

**OFLA Annual Report**  
**Ryan Wertz and Kathy Shelton – ODE World Language Consultants**  
**May 2, 2020**

The [Ohio Department of Education's Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) web page](#) provides information and resources regarding the ordered school-building closure. Included is a [FAQ Document](#) which is intended to help school and district leaders think through important local-level decisions. The FAQ will be updated on a regular basis throughout the coronavirus crisis. The Department's World Languages and Cultures [Resource Center](#) continues to provide frequently updated information and resources to assist schools and districts with planning for student learning

### **1. Clear Expectations for Students**

On March 10, 2020, the State Board of Education unanimously adopted *Ohio's Learning Standards for World Languages and Cultures*. These world-class standards are aligned with ACTFL's national *World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* (2015), the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* (2012) and the *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements* (2017). The addition of "Cultures" to the name reflects the essential role of intercultural communicative competence in one's native culture as well as in global cultures. The addition of a literacy strand to the standards guides the building of literacy skills in both the target and native languages. These standards will go into effect during the 2021-2022 school year, but teachers may begin using them immediately.

Educators can choose from a variety of configurations of the standards to best fit their learning context and students. The revised standards align to proficiency levels for Novice Low through Advanced Low learners. They also include progress indicators, which serve as optional examples of what learning might look like for modern languages, classical languages, American Sign Language, and elementary or immersion programs. They are intended to help guide schools and districts in implementing high-quality, communicative language programs that are proficiency-based. The design and scope of the new learning standards will ensure that more K-12 language learners obtain the higher levels of language proficiency that are required for success in college and in one's career in today's global society. They will also ensure that language educators at all levels have the blueprint they need to guide proficiency-oriented language acquisition and intercultural competence growth for their learners. Over the coming months, ODE consultants will provide customer service around the new standards to teachers through local trainings, regional workshops and conference sessions. Go to the [World Languages and Cultures webpage](#) to access the current standards for K-12 world languages and cultures.

The **NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Communication** and the **NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication** are essential resources for today's world language educators. They can be found in Ohio's [World Languages Model Curriculum](#) as well as on the NCSSFL and ACTFL websites.

The Department's **holistic performance rubrics** also can be found in Ohio's [World Language Model Curriculum](#). These important resources are ideal for use with OTES-related assessments as well as semester and final exams and end-of-unit testing.

The **Ohio Seal of Biliteracy Program** is now in its third year of implementation. Ohio is one of 39 states and the District of Columbus to offer this prestigious award. A seal can be awarded to graduating high school seniors who have demonstrated high levels of proficiency in both English and at least one other world language. Schools and districts around the state continue to add the program to the menu of career-readiness options they make available to graduating seniors. The Department has created many guidance resources to aid with the implementation of the program. They can be found easily on our [Seal of Biliteracy webpage](#). The Department is grateful to all the schools and districts around the state that added Seal of Biliteracy programs during the 2018-2019 and current academic years. We encourage schools that have not yet implemented the program to consider making the award available to students in the near future.

The Ohio Department of Education continues to provide guidance and oversight for Ohio's **Credit Flexibility Program**. Guidance on the Department's website can be found by typing "*credit flexibility guidance*" in the search box on the ODE homepage. By law, local districts have been required to have a student-friendly credit flexibility policy in place since 2010. Such plans must describe ways that learners can earn high school credit in all subjects based on prior knowledge and demonstrated proficiency, and they must facilitate, not hinder, learners' ability to earn flexible credit. Learners may earn credit for measurable language proficiency gained through a variety of experiences including service learning, internships, study abroad, heritage acquisition of language, individualized study with a private tutor, etc. Credit earned in this manner must be recorded on students' transcripts just like any other credit. Currently, the amount of credit that students are awarded based on their demonstrations of proficiency is determined at the local level based on ODE recommendations and local input. Information contained in Ohio's [Research-based Proficiency Targets](#) is particularly helpful when making a credit determination.

## 2. Teacher Capacity

Currently, the Ohio Department of Education is undertaking an update of **Ohio's Model Curriculum for World Languages and Cultures**, a tool designed to help language teachers implement the learning standards, which was last approved by the State Board of Education in June 2014. The *Model Curriculum* currently consists of six broad categories of useful information and resources. Over the past year, the Department has continued to run occasional workshops and conference sessions to train teachers, curriculum directors and other stakeholders from around the state on its use. ODE consultants also have continued to provide guidance via customer service to educators as they continue to work with the tool and its extensive menu of resources. It is important to note that the Model Curriculum is being reviewed and updated periodically, with new resources and instructional strategies being added as they come to us and are vetted.

