

Governor's World Language Expansion Initiative Overview

- World language capacity is crucial to Delaware for the state to maintain and strengthen its domestic economy. Delaware graduates who enter the job market without the ability to speak a world language other than English are at a significant disadvantage.
- A few students have the opportunity to begin to learn another language in middle school, and few have a chance for a language learning experience of any kind in elementary school. Most students in Delaware currently do not begin learning another language until they reach high school.
- Compared to their Asian and European peers who begin learning additional languages as early as 5 years old, Delaware students lag considerably behind.

Major activities/strategies

- Delaware students will begin their study of either Mandarin Chinese or Spanish in an elementary immersion program in kindergarten or first grade and continue language study into middle school.
- These students will be able to achieve Advanced Placement credit by ninth grade and will be encouraged to begin study of an additional world language, such as Arabic, that could also culminate in additional Advanced Placement credit by graduation.
- Delaware students may also be able to participate in dual-credit options with Delaware institutions of higher education to further their language abilities and enter college with a number of world language credits that could easily count toward a minor or major in the language.
- A robust world language performance-based assessment system is at the core of this aggressive plan. This system will assess program effectiveness and monitor the progress of student language growth against established proficiency targets. This also ensures students exit their K-12 experience with the needed advanced-level language skills.
- An overview of the K-12 articulation is available here
http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/world_languages.shtml.

Key outcomes

- The Governor's World Language Expansion Initiative is an aggressive world language plan to prepare generations of Delaware students with the language skills to compete in an ever-changing global economy at home and around the world. In essence, Delaware will begin to graduate globally-competitive students with advanced-level proficiency in languages, giving them an economic edge in the multilingual and multicultural workforce of the 21st century.

Progress-to-date

- Interviews for State-Level Immersion Support Staff including an Education Associate for World Language Immersion and two Field Agents—one for Chinese and one for Spanish
- Applications for District/School Participation in the Immersion Programs
- Selection of the Participating Schools for the First Year of Implementation:



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- McIlvaine Early Childhood Center, Caesar Rodney School District—Chinese
- Wilbur Elementary School, Colonial School District—Chinese
- John M. Clayton Elementary School, Indian River School District—Spanish
- Lewis Elementary School, Red Clay Consolidated School District—Spanish

Next steps

- Principal and Staff Training and Technical Assistance
 - Parental Information Sessions for Each Immersion School
 - Curriculum Development in Immersion Languages
 - Immersion Teacher Recruitment and Training
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