

Foreign Language Advisory Council Recommendations

Senate Bill 311 called for the creation of a Foreign Language Advisory Council (FLAC). The 37 members of the Council who represent Ohio's many diverse sectors were selected by the State Board of Education (SBOE) from recommendations and applications submitted to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE).

Task: To propose a statewide P-16 foreign language implementation plan which includes recommendations for legislation to implement the plan by the 2014-2015 school year.

Timeline: The Council must submit its final implementation plan to the recipients listed below by December 31, 2007.

The Foreign Language Advisory Council shall consider at least the following:

- (A) Facilitating foreign language acquisition across grades kindergarten through twelve, rather than limiting it to high school;
- (B) The extent to which students should focus on critical languages of economically competitive countries;
- (C) Best practices for implementing P-16 solutions to course instruction in foreign languages;
- (D) Multiple course-delivery models including distance learning, online learning, and synchronous and asynchronous Web-based delivery;
- (E) Defining a proficiency-based approach to earning credit for foreign language that can be reflected on students' high school transcripts; and
- (F) Allowing for the proficiency-based approach to apply to nonnative English speakers in their native languages.

Recipients of the final plan:

- State Board of Education
- Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Ohio Board of Regents
- Partnership for Continued Learning
- Governor
- Speaker and Minority Leader of Senate
- Chairpersons and ranking minority members of standing committees of House of Representatives and the Senate that consider education legislation.

Provide feedback to:

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Facilitating P-16 Language Learning

Provide access to a sequence of foreign language instruction across grades P-16, so that instruction at each level builds upon the proficiency that students have attained at an earlier level.

- All students must take a foreign language as part of the Ohio Core.
 - Opportunities for learning must be available so that students can attain at least an Intermediate-Low/Novice High level of proficiency based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language's Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners.
 - This requirement may be fulfilled during high school or before.
- Students who begin in elementary school should attain at least a basic level of proficiency in at least one foreign language by the end of eighth grade.
- Districts with existing high school programs may be able to build longer, articulated sequences of instruction from ninth grade down rather than from kindergarten up.
- In high school, students should build on prior language proficiency through traditional coursework, online or distance learning, or career-embedded language experiences.
- More dual enrollment opportunities for foreign language learning should be made available so that high school students may earn college credit.
- Placement into postsecondary or workforce language learning should be based on students' prior demonstrated level of proficiency.

Critical Languages

Retain capacity in commonly taught languages such as French, Spanish, German, Latin, and American Sign Language while building capacity in languages critical for economic and strategic importance such as Arabic, Japanese, and Chinese.

- Encourage schools and community-based providers to offer multiple languages to meet individual, community, and state needs.
- Create networks to share resources and teachers needed for language learning.

A federal initiative is taking place in Ohio, Oregon and Texas to determine language needs. In June 2007, participants at Ohio's Language Summit sponsored by the U.S. Departments of Defense, Labor, and Commerce were asked what languages were needed in Ohio's businesses and government. The chart below shows the participants' suggestions.

Business with Domestic Focus	Government with Domestic Focus	Business with International Focus	Government with International Focus
Spanish Chinese Somali German Russian Japanese Korean French African languages	Spanish Chinese Japanese Russian Arabic French Somali African languages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amharic • Falani 	Arabic Chinese Hindi Spanish American Sign Japanese Portuguese Russian Vietnamese French German Somali Hebrew Italian	Hindi Spanish Somali Chinese Russian Portuguese Japanese Arabic

We need commonly taught languages to understand our neighbors and to do business with our biggest trading partners. But, we also must position ourselves for the future by increasing critical language programs.

In order to attain proficiency in a critical language, students may take a common language first, then layer on a more difficult language. Similarly, they may take an uninterrupted sequence of instruction in one language that will lead to a higher level of language proficiency.

Proven Program Models

Use proven programs with the goal of developing long sequences of P-16 language learning and advanced levels of proficiency in adulthood.

Preschool

- Begin programs in preschool when children are naturally acquiring oral language and pre-literacy skills.
- Tie program goals to oral communication and the development of cultural awareness.

