
Report of the Task Force on the Preservation of Heritage Language Skills in Maryland

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Report of the Task Force on the Preservation of Heritage Language Skills in Maryland

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Note From the Chair

The Task Force for the Preservation of Heritage Language Skills in Maryland was established during the 2008 Maryland General Assembly session in order to investigate current language preservation efforts and to develop new strategies in preserving world language skills in our State. To our knowledge, this is the first state-sponsored task force on heritage languages in the United States.

Maryland is home to an unusually diverse and well-educated immigrant population. Newcomers recognize the preeminent importance of mastering English, and many also strive to maintain their heritage languages, speaking them at home and hoping their children will become fluently bilingual. Heritage language speakers represent a vital resource to our commercial, educational, and cultural communities. In order to maintain America's competitive edge in such vital sectors as trade and national security, it is critical that we provide for the preservation of our heritage languages, while assuring that our new Marylanders have ample access to effective English language programs.

The strengths of Maryland's state education system, the strategic and international orientation of many of its corporate and governmental employers, and the unique resources of the national capital area position Maryland to take a strong leadership role in assuring that the language skills of its immigrants are preserved to the benefit of the State and the nation. In these difficult economic times, it is encouraging that many strategies identified in the study are extremely cost-effective. The work of the Task Force itself – characterized by commitment, expertise, and creativity - has borne witness to the feasibility of effective collaboration across sectors and to the timeliness and significance of this effort. It is our hope that this report will serve as a catalyst for a robust initiative that will break further new ground in the coming years.

Sincerely,
Catherine Ingold
Director, National Foreign Language Center

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Catherine Ingold, Chair
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Executive Summary

The Task Force for the Preservation of Heritage Language Skills in Maryland was established during the 2008 Maryland General Assembly session, (Senate Bill 506 and House Bill 610) in order to investigate current language preservation efforts, as well as to develop new strategies in preserving world language skills in our State.

“Heritage languages” are those languages spoken by minority or immigrant people living in a country with a different societal language. Sometimes called “home languages,” heritage languages are those used by immigrants to the United States, by their children who immigrated to the U.S. before they had any formal instruction in their native language, and by their grandchildren who may use the heritage language to communicate with their grandparents and in the social context of heritage community activities.

Maryland is home to an unusually diverse and well-educated immigrant population. **Newcomers recognize the preeminent importance of mastering English, and many also strive to maintain their heritage languages, speaking them at home and hoping their children will become fluently bilingual.**

Heritage language speakers represent a vital resource to our business, educational, and cultural communities. In order to maintain **America’s competitive edge in such vital sectors as trade and national security**, it is critical **that we provide for the preservation of our heritage languages.**

In 2006, **12.2% of Maryland’s population was foreign-born.** This figure mirrored the national average (12.5%). Maryland’s foreign-born population is diverse, with no single national origin group representing more than 10% of the total. While Marylanders speak more than 140 languages, *Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, German, Russian, Vietnamese, and Hindi* are the heritage languages with the most speakers in the State. It is worthy of note that Maryland’s heritage speakers are remarkably diverse, and no single group predominates. Indeed, only about a third of heritage language speakers in Maryland speak Spanish – far fewer than the national average. Besides being a diverse language population, **Maryland’s heritage language speakers are highly educated.** In 2006, Maryland ranked third of 50 states and the District of Columbia based on its share of the foreign-born population with bachelor’s degrees or higher.

Senate Bill 506 and House Bill 610 succinctly outlined membership and questions to which the Task Force was required to respond. These questions covered a broad perspective of issues surrounding heritage languages. The Task Force was charged with reporting to the Governor and the General Assembly by January 1, 2009. The Maryland State Department of Education provided staff to the Task Force which brought together representatives from education, government, business, and community groups from around the State.

The Task Force mandate was to investigate the current state of heritage language preservation in Maryland by studying current methods for preserving skills, consulting with experts in the field of world language training, compiling statistics on the subject, and by developing a process to prioritize language needs for government and industry while identifying “best practices” already in place. Based on its findings the Task Force was to develop recommendations and actions which offered a cost-effective way to facilitate heritage language learning while maximizing the preservation of heritage language skills in Maryland.

Community and Religious Groups Provide a Focus for Heritage Languages

A subcommittee format was employed to gather the data utilized by the Task Force to develop the recommendations. The subcommittees used open source information such as the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2006 American Community Survey, data from the Governor’s Office for Community Initiatives (GOCI) and websites such as the Heritage Alliance. It further drew upon community-based organizations such as The Hope Chinese School of College Park which offers language education to approximately 180 students over the course of two semesters running concurrent with the public school system and Talent, a Tamil education and training program founded in the basements of Tamil heritage community members. Religious-based groups such as the Korean Presbyterian Church of Baltimore and The Kali Temple in Burtonsville which is focused on Bengali languages provide heritage training to small focused groups often using volunteers. Most noted that heritage language proficiency is normally lost by the second generation without intervention. This insight provided the Task Force with a diverse and varied viewpoint to better understand the needs and challenges faced by these organizations who are attempting to promote and foster their heritage language and culture.

Survey Conducted by the Task Force

To augment the Census and other data collected, the Task Force conducted a pilot survey concerning languages other than English spoken at home. Populations surveyed included students in Speech for International Students classes at Prince George's Community College, Adult Education students at Prince George's Community College, Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems employees, and Adult Education students of CASA of Maryland. This pilot survey was designed to sample the opinions and needs of heritage language speakers. More than 700 responses were received. Preliminary findings from 446 respondents, who ranged from newcomers to the United States to those who had lived in the United States more than twenty years, include:

- Respondents were born in 58 different countries
- They had lived in 47 other countries for more than six months
- They grew up in households that spoke 94 different languages in addition to English
- Many use 2-3 languages in addition to English

Town Hall Meeting

The Task Force hosted a Town Hall Meeting on November 24th, 2008, at Howard High School in Howard County, MD. There were over 100 audience members, including thirty participants who provided testimony to the Task Force members. Representatives from various groups provided written and/or oral testimony regarding their programs and the challenges they face; many groups shared similar concerns.

Highlights from the Town Hall include the following:

“The importance of learning the mother tongue to heritage culture, as language represents the core of the identities of children, representing their values, culture, and traditions.”

“The critical need to develop language diversity in Maryland in order to maintain the competitive edge necessary to participate in the increasingly globalized business community”

“...establishment of statewide funding to foster heritage school expansion, a fast track to certification for experienced teachers, and the standardization of language skills tests to promote learning on behalf of heritage students.”

Challenges with the Preservation of Heritage Languages

The Task Force also gained a better understanding of the challenges associated with preserving heritage languages. From resource constraints such as limited budgets and inadequate facilities to the diversity of needs which require instruction to address beginners to advanced skills all within the confines of a basic program assisted the Task Force in better understanding the varied needs of these organizations.

Businesses and Government Need Heritage Language Speakers

The Maryland business community was investigated with data collected from the World Trade Center Institute, Regional Manufacturing Institute, Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce and Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems. Business community findings include the following assessment of heritage language preservation and practice:

- Fluency in multiple languages recognized as a valuable company asset and business enabler
- Limited formal programs to identify language skill gaps or preserve capability
- Informal programs include
 - Language lessons hosted by native language-speaking employees
 - Multi-lingual employees identified on an as-needed basis
- Formal processes to preserve and enhance heritage language capabilities tied to strategic plans

Language requirements of the Federal Government highlighted needs which support U.S. national security interests. The National Security Agency (NSA) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as well as data gathered during a Task Force visit to the National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC) noted a need for the following language skills: *Arabic, Pashtu, Russian, Chinese/Mandarin, French, Urdu, Korean, Japanese, Russian, Indic, Iranian, and other Turkic language families and several African languages and dialects.*

Recommendations of the Task Force

Given the state's demographic profile and proximity to the national capital, Maryland is uniquely positioned to take a leadership role to support heritage language requirements of government and industry. Future economic and national interest needs will continue and increase the demand for heritage languages so that we can engage in a more dynamic interchange with our global partners. Having a multi-lingual workforce could provide Maryland with a competitive discriminator to better compete in the world's marketplace. Therefore the Task Force is pleased to present the following recommendations for consideration:

1. Establish a website for Maryland's heritage language programs.

2. Support and promote the awarding of high school credit by exam for students who attend non-public heritage language schools in Maryland.
3. Offer additional preK – grade 12 world language programs in Maryland public schools where students have the opportunity to learn English while continuing to enhance their heritage language proficiency.
4. Continue to expand teacher certification options for heritage language speakers.
5. Enhance library collections of children’s literature in heritage languages.
6. Provide affordable, accessible advanced English language classes for adult heritage language speakers.
7. Increase access to heritage language programs for all Marylanders by exploring and sharing information on facilities for use by heritage language training programs.
8. Compile and make available a list of employment opportunities in Maryland for heritage language speakers.
9. Develop a *Language Roadmap* (strategic plan) for Maryland.

Although the work of the Task Force is complete, the members agreed that there is a need to continue engaging business, community members, and State agencies in the important work of preserving heritage languages in Maryland. On December 4, 2008, Governor Martin O’Malley signed an Executive Order (See Appendix 1.) that establishes the Maryland Council for New Americans to “promote full immigrant integration into the economic and civic life of Maryland.” With this Executive Order, Governor O’Malley has established a partnership between public, private, and civic sectors in Maryland that has the potential to continue the discussion and give impetus to the recommendations of the Task Force.

History and Charge

The need for world language skills is increasingly important for national security, defense and education, and to maintain a competitive edge in business and trade. Maryland's heritage language speakers are descendants of immigrants and raised in homes in which foreign languages are spoken. These speakers, however, are educated in English and comprise a valuable and vastly underutilized linguistic resource for the United States. During the 2008 Maryland General Assembly session, Senator James Rosapepe and Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk, both of the 21st District, sponsored legislation to create a Task Force that would study methods of advancing and preserving heritage language skills in Maryland. Their bills received broad support. Senate Bill 506 passed by a vote of 41 to 6, and House Bill 610 passed 93 to 40.

Senate Bill 506 and House Bill 610 succinctly outlined membership and questions to which the Task Force was required to respond. These questions covered a broad perspective of issues surrounding heritage languages. The Task Force was charged with reporting to the Governor and the General Assembly by January 1, 2009. The Maryland State Department of Education provided staff to the Task Force which brought together representatives from education, government, business, and community groups from around the State.

The following are the mandates that the Task Force addressed from Senate Bill 506 and House Bill 610:

- Study methods of advancing and preserving heritage language skills in Maryland;
- Consult with educators and other experts in the field of world language training and development;
- Review and identify the best practices of heritage language programs that are being or will be conducted by government, schools, community groups, religious groups, and ethnics groups in the State, across the U.S., and internationally;
- Compile data on the number of actual and potential heritage language speakers in Maryland;
- Develop a process to identify priority heritage languages that is flexible enough to meet current and future national security and international business requirements;
- Consider new, cost-effective, and innovative ways to encourage and facilitate heritage language learning while also encouraging new citizens of the U.S. to learn and master English;
- Recommend actions and programs that ensure maximum preservation of heritage language skills and identify measures of success for each.

Report of the Task Force

Heritage Languages: What are They and Why are They Important?

“Heritage languages” are those languages spoken by minority or immigrant people living in a country with a different societal language. Sometimes called “home languages,” heritage languages are those used by immigrants to the United States, by their children who immigrated to the U.S. before they had any formal instruction in their native language, and by their grandchildren who may use the heritage language to communicate with their grandparents and in the social context of heritage community activities. As stated in the Act, these *heritage language speakers comprise a valuable and vastly underutilized linguistic resource in the United States*. This is especially true in Maryland where more than 140 heritage languages are spoken and heritage language speakers are highly educated and located close to major population centers.

While heritage languages are a valuable resource, maintaining (or “preserving”) these languages requires time, energy and resources. In some cases, heritage communities provide for the education of their children in the heritage language through religious and social organizations and language training is enriched by immersion in the heritage culture at home. However, children who are born in the U.S. or come here when very young are unlikely to be literate in their heritage language unless the parents systematically home-school their children or the children have access to an effective program of study at school. In either case, only a small minority of these children receive enough heritage language education in the community to become literate.

Immigrant parents overwhelmingly understand the importance of learning English for their children’s well-being, and parents and children alike often focus on English to the exclusion of instruction in the home language. Research has shown that by the third or even second generation following immigration, individuals no longer speak the heritage language without having studied it as a school subject. Where there is continued new immigration, this pattern may not be obvious to people outside the heritage community. New immigrants often seek out earlier immigrants of the same culture, with the community members who arrived earlier acting as bridges to the new U.S. language and society to which the newer immigrants must adapt. Absent new immigration, most heritage languages die out as community languages once those who immigrated as adults have died. While there are exceptions, the phenomenon of heritage (or minority indigenous) language disappearance is highly consistent and well-documented in research.

