

WORLD LANGUAGES CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Developed 2017-2018
Implemented 2018-2019

Mountain Brook Schools
32 Vine Street
Mountain Brook, AL 35213

WORLD LANGUAGE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Mountain Brook Schools Board of Education

Elizabeth Dunn, Chairman
Brad Sklar, Vice Chairman
Tommy Luckie
Richard Murray
Nicky Barnes

Dr. Richard Barlow
Superintendent

Dr. Missy Brooks
Director of Instruction

WORLD LANGUAGES



General Introduction

The title *World Languages* is a transition from the previous edition of the document, *Languages Other Than English – Foreign Languages*. This deviation from the 2006 edition is a response to language used in the 2015 National Standards in Foreign Languages Education Project (NSFLEP) that refers to language targets as *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*. The term *world languages* furthers the 2006 version’s attempts to indicate that many of the languages taught in public schools are not considered “foreign.” *World Languages* also includes American Sign Language in accordance with Alabama Senate Bill 94 signed into law in August of 2005.

While the Alabama High School Diploma does not require credit(s) in world languages, local education agencies (LEAs) may require students to earn one or more credits in world languages to receive a diploma with an advanced academic endorsement. Furthermore, numerous universities require successful completion of world languages courses for admission. Additionally, the overwhelming majority of universities in the region which do not require language courses for admission encourage high school students to complete such courses as advanced electives for freshman admission.

Content standards in this document reflect the five goal areas of language learning as identified by the National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project in its 2015 national standards publication, *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, 4th Edition*. These goals, **Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities**, serve as the organizing principles of the *World Languages* document and resonate throughout the content standards in each grade level and content cluster.

This framework details the **minimum** requirements for what learners should know, what they should be able to do, and how well they should be able to do those things at the culmination of each grade cluster or level of study.

In the Mountain Brook *Curriculum Framework*, substance of the world languages program, combined with appropriate rigor of instruction, will allow learners to reach the goal of language proficiency. By attaining this proficiency, learners will be prepared for careers that demand the capacity to communicate effectively and skillfully with others. The attainment of such linguistic and cultural capital for a future certain to demand such skills will be crucial to creating an educated, economically viable, and globally literate citizenry to benefit Alabama and the world community.

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Alabama's K-12 World Languages Curriculum Conceptual Framework

The graphic representation of this Course of Study contains several elements, each of which communicates an important aspect of the document as a whole.



A map of Alabama serves as the focus of the conceptual framework design for Alabama's K-12 World Languages course of study, with a globe as an inset. This reflects the contemporary nature of business and industry in Alabama. More and more, 21st century learners are connected to people all over the world, as well as to individuals from a variety of language backgrounds, through a wide range of personal and professional contacts. Add to that the intrinsic pleasure and personal benefits of language learning, and it is easy to see the power of studying world languages.



The five outer rings represent five broad goals of language instruction, which are connected to represent their interdependence. The goal areas, according to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)'s *World Readiness Standards for Learning*, are **Communication**, **Cultures**, **Connections**, **Comparisons**, and **Communities**. Each goal area has its own essential place within the conceptual framework of language proficiency. **Communication** indicates that students are able to converse, present, and interpret effectively in more than one language in order to function in different settings and with varied intents. **Cultures** means that students connect to others with cultural competence and perspective. **Connections** indicates that students associate language proficiency with other disciplines and gain knowledge in varying contexts in order to exercise the language while engaging in personal, professional, and scholarly pursuits. **Comparisons** expresses that students establish an understanding of the essence of language and culture, resulting in the ability to collaborate with cultural competence. The **Communities** goal area focuses on establishing affiliations that allow students to connect and relate with others in a culturally competent manner.



The inner ring encompassing the globe and weaving through the five linked circles portrays the three modes of communication, **interpersonal**, **interpretive**, and **presentational**. The **interpersonal** mode involves the exchange of meaning between people, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing through face-to-face, telephone, and digital communication. The **interpretive** mode is indicative of receiving and understanding messages in visual, spoken, and written form, including video clips, web pages, literary texts, movies, radios, and television broadcasts. The **presentational** mode refers to a student's ability to construct messages in both written and spoken form, including speeches, performances, and written communication.

