



Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers

Joint House and Senate Education Committee February 27, 2013

Briefing:

- The Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers and the world languages teachers of Colorado fully support and are highly involved in the Colorado Department of Education initiatives, including the Colorado World Language Academic Standards, the Assessment Resource Banks, and the Sample Curriculum Units project, even though we do not have a World Languages Specialist at CDE.
- The U.S. State Department has identified learning a second, third and even a fourth language as critical for our national security.
- Students acquire language skills more easily at an early age and have the opportunity to become fluent (advanced proficiency) in a K-16 program.
- When policy makers and education leaders talk about STEM, we expect to establish a shared understanding that this must also include the study of languages and cultures so that our future leaders are prepared to full participate in our connected, global society and economy.
- In order to support, bolster and improve job opportunities, business and trade in Colorado, we must support long-range, K-16 World Language programs throughout the state.
- The knowledge of Foreign Languages is included in the top five skills cited as "very important" by employers for high school graduates.
- The Colorado colleges and universities have recommended that high school students complete two years of the same language for college entrance and readiness.

Recommendations:

- That the state establishes and funds a World Language Specialist position for the Colorado Department of Education.
- That funding be provided for schools across Colorado to begin and maintain second language study K-16; that students be provided the opportunity to learn a second language as early as possible in school.
- That two years of the same world language be a Colorado high school graduation requirement or test via a Standards-based measurement of proficiency at a minimum proficiency of Novice-High on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) rating scale.