

Delaware K-12 World Languages Clarification Document

Introduction

Welcome to Delaware's Statewide Recommended Curriculum in World Languages. This document represents many months of dedicated contribution from classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, and academicians, with the leadership of the Delaware Department of Education.

21st Century World Language Programs for Delaware

In order to prepare Delaware students to be successful in the interconnected world of the 21st century, we must adopt a new paradigm of language learning and teaching. In this paradigm, Delaware students will become knowledgeable and skillful to interact with people of diverse backgrounds at home and abroad. They will develop multiple literacies, broaden their worldviews, and gain virtual and real cross-cultural experiences.

Delaware School Districts and the State Agency must consider the following elements when developing curricula and programs to achieve these goals in World Language education:

- Expand the offerings of world languages to establish the K-16 language learning pipelines
- Infuse international content into World Language curricula to prepare global citizens
- Design responsive programming to make world language study accessible for all students
- Offer extended sequential World Language study to develop high level of proficiency, literacy, and cultural competence
- Establish realistic and clear expectations
- Build flexible programs with multiple entry and exit points
- Ensure student, teacher, and program accountability
- Promote sustained, high-quality professional development

The Delaware Recommended Curriculum (DRC) recognizes that students need a long sequence of well-articulated language experiences in order to achieve functional levels of language proficiency and thus promotes a K-12 approach to language learning. K-12 Grade Level Expectations are provided to help districts and classroom teachers map out a smooth

path for students to continuously refine their communicative abilities and cultural knowledge and appreciation. (See the World Language Grade Articulation Chart: [CLICK HERE](#)).

Why World Languages Statewide Recommended Curriculum?

Presently there are two major documents guiding the World Language Education in Delaware: The Delaware World Language Content Standards and Performance Indicators. The former was adopted in 1997, outlining **what** students should know and be able to do after having studied a world language and its culture for a designated period of time. Under a three year federal Foreign Language Assistance Program grant (2000-2002), the Delaware World Language Performance Indicators (PIs) were developed and completed in 2004. This PI document illustrates **how well** students should be able to use the language and function within its culture under the rubrics of the proficiency levels of Novice, Intermediate, and Pre-Advanced (ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners, 1998).

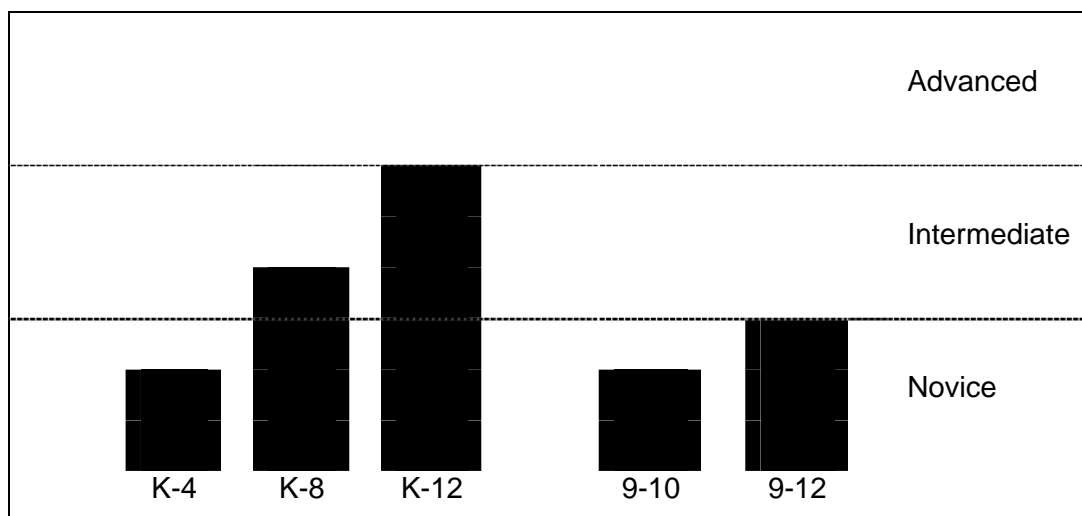


Chart reflects the anticipated performance outcomes as described in the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners based on information gathered from foreign language professionals representing a variety of program models and articulation sequences.

In 2004, Governor Minner convened a Task Force to review the Standards-based reform in order to ensure the alignment among the Standards and classroom instruction and assessment in Delaware. This Task Force discovered that there was a serious disparity among districts in terms of the consistency and rigor of the content being taught. Therefore, the Task Force recommended the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) to undertake the development of a statewide recommended curriculum in all content areas to be completed by 2007. As such, each content area conducted a Standards Review project. The WL Standards Review Project was conducted in 2004-05 with the following questions to guide the process:

- 1) Do the Delaware World Language Content Standards and Performance Indicators provide rigorous content for all students?
- 2) Do these documents incorporate the principles of international education, diversity, inclusion, and technological integration?
- 3) Do the stated benchmarks set realistic and achievable expectations for students and teachers in Delaware WL classrooms?

