

Benefits of Language Learning

Learning a world language improves academic performance, fosters greater appreciation of diverse perspectives, and increases career opportunities.

Research shows that:

- Students who studied a foreign language score higher on tests in reading and math than students who did not study language.
- The more foreign language a student has taken the greater the positive effect on SAT and ACT scores.
- Skills and strategies used in reading and writing processes are transferable from first to second languages and vice versa.

In addition, studying another language:

- Increases cognitive skills, such as mental flexibility, creativity, and divergent thinking.
- Improves knowledge and understanding of English through greater sensitivity to structure, vocabulary and syntax.
- Increases understanding, appreciation and respect for diverse cultures and languages.
- Reinforces content learned in other subject areas.

World Languages are for **ALL** students

- ALL students can and should learn multiple languages.
- World language classrooms accommodate diverse learners through a collaborative, communicative approach to learning.
- Students with a language background other than English should be encouraged to nurture skills in their first language so that they can use it as an asset to enrich their own lives, their community, and their careers.

Enhanced Career Opportunities

The need for communication skills in languages other than English is growing at a rapid pace as the global market expands. These will play an important role in service industries that are predicted to be the fastest growing markets in the 21st century.

- Proficiency in a world language is important for many different employment and career opportunities ranging from arts to technology.
- 33% of today's corporations conduct business internationally. Minnesota's top international markets are Canada, Europe, Asia, and Mexico.
- Minnesota's exports topped ten billion dollars in 2000.
- Exports support more than one out of every six jobs in Minnesota's manufacturing sectors.



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A WORLD OF LANGUAGES



Learning another language

- Strengthens communication skills
- Enhances intellectual and cognitive growth
- Broadens career and life opportunities
- Increases understanding of other people and cultures
- Encourages students to reflect on their own language and culture

All students can learn and benefit from studying a world language.

Save Time and Money by investing in the study of a world language!

Did you know that students could receive college credit or even satisfy some college graduation requirements if they have invested 3 to 4 years studying a language while in high school? The results — dollar savings for students.

- After studying 3 to 4 years in high school, a student entering the University of Minnesota can take the Minnesota Language Proficiency Assessment and place typically into the third semester of the language course sequence. Some students will qualify for placement into the fourth semester course.
- Students who are placed into third or fourth semester language skills courses and successfully complete those courses, may receive credit for the intervening semester(s) of skills courses, excluding the first semester. This is called an "automatic credit" award.

For example, a student who completes German 1003 with a grade of C- or better may receive credit for German 1002; a student who completes Spanish 1004 with a grade of C- or better may receive credit for Spanish 1002 and 1003.

- This translates into a potential savings of almost \$1000.00 (for one five credit course and materials) or \$2000.00 (for two five credit courses and materials).
- At a private college, placing into an upper level language course results in even greater savings.

Recommendations

Parents, teachers and counselors should encourage students to:

- ✦ Begin language learning as early as possible and continue a long sequence. Current research shows that it takes approximately 3-4 years to develop basic social language skills, and more to acquire academic and professional skills in a language.
- ✦ Place in the right level in high school and college and build on previous language experience from middle or elementary school.
- ✦ Enroll in courses that will further develop and maintain skills in the first language of students from non-English speaking backgrounds, especially reading and writing, so that students will be able to use their native language as a resource and asset in their futures.
- ✦ Be assessed for language proficiency at the end of high school for upper level placement, which saves time and money in college.

Entrance and Exit Requirements for Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities recognize the academic, social, and economic benefits of knowing other languages for well-educated individuals. Most universities have entrance or exit requirements for the study of world languages.

- Macalester College, a private university, recommends that high school students have at least 3 years of a foreign language for admission.
- At the College of St. Scholastica, students are automatically exempted from completing the college's language requirement if they have 3 years of high school language study.

- St. Cloud State University recommends at least 2 years of language study in high school.
- At the University of St. Thomas, a language is not required for admission, but 3 semesters is required for graduation. UST recommends that students take at least 2-3 years in high school, because students can test out of the language if they are well prepared.
- When students are placed in higher levels of language study at the university level, they develop stronger proficiency in the language through deeper study, perhaps leading to a double major. This advantage can be added to any career choice, thus doubling the marketability of the job candidate.