Maryland’s heritage language communities represent an important and unique resource for the State and the Nation. As pointed out in the Act, *the need for world language skills is increasingly important in national security, defense, education, and in maintaining a competitive edge in business and trade.* Maryland’s heritage language speakers can and do contribute in all of these areas. The Act also notes that *heritage language skills tend to diminish rapidly as individuals and families are assimilated,* and underscores the need to encourage and assist heritage language speakers in *maintaining, developing, and improving their native language abilities while improving their English skills.*

This report focuses on these challenges by documenting Maryland’s heritage language resources and describing the activities related to language education carried out by many heritage language communities. The report also discusses the challenges associated with heritage language preservation, describes approaches for preserving heritage languages, and outlines opportunities for heritage language speakers in business and government. Recommendations are provided to address the most pressing challenges and to fuel additional thinking and actions to ensure Maryland continues to focus on heritage languages. On December 4, 2008, Governor Martin O’Malley signed an Executive Order that establishes the Maryland Council for New Americans to “promote full immigrant integration into the economic and civic life of Maryland.” (See Appendix 1.) With this Executive Order, Governor O’Malley has established a partnership between public, private, and civic sectors in Maryland that has the potential to continue the discussion and give impetus to the recommendations of the Task Force.

Maryland has a diverse and educated heritage language population

In 2006, **12.2% of Maryland’s population was foreign-born.** This figure mirrored the national average (12.5%). Maryland’s foreign-born population is diverse, with no single national origin group representing more than 10% of the total. Latin America accounted for 35% of Maryland’s foreign-born population, a lower percentage than the U.S. average, while 34% of Maryland’s foreign-born population was born in Asia, a higher percentage than the U.S. average. While Marylanders speak more than 140 languages, ***Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, German, Russian, Vietnamese, and Hindi*** are the heritage languages with the most speakers in the State. There is also a significant population of speakers of African languages including ***Kru, Igbo,*** and ***Yoruba.***

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2006 American Community Survey, **15% (780,199 individuals) of Maryland’s total population spoke a language other than English at home.**

Of this population, 480,463 reported speaking English “very well”, while 299,736 reported speaking English “less than very well,” representing a population with limited English proficiency. Also in 2006, **21.9% (148,279)** of Maryland’s foreign-born population reported speaking English only, suggesting that they **are potential speakers of heritage languages**.

Specific language information is available for 2005 and indicates that 29 languages other than English are spoken in a significant number of Maryland homes (see Figure 1).

Language	Number of Speakers	Percentage of Maryland Population
Spanish	289,481	5.77
French	46,959	0.93
Chinese	43,192	0.85
Korean	32,649	0.65
Kru, Igbo, Yoruba	23,792	0.47
Tagalog	21,802	0.43
German	21,307	0.42
Russian	21,200	0.42
Vietnamese	16,756	0.33
Hindi	16,042	0.32
Persian	12,070	0.24
Portuguese	11,327	0.22
Amharic	10,863	0.21
Italian	10,581	0.21
Greek	9,265	0.18
Urdu	9,091	0.18
Hebrew	8,171	0.16
French Creole	7,859	0.15
Arabic	7,167	0.14
Gujarat	6,772	0.13
Japanese	6,620	0.13
Thai	5,391	0.1
Bengali	4,435	0.08
Polish	4,286	0.08
Cantonese	3,855	0.07
Tamil	3,705	0.07
Swahili	3,457	0.06
Punjabi	3,384	0.06

Figure 1: Languages Other than English Spoken in Maryland Homes

Source: 2005 American Community Survey & Census 2000, Summary File 3

The Maryland Department of Planning has recently posted imaging maps of languages spoken at home in Maryland. These maps are based on the 2000 Census and are currently being upgraded.

To access these maps, link to the following web page:

<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc/Census2010.htm>

At the bottom of the page, select “View maps showing languages spoken at home, 2000.” (For additional demographic information gathered by the Task Force, see Appendix 2.)

Besides being a diverse language population, **Maryland’s heritage language speakers are highly educated.** In 2006, Maryland ranked third of 50 states and the District of Columbia based on its share of the foreign-born population with bachelor’s degrees or higher. (See Figure 2.) The number of foreign-born individuals living in Maryland with college degrees increased by 44.4% between 2000 and 2006; 42.7% of foreign-born individuals in Maryland had a college degree in 2006.

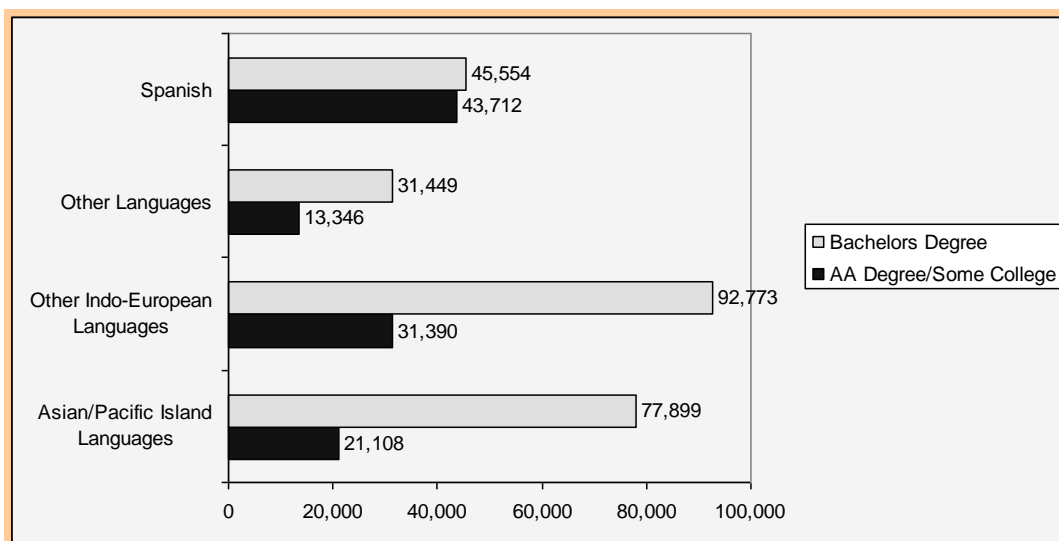


Figure 2: Education Levels Among Maryland’s Heritage Language Speakers

Source: Maryland Fact Sheet, <http://www.migrationinfo.org/datahub/state2.cfm?ID=>

Survey Conducted by the Task Force

To augment the Census statistics referenced in this Report, the Task Force conducted a survey concerning languages other than English spoken at home. Populations surveyed included students in Speech for International Students classes at Prince George’s Community College, Adult Education students at Prince George’s Community College, Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems employees, and Adult Education students of CASA of Maryland. More than 700 responses were received. Preliminary findings from 446 respondents, who ranged from newcomers to the United States to those who had lived in the United States more than twenty years, include:

- Respondents were born in 58 different countries
- They had lived in 47 other countries for more than six months.
- They grew up in households that spoke 94 different languages in addition to English
- Many use 2-3 languages in addition to English.

These data support Census 2000 findings that Maryland residents speak a variety of languages from many different countries. (A list of all languages spoken by respondents in the pilot survey is provided in Appendix 3.)

When asked if it was important for their children to preserve their second and third languages, respondents agreed that it was.

- 81.4% of PGCC students and Adult Education students thought it was very important to preserve their second languages, and an additional 8.5% thought it was somewhat important.
- 51.5% of those with a third language thought it was very important to preserve it and 14.9% thought it was somewhat important.

When asked what the State could do to help them preserve languages in their families, the highest ranked options in all groups, in order, were the following:

1. Provide high school and/or college credits for language skills
2. Provide funding for printed materials and DVDs for teaching the language
3. Provide a website to keep language information
4. Provide links to websites that help teach heritage languages.

Community and Religious Groups Provide a Focus for Heritage Languages

Community-based and religious groups provide language training and exposure to heritage languages and culture. Data provided by the Governor's Office for Community Initiatives (GOICI) and by Delegate Pena-Melnyk's staff identified these groups and their organizations by language. Sources of this information include the Governor's Commission reports from the Asian Pacific American (APA) Commission (2007) and Hispanic Commission (2007). The Middle Eastern Commission report is due 2008 and data are still being compiled; members of the African Community have been contacted in order to gain further insight into the preservation of African languages and dialects.

Community-based organizations whose goals include the promotion and expansion of heritage languages include **Arabic** schools located in Washington, D.C. and available to Maryland residents, **Chinese** schools, the formal instruction of **Tagalog** at the University of Maryland, College Park as well as its informal instruction within the community, and Pinnacle, an organization that works with **Urdu** speakers focusing on English language learning.

Examples of **community-based** heritage language activities in Maryland include:

- **The Hope Chinese School of College Park** offers **Chinese** language education to approximately 180 students over the course of two semesters running concurrent with the public school system. Each class consists of approximately ten to twenty-five students, and courses are held on the school's College Park Campus. The Hope Chinese School of College Park believes that teaching the *Pin Yin* romanized system of written Chinese simplifies the language and helps to produce students who are fluent in both written and oral forms of the language.
- **LIFE and Discovery** offers **Chinese** language instruction to students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The school has eight locations with a ten-student minimum for each location. LIFE and Discovery director, Elizabeth Chung stresses the importance of tailoring individual curricula for each student in order to maximize language proficiency. The LIFE and Discovery schools encourage parent participation, and promote on-going staff development. Many of its teachers are native Chinese speakers, which Chung feels is critical to the development of fluent Chinese speakers within Maryland's heritage communities.
- **TALENT** Tamil education and training program was founded in the basements of **Tamil** heritage community members. Today, TALENT holds language courses at the Howard County Library two times per month to approximately fifty students. Traditional Tamil song, dance, drama, and poetry are performed to students' parents as part of the curriculum. Talent would like to see Tamil established as a language offering in Howard County Public Schools.
- **Bethesda International School** was established in 2001 by members of the **Spanish** heritage community. Within the student body of some 70 children, over 30 Spanish-speaking countries are represented. The Bethesda International School recommends creating a fast-track to teacher certification for Spanish heritage speakers in order to deal with an increasing shortage of qualified instructors.
- **The Sudanese School** is part of the Sudanese American Community Development Organization. The school places an emphasis on the cognitive and academic benefits of being bilingual, and believes that through bilingual education efforts, Maryland's children will be better world citizens.

Religious groups are also critical to the preservation of heritage language in their promotion of the culture in which those languages exist. Within the **Amharic** community, the Debre Genet Medhane Alem Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church places an informal focus on Amharic language preservation. Muslim community centers and mosques in Ellicott City, Hagerstown,

and Frederick provide opportunities for speaking and interacting in *Arabic* to the Arabic heritage community. There are a large number of Jewish, *Yiddish and Hebrew* schools in Baltimore, Pikesville, Silver Spring, and Rockville that promote the continued use of the Hebrew and Yiddish language. Within the Greek community, ten Greek Orthodox churches in Maryland maintain language schools. Two large Korean churches provided information to the Task Force regarding their Korean language schools.

Other examples of **religious-based** heritage language programs are:

- **The Korean Presbyterian Church of Baltimore** offers weekly *Korean* language courses consisting of 5-10 students in each course. These courses are offered to students from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The KPCB expressed concern over language loss within the Korean heritage community, pointing out that while the first generation of Korean immigrants speaks fluent Korean, proficiency is normally lost by the second generation. A KPCB representative cited the grueling work hours of many Korean parents in Maryland as a source of this loss, believing that limited family interaction contributes to this phenomenon.
- **The Kali Temple in Burtonsville** offers weekly *Bengali* language courses to approximately forty students of varying proficiency. Teachers at the Kali Temple are volunteers, and students are of the first, second, third, and fourth generation of Indian descent. Representatives of the Kali Temple's Bengali language program are concerned that without adequate support and a revised method of teacher certification, the Bengali language will soon be lost.
- **The Kaur Foundation** was founded by Sikh parents seeking to preserve *Punjabi* language skills. Kaur currently supports a Punjabi language school in Silver Spring, with a student body of approximately 110. The school itself functions on the tenet that a loss of language diversity in Maryland represents a loss of ability to function within other communities.
- **Greater Baltimore Temple** provides instruction in *Gujarati, Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil*. Twenty-five classes are taught each year to students ranging in age from 4 to 14. The program is run by parents and volunteers.

Town Hall Meeting

To gather additional data and hear testimony from heritage language groups in Maryland, the Task Force hosted a Town Hall Meeting on November 24th, 2008, at Howard High School in Ellicott City. There were over 100 audience members, including thirty participants who provided testimony. Each presenter was allowed three minutes to speak; written comments were encouraged as well. Representatives from various groups provided written and/or oral testimony regarding their programs and the challenges they face; many groups shared similar concerns, as

discussed below. The format provided an orderly and equitable environment. Participants expressed gratitude to the Task Force for providing this forum and welcomed the opportunity to listen to their colleagues in other heritage language communities. The Task Force members were encouraged by the enthusiastic response from the audience and the variety of languages and communities represented. (See Appendix 4 for a summary of the presentations made at the Town Hall Meeting.)

