

MCCPTA-EPI FLES

Coordinator Manual

2010 - 2011



Serving the MCCPTA
Since 1975!

**Montgomery County Council of Parent Teacher Associations
Educational Programs, Inc**

Foreign Language in Elementary Schools Program

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I. What is the MCCPTA-EPI FLES Program?

MCCPTA - Educational Programs, Inc (MCCPTA-EPI) is a nonprofit organization which was established in 1975 to provide extracurricular programs as a service to the local PTA's. Three quality enrichment programs continue to be offered today under the EPI "umbrella". These programs are Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES), Hands On Science (HOS) and Cultural Showcases. This past school year, over 70 PTAs throughout Montgomery County offered FLES classes to their students. The cooperative relationship that exists between FLES and the PTAs makes it possible for thousands of elementary students to participate in **Spanish, Mandarin Chinese** and **French** language classes each year!

FLES classes are made available to any PTA that identifies a parent volunteer who will oversee the program at their school. This parent is the PTA FLES Coordinator. The FLES Coordinator is an active member of the school PTA and is considered an essential member of the FLES "team". This parent promotes the FLES program among parents, registers students for classes, collects tuition payments and acts as the liaison between the FLES teacher, the FLES office and the school community throughout the school year.

The FLES program is administered by a professional, multilingual staff that works closely with FLES teachers and PTA Coordinators from August through June to provide FLES classes at each participating school. Our staff develops curriculum; hires, trains and assigns teachers to schools; provides ongoing support and mentoring in the classroom and advocates for early foreign language learning in the community. FLES is governed by a seven member Board of Directors, on which the MCCPTA President serves as a member.

The FLES Program provides....

- An exceptional opportunity for elementary students to gain a firm foundation in a foreign language
- Spanish, Mandarin Chinese and French programs for students in K-6th grade at your school from October - May
- A comprehensive, sequential curriculum in each target language
- Carefully selected, trained FLES teachers with native language skills who are enthusiastic about sharing their language and culture with young students
- A professional team of administrative and support staff who mentor teachers and supervise programs throughout the school year
- 35 years of experience in our field!

II. What do we offer?

Introductory Level

K and 1st grade beginners

Children learn Spanish, Mandarin Chinese or French while having fun! At this level we introduce children to a foreign language through an interactive retelling of well known children's tales. The Three Pigs, The Little Red Riding Hood, The City Mouse and the Country Mouse and The Little Red Hen provide a familiar, age appropriate setting for our curriculum. Teachers use bright and cheerful visuals, flashcards and puppets to spark children's imagination and children sing, play act, engage in games, body movements and creative hands-on activities during each lesson.

- Designed for K-1st graders
- Rotating curriculum designed to allow children to participate for two years
- 45 minutes of instruction before or after school
- 20 classes, once a week, October – April

Beginner Level

2nd through 5th grade beginners

At this level the emphasis is on conversation in Spanish, Mandarin Chinese or French! Children learn to communicate using short and simple sentences with everyday expressions and vocabulary. In our Chinese classes, we focus on tone recognition. Each lesson gives children the chance to act out dialogues, play games and sing. Opportunities for learning abound as teachers share their culture with the class! Children look forward to celebrating the end of the year with an authentic Spanish, French or Chinese breakfast party. The curriculum units include greetings and feelings, body parts, weather, calendar, colors, shapes and numbers, telling time, the classroom, family and autobiography, pets and farm animals, the alphabet and vowels (or tone markings for Chinese) and breakfast foods.

- Designed for all 2nd -5th grade beginners
- Participation in Introductory Program classes not a prerequisite
- One hour of instruction before or after school
- 24 classes, once a week, October – June

Intermediate Level

Children who have completed the Beginner Level

At this level, children take pride in learning to read and enjoy working in their FLES workbooks! Children learning Chinese begin with Pinyin and advance to Chinese characters. In each of the languages, children increase their vocabulary and their ability to express themselves, with expanding confidence! Each lesson builds on the previous one, incorporating themes from the Beginner Level. Classes are lively and children delight in amusing dialogues and play challenging games that reinforce what they have learned. The curriculum units include seasons, the zoo, prepositions, descriptive adverbs and adjectives, sports, pastimes, the house, preferences, snack and lunch. The year culminates with an end-of-the-year party.

