

# **World Language Program Evaluation Secondary Level (6-12)**

Prepared by:  
Cheryl Dyer,  
Supervisor of World Cultures

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## Committee Members

### **Comparison**

*Myles Keegan*  
*Carmen Fernandez*  
Carol Beaver  
Susan McGovern  
Barbara Menegozzi  
Ayako Morrell  
Debbie Resvick  
Janice Stavenick

### **Perception**

*Betsy Maxwell*  
*Diane Reilly*  
Sonnya Espinal  
Josh Gebhardt  
Kate Heisler  
Kathy Horvath  
Karin Sattler  
Bev Rabinowitz

### **Alignment**

*Lori Ziminski*  
Joelle Caffara  
Carol Dempsey  
Lois Dick  
Marissa Parrotta  
Raffaela Quinto  
Ann Visinski  
Jan Zucco

The individuals whose names appear in italics chaired the sub-committees. The Program Evaluation began in the fall of 2001 and continued through the second marking period of the 2002-2003 school year. This period of time was approximately eighteen months.

## **Changes Since 1997**

The world language program was last evaluated as part of the Middle States Evaluation in 1996. At that time, the department at Ridge consisted of one part-time and eight full-time teachers. The department had no chairperson, nor was there a curriculum supervisor at the district level. There was a coordinator who was paid a stipend. This individual served as a liaison between the department and the administration. Among the high school department members, one teacher had an earned Ph.D., eight teachers had Master's degrees, and one teacher had a Bachelor's degree. Two teachers were native or heritage speakers of the language that they taught. The school offered five levels of world language instruction in four different languages. The languages offered were: Spanish, French, Latin, and German. The fifth level available was Advanced Placement.

The number of world language teachers at William Annin Middle School and Ridge High School has increased proportionally with the student population. Currently there are fourteen teachers assigned to the high school for all or part of their day. Three teachers teach part of their day at William Annin and two teachers are part-time. Nine additional teachers are assigned to the middle school full-time. Currently, eight of the total world language teachers are native or heritage speakers of the language that they teach. The world language department at the secondary level is now comprised of twenty-four members.

In 1999, the district added a curriculum supervisor for the areas of world languages and social studies. The facilitator positions at the high school and middle school were eliminated.

## **Current Status**

There are fifty-nine sections of world languages currently being taught at the high school with an average class size of 22 students. There are forty-nine sections of world languages at the middle school with an average class size of 24 students. Languages being taught include: Spanish, French, German, Latin, Japanese, and Italian. Unfortunately, declining enrollment in German has caused the language to be phased out over a period of four years. Currently there is one section of German at the high school that combines students at Level IV with Advanced Placement Students. The 2003-2004 school year will be the last year that German is offered for continuing students. The two languages that have been added since 1997 are Italian and Japanese.

Beginning in 2000-2001, additional levels of language instruction were added to the high school Program of Studies. Over a two year period, the following courses were added: Spanish III Honors, Spanish IV Honors, Latin III Honors, Latin IV, French III Honors, and French IV Honors. Spanish V, French V, and Latin V have been approved and will be added as enrollment allows.

In 2001, the district changed the graduation requirements to include 10 credits of world languages for all students. Meeting the needs of students with learning disabilities in the world language classroom has been a major focus of staff development through

department meetings and Staff College courses for the past three years. The supervisor conducted considerable research on this topic. (See Appendix A) Staff members also responded to a survey to determine their attitudes regarding the teaching of students with learning disabilities at the beginning of the evaluation process, which coincided with the change in graduation requirements to include world languages.



Course	R	NP	S	W	M	WM	CH	L	H
Japanese III	Yes	Yes							
Japanese III H									
Japanese IV	Yes	Yes							
Japanese IV H									
Japanese V									
Japanese V H									
Latin I	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latin I H									
Latin II	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latin II H									
Latin III	Yes		Yes	Yes					Yes
Latin III H	Yes			Yes					
Latin IV	Yes		Yes	Yes					
Latin IV H				Yes					
Latin V	Yes								
Latin V Hon				Yes					
Latin AP Lit	Yes		Yes	Yes					
Latin AP Virgil	Yes		Yes						
Italian I	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes
Italian I H									
Italian II	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes
Italian II H									
Italian III	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes
Italian III H									
Italian IV	Yes		Yes	Yes					
Italian IV H									Yes
Italian V									
Italian V H									Yes
Spanish I	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spanish I H						Yes		Yes	
Spanish II	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spanish II H			Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Spanish III	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spanish III H	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Spanish IV	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Spanish IV H	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Spanish V				Yes				Yes	
Spanish V H	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes	Yes		
Spanish AP Lang	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes
Spanish AP Lit.		Yes	Yes						
Spanish Conversation			Yes	Yes					
Total	35	22	28	35	19	25	17	25	18

Livingston and Holmdel also offer Chinese at levels I, II, III, IV. Livingston has a level V.

