very diverse community and language is an opportunity to showcase it.
Nope--thanks for the opportunity to contribute!
Yes. I think the Spanish is too easy. Maybe, instead of introducing a new language, the Spanish could be more advanced.
I would like to see Mandarin, or any other language options, but they need to be done well. The elementary school language program is very weak. My kids are in second grade and can't say much more than numbers and colors in Spanish. They can't form a sentence. So as much as I'd like to see new languages, I'd say don't bother if it's going to be run like the elementary school program. If it's going to be done well, then I'm all for it.
I am surprised that Latin isn't under consideration as a language offering. Although not currently spoken, Latin is extremely useful for vocabulary and as a basis for Romance languages. If it were offered, I'd sign my children up for it.
As you probably know, if you rank the languages by population, Mandarin and Spanish are number 1 and 2. French is 19th. If we want a modern foreign language program, we should definitely offer Mandarin.
I find it preferable for my child to continue studying Spanish (which he is already getting at Greenacres) and to get a real mastery of this language through middle school, rather than starting another language.
Hindi is the most spoken language of India, a growing economic power that shares the core values of democracy, individual freedom and secularism with the United States. Would have been nice to have Hindi offered as a choice.
Mandarin is the most useful language after English in the business world. To keep Scarsdale's high standard for education, mandarin should be included to benefit the students and better prepare them to be global citizens.
You have it on the mark. I have always envied people who speak other languages, looking around today's world it seems that Mandarin, Arabic and possibly Urdu/Hindi can cover another 2 billion of the world's population alongside the usual world languages of English, Spanish and French. Thanks.
I think the current choices are fine for my son because the real hurdle will be getting him interested in learning a language in general, but for others I think more choice is better than less, and offering a non-European language would give the students a more diverse choice
While I very much would like to see Mandarin offered, I wonder whether Spanish and French (as Romance languages) are helpful in acquiring deeper knowledge of English itself.
It might be helpful if the District could provide residents reference to studies about the efficacy of secondary languages (and which) towards in-depth English language acquisition.
I am also interested in getting more information regarding the curriculum should Mandarin be implemented in Middle School.
Approve Mandarin as a language option for Scarsdale Schools.

Would be great if offerings could be expanded at elementary level as well, especially for those with already spanish-english bilingual children. thanks
Arabic and Urdu, Really?
I wish for Hindi to be offered in schools here as there are quite a few Indians
Why not offer more than one language?
Mandarin is crucial to start at SMS. We are learning Mandarin outside school.
Being multilingual is an extreme advantage in a COMPETITIVE GLOBAL economy. Having to choose one language only is not enough. Our children should grow up learning, at a minimum, Spanish/Mandarin/French starting from Elementary school. Most foreign workers in the US speak at least 2-3 languages. Why are our children not exposed to the value of being multilingual when our world economy depends on cross-cultural and international business?
Moreover, the US is a land of immigrants. We are a multicultural society and yet our education curricula does not reflect or embrace this quality.
Thank you.
It's not on the list, but Latin can be helpful for learning roots of words and vocabulary.
Portuguese
I think one of the upcoming languages nowadays is Mandarin and it will be great if we can offer Mandarin at MS. Also Mandarin is offered at high school but not middle school? It seems to me that there is no continuity ...if you are learning Spanish or French till 8th grade what's the point of starting a new language in HS? I think that whatever languages are offered at elementary school should continue till High school and if there is a demand for Mandarin it should be offered. I certainly would welcome that change. Thank you.
Asian is a very big potential career field for our kids future. My Mandarin speaking background helps me so much in my conversations with my clients. Scarsdale has very good educational exposure for European backgrounds and knowledge. Enhancing Asian background introduction will enhance our kids' international viewing.
Thank you so much for helping our school system!
NYC has very big Asian population. Knowing Mandarin will help our kids know more about their neighbors or family background. It also helps them service the community or their jobs better. In medical field, if the doctors or nurses can speak multiple languages, it will help so much to know the patients.
Thank you so much to keep improve our school system! Cheering for Scarsdale schools!
I am not familiar with all the options available for world languages in the high school but assume there is more than Fr, Sp and Mandarin?
I grew up and went to public school in Missouri, and we had the choice of French, Spanish, Latin or German starting in jr. high (7th gr). It isn't clear to me here what the tradeoffs are of expanding the World Lang. program in the MS, but assuming no budget changes, I believe a district like Scarsdale should offer more than just Fr or Sp in 6th grade. If anything, the world is much more accessible than when I grew up and the global economy favors those who can easily work in different regions.
I appreciate your taking the time to survey parents, and also hope that you consider globally what languages may of value (and not just lean towards adding one language b/c of a large local population).
I am not sure my kids would be interested in learning anything but spanish
Don't dilute resources for fleeting fads. The same popularity of Chinese today is what we saw with Japanese in the 1980's. Latin would be a better language to teach (as a foundation for English).
Immersion is the best way to learn a language. 1-2 x per week for an hour is a waste of time.

Being able to speak a World Language is a lifelong advantage, this is why we find it very important to learn it at an early age. Thank you
I think adding languages like Mandarin, Urdu etc is tough. These are languages that you can only learn if you are truly immersed in them. What you will see is that the children who speak these languages at home are the ones who will participate. Other than that, I would like to see more native speakers teach the languages.
if you are looking to spend money on the curriculum add more hands on stem work or add an art history course. also please drop the farce of a music (non-instrumental) program.
If there were a budget issue, then I would actually choose to replace French with Mandarin.
Teaching a second language to our kids is extremely important. i would like to see this program start at Kindergarten and continue as the kids move up. i would like the curriculum to be strong and really focuses on getting out kids fluent in whatever language they choose, and not just basic skills. Starting young is the key, i don't believe starting Mandarin in middle school will be effective. if we are going to introduce a new offering, we should consider introducing it earlier than later.
German
As a member of the group of moms urging our District to expand Mandarin from current High School offering only into the Middle School, I support the inclusion of Mandarin in MS curriculum whole heartedly! Our District is already fallen behind compared to neighboring school districts (White Plains, Larchmont, New Rochelle, New York City to name a few) in this area. It is time to put Scarsdale back on the map as we are renowned nation wide, and the world to a certain extent, as a District historically grounded in exceptionally high quality liberal art education!
I would like my child to be able to study 2 world languages in 6th grade and onwards, not just one. If Mandarin were available as a 2nd language, we would pick that.
Can you please add German to the list?
We would like to see offering of second language specifically Mandarin in middle school at the latest, but hopefully at an earlier age starting in elementary school. Thank you.
Should you decide to add additional languages, I hope that Spanish continues to be an alternative.
I am confused by this survey. It asks questions about languages in SMS in theory, but only asks about our children in k-5, not those currently or previously in SMS. I think before we add more languages, we should do a better job with the languages we currently offer k-5. Many of the teachers regularly make spelling and grammatical mistakes in elementary Spanish.
Latin - it helps people learn how to write better
We are Chinese Americans and we would very much like for our children to master Mandarine starting an early age. By the time our children reach Grade 6, their level of Chinese would surpass the Level 1 Mandarin offered at Grade 6 of Middle School. Our children would greatly benefit from studying Mandarin at a higher level at the Middle School. It would be very welcome if there are various entry levels for Mandarin offered at the Middle School that allow all Scarsdale students regardless their background to progress in their mandarin study at their appropriate levels.
Offering Mandarin has been standard practice in Mamaroneck Middle school and HS for years.
Mandarin is so important these days, not because I am Chinese.
Why weren't other languages included on the survey questions for "expanded language offerings" at SMS? If there was an "other" option, I might have chosen Russian, German or Portuguese as some of my additional choices. I believe Mandarin and Arabic to be important languages for the future, but not necessarily over these other languages not mentioned in this survey.
China is the now the largest trading partner of United States and will continue to grow. Learning Chinese at a young age will provide students a lifetime edge to succeed in the future economy. President Obama has recently urged a million americans to learn the Chinese language by 2020. Scarsdale has a well educated and successful Chinese population and we should leverage our resources to provide world class forward looking education to our students.