As mentioned, the updating of *Ohio's Model Curriculum for World Languages and Cultures* is already underway. The Department is currently analyzing stakeholder feedback about the current model curriculum which it received through a public survey administered to stakeholders in the early spring of 2020. At the same time, the Department is in the process of seating a model curriculum working group that will make revisions and add content based on the survey's results. Here is an estimated timeline of the steps needed to complete this revisionary work:

- **Spring 2020:** Complete analysis of public survey data & seat model curriculum working group.
- **Summer to Early Winter 2020:** Collaborate with working group to complete initial updates to the draft model curriculum.
- **Winter 2021:** Administer public survey to gather stakeholder feedback on draft model curriculum.
- **Late Winter 2021:** Analyze stakeholder feedback and incorporate suggestions into draft.
- **Spring 2021:** Initiate State Board of Education process to approve updated model curriculum.

Rollout of the newly revised **Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) 2.0** will commence during the 2020-2021 academic year and conclude during the 2021-2022 school year. Due to the COVID-19 mandated school-building closures, districts have the discretion to determine their readiness to implement OTES 2.0 for the 2020-2021 school year or delay for one year until 2021-2022. It is recommended that this decision be made in collaboration with teachers. ODE world language consultants will support teachers with requirements related to the implementation of OTES 2.0. Ohio law mandates

that local boards of education, in consultation with their teachers, enact standards-based teacher effectiveness evaluation policies that conform to the ODE framework for the evaluation of teachers. The framework's options continue to include a measurement of student academic growth. In the world languages and cultures content area, the growth of students' overall language proficiency during the evaluative period as evidenced through periodic performance assessment in combination with other measures continues to be the focal point. Measuring students' achievement on discrete elements of the target language, such as vocabulary, grammar, syntax and cultural factoids, is not an acceptable way to determine overall language proficiency growth. OTES 2.0 measures must be standards- and performance-based. ODE consultants continue to help build the capacity of language educators to develop appropriate performance-based assessments to measure student growth. Recommended growth measures include the use of Integrated Performance Assessments (IPAs) as well as use of the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements in conjunction with the collection of supporting evidence. For more information about the requirements of OTES 2.0, visit the Department's [Educator Evaluation Systems webpage](#).

ODE world language consultants led a multitude of **professional development workshops and sessions** regionally throughout Ohio and at state, regional and national conferences. A diversity of topics was covered, including the standards, the model curriculum, research-based best practices in Second Language Acquisition, intercultural competence, planning for performance, backward design, the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy and performance-based assessment.

ODE continues to facilitate four **international teacher exchange programs** with Ohio's official partners: mainland China, France, Spain and Taiwan. Cross-cultural sharing, teacher shortages, immersion programming needs, sister school program development, project-based learning, teacher training and two-way exchanges are just some of the reasons school districts elect to participate in Ohio's visiting international teacher programs. All the Department's efforts in this area are designed to provide participating host institutions with options and their students with diverse learning experiences that will better prepare them for academic and professional success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. ODE consultants work with host institutions to support their visiting international teachers in all aspects of their work in Ohio. During the 2019-2020 academic year, Ohio schools and districts have hosted 20 visiting teachers from Spain and 8 guest teachers from mainland China. There were no visiting teachers from France or Taiwan during this period.

### 3. Advocacy

ODE consultants continue to work with the **Ohio Immersion Program Administrators' Network** to support the growth and further development of immersion programs in the Buckeye State. The group is made up of the administrators and program coordinators from Ohio's eleven dual language immersion programs. Ohio's eleven immersion schools are:

1. Global Ambassadors Language Academy (GALA) - Cleveland
2. Buhner Dual Language Academy - Cleveland
3. Luis Muñoz Marín Dual Language Academy - Cleveland
4. Mansfield Spanish Immersion School - Mansfield
5. Columbus Spanish Immersion Academy (C.S.I.A.) - Columbus
6. Ecole Kenwood French Immersion School - Columbus
7. Bowman Primary School Immersion Program - Lebanon
8. Academy of Multilingual Immersion Studies (A.M.I.S.) - Cincinnati
9. C.O. Harrison E.S. Immersion Program - Oak Hills/Cincinnati
10. J.F. Dulles E.S. Immersion Program - Oak Hills/Cincinnati
11. Oakdale E.S. Immersion Program - Oak Hills/Cincinnati

Ohio immersion students learn in Spanish, French and Mandarin Chinese depending on the school. Three of the schools (C.S.I.A., A.M.I.S. and Mansfield Spanish Immersion School) have been designated with the prestigious title of *International Spanish Academy* by the government of Spain. Next year the Lebanon City School District will continue the growth of its Spanish Immersion Program at Donovan Elementary School, which will become Ohio's 12<sup>th</sup> dual language immersion school. Currently, ODE consultants are collaborating with various departments at The Ohio State University to plan Ohio's very first **Dual Language Summit**, which will be held on the OSU campus in December 2020 if health conditions allow.