The findings show that the WL Content Standards and PIs provide rigorous content for all students. They are also aligned directly to the *ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners*. The challenge for teachers, however, is that each proficiency level of Novice, Intermediate, and Pre-Advanced spans across several grade levels. The benchmarks outlined in the PI document do not directly meet teachers' need for end of course expectations. It also became apparent that more classroom examples must be provided to illustrate how the principles of international education, diversity, inclusion, and technological tools may be infused and implemented at the classroom level.

What is World Languages Statewide Recommended Curriculum?

Responding to the findings of the Standards Review Project that the Content Standards and PI documents outline the “what” and the “how well” for students and teachers, the next step is to development a guide that explains “*how to do it.*” The WL Standards Review Committee hence recommends the development of a statewide curriculum that contains these elements:

- a. Course syllabi that outline realistic and achievable grade level expectations (GLEs);
- b. Organize the syllabi and GLEs based on the principles of Understanding by Design (UbD) (Wiggins and McTighe, 1998; 2005); and
- c. Develop UbD-based model units of instruction and assessment that address international education, diversity & inclusion, informational and technological literacies.

The UbD is a rigorous model for thinking, organizing learning, and setting priorities for students and teachers. It takes the backward design approach to developing a curriculum or unit that begins with the end in mind and move toward that end (p. 338). This paradigm includes the following components:

- **Big Ideas:** Big ideas are the core concepts, principles, theories and processes that serve as the focal point of curricula, instruction, and assessment. They are the final destination of an inquiry (pp. 338-339, Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).
- **Enduring Understanding:** In UbD, enduring understandings are written in full-sentence statements, describing what students should understand about the topic based on big ideas. The stem “Students will understand that…” provides a practical tool for teachers to facilitate students to reach understandings that are enduring and transferable to new situations (p. 342, Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).
- **Essential Questions:** Essential questions pose as guides that promote inquiry and uncoverage of a subject. They are the multiple paths that students and teachers can take in order to reach the destination. Essential questions do not yield single straight forward answers but produce different plausible responses. They can be either overarching or topical on the unit level in scope (p. 342, Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

By using the principle of UbD and guided by big ideas, enduring understandings and essential questions, this Delaware World Language Statewide Curriculum promotes discovery-based learning and teaching. Together, learners and teachers assume the responsibility of uncovering and connecting pieces of information, knowledge, and skills central to the discipline.

What Does a Standards-Based World Language Classroom Look Like When Implementing the Statewide Curriculum?

In such a world language classroom, students will understand that

- The competencies in another language and culture along with one’s own are essential tools for a global citizen of the 21st century; and
- Learning another language and culture enables individuals to deepen knowledge and broaden perspectives about self and the world.

Specifically, the following features will be observed:

Students will	Rather than
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in authentic and purposeful communication in the target language • Learn language, including vocabulary and grammar, using thematic approach • Explore cultural diversity and multiple perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on drills, exercises, and testing • Learning vocabulary and grammar in isolation • Being exposed to limited perspective and ethnocentric practice

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use materials relevant to the enduring understanding and appropriate to students' age and interests • Access rich content in various subject matters through the study of the target language during inquiry • Access, organize, and communicate information using modern technology • Discover more about one's own language and culture through the study and comparison of another language and culture • Seek opportunities to use and transfer the newly learned language and culture in various communities • Be active and productive members of a global community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on textbooks • Restrict learning to the knowledge about a language and to the textbooks • Technology viewed as a distraction • Study without actively comparing the similarities and differences between target and native languages and cultures • Learn language to fulfill the course or program requirements • Perceive learning as limited to school settings
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Elementary World Language Programs

The Delaware Recommended Curriculum for the elementary grades begins in kindergarten and continues until sixth grade. It follows a communicative approach where students are active users of the language they are learning. World Language learning at this level emphasizes oral language development and reinforces and enhances content previously introduced in other subject areas (math, science, social studies, etc.). Younger children learn languages more effectively when the content is meaningful to them and is presented in contexts with which they are readily familiar (i.e., content from other subjects). While keeping the instruction in the target language, teachers should employ a variety of strategies such as Total Physical Response (TPR) and hands-on projects to meet the social and linguistic needs of young children. The elementary Grade Level Expectations are based on a model of having approximately 90 minutes per week of instruction. Research has shown that 90-150 minutes per week is optimal for giving students a firm foundation for advanced levels of language proficiency.

Junior Level Profiles for K-8 Students

[Click here](#)

Middle School World Language Programs

Building on the elementary content-related, communicative experience, middle school programs deepen students' abilities to communicate within and beyond their classroom. Using meaningful themes and topics that embed culturally authentic contexts and connect the student to the community, teacher can employ instructional strategies such as Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS), cooperative work, and community-based projects to meet the social and linguistic needs of pre-adolescents. Middle school programs need to provide a minimum of 150 minutes per week for students to be able to meet the Grade Level Expectations.