Best Practice – The Howard County Chinese School focuses on teaching Chinese and promoting Chinese cultural activities; committed parents and professional teachers are keys to success.

Heritage language communities that commit resources (time, talent, money) to language instruction on a sustained basis have many examples of best practices. For example, the **Howard County Chinese School (HCCS)**, established in 1998, is focused on teaching the Chinese language and promoting cultural exchange. It also serves the Chinese-American community and promotes communication among parents.

HCCS currently has more than 400 preK to 10th grade students enrolled in either bilingual classes or Chinese classes in which Chinese is taught as a foreign language to students from Chinese and other ethnic backgrounds. The school offers classes on weekends as well as a Summer Camp. In addition to language classes, HCCS also offers “subsidiary” classes in cultural heritage areas such as calligraphy, music, dance, and martial arts.

Two keys to success for HCCS are parents who are strongly committed to education of their children in Chinese language and culture, as well as professional teachers. The use of professional teachers is a best practice because the quality of instruction is enhanced and because the teachers are familiar with American society and instructional methods.

Challenges with the Preservation of Heritage Languages

While community organizations and religious groups currently provide the foundation of heritage language learning and preservation, their efforts are frequently challenged by a shortage of certified teachers and other resource constraints. There are also important differences in language learning among heritage language speakers and these differences contribute to the

complexity of providing consistent and comprehensive language education. Finally, there is tension created between the need to maintain heritage language skills and to master English. In addition, families recognize the importance of their children's acquisition of fluent English, and children of immigrants often identify strongly with their English-native peers. Especially in their teenage years, they often resist participating in heritage language programs. In college, the same students may re-acquire an interest in their family language and culture and express regret at lost opportunities to become more fluently bilingual.

Resource Constraints Affect Community Heritage Language Efforts

Heritage language communities in Maryland that provide language instruction through community-based schools and religious institutions do so on limited budgets and with varying degrees of funding from parents. As described in research and in testimony presented at the Town Hall Meeting, these programs vary widely. The programs provide limited time on task, usually on weekends, and in some cases serve a stronger cultural than linguistic mission. The lack of funding for heritage schools, the lack of qualified teachers, and the lack of efficient qualification methods were cited as common concerns by speakers at the Town Hall Meeting. Another challenge mentioned was the inability of students at such heritage schools to receive academic credit for their respective language studies in religious and community groups. Many speakers also agreed upon the importance of working together within the heritage community in an attempt to pool resources and share ideas.

In many cases, heritage language communities build on a long tradition that – particularly for Chinese – includes nationwide networks of heritage community programs, and even large regional conferences. In California and elsewhere, heritage community schools in Chinese have forged successful alliances with public education, and most recently have achieved the introduction of Chinese as a regular offering in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Community representatives reported facing a number of challenges, many of which revolve around finding affordable space in which to hold their programs. In some cases, use fees are high; in other cases, liability insurance proves prohibitive. Funding, determining appropriate fee structures, finding teachers willing to work on weekends, accessing materials for students, and maintaining student interest (particularly as they get older), among the challenges cited by Maryland heritage programs, are typical of challenges facing community-based programs around the U.S.

Best Practice – Some libraries provide heritage language collections.

One program praised its local library for its efforts to provide reading materials in their language. Providing local library collections in heritage languages, especially literature for children and youth, is a “best practice” for heritage language support that addresses a finding of UCLA’s survey of heritage students enrolled in UCLA courses in their language: the paucity of reading material in their heritage language available in their homes. Since pleasure reading has been shown to be extremely valuable in developing literacy, access to engaging reading materials can greatly assist school-, community- and family-based efforts to develop these skills in young heritage speakers. Immigrant families can benefit enormously from sound advice on raising bilingual children, and this type of guidance could be made much more available to Maryland families at minimal cost through the Internet and community networks.

It became apparent at the Town Hall Meeting that some community-based programs work very much in isolation and could benefit greatly from a means of sharing best practices on logistical, financial, and curricular issues. The State of Maryland can draw upon existing resources to document its heritage language community programs and provide information to them: one recommendation of the Task Force is that Maryland participate in an emerging effort to create a national database of heritage language programs, and consider using the website of the Heritage Alliance (see <http://www.cal.org/heritage/>) to provide and share information. These resources, being developed and maintained by the Center for Applied Linguistics in collaboration with the National Foreign Language Center and UCLA’s Heritage Language Resource Center, connect with a larger initiative for more robust national data-gathering on language programs in all three settings: higher education, K-12, and community-based. Such a database, along with an informational website and other forms of electronic outreach, could provide invaluable support to heritage schools and community organizations in helping them find each other, share best practices in administration and program planning, recruit students from their communities, and ultimately connect their learners to K-12 and higher education programs, scholarships, fellowships, and careers.

Heritage Language Learners Have Differing Needs

When we discuss U.S. English-speaking individuals who are foreign language learners, we distinguish beginners from intermediate students, and intermediates from advanced. We don't expect a student in a first-year class to resemble someone returning from language study abroad. In the case of heritage speakers, the diversity in learning needs is even greater.

At one end of the spectrum, Maria is an individual who immigrated to the U.S. after completing the customary years of education in Argentina. When she arrives in the U.S. as an adult, she is an educated native speaker of Spanish and will remain so. After years in the U.S., particularly if she has little contact with the home country

or more recent immigrants, her language may sound old-fashioned to someone from the country of origin. She may not understand new terms and may lack contextual knowledge of societal changes in that country, but she remains an educated native speaker.

Another profile is Sergei, who is born to parents who have moved to the U.S. from Russia and speak Russian – along with English to greater or lesser extent – in the home. When Sergei enters a U.S. school where the only language used is English, he becomes progressively English-dominant over the next few years, especially as school activities and peers become more important in his life. A younger sibling becomes English-dominant even more quickly than a firstborn child because he interacts more with his older (now English-dominant) sibling and less with parents, who may also have begun to use more English.

According to a study carried out by the Heritage Language Resource Center at UCLA, many college students who fit this profile report that, even when their parents address them in the home language, they answer in English. They may retain the ability to comprehend spoken language, but their own speech is confined to routine greetings and polite interactions and may even be completely latent. On the other hand, if there is a monolingual grandparent in the home, the child may continue to speak the language in order to communicate with the grandparent. (Grandparents have an important role in family language preservation. Researchers have found that people who immigrate after age 40 without having learned the new language beforehand are significantly less likely than immigrants at a younger age to become proficient in the new language. In efforts to preserve minority languages around the world, such as Amerindian

Heritage Language Learner Profiles

Adult Immigrant – Arrives in U.S. as an educated native speaker. Uses media and home visits to maintain language skills.

Child of Recent Immigrants – Speaks heritage language at home and English at school. Likely to become English-dominant over time, and heritage language skills may not develop to useful professional levels.

Teenage Immigrant – Arrives in U.S. with incomplete education in heritage language. Focus on mastering English; conversational skills in heritage language usually retained.

languages, direct grandparent/grandchild language transmission is often systematically encouraged, with good results.)

A third heritage language profile is Ahmad who arrives in the U.S. as a teenager and before completing secondary education in Iraq. He faces more significant challenges in learning English: high school involves more complex subject matter and makes greater demands on learned language skills, so learning English sufficiently to catch up to grade-level work is consequently harder. Depending on the quality of his schooling in Iraq (often interrupted for refugees), Ahmad may be able to draw upon his verbal and literacy skills in Arabic in order to learn English. But the later a youth arrives in the U.S. without already knowing English, the more likely it is that he or she will not learn English quickly enough to graduate from high school before “ageing out” – exceeding the maximum age (21 in Maryland) to receive public school education.

For these students, the critical issue is English acquisition. There is a risk for this group that they will be unable to develop full professional proficiency in English and may be trapped as a result in low-wage jobs. The further development of their home language is consequently a secondary consideration. While in principle students with this profile should be able to receive credit by examination for their skills in their heritage language, thus advancing their progress to a high school diploma, this happens infrequently, especially if the language is other than Spanish.

If a student with a partly-developed heritage language enrolls in a foreign language course that teaches his or her heritage language, he is likely to find himself bored in the early weeks because he is already fluent in everyday speech far beyond what a foreign language learner can quickly acquire. But with possibly underdeveloped literacy in his heritage language and little sense of the structure of the language, he may later fall behind or drop out of the course.

This phenomenon has been observed in U.S. classes aimed at foreign language learners of many different languages. Because of the large number of *Spanish* speakers in the U.S., the American Association of Teachers of Spanish has worked over the past several decades to document and address the distinctive needs of heritage learners of Spanish, and quite a few textbooks specifically for heritage speakers of Spanish are available. Dr. Guadalupe Valdés of Stanford University, an early leader in the pedagogy of Spanish for Spanish Speakers, has identified the **key goals of heritage language development, including bridging from listening to speaking and from oral skills to literacy; expansion of bilingual range, and acquisition of formal registers and academic language.** In some cases, the individual also needs to acquire a

standard variant in addition to his family's regional or stigmatized variant of the language. These patterns of language strengths and gaps have been found to be broadly similar for heritage speakers regardless of the language. At the same time, there are differences in the ease with which literacy skills acquired first in English can be transferred to the heritage language (easier transfer for Spanish, much more difficult for Chinese) because of different degrees of language similarity and in some cases, different writing systems.

Another difference between heritage learners and foreign language learners is the degree to which heritage language use or non-use is tied to the individual's and **family's attitudes toward the language**. Many youth from immigrant families, who may see their parents struggling in low-paying or undervalued jobs and disadvantaged in other ways, may associate their family's challenges with the heritage language and culture. They associate their heritage language with stigma, wishing primarily to fit in with the mainstream culture, and often do not realize the value of their language and culture of origin until their college years, when recovery of their language skills is far more difficult. For that reason, one of the key goals of heritage language programs, whether in the public schools or in community-based programs, is to help members of the community to **value both their adoptive country and its language and their language and culture of origin**. A place in the school curriculum for the heritage language, particularly when U.S.-born students can participate as well, sends a powerful message of status and respect that is not only motivational for heritage language development, but also has been shown to increase heritage learners' school completion rates. One factor in this phenomenon is increased family engagement in the student's school.

Bi-lingualism and the Need for English

Broadly speaking, most U.S. needs for languages other than English require professionally useful skills in English and in the other language or languages.

When we speak of "professionally useful" language skills, we usually mean literacy: the ability to read and write as well as to speak the language and comprehend the language when spoken. One definition of "professionally useful" language skills – depending, obviously, on one's particular profession – might be a 2+ or 3 on the Interagency Language Roundtable proficiency scale (See <http://www.govtilr.org>) or a Superior to Distinguished rating on the ACTFL proficiency scale <http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3325>. Examples of tasks requiring these skills include listening with comprehension to a televised talk show interview (about a 2 or 2+) or an in-depth Charlie Rose interview (level 3); reading with a high degree of comprehension an editorial in the *Washington Post*; carrying on an extended substantive

conversation on a topic related to a recent news event; writing a summary for one's company of possible business opportunities in a particular city; and making an effective PowerPoint presentation to a general or workplace audience. A person who can carry out these tasks in both English and his or her community (heritage) language can be considered a well-developed bilingual who has a range of employment options, and can be useful to Maryland and D.C. area companies, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

For typical English-speaking Americans, acquiring this level of proficiency in another language in addition to English requires a multiple-year sequence of serious language study, including an intensive program of study in a country where the language is spoken, and possibly an internship as well. (The National Security Flagship –NSEP - program has recent data on design of educational programs leading to this degree of proficiency.) In the U.S. today, an extremely small percentage of students engages in this type of language study program, although the National Security Language Initiative (particularly NSEP) is working to increase those numbers. Moreover, it is clear that such programs of study require significant investments of time and tuition on the part of students and their families, and significant investments in program planning and delivery on the part of states and federal agencies. One of the important potential benefits of helping immigrants and their children to become bi-literate is that it is a cost-effective way of increasing usable language capacity in the U.S.

It is important to point out that professionally useful English as described in this report is not an automatic product of a U.S. K-12 education. Large populations of native speakers of English in the U.S. fail to attain such levels without a rigorous college education. A discussion of literacy in the U.S. English-speaking population falls outside the scope of this task force, but the importance of formal education in developing advanced language skills, even for native speakers living in their home country, is a key point to remember as we consider how to help recent immigrants and children of immigrants to attain such skill levels in their family language and in English.

