

AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Barre, Vermont

TEAM: Proficiency-Based Learning team

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education adopt the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL), World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages?

SECRETARY'S RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the State Board of Education adopt the ACTFL, World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 16 V.S.A. §164 (9) Implement and continually update standards for student performance in appropriate content areas and at appropriate intervals in the continuum from kindergarten to grade 12 and methods of assessment to determine attainment of the standards for student performance. The standards shall be rigorous, challenging and designed to prepare students to participate in and contribute to the democratic process and to compete in the global marketplace.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

What brings us to this recommendation?

- Global citizenship, where world language resides, is one of the seven content areas identified in the Education Quality Standards (EQS) for which students must demonstrate proficiency. (EQS 2120.5 Curriculum Content)
- The current Grade Expectations for Vermont's Framework for Standards and Learning Opportunities, Standards for Non-Native Language do not adequately emphasize EQS transferable skills and are outdated in the context of Vermont's movement towards proficiency-based learning and personalization. (EQS 2021.1 Instructional Practices, 2015.5 Curriculum Content)
- The State Board of Education has adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Mathematics, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), the Society of Health and Physical Education (SHAPE) Standards for Health and Physical Education, the National Core Arts Standards (NACS), College, Career and Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards (C3), Jump\$tart National Standards in K-12 Personal Finance Education, and the International Society for Technology in Education Standards (ISTE).
- Global citizenship curriculum should be rigorous and coordinated across all grades and the supervisory union, to prepare all students for graduation. (EQS 2120.6 Curriculum Coordination)
- The ACTFL, World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages allow each supervisory union to select or develop appropriate and relevant content to align with standards approved by the State Board of Education. (EQS 2120.5 Curriculum Content)

Why do we believe that these standards are superior to the 2004 Grade Expectations for Vermont’s Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities, Standards for Non-Native Language?

- The ACTFL, World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages represent the most current research and best thinking of teachers, professional organizations and national experts regarding the world language core areas of communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities.
- The ACTFL standards provide students a range of interactions and opportunities to test and revise their conclusions, learning and language acquisition as they move towards proficiency.
- The ACTFL standards provide opportunities for rigorous learning in world language while also focusing on transferable skills necessary for college and career readiness.

How were the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language, World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages developed?

- Development of a primary document was initiated in 1996 as part of a three-year joint U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment of the Humanities grant; an eleven-member task force, representing a variety of languages, geographic regions and levels of instruction, set out to define what students should know and be able to do regarding language learning.
- With unprecedented acceptance from educators, business leaders, the community and government, the ACTFL, World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages were updated in 2017 to its current 4th edition, which includes the addition of proficiency range designations for new sample progress indicators, which will help both instructors and learners progress. In 2017, through a collaborative effort between ACTFL and the National Council of State Supervisors for Foreign Language (NCSSFL), student-focused Can-Do Statements were created to align with the ACTFL, World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages.

What input has been provided by Vermont educators?

In May 2018, Vermont School Board members, superintendents, administrators, curriculum directors and teachers (world language, early learning, homeschool) responded to a survey regarding the adoption of world language standards that are national in scope (n=123). Findings are summarized below:

- Ninety-one percent are currently using ACTFL World-Readiness Standards for Learning languages.
- When asked if ACTFL World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages should be adopted as the new World Language standards:
 - ✓ Seventy-two percent responded “YES”.
 - ✓ Four percent responded “NO”.
 - ✓ Twenty-four percent responded “UNSURE”; further analysis eliminated certain concerns as they were addressed within the standards. When this subset was asked which were the “Most/Slightly Important” characteristics required of world language standards, they responded 54-79% to characteristics which mirror the ACTFL standards.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS: Grade Expectations for Vermont’s Framework for Standards and Learning Opportunities, Standards for Non-Native Language will be replaced with new standards that are national in scope and allow relevant content and instructional practices to be selected and developed by supervisory unions/districts.

EDUCATION IMPLICATIONS: A rigorous world language curriculum can be coordinated across all grades and the supervisory union to allow all learners to successfully engage in the curriculum and meet the graduation requirements. Adoption of these standards for world language directly support implementation of the State Board of Education’s *Education Quality Standards* sections 2120.5 Curriculum Content, 2120.6 Curriculum Coordination, 2120.7 Graduation Requirements, 2021.1 Instructional Practices and 2123.2 Development and Implementation of Local Comprehensive Assessment Systems

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: Minimal; additional costs will be limited to any changes in curriculum or professional development costs related to learning the new standards.

STAFF AVAILABLE: Martha Deiss, Proficiency-Based Learning Team- Global Citizenship Specialist Martha.deiss@vermont.gov or (802)479-1487.