



WHY STUDY A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL?

- **EARLY START** - long extended uninterrupted sequences of language produce the best results. Students learning a second language truly benefit from an early start. UCLA biophysicist, Michael Phelps, says, "If we teach our children early enough, it will affect the organization, or 'wiring' of their brains." Researchers have found that an earlier start in learning a second language provided students greater opportunities to obtain functional proficiency in the second language.
- **MORE TIME!** - learning a second language takes a long time. The Collier study shows that at least 7-10 years are required to learn a second language. Our middle school program allows students an opportunity to start early and continue at the high school to achieve higher levels of proficiency in their second language. ASD offers Advanced Placement courses in French, German, Russian and Spanish and collaborates with UAA Anchorage to extend the language sequence for our students. An Advanced Placement option is available to students at UAA and there is also a degree program with Major in languages.
- **LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNICATION** - proficiency is the goal of second language study. Second language teachers are trained to use instructional strategies that promote highly interactive, participatory activities which support communication in the second language for both teachers and students.
- **LANGUAGE AND CULTURE** - the two are inseparable. Inextricably woven together, culture and language support students' acquisition of a positive attitude toward and an awareness of other cultures, language and people.

WHAT DO MIDDLE SCHOOL AND SECOND LANGUAGE STUDY HAVE IN COMMON?

Middle school and second language study seek the same ends to integrate learning through an interdisciplinary approach that connects meaningful experiences in school to the students' community and understanding of outside of school.

