

D211 POST: DISTRICT 211 ADDS JAPANESE LANGUAGE COURSE THROUGH ONLINE CLASSROOM



Students at James B. Conant and Schaumburg High School have been involved in a new style of classroom this semester. They gather in their respective school's media centers where they log into Blackboard where they engage online with a Japanese language instructor at Harper College. This is the District's first step into adding online classes to the curriculum.

Conant High School Senior Emma Rogers said she was happy to see the District use the online course option to add Japanese to the curriculum.

"When I was in elementary school, my mother put me in the dual language program. Ever since then, we have been a Japanese program," she said. "When I got to high school, they didn't have it. As soon as they added it, I chose to take it to continue my Japanese learning."

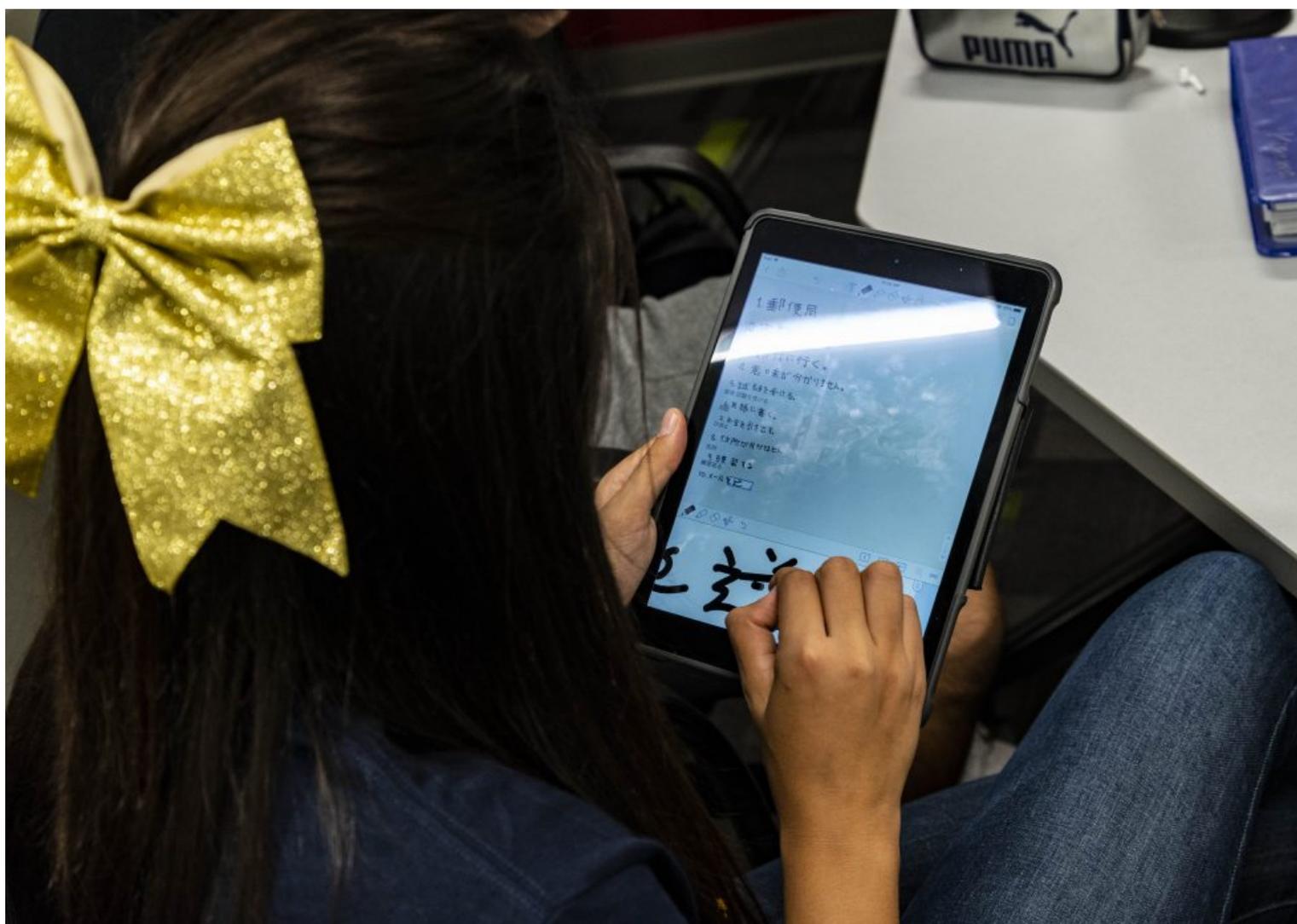
Dr. Danielle Hauser, District 211 Director of Instructional Improvement, said the District explored options for students to continue once they moved from District 54 to District 211.

“We encouraged students to take the Seal of Biliteracy in their native language and the target language. In addition, we encouraged students to participate in internships where they would be able to continue in their language acquisition skills,” Hauser said. “All along that time, we have been seeking opportunities to continue coursework in the Japanese language.

Hauser said Harper College was willing to partner with District 211 to establish what would ultimately become one of the District’s newest dual credit course.

Starting in the spring of 2018, representatives from Harper College and District 211 tested a variety of programs to see which would be the easiest to integrate the high school students into the college’s online course. Hauser said they ultimately chose Blackboard, which Harper currently uses for multiple classes. This allows the students to log in to the class from both their iPads and a central station in the classroom.

For Rogers, whose mother is half Japanese, having the course available has helped rebuild her vocabulary and is helping her brush up her technique.



A student at James B. Conant High School submits answers to a question asked during her online Japanese class.

“I noticed after freshman year, by not having the course available, caused by vocabulary to diminish,” she said. “At home, my mom speaks to me in

Japanese and I would have to respond in English. Being in a class which forces me to use Japanese every day has been very helpful.”

Dr. Hauser said an unexpected benefit to this online course is the students are exposed to an online system used by many colleges. She said when the students go on to college, they are now familiar with programs most first year college students haven’t used. She added that the District was pleased to offer students a way to continue a program they began in elementary school and can continue into college.

“District 211 is very excited to offer students an opportunity to continue their Japanese acquisition skills after many years in the dual language program while gaining the benefits of course credits on both their high school and college transcripts,” Hauser said.

Rogers said she has plans to continue her studies after graduating from Conant.

“After high school I plan to major in aviation while minoring in Japanese,” she said.