

**World Language Department
Bedford Central School District
Philosophy Statement**

The Bedford Central School District World Language Program believes the study of languages other than English is an essential component of students' complete educational experience. We strive to instill a sound linguistic and cultural foundation in all students in order to best prepare them for life and the global realities of the 21st century. The interdependent nature of today's world requires all individuals to acquire the skills needed for cross-cultural communication, understanding and appreciation. Language learning, and its accompanying cultural study, inherently broadens students' perspective and enhances their ability to understand and accept both the universal and unique aspects of the panorama of our world's varied societies. It provides students the opportunity to gain a deeper and richer concept of self as well as a greater appreciation for their own culture. We believe that students of all abilities and backgrounds should have the opportunity to acquire second language proficiency so they are best prepared for an informed and productive role in the world community and global marketplace. The population of the Bedford Central School District represents and embodies today's world cultures. The World Language Department plays an inextricable role in recognizing, celebrating and advocating the strength of our diversity. Language is our connection to our community and to our world. We therefore believe that language learning is an integral and indispensable experience for the education of the whole student.

Our instruction is student-centered, interactive, communicative and performance-based. It is designed not only to develop students' target language communication skills in the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes (listening, reading, speaking, and writing), but also to cultivate and enhance higher-order thinking skills. Our second language instruction is differentiated to accommodate varied learning styles and acknowledges that students learn through diverse methods, strategies and settings. It focuses not only on the development of verbal/linguistic intelligences, but also fosters the development of creativity through other intelligences including logical/sequential, musical/rhythmic, bodily/kinesthetic, and visual/spatial. As part of the core curriculum in Bedford, second language instruction is supportive of and integrated with a student's entire school experience, incorporates effective teaching strategies, program models, advanced technology applications, and assessment procedures, and reflects continually evolving standards at the national, state and local levels. The standards that guide our approach are the five primary goals of second language acquisition: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities.

The goal of the World Language Department in the Bedford Central School District is to ensure that students:

- Communicate in languages other than English
- Gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- Connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- Develop insight into the nature of language and culture
- Participate in multicultural communities at home and around the world.

In our multicultural society, both local and worldwide, we all must be able to understand, function within, and positively contribute to our own and other cultures. We believe our program of second language instruction is the vital first step in realizing this goal.