Along with bi-literacy, individuals who hope to use two or more languages in a profession also need cultural competence. This includes, for example, the ability to interpret correctly the meaning and intent of the speech and behavior of people in American society and in the society that speaks the other language, to interact without offense or misunderstanding with Americans and members of the other culture, and to understand the perspectives of various groups in America and the other society. Here again, these skills are acquired most effectively through living, working and interacting with people from each culture, reflecting on experience and seeking clarification as needed to understand the basis for particular beliefs or behaviors. These

skills fall into the general category of “interculturality” or “cross-cultural skills” or “cross-cultural effectiveness.” One current effort to describe the cultural aspects of language competence has been led by Dr. Gerald Lampe of the National Foreign Language Center (UMD). His draft document can be found at <http://www.nflc.org>.

In addition to these language and cultural skills, additional areas of skill and knowledge are necessary for particular types of work. Knowing two languages is not sufficient in itself to be an effective interpreter (of spoken language) or translator (of written language). Translation and interpreting are extremely demanding tasks that rely upon skills and knowledge developed through training and extensive practice. Translation and interpreting are poorly understood professions in the U.S., and the U.S. has far fewer programs to educate translators and interpreters than, for example, the nations of Europe. For these professions, what we have called “professionally useful language skills” in both languages is a pre-requisite for study of translation or interpreting, not a full qualification to do that demanding work.

In other areas of employment requiring bi-literacy, specific expertise in fields such as engineering, medicine, accounting, or management is also required. At the same time, even highly skilled and educated heritage speakers cannot practice their profession in the U.S. without sufficient English skills. For that reason, any discussion of heritage speakers as a national resource must consider heritage language development and maintenance and English acquisition or enhancement, as well as the broader context of other job skills and requisites which this report touches on only in passing. In examining educational issues relevant to heritage languages and heritage speakers, therefore, we consider English and the heritage language as two complementary components of bi-literacy.

The benefits to our society of a supply of bi-literate individuals in the languages we need are obvious, but bi-literacy also increases the individual’s earning power substantially. A 2001 study by the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, showed that immigrants who were bi-literate earned about 10% more than people literate only in English, and (not surprisingly) earned more than twice as much as U.S. residents literate only in a language other than English.

Preserving Heritage Languages

The most effective approaches to maintaining heritage languages combine instruction in the heritage communities with public education. There is wide consensus among language policy

It is important to emphasize that no effort to preserve or develop heritage language skills can serve U.S. society or immigrant families without at the same time providing adequate access to effective programs for the acquisition of English.

makers that the U.S. needs to start language learning much earlier in the schools; the U.S. is unique in developed nations in the lateness and brevity of standard language programming. It is important to emphasize that no effort to preserve or develop heritage language skills can serve U.S. society or immigrant families without at the same time providing adequate access to effective programs for the acquisition of English.

English language arts and heritage language arts have been shown to be mutually reinforcing, and content instruction in the two languages reinforce key concepts while developing domain-specific vocabulary in both languages. Examples include dual language programs, content-based language curriculum in which language lessons align with lessons in science or social studies.

There are approaches today, in Maryland and elsewhere, that are based on these findings. Dual-immersion programs that provide instruction in English as well as the heritage language are a good example. **Dual immersion** is also a particularly cost-effective model. Its effectiveness has been documented in numerous studies, and the presence of dual-immersion programs in Maryland is a very positive sign. Early-start (elementary school or earlier) dual immersion is a particularly desirable model that serves English speakers learning a world language and heritage speakers learning English while developing their own language. For heritage speakers, early dual immersion starts them out at the point where their heritage language skills are most like those of students of the same age in the home country. In Maryland public schools, the preponderance of **Spanish**, with some **French**, in heritage-language and dual-immersion programs reflects the dominance of Spanish, and to a much lesser extent French, in foreign language offerings in schools nationwide. Spanish speakers are also by far the largest single heritage language group in the U.S., coming from many different countries, although Maryland has a more diverse heritage language population than many states.

Dual immersion has much to recommend it for all students. Other desirable features include integration of heritage and foreign language learners, opportunities for each to learn from the other, more authentic exposure of English speakers to other cultures, and validation to heritage

learners and to English-speaking students of the importance of the language skills present in the heritage communities. Dual immersion programs also offer an ideal environment to begin to introduce age-appropriate and engaging activities involving transfer of meaning across languages, thereby building interest and skills related to interpreting and translation. These additional components of language study can support future recruitment into these under-supplied professions.

The relatively small number of programs focused on heritage learners in **Maryland colleges and universities** is broadly consistent with the national picture in college-level language programs. The prevalence of *Spanish* among heritage programs in Maryland post-secondary education reflects the fact that Spanish, by far the most commonly-taught language in K-12 and higher education and the largest language of immigration, is the language both in Maryland and nationally that is most likely to have sufficient enrollments to differentiate between heritage learners and foreign language learners, and a sufficient population of heritage learners to justify separate courses. A number of less commonly-taught languages in universities typically have high enrollments of heritage learners in them. At the University of Maryland – College Park, these include *Chinese, Korean, Arabic and Persian* among others. As a general rule, however, separate classes or different language sequences are not offered due to limited overall enrollments in those languages. Information is anecdotal and research is lacking on the degree to which language programs in higher education use effective practices in meeting the needs of both heritage learners and foreign language learners.

The third venue for heritage language programs is the **heritage community itself**, as described above. Through testimony received at the Town Hall Meeting, the Task Force has begun to identify communities in Maryland that provide language instruction through community-based schools, community activities, and religious institutions. Based on national studies, these programs vary widely, but typically involve meetings on weekends. The programs thus provide limited weekly time on task, and in some cases serve a stronger cultural than linguistic mission, but they build on a long tradition that – particularly for Chinese – includes nationwide networks of heritage community programs, and even large regional conferences. In California and elsewhere, heritage community schools in Chinese have forged successful alliances with public education, and most recently have achieved the introduction of Chinese as a regular offering in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

In considering ways that the public school system can support these programs and enhance their value to the community, one cost-effective option is to **enable students to earn credit by**

examination. The State Department of Education can work with school districts to identify appropriate assessment tools, proficiency scores, and approaches to test administration. Awarding credit for student performance avoids the pitfalls of trying to accredit community-based programs themselves, whose quality may fluctuate significantly from year to year; but offers heritage learners an opportunity to validate their skills and to engage with the formal education system, including the possibility of advanced standing in college language courses. With technical and administrative support at the state level, credit by examination can be made rigorous, consistent, and extremely cost-effective.

Community-based schools sometimes draw upon teachers in the public schools who are native speakers of the heritage language and are certified to teach another subject, such as mathematics or ESL – but in many cases, community program teachers could benefit greatly from opportunities for professional development. Resources for professional development are abundant in the Maryland system and the Washington area in terms of expertise and organizations. Here again, use of technological means to share information about opportunities for heritage schools can increase the effectiveness and utilization of existing teacher-development resources.

In discussing **teacher development for the heritage schools**, it is important to point out the important resource that the heritage community represents as a source of K-12 language teachers. As the public schools seek ways to expand their overall world language offerings for all students to include less-frequently taught but highly important languages such as Chinese, Arabic, and Hindi, heritage communities are tremendous resources for prospective teachers who bring native proficiency in the language and deep understanding of the culture. The **STARTALK program**, funded by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and administered by the National Foreign Language Center, funds programs for teacher training and student learning in *Arabic, Chinese, Persian, Hindi, Urdu, Swahili, and Turkish*. In the first two years of STARTALK operation, over 95% of current and prospective teachers of these languages who enrolled in STARTALK professional development programs have been educated native speakers drawn from the nation's heritage communities. Efforts to assist states in developing best practices in training and certifying these teachers have begun with a summit on December 15, 2008, at the headquarters of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in downtown Washington, co-sponsored by CCSSO, NFLC, and the Asia Society. The Maryland public school system may benefit from this effort to increase its supply of highly qualified world language teachers – who can also serve their own heritage learners. This type of initiative can provide an opportunity for higher education, K-12, and the heritage community to seek ways of expanding cooperation and collaboration, both for student learning and for teacher education.

One such model that has much to recommend it is the possibility of **after-school programs located at K-12 schools that include study of local heritage languages**. These programs can operate with greater flexibility outside the scheduled program, and meet families' needs for after-school care and supervision while providing enrichment. Credit by examination could enable successful students to progress in their formal study as well. Evidence from other states suggests that a pitfall of after-school programs is that they do not serve all students and lack the official sanction of official school-day offerings. One State superintendent cautioned that after-school programs could inadvertently impede the development of credit-bearing courses in schools where they could be viable – becoming a permanent “half-a-loaf” solution. One would hope that after-school programs might serve a legitimate need while offering an opportunity to test and even foster demand and interest in languages with a local heritage population, leading whenever feasible to more fully-integrated offerings.

Maryland's **higher education institutions** include a number of externally-funded centers and programs that can provide greater benefit to more students with relatively simple efforts to increase coordination. In addition to NFLC and the STARTALK program, the University of Maryland College Park hosts a National Security Education Program Flagship for Arabic and Persian. Flagship programs around the US are working to establish “pipelines” with public school systems in their states to create opportunities for more students to engage in longer sequences of instruction in critical languages, including study abroad. Maryland students, both heritage speakers and foreign language learners, should be made aware of the increasingly array of generous scholarships, internships, and employment opportunities offered by the federal government for successful students of critical languages (<http://www.thelanguageflagship.org>).

The **United States government and many state governments** are working to expand language offerings in world languages of particular significance to the U.S. and to its citizens. At present, this effort is couched primarily in terms of programs for foreign language learners – that is, English speakers who have no prior background in the other language. Nevertheless, it is often the case that heritage learners enroll in such courses – and we have already discussed the problems that arise from curriculum and instruction that are not appropriate to their language profile. While it is useful to offer dedicated programs for heritage students, including dual immersion programs, wherever numbers of heritage students make it economically feasible to do so, it is clear that in many cases this will not be possible. For that reason, it is important to develop effective preparation for teachers to enable them to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of heritage learners in their classroom. In addition, development of curricula, materials,

instructional strategies, and assessment tools that are adapted to the needs and the possibilities of heritage learners can enable this important resource population to take advantage of available programs in their family language. Maryland has the opportunity to exercise leadership in this important effort, using the resources within the State and the Washington metropolitan area.

Businesses and Government Need Heritage Language Speakers

To determine potential job opportunities for heritage-language speakers, the Task Force researched current requirements in the business community, State government, and the Federal government to include the defense and national security sectors. Sources for this information included the Department of Business and Economic Development, contacts with relevant business and governmental organizations such as the World Trade Center Institute and the National Virtual Translation Center, web-based research, and the personal knowledge of Task Force members.

Business

Data collected concerning the Maryland business community demonstrated a strong need for heritage language speakers. Respondents to inquiries made by the Task Force included Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, the World Trade Center Institute, the Regional Manufacturing Institute, and the Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce. These organizations recognized heritage language speakers as valuable company assets and important enablers, and expressed having a limited formal process for preserving or identifying language skills or needs. The various informal programs already in place include daily language lessons hosted by native-language-speaking employees and the engagement of bi- or multi-lingual employees on an “as needed” basis. The continuance of an ongoing process of developing a formal strategic plan concerning heritage language speakers was also mentioned by these companies..

To gain additional insight into Maryland’s potential business needs, the Task Force catalogued the languages associated with the State’s top export destinations. The data suggests a strong correlation between many of Maryland’s heritage languages and the countries engaged in trade with the State. (See Figure 3.)

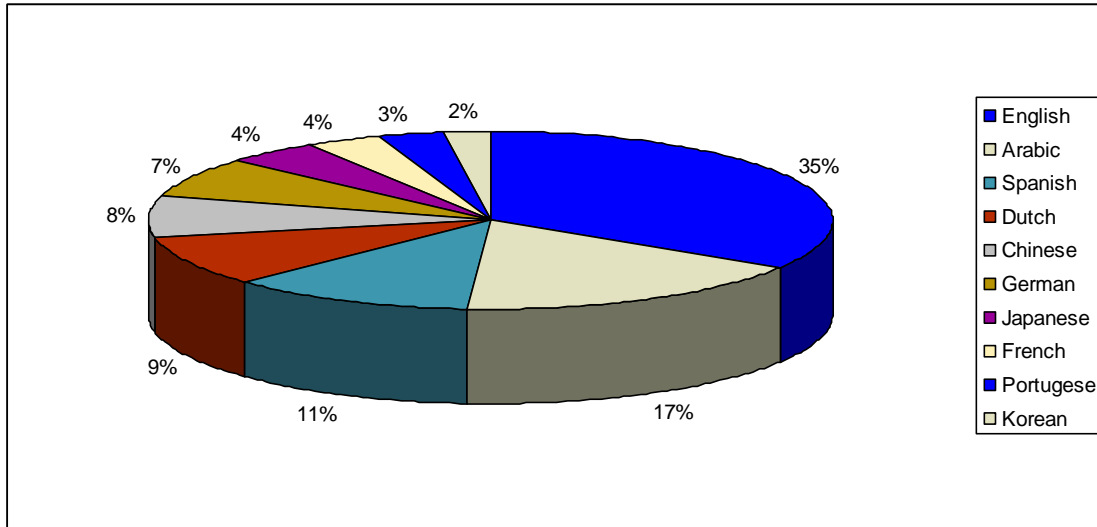


Figure 3: Languages Associated with Maryland Export Destinations

Source: www.wisertrade.org, September 2008

Additional data on potential business needs was gathered at a Metropolitan D.C. Language Flagship workshop on October 14, 2008. Sponsored by The Language Flagship as part of a series of workshops throughout the U.S., the workshop brought together representatives from area businesses that have language needs. Current required languages include *Farsi, Pashto, Urdu, Dari, Chinese, French, Arabic and its dialects, English, Spanish, Portuguese, African languages, Afrikaans/Dutch, and Russian*. A five-year projection placed emphasis on the need for the same languages with the addition of Eastern European languages such as *Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian*. These languages are applied during business development and contract negotiation, communication, public relations, marketing, and publication, as well as translations, training, recruitment, and other projects.