- Designed for all children who have completed the FLES Beginner Level
- One hour of instruction before or after school
- 24 classes, once a week, October – June

Advanced Level

Children who have completed the Intermediate Level

This level provides continuous opportunity for conversation, reading and writing. Our curriculum broadens to focus on aspects of community life and the geography of the countries where the target language is spoken. The themes pertaining to clothing, shopping, family relationships, dinner foods, animals in the wild, pastimes, travel and transportation encourage opportunities for fun, creative role play and challenging, age appropriate games. Increased vocabulary allows students to plan trips and act out visits to places in the community - and around the world. The year includes a visit to a local embassy, ambassador's residence, cultural center or cultural event, and culminates with either a class trip to a restaurant or a party.

- Designed for all children who have completed the FLES Intermediate Level
- One hour of instruction before or after school
- 24 classes, once a week, October – June

Middle School Level

This level is specially designed to bridge the gap between elementary and 7th grade FLES. As in elementary school, our classes provide the optimal setting for language learning. Teachers engage students in conversation and share cultural notes. The FLES curriculum at the middle school level is aligned with the foreign language curriculum in 7th grade.

- For 6th graders who have completed two years of FLES in 2nd through 5th grade**
- One hour of instruction before or after school
- 24 classes, once a week, October – June

***Please note that we can also offer a Beginner Level for 6th grade beginners with no prior experience with the language.

III. What will I do as the PTA FLES Coordinator?

The PTA FLES coordinator plays a unique and vital role in the FLES program! Coordinators introduce their school staff to the FLES teachers, send out the registration forms, collect tuition payments, inform their PTA and parents about the FLES Program at their school throughout the year, and act as the liaison between the FLES teacher and the school community. If there is more than one FLES Coordinator at a school, it is important that they work together.

The responsibilities of the PTA FLES Coordinator / team are:

- Attend the FLES PTA Coordinator Training;
- Publicize the program and register students according to the required minimum and maximum number of students;
- Ask the school's administrative staff to identify a classroom and communicate the room number to the FLES administrative office;
- Collect all student payment checks and forward them, upon receipt, to the PTA Treasurer;
- Complete a Class Roster for each class with each student's emergency contact information and forward the Class Roster to the FLES office with your PTA's payment;
- Once payment is received by FLES you will receive your teacher contact information.
- Confirm class start date and give a copy of the Class Roster to the FLES teacher and your school office.
- Email a Confirmation Letter to parents;
- Introduce the FLES teacher to key school staff - secretary, building service manager and principal; inform the FLES teacher of the school's policies regarding use of the school's copy machine, parking lot, student drop-off and pick-up for activities, etc;
- Maintain lines of communication with the FLES teacher(s), parents and FLES office; help the FLES teacher as needed to inform parents about FLES Open Houses, FLES Year-End celebrations, school International Night participation;
- Inform the school community about the progress of FLES classes or FLES events via PTA meetings, your school's newsletter and an online link to the FLES website;
- Email, collect and return Parent and PTA Program Evaluation Forms at the end of the year.

All of the forms you will need to perform the tasks above will be available starting August 1, 2010 on our website www.fles.org

IV. A Step by Step Guide to Coordinating

Please visit www.fles.org for answers to some frequently asked questions!

Step 1 – Identify a Coordinator

Once the PTA has decided to sponsor a program, the first step is to give the name of the volunteer PTA FLES Coordinator, along with the contact information including address, phone number(s) and email address to the FLES Office.

Step 2 – Request a FLES program

If your school currently sponsors FLES you will receive a Program Request Form in May. This form will serve as the template for the following year's schedule, and you will have the opportunity to request additions or changes to your current offerings. The form is addressed to the acting PTA FLES Coordinator, or the current PTA President. Please complete the request and forward it to the FLES office so we can schedule classes for your school in the fall.