Junior Level Profiles for K-8 Students

[Click here](#)

High School World Language Programs

High schools must be prepared to help *all students* meet the World Language graduation requirement. This includes providing access to a range of study from the beginning level of a language through Advanced Placement and specialized courses (i.e. Occupational and Professional Spanish for Nursing, Police, Agriculture, or Business German or French) for students who have a long-sequence of language learning from elementary and middle schools. High schools should also consider online courses for critical needs languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, etc. or performance-based options for heritage speakers. High school world language students thrive in a classroom where there is a variety of authentic and meaningful communicative activities. The Grade Level Expectations call for students to demonstrate communicative cultural competence by using e-pals, completing collaborative projects with international partners, taking part in student or classroom exchanges, or working with community agencies that help immigrants, etc. At all levels of instruction, heritage language speakers should be included in meaningful ways and be provided challenging learning opportunities.

HS Learner Profiles

[Click Here](#)

How Are the World Language Standards Expressed in the UbD Model?

In the next section, the essence of each content standard or goal is organized and clarified in terms of big ideas, enduring understanding, and essential questions for a K-12 World Language program.

Goal 1: Communication

Communicate in languages other than English through listening, speaking, reading and writing in various cultural contexts.

Standard 1.1 Students listen and respond, engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express preferences, emotions and feelings, and exchange opinions and beliefs.

Standard 1.2 Students comprehend and interpret written and oral language on a variety of topics.

Standard 1.3 Students present information, concepts, and ideas in oral and written form on a variety of topics.

Big Ideas	
Language is at the heart of all human interaction.	
Enduring Understanding	Essential Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language is a multi-faceted, multi-layered system of communication. • Speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are developed by using the interpersonal, interpretative and presentational modes of communication. • Language learning involves taking risks and learning from one’s mistakes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are words alone sufficient for communication? • What is communication? What do you need to be able to do to communicate in another language? • When do mistakes interfere with communication? Does practice make perfect?

Goal 2: Cultures

Gain knowledge of other cultures through the study of language

Standard 2.1 Students demonstrate knowledge of social patterns and conventions and interact appropriately in cultural settings.

Standard 2.2 Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of significant components of the cultures being studied, such as traditions, institutions, art, history, music, and literary and artistic expressions, among others.

Big Ideas	
Culture and language are inseparable; they influence and reflect each other.	
Enduring Understanding	Essential Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A people's perspectives, practices and products are windows to their culture. • Language and culture are inseparable, like body and soul. • Language and culture evolve. They are bound by people, time and place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a culture? What is the connection between a people's perspectives, practices, products and their language? • How do language and culture influence and reflect each other? • How do people, time and place affect language and culture?

Goal 3: Connections

Connect with other disciplines and gain access to information

Standard 3.1 Students reinforce and broaden their knowledge of other disciplines through the target language.

Standard 3.2 Students access information and cultural perspectives that are available through the target language via electronic or traditional means.

Big Ideas	
The study of World Languages helps students enhance learning and provide access to other content areas, strategies, and resources.	
Enduring Understanding	Essential Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language learning provides opportunities to uncover big ideas about languages, cultures, and other disciplines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the connection between the study of a world language and other content areas?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies used to acquire a language are transferable to other areas of learning throughout life. • Learning another world language enables one to access information available only in that language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the strategies that individuals use to learn a world language? How do these strategies help them learn in other content areas? • Why is it important to access primary information?
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Goal 4: Comparisons
Develop insight into the nature of language and culture

Standard 4.1 Students learn that different languages use different ways to communicate and can apply this knowledge to their own language.

Standard 4.2 Students learn that people of different cultures may think and act differently, and students can apply this knowledge to their own culture.

Big Ideas	
Comparing and contrasting one's own and other languages and cultures enables individuals to gain new insight about self and the world.	
Enduring Understanding	Essential Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By learning another language individuals can better understand how both the native and other languages work. • By studying another culture, individuals can better understand and appreciate their native and other cultures. • Comparing and contrasting world languages and cultures promote individuals' ability to process information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do they say or write it that way? Why can't they say or write it our way? • How does studying another culture make an individual understand and appreciate his/her own? • In what way does the study of another language and culture develop an individual's critical thinking skills?

Goal 5: Communities
Participate in multilingual communities, the global society, and world market place

Standard 5.1 Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

Standard 5.2 Students use language for leisure and personal enrichment.

Big Ideas	
The study of WL enables individuals to participate in multiple communities and enriches their experiences	
Enduring Understanding	Essential Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study of a World Language expands individuals' opportunities. • Language is tool to connect with the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways does the study of a World Language open doors for individuals? • What difference does the study of a World Language make in an individual's life? • What does it take to become a global citizen?