



World Language Curriculum Review
West St. Paul - Mendota Heights - Eagan Area Schools
School District 197

Prepared by

Kate Skappel
Curriculum Coordinator

June 2015

Background

The study of world languages prepares students to be linguistically and culturally competent and to communicate, work and collaborate effectively with people of diverse backgrounds at home and abroad. Speaking the language of others is essential for understanding their culture and perspectives, and for the global competency students need to be prepared for life and work in the 21st century.

Studies show that language learning improves cognitive development, develops transferable reading skills, reinforces other subjects, and develops cultural literacy, appreciation and understanding for diversity. Studies have also shown that students who learn a second language are better problems solvers and score higher on state standardized assessments, SAT and ACT tests.

The state of Minnesota supports standards written by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and uses their measures to determine world language proficiency. The ACTFL Standards¹ are categorized by the Five C's:

- **Communication:** Communication is at the heart of second language study, whether the communication takes place face-to-face, in writing, or across centuries through the reading of literature.
- **Cultures:** Through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language and, in fact, cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs.
- **Connections:** Learning languages provides connections to additional bodies of knowledge that may be unavailable to the monolingual English speaker.
- **Comparisons:** Through comparisons and contrasts with the language being studied, students develop insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture and realize that there are multiple ways of viewing the world.
- **Communities:** Together, these elements enable the student of languages to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world in a variety of contexts and in culturally appropriate ways.

Each of the five categories of the ACTFL standards have two to three benchmarks that indicate what a student should be able to do in relation to that standard. These standards encompass all grade levels. Teachers work to determine what that looks like at each grade level.

In School District 197, we have Spanish available in two of our elementary schools as a specialist subject, which means students have Spanish one day a week for approximately 30-45 minutes. At the middle school, students may take Spanish I for high school credit. At the high school, we offer Spanish, French and German at various levels including college credit opportunities in all three languages. The outline of our world language program is shown in the table below. Enrollment for courses at the middle and high school are provided below as well.

¹ https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/StandardsforFLLexecsumm_rev.pdf

School District 197 World Language Program

K-4	<p>Spanish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 30-45 minutes per week ● Mendota and Somerset
5-8	<p>Spanish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grade 8 ● Spanish I
9-12	<p>Spanish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Levels I, II, III, IV and V ● Concurrent Enrollment (CE) college credit through Minnesota State University-Mankato for levels IV and V <p>French</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Levels I, II, III, IV, and V ● French II offered in the summer for students who want to complete all five levels. ● College in the Schools (CIS) through University of Minnesota for levels IV and V <p>German</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Levels I, II, III, IV ● College in the Schools (CIS) through University of Minnesota for levels III and IV

Enrollment Data (2014-15)

	French	German	Spanish
I - Middle School			161
I - High School	55	63	285
II	31	65	331
III (CIS)	37	(47)	292
IV (CIS/CE)	18 (18)	(54)	141 (27)
V (CIS/CE)	21 (22)		94 (26)

Summary of Year Two

The world language review team (see appendix A), which consists of all world language teachers K-12 worked to unpack the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) standards. Teachers wrote learning targets for each level of their classes for the 10 benchmarks. This framework document includes the following components:

- Standard: The five ACTFL Standards around Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities.
- Benchmark: The standards are broken down into two to three benchmarks per standard. These convey what a student should be able to know and do.
- Knowledge and Content: What students need to be able to know and understand.
- Learning Targets: A statement that identifies what a student will be able to do. Learning targets are to be written in student friendly language and begin with "I can..."
- Academic Vocabulary: This section includes all academic vocabulary that students need to be able to meet the grade level benchmark.
- Curricular Connections and Resources: Includes a list of all resources that are used to teach this benchmark.
- Assessments: Quizzes, tests and performance tasks used to assess this benchmark.

From this work, the teachers developed curriculum maps, which indicate what resources they currently use and which benchmarks are addressed with those resources. Through this work, we made the following recommendations for world language curriculum:

- New textbook resource for College in the School French IV: The College in the Schools textbook requirement has changed, so this purchase is required to continue offering college credit for these students. The new text for CIS French will be Deux Mondes 7th ed. from McGraw Hill.
- New textbook resource for Concurrent Enrollment Spanish IV and V: There were concerns from Mankato and our teaching staff that the text we are currently using is too advanced for this level of Spanish. We are currently working with Minnesota State University- Mankato to identify an appropriate resource for this course.
- Rosetta Stone has been available for a number of years to the World Language department. After discussions about the use, cost and effectiveness of the tool, the team decided to discontinue the use of this tool for the 2015-2016 school year. The team felt it was not an essential part of language development for students.

Minnesota Statute 120B.022 (see appendix B) provides the opportunity for students to obtain two levels of language proficiency certificates:

- The Minnesota World Language Proficiency Certificate recognizes students who demonstrate intermediate-low proficiency using a valid and reliable assessment.
- The Minnesota World Language High Achievement Certificate recognizes students who demonstrate pre-advanced proficiency on a valid and reliable assessment.
- American sign language is recognized as a world language for purposes of both types of certificates.