I selected Mandarin not for personal reasons but to serve as a introduction to the course at the high school.
Many chinese kids who have been to outside weekend chinese schools will be in advanced level in Mandarin when they reach middle school. If Middle school decides to open Mandarin class, I hope there will be advanced class (corresponding to 6th grade Mandarin level) for these group of kids.
Besides English, I think Spanish is the second important language in US. And it is not very important for kids to learn many languages, because as the technology improve, the phone will translate languages very easily in the future. It is very important for us to open some classes that may related to how to making translate easier in the future, like technology class.
Japanese
Top ten economies based on the criteria of GDP, current prices (US dollars) which is simply known as nominal GDP. The rankings differ if the same list is prepared using the GDP based on purchasing-power-parity (PPP). As a general rule, developed countries have a smaller gap between their nominal GDP (i.e., current prices) and GDP based on PPP, while the difference is greater in developing countries, which tend to have a higher GDP when valued on purchasing-power-parity basis. 1. United States 2. China
China is ranked #2. Learning to speak Chinese is a great way to give our children well prepared in the increasingly competitive business world.
Asian languages are much harder to pick up at later stages of language learning curve, thus instilling our pupils with early exposure to them is immensely beneficial.
more intensive training in 4th and 5th grade (at least 3 times per week) instead of once every 6 days K-5. seems so ineffective.
offer "trial" classes for a month in 4 or 5 so students can make an informed decision based on experience rather than picking one based on nothing other than parents choice.
Mandarin is becoming more and more important as the trading/cooperation and other business between China and USA grows over the years. It is already a most spoken language in the world, and I am expecting it will play a more important role in the future.
The current elementary school spanish program is inadequate. regardless of what language is offered in middle school, spanish or mandarin or whatever should be started in kindergarten!!!
Mandarin lessons seem to be just like kale - popular at the moment because everyone has decided its the key to some broader, higher aspiration (eternal health?), but not that great or fun to eat/learn.
I'm a fan of languages and of people learning many of them, but on the whole I think our curriculum is pretty aggressive and we should ease up on our kids a bit.
If you're going to add any language at all at SMS, I'd add Latin and leave it at that. I would even go so far as to say that Latin should be required for all 6th grade students, with Spanish and French moved to 7th and 8th only. Or go crazy, scratch Spanish in the elementary schools (the five years of Spanish classes that my 6th grade twins took taught them virtually nothing) and teach Latin for K-5.
Multiple level of language class should be offer and place children in a level based on his or her language level instead of grade
I think Latin would be a valuable option for students More importantly, though, I believe students need more class time in the languages we already offer if they are going to progress in foreign language.
It's critical for Scarsdale Middle School to expand the world language options in order to live up to the district's reputation and attract families who values high-quality education. With surrounding districts and nearby private schools in competition, we cannot afford to overlook this important curriculum issue any longer.
Actually, which world language we will choose will depend on the level of the language class offered. We are Mandarin speaking family. We teach our children Mandarin at home. We also send them to Chinese school every weekends since kindergarten. They are

advanced Mandarin speakers. What they need to be strengthened are reading and writing in Mandarin. If school can offer advanced Mandarin class for their level, we will definitely choose mandarin. However, if it was for beginner level, we may choose French...
Mandarin is a very important language and I want to give my children every opportunity to master this language and if possible have daily exposure.
I think you should offer Russian.
Thank you for the survey. We are also hoping to see Mandarin be added to elementary school's after school club curriculum.
Thank you.
No
Manderin has been offered at so many private and public schools all around. Some private schools even require is as second language.
Any other language from African Sub Region or Latin American such as Swahili, Portuguese etc.
Even though Daisy would continue her study of Spanish in elementary school, we believe she may be quite interested in learning Mandarin at SMS.
No.
I think it's critical to expand foreign language offerings and to do it as young as possible. I had much greater success learning a foreign language and acclimating to the grammar rules, idiomatic expressions and culture than in later years. I would like mandarin offered at the grade school level and Spanish and French offered starting in 1st grade.
N.A.
Not at this time
I have heard that Mandarin is a very difficult language. I wonder of introducing it early would make it more easier for children to grasp the concepts of the language so that it would be more accessible should they want to pursue it later on. I also heard that because it is picture based it appeals to younger children.
Your list of choices above ommitted Hindi, the 2nd or 4th most language spoken in the world, depending on source. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_languages_by_number_of_native_speakers http://www.vistawide.com/languages/top_30_languages.htm
As of today, the United States has the world's largest economy and China the second largest. The two countries are major trade partners and have become more and more intertwined as great numbers of Chinese and Americans have experience visiting, studying, working and living in the others' country. Learning Mandarin, the official Chinese language, from middle school or even elementary school as a foreign language for Scarsdale students can be very helpful for their future career. Through learning the language, the students will also have the chance to study about the country and its culture, which can be very important as being a global citizen and to understand the cooperative and mutual beneficial relationship between the US and China.
I think school subscriptions to Rosetta Stone would cost effective tools to teach additional languages
Our son is Dyslexic and really struggles with any language. We prefer that he not be REQUIRED to study any language other than English, but if an additional language is required, we prefer it be Spanish because we have Spanish speakers in our home. Our situation may be somewhat unique...but I answered based on our need and preferences. Thanks!
Latin would be a nice offering. Is that offered at the high school?
Please consider adding mandarin class of various levels to accommodate students with prior exposure to the language.
No other languages besides Spanish and French are needed at the middle school.
My daughter would take Hebrew if it was offered in 6th grade. She is currently in 5th.