Elementary

- Increase immersion programs that allow English speaking students to learn at least half to all of their school subjects in a target language.
- Create dual immersion programs with a 50-50 split of heritage language learners and English language learners in school districts with a sufficient heritage language population, so that both groups of students become bilingual.
- Increase the number of elementary foreign language programs that reinforce content from other disciplines and that meet for at least 90 minutes per week.
- Deliver instruction via a range of technologies with reinforcement by teachers or paraprofessionals.
- Incorporate authentic cultural experiences by video conferencing with native speakers.

Middle and High School

- Plan middle school and high school programs that build on instruction that takes place in elementary so that learners are not forced to start over at a beginning level.
- Encourage learners to acquire more than one foreign language based on personal interest, community need, or career goals.
- Develop occupational foreign language courses such as Spanish for school personnel, Somali for healthcare professionals, or Arabic for business.
- Award credit through educational options for internship or service learning experiences where students use their foreign language skills.
- Continue funding intensive summer or enrichment programs and camps such as the Regents' Language Academies.
- Fund at least one fully articulated P-12 pilot program in each of the 16 regions of the state.

University and Adult Learners

- Offer a variety of on-campus and online programs at convenient times so that more Ohioans have the opportunity to become proficient in a second language.

Multiple Means of Delivery

Use multiple means to deliver language instruction.

- Develop local consortia to share resources and language teachers
- Supplement face-to-face delivery with a variety of synchronous and asynchronous alternative delivery methods.
 - Develop online courses in a variety of foreign languages.
 - Include virtual communities such as online environments where other languages are used and virtual networking in the target language such as blogging.
 - Encourage districts to provide online language courses through the new clearinghouse under development by the eTech commission to provide more choices and opportunities for students.
 - Create online and face-to-face discussion-group opportunities between students and native or heritage speakers.
- Work with technical schools and community colleges to develop curricula or programs that lead toward professional skills in high-need languages in areas such as health care, social services, business, and law enforcement
- Develop immersion programs for high school and college students who already have a basic level of language proficiency.
- Develop language courses that are relevant and include real-world experiences such as internships and service learning by collaborating with the business community, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, social services and humanitarian organizations, and heritage communities.
- Expand the learning day by allowing students to learn language through services provided in the community.
- Set up community-based programs that utilize the resources of the heritage language communities in Ohio to provide instruction or as an adjunct to ongoing sequences of instruction.
- Develop an evaluation of the delivery systems to assess student learning and problems encountered that need to be addressed.

Determining Proficiency and Awarding Credit

Create a seamless system for granting foreign language credit based on demonstration of proficiency.

- Allow students to earn credit by either the traditional Carnegie unit or by demonstration of proficiency on existing reliable and valid tests.
- Make existing reliable and valid proficiency testing available to all learners so that they may earn credit for their language proficiency.
- Use ACTFL levels to determine students' language proficiency. (See diagram on previous page.) All learners must graduate from high school with at least Intermediate-Low proficiency in languages such as French, Italian, or Spanish, or Novice-High proficiency in difficult languages such as Chinese, Arabic, or Japanese.
 - Students may fulfill this requirement by earning at least two traditional Carnegie units.

Teacher Capacity

Increase the number and build the capacity of qualified foreign language instructors in the state of Ohio.

- Continue to recruit and fund licensure for heritage and native speakers as instructors and paraprofessionals.
- Change current alternative licensure for foreign language teachers from the current 7-12 to align with traditional foreign language licensure which is P-12.
- The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages has determined that teachers need to have a sufficient level of proficiency themselves to be effective language models. For most languages, this level has been set at Advanced-Low; for difficult languages, it is set at Intermediate-High. Teacher candidates should demonstrate these levels on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) as a condition for licensure.
- Create a Foreign Language endorsement for certified teachers with Advanced-Low/Intermediate-High language proficiency.
- Expand teachers' abilities to utilize current and emerging technologies including teaching in an online environment and distance learning.
- Create professional development opportunities that increase teachers' skills in teaching and assessing so that students learn to interpret, speak, read, and write languages and develop sensitivity to and understanding of other cultures.
- Train teachers in intervention strategies so that all students can learn a second language.

Please send your comments to our World Language Consultants listed on page one of this document.