The workshop also covered the opportunity costs connected to a lack of language capability. These include time lost in productivity, potential loss of clients, materials being wasted and projects going unfinished due to misunderstandings, loss of deals due to misunderstandings, and loss of or damage to business relationships. Many organizations conveyed their experiences related to language capabilities simply stating, “If we don’t have the language capabilities, we don’t even get the requests for proposals.” The challenge overwhelmingly expressed was the retention of critical talent on behalf of employers.

Workshop participants concluded that business must make high school students

“If we don’t have the language capabilities, we don’t even get the requests for proposal.”

aware that they need native language skills in their employment pools. It is critical that the value of language in business become more visible through the influence of colleges and universities interested in advertising potential linguistic career paths. Through partnering with government agencies and encouraging earlier language education at the K-12 level, many of these alarming trends can be reversed.

***Best Practice* – Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems has a variety of programs to recruit heritage language speakers and celebrate the heritage cultures of their employees.**

In recognition of the value of heritage languages to their business, some Maryland companies provide opportunities for heritage language speakers to use their language and celebrate their heritage culture. **Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems (NGES)** provides an example of a major business that demonstrates best practices in heritage languages and cultures. With 34 operating entities in 18 countries and customers, products, and services in 79 countries, NGES views heritage languages as a key competitive advantage. They have a variety of programs focused on recruiting and staffing, university internships, recognition of heritage language groups within the company, sponsorship of professional associations, and community outreach. Although not all of these programs are focused primarily on language, the existence of heritage culture support groups sends a positive message to employees about the importance of their language and culture.

For example, *NGES* sponsors two employee resource groups: *Adelante*, an Hispanic employee network with seven chapters and more than 500 members; and *APPN-ES*, an Asian-Pacific professional network with five chapters and a total of almost 550 members. *NGES* is a lead corporate sponsor of the Maryland Hispanic Youth Symposium, and a corporate sponsor of the U.S. Hispanic Youth Entrepreneur Education program.

NGES also presents awards to the Asian-American Engineer of the Year and supports the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Conference.

Federal Government

The U.S. Department of Education has identified priority languages for their Foreign Language Assistance grants program. This is an anticipated competitive grant whose details have not yet been revealed, although the 2008 Appropriations Act language indicates the following:

“That \$3,000,000 of the funds available for the Foreign Language Assistance Program shall be available for 5-year grants to local educational agencies that would work in partnership with one or more institutions of higher education to establish or expand articulated programs of study in languages critical to United States national security that will enable successful students to advance from elementary school through college to achieve a superior level of proficiency in those languages.”

The languages of national security interest identified for 2008 include *Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Russian, Indic, Iranian, and other Turkic language families*. A number of these languages are represented by significant populations of heritage speakers within Maryland.

There are also potential opportunities for employment in heritage languages within the U.S. intelligence community. On November 3, 2008, members of the Task Force visited the National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC) in Washington, D.C. The NVTC provides timely and accurate translations of foreign language information for the Intelligence Community, law enforcement agencies, Federal and State courts, academia, and industry. The languages of current interest as identified by the NVTC are *Arabic, Pashtu, Russian, Chinese/Mandarin, French, Urdu, and several African Languages and dialects*. The NVTC expressed their interest in recruiting speakers of heritage languages for both classified and unclassified work, and explained that they work through contract vendors who provide independent contract linguists that meet the NVTC’s requirements.

The Task Force also investigated linguistic opportunities with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The CIA produces intelligence reports and conducts intelligence operations for the U.S. government. Languages of current interest by CIA recruiters are *Arabic, Chinese/Mandarin, Dari, French, German, Greek, Serbo-Croatian, and Turkish*. Within the CIA, linguistic job opportunities include Language Officers for the National Clandestine Service, foreign media analysts, and language instructors. Because applicants must be U.S. citizens and meet current security requirements, heritage language speakers are desirable candidates.

Additional opportunities are available in the National Security Agency (NSA). The NSA performs foreign intelligence missions for the U.S. government. Currently, the NSA is interested in recruiting speakers of *Amharic, Arabic, Azeri, Baluchi, Dari, Dinka, Kurdish, Pashto, Persian-Farsi, Somali, Swahili, Tingrinya, Turkish, Uighur, Urdu, Punjabi, other central and South-Asian languages, and other languages of Sub-Saharan Africa*. Current linguistic employment opportunities with the NSA include working directly with the original written or

spoken language to determine the relevance of the intelligence collected, to analyze, and to put the information into context. Potential employees may be called upon to research and understand a culture in which a specific language is spoken. Again, such positions are potentially ideal for heritage language speakers, as applicants must be U.S. citizens and meet current security requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force reached consensus on the following recommendations. While not in priority order, they are intended to suggest a range of feasible and cost-effective approaches for the State of Maryland to capitalize on the intellectual capital of its heritage communities. Implementing these recommendations will help immigrants and English-speakers to develop bi-literacy, match linguistic and cultural skills with job opportunities, and engage both heritage communities and English-speakers in collaborative efforts to promote an internationally competitive, linguistically competent, and interculturally effective state and nation.

RECOMMENDATION ONE

Establish a website for Maryland’s heritage language programs.

POSSIBLE LEAD AGENCY: Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI)

RATIONALE

As evident in the testimony provided to the Town Hall Meeting and the responses in the survey, Maryland’s heritage language program providers have no vehicle for communication or collaboration regarding common issues, including curriculum, instructional materials and materials, as well as questions about facilities and liability insurance. Almost one third of survey respondents asked that there be a link to existing resources for teaching their languages.

While the Task Force has gathered information on numerous heritage language programs in Maryland, a website could host an updated and expanded database. It could serve as a key communication resource between and among programs – as well as for families seeking heritage language services.

A link to the *Alliance for the Advancement of Heritage Languages* is a possible option for Maryland’s heritage language webpage. Resources and information regarding heritage language development are already available on the website of this national organization. Other links may include *The Center for Applied Linguistics*, opportunities for language teacher training, materials for parent home schooling, and other websites that provide education materials in various languages.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

Support and promote the awarding of high school credit by exam for students who attend non-public heritage language schools in Maryland.

LEAD AGENCY: Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)

RATIONALE

The findings of the Task Force and the testimony at the Town Hall Meeting confirm that there are numerous community-based heritage language programs already established in Maryland. The option to earn credit for proficiency rather than the number of hours spent in a classroom aligns with current trends in language education and responds to requests made by heritage language students and their parents. Additionally, the opportunity to earn credits towards graduation will serve as an incentive to participate in heritage language instruction and will address the concern expressed by heritage language program providers about motivating students to participate in weekend classes. Over one-third of survey respondents requested that high school language credits be an option for themselves and their children. The Task Force further recommends that students be encouraged to continue their language study beyond basic proficiency to advanced professional proficiency levels.

COMAR 13A.03.02.05 provides the option for local school systems to award credit by exam. The Task Force recommends that MSDE engage key stakeholders and world language experts to participate in a statewide validation of assessment(s) that would be available to local school systems to “assess student demonstration of local curricular objectives” as stated in COMAR. As there will be a cost associated with each assessment, payment procedures and/or funding sources should be investigated.

The resulting system that awards credit based upon proficiency scores on nationally-recognized assessments recommended by validation committee will reward students and Maryland’s private and community heritage language programs that succeed.

RECOMMENDATION THREE

Offer additional preK – grade 12 world language programs in Maryland public schools where students have the opportunity to learn English while continuing to enhance their heritage language proficiency.

LEAD AGENCY: Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)

RATIONALE

Although dual language programs are cost-effective and provide intensive language instruction for native English speakers and heritage speakers alike, there are only two such programs in Maryland. Additional dual language programs in Maryland have the potential of improving the achievement of English language learners and responding to parent requests for more elementary world language programs. The cognitive, affective, and social benefits of dual language programs are well documented in research.

The Task Force recommends a goal of creating at least 10 new dual language programs be established in Maryland public schools by 2012. To achieve that goal, we also recommend that MSDE provide research and factual information regarding dual language programs to local school systems. In addition, we recommend that the State of Maryland incentivize, recognize, and celebrate school systems that initiate dual language programs for heritage language speakers and English language learners.

Additionally, The Task Force recommends that MSDE explore online and distance delivery systems for heritage language courses in order to provide accessibility for heritage language speakers in smaller communities and flexibility for busy students and families.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

Continue to expand teacher certification options for heritage language speakers.

LEAD AGENCY: Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)

RATIONALE

A limiting factor in the growth of heritage language learning programs is the lack of highly qualified teachers. Several world language areas have been identified as critical shortage areas in the *Maryland Teacher Staffing Report, 2008-10*: Chinese, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish. MSDE has defined options for college-educated heritage speakers of Chinese and Italian to verify the content coursework required for certification. The Task Force recommends that this option be expanded to other language groups. We also recommend that MSDE and local colleges and universities expand collaboration to ensure that heritage speakers have access to Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) and alternative preparation programs. Finally, we recommend that MSDE, colleges, and universities develop and disseminate a fact sheet for heritage speakers summarizing multiple pathways to teacher certification in Maryland.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE

Enhance library collections of children’s literature in heritage languages.

LEAD AGENCY: Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)

RATIONALE

Testimony at the Town Hall Meeting highlighted the lack of reading materials available to students and their families in their heritage language. The value of self-selected and free voluntary reading in the development of literacy in the heritage language has been demonstrated by numerous researchers. In first-language literacy, the presence of books in the home, parents reading to children, and encouraged reading for pleasure has been widely shown to correlate with proficient reading, extension of vocabulary, and other benefits to cognitive development and academic success.

The Task Force recommends that Maryland public and school libraries consult regional immigration and language data, review existing collections, and consider developing collections that provide a selection of children’s print and electronic books in heritage languages represented in their communities.

RECOMMENDATION SIX

Provide affordable, accessible advanced English language classes for adult heritage language speakers.

POSSIBLE LEAD AGENCY: Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)

RATIONALE

The Task Force found that immigrants in Maryland are among the nation's most highly educated. The majority of adult education ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programs typically focus on functional language literacy skills. There is a lack of classes for educated immigrants who strive to reach advanced English proficiency. Existing classes, including business writing, typically are filled to capacity with waiting lists; translation training programs are non-existent.

The Task Force recommends that the Maryland Higher Education Commission take the lead to work with adult education providers, community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities to identify gaps and make recommendations for a comprehensive plan to transition students from functional English language literacy to advanced professional English language proficiency. To meet the demand for employees who can function professionally in two or more languages, additional programs are needed. Online and/or distance-learning formats are potential cost-saving options that would also provide personalized flexible schedules for working adults.

RECOMMENDATION SEVEN

Increase access to heritage language programs for all Marylanders by exploring and sharing information on facilities for use by heritage language training programs.

POSSIBLE LEAD AGENCY: Governor's Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI)

RATIONALE

Many participants in the Town Hall meeting noted the expense of renting school and church facilities for language classes. Moreover, even when funding is available, availability of adequate facilities is a challenge. Another challenge is the need to pay liability insurance for

facility use. A central source of information on facilities would enable heritage language programs to focus on other resource needs.

RECOMMENDATION EIGHT

Compile and make available a list of employment opportunities in Maryland for heritage language speakers.

LEAD AGENCY: Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR)

RATIONALE

The Task Force recognizes the importance of employment as both a goal and an incentive for the preservation of heritage languages and the expansion of heritage language learning programs. Data gathered by the Task Force reinforces the need for bilingual employees and translators in business, medical, legal, and government agencies. There is a significant need for low-density languages in all employment areas.