If this is the first time your PTA will host classes, please call us for information on our offerings. Classes are scheduled based on FLES teacher and MCPS classroom availability.

Step 3 – Attend the required PTA Coordinator Training

Two FLES Coordinator Training sessions are held each year – the first is held at the MCCPTA Spring Training in June, and another is held during the first week of school at the FLES Office.

Step 4 – Ask school secretary to identify a classroom

The FLES Program rents MCPS classrooms through the Interagency Coordinating Board (the ICB) and is required to provide detailed records to the ICB for billing and liability purposes. Ask your school secretary to assign a classroom for each class and let the FLES office know the room number.

The FLES classroom identification process is as follows:

- Give secretary the list of proposed FLES class days according to the schedule. A complete list of dates for each of your school's classes is available from the FLES office upon request
- Once the school secretary identifies a classroom, call the FLES office with the room number.
- FLES reserves classrooms with the ICB for the year.
- Report all changes to the FLES schedule, even seemingly small ones, to the FLES program office during the school year.

FLES Classroom Needs

To ensure that students and teachers have the best possible classroom environment, please ask for classrooms with the following:

Introductory Level

Kindergarten room or comparable classroom with a carpet for circle time
Chairs and a space at a table for each student at activity time

Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced Level

Space on a chalkboard or whiteboard
Chairs for each student (classroom desks are not used)

Middle School Level

Space for the teacher on a chalkboard or whiteboard
Desks for each student

Note: FLES teachers understand that they and their students share MCPS classroom space, and that they must make sure to leave the classroom as they find it, with the cooperation of their students.

Step 5 – Registration begins Monday, August 30th

Registration ends Friday, September 10th

The process for Elementary School registration is as follows:

- Display the FLES poster in a prominent spot at school
- Copy the FLES Registration Form on color paper with the flyer on the back
- Count out and place appropriate forms in the boxes for each K - 5th grade classroom teacher
- School's classroom teachers put a Registration Form in each backpack
- Set up a PTA FLES Envelope or Box in a prominent place in your school office for collection of all Registration Forms and payment checks

The process for Middle School registration starts with an email inquiry the first week of school and Registration Forms are then sent by email to interested parents.

FLES does not offer online registration on its website. PTAs are free to make the registration forms available through the school list serve.

2010 - 2011 FLES Class Size Requirements

We use the following guidelines to determine whether or not we can open a class. In order for a FLES class to start, we must be able to assure that the class is large enough to be lively and exciting, and the class can support itself financially.

Introductory	Minimum 10 students (If we have 21 students we will open a second class)
Beginner	Minimum 12 students (If we have 25 students we will have a second class)
Intermediate	Minimum 8 students
Advanced	Minimum 6 students
Middle School (6th)	Minimum 6 students

Step 6 – Contact the FLES Office with the number of students registered

If your numbers do not meet our minimum standards, do not make the decision to start a class with insufficient enrollment. Please do not give up! We will make suggestions to enhance participation. You may:

- Call the FLES Administrative office
- Send out the registration forms again as you try to find more participants
- If the enrollment for the Intermediate or Advanced Level is below the minimum, the FLES office may decide to offer combination class.

FLES launches each class based on the number of registrations received. Once a Registration Form and payment is received, registration is complete. There will be no refunds unless registration did not meet enrollment.

In this case, the PTA Coordinator will return Registration Forms and Checks to parents.

Step 7 – Complete a Class Roster for each class

For security and liability reasons, it is imperative that copies of the complete Class Roster are received by the teacher and the FLES office prior to the first day of class.

Copy your Class Rosters for:

- The FLES Office, which you will send with your payment
- The FLES Teacher
- The School Secretary
- Your records

Step 8 – Forward your PTAs payment and Class Roster to FLES

PTA payment and Class Roster due Friday, September 17th

A FLES class is scheduled and a teacher is assigned when the PTA payment check is received.

