

*"The engaged voice must never be fixed and absolute but always changing, always evolving in dialogue with a world beyond itself."*

bell hooks  
American Educator

## PROGRAM DELIVERY STANDARDS FOR IMPLEMENTING A HIGH-PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

- Curriculum
- Instructional Materials
- Instructional Time
- Instructional Technology
- Instructional Connections
- Professional Development
- Professional Interaction
- Professional Supervision And Evaluation
- Assessment of Students
- Monitoring Programs
- Grouping And Tracking
- Student Support
- Articulation And Alignment
- Resource Personnel And Leadership



## Program Delivery Standards For Implementing A High-Performance Program

**I. Curriculum.** A high-quality program is defined, guided and supported by a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, written curriculum that has been developed considering the latest research and thinking in the field.

A school or district's curriculum delineates the overarching philosophy and goals of the program; presents the key objectives or outcomes for each grade level or course; provides illustrative examples, tasks and/or activities; includes the available resources for implementing the curriculum; and details how the outcomes or objectives will be assessed.

A high-quality program uses a comprehensive, interactive, teacher-friendly curriculum guide to provide clear direction, articulation between K-12 grades and courses, coherence among the program's components and strategies for postsecondary articulation.

A high-quality program offers a variety of languages in the curriculum, selected according to the following factors:

- community input based on local traditions and ethnic interests;
- availability of well-trained teachers who have a long-term commitment to the program;
- the number of languages a district can financially support through advanced levels of instruction; and
- opportunities to study a classical language such as Latin or Greek, a less-commonly taught language and/or a language deemed by the United States government as critical to national and/or security interests, e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian.

Because proficiency evolves over time, the opportunity to study one world language for an extended sequence is of greater importance than a variety of choices for short periods.

**II. Instructional Materials.** A high-quality program provides and makes use of a textbook or equivalent instructional print materials for each student and provides an adequate supply of nonprint materials to accomplish the goals of the curriculum.

Materials should be selected after curricular decisions have been made. In addition, the term "textbook" does not necessarily refer to a bound book, but may also include:

- a variety of culturally authentic print materials, such as schedules, brochures, newspapers and/or recipes presented in a hardbound, softbound or electronic format; and
- nonprint materials, now included as part of the basic, or "core" components of instruction, such as food, art, music, coins or other cultural artifacts, photographs, videos, film, and telecommunications software.

Several possible approaches to the selection of materials may involve teachers, administrators, students and parents. For example, the process may be performance based or questionnaire based.

The performance-based selection process involves:

- selecting performance standards related to content standards that require the support of good print and nonprint materials;
- determining which textual components are necessary to help students achieve the desired performance; and
- reviewing materials to determine if they contain this essential content.

The tables on pages 147-149 from *The Indiana Foreign Language Proficiency Guide* provide a sample of what local districts may use in the selection of appropriate text materials.

**Performance:** (From Content Standard 1.2) After reading or viewing a program or pictures on cultural information such as customs, school building styles, family structure, etc., the student identifies and explains some similarities and differences.<sup>1</sup>

Textual Material	Text A	Text B	Text C	Text D	Text E
Pictures of homes, schools, etc.	no	no	yes	yes	no
Written information on the family.	no	no	yes	no	yes
Written information on holiday customs.	no	no	yes	no	no
Pictures of rooms of typical homes.	yes	no	no	no	no

In the questionnaire-based selection process, the materials selection committee should develop a questionnaire for evaluation purposes. The questionnaire should reflect the basic direction and philosophical stance of the desired curriculum. The following charts by Lorraine A. Strasheim<sup>2</sup> reflect a curriculum that emphasizes communicative and cultural learning.

<sup>1</sup> *The Indiana Foreign Language Proficiency Guide*, Indiana Department of Education, 1995, 250. Reprinted with permission.  
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 257-258. Reprinted with permission.

## Evaluating Foreign Language Textbooks For A Proficiency Orientation

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Text \_\_\_\_\_ Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Ranking: Number \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

<i>The Textbook</i>	Excellent	Adequate	Poor
The text is attractive, appealing and inviting to the learner.			
The text's size is reasonable for carrying and locker storage.			
The text is durable enough to last through the adoption period.			

<i>The Teaching Package</i>	Excellent	Adequate	Poor
The text is "teachable" in the available instructional time.			
Transparencies, audiotapes, computer lessons, etc. can be "mixed and matched" to suit your teaching style and emphases and are affordable.			
The workbooks are varied – not just grammar.			