RECOMMENDATION NINE

Develop a *Language Roadmap* (strategic plan) for Maryland

POSSIBLE LEAD AGENCY: Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives (GOCI)

RATIONALE

In 2007, the National Security Education Program (NSEP) at the Department of Defense sponsored the *Roadmaps to Language Excellence* efforts in three states – Ohio, Oregon, and Texas. A follow-up to the February 2005 Report, *A Call to Action for National Foreign Language Capabilities*, the *Roadmaps* project emphasized systematic needs assessment of the demand for language skills and strategic planning to respond to these needs at the state level. Each of the states in the *Roadmaps* project received a major grant from NSEP to hold Language Summits, establish Language Roadmap Working Groups, and to design Language Roadmaps Reports.

Given the timeframe, scope, and lack of funding for Senate Bill 506 and House Bill 610 the Task Force recognized that this report would be preliminary in nature and recommends that Maryland explore federal, state, and corporate funding sources to engage state and local decision makers, the community, and business leaders in the development of a comprehensive plan (*Language Roadmap*) to coordinate and advocate for languages at the state level.

Appendix 1: Executive Order



The State of Maryland Executive Department

EXECUTIVE ORDER

01.01.2008.18

The Maryland Council for New Americans
(Rescinds Executive Order 01.01.1996.18)

- WHEREAS, Throughout our nation's history immigrants have made critical contributions to the overall economic, social, and political vitality of the State of Maryland;
- WHEREAS, Many present day Marylanders are descendants of those who left foreign homelands for the promise of a better life in America;
- WHEREAS, Maryland's immigrant population has grown significantly in recent years, now accounting for 12 percent of all Marylanders, compared to seven percent in 1990;
- WHEREAS, Roughly 175,000 Marylanders are immigrants who are, or will soon be eligible to become American citizens. Increasing the pace of naturalization will allow them to fully participate in civic life and take advantage of the full array of available job opportunities;
- WHEREAS, Learning English is critical to ensuring that foreign-born Marylanders can maximize their earning potential and help alleviate the State's labor shortages by participating in the workforce;
- WHEREAS, A proactive policy for new Americans in Maryland will ensure our economic competitiveness by helping employers meet critical workforce needs and allowing foreign-born Marylanders to have a meaningful opportunity to succeed;
- WHEREAS, Comprehensive federal reforms are needed to ensure that immigration occurs within a fair and legal framework that protects all workers, promotes permanent legal immigration, prioritizes enforcement, and ensures respect for the rule of law;
- WHEREAS, A new federal immigration policy must require that new Americans register for legal status, learn English, and pay taxes;

WHEREAS, The federal government's failure to enact meaningful, comprehensive immigration reform has placed significant pressure upon state and local governments;

WHEREAS, Maryland faces chronic labor shortages in a number of critical industries;

WHEREAS, Immigrants living and working in Maryland are a vital component of Maryland's economic engine, tax base, and social and cultural fabric;

WHEREAS, Eighteen percent of federal, State, and local taxes paid by Marylanders come from immigrant households;

WHEREAS, Forty-three percent of immigrants working in Maryland have a college degree or higher, and one in five doctors and one in four scientists in Maryland are immigrants;

WHEREAS, Immigrants' access to mainstream financial services helps ensure the economic health of our State and promote the full-fledged participation of immigrants in community life; and

WHEREAS, A new Maryland Council for New Americans should be established to promote full immigrant integration into the economic and civic life of Maryland.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARTIN O'MALLEY, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF MARYLAND, HEREBY RESCIND EXECUTIVE ORDER 01.01.1996.18 AND PROCLAIM THE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE ORDER, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

A. There is a Maryland Council for New Americans (the "Council"). The Council shall be a partnership among the public, private, and civic sectors to promote full immigrant integration into the economic and civic life of Maryland.

B. Duties. The Council shall:

(1) Review and recommend new policies and practices to expedite immigrant integration into the economic and civic life of the State;

(2) Provide a Maryland Council for New Americans report and recommendations no later than nine months after the date of this Executive Order; and

(3) Perform any other duties that may be requested by the Governor.

C. Membership.

(1) The following members or their designees, shall be ex-officio members:

(a) The Secretary of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation;

(b) The Secretary of the Department of Business and Economic Development;

(c) The Secretary of the Department of Planning;

(d) The Secretary of the Department of Human Resources;

(e) The Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development;

(f) The Executive Director of the Governor's Workforce Investment Board;

(g) The Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives;

(h) The Special Secretary of the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs;

(i) The Chair of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture; and

(j) The Chair of each of the commissions on ethnic affairs that the Governor has established, or establishes in the future, including but not limited to the Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, the Governor's Commission on Indian Affairs, and the Governor's Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs.

(2) The following members shall be appointed by the Governor, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor for up to two consecutive four year terms:

(a) One Maryland County Executive;

(b) One additional representative from county government;

- (c) One representative from municipal government;
- (d) Three representatives from nonprofit social service organizations that reflect the ethnic diversity of the State;
- (e) Three representatives from private sector employers;
- (f) Ten representatives from faith-based organizations and the clergy;
- (g) One representative from higher education;
- (h) One representative with expertise in adult education and language acquisition;
- (k) One representative from the banking and financial services sector;
- (l) One representative from the healthcare sector;
- (m) One representative from organized labor;
- (n) One representative from the small business sector;
- (o) One representative from a national organization with expertise in demographic trends and public policy; and
- (p) One representative from the philanthropic sector.

(3) The Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates shall appoint two members from among the members of the House.

(4) The President of the Maryland Senate shall appoint two members from among the members of the Senate.

(5) Members of the Council may not receive any compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, in accordance with the Standard State Travel Regulations, and as provided in the State budget.

(6) In the event of a vacancy on the Commission, the Governor shall appoint a successor.

(7) State government representatives shall not constitute a majority of members.

D. Procedures.

(1) The Secretary of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation and the County Executive member shall co-chair the Council.

(2) There shall be an Executive Committee of the Council, which shall consist of the Secretary of the Department of Business and Economic Development or the Secretary's designee; the Secretary of the Department of Planning or the Secretary's designee; the Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives or the Director's designee; and the Executive Director of the Governor's Workforce Investment Board or the Director's designee.

(3) The Council shall meet at the call of the Chairs.

(4) A majority of Council members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business.

(5) The Council may adopt such other procedures and by-laws as may be necessary to ensure the orderly transaction of business.

E. Working Groups. In addition to any other groups the Council deems necessary to establish to accomplish its work, it shall establish the following working groups, which may include participants who are not Council members, to make recommendations to the Council to address specific challenges facing immigrants.

(1) Workforce Working Group. The Workforce Working Group will focus on helping to address the State's workforce shortage by examining credential transfer, training, and the attraction of key workers to create the region's most competitive workforce; examining the role of "One Stop" employment centers in streamlining the economic integration of new Americans; and identifying best practices that expedite English as a second language, both for children in the public school system and for working adults.

(2) Citizenship Working Group. The Citizenship Working Group will plan a broad, coordinated citizenship promotion and assistance program to naturalize Maryland's estimated 175,000 legal permanent residents who are eligible for naturalization at a faster pace.

(3) **Governmental Access Working Group.** The Governmental Access Working Group will focus on how to improve accessibility of State and local government services to new Americans. This will include an assessment of resources necessary for compliance with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements; an assessment of the availability of vital documents in other languages; and identifying best practices at the county, community, and municipal levels. This group is also charged with developing specific government wide StateStat measures to track capacity to serve these communities.

(4) **Financial Services Working Group.** The Financial Services Working Group will examine strategies for increasing immigrants' access to mainstream financial services, stable homeownership, and family financial planning.

F. **Operational Support.** The Governor's Office of Community Initiatives and the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation shall provide publication, operational, and other support as needed to the Council.

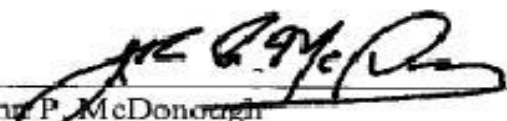
G. The Maryland Office for New Americans within the Department of Human Resources is hereby renamed the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees. Its purpose is to administer Maryland's federally-funded refugee programs.

GIVEN Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland, in the City of Annapolis, this 3rd Day of December, 2008.



Martin O'Malley
Governor

ATTEST:



John P. McDonough
Secretary of State

Appendix 2: Additional Demographic Data

Maryland's foreign-born population is concentrated in the counties within the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan region, with some representation throughout the State.

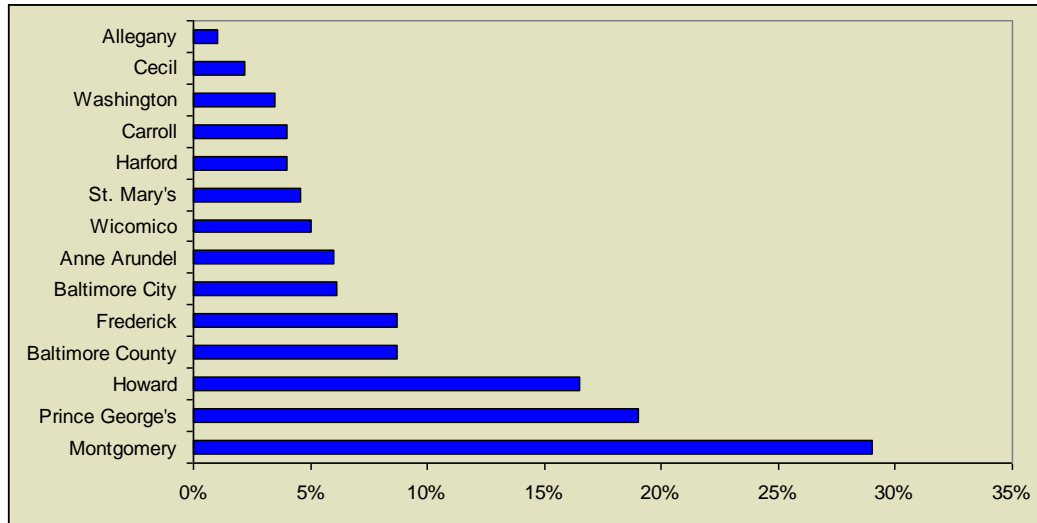


Figure 2-1: Maryland Foreign-born Distribution by County
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

In 2006, 35.4% of Maryland's foreign-born population was born in Latin America, a lower percentage than for the U.S. generally.

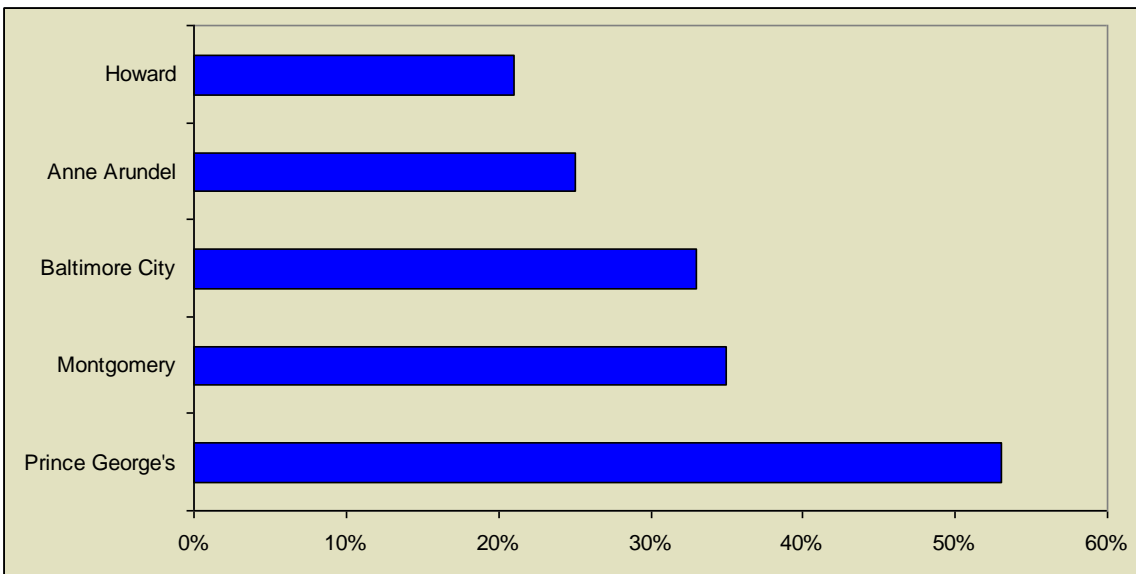


Figure 2.2: Percentage of Foreign-Born from Latin America (Top 5 Counties)
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

In 2006, 33.7% of Maryland’s foreign-born population was born in Asia, a higher percentage than for the nation at large.