The committee also compared the end results of the Bernards Township World Language program by comparing Advanced Placement test scores in each of the languages for which an Advanced Placement course exists. The results appear in the chart below. Percentages reflect the number of students who earned a passing score (3, 4, or 5) and are averaged over a five-year period from 1995-2000.

<b>Course</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>CH</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>H</b>
French	67%	X	74%	86%	89%	X	85%	86%	85%
Spanish	52%	X	71%	84%	95%	98%	100%	100%	95%
German	100%	X	42%	75%	89%	X	X	87%	X
Latin Literature	54%	X	44%	60%	X	X	X	X	50%
Latin Virgil	50%	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	80%

All districts in the comparison group scored better than Ridge in French and Spanish. Only one other district reported scores for Latin Virgil, which surpassed Ridge. Ridge scored better than other districts in German. However only four students took the AP German test from Ridge compared to 18 students from Madison and 23 students from Livingston.

### **Curriculum Alignment**

The desired outcomes for world language instruction are based on the Core Curriculum Content Standards. For world languages, there are two standards that must be addressed by the curriculum. They are: All students will be able to communicate at a basic literacy level in at least one language other than English, and all students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationship between language and culture for at least one world language in addition to English. These two standards incorporate the five national standards for world language learning:

- Communication: Communicate in languages other than English
- Cultures: Gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- Connections: Connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- Comparisons: Develop insight into the nature of language and culture
- Communities: Participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world

The curriculum in Bernards Township has been aligned to the National Standards as well as to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. However, there was a lack of alignment among languages. Themes, topics and skills addressed in one language at Level I were not consistent among other languages at the same level. The curricula was not written in a standard format, which made it more difficult to compare.

The implementation of the curriculum is still a work in progress. The focus of the National and New Jersey Standards is on communication and competency. Many teachers are still rooted in a pedagogy that emphasized grammar and syntax. The paradigm has

shifted from the four skill areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing, to a broader concept of language in context (Appendix B). Not all teachers have made the shift.



### Perception of the Program

In the spring of 2002, seniors at Ridge High School responded to a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to elicit their perception of the world language program and their preparation in this content area. The questionnaire is attached. The results appear below. Response choices were: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD), or Not Applicable (NA).

Statement	SA or A	D or SD	NA
I enjoyed studying world language in high school.	44%	57%	0%
Sufficient time was allotted weekly for language learning.	57%	43%	0%
There were sufficient opportunities to receive help outside of world language class if needed.	62%	32%	6%
I took this class because I was interested in learning a world language.	51%	47%	2%
I took a world language because it was a requirement of many colleges.	78%	22%	0%
The high school offered a sufficient range of language choices.	71%	29%	0%
I had the option to study more than one language at a time.	59%	32%	9%
The curriculum emphasized active communication.	58%	42%	0%
Different methods were used to meet different learning abilities and styles.	46%	52%	2%
Sufficient technical equipment was available.	36%	58%	6%
The course text and other materials were current and effective.	54%	45%	1%
A variety of extra-curricular world language activities were offered.	29%	67%	4%
I had authentic cultural experiences in world language class.	24%	76%	0%
World language is an important part of the high school curriculum.	49%	50%	1%
The needs of heritage speakers were adequately addressed.	9%	3%	88%

