

The Attitudes of People in  
CVUSD Towards an Optional  
Foreign Language Program in  
Public Elementary Schools

AP Research 2016-2017

# Overview

- No public elementary school (PES) in Conejo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) currently offers a foreign language program (FLP)
- Community was surveyed to measure interest

# Background

- Proposition 227 (1998) discouraged FLPs
- Proposition 58 (2016) encourages FLPs
- CVUSD Board Policy supports FLPs
  - “Recommend world languages to be taught...based on student interest, community needs, and available resources.”

# Benefits of Foreign Languages for Students

- Early language learning leads to:
  - Increased memory, attention, and focus<sup>4</sup>
  - Better problem solving skills<sup>5</sup>
- Bilinguals exceed monolinguals in:
  - ACT and SAT scores<sup>6</sup>
  - Hypothesizing in science<sup>4</sup>

4. Ivers, N. N., Ivers, ., J., & Duffey, T. (2013). Second Language Acquisition: Cultural, Cognitive, and Clinical Considerations for Counseling Practice. *Journal Of Creativity In Mental Health*, 8(3), 219-234. doi:10.1080/15401383.2013.821920

5. Bamford, K. W., & Mizokawa, D. T. (1991). Additive-bilingual (immersion) education: Cognitive and language development. *Language Learning*, 41(3), 413-429. from ERIC database.

6. Olsen, S.A., Brown, L.K. (1992). The relation between high school study of foreign languages and ACT English and mathematics performance. *ADFL Bulletin*, 23(3), from ERIC database.

# Long Term Benefits of Foreign Languages (FL)s

- Higher performance in other subjects<sup>7</sup>
- Gives an advantage in the job market<sup>8,9</sup>
- Greater acceptance of other cultures<sup>10</sup>

8. Zelasko and Antunez, 2000

9. Vogel, T. (2001). Internationalization, Interculturality, and the Role of Foreign Languages in Higher Education. *Higher Education In Europe*, 26(3), 381-389. doi:10.1080/03797720120115951

10. Bamford, K. W., & Mizokawa, D. T. (1989). *Cognitive and attitudinal outcomes of an additive-bilingual program*. U.S.; Washington: ED305826

# Factors of Success in Establishing a FLP

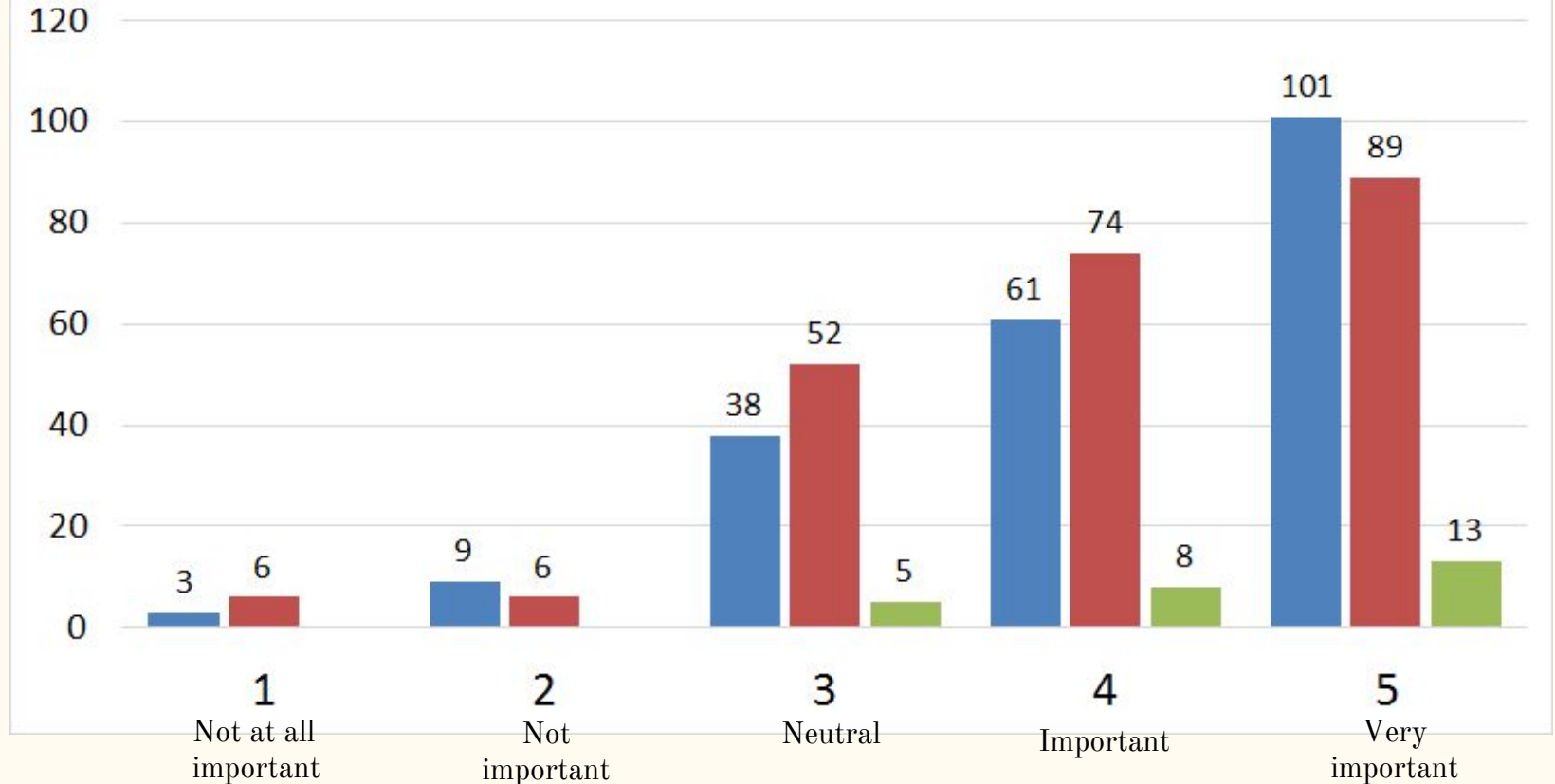
- Parent interest to enroll children
- Faculty support
- Student interest

