**ELIGIBILITY**

**Who is eligible to test?**
The test is open to current Northshore School District students grades 7 through 12.

**How do students know if they should take the test?**
If students can fluently read, write, speak and listen in a language other than English and can answer "Yes, I can do this fairly easily" to each statement, or “Yes, I can do this very easily” then they should consider testing. The test will assess these four areas. If a student cannot proficiently use the language in any of these areas, they should not test.

- **Listening**: I can understand ideas on familiar topics expressed through phrases, short sentences, and frequently used expressions.
- **Reading**: I can understand the main idea and some details in simple texts that contain familiar vocabulary.
- **Person-to-Person Communication**: I can exchange information with another person about familiar tasks, topics and activities.
- **Speaking**: I can use a series of phrases and sentences to provide basic information about familiar topics.
- **Writing**: I can write simple descriptions and short messages and request or provide information on familiar topics.

**What if a student can speak and listen in the target language but cannot read and write?**
Students must demonstrate proficiency in four areas: reading, writing, listening & speaking. If they do not have a high level of functionality in the language in all four areas, they should not test.

**Does the student have to be a native speaker of the language in which they will test?**
It is not necessary to be a native speaker of the language. However, it is encouraged that native speakers test if they believe they can demonstrate proficiency in all four areas.

**Can a student use the World Language Competency test for practice for the IB and/or AP language test?**
The test is for students who wish to demonstrate their language proficiency and are not planning to take an AP or IB language test. This is not a practice test for the AP or IB—the format and content of this test is quite different from what students will see on the AP or IB language test.

**Can a student test in more than one language?**
If a student can demonstrate proficiency in more than one language they can test in each of these languages. However, a student can only test in one language per testing date.

**What if a student has already taken a World Language Competency test through another OSPI approved site?**
If a student has already tested for proficiency in a World Language in another Washington State school district, please complete the [Request for Approval of Credit for Proficiency in a World Language](#) form for Northshore School District. Submit this form with a copy of the test results and official documentation to your school counselor.

**CREDITS, TESTING BENEFITS & HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS**

**What is the benefit of taking the test?**
Students can earn competency-based high school credits and may qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy on their high school transcript.

**How many credits can the student earn by demonstrating fluency in reading, writing, speaking and listening?**
Students will be able to earn up to four World Language competency credits, depending upon the level of proficiency they demonstrate on the assessments in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Because credits will be awarded based
on the lowest level of proficiency demonstrated across these skill areas, it is important for students to have strong skills in all four areas.

**Note:** If students have also earned class time credits in the same language in which they test for proficiency, only those credits in addition to the class credits, up to a possible total of four, will be added to the student's transcript. **Example:** The student has taken and passed two years of Spanish classes for two credits, and has also tested at a proficiency level earning him/her three competency credits in Spanish. One additional credit may be added to the student's transcript for a total of three credits (2 class credits, plus one additional competency credit).

**Will earning World Language competency credits through proficiency testing be considered on college applications?**
Having your language proficiency noted on your high school transcript is a valuable addition to any college application. However, colleges and universities determine their own policies about accepting credits attained through proficiency testing for either entrance requirements or placement in language courses. Students should check with their desired college or university to learn more about their policies regarding World Language competency credits.

**How will students get the credits added to their transcript?**
The district receives your test results within a few weeks of testing. You will receive a letter from the district with a copy of your test results indicating proficiency levels attained in the tested language and how many world language credits, if any, may be awarded. You will also receive a copy of the Request for Approval form (2409F). In order to get the credits you earned posted to your high school transcript, a completed Request for Approval form, along with your tests results and official documentation, need to be turned in to your school counselor.

**Will a failing test score be added to the student’s permanent high school transcript?**
No. Test results are not automatically added to a student’s transcript. Students will request the results be added to their transcript if they are seeking World Language competency credits with a passing test score and/or they are applying for the Seal of Biliteracy.

**SEAL OF BILITERACY**
**What is the Seal of Biliteracy?**
The Seal of Biliteracy is an achievement award enacted by Washington State to recognize students who have attained strong proficiency in English and one or more other world language(s) by high school graduation. Students who demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English and also meet all graduation requirements for English Language Arts, including passing the State ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment, can have the Seal added to their high school transcript. For more information on the Seal of Biliteracy see the NSD World Language Testing webpage and click on the heading “What is the Seal of Biliteracy?”

**LANGUAGES TESTED**
**Which languages are available for testing?**
There are many languages available for testing. Some languages will use a fully-computerized test (STAMP or World Speak test). Other languages will use a handwritten and phone interview test (ALTA test). When a student registers, they will indicate in which language they wish to test. If a test for that language is not currently available, the student will be notified immediately by the testing coordinator—it is possible there is a customized test for that particular language. Note that some custom tests may require more time to create. Students will be notified immediately if this is the case.
TEST REGISTRATION
When is the test offered?
NSD will offer the test twice a year—once in the fall and once in the spring. Testing dates will be posted on the NSD World Language Competency Testing website.

