**World Languages Curriculum**

Learning other languages and understanding the culture of the people who speak them is a 21st Century skill that is vital to success in the global environment in which our students will live and work. In a 2006 report entitled, ***Education for Global Leadership: The Importance of International Studies and Foreign Languages for U.S. Economic and National Security****,*the Committee for Economic Development (CED) stated “To confront the twenty-first century challenges to our economy and national security, our education system must be strengthened to increase the foreign language skills and cultural awareness of our students. America’s continued global leadership will depend on our students’ abilities to interact with the world community both inside and outside our borders.” For college and career readiness, our students need to be proficient in other languages, regardless of whether they choose to transition directly to the workforce or to post-secondary education.

Language education not only contributes to students’ career and college readiness, it also helps develop the individual as language learners take on a new and more invigorating view of the world. They come to understand the world better because of their knowledge of speakers of another language – of people who share many of the same hopes and dreams for their future. While perspectives may differ among speakers of different languages, more similarities exist than we might imagine. However, it is only through knowing the language of others that we can truly understand how they view the world. *(21st Century World Languages Skill Map)*

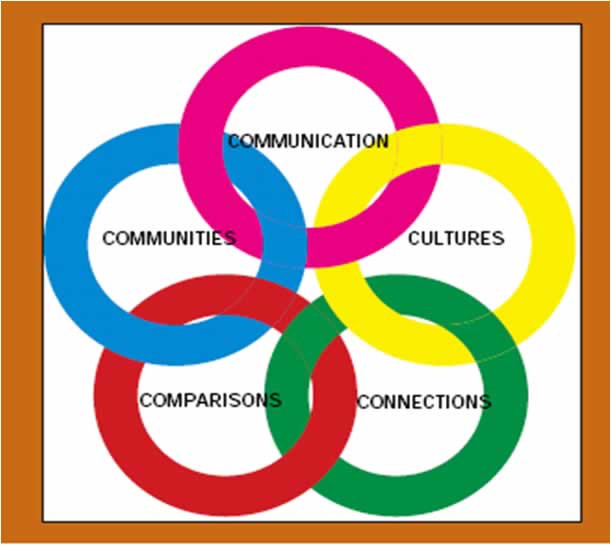
**Enduring Understandings**

* Effective communication requires knowing how when and why to say what to whom.
* Global citizenship requires an ability to communicate in more than one language.
* An ability to communicate in another language fosters a better understanding of my own language and culture.
* Proficiency in a foreign language is a vehicle to gaining knowledge that can only be acquired through that language and its culture.
* Learning other languages enables an individual to participate in multilingual communities.
* The purpose of language study is to communicate so I can understand others and they can understand me.
* The study of a foreign language develops insights into the nature of language and culture.
* Custom and tradition vary within a culture, as well as between cultures.

**Essential Questions**

* What does it mean to communicate effectively?
* How do I develop proficiency in a second language?
* What is culture? How can I develop a multi-cultural perspective?
* Why do I value the ability to communicate in a second language?
* What self-knowledge am I acquiring as I study another language and its cultures?

Explanation of National Standards



The language teaching community has reached strong consensus regarding the goals of a language program: to develop students’ language proficiency around modes of communicative competence reflecting real life communication. This is reflected in the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century in the opening statement, “Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience.” The national standards of five goals (the 5 Cs) that focus language learning on:

**Communication:** The ability to convey and receive messages based on the three modes of communication; interpersonal, or two-way interaction with someone else; interpretive, the ability to understand and interpret a one-way aural or written text; and presentational, the ability to present information in either a written or oral format. These modes reflect how people communicate in real life.

Standard 1.1- Interpersonal Communication: Students engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feeling and emotion, and exchange opinions.

Standard 1.2 – Interpretive Communication: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

Standard 1.3 – Presentational Communication: Students present information, concepts and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety or topics.

**Cultures:** As the teaching of language and culture are inextricably intertwined, students learn to understand the culture of the people who speak the target language through learning about the products and practices of the culture and how those relate to the perspectives of the people of that culture.

Standard 2.1 – Practices and Perspective: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

Standard 2.2 – Products and Perspectives: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

**Connections:** Students are able to access knowledge in other disciplines through the target language and to reinforce concepts already learned in these disciplines in the language classroom.