ODE consultants serve as *ex officio* OFLA board members on the **OFLA Executive Board**. This allows us to serve the organization in an advisory manner. Additionally, it permits us to exchange information and coordinate outreach activities with the board around all facets of world language teaching and learning, including state and national trends, standards- and proficiency-based best practices, seal of biliteracy assessment, policy considerations, 21<sup>st</sup> century skill development, early language learning, critical need languages, educator retention and exchange, teacher evaluation, advocacy and program design. We are especially grateful to OFLA during the ordered school-building closure for its

collaboration with the Department on the series of virtual meets that have been held throughout the spring to provide Ohio's world language educators with a forum to exchange the information, resources and networking they needed during this unprecedented time of remote learning.

Through active participation in the **National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL)** and the **American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)**, ODE consultants continue to keep abreast of - and pass on information about - world language issues at the national level that impact Ohio. In 2019 ODE consultants actively participated in the meetings of both organizations in Washington, DC.

Department consultants continue to **advocate strongly for ALL languages**, with an emphasis on maintaining Ohio's critically important language programs in Japanese, German and French while also encouraging schools and districts to consider offering students the option of learning at least one less commonly taught language, including Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Korean, Portuguese and Russian. A call for long, articulated sequences of communicative language learning beginning in the earliest grades and continuing through graduation (and beyond!) continues to figure into every conversation we have with district and building teachers, administrators, curriculum directors, school board members, parents and other stakeholders. Currently, ODE consultants are collaborating with various departments at The Ohio State University to plan a language summit during the winter of 2021 to provide district decision makers with the information they need to determine the feasibility of offering programs in Brazilian Portuguese in K-12 schools.

#### **4. Miscellaneous**

The Ohio Department of Education continues to draw from the expertise of two full-time world language specialists. Educators in only a few states benefit from this level of support from their state education agencies. We are grateful for the Ohio Department of Education's continuingly strong commitment to world language learning at the K-12 level. Continued advocacy for these positions by OFLA as an organization and also by teachers individually demonstrates the ongoing need for state-level leadership and professional guidance in our content area.

**During the past year ODE consultants:**

- Attended OFLA meetings and submitted status reports to the OFLA Executive Board;
- Submitted *Around the State* articles to The Cardinal;
- Advertised Camp OFLA and other travel, study, professional development, staffing, and funding opportunities over the OFLA's Google Group and in the department's *World Language Updates*, *Tools for Teachers* and *EdConnection* e-newsletters;
- Worked with schools and districts across the state to determine the need for visiting international teachers, screened potential host districts, recruited and screened visiting teacher candidates, and managed all aspects of Ohio's visiting international teacher programs for 2019-20.
- Provided a 14<sup>th</sup> cohort of visiting teachers from Spain and China with formal training on schooling, standards, classroom management, and grading and assessment, among other topics;
- Supported Ohio's visiting international educators and their host institutions with J-1 visa issuance, licensure assistance, professional development, and site visits;
- Represented Ohio at the national NCSSFL Annual Business Meeting and at the ACTFL Convention, presenting workshops and sessions at both;
- Oversaw the continuing implementation and expansion of Ohio's Seal of Biliteracy program;
- Developed tools and resources while providing focused professional development opportunities for educators and district decision-makers around a wide range of topics, often in coordination with OFLA; and
- Hosted groups of visiting international educators and administrators from all over the world during their visits to the Ohio Department of Education.

**5. Continuing Goals Related to the ODE Consultants' Interactions with the OFLA Board**

1. Share relevant information about state and national education policy as it relates to world language learning in a timely manner to promote the continuing innovation and improvement of Ohio's K-12 language programs.
2. Collaborate with the OFLA on initiatives such as the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy, support for educators during the COVID-19 health crisis and updating Ohio's Model Curriculum for World Languages and Cultures that will result in high-quality language teaching on the part of Ohio's world language educators and higher levels of language proficiency on the part of our state's K-12 world language learners.

3. Advocate for long, articulated sequences of communicative language learning in a wide variety of languages through proven program models beginning in the earliest grades and continuing through graduation and beyond.
4. Work with the OFLA to support teachers' efforts to quantify their students' overall language proficiency growth for the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES).
5. Work with Ohio's postsecondary world language teacher preparation programs and language departments to ensure a steady supply of well-prepared teachers and a more seamless articulation of language learning from the earliest grades through university.

Respectfully submitted,

**Ryan Wertz and Kathy Shelton**

*ODE Consultants for World Languages and Cultures*

Office of Learning and Instructional Strategies

