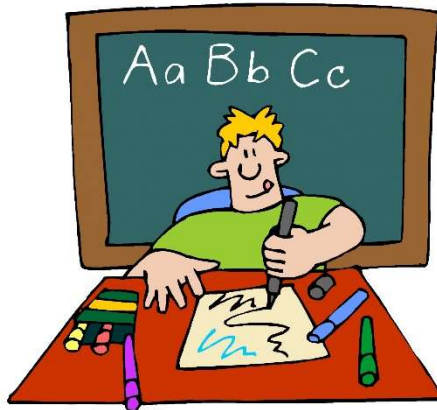


Mix-and-Match

*Differences and Similarities
between
Latin American
and United States
Public Education Systems*

Question

When **you** were in the 5th year of school
(wherever that took place),
how was that grade level classified?
(primary, elementary, intermediate,
primaria, elemental...)



Structure of education in Spanish-speaking Latin America

- Content and levels are regulated by the Ministry or Department of Education
- Consistent across the country
- Include allowances for special circumstances (rural, disabled, homebound, etc.)
- Most have been fundamentally changed within the last 25 years

Structure of Education Systems

Country	(PK) / K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Argentina	Inicial	Primaria						P/S	Secundaria					
Bolivia	Inicial Escolarizada	Primaria comunitaria vocacional						Secundaria comunitaria productiva						
Chile	Parvularia	Básica						Media						
Colombia	Inicial	Básica Primaria				Básica secundaria				Media				
Costa Rica	Preescolar	Básica Primaria						Básica secundaria		Diversificada (2-3)				
Cuba	Preescolar	Primaria						Secundaria Básica		Preuniversitaria				
Dominican Rep.	Inicial	Básica						Secundaria						
Ecuador	Preparatoria	Básica Elemental			Básica Media			Básica Superior		Bachillerato				
El Salvador	Parvularia	Básica								Media (2-3)				
Guatemala	Preprimaria	Primaria-fundamental			Primar.-complementaria			Básica		Diversificada (2-3)				
Honduras	Preescolar	Primaria						Secund. Ciclo Común		Secund. Divers. (2-3)				
Mexico	Preescolar	Primaria						Secundaria		Preparatoria o Bachillerato				
Nicaragua	Preescolar	Primaria - fundamental				Primaria 2 ^{do} ciclo		Secundaria básica		Diversificada				
Panama	Preescolar	Primaria						Pre-Media		Media				
Paraguay	Inicial	Básica (3 ciclos)								Media				
Peru	Inicial	Primaria						Secun.Gral.	Secundaria Diversificada					
Puerto Rico		Elemental						Secundaria (Media)		Secundaria (Superior)				
Uruguay	Preescolar	Primaria						Media o Secundaria Básico		Media o Secundaria Bachillerato				
Venezuela	Preescolar	Básica (3 ciclos)								Media (diversificada y funcional)				

Let's go back to that question:



If your child were in the 5th year at the same school today, would the classification be the same?

Structure of education in the United States of America

- Federal government determines basic rights (language access, special education, disability access, etc.), provides some funding
- State government determines content, provides some funding
- Individual district (with some varying guidance from the state education agency) determines delivery, environment, extracurricular activities*, provides some funding. In some states, districts may also have some Regional level of oversight.

** Extracurricular competitions are governed by a variety of entities, depending on the type of competition*

Districts

- Determine number and type of schools
- Hire teachers and paraprofessionals
- Determine how grade levels will be divided (elementary, intermediate, junior high, etc.)
- Determine what extracurricular activities will be sponsored, subject to state and federal laws
- Determine the school year terms and grading cycles (6 weeks, 9 weeks, trimester/semester, etc.)

More about Districts...

- Governed by a Superintendent and a Board of Trustees (School Board)
- Trustees (Directors) are elected officials
- Superintendent is hired by the Board
- Set dress codes and rules for student conduct, subject to state and federal laws
- Establish punishments, subject to federal and state law
- Make safety decisions (such as having police officers on staff)

Wait.....we're not done!

- Contract special services when necessary
- Coordinate with external organizations to provide Special Education services (eg., local services for the blind)
- May provide classes for parents, particularly for those whose children have special needs
- Etc.

....ok now we're done!



But keep in mind:

The specific levels of service, the choice to offer certain services, and the manner in which they are delivered vary:

From State to State

From County to County

From District to District



*Which means that no matter how much you know, there's probably more you don't know about an school client until you establish a **relationship.***