Standard 3.1 – Knowledge of Other Disciplines: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Standard 3.2 – Distinctive Viewpoints: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

**Comparisons:** As students learn a new language and culture, they develop insight into their own language and culture, thus providing them with a deeper understanding of how language works and how cultures reflect the perspectives, practices, and products of the people who speak that language.

Standard 4.1 – Nature of Language: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

Standard 4.2 – Culture: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

**Communities:** Language learning becomes even more purposeful for students when they  
see the application beyond the classroom. With today’s communication technologies, language classrooms can bring the world to the students, as teachers provide opportunities for students to use the language beyond the confines of their classroom walls.

Standard 5.1 – Beyond the School Setting: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

Standard 5.2 – Life-long Learners: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Explanation of State Foreign Language Standards

The *Illinois Learning Standards for Foreign Languages,* and the Illinois State Goals 28, 29 & 30 are based on the 1999 *National Standards for Foreign Language Learning*.

**State Goal 28: Communication**

*Use the target language to communicate within and beyond the classroom setting****.***

1. Understand oral communication in the target language.
2. Interact in the target language in various settings.
3. Understand written passages in the target language.
4. Use the target language to present information, concepts and ideas for a variety of purposes to different audiences.

**State Goal 29:** **Culture and Geography**

*Use the target language to develop an understanding of the customs, arts, literature, history and geography associated with the target language.*

1. Understand manners and customs of various target language societies.
2. Understand music, dance, folk art, visual art, drama and architecture related to the target language societies.
3. Understand literature and various media of target language societies.
4. Understand history of areas where the target language is spoken.
5. Understand geography of various target language societies.

**State Goal 30: Connections and Applications**

*Use the target language to make connections and reinforce knowledge and skills across academic, vocational and technical disciplines****.***

1. Use the target language to reinforce and further knowledge of other disciplines.
2. Use the target language to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a variety of career options.

Other Standards that Impact Foreign Language Curriculum

21st Century Skills World Language Standards

The language classroom in the U.S. has been transformed in the last 20 years to reflect an increasing emphasis on developing students’ communicative competence. Unlike the classroom that required students to know a great deal of information about the language but did not have an expectation of language use, today’s classroom is about teaching languages so that students use them to communicate with native speakers of the language. This is what prepares them to use their language learning as a 21st Century Skill. The 21st Century Skills stresses 4 key skills – Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving and Creativity and Innovation. The intersection between World Languages and the 21st Century Skills for these 4 key skills is explained in the table that appears below.

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| --- | --- |
| **21st Century Skills** | **World Language Classrooms** |
| Communication | Students as effective communicators use languages to engage in meaningful conversation, to understand and interpret spoken language and written text, and to present information, concepts, and ideas. |
| Collaboration | Students as collaborators use their native and acquired languages to learn from and work cooperatively across cultures with global team members, sharing responsibility and making necessary compromises while working toward a common goal. |
| Critical Thinking and Problem Solving | Students as inquirers frame, analyze, and synthesize information as well as negotiate meaning across language and culture in order to explore problems and issues from their own and different perspectives. |
| Creativity and Innovation | Students as creators and innovators respond to new and diverse perspectives. They use language in imaginative and original ways to make useful contributions. |

The Complete World Languages Skill Map can be found at: http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/Skills%20Map/p21\_worldlanguagesmap.pdf

Correlation of World Language Standards to Common Core (ELA) Standards

The Common Core strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening are captured in the standards for learning languages’ goal area of Communication, by emphasizing the purpose behind the communication:

* Interpersonal (*speaking + listening* or *writing +reading*)
* Interpretive (*reading, listening, viewing*)
* Presentational (*writing, speaking*)

In addition, the standards of the other four goals areas for learning languages – Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities – also support and are aligned with the Common Core.

The Common Core strand of Language is described for language learners through proficiency levels that outline three key benchmarks achieved in world language programs: novice, intermediate and advanced. The Common Core standards for Language and the benchmark proficiency descriptions both consider Conventions, Knowledge of Language and Vocabulary. Many factors influence the rate of progress through these proficiency levels and the level learners acquire by the end of a high school program. Chief among these factors are time and the degree of immersion in the foreign language.