Once you have the tuition payments for the minimum number of students per class:

- Forward the parent's payment checks and a copy of the Class Roster to your PTA Treasurer;
- The PTA Treasurer will write a check for the total amount due to FLES. The PTA payment check should be made out to the MCCPTA-EPI FLES Program;
- Send PTA payment check and Class Roster(s) in an envelope and send to the FLES Office by PONY or US mail.

Step 9 – Contact the FLES Office for teacher assignment information

Step 10 – Confirm class start date with the FLES teacher

Scheduled class start dates for 2010 - 2011

Monday, October 4th – Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced & Middle School

Monday, October 18th – Introductory Level

Step 11 – Meet the FLES teacher(s)

Introduce yourself and exchange contact information. You may arrange to meet at the school to introduce your teacher to the secretary and main office staff, the building service manager and the principal.

Orient your teacher to the school – the available parking, the use of the copier, the sign-in procedure, the student dismissal procedure, teacher bathroom

Step 12 – Create an email distribution list

Create an email distribution list of all parents (for each class) for communication throughout the year.

Step 13 – Send out Parent Confirmation Letter

Once a class has the required number of students, payment has been received by the FLES office and the classroom number and the start date is confirmed, the parents will need to know the specifics about the class.

Email the Confirmation Letter to the parent of each student who is on the Class Roster.

Step 14 – Evaluate your FLES Program in the Spring

In early spring, PTA FLES Coordinators are asked to help facilitate the evaluation process. Your feedback and the response of parents are very important to us!

- Email Evaluation Form to parents
- Collect the Evaluation Forms
- Complete a Coordinator Evaluation on behalf of the PTA

Forward all of the above to the FLES office by mail, email or by PONY mail.

V. Scheduling Guidelines

A. Introductory Level - 20 Weeks

Classes are scheduled to begin the week starting **Monday October 18th**. Classes follow the school calendar are usually completed by the end of May.

Classes meet once a week for 45 minutes in the morning or for one hour in the afternoon, for 20 weeks

Before school

Classes are scheduled for 45 minutes and should be scheduled 50-55 minutes before school starts to allow students 5 minutes to get to their regular school day class.

Parents should drop off children inside the classroom **ONLY** if the teacher is present, and no more that 10 minutes before the start of class. Children should not be dropped off outside in front of the school.

After school

Classes are scheduled for one hour right after school. The FLES Introductory class is actually 45 minutes long, but is scheduled for one hour because we include a 15 minute transition/snack time to allow for a drink, snack and bathroom visit.

15 minute snack time is supervised by the FLES teacher in the FLES classroom before class. Parents are asked to send a simple dry snack with their children on the day they have FLES class.

Classes are announced over the school's intercom and children walk to their FLES classroom after the regular school day.

Parents should pick up children FROM THE CLASSROOM or from inside the school's front entrance depending on the school's policy for pick up from afternoon activities.

FLES teachers are expected to stay with students until picked up by parents.

B. Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced Levels - 24 weeks

Classes are scheduled to begin the week starting **Monday, October 4th**, and end before the close of the school year. (Tuesday classes begin the 5th, Wednesday classes on the 6th, and so on) Classes follow the school calendar.

Classes meet once a week, before or after school, for one hour at a time, for 24 weeks.

Before school

Classes are scheduled for one hour right before school. Set time to allow children 5 minutes to get to their regularly scheduled school day class

Parents should drop off children inside the classroom **ONLY** if the teacher is present, and no more that 10 minutes before the start of class. Children should not be dropped off outside in front of the school.

After school

Classes are announced by intercom at the end of the regular school day, and students walk to their FLES classroom. Set time to allow children 5 minutes to get from their regularly scheduled school day class. This should allow time for a drink and a bathroom visit.

FLES teachers are expected to stay with students until picked up by parents.

C. Middle School Level - 24 weeks

Students who have taken two years of Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced in elementary school are eligible for the middle school FLES class.