There are various resources (see appendix C) used to assess student proficiency in a language that are approved by the state for this certification. The review team determined that we as a school district should provide this opportunity for students who may want to pursue a certificate in order to obtain certain jobs or college credit at Minnesota colleges. This assessment would be requested by the student and scheduled through the curriculum office. Once the results are returned, the student would receive the certificate of proficiency.

Next Steps

- The review team will continue to work on communication to families about the language proficiency certificate opportunity, as well as work with the high school to include the certificate on student transcripts.
- Parent Resources will be available to families via our curriculum website including outcomes for each level of [World Language](#). (See appendix D)

Appendix A: Curriculum Review Team

Elementary	Middle School	High School	Administrative
Tricia Crider (ME/SO)	Katie Bernardy (HMS) Elizabeth Klinkner (FHMS)	Robert Hanson Tony Kienitz Lawrence Laux Thomas Raymond Mark Stewart Robert Terry	Joni Hagebock Kate Skappel

World Language Proficiency for High School Students

Districts must establish world language standards and offer elective language courses

Minnesota's high school graduation requirements include a minimum of seven elective credits, which may include world language elective credits. Districts must establish standards in world languages and offer elective courses in this subject area. In addition to awarding course credit, schools may recognize students' proficiency in world languages, through language proficiency certificates and bilingual and multilingual seals under [Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.022](#).

Schools may award proficiency certificates to students who demonstrate world language skills

Minnesota public, charter, and nonpublic schools currently may award two types of Minnesota world language proficiency certificates to students who demonstrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in a world language:

- The **Minnesota World Language Proficiency Certificate** recognizes students who have an intermediate-low proficiency level on a valid and reliable assessment. For U.S. Foreign Service Institute "category 3" or U.S. Defense Institute "category 4" world languages with sometimes significant linguistic or cultural differences from English, students must demonstrate an intermediate-low proficiency level for listening and speaking, and a novice-high proficiency level for reading and writing.
- The **Minnesota World Language Proficiency High Achievement Certificate** recognizes students who demonstrate a pre-advanced proficiency level on a valid and reliable assessment. In order to receive a proficiency high achievement certificate for world languages with sometimes significant linguistic or cultural differences from English, students must demonstrate a pre-advanced proficiency level for listening and speaking and an intermediate-mid proficiency level for reading and writing.

American sign language is recognized as a world language for purposes of both types of certificates.

Graduates who demonstrate proficiency in a world language may receive a state bilingual or multilingual seal and school credits

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, Minnesota public schools, including charter schools, may award bilingual seals or multilingual seals to high school graduates. To receive a bilingual seal or multilingual seal a student must:

- demonstrate a level 3 functional native proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages other than English on either a Foreign Services Institute language proficiency test or an equivalent assessment;
- complete all English language arts credits required for graduation; and
- demonstrate mastery of Minnesota's English language proficiency standards, if the student's primary language is not English.

A student who demonstrates a level 3 functional native proficiency in one language other than English is eligible to receive the state bilingual seal, and a student who demonstrates a level 3 functional native proficiency in multiple languages other than English is eligible to receive the state multilingual seal. American sign language is recognized as a world language for purposes of these seals. School officials must affix seals to graduates' high school transcripts and may affix seals to the graduates' diplomas. Schools must not charge students a fee for the seals.

In addition to receiving seals, schools may award elective world language credits to students who demonstrate level 3 functional native proficiency in a language other than English and also may award community service credit if these students participate in teacher-directed, curriculum-related activities that support school or community bi-literacy.

Participating public schools must allow students to periodically demonstrate their world language proficiency. The education commissioner must identify and list assessments equivalent to the Foreign Services Institute language proficiency tests on a department Web page and provide for the electronic delivery of the seals. Where valid and reliable assessments are unavailable, schools may use licensed foreign language immersion teachers or qualified nonlicensed community experts to assess students' world language proficiency. Schools must keep appropriate records to identify high school graduates eligible to receive these seals.

MnSCU must award foreign language credits to students with bilingual or multilingual seals

MnSCU colleges and universities must award foreign language credits to students who receive bilingual or multilingual seals and may award foreign language credits to students who receive world language proficiency or world language proficiency high achievement certificates. The MnSCU chancellor and the education commissioner, after consulting with University of Minnesota world language faculty, must determine credit and course equivalencies for each seal and certificate by February 15, 2015.

For more information: Contact legislative analyst Lisa Larson at 651-296-8036.

The Research Department of the Minnesota House of Representatives is a nonpartisan office providing legislative, legal, and information services to the entire House.

Appendix C: Assessment Resources for Language Proficiency Certificate

ELPAC, <http://store.emcp.com/elpac>

EMC Language Proficiency Assessments by CARLA, a battery of high-quality, proficiency-based second language assessment tools for Reading, Listening, Writing, and Speaking. Assessments are currently available for Spanish, French, and German at two levels on the scale outlined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

STAMP, <http://www.avantassessment.com/stamp4s.html>

Avant's STAMP (*ST*Andards-based *M*asurement of *P*roficiency) 4S assessments measure proficiency in Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking in nine languages with content appropriate for middle school through university students.