Both proficiency and performance descriptors for foreign languages also consider the key standards of reading found in the Common Core: Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas and Range of Reading and Text Complexity. Both also support a balance of literary and informational text at all levels of instruction.

Foreign Language descriptors for Writing also address the key standards identified by Common Core: Text Type and Purposes, Production and Distribution of Writing, Research to Build and Present Knowledge, and Range of Writing. Both standards support a balance of writing to explain, persuade, and to convey experience.

Finally, both the Common Core and Foreign Language standards address the standards for Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration, and Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas.

The complete document Alignment of the National Standards for Learning Languages with the Common Core State Standards can be found at: <http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Aligning_CCSS_Language_Standards_v6.pdf>

Explanation of Proficiency

What does it mean to be proficient in a language?When we say that someone is proficient in a language, we generally mean that they are able to communicate in the language. Proficiency does not mean perfection. Proficiency is an ongoing target. Students are continuously in the process of learning to control aspects of language. For students to advance in proficiency, it’s important to make certain that the curriculum focuses on meaningful language, language that will be used in authentic ways.

The actual proficiency level of a language speaker is dependent on:

* the number of language functions or tasks in the control of the learner
* the number of social contexts and specific content areas where the learner is comfortable
* the type of text or discourse that the speaker is able to use, and
* the degree of accuracy and the comprehensibility of the text

ACTFL uses an inverted pyramid to explain how students advance toward greater proficiency. Instruction for proficiency requires consistent spiral to use, recycle and expand linguistic features over several levels of instruction. Detailed information on the proficiency guidelines can be found at: <http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org>

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| --- | --- |
| **By the end of 8th grade students will be able to:** | |
| **1. Interpretive Communication**  Students use language to understand and interpret authentic written and spoken language. | * demonstrate an understanding that is limited to the broadest description of the main idea; no accurate identification of supporting ideas exists * Identify cultural background of target culture only if teacher calls attention to the concepts |
| **2. Interpersonal Communication**  Students use language to engage in meaningful, unrehearsed conversation and/or informal written exchanges. They ask and answer questions in order to provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions. | * make good use of new vocabulary; variety of vocabulary in current group; complete task * use words, phrases and memorized sentences * demonstrate level appropriate control of taught structures * cause occasional misunderstandings with errors in pronunciation and intonation that occasionally affect comprehension * comprehend isolated phrases * respond to basic direct questions and ask questions to maintain the conversation; hesitations occur * Imitate the use of culturally appropriate vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and non-verbal behaviors modeled by the teacher |
| **3. Presentational Communication**  Students use language to present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics. | * make good use of new vocabulary; use a variety of vocabulary from previous topics; complete task * use lists of words and learned phrases; * demonstrate level appropriate control of taught structures * cause occasional misunderstandings; errors occasionally affect comprehension even for sympathetic readers/listeners * use gestures or visuals to help audience understand message |

# Principles for Effective Language Instruction

# Adapted from NADSFL (National Association of Supervisors of Foreign Language) and NBPTS (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards)

## Curriculum

## The curriculum is standards-based, thematically organized and aligned with instruction and assessment.

## There is a clearly stated curriculum known by the teachers.

## The curriculum is used when planning and implementing units and lessons.

## The curriculum drives instruction. The textbook is only a tool.

## The curriculum is aligned and articulated horizontally and vertically within the program.

## The language curriculum integrates language, culture and content in a thematic context.

## The teacher explicitly states objectives in terms of language functions so that students will know what they are expected to learn and how they will use what they have learned by lesson’s end.

Instruction

* The target language is used for instruction at least 90% of the time, 100% of the time in an immersion setting.
* New vocabulary is presented in a meaningful context. Vocabulary is not taught or practiced through translation. Teachers avoid the use of translation by using a variety of verbal and non-verbal strategies such as circumlocution, body language, and visuals to enhance student comprehension.
* Teachers ensure meaningful interaction in the target language. There is clear evidence of opportunities for unrehearsed communication. In every class session, the teacher provides pair and/or small group activities that engage students in using the language for meaningful communication.
* The teacher teaches grammar as a tool for communication. It is not the focus or the goal of the course, unit, or lesson. Students engage in activities that go beyond memorization, drills and regurgitation of information.
* There is more student talk than teacher talk as appropriate to the level of instruction.
* Teachers differentiate instruction based on learner need.
* The classroom is organized to facilitate learning and is free of clutter.

