



## **National Standards for Foreign Language Education**

With the help of a three-year grant from the US Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities, an eleven-member task force, representing a variety of languages, levels of instruction, program models, and geographic regions, undertook the task of defining *content standards* -- what students should know and be able to do -- in foreign language education. The final document, *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century*, first published in 1996, represents an unprecedented consensus among educators, business leaders, government, and the community on the definition and role of foreign language instruction in American education. This visionary document has been used by teachers, administrators, and curriculum developers at both state and local levels to begin to improve foreign language education in our nation's schools. The NEW 3rd Edition Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century, revised including Arabic standards, is now available.

ACTFL continues to play a leadership role in the collaborative project that was responsible for the development of national content standards for foreign language education. The project continues to operate, focusing now on professional standards, and the development of programs and publications to assist in the implementation of standards nationwide.

## **Statement of Philosophy**

*Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. Children who come to school from non-English backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language.*

## **STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

### **COMMUNICATION**

#### **Communicate in Languages Other Than English**

- **Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions
- **Standard 1.2:** Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics
- **Standard 1.3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

### **CULTURES**

#### **Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures**

- **Standard 2.1:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied
- **Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

## **CONNECTIONS**

### **Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information**

- **Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language
- **Standard 3.2:** Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures

## **COMPARISONS**

### **Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture**

- **Standard 4.1:** Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own
- **Standard 4.2:** Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

## **COMMUNITIES**

### **Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World**

- **Standard 5.1:** Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting
- **Standard 5.2:** Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.