<i>The "Basics"</i>	Excellent	Adequate	Poor
The materials are designed for and directed to the learner.			
Structure and vocabulary drills are contextualized more often than not.			
Communicative activities are "built in" as application in the drill process.			
The drills progress from discrete-item exercises to meaningful drills.			
The student can readily find the help or information s/he needs or wants.			

(continued)

Evaluating Foreign Language Textbooks For A Proficiency Orientation, continued

<i>Communication</i>	Excellent	Adequate	Poor
Authentic spoken and written language samples are used.			
All four skills receive attention and practice.			
Open-ended questions are frequently employed.			
Communicative activities are set in situations appropriate for students' age level.			
The communicative activities lend themselves to formative testing and evaluation.			

<i>Culture</i>	Excellent	Adequate	Poor
There is a wide variety of cultural topics.			
The cultural topics are appropriate to the age of the learner.			
Drills and exercises are set in cultural contexts whenever possible.			
Communicative activities are set in cultural situations.			
Attention is paid to the role of the target language and culture(s) in the world.			

<i>Integration</i>	Excellent	Adequate	Poor
Approximately equal "weight" is given to language (structure), communication, and culture.			
Communication and culture are handled systematically as well as language (structure).			
The communicative and cultural topics and situations have "fit" with the Indiana [Connecticut] Department of Education content standards established for this level.			
If appropriate: The level one and level two texts are well articulated and coordinated.			

Tables on pages 147-149 from *The Indiana Foreign Language Proficiency Guide*, 257-258. Indiana Department of Education, 1995. Used with permission.

**III. Instructional Time. A high-quality world languages program assures specific time allocations at each level of instruction.**

The amount of time on task and the quality of activities are critical variables in the delivery of a high-quality program. The recommended periods of instruction at each level should be expanded through interdisciplinary and integrated units that students experience throughout the year in all classrooms.

The study of world languages is now considered in the federal "Goals 2000" as part of the common core of learning. Accordingly, the following ranges of study are recommended:

- a minimum of 10-15 minutes of *daily*\* instruction for Grades K-3 (50-75 minutes per week);
- a minimum of 20-30 minutes of *daily*\* instruction for Grades 4-6 (100-150 minutes per week);
- a minimum of 30-50 minutes of *daily* instruction for Grades 7-8 (150-250 minutes per week); and
- a minimum of 40-50 minutes of *daily* instruction for Grades 9-12 (200-250 minutes per week).

\*or sequential blocks of time totaling the recommended range.

**Note:** A program that uses the lower range of minutes per day will only minimally meet the achievement of instructional goals and will compromise the level of language acquired. Frequent contact for shorter periods tends to be more conducive to language learning than one block of time per week. Moreover, as Curtain and Pesola report, "Participants in the 1991 Colloquium on Foreign Languages in the Elementary School Curriculum agreed that a minimum time allotment for a program to bear the FLES designation should be seventy-five minutes per week, scheduled no less often than every other day."<sup>3</sup>

**IV. Instructional Technology. A high-quality program provides and makes use of appropriate technologies as required to implement and enhance the goals of the curriculum, and ensures that each student has access to these technologies in a systematic, ongoing way.**

As the 21st century approaches, there is an instructional shift toward the integration of technology into the language classroom not as a casual addition, but as

an essential component of the language experience. Videos, computers, CD-ROMS, laser discs, the Internet, digital cameras, satellites and computerized, multimedia language labs bring the target language and cultures into the classroom in an immediate, authentic and contemporary way. Delivery of curriculum through an electronic format validates and increases learning and communication. Communication with speakers of the target language through technology enhances student motivation and changes the study of language from an object of study to a subject of meaningful interaction. These technologies can also provide practice, remediation and assessment opportunities far beyond the scope of traditional practices.

**V. Instructional Connections. A high-quality program regularly makes connections across subject areas so that students regularly see the links between and among curricular strands and disciplines.**

The world languages classroom is interdisciplinary by definition. The importance of connecting with other areas of study is highlighted by Program Goal 3. Communication in a world language requires both knowledge of the language and the manipulation of subject-area skills in that language (e.g., mathematics skills for shopping in the target language or map skills for directions in the target language). A high-quality program develops these skills through a variety of content-related activities that provide meaningful, authentic and motivating opportunities for learning.