I do believe aside from Mandarin being offered as a World language, Spanish should also be offered in light of the current dynamics of the world economy and cultural interaction.
Thank you.
Maybe set up a dual language program for students
She's taking 1 st grade level mandarin at edgemont high school. Not sure how to integrate all the various levels as many there started at age 4. That would be a challenge. But offering mandarin in some form would be great exposure to all!
German would be a great addition.
Although I selected 'None of these. Current offerings are sufficient', that was not what I really meant, in that I'd like to see if anything, Latin offered at Middle school (I realise that is a classical language rather than what would maybe be considered 'World language'). Also would like to see either Russian or German on the list. Other than that, I am happy with current offerings.
No
It would be fun for the Jewish kids to be able to take Hebrew and or Yiddish:D
I don't understand how I was supposed to fill in the above chart but I have 2 children currently in grades 2 & 4. I would like them both to learn Spanish. My second choice would be mandarin (not French).
The most valuable addition would be some way to maintain their proficiency status during the summer rather than having it all fade away. Perhaps there are online language labs (written and oral?). I would think students out of the US might be a natural and low-cost counterpart.
The Spanish program at the Elementary level could benefit from a better methodology and could be encouraging more proficiency.
Would like to see mandarin and Hindi offered!
Hindi as another world language option.
Scarsdale school district should consider to offer Mandarin at elementary school. Due to the complexity nature of the language, it will be better to start the language at earliest possible.
Teachers should have the appropriate accent (ie native accent)
Russian Language
If a small group wants Mandarin, I suggest they get together and hire a tutor outside of school. Additionally, I think this survey is very poorly worded. The answer to "If the District's world language offerings were expanded at the Middle School, which language would you like to see offered as your first choice?" is presented as conditional, yet presents the option to say no additional language is necessary. This can lead to very misleading conclusions.
Could German be provided?
Could German be provided?
Current language offerings at middle school are sufficient, no need to raise your costs and our taxes.
My son learned some Mandarin last year in an immersion program and I wish he could continue it
We don't need more, we need better.
As a member of the group of moms urging our District to expand Mandarin from current High School offering only into the Middle School offering. I support the inclusion of Mandarin in MS curriculum fully! Our District is already fallen behind compared with neighboring school district (white plains, Larchmont, New Rochelle, NYC and etc) in this area. It is the time to put Scarsdale back on the table as we are renowned nation wide. Thank you!
It would be a wise and forward looking decision to offer maderin as early as possible given China's rising influence worldwide.

It will be great to set up different levels of Mandarin courses in the middle school.
You asked if the children are studying Latin outside the school, but did not make that an available choice for an expanded offering. I would have chosen that.
It is important to have the opportunity to choose.
I would be interested in seeing Russian being offered as a world language at the scarsdale middle school
I love the idea of having my child learning Mandarin at school. However, if the school would consider to offer an option of taking "Traditional Chinese" instead of Simplify Chinese. If the Mandarin class is going to teach Simplify Chinese only, I don't this this option will benefit my child, I would rather my child select another language.
Please offer Hindi. Thanks.
I would rather resources be put into other areas of education. Music & Arts & PE. Addition of another language is minimally important to me.
I THINK SPANISH WOULD BE A GREAT SECOND LANGUAGE TO BE ADDED AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TOO.
It is important to introduce Mandarin as a second language.
Languages should be taught so they don't cause undue burden on families to hire supplemental tutoring outside of school.
I think additional language offerings are always an enrichment, as long as students keep up with their choices. Once the choice for the second language is made, it should be kept until the end of Middle School, in my opinion.
Spanish is meant to be the second language in the US and a third language with more variety of choice than just French could be great.
It would be a wise and forward looking decision to offer maderin as early as possible given China's rising influence worldwide.
German - Far more relevant for global business today than many of the Asian choices which were our only choices in the drop down menus. It is in the top 5 economies today and will be in 2030 as well.
I feel that the Spanish at Greenacres is extremely weak and they are at a great disadvantage in middle school in compared to the other four elementary school. Since the new Spanish teacher came my kids have learned less and less Spanish than my older kids and a lot of their friends either drop foreign language since they are so behind or pick French since they feel they are starting new anyway. The supposed review in sixth grade is brand new information for them. Please bring us changes to Greenacres to make Spanish to the level of the other elementary schools.
The families pushing for Mandarin classes in the Middle School all already speak Mandarin fluently and attend Chinese school regularly. They are looking for an easy A for their child, to inflate their GPA, and NOT to actually learn anything from the class. No one who is not a fluent speaker will be able to enroll for these classes as they will not be able to compete with the native or first generation students. Please do NOT offer Mandarin in the school!
Spanish and Mandarin are two languages besides English used widely with large population. To prepare out kids for world-class citizen, we wish our kids have opportunity to learn these 2 languages earlier.
No
Focus more on math, the languages are alright
I would rather spend money on improving what the school system has than adding to it. Scarsdale parents in general are rich enough. If they want to teach their children mandarin, they can eliminate one of the 3 travel sports team they are currently participating in, and replace with mandarin. Pleaes don't burden the school system and taxes anymore. Spanish has already been removed from the schools for 1st. Please don't alter anymore.
I believe adding additional languages will dilute focus on excellent teaching of languages we already have in the system.
In the USA only English and Spanish are relevant languages. All the other ones are "nice to have" and non-essential. It's way more important to reach an exceptional level in English and Spanish than a mediocre level at best in any other language. There are too many different cultural backgrounds in Scarsdale and whatever language you offer would only benefit one of the groups, which will always be always be a very small fraction of the population.

So therefore we think that if parents would like their children to learn other languages they should use their own money, NOT tax payer dollars. It is also inconceivable to us that taxes would have to be raised to fund somebody else's wish list.