# Methods

- 6 out of 18 PESs in CVUSD were studied
  - Principal interview
  - Parent & teacher surveys
- Surveyed students at one CVUSD high school
- Interviewed two CVUSD board members

# Importance of Learning FLs

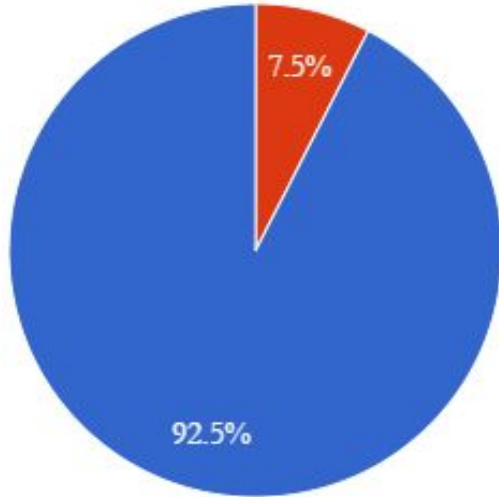
■ Number of Parents    ■ Number of Students    ■ Number of Teachers



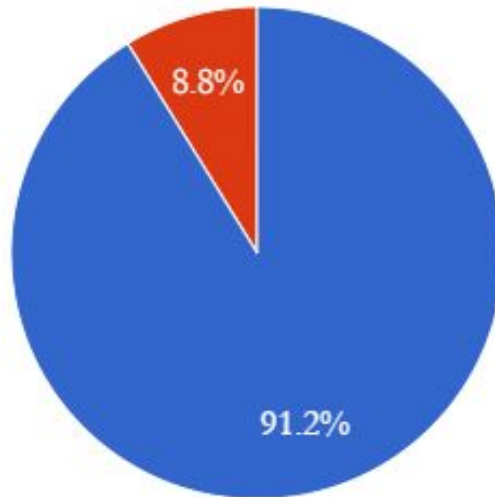


