
World Language Standards

The Background:

State Board Policy 2.103 – High School Policy requires that students study a foreign language in order to graduate from a Tennessee high school. In addition, select Tennessee elementary and middle schools offer foreign language studies in immersion or elective programs. State Board Policy 3.209 – Standards Review requires that the Board review academic standards at least every six (6) years. The world language standards were previously reviewed more than nine (9) years ago.

A review process began in fall 2016 and continued throughout the first half of 2017. The review included an educator advisory committee, multiple opportunities for public feedback through online surveys, and several rounds of edits and revisions. The review included standards for modern languages and classical languages.

The framework and design of the draft standards was heavily influenced by the guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). The revised standards provide a description of the competencies a Tennessee language learner should demonstrate at three performance levels (novice, intermediate, and advanced), as defined by the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and Performance Descriptors for Language Learners. The focus is no longer on *what* students know, but *what they can do* with what they know.

Additionally, the committee sought to improve certain aspects of the standards. The revised standards are not intended to be taught individually, but rather combined from across five cornerstones to create rich learning experiences. The committee was careful to utilize clear and user-friendly language and examples, keeping both teachers and students in mind. Also, the revised standards allow for multiple entry points, and they are designed to meet the unique needs of Tennessee students.

The world language standards proposed in this item represent the skill, content, or behavior outcome of the student at the completion of a level or course. Creating developmentally appropriate learning experiences that meet the standards is the responsibility of the world language teacher and in alignment with school district resources.

There have been slight formatting and grammar edits, but no substantive changes to these standards between first and final reading.

The Recommendation:

The State Board of Education staff recommends adoption of this item on final reading.