My child is actually in private school now. She completed the 5th grade at Greenacres last year. A major reason why she no longer attends Scarsdale Schools is because of the importance to our family of having her begin to learn Mandarin in a dedicated manner (not only on weekends or at night) at an earlier age than high school. Mandarin is a language that is difficult to learn after the younger years. It takes years longer than for a romance language to become fluent in Mandarin for those of non-Mandarin speaking families. Ideally, children should be exposed to Mandarin prior to age 7 so that the ear can acclimate to the tonal nature of this language. Given the spotty and inconsistent approach to Spanish at the elementary level in Scarsdale (i.e. the poor instruction at Greenacres which is well documented by the District and known by all parents in that school), it might even make sense to replace Spanish with Mandarin in elementary school with the goal of training the young ear to listen and hear. Further, the actual writing of Mandarin uses a different side of the brain than the speaking of the language (left vs. right (or perhaps it is the other way)) which makes this language much different than romance languages which use only one side of the brain. Additionally, I would also like to see Latin offered in some form. Latin provides an excellent foundation for English and many other languages. It would augment both the study of some second languages while simultaneously improving English vocabulary and comprehension. Latin is important to many fields such as law, science and medicine. Although my child no longer attends Scarsdale and would be unlikely to benefit from an addition to the Middle School curriculum 2 or 3 years from now, we would definitely support the addition of languages - particularly Mandarin and Latin and will happily approve a budget with these items even if it is over the cap. A decision to add a language should not be predicated on having that magic number of 20 or 25 kids per section. In fact, the class size for languages should ideally be very low to provide the individual attention needed to truly master a foreign language. We are particularly concerned that the Scarsdale schools are at a competitive disadvantage both in terms of their language offerings and in terms of producing students with adequate language skills for the 21st century workplace, or even for adequate preparation for college. This should be a concern for all in the community, not just those with kids who may benefit years from now.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding the World Language offerings at Scarsdale High School?
Enough Already!!
Rather than offering more language classes the district could put the money to better use offering SAT classes which would help the less advantaged children attain better grades. Being a high achieving school district should not mean that the education has to be supplemented with tutors so that those grades can be achieved.
My oldest child is now a freshman in college. He was not eligible to take a language until 7th grade, when he started with French. In 9th grade he added Mandarin and in 11th grade he added Spanish. For four years he took two languages and for two years he took three languages. I am a huge proponent of taking multiple languages in the High School. It served my oldest child well. I have two kids entering the high school next year and they are both talking about taking a second language in 10th grade. I feel very lucky that we had multiple languages offered in our high school. Keep it up Scarsdale. Happy to participate in any discussions going forward.
I think if you made the SECOND foreign language a pass/fail class you'd have more interest. Sometimes the stress of their grade point average is what deters them (understandably) from doing it and that's really quite a shame. I had the opportunity to learn 3 languages in school K-12 (the 3rd one was a pass/fail class) and consider myself fluent. I have since learned 2 more but age made a big difference, I can "manage" in both of them, but unless I move to those countries and become immersed, I will never be as fluent as with the ones I learned in childhood.
Don't spread the existing resources too thin. Focus on the languages you offer now and do it well.
Instead of increasing the World Language offering at the high school level, it would be better to offer the current languages, specifically Mandarin, in the middle school level. Starting a language in high school is okay, but there would be significant advantage in starting a language earlier.
If at all possible, it is very important to have native speakers teach foreign languages starting in elementary through high school. It is also to have different levels in all grades. Otherwise students will not learn languages well.
My son is currently taking Spanish but also has some exposure to/knowledge of Mandarin. I wish it was easier to fit 2 languages into his schedule all 4 years of high school.
My younger son has been dying to really learn Hebrew - my other two are done - not really interested in languages - struggling through Spanish...
There are many opportunities to study language outside of school with tutors and special language schools. I believe this is sufficient.
languages should be supported earlier in schooling.
Languages can be studied in different ways not necessarily through school curriculum.
Anil who is attending university of Chicago took 4 years of Spanish and mandarin. That was perfect for him.
There is a wealth of research showing that early start is highly beneficial for language acquisition.
Work with middle and elementary schools to introduce languages early, in a rigorous and systematic way. Cutting Spanish in elementary school is a mistake.
By the time the student reaches high school, s/he should be building their language skills on top of years of study. Starting a new foreign language as late as high school is not cost-efficient, and will be an uphill battle for an average learner. Learn from european educational system; start earlier.
I think Scarsdale covers all the languages truly needed in our changing world. But English is the language of the elite for a reason. It is the language of math science and business. Don't waste money on minor languages. Good luck.
I believe the languages offered are sufficient and even question the importance and impact of offering Madarin. I prefer my children to focus on the core educational requirements of math, reading, sciences, etc.

For Latin, combining students who are in their third year and students in their fourth year of student is not optimal. For Mandarin, combining students who speak Mandarin at home or attend a Chinese school with students who are just learning the language is not optimal.
I believe the World Languages offered now are sufficient. The only reason I wrote in Greek is for the benefit of a better understanding of the entomology & meaning of English words used in Math, Science, etc.
Ancient Greek
When I moved here 10 years ago I was shocked at the limited World Language choices. A district of this caliber should have more. At least Mandarin has been added, I hope to see the choices expand for future students who will be living in a global society.
A great effort. In today's global economy having a working knowledge of other languages opens doors and facilitates business. Numbers and foreseeable future trends favor Arabic, Urdu, Korean and Japanese in more or less that order.
The Spanish program is great. I do think an expansion of language opportunities would be useful for some kids. My own daughter would likely choose computer sciences or additional math, however.
not really necessary to modify world language, use that proposed money elsewhere where really needed.
Cantonese is NOT a language. It is merely a dialect of the Chinese (Mandarin) language.
would prefer resources go elsewhere one of my children did want to take a second language but there was no room in the schedule
n/a
I think that there should be a stronger focus on basic English literacy, including writing essays and research papers, and that is a higher priority than expanding the world language offerings.
The existing Spanish and French program is very strong at SHS. Not too sure if Mandarin has been much of a success at SHS beyond a few students though there probably is a need to have Mandarin teaching. You could do a trial period for another language like Arabic, Korean or Italian to see if there is enough interest.
It would be good to expand offering Language choices. Even if they cannot be offered at the High school. Equivalent programs offered outside be considered for credits.
Example programs SAFL is a program offered for learninh Sanskrit as a foreign language. Tamil is Offered by various institutions through an accredited program with California.
There are not enough resources to offer more languages, and it would only add more burden to the school's budget. The languages offered now are sufficient. Students who want additional offerings can do it outside of the school.
For kids to start learning world language(Mandarin), it is so important to begin when they are younger in elementary school and middle school. My kids would want to learn Mandarin but they can't start learning until high school which does not make any sense. We would strongly propose the district starting to offer Mandarin class from elementary and middle school. Thank you very much!
Appear sufficient.
The current school day at SHS makes it very difficult for a child to take a second language. If they decide to take a second language, which two of my children considered doing, they gave up almost all free periods, thus making it very complicated to meet with teachers. This issue is part of a larger issue in how the high school day is constructed. I hope that this issue will bring forth this larger issue to the Board of Educationa attention.
The Spanish program is great. I do think an expansion of language opportunities would be useful for some kids. My own daughter would likely choose computer sciences or additional math, however.
The Spanish program is great. I do think an expansion of language opportunities would be useful for some kids. My own daughter would likely choose computer sciences or additional math, however.
I think the level that anyone can learn a language without being immersed is somewhat limited but it's good to be exposed to languages. However, we already pay such high taxes for our kids' education and I think breadth of choice can be a superficial offering, it looks good,