The five goal areas and three communicative modes are interwoven throughout the World Languages curriculum and are addressed at each level of the instructional process. This framework, combined with effective instruction, enables students to develop an appreciation of other cultures, as well as their own, in a comprehensive manner.

Position Statements

I. Benefits of Language Learning:

In the 21st Century, knowing a second language is not only beneficial, but necessary for success in life. The continual globalization of the world's economy is bringing diverse cultures and communities into more frequent contact with each other. The ease of global travel and the internet have collapsed the barrier of distance that once kept the world's communities separate. From the corporate marketplace to the individual consumer, from the pre-school to the elite university, from the beach vacationer to the global jetsetter, the world community has become integrated and interdependent. Institutions of higher learning have become more selective in the admissions process, and view world language proficiency as a trait of future world leaders. Employers and businesses are seeking applicants who can navigate the modern global economy. It is through learning another language that students can develop both of these necessary skill sets. Not only does learning another language make economic sense, it also provides many other benefits including greater academic achievement, greater cognitive development, and more positive attitudes towards other languages and cultures. Simply put, language learning is necessary for students to effectively function in the modern global marketplace.

II. Curriculum vs. Course of Study:

A curriculum is the specific academic content taught within a given course. It includes the materials, books, topics, assignments, and assessments used in the course. *Alabama Course of Study: World Languages* is a guide that outlines the minimal required standards for all world language courses in the state of Alabama. The *Mountain Brook Curriculum Framework* is not a curriculum; rather it is a guide for proficiency-based curriculum development.

III. Proficiency:

Proficiency, as defined by ACTFL, is what individuals can do with a language in real-world situations in spontaneous and unrehearsed contexts. Proficiency is based on the speaker's ability to communicate within a particular context. It is not based solely on grammatical accuracy and thus there is no possibility to "get all the answers right." Therefore, the goal of a proficiency-based language program is to develop learners who can communicate competently **in** the language rather than simply talk **about** the language. For modern spoken languages, proficiency is measured in all three modes of communication: Interpretive (Listening and Reading), Interpersonal (Speaking and Writing) and Presentational (Speaking and Writing). For American Sign Language, proficiency is expressive and receptive use of the language in all three modes of communication. For classical languages, it is a learner's ability to read and interpret authentic ancient texts. The Mountain Brook Schools world languages curriculum is intended to provide a framework of uniformity for proficiency-based learning.

IV. Target Language Use:

The use of target language refers to all that learners say, read, hear, write, and view – production and reception of language on the part of learners, educators, and materials. ACTFL recommends that learning take place through the target language for 90% or more of classroom time. The target is to provide immersion in the target language unless there is a specific reason to NOT use the target language. Second Language Acquisition research has shown that learners need as much exposure as possible to the target language for acquisition to occur. Learners need to be actively engaged with the target language. Just like learning to ride a bike or any other important skill, learning is best achieved by *doing*.

Language educators must maximize this exposure by providing a language-rich environment that prepares learners for success in the real world. Likewise, if the goal is for learners to have the proficiency to survive and thrive in the target culture, whether it be in our neighborhoods or across the ocean, then authentic target language experiences and materials must be provided.

V. Professional Development:

Effective world language teachers are committed to seeking out and participating in ongoing, rich, content-specific professional learning. Language and culture are constantly evolving, and in order to stay current, teachers must continually enrich and expand their professional knowledge in order to meet the needs of the 21st century learner. World language teachers should not only seek to increase their pedagogical knowledge but also to maintain or improve their own language proficiency. To that end, teachers should be active members of professional organizations.