Assessment

## Teachers assess student learning using performance-based assessment. Students receive feedback on how to improve their performance.

* Teachers implement formative and summative assessments in all 3 communicative modes.
* Teachers design communicative tasks that have real world value outside of classroom.
* Teachers provide opportunities for self-assessment.

## Teachers differentiate assessment based on learner need.

Professionalism

* Teachers show a willingness to engage in self-reflection and are open to new ideas.

## Teachers are involved in a sustained program of professional development.

Teaching Strategies

Interpretive

The interpretive mode is characterized by the appropriate cultural interpretation of meaning that occurs in written and spoken form where there is no recourse to the active negotiation of meaning with the writer or speaker. When interpreting spoken and written texts, students synthesize information from a variety of authentic texts. Authentic texts are those texts that were created for speakers of the language. Students develop interpretive skills by:

* Recalling or reviewing what is known about the topic
* Reading materials related to the topic
* Reacting to visual cues such as pictures, maps, graphs or charts
* Predicting content of text
* Verifying predictions and checking that guesses are correct
* Activating language structures or vocabulary
* Brainstorming
* Asking questions
* Making connections – text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world
* Identifying and explaining key words, sentences or concepts
* Identifying main idea and supporting details
* Creating visuals to represent text
* Matching visuals to text
* Ordering the sequence of information
* Completing KWL charts
* Creating or matching a title/headline to the text
* Expanding headlines
* Completing grids, graphs, charts, pictures or diagrams
* Identifying inferences
* Stating opinions and defending those opinions using text evidence
* Identifying author point of view
* Identifying purpose of text
* Identifying structure of text
* Summarizing text
* Paraphrasing text

Interpersonal

The interpersonal mode is characterized by active negotiation of meaning among individuals. Participants observe and monitor one another to see how their meanings and intentions are being communicated. Adjustments and clarifications can be made accordingly. Students develop interpersonal skills by:

* Participating in pair or group work
* Completing information gap activities
* Role playing with peers
* Debating
* Asking questions
* Practicing circumlocution
* Paraphrasing
* Exchanging information
* Conducting interviews
* Discussing images
* Writing formal and informal emails/text messages
* Stating and supporting opinions in interactions
* Initiating and sustaining conversations
* Eliciting information and clarifying meaning
* Asking for clarification
* Using culturally appropriate expressions and gestures

Presentational

The presentational mode is characterized by the creation of written and spoken messages in a manner that facilitates interpretation by members of the other culture where no direct opportunity for the active negotiation of meaning exists. Students develop presentational skills by:

* Making simulated announcements
* Describing a sequence of actions with or without visual support
* Telling a short story
* Giving a short speech
* Speaking or writing about topics of personal interest
* Writing persuasive essays on academic topics
* Comparing and contrasting people, places and things
* Giving presentations with visual support
* Creating original works (short stories, movies, personal narratives, poems, songs)
* Writing for a specific audience
* Responding in writing to prompts
* Describing a picture
* Retelling or summarizing in narrative form
* Editing for content, organization and grammar
* Using reference tools appropriately

The AP Course for World Language and Culture

The AP Curriculum Framework for World Language and Culture does not require a prescribed curriculum or textbook. Instead the framework describes the modes of communication and names the course themes that constitute the organizing principles of AP world language and culture courses. The AP Curriculum stresses the importance of a curriculum that is vertical aligned from the first level of instruction. The six overarching themes are:

* global challenges
* science and technology
* contemporary life
* personal and public identities
* families and communities
* beauty and aesthetics

Each of these themes includes a set of recommended contexts to provide flexibility in resource selection and instructional exploration. The teachers ensure that the themes and topics they select are developmentally appropriate and intellectually engaging, scaffolding the content in ways that make it accessible for students at all levels of the curriculum.

Standards-Based Thematic Units

The curriculum for each year of study is divided into 4 thematic units. Each unit is guided by one or more essential questions allowing students to use language skills to learn more about themselves and about the world. Students are encouraged to explore topics beyond the classroom and every effort is made to connect students to speakers of the language outside of the classroom. Students are assessed throughout the unit on their ability to use the language and each unit of study culminates in a series of performance tasks designed to showcase what the student knows and can do with the language.