but do we need it and do we lose depth in the subjects already offered. I just think it's frivolous to add more languages. That's what college is for. If people want to pay for more education let them Get private lessons. I'd rather see improvements in the quality of what is already offered.
Many high schools and colleges offer Italian. My daughter, now in 2nd year is taking it at her college. It would have been great if Scarsdale High still offered the Italian language as it would have been helpful for my daughter. I really hope they bring it back to the HS. It is a language and culture loved by many. I
I think it is sufficient. If parents want their kids to learn other languages, they can afford to send them for private lessons.
The quality of instruction varies widely. The Advanced French offering is not interesting and redundant from year to year. More works of fiction and nonfiction should be read in non Honors courses. Less emphasis should be placed on rote memorization and more on analysis.
We have plenty of options. If parents want other language options they can arrange for instruction outside of school
Mandarin is the most useful business language after English. Many neighboring towns are offering mandarin already. Offering Mandarin in Scarsdale will help the students to be more worldly and ready as global citizens.
Italian was once offered in the school district and it was removed. I would remove Mandarin. Only a fe students study mandarin
In the USA only English and Spanish are relevant languages. All the other ones are "nice to have" and non-essential. It's way more important to reach an exceptional level in English and Spanish than a mediocre level at best in any other language. There are too many different cultural backgrounds in Scarsdale and whatever language you offer would only benefit one of the groups, which will always be always be a very small fraction of the population. So therefore we think that if parents would like their children to learn other languages they should use their own money, NOT tax payer dollars. It is also inconceivable to us that taxes would have to be raised to fund somebody else's wish list.
Kids who second language is one of the ones offerings should be at a higher leave than kids who don't know the language
I would remove Mandarin. I believe the language poses numerous challenges for a student to master , especially High School. I believe it is currently popular because of China's economic power. However, once or if China's economy implodes , interest will wane. The result will be similar to the 1980 's when Japanese was extremely popular until Japan's economy spiraled downward.
I think it's more important to strengthen the existing language programs - both in the high school and the middle school- rather than expanding.
i believe that there are many places that any additional money in the scarsdale system should be applied, prior to expanding the language program.
Mandarin should be offered in the Middle School, at the same time when French is offered. It is difficult for 9th graders to consider a new language, while it is much easier for 6th graders to pick up a new language. Since French is the only other option available in 6th grade, it has a significant advantage over Mandarin--which is offered when students are 3 years older and busier. Why should French have this advantage over Mandarin? If both languages were on an equal footing, the district will see how much more popular Mandarin is. Mandarin is the more spoken, more valuable and more useful language by far. The district needs to correct this disservice to students as soon as possible!
I think funds should be used in another way.
I believe that we have a full offering in this area. There are other areas of study that need expansion more. Also would like to see more emphasis in developing current curriculum and teacher aptitude rather than expanding into new areas.
It is good to have choices so the children can think outside of convention and explore ways to utilize their language skills. I also feel emphasis should be given to the spoken language in addition to the written as many leave high school with multiple years of language study but weak verbal skills and lack of confidence in their ability to converse
As the parent of a current 5th and 8th grader, I find it difficult to say with strong certainty how many years of foreign language instruction my children will complete in the future. I am unclear on the purpose/validity of this question. Is the purpose to gauge how committed parents would be to having their child study a certain language, given the associated resources/expenses involved? If so, the better question may be, if X language is offered, would you be willing to commit to a minimum number of instruction years.
Current offerings seem sufficient to me especially if a child can select more than one foreign language
No

<p>It must be started in early elementary grades</p> <p>It is not worth adding extra languages when we are not starting the languages at K level</p> <p>This is where the money should be spent ,</p> <p>In my opinion</p>
<p>I strongly feel that the languages offered are sufficient and that no additional tax dollars should be spent on new language programs outside the ones currently offered.</p>
<p>We have limited resources. I do not think language is the priority. I would rather see district expend more resources on technology. Those seeking expanded language offerings can pursue it privately.</p>
<p>We could work with Middlebury College as we broaden our offerings since their programs are so strong.</p>
<p>The current languages to not inspire all the students at SHS. More offerings would meet the needs of wants of more students. Mandarin is too hard for many children who are not Chinese to learn. Latin is also very challenging although I feel it's very valuable. Some more options like Hebrew and Italian would meet the needs of more children.</p>
<p>I would rather see the focus on languages start as early as possible, rather than letter. Children pick up much more at an earlier age, prior to middle school. also we should focus on the quality of the program rather than expanding the program's offering.</p>
<p>Students should be taught to converse, rather than stressing reading and writing which is important but will not be used as much as conversation.</p>
<p>Note, my third child is graduating this year so extra languages would not benefit him.</p> <p>I know it is touchy in Scarsdale, but German is a world language that is truly missing from Scarsdale. It is important for study of literature, music, medicine etc, and it opens up doors to other Germanic languages like Yiddish, Dutch, and Scandinavian languages.</p> <p>I see no reason why interested students could not take 3 or more languages at SHS. That is what I did growing up. Perhaps this would be sensible:</p> <p>* English - all years</p> <p>* Spanish = A language - 1st - 12th. Spanish is so important now it cannot be ignored. It should be mandatory for all. And to start early is key. In my opinion, Spanish is currently a 'joke' in K - 5. It should be taught with much more rigor. Young kids are very good at learning foreign languages. Words should be sent home each week, and grammar should be studied.</p> <p>* B language, French, Spanish, Mandarin, German etc.- 6 - 12th, and</p> <p>* C language optional 9th - 12th.</p> <p>Students would truly benefit from speaking at least 2 languages very well.</p>
<p>The study of world languages is critical to our children's education and, I believe, to the future of our country. I would like to see more comprehensive world language study initiated in the elementary schools, though it is too late for my children. In addition, I would like to suggest an integrated study abroad program at the high school level. The current offerings feel a bit piece meal but unrelated to the students' course of study. My daughter went on the Australian exchange this summer, a valuable life experience unrelated to language study. Thank you for conducting this important survey,</p>
<p>I think there should be different levels of language courses. There should be beginners, Intermediate and advanced classes.</p>
<p>I am enthralled that there is consideration underway to add to foreign language options that are currently offered!</p>
<p>I am more concerned about the ability of language teachers to get our students enthusiastic about and engaged in learning a foreign language. My child who is in 12th grade elected to stop Spanish this year. She has not had a good experience with Spanish teachers, although she has received good grades. She said class is just boring. I think there needs to be more interactive ways to learn language. Regrettably, foreign language has not been a positive experience for either of my High School Students.</p>
<p>IF there's any chance for the ESL student to take French/Spanish, that will be great.</p>