Classes are scheduled to begin the week starting **Monday, October 4th**. Classes follow the school calendar are usually completed by the end of May.

Classes meet once a week for one hour at a time, for 24 weeks.

Classes are scheduled for one hour right after school.

Classes are offered on the day the activity bus is available.

VI. Important Considerations

A. The FLES Class Schedule and the School Calendar

FLES classes held in Montgomery County follow the MCPS calendar, classes in Baltimore County follow the BCPS calendar and those in Washington, DC follow the DCPS calendar. FLES classes are held only on school days according to each calendar.

On days when school is closed for students, there are no FLES classes.

When school openings are delayed, morning FLES classes are cancelled, but afternoon classes still do take place.

On early release days, or in case of weather or other unscheduled early release, afternoon FLES classes are cancelled.

Please note that on the FLES website home page, www.fles.org, there are links to the MCPS, BCPS and DCPS websites for any information on weather or emergency related changes to your school's schedule.

B. Workbooks, Progress Reports and Certificates of Achievement

At the Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced Levels, each student will receive a workbook that he or she will use in class during the school year. The cost of the workbook is included in the program fee, but students will be charged a \$5.00 fee for replacement copies.

FLES workbooks are designed to reinforce concepts and vocabulary learned in class. Progress updates are distributed two times per year to keep parents informed about their child's attendance, participation and comprehension in class. On the last day of FLES class, children receive Certificates and Diplomas to celebrate their participation in the program.

C. Student Patrols who participate in FLES classes

FLES Teachers are aware that 4th - 5th graders may have patrol duty before or after school. We encourage parents to ask that their child to be excused from patrol duty on the day of FLES class. FLES teachers will dismiss children to patrol duty, but they will need permission to do so in the form of a written request from the school or parent that will be sent home on the first day of class via backpack.

D. FLES Classroom visits and Teacher Supervisions

To ensure the highest quality of instruction, and to provide year-round support to our teachers, the FLES supervisory staff visits each teacher in the classroom at least two times per year. Supervisors mentor their teachers throughout the school year, and also work in the office to develop curriculum, interview and train prospective FLES teachers and make recommendations for teacher placement. Your comments about how our FLES teachers are performing are always welcome throughout the year.

VII. MCCPTA-EPI FLES Policies

A. PTA Payment

PTA payment checks for the FLES classes must be received prior to the start of a class.

B. Tuition Refunds

Once a child is registered for a FLES class and a payment has been received, there will be no refunds unless the class does not start due to insufficient enrollment. In this case, the PTA FLES Coordinator will return tuition checks to parents.

C. Parent Late Pick-up

The FLES program is a private program operating outside of school day hours. Parents are required to pick up their children on time when they are released from classes. Security measures demand that parents consider this policy seriously. There are no provisions for supervising children when they are not actually in class and neither MCCPTA-EPI FLES nor the school can assume responsibility for them. Parents who fail to pick up their children on time will be asked to withdraw them without a refund after the second "late pick up" offense.

Note: Teachers arrive 15 minutes before class begins in order to set up and to oversee the arrival of students. For morning classes, each child is dismissed to their regular school day after FLES class. After school, Introductory Level students are dismissed after class to their parent or guardian – in person, unless they are in the school's after care. If this is the case, parents will coordinate the responsibility with the aftercare provider. It is imperative for the safety and security of each child that a teacher stay with the students until the last child has left the classroom with a parent or guardian, or has gone to after care. Level I-III students may have permission to walk home, or may take the school's activity bus.

D. Photos and Video Recordings

Photos and video recordings of the classroom may be taken periodically throughout the year by FLES administrative staff and will be used for MCCPTA-EPI FLES purposes only.

E. Emergency Procedures

FLES requires that the teacher to ask the FLES Coordinator must inform the FLES teacher for the school's policy on Emergency or Code Blue/Red procedures. Schools' responses differ in regard to emergency situations, depending upon their proximity to or extent of involvement in a particular specific emergency situation.