Parents at the middle school and high school were randomly selected to respond to a survey that was designed to determine their perceptions of the world language program. The survey was presented in a Likert scale format. The results appear in the table on the next page.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA or A (High School)</b>	<b>D or SD (High School)</b>	<b>SA or A (Middle School)</b>	<b>D or SD (Middle School)</b>
The district offers a sufficient range of language choices.	93.4%	6.6%	95%	5%
Sufficient time was allotted weekly for language learning.	97.8%	2.2%	98%	2%
Students are given opportunities to experience different languages before world language selection.	82.9%	17.1%	87.5%	22.5%
The needs of heritage language speakers are adequately addressed.	63%	37%	59%	41%
Different levels of instructional methods are used to meet different learning abilities and styles.	73%	27%	68%	32%
The curriculum emphasizes active communication (listening, speaking, reading, writing) in real life situations.	82%	18%	77%	23%
Sufficient technological equipment is available.	69.7%	30.3%	79%	21%
The course text materials are current and effective.	91.1%	8.9%	86%	14%
A variety of extra-curricula world language activities are offered.	44%	56%	51%	49%
Students are encouraged to use their language learning outside of the classroom.	56%	44%	42%	58%
Learning occurs in meaningful, communicative context relevant to students.	84.4%	15.6%	89.7%	10.3%
Students experience learning activities that involve the culture of the target language.	77%	23%	89%	11%

## **Criticisms**

Most students took a world language in high school because it was a requirement of many colleges. A majority of the students:

- Did not enjoy studying world language.
- Did not perceive the use of different teaching methods on the part of their teachers.
- Did not think that sufficient technical equipment was available.
- Did not think that a variety of extra-curricular experiences were offered.
- Did not feel that they had authentic cultural experiences in world language class.
- Did not feel that world language was an important part of the high school curriculum.

Many students did not feel that the course text and other resources were current and effective or that the curriculum emphasized active communication.

Parents were also critical of the extra-curricular offerings and did not feel that students were encouraged to use their language learning outside of the classroom.

## **Complements**

Most students felt that sufficient time was allotted for language learning and that there were sufficient opportunities to receive extra help. They felt that the high school offered a sufficient range of language choices and that they had the option to study more than one world language.

Parents endorsed the program in a number of areas. They perceive strengths in the areas of language choices, amount of time for learning, and opportunities to experience different languages. Their perception of the implementation of the curriculum is more favorable than the students' perception.

## **Areas of Strength**

The Bernards Township program of study in world languages has notable strengths. The district has more course offerings than other districts in the comparison group except for Westfield, who had the same number (35). The district has increased the percentage of native or heritage speakers on staff by 400%. The district has provided teachers with staff development in order to meet the needs of students in the district and in accordance with the change in graduation requirement. The district has increased accountability by adding a curriculum supervisor for world languages. The supervisor observes and evaluates the twenty-three secondary teachers and the four elementary teachers. The teachers are accessible and students feel that they can ask for and receive extra help.

### Areas Needing Improvement

The current program does not meet the needs of all students at Ridge High School. Historically, students who were planning on attending a four-year college enrolled in world languages. At Ridge High School, 91% of the school population takes a world language. However, in the school year 1999-2000 only 73.8% of the population was enrolled in world languages (Appendix A, pg. 13). The teachers have not been required to teach all students until recently. In the fall of 2001, the teachers responded to a survey on the world language program and the student with disabilities. The results appear below:

	SA or A	D or SD
I believe that there should be an increase in the number of credits required in special education at the undergraduate level for all teachers.	67%	33%
Lack of training in special education hinders my ability to teach.	33%	67%
All special needs students need to be included in the regular education curriculum.	42%	58%
Emotionally disabled students would have a negative impact on learning in the classroom.	67%	33%
The presence of learning disabled students in my class causes a reduction in curriculum content.	21%	89%
Undergraduate teacher training programs adequately prepare teachers for teaching severely disabled students.	1%	99%
There are severe disabilities that are inappropriate for the world language classroom.	72%	28%
Teachers have the instructional background necessary to teach inclusion students effectively.	39%	61%
My effectiveness is compromised by the amount of preparation required due to placement of learning disabled students in my classes.	39%	61%
Learning-disabled students are socially well adjusted in the classroom.	67%	33%
The number of learning disabled students in the world language classroom affects teacher effectiveness.	59%	41%
Learning-disabled students in the world language classroom have a minimal affect on implementation of curriculum content.	59%	41%
Students with disruptive behaviors are usually learning disabled.	26%	74%
I have adequate knowledge of special education law.	41%	59%
Students with learning disabilities affect the learning climate of the world language classroom.	59%	41%
Teachers can be effective with learning disabled students in the class.	100%	0%
Other students socially reject disruptive special education students.	75%	25%
Learning-disabled students behave like regular education students.	65%	35%
Students who are mild-cognitively impaired can succeed in the world language classroom.	88%	12%
My school district provides me with sufficient support staff involvement for my classified students.	19%	81%