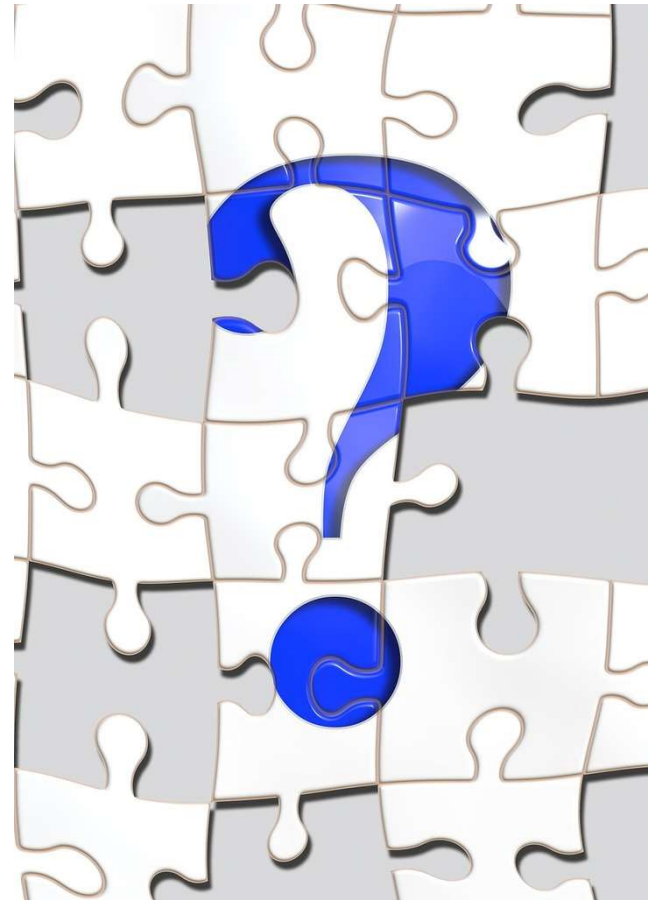
Question

In the United States education system, what does a student have to complete to become a Junior?

Common grade level divisions

- PreK (federal rules apply if free)
- Elementary: grades K-3, sometimes K-4...or 5...or 6
- Intermediate: grades 3-5, 4-6 or 5-6
- Middle: grades 6-8
- Junior High: grades 6-8, 7-8, 7-9
- High School: grades 7-12 or 9-12 or 10-12
- Senior High School: grades 10-12 or 11-12

Where do
Freshman,
Sophomore,
Junior &
Senior fit in?



Freshman: has completed 30 credit hours

Sophomore: has completed 60 credit hours

Junior: has completed 90 credit hours

Senior: from 91 credit hours through graduation

(So someone who is 10th grade might or might not be a sophomore; if they have enough credits, they might be a junior.)

Let's talk Special Education

Question

A student is placed in Special Education because he or she has a low IQ – True or False?

False !!!

- Special Ed (aka Special Education, aka SPED) covers any special service due to:
- intellectual,
- cognitive,
- learning,
- physical,
- emotional,
- language,
- or other challenges

A few things about Special Ed

- Subject to federal regulations
- Access to federal funding, including Medicaid, to pay for therapy, language access services, equipment and more for low-income families
- Contracts outside services when necessary, such as when the district does not have the necessary personnel (speech therapists, autism specialists, braille instructors, psychologists, etc.
- Coordinates services with outside agencies

Question

What does IEP stand for?

- 1) Individual, Educator & Parent
- 2) Interim Exploratory Plan
- 3) Internal Education Proposal
- 4) Individualized Education Program ✓

IEPs

(established by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

- Federally mandated
- Produced by committee (teachers, parent, etc.)
- Parent participation - must agree to the plan
- Meetings and services must be documented
- If an entity receives federal funds, it must make reasonable efforts to provide language access to LEPs.

LEPs?

Weren't we talking about IEPs?

Yes, we were. But now let's talk about LEPs:
Limited English Proficient Individuals.

www.lep.gov

Offers important information about government rules on language access for non-English speakers.

Like this
whole series:

Translation and Interpretation Procurement Series



Before You Hire - Ask Yourself: "What are my Project's Language Needs?" - TIPS to making language service hiring decisions. (PDF)



TIPS on Hiring the Right Telephonic Interpretation Vendor - TIPS to finding a high-quality telephone interpretation vendor. (PDF)



TIPS for Working with Telephone Interpreters - TIPS for planning, placing, and troubleshooting phone-calls with telephone interpreters. (PDF)



What Does it Mean to be a Certified Linguist? - TIPS to discovering vendor and linguist qualifications. (PDF)

My favorite:



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A *CERTIFIED* LINGUIST?



TRUST ME, I'M A
CERTIFIED INTERPRETER!

WHAT THIS *SHOULD* MEAN:

- Certification documentation should indicate: the certifying or assessment body (e.g., NCSC, NAJIT, FCIP, ILR), any subject area expertise (e.g., medical, conference, or court/legal), the proficiency level (e.g., master, novice, or a number score indicating proficiency), and specific language combination(s) assessed (e.g., Spanish/English).
- Interpreter scored passing marks on assessments in speaking, listening, and/or interpretation performance in the target language(s) and English.
- Interpreter maintains valid certification through continued work training, and/or continuing education credits.
- Interpreter completed a requisite number of hours interpreting.



TRUST ME, I'M A
CERTIFIED TRANSLATOR!