**VI. Professional Development. A high-quality program includes a comprehensive plan for professional development that is tied to curriculum objectives. A high-quality program maximizes opportunities for ongoing professional interaction among teachers, including opportunities to participate in conferences, seminars and institutes at home and abroad.**

In order to implement fully the new standards or any curricular/ technological changes, it is essential to provide professional development opportunities for world languages teachers. Training workshops and time to consult with colleagues enable teachers to learn, adapt and experiment with current methods of teaching and

<sup>3</sup> Curtain, Helena Anderson and Pesola, Carol Ann. *Languages and Children – Making the Match: Foreign Language Instruction for an Early Start Grades K-8*, second edition. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group, 1994, 266.

learning and educational technology, as well as to maintain and improve their own language proficiency. The following activities provide important professional development experiences:

- active participation in local, state and national world language organizations;
- frequent interaction with world language colleagues both within and beyond the local school district; and
- participation in study and travel programs offered by state, national and world agencies.

Professional development should be linked closely with curriculum objectives.

**VII. Professional Interaction. A high-quality program assures that teachers have ample time and resources to interact professionally on substantive matters of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.**

The professional isolation of teachers is frequently cited as the most serious impediment to improved curriculum, instruction and assessment. Many teachers practice their craft behind closed doors, minimally aware of what their colleagues are doing, usually unobserved and undersupported. Far too often, teachers' frames of reference are how they were taught, not how their colleagues are teaching. Common problems are too often solved individually rather than cooperatively.

Professional interaction can and must take many forms. For example, peer observations, team teaching, formal and informal opportunities for sharing, videotaping instruction, issue-focused discussions at faculty meetings, cross-district grade-level meetings, course committees and common planning time are all powerful vehicles for reducing professional isolation and enhancing professional interaction. Each of these strategies has a role in helping school faculties and world languages departments become dynamic communities of learners rather than just assortments of teachers and students working in the same building or district. Also, each of these strategies promotes the sharing of ideas, experiences and knowledge that is the hallmark of professional collaboration.

**VIII. Professional Supervision and Evaluation. A high-quality program has in place a system of professional supervision and evaluation that sets high standards of professional performance and implements programs and policies to ensure that these standards are met.**

Just as the methods and techniques of student assessment must change to account for measuring newer and broader outcomes, so too must methods and techniques of teacher evaluation change to account for different definitions of productivity and effectiveness.

Professional evaluation that supports a high-quality world languages program needs to reflect the requirements of a communication-based program driven by curriculum outcomes for students. Administrators and supervisors must be better trained and more knowledgeable about effective world languages curriculum and instruction. Moreover, a world languages curriculum specialist should be assigned to oversee the world languages curriculum. In addition, professional evaluation must go beyond periodic observations and include such activities as the development and peer review of professional performance portfolios and analysis of student work and student achievement.

**IX. Assessment of Students. A high-quality program has a coherent system of assessment that is closely aligned with both the curricular and instructional goals of the program.**

In schools, what is assessed and how it is assessed communicate most clearly what is valued. If the vision of a thinking, reasoning and communicative curriculum is to become a reality, our entire system of assessment and how we hold students accountable must shift.

A high-quality world languages program should incorporate assessments of demonstrated accomplishment using observations, performances, projects and/or portfolios. The assessment system should incorporate judgments of student work that are based on clear criteria (rubrics) for expected performance which are tied to the curriculum and hold students accountable for meeting high standards. All five language skills (listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing and cultural knowledge) as described in the Framework of Communicative Modes (interpersonal, interpretive, presentational)<sup>4</sup> must be assessed in a systematic, ongoing way at each level of instruction in a contextual manner. That is, each skill is embedded in a meaningful context rather than in isolation. In other words, students demonstrate what they can **do with** the language, not just what they **know about** the language.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* Chart: Framework of Communicative Modes, Appendix A

<sup>5</sup> See Farmington (CT) Language Proficiency Test in Appendix A.

**X. Monitoring Programs.** A high-quality program has a comprehensive, ongoing system of evaluation that consistently reviews and seeks to improve programs.

Every program in every school system periodically should be subjected to scrutiny. Those within the system and, increasingly, those outside of the system have a right to definitive answers to such questions as:

- Is the program working for all students?
- Is the curriculum meeting the needs of the students, the community and the broader society?
- Is instruction provided in ways that maximize student achievement?
- Are students achieving in sufficient numbers and at high enough levels, and if not, why?
- Are all necessary program components in place and aligned to achieve program goals?

To ensure a high-quality world languages program, it is necessary to conduct periodic and comprehensive reviews of the entire program to answer these and other questions, publicly report findings, and implement changes on the basis of the reviews.

**XI. Grouping and Tracking.** A high-quality program reduces the sorting and tracking of students into homogeneous groups to the minimum degree required to fully meet the diverse and individual needs of all students.

No single component of the educational system more powerfully communicates the expectations, both high and low, that we hold for young people than the ways in which schools group, sort, level and track students. This certainly has been the case in world languages, where access sometimes has been denied to students on the basis of reading or other test scores. All students should have an opportunity to study a world language.