# Should CVUSD offer an optional FLP in at least one PES?

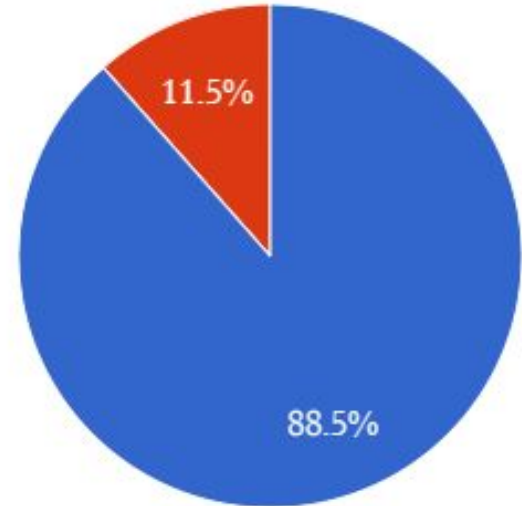
Parents



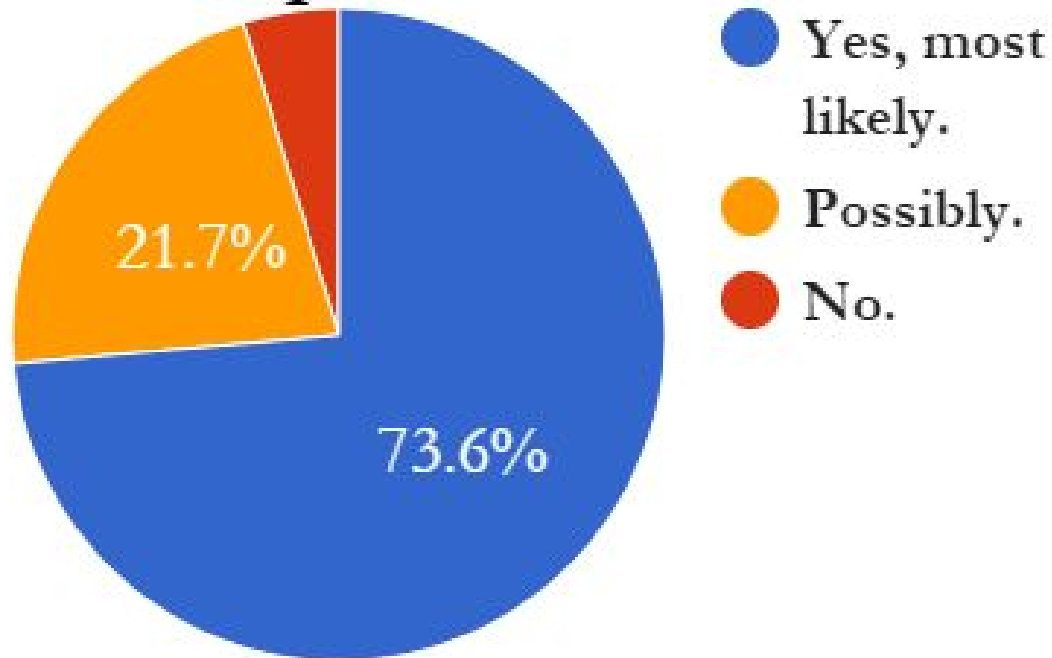
Students



Teachers

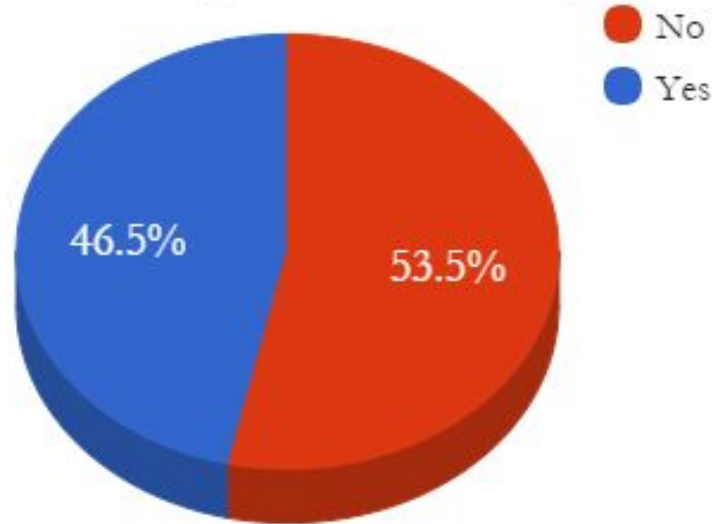


# Parent Possible Enrollment in an Optional FLP

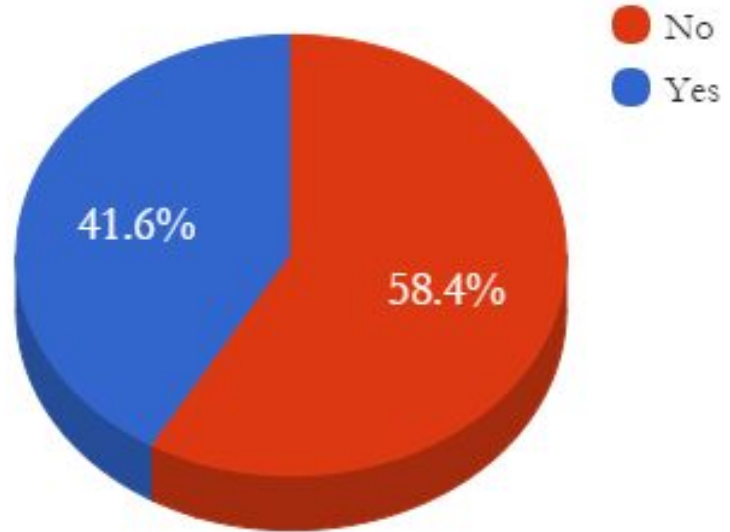


# Parent Response

Would a FLP be a deciding factor in choosing an elementary school?