The analysis of the results revealed significant information for use in planning staff development. Teachers felt strongly that they needed additional training in order to teach students with learning disabilities. They did not feel that undergraduate teaching training programs adequately prepares teachers for teaching severely disabled students and they believed that there should be an increase in the number of credits required in special education at the undergraduate level. They did not feel that the district was providing them with enough support and did not feel that they had adequate knowledge of special education law.

However, they did not feel that the lack of training hindered their ability to teach all students. They did not feel that the curriculum content was compromised, nor did they feel that their effectiveness was compromised.

Training through Staff College courses was offered to teachers during the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 school years specifically aimed at providing training in special education law and teaching strategies for use with learning disabled students. The special education supervisor and the world language supervisor delivered the training. Two-thirds of the teachers at the high school participated in the training. Teachers were also encouraged to attend other staff development workshops offered by outside organizations.

A review of student achievement data during the school year 2001-2002 and for the first half of 2002-2003 revealed some problems. During the 2001-2002 school year, 48 students with IEP's were enrolled in world languages. Sixteen students (approximately 33%) struggled with the course requirements. At the end of the first marking period in 2002, the following data was reported:

- 77 students with IEP's were enrolled in world language classes this fall.
- 5 students have decided to withdraw from their world language class, 4 of the 5 students were earning D's or E's at the time. One student was earning a C.
- Approximately 80% of the students are experiencing success in their classes.
- The grade distribution for the students was as follows:
  - 14 A's
  - 28 B's
  - 18 C's
  - 6 D's
  - 10 E's

By the end of the second marking period, a total of twenty students had withdrawn from world language classes.

- The grade distribution for those remaining was as follows:
  - 8 A's
  - 16 B's
  - 22 C's
  - 7 D's
  - 6 E's

The teachers indicated that although many students were successful with the accommodations that were made in accordance with their IEP's, some students required a modified curriculum that could be delivered at a slower pace.

The program is not fully meeting the needs of students in advanced placement classes. The scores for Bernards Township are significantly lower than comparison districts. This is especially true in Spanish, French, and Latin Virgil. However, the effect of adding honors levels has not yet been reflected in the AP scores. The first set of scores that will reflect this change will not be available until the summer of 2004.

### **Recommendations**

This evaluation reveals a need for revision and remediation in several areas:

#### **Curriculum Alignment**

The district needs to align the curriculum among languages in order to provide for greater consistency and clearer expectations for student achievement. This process began in the summer of 2002 with the alignment of Level I curriculum for all languages and will continue in the summer of 2003 with Level II.

The format of the curriculum should be aligned to the template proposed by the NJ State Supervisors of World Languages in an effort to ensure that the standards are being addressed in meaningful context. This process began in the summer of 2002 and will continue in the summer of 2003.

The sixth grade cycle program at Annin should be reviewed in order to provide for articulation with the elementary program. Students now enter sixth grade having had an introduction to French and Spanish in the elementary school. The French and Spanish cycles must be modified to reflect this change.

#### **Curriculum Implementation**

Teachers must focus their attention on the revised standards and develop lesson plans in accordance with them. Only 58% of the students felt that the curriculum emphasized active communication. The teachers should reflect on the design and implementation of their lessons to determine the underlying cause of this perception.

#### **Student Achievement**

Additional training is needed for teachers with regard to meeting the needs of learning-disabled students and in the area of Advanced Placement.

A modified curriculum, presented at a slower pace, should be made available to those students who are identified by guidance counselors and child study team members as in need of it.

## **Timeline for Implementation of Recommendations**

Curriculum Alignment	Level I	Summer 2002
	Level II	Summer 2003
	Level III	Summer 2004
Sixth Grade Cycle Revision	French and Spanish	Summer 2003
Curriculum Implementation: Training in Standards Based Instruction Methodology		Ongoing
Student Achievement: Learning Disabled AP Scores	Spanish IA/IB	September 2004 Ongoing