WHAT THIS *SHOULD* MEAN:

- Certification documentation should indicate: the certifying or assessment body (e.g., NCSC, ATA, NAJIT, ILR), any subject area expertise (e.g., medical, conference, or court/legal), the proficiency level (e.g., master, novice, or a number score indicating proficiency), and the specific language combination(s) assessed by translation testing *and the direction* of translation permitted (e.g., Spanish→English, English→Spanish).
- Translator scored passing marks on assessments in reading, writing, and/or translation performance in the target language(s) and English.
- Translator maintains valid certification through continued work training, and/or continuing education credits.
- Translator demonstrated mastery of English grammar and usage in addition to grammar and usage in the target language.

BEWARE – NOT ALL CERTIFICATIONS ARE THE SAME: ***If You Don't Ask, "CERTIFIED" COULD MEAN:***

- The linguist received his/her certification years earlier, and has not maintained the certification or his/her language skills.
- The linguist is a practicing interpreter and translator, but is only certified in one skill (e.g., translation, *but not* interpretation).
- The linguist is certified in one field (e.g., medical), but is *not certified* to provide language services in the required field (e.g., legal).
- The linguist is not certified, but is instead "registered," "licensed," or "qualified" by the certifying body through a less rigorous process.
- The translator is certified in only one language direction (Spanish→English), and is *not certified* to translate in the other (English→Spanish).
- The linguist received his/her certification, without training or prior experience, from an online open-book exam (or other unsuitable assessment).
- The linguist received an inadequate certification that did not assess the necessary skills (e.g., the "certified translator" was never assessed in reading).

QUESTIONS TO ASK A CERTIFIED LINGUIST:

- ☐ Are you a certified translator? Interpreter? Or both?
- ☐ What did your certification process entail?
- ☐ Which certifying authority or organization granted the certification?
- ☐ In which language(s) or language combination(s) are you certified?
- ☐ Are there any limitations to your certification?
- ☐ How much experience do you have interpreting/translating?
- ☐ Are you required to maintain your certification with experience or continuing education?

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR LANGUAGE SERVICES VENDOR:

- ☐ What baseline qualifications do you require your linguists to have?
- ☐ How often do you assess your linguists or vet their work?
- ☐ How do you determine whether a linguist is qualified for a job?
- ☐ Do you keep records of client complaints?
- ☐ How do you address client complaints?
- ☐ How do you verify your linguists have and maintain certification?
- ☐ What remedy do you offer clients if a linguist makes an error?
- ☐ What happens to a linguist if he/she has made substantial errors?

Why so much focus on Special Education?



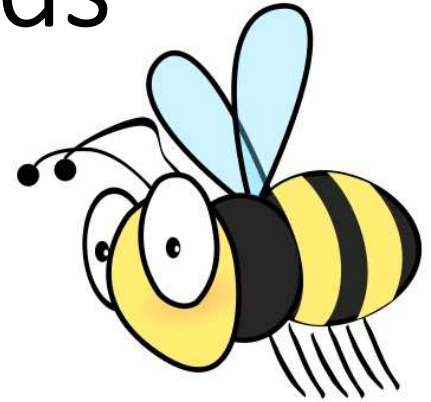
Because SPED can require significant support from translators and interpreters.

Any SPED service might involve documents from an immigrant child's home country (medical records, psychological history, test results, etc.)

Other ways schools need us

- Medical records when a child becomes ill while traveling
- Academic records when a child enters the district
- Letters from parents or guardians
- Interpreters are needed for IEP meetings, parent conferences, parent education sessions, disciplinary hearings, PTA meetings, interactions with the school board, etc.

A few terms & buzzwords



- **Endorsements or specializations** - an increasing trend in U.S. schools, making students more competitive for trades or universities.
- **Magnet or specialized schools/programs** - focus on specific areas, such as Engineering or Dance.
- **Vocational vs. college-prep tracks**
- **AP, Dual Credit** - college credit while in High School

Title I - low-income (No Child Left Behind)

Title VI - language access (Civil Rights Act)

Section 504 - disability (Rehabilitation Act)



Truancy - a legal concept that includes cumulative absence from school without permission, that cannot be excused for medical or other approved reasons, in a manner that violates the law.

A very few Spanish>English pitfalls

- Preparatoria
- Secundaria
- Colegio
- Profesor
- Tesis, especialización, técnico en...
- Escuela, academia, colegio, liceo, instituto...
- Bachiller

Spanish Resources

- Ministry or Department of Education website for the source country
- School websites in the source district or region (check 2 or 3)
- Domain-restricted Google searches
- A simple starting (but not ending) place: Universia (search “universia” “estructura sistema educativo” and the name of the country)

English Resources

- Department of Education
- State Departments of Education or Education Agencies
- Title I - low-income (No Child Left Behind)
- Title VI - language access (Civil Rights Act)
- Section 504 - disability (Rehabilitation Act)

To wrap this up...

	<u>Latin America</u>	<u>United States</u>
Price	Free	Free
Rights	National law	Federal & state law
Content	National	State & district
Structure	National	State & district
Special Ed	Most	All
Grade levels	National	District

	<u>Latin America</u>	<u>United States</u>
Obligatory	Yes, but ages vary by country	Ages 6-18 (19)
Truancy	Limited	Enforced
Extracurriculars	Varies by country	All
Specialization	Yes	Yes, with push toward occupational as alternate to college

Thank you!



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