My daughters have benefited greatly from having started a world language in the elementary school. It has really aided my eldest in succeeding in the honors world language classes. We wanted them to focus on learning one language well and they are not interested in learning additional languages at this time. Thank you for surveying the parents.
I think adding ASL would be a great idea.
When my children entered the high school, I was ,honestly, surprised about the limited foreign language offerings. Scarsdale has a stellar reputation of providing a liberal arts, pre-collegiate program and that includes a variety of foreign language opportunities. When I went to high school, there were at least 7 foreign language offerings. At the time my oldest child entered the high school, he graduated in 2014, there were only 3 language offerings. Mandarin was just getting started and I thought the high school was lagging in this area. My children , like many others, have an aptitude for language and they should have an opportunity to study additional languages. My oldest child enrolled in the latin program al the high school and in college he is studying a third language.. Many students would benefit from the opportunity to study additional world languages in the high school.
I believe SHS should consider adding Hebrew as an option, especially given that more than half of families in Scarsdale are Jewish. In addition to being one of the most influential languages in the history of humanity and the official language of Israel, one of US' strongest allies and an important global center for technology and science, Hebrew is also very important part of the heritage and tradition of many Scarsdale families, and would provide a valuable base for the many Scarsdale children who will be preparing for their Bar-Mitzvah, planning to study or work in Israel at some point, or trying to maintain strong ties with their roots, religion and/or family and friends in Israel. I speak for mainly for my family, but I am confident this is the also the case for many of the other Jewish families in our district.
I don't think that Mandarin should be offered.
We would rather see the the current offerings with improved teaching.
It IS very important to start learning second or third languages in earlier years of life, to adapt correct pronunciation
I hope you will keep Latin.
If we are being honest, this is not a particular strength at Scarsdale. Would prefer higher quality than higher quantity.
More languages should be offered earlier in middle and elementary school. Westport schools already teach mandarin in elementary school because of the tonal differences. In high school it is too late to learn.
Drop French
I think is vital is that the Middle School teaches language every day; and that is key. If languages are not practiced every day, they are not effective. So thank you for that and I hope it is the same case at the high school.
You cannot be everything to everyone. It is not economically feasible to offer additional languages to meet the needs of special groups.
If they are that passionate about it they should seek resources outside the school system.
I feel the current number of world language offering is good. The problem is the level of the classes. It's important that the High School place students in the appropriate level to ensure their progress in the language and culture understanding. That's the only way to cultivate their world language interests and benefit their life/career in college and beyond.
the answer to this question "If the World Language offerings were expanded, how many years of study would your child#3 complete in the newly offered language?" depends on which language was added
I know that this is not what you are asking, but the elementary program in Spanish was useless in preparing my son to study language. For one, it never seemed like a program. Material seemed to be random. I had no idea how he was evaluated or what the goals were. In order for any new initiatives in language to be successful, you first have to look at their language foundations.
There are many opportunities to incorporate basics of language in the social studies and music curriculum from grade 1 onward and these should be explored
I think other languages are very important to others - for us, we are fine with Spanish as it is extremely practical and useful in the US and beyond.
This is a great initiative; I hope it passes
I'm very glad that Mandarin is being offered at SHS.

The kids are so busy that they can't fit any more coursework into their schedules but they are so behind on computer languages compared to others applying to cal tech and MIT. They just don't have enough background in computers. I think exceptional kids have to do enrichment classes in order to be competitive for colleges They need to take computer languages and logic classes as well as intro to engineering in private enrichment classes. New Rochelle gets more kids into the top technical schools than Scarsdale because of the limited course offerings
Pleas leverage school subscription to Rosetta Stone in order to expand offerings.
Russian and Arabic are two of the six official UN languages (En, Fr, Sp, Ch, Ru, Ar)
Russian is widely spoken in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.
Anything we can do to increase dialogue and understanding with Arab states is important.
Thanks
My daughter took Mandarin on her own in elementary school but it was too onerous to do out of school. I believe Mandarin should be an option in the elementary schools so that kids can take it when their ear is still developing. Had that been possible, I believe she would have continued with it.
Would rather see funds/resources dedicated to more creative ways of teaching math than to teaching additional languages. They can learn these in college if they wish.
I can't predict what my children will choose to do. Wish I could! Thus, I had difficulty answering these last two groups of questions. My elementary student has no plans, and if she did, they would likely change. I can say that I believe the offering is sufficient at SHS.
Intensive language training must begin at a very early age; current program is a joke to any international person;
A student should have the option to choose two languages other than English to study in high school, even early in elementary school.
I think the level that anyone can learn a language without being immersed is somewhat limited but it's good to be exposed to languages. However, we already pay such high taxes for our kids' education and I think breadth of choice can be a superficial offering, it looks good, but do we need it and do we lose depth in the subjects already offered. I just think it's frivolous to add more languages. That's what college is for. If people want to pay for more education let them Get private lessons. I'd rather see improvements in the quality of what is already offered.
No.
Hindi is significantly more prevalent than Urdu. Why is it not being offered? Borg languages are closely related and could even be taught together
I would like there to be more offerings in the earlier grades - beyond Spanish and French. For example, my younger daughter had Chinese in her kindergarten before we moved here. I would love to see an Asian language offered in elementary and middle school.
I view world language lessons should be chosen to reach wide participation. I think German should be part of the curriculum.
The current Spanish, French, Latin or Mandarin four language choices are good enough for my kids' studying. Too many choices can over warm the students' high school studying. They are busy enough with the current study, sports and social activities. The students should have enough time to discover their own favor fields before entering the college. They don't need to be good in all fields, but they should be excellent in one specific area, which can be further enhanced as their life driving.
I would like there to be language courses tailored for students who are studying Spanish or French who are interested in picking up the basics of the language they are not currently studying.
I love that the school has a global perspective, but I think the current offerings are sufficient. If a child is interested in other languages there are plenty of colleges that can offer those learnings.
Mandarin should be offered at as many levels (advanced, intermediate) as French or Spanish. Mandarin should also be expanded to earlier grade levels, such as 6th grade (middle school) or 4th grade (upper elementary school). Some other school districts are already offering Mandarin in middle schools.
I have four children. There was only room to answer which languages three of them take. My second does not, so I skipped her & included answers for the three who do study a language in school.