VIII. FLES Activities throughout the Year

Throughout the school year, the PTA FLES Coordinator remains active and available to assist the FLES teacher as needed to inform parents of the following events and activities.

Please note that teachers may ask for the PTA Coordinator's help in informing parents about these events and activities. Your assistance in facilitating this communication between teacher and parents is always a great help since you are part of the school community!

A. FLES Open Houses

Two Open Houses for the Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced classes are held each year. These Open Houses are regular classes, open to visiting parents. The first Open House is traditionally held the third week of November and the second will take place in April. FLES teachers will confirm the dates for the Open Houses with the PTA FLES Coordinator and invite parents by email.

Two Introductory Level Open Houses are held each year. The first is held on the 10th lesson, which coincides with the end of the first "story" and the second is held on the 20th lesson, which is the last day of class for the Introductory Level. FLES teachers will confirm the dates for the Open Houses with the PTA FLES Coordinator and invite parents by email.

As a courtesy, please notify your school secretary that parents will be attending the Open Houses. And, please invite your Principal, too!

B. Make up classes

Make up classes are scheduled in early spring if there had been any cancellations due to weather or teacher absence. FLES will make the appropriate changes with the ICB.

Classroom availability must be confirmed with the school secretary. Make certain that the school office has the revised FLES schedule so the morning and afternoon announcements are correct! The teacher may request your help with communicating changes in class schedule to parents.

F. Writing Projects & Embassy and Cultural Center Visits

For the past several years, we have had the opportunity to work with the Embassy of France and the Embassy of Spain on a writing project that we have included as part of the curriculum. In the spring, Advanced Level Spanish and French students have traditionally been invited to visit the Spanish Embassy and French Ambassador's Residence. Chinese students have had the opportunity to perform in a community Chinese New Year Celebration and will be invited in the spring to a local Chinese art and culture event. We will continue to make these experiences possible for our students each year!

IX. FLES Class Participation in School Events

A. International Night

Most schools hold an “International Night” celebration. FLES students traditionally sing, recite a short poem or skit – which is wonderful recognition for the students!

If the PTA would like FLES students and teachers to participate, please inform the teacher of the day and time of this school event well in advance, so there is time to prepare!

B. School Picnics or Back to School Night Presentations

To make sure that everyone in your school community knows about the FLES Program at your school, it is a good idea to have the FLES program represented at picnics, socials or at Back to School Night. As early as possible, make arrangements with your PTA to have a table set up with FLES flyers and registration forms. The FLES staff is always available to come out to talk with your PTA anytime during the school year.

C. Kindergarten Orientation

Each school has its own process at Kindergarten Orientation time. Please let us know how we can best help you inform the Kindergarten parents about this wonderful foreign language opportunity!

X. List of FLES Forms

Each of the following forms or letters will be available to download for copying and distribution from our website www.fles.org by August 1st, 2010. A personalized Registration Form for your school's program will be mailed to you in August. Please call the FLES Office if you have any questions.

FLES Monthly Newsletter

Important source of updates and reminders sent by email to each FLES Teacher and PTA Coordinator throughout the year

FLES Flyer

To be copied on the back of each registration form

Registration Form

PTA Coordinator fills in days, times of offerings as soon as they receive these details in August

Class Roster – Elementary and Middle School

Includes the essential personal and emergency information of each student

Confirmation Letter – Introductory, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, Middle

PTA FLES Coordinator emails this letter to the parent of each student enrolled. Letter confirms that payment has been received and that class will start. Letter includes the start date of the FLES class. Middle School Level is confirmed by email.

Program Evaluations

Evaluation forms are emailed to parents by the PTA Coordinator. Completed forms are forwarded to the FLES office.

To be completed by the parents:

Parent Evaluation of Introductory Level

Parent Evaluation of Beginner, Intermediate Advanced and Middle School Level

To be completed by the coordinator:

PTA Coordinator Evaluation of Introductory Level

PTA Coordinator Evaluation of Beginner, Intermediate Advanced and Middle School Level

Program Request

Details the PTAs requests for the upcoming year's program

