

MONITORING REPORT: Policy R-2.9 (Academic Achievement: World Languages)

PHASE ONE: Interpretation, Benchmark Data, and Goals

DATE: February 2019

Policy

All students will master the skills and demonstrate proficiency in each required discipline and electives:

Discipline: World Languages

Interpretation

We understand this policy expresses the School Board’s expectation that all students enrolled in World Language classes will demonstrate mastery of content, concepts, and practices as measured by national and classroom-based assessments. Or they will provide evidence they are making reasonable progress toward such mastery.

We further understand that this policy expresses the value the School Board places on providing opportunities for our students to study and learn World Languages. Not only is World Language learning associated with higher overall academic achievement, but it also opens doors for mutual appreciation and respect. Students who learn other languages gain insights into other cultural perspectives. They develop such intercultural competencies as the ability to (a) communicate in culturally appropriate ways, (b) show appreciation for and understanding of others, (c) maintain a spirit of openness and respect for diversity, and (d) recognize the commonalities and the differences between cultures. They are more likely to realize how culture impacts one’s attitudes and worldview. They grow in flexibility, adaptability, empathy and respect.

Background Information

Earning credit in a World Language was not a State high school graduation requirement prior to the Class of 2019. Beginning with the Class of 2019, two World Language credits are included in the new State 24-credit graduation requirement framework. However, they are characterized as flexible credits; that is, they are not considered core subject requirements. This means that, instead of taking two credits of World Language classes, a student may substitute two credits of Personalized Pathway Requirements. Personalized Pathway and Personalized Pathway Requirements are defined as follows:

- **Personalized pathway** refers to a locally determined body of coursework identified in a student's High School and Beyond Plan that is deemed necessary to attain the post-secondary career or educational goals chosen by the student.

- **Personalized pathway requirement** refers to up to three course credits (from the required 24) that are chosen by a student as part of his/her personalized pathway and that prepare him/her to meet specific post-secondary career or educational goals.

Although students may opt out of World Language to take pathway courses instead, we believe the Board has charged us with advising them that taking two years of the same World Language is an entrance requirement at most four-year universities. In order to keep post-high options as open as possible, the Board believes students should be encouraged to take advantage of World Languages offerings whenever possible.

For those students at Ferndale High School who choose to take World Language, we provide instruction in French, Spanish, and Lummi. Dual Credit (that is, both high school and college credit) is offered *for a fee* to all students who successfully complete fourth and fifth year Spanish courses. Currently, both Vista and Horizon Middle School offer first-year Spanish and an Introduction to Lummi Language.

In Ferndale, all of our World Language classes provide cultural learning. As a capstone experience, French and Spanish students have the opportunity -- *for a fee* -- to participate in a two-week experience in a foreign country where they can practice their language skills and augment their cultural understanding. In the Spring of 2018, 15-20 Spanish students traveled to Spain. In the Spring of 2019, a group of French students will be traveling to France. For those who can afford to take advantage of these opportunities, they are always impactful and often life-changing. The issue, however, is equity. The percentage of students who are able to take these trips is small.

Lummi Language classes at both the middle school and the high school levels are taught by enrolled members of the Lummi Nation who have been approved by the Lummi Culture Department. In addition to language, these instructors bring a wealth of cultural knowledge and experience to their students.

Benchmark Data

Ferndale Students Enrolled in World Languages 2018-2019			
	Spanish	Lummi Language	French
Total number of students enrolled across all grade levels	359* students	51 students	151 students
	*87 of these students are enrolled in Dual Credit Spanish		

The total number of students enrolled in World Languages in 2018-2019 is 637.

Goals

The process of preparing this report has caused to identify areas for further study related to our World Languages offerings. During the upcoming year, we plan to:

1. Create a more detailed portrait of the way our District students are accessing and performing in our World Language classes. Such a portrait will include which students are taking World Languages; when they are taking them; how many years they are remaining in a language sequence; why they choose to remain in the sequence; and why they choose to leave the sequence.
2. Continue to develop and implement our Lummi Language program districtwide. We understand this work needs to be coordinated with Lummi Nation.
3. Conduct an audit of our World Language curriculum to determine alignment of our current instructional program to (a) State standards, (b) college entrance requirements, and (c) documented best practices in World Language instruction in public PreK-12 school systems.
4. Review our assessment practices and course grading data to determine the success rates of students in all of our secondary World Language classes.
5. Conduct an equity audit of the enrollment status in all aspects of our World Language programs, including the Dual Credit courses at Ferndale High School and optional travel experiences.