

World Languages



Learning Languages in the 21st Century:

“To prepare young people for meaningful interactions with people around the world, helping them understand the inextricable link between language and culture as they work to understand and communicate in the language they are learning and, at the same time, deepening their understanding of their own culture; to prepare young people to be explorers: being curious, asking questions, being open to sharing new experiences and new ideas, ultimately the goal of creating networks of collaboration to address the challenges facing today’s world.”

– Donna Clementi

“Language education not only contributes to students’ career and college readiness, it also helps develop the individual as language learners take on a new and more invigorating view of the world. They come to understand the world better because of their knowledge of speakers of another language – of people who share many of the same hopes and dreams for their future.”

– Partnership for 21st Century Skills

World Languages Incentive Credit

The Research indicates that the study of another language is most effectively accomplished if it begins at an early age, is sequential and continues for a long term without interruption. To encourage more students to begin language study in middle school and continue into Level II in high school, the Anchorage School District offers a World Languages Incentive Credit option.

Who will qualify for the World Languages Incentive Credit option?

Students who complete **two** years of language study while in middle school (courses 1A and 1B), enroll as ninth-graders in **Level II** of the same language, and complete both semesters of this year-long course with a **grade of “C” or better**, are eligible to earn the incentive credit.

How will students receive the World Languages Incentive Credit?

Students request that the graded credit be added to their transcript on the ASD high school *Credit-by-choice* application form and submit the form to their counselor. Students’ fourth-quarter grade from their eighth-grade world language course will be posted on their high school transcript for their ninth-grade year.

Will the World Languages Incentive Credit affect overall GPA?

Yes. The incentive credit is one graded credit and will affect GPA and class rank. The credit will count as a one-year elective credit toward graduation requirements.

What other incentives are available to students of World Languages?

- Students may waive the .5 credit social studies requirement by completion of Level III, IV, V, or AP of one or more of the World Languages offered: ASL, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Latin, Russian, or Spanish. Immersion students may also waive .5 social studies requirement by completion of approved immersion courses (see back side for complete listing).
- Japanese, Russian and Spanish language immersion students who have been enrolled in an immersion program, beginning in elementary school and without interruption through middle school and all four years of high school, will earn an Immersion Completion Cord to wear at their high school graduation ceremony.

Anchorage School District World Languages Incentive Credit by Choice

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the goal of the World Languages Incentive Credit by Choice?

The incentive credit is an option to encourage students to begin their second language study in middle school and continue into a Level II course of the same language in high school.

Why is there an incentive credit for World Languages?

Research and experience show that students are more successful language learners if they begin studying a second language before high school. Students will acquire higher levels of proficiency in speaking, writing, reading and listening comprehension skills that will be beneficial during educational and/or work careers. Research study results show a correlation between high school foreign language study and higher academic performance at the college level.

Will students earn a graded credit?

Yes. Students entering high school are eligible to receive one graded credit if they meet the incentive credit requirements: complete two years of the same language study while in middle school (courses 1A and 1B); enroll in Level II of the same language in high school; and complete both semesters of the year long high school course with a “C” or better. Students must initiate this process by completing the ASD Credit by Choice application and return to their counselor once they complete level II at the high school level.

Which grade is posted on the transcript?

The student’s fourth quarter grade from the eighth grade language course is the grade posted on the transcript in the ninth grade year for the Level I course.

Will students still need to complete two years (Levels II and III) at the high school to fulfill college entry requirements?

While there is no ASD requirement, it is recommended that students complete a minimum of 2-3 years language study while in high school. Colleges often have “entry and/or exit” language requirements. Successful completion of courses that are Level III and above will prepare students for most post-secondary programs. Each college/university has its own set of admission requirements and/or graduation requirements so it is very important to research this before making the decision to stop language study after Level II.

What is the .5 Social Studies waiver?

ASD Graduation Requirements include 4 credits of Social Studies, .5 of which is a Social Studies elective. Students may waive this .5 credit social studies requirement by the completion of Level III or above of a world language (ASL, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Latin, Russian, or Spanish; Immersion students may waive this .5 credit social studies requirement by the completion of approved immersion courses. These include: *Japanese for Fluent Speakers I-IV* (including Honors); *Contemporary Youth and Culture* (Russian); *Russian Literature and Media*; *Russia and Alaska: Historical Connections*; *Vistas Juveniles del Mundo Hispano*; *Perspectivas Literarias*; and *Estudios Latinamericanos*.

Do immersion students and native speaker students qualify to receive the World Languages Incentive Credit?

No. Immersion students and native speaker students already have the advantage of an “early start.” Immersion students are eligible to earn the ASD “Language Immersion Completion Cord” to wear at their high school graduation. The district’s Credit by Examination is an option for students who choose to challenge high school courses.

What will middle school students gain when they are provided an opportunity to learn a second or third language?

- Global competence that broadens students’ educational background through second language proficiency, cross-cultural skills, and culturally responsive attitudes about people of other cultures
- Pathway to advanced level coursework that motivates students to continue learning in another language and achieve higher levels of proficiency

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