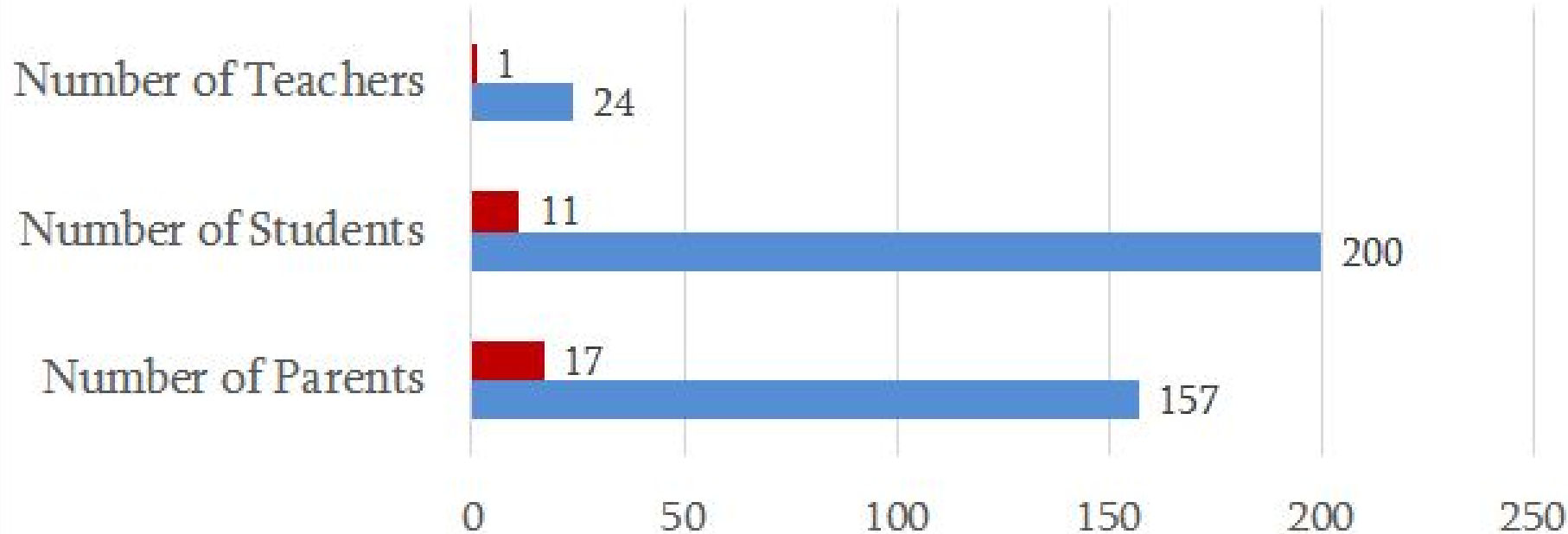


Consideration of switching a child to a different school with a FLP

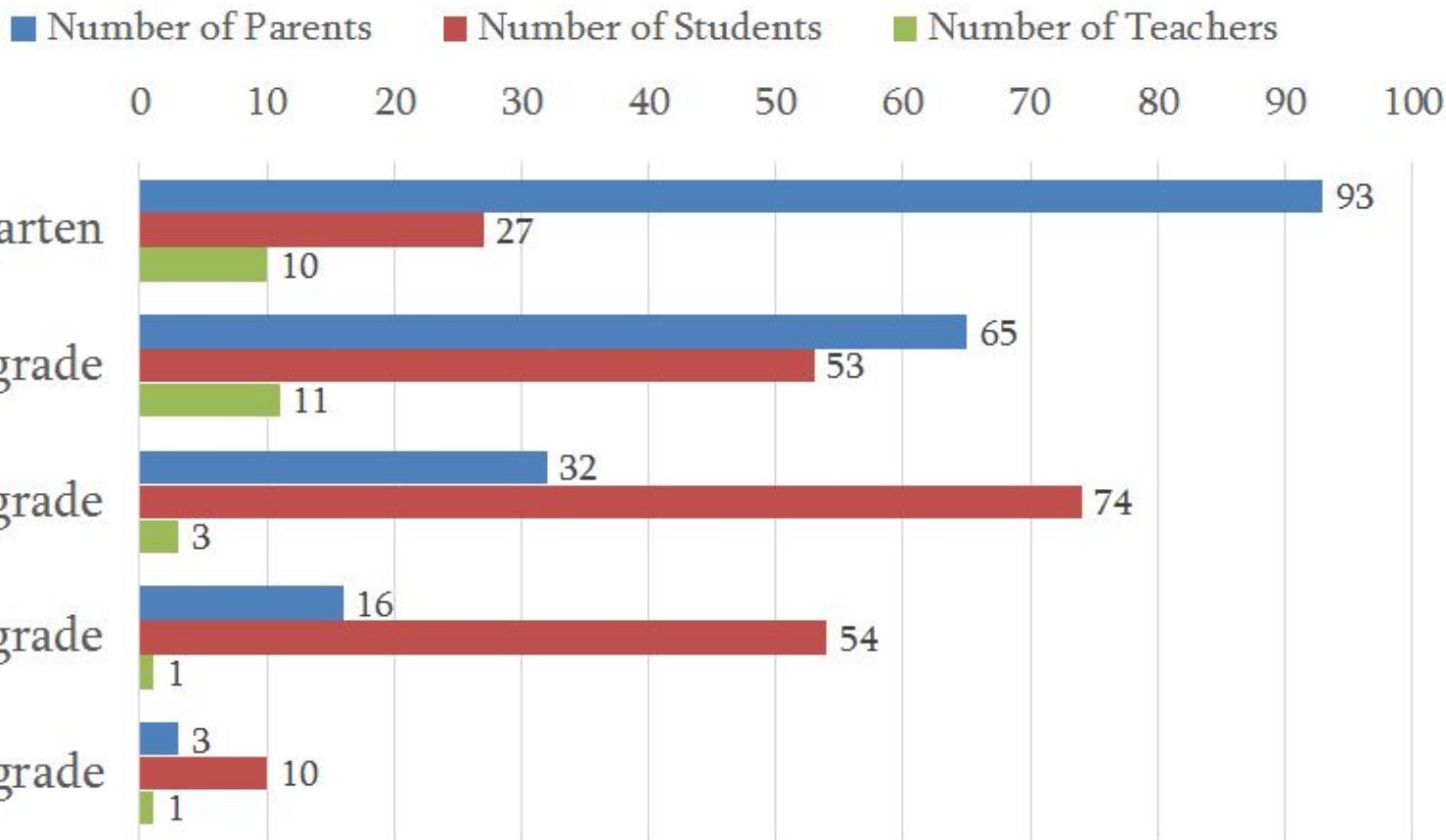


# Which Language?

■ Mandarin ■ Spanish

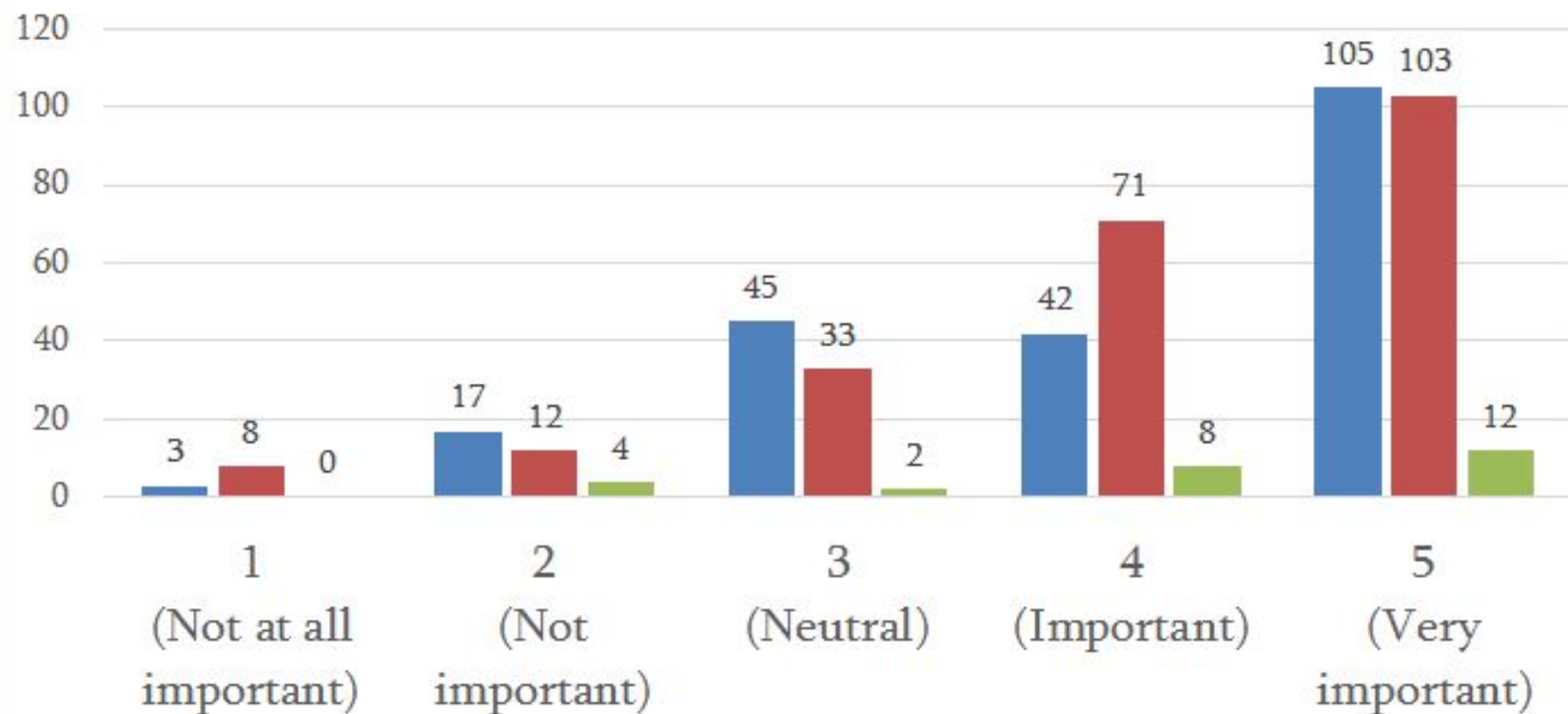


# When Should a FLP Begin?



# Importance of Culture

■ Number of Parents   ■ Number of Students   ■ Number of Teachers



# Principal Interview Analysis

- 4 out of 6 expressed possibility at their PES for a FLP
  - Main factor: community interest
- All 6 think culture is very important
- All 6 think Spanish is best for CVUSD

# CVUSD Board Member Interviews

- 2 interviews conducted
- Proposition 58 should foster more FLPs
- Bilingual programs lead to biliteracy most effectively
- Principals should understand dynamics of English and FL groups



# Interviewee Concerns of a FLP

- Not enough time in the school day
  - Possible after-school program
- Very limited number of bilingual staff (only 5 in PESs)
- Maintaining enrollment in the FLP
- Budget of a FLP

# Overview of Best Fit FLP

- Language: Spanish
- Time spent in FL Instruction: 10-40%
- Duration: 5 or more years
- Year to Begin:
  - Parents favored Kindergarten
  - Teachers favored 1st-3rd grade
  - Students favored 4-5th grade
- Culture should be taught with the FL

# Limitations

- Cost was not analyzed
- Majority of students contacted through FL classes
- Children of parents surveyed are already in PES

# Conclusion

- Future research:
  - Economics of a FLP
  - Incoming PES parents' attitudes
- Special thanks to Dr. Garcia-Ramos
- The CVUSD community overall is supportive of an optional FLP in PESs

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