AAPPL, <http://aappl.actfl.org>

The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) measure addresses the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* and uses today's communication media in which test takers perform tasks such as participating in a virtual video chat, creating wikis, e-mailing, and using apps to demonstrate language ability.

Appendix D: World Language Grade Level and Course Outcomes

School District 197 World Language Grade Level and Course Outcomes

Elementary

Kindergarten students will be able to:

- tell how he or she is feeling
- greet others
- count to 10
- sing a song about colors
- identify some body parts, toys, farm animals, things in the classroom, and clothing items

1st grade students will be able to:

- tell how he or she is feeling
- count to 20
- tell the colors of different objects
- identify some family members, body parts, places in school, things in the classroom, and zoo animals

2nd grade students will be able to:

- say the vowels in Spanish and use them to sound out simple unfamiliar words
- comprehend numbers 1-59
- say days of the week in order
- identify some classes and things in the house
- describe animals

3rd grade students will be able to:

- sing the alphabet song
- say the months in order
- tell what the weather is like
- change the endings of color s
- comprehend numbers 1-100
- describe themselves and others

4th grade students will be able to:

- tell what time it is
- change the endings of colors
- identify some items of clothing and foods
- tell what he or she likes and doesn't like to do/eat
- change verb endings of regular AR verbs

Middle and High School Courses

Level 1

Broad Course Objective: Students will begin to explore language and culture through a variety of activities and learning strategies that encourage the development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Be able to name and identify simple objects, people, and places as well as supply basic personal information such as likes, dislikes, and interests.
- Be able to understand short utterances drawn from very familiar material, supported by gestures and props.
- Be able to identify basic patterns of the new language and have a beginning awareness of spelling differences and accent marks, adjectives, verb conjugation and the concept of masculine / feminine.
- Be able to pick out main ideas and key words when reading short passages on familiar material.
- Be able to ask information questions and make simple plans
- Be able to discuss near future plans and wants.
- Be able to demonstrate a general knowledge of where the language is spoken and emerging respect for the diverse cultures represented.

Level 2

Broad Course Objective: Students will continue the development of vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills as well as further cultural discovery.

Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Be able to understand sentence-length speech when context supports understanding, topics are familiar, and speech is clear and not too fast.
- Be able to write and speak using some of the basic structural patterns such as gender agreement, adjective placement, verb endings and especially constructions that differ from English constructions.
- Be able to read and pick out key phrases and expressions from short texts such as letters, illustrated stories with some consistency and accuracy.
- Be able to ask and respond to questions on familiar topics and express basic needs.
- Be able to write a paragraph using familiar material with recognizable spelling and language structure.
- Be able to perform various necessary functions in the context of specific situations in the target language.
- Be able to narrate and tell about past events and conditions.

Level 3

Broad Course Objective: This course introduces more complex grammar structures and emphasizes verb tense acquisition and vocabulary for listening, reading, writing and speaking development.

Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Be able to respond to familiar questions and statements and comprehend the main idea in a conversation on familiar topics.
- Be able to read for information and draw conclusions from understanding the main concepts in an extended reading.

- Be able to narrate a series of events.
- Be able to discuss future plans and conditions.
- Be able to perform intermediate level functions that would be required for someone living in a country / region that speaks the target language.
- Be able to work with different time frames (past and future) and use them with some accuracy in guided situations.

Level 4

Broad Course Objective: This course emphasizes development of conversational, reading, and writing strategies and skills; it includes a systematic review of grammar with advanced grammar structures. Grammar and vocabulary are presented in the context of reading and discussing social issues.

Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Be able to sustain understanding of face to face speech at somewhat reduced speed when context is familiar.
- Be able to participate in conversations with some elaboration using some culturally appropriate expressions and a greater variety of vocabulary and tenses.
- Be able to understand and explain main ideas in authentic texts with appropriate dictionary use.
- Identify some events and people from present and past, and explain some cultural differences when compared to native culture.
- Be able to meet a number of practical writing needs (letters, e-mail, paragraphs, etc) using present, past and future time frames with reasonable accuracy and consistency, variety in vocabulary and attention to agreement / placement issues.
- Be able to carry on a short conversation about a familiar topic with a target language speaker accustomed to dealing with language learners.

Level 5

This course emphasizes development of conversational, reading, and writing strategies and skills; it includes a systematic review of grammar with advanced grammar structures. Grammar and vocabulary are presented in the context of reading and dialogues, and social and political issues are discussed within the framework of the target speaking world.

Essential Learner Outcomes Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Be able to sustain understanding of face to face speech at somewhat reduced speed when context is familiar.
- Be able to participate in conversations with some elaboration using some culturally appropriate expressions and a greater variety of vocabulary, tenses, and moods.
- Be able to understand and explain main ideas in authentic texts with appropriate dictionary use.
- Be able to meet a number of practical writing needs (compositions, reports) using present, past and future time frames as well as various verbal moods with reasonable accuracy and consistency.
- Be able to use a variety of vocabulary with attention to agreement/placement issues as well as nuances.
- Be able to carry on a conversation about a familiar topic with a native target language speaker accustomed to dealing with language learners.