None
I would suggest that the school allocate funds to enrich current language programs and create a more effective learning environment rather than offer additional languages. Young adults who like languages will make an effort to learn additional languages in the future, if so inclined. It has been my experience that depth and not breath is more important and a strong foundation in a second language would be beneficial.
Nothing in particular to add about high school, but I'd like to take this opportunity to express my strong support for the elementary school language program. I feel my high school junior was very well served by her early exposure to Spanish.
No
We would rather see the money spent on coding/computer science courses.
While it is certainly possible for children to learn more than one foreign language, it likely is better for most to attain deeper knowledge of one. My SHS student currently is in honors Spanish and will continue; she is considering taking Latin for a year to gain a historical perspective on language in general.
Rather than expanding the number of offerings, SHS should consider making the current offerings better. Currently, the regular level foreign language classes (Spanish & French, don't know about Mandarin) do not cover very much, and the honors level, which teaches in the effective, immersion style, is only open to students who get an A in middle school foreign language. No other SHS honors class that I'm aware of requires a grade that high to get into the honors class the next year. If there were more honors level sections, very capable A- and B+ students would be offered the opportunity to learn at a level (and in the effective style) commensurate with what the honors kids get.
Have you surveyed the students? What do they want?
It may also be a good idea to avoid jumping on the current trends of language learning where languages like Mandarin and Cantonese, although currently trendy, are not realistically acquired without many years of study.
It is impossible to answer how many years of study one might choose in a newly offered language without first knowing what the newly offered language is.
The level of the elementary Spanish was very poor. No textbooks. No structure. Kids could be bilingual at age 10 if thought well from beginning.
The last question is hard to answer as it depends on what the newly offered language would be.
I do not think Latin is a useful offering, and if those resources could be put toward a new language, I think that is a better use of resources. I would prioritize languages in this order: first priority is to languages spoken in several countries (English, Spanish, Arabic, etc.); second priority is given to languages in which the number of countries might be limited, but the number of people who speak it is vast (Urdu, Mandarin, Cantonese, etc.); last priority is given to languages spoken in only one country whose population is smaller than our own (Hebrew, Italian, etc.).
NA
I would be great to see teacher that are native to the languages that are being taught.
Scarsdale High School has been a role model for many programs across the country. Like many outstanding programs, we value our ability to teach our students to think expansively and outside the box. This is why we should be offering a language that provides for multiple benefits above and beyond what any other spoken language can offer at this time. Like any other important course offered at Scarsdale, foreign language is an essential and vital part of a child's curriculum and should be made available to every child regardless of their ability or need. Not only do many people learn ASL for the beauty of the language, Offering ASL allows Scarsdale to make foreign language accessible to all, regardless of learning styles whether they be visual or auditory. This allows a large number of people to benefit from learning a rich language that is based on a rich history and culture in ways that a spoken language will not allow.

ASL has also proven to be a very useful tool as one begins to consider possible careers including speech pathology, teaching in the area of special education, sign language interpreting , working in careers that are more visual-spatial such as art and graphics or teaching in environments where ASL is used as the main language just to name a few.

The benefits of ASL is widely recognized and is already offered for foreign language credit at many high schools and Universities across the country. For Scarsdale, offering this language as opposed to yet another spoken language not only widens the learning horizons for many students, it is what a top notch model program should be providing for all.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Expanding the language offerings at the high school is mandatory if our children are to be competent and competitive global citizens, and if our school system is to earn its accolades. Adding Mandarin and at least one other language at the middle school level is critical too. However, we need to fundamentally re-examine how we are teaching languages. In America, no one emerges from high school bilingual, no matter how impressive their school. But in other countries, even the store clerks, taxi drivers, and hotel bellhops are bilingual and trilingual. Scarsdale needs to implement a truly immersive language program beginning in K or 1. Singing songs in Spanish is insufficient.

This survey is confusing. I don't understand the purpose. Thought it was directed at whether we wanted Mandarin as a second language for SMS, but this survey didn't seem to serve that purpose. What's the purpose of adding Cantonese while even people in HK are speaking Mandarin.

comparing the importance of French, Spanish and Mandarin, it seems Mandarin comes first, not just because more people are speaking it, but also that it is a totally different language system that people can open up to a new horizon.

We would like the high school to continue offering Mandarin and also improve it. Thanks

This is an addendum to the comments I have already submitted with regard to the offering of American Sign Language (ASL):

ASL is also the third most widely used language in the United States. It is a visual and formal language that is completely separate and distinct from English. It contains all the fundamental features of language—it has its own rules for pronunciation, word order, and complex grammar.

I went to Horace Mann, which always offered German. Having lived and studied there, and as a leAding global nation, it is imperative to offer it as a language option. It leads in industry and manufacturing, medicine and finance. There are many German speaking families in Fox Meadow and all of Scarsdale.

I would reduce the number of Latin courses. It's a dead language and only used to potentially help students with SAT and ACT test scores. I understand that the course offerings are similar to what's offered at our peer schools but it's not practical. Mandarin needs to start at the middle school. It's a complex language to learn and students don't want to start Mandarin in high school when they've already studied Spanish or French in the middle school.

Omit Spanish as the only choice in elementary school.

Scarsdale does not do enough about being "international". Lip service is paid in various clubs, etc. but my take is that the school is focused on the local rather than the international. Adding one more language is not going to change that. My daughter started French in elementary school, learned very little, but has continued due to family encouragement and summer study/homestay in France.

The current World Language offering at the SHS is sufficient.

However, I really would like to see Mandarin to be included in SMS curriculum. Our District is already fallen behind compared to neighboring school districts in this area. Since our district is historically known to be very strong on liberal art education, it is time to put Scarsdale back on the map again.

American sign Language is my first choice for an expanded program. It offers a unique opportunity for students to learn a non verbal language and and exposes them to another form of communication. I do feel the language dept needs a larger infusion of choices. Thank you.

Scarsdale school district should start introduce Mandarin from elementary school. Then officially have Mandarin as a choice in middle school (together with French and Spanish). Mandarin has been more and more important in our life and work. Scarsdale should be better prepared students in Mandarin.

I think the languages offered are sufficient. I would prefer to see offerings broadened at the MS and strengthened at the elementary level. I'd prefer to see Mandarin at the MS level as an option. The elementary level just is not enough time or quality to make a real impact.

You should offer Italian.

It is very important to us that French and Latin are offered on an ongoing basis.

Hello,

I suspect there is a mistake in this survey, as I think you meant "Mandarin" and not "Cantonese". There is a difference between the two, and I believe learning Mandarin would prove more useful than learning Cantonese.

As a professional interpreter, I believe students should be able to learn other languages than French and Spanish. I also believe those who already speak French and Spanish (like my oldest son, who is perfectly trilingual) should have the option to learn Spanish or French at a higher level.

I also believe that textbooks and teaching methods should be adapted and modernized. My son's French textbook (7th grade) uses French francs (instead of euros) and is almost 20 years old. Pictures show video tapes and cassettes/tapes instead of tablets and iphones. The characters in the book have old-fashioned French names.

I am sorry to say that I am not sure Latin is the best option. I learned Latin for 7 years, and everything I learned could be summarized in a few hours. I understand this is not necessarily a popular view !