Where can students register for and take the assessment?
Online test registration can be accessed from World Language Competency Test webpage under the Assessment heading on the In Our Schools menu on the district’s website. The district will communicate with families about test registration windows once test dates have been determined.

What will the test cost?
The district will bear the cost for enrolled students taking a district-sponsored world language proficiency test. If a student is unable to make their testing appointment the testing coordinator must be contacted at wlc@nsd.org at least 48 hours prior to the testing appointment, or the student may be charged the amount of the test fee, which can vary depending on the test language.

Can a student retest if he/she is not satisfied with the results?
It is important to take into consideration a student’s proficiency in all skill areas before registering. However, a student may retest if they believe they have performed below their capabilities. Additionally, the maximum amount of competency credits a student can earn is four credits (per language) regardless of how many times they test.

TEST DETAILS AND PREPARATION
Students will take one of these tests, depending on the language being tested:
- Students testing in the following languages will take the STAMP test: Arabic, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin (Simplified or Traditional), Polish, Portuguese (Brazilian), Russian & Spanish.
- If your testing language is Amharic, Armenian, Chin, Czech, Filipino (Tagalog), Haitian-Creole, Hmong, Ilocano, Samoan, Somali Maay, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese, or Yup’ik you will take the World Speak test.
- Students testing in most other languages will take the ALTA test.

Information about the STAMP test:
The STAMP test offered through Avant Assessment is a fully computerized, self-paced, computer adaptive test. Students will be provided Chromebooks and a headset the day of the test as well as a login. Students must know their NSD student ID# to login and access the testing site. The test covers all four skill areas with a variety of tasks covering a wide range of everyday themes and language structure.

Preparing for the STAMP test?
- Read the Test Taker’s Guide
- Read the Benchmarks and Rubric Guide for assessment topics
- Practice by taking a sample test

Information about the World Speak test:
This test offered through Avant Assessment is a fully computerized test. Students will be provided Chromebooks and a headset the day of the test as well as a login. Students must know their NSD student ID# to login and access the testing site. Students begin with a self-assessment based on CanDo statements. Based on their score students are given four Speaking and four Writing prompts with three prompts delivered at the self-assessed level and one prompt delivered at a level above the self-assessed level.
Preparing for the World Speak test?
   a. Read the Test Taker’s Guide
   b. Read the Benchmarks and Rubric Guide for assessment topics
   c. Practice by taking a sample test

Additional Information about STAMP and World Speak:
Many of the languages tested use a specialized keyboard. On the day of testing, students will be provided with instructions for setting up the specialized keyboard on the Chromebooks. For languages that use a Latin-based alphabet (French, German, Italian, Spanish) with special characters, accented vowels, etc. there will be an onscreen menu from which students can choose. It is recommended that prior to testing, students take the sample test and practice typing in their language, especially helpful for students with limited experience typing with specialized keyboards.

Information about the ALTA test:
The ALTA test offered through ALTA Language Services is a two-part test.
   • **Part one:** Reading and Writing. This test is what the student will take on the scheduled test date. It is a handwritten test comprised of a minimum of three writing prompts. If the student scores an IRL 0+ or higher, they will be contacted by the testing coordinator to schedule part two at a later date. Part one of the ALTA test (reading & writing) takes around an hour.
   • **Part two:** Speaking and Listening. This test is a live phone interview with a native speaker of the language and is coordinated with ALTA Language Services based in Atlanta, GA. Phone interviews are conducted under the supervision of an NSD employee (usually someone at the student’s home school). The interviews are scheduled Monday through Friday, 6:00am-3:00pm Pacific Standard Time. Students who qualify will be contacted to schedule the Speaking and Listening test. Part two of the ALTA test (speaking & listening) lasts around 20-30 minutes.

Preparing for the ALTA test?
   a. Be prepared to show what you know with a variety of speaking, listening and writing tasks, such as: giving a description; talking about an event; writing a letter; and describing a procedure.
   b. Be sure that you demonstrate fluency with how you use and control the language, since you will be scored on communication

How do I know if I am ready to take a language proficiency test?
These tests measure proficiency: what a student can do with the language (not what they know about the language, such as grammar facts or vocabulary definitions). To see whether their proficiency level is appropriate for testing, students can review the “Can Do” Statements at the Intermediate-mid* and other levels prepared by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

*Intermediate-mid is the minimum level of proficiency necessary for the Seal of Biliteracy and the four World Language competency credits

How will scores be reported to the student?
Students will receive a letter from the district with their results, along with a detailed score report with descriptors based on their proficiency level. They will not receive a copy of the actual test they took.

For additional questions:
Additional questions can be addressed to wlcompetency@nsd.org