A major step in moving toward the vision of “world languages for ALL” is drastically decreasing the ability grouping, leveling and tracking of students. This does not mean removal of all ability groupings; it does not mean elimination of all honors courses; and it does not mean grouping all students heterogeneously all the time. It does mean, however, a change in policy at the school and district levels regarding ability grouping and tracking so that no student is denied access to a rich and demanding educational program best suited to his or her individual needs and interests. It also means that the cur-

rent gap in breadth, depth and rigor between what is provided for the top 20 percent and for the bottom 20 percent is significantly narrowed, while maintaining high standards. Moreover, an emphasis on accommodating multiple learning styles in teacher presentations, increased student practice in a variety of classroom groupings, the addition of varied instructional strategies and smaller class sizes can provide all students in heterogeneous classes with the necessary tools for comprehension and subsequent skill development.

**XII. Student Support.** A high-quality program makes available a comprehensive program of remedial assistance and student support that is responsive to individual needs and learning styles.

While individual and diverse backgrounds, interests, styles, preferences and abilities are widely recognized, schools often overlook and even ignore these differences by keeping time a constant. There are one-year courses, 45-minute classes, 15-minute quizzes and 2-minute fact drills that apply to all students. Common sense dictates that some students need less time and others need more time to reasonably be able to meet the objectives for any lesson, unit, year or program. One way that time becomes a variable used to better meet individual student needs is through the provision of more advanced or remedial or compensatory instruction for those students for whom traditional time allocations are not appropriate.

Recognizing that some students need more time to accomplish what others can do in less time implies that schools must provide a range of alternatives for students. Students can be better supported by:

- teachers who have a variety of strategies and assorted instructional materials (including hands-on materials and high-quality software), and who supplement daily instruction to meet individual students’ needs;
- language centers and language labs that are well maintained and well stocked with materials, supplemental resources and computers, and that are staffed with trained and knowledgeable personnel;
- support personnel available to work with students in classrooms more often than in pull-out situations, and who work closely with regular classroom teachers; and
- flexible programs that give students opportunities to revisit topics for better comprehension before moving to the next level or course.

**XIII. Articulation and Alignment.** A high-quality program evolves coherently, grade by grade and course by course, from kindergarten through Grade 12, and presents an alignment of curriculum, instructional materials, professional development and assessment, all of which are implemented to attain the overarching goals of the program.

Mixed and often conflicting messages are given to teachers about what should be taught, how it should be taught and how it will be assessed, as students progress from kindergarten to Grade 12. To eliminate this problem, a guide for K-12 program development like that described in Chapter 4 must replace textbooks and tests as the primary driver of the program. In addition to delineating content expectations, the guide provides both instructional suggestions and assessment possibilities to ensure tighter alignment. Similarly, the guide must be designed to ensure a developmentally appropriate sequence of outcomes, recognizing the need for exploratory exposure to ideas, opportunities to master these ideas and time to review and reinforce them. All offerings must be an articulated sequence that maximizes student readiness for each succeeding course. Common means for increasing the articulation and coordination of the K-12 curriculum are professional development workshops, departmental assessment programs, faculty meetings of two consecutive grades and meetings of course committees where teachers discuss problems and concerns and make necessary adjustments.

**XIV. Resource Personnel and Leadership.** A high-quality program assigns the responsibility for the ongoing implementation and improvement of the program to qualified coordinators, supervisors, resource personnel and/or department chairpeople who provide support, coordination, supervision and leadership.

A high-quality K-12 world languages program entails a complex web of ongoing activity, change, support and evaluation. Such a program cannot simply be put in place and expected to run by itself. In fact, as with every other aspect of a school system, the effectiveness and vitality of a district's K-12 world languages program depend critically on the assignment of responsibility for program oversight and coordination to one or more individuals. All too often, when program leadership and responsibility for ongoing implementation and improvement are not vested in one or more individuals, the focus on program quality and improvement tends to fall through the cracks and fragment because of other priorities.

High-quality programs require that (1) a vision of reform be created, nurtured and advocated; (2) teachers be kept abreast of changes and professional development opportunities; and (3) curricular, instructional and assessment improvement be treated as ongoing processes. For these reasons, it is imperative that a qualified person be assigned leadership of and responsibility for the world languages program at all levels.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> For further discussion, see Appendix F: "A Case for Foreign Languages: The Glastonbury Language Program," *The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1997, p. 5 as excerpted from *Perspective*, Council for Basic Education 7, (2), 1995.