VI. Global Competency:

The acquisition of a new language involves more than learning its linguistic features of a language. It should be language acquisition in conjunction with a rich understanding of the context origin. Globally competent students are prepared to interact with diverse groups of people in a variety of contexts, and global competence is critical if students are to become successful across local, national, and international borders. Students become more globally competent when they communicate with people from the culture of the language they are studying. They get to know the nuances of the language that differentiate it from others. Students should develop their language skills within an atmosphere of respect, such as an awareness of how gestures give expression to the language. Globally competent students are also keenly aware of the products, practices, and perspectives of their native culture and those of the cultures that they study.

VII. Assessment:

Language assessment must be conducted both formally and informally, utilizing a variety of both formative and summative measurements. Formative assessment is assessment **for** learning while summative assessment is assessment **of** learning. Formative assessment is ongoing assessment conducted throughout the lesson through the use of projects and portfolios, allowing for immediate feedback. Since formative assessment is assessment for learning, assignments should be low-stakes and used to inform classroom teaching. On the other hand, summative assessment takes place at the end of a unit or course to determine what a student can do with the language at that point. A healthy language program should include both formative and summative assessment at all levels and for all ages. Assessment results are used to guide teaching and modify curriculum.

VIII. Technology:

Technology influences language learning options and serves as a tool for supporting classroom instruction. With the expansion of online learning opportunities, language learning takes on many forms in addition to traditional classroom instruction. However, it is important to recognize the role of the qualified language teacher in incorporating technology that supports the language learning experience, as well as provides opportunities for interaction through culturally-appropriate and meaningful, authentic tasks. Technology should be used as a supplement to language instruction rather than as the driving force. Language, as a complex human interaction, requires ample opportunity to use the language being learned under the necessary conditions of a dynamic, interactive environment.

IX. Seal of Biliteracy:

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by Mountain Brook Schools to recognize students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. Benefits include increased admissions, scholarship opportunities, and higher achievement on college and university language placement tests. Additionally, participating in the program motivates students to progress further in the study of a new language, validates heritage speakers, and offers a positive impact on language instruction at all levels.

Directions for Interpreting the Minimum Required Content

1. **CONTENT STANDARDS** are statements that define what students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of a course or grade. Content standards in this document contain minimum required content. The order in which standards are listed within a course or grade is not intended to convey a sequence for instruction. Each content standard completes the phrase “*Students can.*”

Students can:

4. Explain the significance of people, events, social structures, and political terms in Roman history; the specific topics covered are determined in consultation with the entire Latin collaborative team.

(Latin, Level II—Content Standard 4)

2. **SUBTITLES** denote content that is related to the standards and required for instruction. Subtitled content is listed under a standard and identifies additional minimum required content and is denoted using the lowercase alphabet.

Students can:

9. Compare products, practices and perspectives of the target culture and the native culture in a variety of time frames.
 - a. Compare activities and events of the target culture to native culture.
 - b. Compare cultural practices in the target culture to the native culture.

(World Languages, Spanish, Level III – Content Standard 9)

3. **EXAMPLES** clarify certain components of content standards or bullets. They are illustrative but not exhaustive.

Students can:

Presentational Mode

3. Present information on familiar topics with a variety of words, phrases and simple sentences in the present time frame.
 - a. Present basic information.
 - b. Give simple instructions.
 - c. Tell about familiar objects, experiences, and daily routines.
 - d. Recite short memorized phrases, poems, and/or anecdotes.

(ASL, Level I—Content Standard 3)

World Languages Curriculum Committee 2017-2018

BWF	Rebecca Chambliss Christy Christian	Parents	Lee Alice Estes Laura Comer Joanna Hufham
CB	Betsey Williams Sandy Ritchey		Paige McCauley Amy Nunneley Kelly Ringland
CES	Kimi Blanton Anna Summerall Phillips Catherine Waters		
MBE	Monica Slaughter Brannon Aaron		
MBJH	Jennie Borland Kimberly Burrell Andrew Burrow Laura Centeno Benlee Huguley Kate Morris Katie Phillips Kelly Scheirer Katie Thomas Brook Gibbons Holly Martin		
MBHS	Holly Alexander John Binet Andrew Burrow Jessie Creech Heather Fitch Audrey Laird Drew Lasater George Mange Allison Price Philip Holley		
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