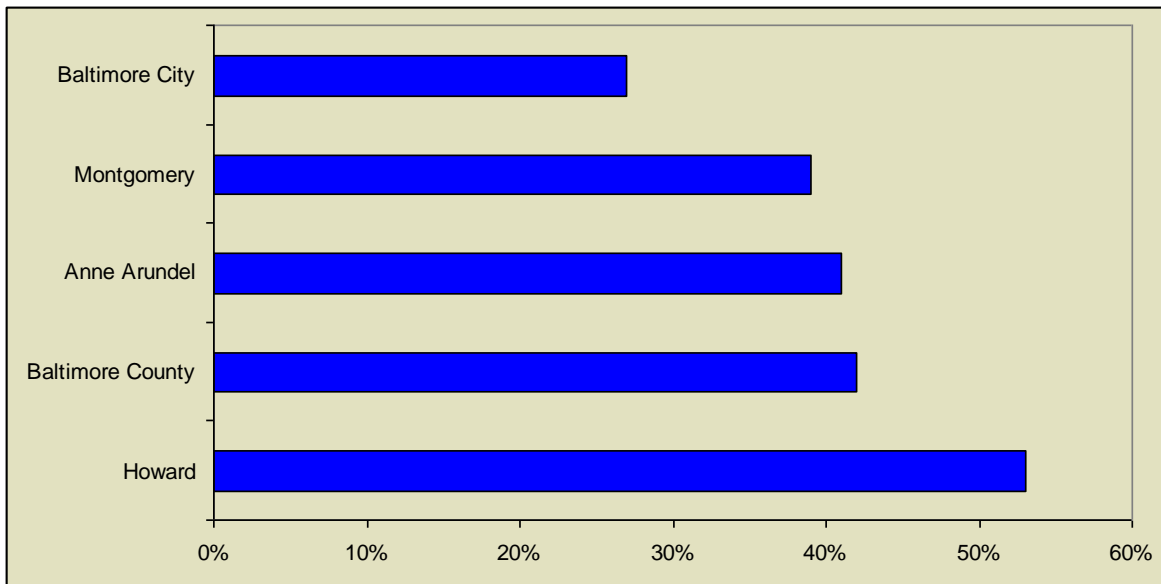


Figure 2.3: Percentage of Foreign-born from Asia (Top 5 Counties)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

In 2006, 12.8% of Maryland’s foreign-born population was born in Europe.

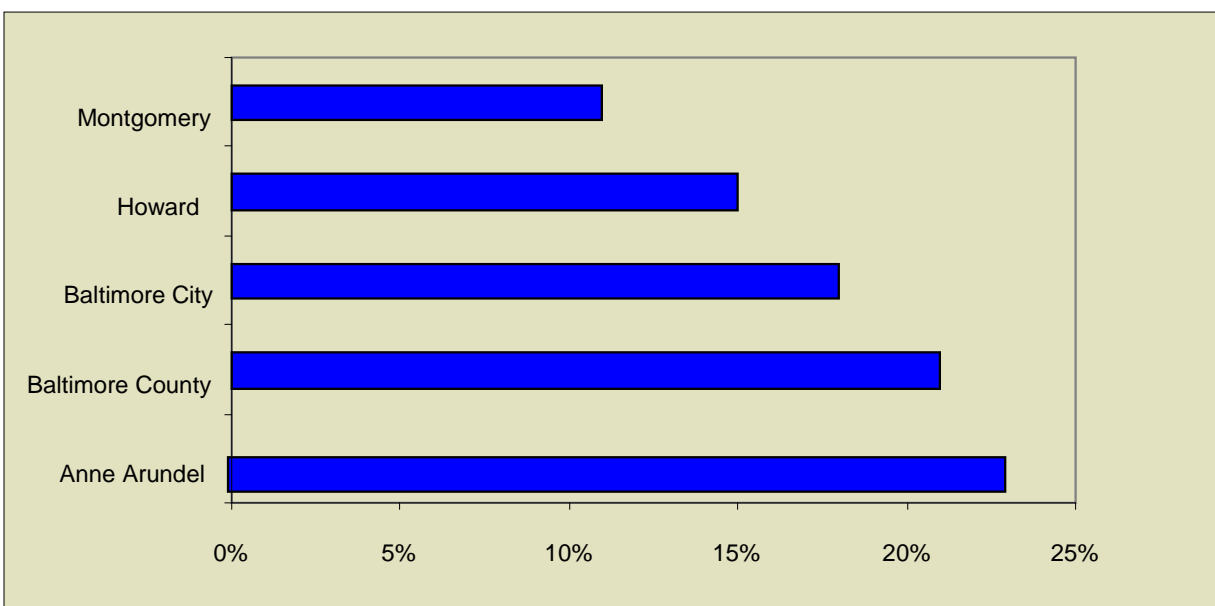


Figure 2.4: Percentage of Foreign-born from Europe (Top 5 Counties)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

Based on the language spoken at home, certain Heritage Language speakers were more likely to demonstrate limited English proficiency (LEP) than others.

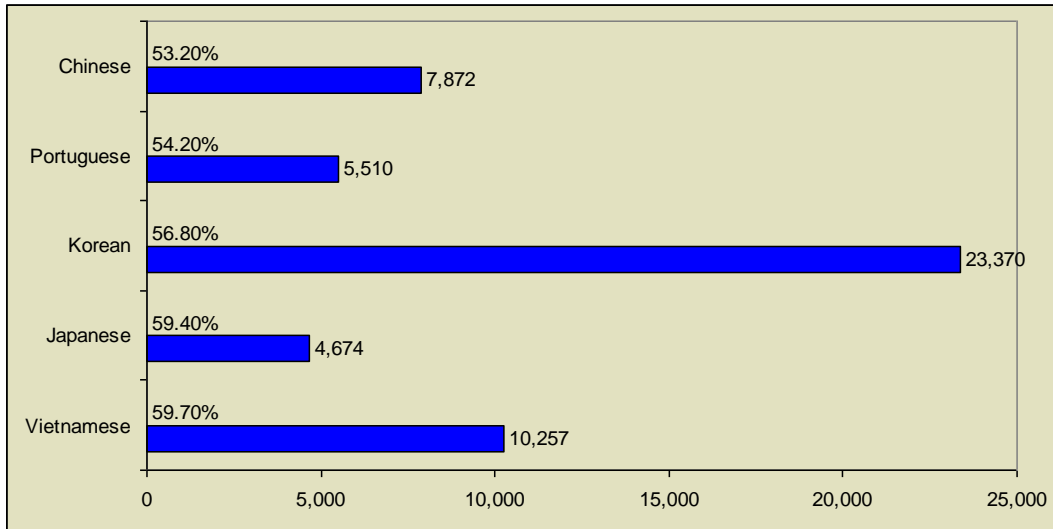


Figure 2.5: Languages with the highest percentage of LEP speakers
 Source: Maryland Fact Sheet, <http://www.migrationinfo.org/datahub/state2.cfm?ID=MD>

Certain Heritage Language speakers were more likely to live in linguistic isolation than others based on language spoken at home. Linguistic isolation occurs in households in which no one over the age of 14 speaks English “very well” or speaks English “not at all.” Three percent of Maryland households were linguistically isolated in 2006.

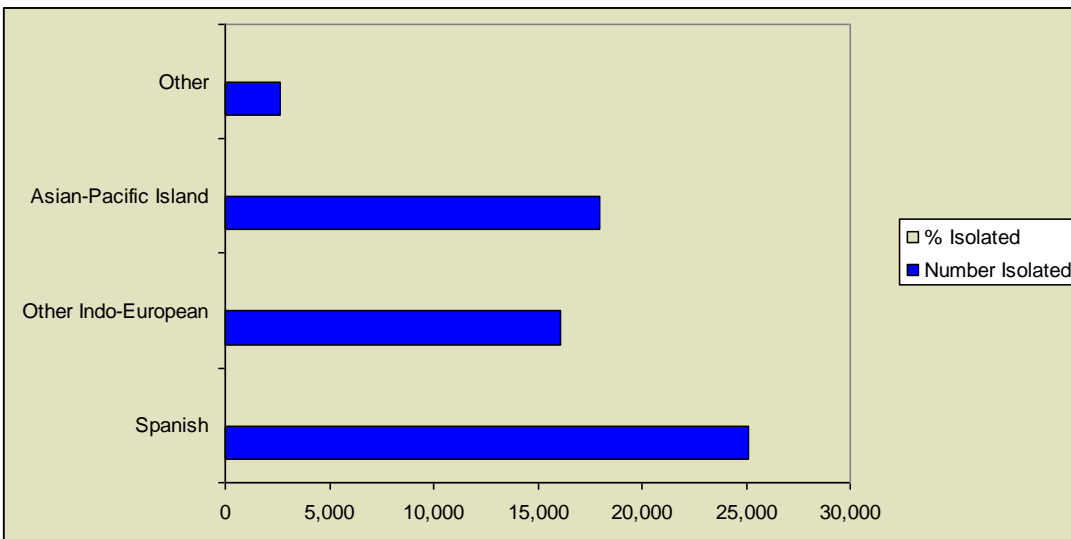


Figure 2.6: Language Isolation

Source: Maryland Fact Sheet, <http://www.migrationinfo.org/datahub/state2.cfm?ID=MD>

Language Groupings Defined:

Indo-European: French, Italian, Portuguese, German, Yiddish, Scandinavian languages, Greek, Russian, Polish, Armenian, Persian, Serbo-Croatian and other Slavic languages, Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu, etc.

Asian and Pacific Island: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mon-Khmer/Cambodian, Miao/Hmong, Thai, Laotian, Vietnamese and Tagalog, etc.

Other Languages: Native North American Languages, Hungarian, Arabic, Hebrew and African languages, etc.

Appendix 3: Languages Spoken by Survey Respondents

Survey Question 5: What language(s) did your mother, father, and/or other family members speak most at home when you were under 18? (Of the 446 respondents, some indicated multiple languages.)

<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Amharic	10	2.2%
Arabic	4	0.9%
Bafong	1	0.2%
Bafut	1	0.2%
Bagante	2	0.4%
Bakenerly	1	0.2%
Bambara	2	0.4%
Bamileke	1	0.2%
Bamiske	1	0.2%
Bangangte	1	0.2%
Bassaa	1	0.2%
Bawga	1	0.2%
Bengali	2	0.4%
Bicol	4	0.9%
British English	1	0.2%
Chabacano	1	0.2%
Chinese	7	1.6%
Chinese - Cantonese	3	0.7%
Creole	14	3.1%
Dialect	2	0.4%
Edo	2	0.4%
English	126	28.3%
Ethiopia	1	0.2%
Ewe	5	1.1%
Feefee	1	0.2%
Filipino	6	1.3%
Flonggo	1	0.2%
French	47	10.5%
Ga	2	0.4%
Gamba	1	0.2%
German	5	1.1%
Gujarati	3	0.7%
Hebrew	1	0.2%
Hindi	4	0.9%
Hungarian	1	0.2%
Igbo	9	2.0%
Ilonggo	2	0.4%

<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Imam	1	0.2%
Italian	2	0.4%
Japanese	1	0.2%
Khemer	1	0.2%
Kinyarwanda	1	0.2%
Korean	4	0.9%
Krio/Kerio/Kero	5	1.1%
Limba	1	0.2%
Maghamo	1	0.2%
Malayitigna	1	0.2%
Mam	1	0.2%
Mandarin	1	0.2%
Mandingo	3	0.7%
Mankou dialect	1	0.2%
Marathi	1	0.2%
Mende	1	0.2%
Moba	1	0.2%
Native	3	0.7%
Nsenga	1	0.2%
Nso	1	0.2%
Oromo	1	0.2%
Pampango	1	0.2%
Pegin	1	0.2%
Persian	1	0.2%
Pigin English	3	0.7%
Polish	2	0.4%
Portuguese	3	0.7%
Pular	1	0.2%
Punjabi	3	0.7%
Pushto	1	0.2%
Rajastani	1	0.2%
Russian	1	0.2%
Serekule	1	0.2%
Somali	1	0.2%
Songhai	1	0.2%
Soussou	1	0.2%
Spanish	138	30.9%
Swahili	1	0.2%

<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Tagalog	32	7.2%
Taiwanese	2	0.4%
Tamil	2	0.4%
Telugu	1	0.2%
Temne	1	0.2%
Tigrinya	6	1.3%
Twi	2	0.4%
Urdu	4	0.9%

<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Urhobo	1	0.2%
Vietnamese	7	1.6%
Visaya	1	0.2%
Wollof	1	0.2%
Yemba	1	0.2%
Yoruba	15	3.4%
No Response	2	0.4%
Total	549	123.1%

Appendix 4: Town Hall Meeting

**Task Force for the Preservation of Heritage Language Skills in Maryland
Town Hall Meeting Summary, 24 November, 2008
Howard High School Auditorium**

Introduction by Catherine Ingold, Chair

Procedures for testimony presented by Colleen Seremet

Speakers:

1. Professor Re Saravanabhavan, Howard University School of Education. Professor Saravanabhavan represents the Tamil community through his affiliations with the - Federation of Tamil Sangams of Northern America and **TALENT**. His presentation and written testimony consisted of three parts: 1) The importance of the Tamil language and its speakers, literature, and people which are comprised of 77 million people worldwide. There are approximately 35,000 Tamil speakers in the United States, 5,000-7,000 of which live in the Washington Metropolitan area; 2) The importance of learning the mother tongue to heritage culture, as Tamil language represents the core of the identities of Tamil children, representing their values, culture, and traditions; 3) The critical need to develop language diversity in Maryland in order to maintain the competitive edge necessary to participate in the increasingly globalized business community.