Thank you for this wonderful initiative to expand language offerings.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us regarding the world language offerings in the Scarsdale Schools?
No
School is hard enough already
nah
We should expand the Mandarin program down into the middle school- not starting until high school discourages a lot of students from taking it, because they have been taking Spanish or French for 3-4 years already.
I really don't think Cantonese should even be counted as a language - It's a dialect, like tens of other dialects of Chinese, and was much more oral than written. Anyway, that's just an opinion. Thanks for the survey! About me not taking another language - I'm just starting Spanish this year, and my schedule will be too busy for the other languages.
I think that it would be great to have more languages- I had actually already wished for a Japanese class. It would be interesting to me to see how it would be taught. Who knows, I might even help out when I'm older!
Urdu deserves respect because my dermatologist speaks it.
Since the start of my Freshman Year, I wish SHS had ASL. I think it is really important and it is more of an alternative than regular language.
More languages should be offered in shs. This would have a more diverse choice of picking a language. My friends from the other schools nearby say that their schools offer what we have plus Italian and other languages too.
I would like to learn many languages, however I don't know how learning a lot at once will affect my learning overall.
I'd love to take another language, but I don't have enough time in my schedule.
Urdu will expand my horizons as a critical and creative learner. With mostly Ukrainian spoken at home and English at school I really need that third language. Urdu is something that has always interested me in many ways. This is because India is a growing country and Urdu is mostly spoken in India and Pakistan. With Urdu not offered at most high schools I really would love to have the once in a life time opportunity to learn how to speak it. I can use this language in the future and I think it will really help me in the long run as a student and as a citizen in the U.S.
no
Are you actually going to install more World Language classes? If so, is it going to be there by 2017?
More people would choose those new languages if they could start them in Middle School! Also German could be a good option.
Spanish or world language more often so than we can grow and get more advanced at the language that we are learning
Children and students should be able to have a large range of languages to pick from to continue their future with.
It would be hard for many people to take multiple languages, since we already have electives, so just one more language would be great.
The languages at SHS are limited: do a survey like this and then actually introduce a new WH program-- German/Finnish/Serbian/Russian-- other great languages! Let students choose and then just guide them!!
Mandarin should be offered in the Middle School. 9th Grade is so late to learn.
No
no
nothing
No
No
No
No

No
No.
Nothing else
Nothing else
I have done french for 3 years before middle school
Mandarin
The world language offerings are fine. Adding new offerings would be a luxury, but not a necessity. Personally, I'd focus on expanding in the STEM fields. However, I love the world language I am taking right now(Spanish), and I think it is important to maintain a good quality standard.
No
No. Not Really.
No
No
No.
No thank you.
No
No
Nope
You should add German to the list of languages
I think that people on reg/adv/honors tracts should stay on that track unless failing. The drop off from advanced to regular is much too large.
I think that learning new languages is very important, especially for when we grow up. We may be traveling, and it would be extremely helpful if we knew how to speak the native language. Also, studies have shown that bilingual students learn faster than students who only know one language. In my opinion, having the ability to speak in more than one language is pretty cool. When I start high school, I will most definitely study more than one language. I am learning so much in Spanish this year, and I hope I can feel this enthusiastic about learning so much when I am in high school as well.
No
Nope
no
Nothing
I think it is good that Scarsdale Schools are trying to add more and different languages. Some say that speaking more than one language will be EXTREMELY useful to my generation. So to those that are running this program, thank you!
I also think Portuguese would be a nice option. It would be my second choice after Italian.
I really like the different levels of each language. I am in Spanish and love it so much and I am so happy that there are different levels because it allows me to learn difficult and very interesting things
There could also be a one semester course for this language so that it fits easily in the schedule
no
I really want ASL and think it is extremely important to know
None
No

There should be more diversity in the languages taught in Scarsdale Schools. Also, there should be more than 2 options of language in the middle school so students are able to learn that language from the middle school and have more advanced classes at the high school. We should be more open to other languages and cultures instead of just teaching very basic and common languages.
No.
The curriculum should be more clear.
Nope
I would add Mandarin to the Scarsdale Middle School
I know that many people talk about how they wish we had an Italian class at Scarsdale High School.
no
Since I will only be attending one year, I have checked off the 11th and 10th options. But, if I had a choice, language would be necessary, and these options would be available.
Scarsdale Schools should definitely expand their world language options to more eastern languages such as Hindi (or Urdu), Korean, and Japanese, because a significant number of people from these countries live in the United States.
Extra help should be offered everyday after school by every teacher
No
No.
Yes. Last time I said something about Cantonese that is not correct - unlike many other dialects, it has a written form. Sorry for being not knowledgeable and jumping to conclusion.
No
The choices in the middle school are too limited because there are only French and Spanish and I am half Peruvian and half French so I speak both of these languages fluently at home.
I think that the teachers need to have a more authentic accent to help the students understand the language in greater detail.
I think, for me, it would be important sign language be offered.

Additional Comments
Will not change language for liam or patrick. If we change in 6, why have languages in 2 -5?
Not certain mandarin is needed in middle school
Our son has been learning Spanish since K and will hopefully be bi-lingual when he graduates. Not to mention he attends Religious School and is learning a 3rd language. I don't want him learning Mandarin at this time.
I am not sure if my daughter will participate in a Spanish language class or she will be part of the LRC program.
Matthew has completed multiple years of basic Spanish education while attending QR and we have a strong preference he continues this in Middle School.
The survey is not designed well. You force someone to choose a language when, in fact, they might never choose it which is going to warp the results. For example, I would never sign my child up for Mandarin.
David goes to Chinese school on Sundays so he will not take Chinese as secondary language in the middle school.
David goes to Chinese school on Sundays so he will not take Chinese as secondary language in the middle school.
I would never choose mandarin beginning in 6th grade. It should start earlier due to level of difficulty. I would choose Latin as a third choice if offered as it is the root of all languages.
We only have an interest in her taking Spanish next year.
Please do not be pressured into offering mandarin at SMS! My kids pursue many interests outside of school, academic and otherwise, that are not offered in our schools. For those who want their children to study mandarin, they can do the same. Any available resources should be invested in technology, not into expanding the middle school language dept.
Henry will continue with Spanish
We are NOT interested in learning French.
How about Portuguese ?
Mandarin class offered at middle school is very important for my children since they will take Mandarin at high school. It lays out the foundation at middle school so that it is easier for them to pick up the language at high school.
Thank you for considering Mandarin as a language choice! Would there be different levels of offerings (beginner, intermediate etc)? We would take it if intermediate level is offered. Thank you
She has elementary Chinese knowledge but not a native speaker. She said that she would continue with Spanish in Middle School. Parents would like her to switch to Chinese.
Not interested in Mandarin
I am not sure what Nathaniel's academic program will be like. I hope that he will be able to take a World Language.
He's interested in Mandarin now but is likely to change his mind
I would prefer Hindi to Mandarin.
I would prefer Hindi to Mandarin.
Carson enjoys Spanish and would like to continue learning it in 6th grade.
Please note that Spanish is really the only language I would want her to study. Thank you.
Sorry if I've completed the survey more than once. Also, if I inadvertently completed one for my older son, Lukas, who is currently in 7th grade.
Would love to see Latin as a language choice
Not sure yet.

Given the degree of difficulty of Mandarin, I'd deter my kids and others not to participate in such a class straight out of elementary school.

Won't be certain until we have to sign on the dotted line, but these are the priorities...

Would very much prefer Spanish, thank you.

Teacher excellence should be paramount; it is far more important than the choice of languages. Relatedly, please note that neither "licensed" nor "competent" are synonymous with "excellent."