2. Kalpana Meiyappan, Tamil Community Member and Volunteer. Through her oral presentation and written testimony, Ms. Meiyappan emphasized the strong connection between the Tamil language and the personal identities of its speakers. She described the language as a simple one that facilitates a sense of belonging for its people. Points to note included UNESCO's funding of a project that sought to identify, recover, and digitally restore thousands of ancient manuscripts written in the Tamil language, Tamil's recent classification as a Classical Language by the government of India, and its ancient history. Through the establishment of several organizations including TALENT, Inc. (a Tamil language program), the Tamil Literary Forum (hosted by Maryland scholars of the Tamil language), and the participation of Maryland residents in the American Tamil Medical Association (ATMA), the Tamil community in our State has been active in preserving its language and culture. Challenges for the global Tamil community include the battle to preserve their identity and freedom in conflicts in countries such as Sri Lanka, where their ancient roots are being challenged.

3. **Ivan Betancourt, Individual Speaker.** Mr. Betancourt is a bilingual naturalized citizen of Hispanic decent who voiced his reluctance to support legislation that would provide funding to heritage language organizations due to his belief that bilingual education should be conducted in the home. He cited his personal experience as a member of the bilingual community who is fluent in both oral and written forms of Spanish that learned the language at home from his family.

4. **Jonathan Wray, President of the Maryland Council for Teachers of Mathematics.** Mr. Wray is the father of mixed Chinese-American heritage children attending the Chinese Language School of Columbia (CLSC) and the husband of a native-born Chinese woman who immigrated to the United States when she was in the second grade. He emphasized that language proficiency is the most important component of participation in today's global society. He cited his wife's difficulty in acquiring an adequate amount of fluency in academic English upon her emigration. His testimony also stressed the importance of researching first language development in regards to second language acquisition. Although the CLSC is funded entirely by the parents of its students, there is no economic return, as the education system currently does not accept its Chinese instruction as academically sufficient for high school language requirements despite the high level of proficiency of students completing the program.

5. **Dr. Sankari Sivasailam, Doctor of Medicine and member of Tamil Education and Training (TALENT).** Dr. Sivasailam has two children raised bilingually and is a founder of TALENT. TALENT was created 6 years ago in the basements of Tamil speaking parents with backgrounds in education. One year ago, TALENT was formally founded and is now comprised of a student body consisting of fifty students. TALENT holds classes at the Howard County Library twice a month between September and May, and provides Tamil culture and language instruction to students aged 4-16 at no charge to its attendees. Children perform songs, plays, dances, and recite poetry in Tamil to their parents as part of the TALENT curriculum. The ultimate goal of TALENT is to establish Tamil as a course offering in Howard County Public schools, but they face several challenges including space limitations, the acquisition of a \$1 million liability policy, and training of teachers.

6. **Emily Lee, Principal, Chinese Language School of Columbia.** Ms. Lee provided testimony outlining the role of the CLSC, its history, and challenges faced by the school. The CLSC seeks to preserve the Chinese language and heritage, as well as to provide an environment in which Chinese culture and heritage can be learned by both Chinese and non-Chinese heritage

families. The CLSC has been serving the Howard County community for 34 years, and is comprised of 130 to 170 students. Challenges faced by the CLSC include space limitations, lack of funding, and lack of standardized tests in public schools to recognize students' language study. Ms. Lee recommends the establishment of statewide funding to foster heritage school expansion, a fast track to certification for experienced teachers, and the standardization of language skills tests to promote learning on behalf of heritage students.

7. Wei-Chuan Liu, Chinese Language School of Columbia/Teacher of Mathematics and Chinese in Howard County Public School System. Ms. Liu teaches math and Chinese at Wilde Lake High School. In her testimony, she points out that while the Howard County School system has 12 high schools, Chinese language classes are only offered in four of them. Three teachers in a total of six classes teach Chinese courses in these four schools. Challenges include the lack of 9th graders interested in taking Chinese because they don't want to switch their foreign language to Chinese, and the language is not promoted to incoming freshmen. There is also a lack of resources for teaching Chinese as a foreign language. She also recommends that students be granted academic credit for heritage courses.

8. Urmi Holz, Bengali Class, Kali Temple. Ms. Holz is an organizer for the Bengali Sunday school at the Kali Temple in Burtonsville, Maryland. She references Bengali's rich tradition and history. She point out that during her time working at the Department of Defense as a mathematician, she has been asked to do several translations although she has no formal training. The Bengali School at the Kali Temple currently has about forty students broken down into four levels of proficiency. The teachers are volunteers, and students are members of the first, second, and third generation of their families living in the U.S. Ms. Holz fears that without adequate support on behalf of the State of Maryland, most of the students at the Bengali School will lose their language by the fourth or fifth generation.

9. Matthew Lee, Korean School in Howard County. Mr. Lee points out that language and business are always connected, and that in order to maintain its competitive edge in the business world, it is critical that Maryland take advantage of its rich language resources. The Korean Association of which he is a member is comprised of 14 chapters with 1000 schools in 50 states. The Maryland/D.C. chapter has 80 schools with 800 teachers. He suggests that heritage schools should non-denominational. An e-newsletter is available at www.waks.org.

10. Kevin Zhang, Chairman, Howard County Chinese School. The HCCS was established in 1998, and is a Maryland registered 501(c) 3. The HCCS currently instructs about 450 students

using a simplified character system. The HCCS is the largest Chinese school in Howard County with an outreach of more than 1000 families in the Howard County area, and is currently experiencing growth. Challenges for the HCCS include designing a standardized curriculum, providing qualified teachers for instruction, and the acquisition of adequate course materials.

11. **Ken Aldrich, Howard County Resident.** Mr. Aldrich opposes any proposed legislation that would cost the taxpayers. He feels that any expansion of foreign language education in Maryland would be too expensive in today's economic climate.

12. **Viviana Cruz, Bethesda International School.** BIS was founded by Ms. Cruz and a group of dedicated parents in 2001. The school's goal is to serve as a linguistic link between students and their heritage. Within the school's population of 70 students, more than 30 countries are represented. Challenges faced by BIS include challenges acquiring adequate funding, finding qualified Spanish teachers willing to work on Saturdays, and the advertisement of the school itself.

13. **Dinny Li, Hope Chinese School.** Ms. Li left China at age 13, and is proud of the fact that she is still capable of speaking and writing fluently in Chinese. The Hope Chinese School was established in 1993. It has a current enrollment of about 4000 students in Maryland and Virginia. The school provides instruction for children aged 4-17, and instructs students of all cultural backgrounds. HCS emphasizes instruction of the Chinese work ethic, and its curriculum has recently been approved by Montgomery County Public Schools as adequate foreign language coursework. The HCS is currently struggling with space limitations and being able to deal with the increasing costs of course materials.

14. **He Huang, American Chinese School.** The ACS currently has an enrollment of 450 students with increasing demand for classes. They focus on teaching Chinese culture and making learning fun. The school also provides English writing classes for adults at no charge. Challenges currently faced by the ACS include the cost of facility rental, and the fact that the school will have no place to meet after Thanksgiving due to the loss of its current facility.

15. **Ellen Dan, adoptive parent of two Chinese children, wife of Chinese American.** Mrs. Dan's children attend the Chinese Language School of Columbia. She is happy that her children had the opportunity to learn Chinese, and feels it is an important part of their culture as adopted children. As a Caucasian parent, she represents another face in the CLSC organization.

16. **George Ego-Osuala, OOPU (Nigerian Organization).** There are 150 million Nigerians worldwide that speak 54 dialects of three different languages. The number of Nigerians in Maryland is increasing, and most belong to the Igbo and Yoruba language families. Nigerians are known for international relations, commerce, and their vast resources. Mr. Ego-Osuala feels that the preservation of Nigerian languages would improve the State of Maryland's economy.

17. **Cosmos Nwokefor, Assistant Provost at Bowie State University, OOPU.** Mr. Nwokefor discusses the challenges faced by Nigerian language preservation efforts. They include inadequate funding and resources, the location of a learning environment that facilitates learning, and providing a place where Igbo speakers can use their lineage to interact. Mr. Nwokefor stresses that the desire to learn Igbo exists, but that there are no resources available to make that happen.

18. **Nizar Abdelsalm, Sudanese American Community Development Organization.** Mr. Abdelsalm represents the Sudanese School in Montgomery County. He discusses the increasing number of Sudanese residents in Maryland. The focus of the Sudanese School is teaching children global cultural skills so they can be better, more useful world citizens. He points out the cognitive and academic advantages gained by bilingualism, and stresses the importance of heritage languages to the business community. The Sudanese School runs September through May and is taught by teachers, parents, and language professionals. They face challenges surrounding curriculum design and the training of qualified instructors.

19. **Tatyana Baytler, Russian Maryland Cultural Center.** Ms. Baytler begins by pointing out that she finds it confusing that more people don't speak several languages in the U.S. because multilingualism is a part of life in Russia. She would like to see an increased selection of Russian literature in the public libraries so that her children could become literate in their heritage language. She believes that training teachers is too expensive, which is reflected in the lack of linguistic professionals with backgrounds in Russian. She requested funding.

20. **Raza Hasan, Pakhtoon Community Association.** Mr. Hasan is a Pashto language speaker, and a native of Pakistan. He came to this country on a student visa with an emphasis on English. He is now a successful IT professional. Mr. Hasan recently became involved in his heritage language because he believes that it is important to be multilingual to remain competitive in the business world. He points out that every organization in attendance is under resourced, and stresses the importance of bridging gaps between heritage communities in order to pool resources.

21. **Arvinder Goomer, Kaur Foundation.** The Kaur Foundation was created by Sikh parents. The foundation supports a Punjabi language school in Silver Spring, Maryland with a student body of about 110. Ms. Goomer stresses that a loss of language diversity within Maryland represents a loss of ability to adapt within all communities.

22. **Edwin Udenkwo, Nwannedinamba (Nigeria) Association.** Mr. Udenkwo supports the inclusion of African languages in any legislation created by the Task Force's report. He points out that the changing demographic in Maryland represents a need to expand the number of languages taught in schools. He supports and commends the work of the Task Force.

23. **Hindi Organization representative.** The Washington Metro Area includes 170,000 speakers of Hindi. Worldwide, Hindi is spoken by millions of people. Hindi should be taught in schools and be standardized according to the testimony of this representative.

24. **This speaker recommended that more Marylanders study Sanskrit,** as it is the language of math and science. He believes that teaching Sanskrit will improve the mathematic proficiency of students in Marylanders. The speaker stressed that by not teaching Sanskrit, Maryland is losing an important resource.

25. **Dr. Kamala Edwards, Indian American Leadership Council, Indian American Commission of Maryland.** Dr. Edwards stresses the importance of teaching Asian Indian heritage languages in Maryland classrooms. She points out the need of a national body to train teachers and produce resources for teaching Asian Indian languages.

26. **Steve Weissberg, Resident of Howard County.** Mr. Weissberg first points out his love of world languages, and then presents his concern of the almost universal request for funding on behalf of most organizations in attendance. He hopes that any action taken by the task force will take into account the current economic climate in Maryland, and hopes more non-affiliated individuals will share their voice. He believes that granting funding to one organization will mean granting funding to all of them. Mr. Weissberg believes a process to select languages that will receive funding will be discriminatory and difficult.

27. **Mr. Laur Onyekwere, Aka Ikenga (Nigeria) Association.** This speaker points out that one third of the total Nigerian population (150 million) speaks Igbo. He wishes to continue the study of culture and tradition, and wants to receive updates from the task force.

28. **Faiz Agarib, Sudanese American Community Development Organization.** Mr. Agarib points out the size of the Sudanese community in the D.C. area (20,000 people) and points out the importance of teaching heritage languages in the home. The official language of Sudan is Arabic, and Mr. Agarib would like to see that taught in Maryland schools.

30. **Raymond Ihegbe, Prince George's County Resident.** Mr. Ihegbe is an Igbo speaker who desires to see his language included in the final report from the task force.

31. **This speaker is a member of the Arabic community.** He prays in Arabic and believes it is critical that speakers of his language continue its study in order to continue praying in the language. He believes that Marylanders desire to do business with Arabic speakers, which means they must learn Arabic. He feels that Arabic speakers would be much more willing to spend money if they were addressed in their own language.

Wrap up on behalf of Task Force; information on Heritage Language Alliance by Ana María Schwartz.