California Department of Education
Executive Office

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***World Language Content Standards for California Public Schools,
Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve***

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Introduction

Developing Global Competency

In order to succeed in the 21st century, today's students need to develop linguistic and cultural literacy, including academic knowledge, proficiency in English, and in several of the world's languages and cultures. The ability to communicate in culturally appropriate ways in a variety of settings will ensure success in a technologically driven global economy and increase intercultural understanding and the benefits derived from collaborative international efforts. In order to succeed in our interconnected world, California's students need to use language and cross-cultural communication skills effectively.

As a result of culturally appropriate language use, students will enhance their ability to effectively carry out a wide range of tasks with a high level of control of the linguistic system. We can no longer afford to simply **learn about** languages and cultures but rather, we must provide students with opportunities to **learn** languages and cultures by participating in communicative interactions that prepare for real-world language use and global citizenship. Language learning needs to be a life-long endeavor.

The standards that follow are intended to provide guidance to administrators and teachers in implementing a World Languages and Cultures program for a diverse student population at any point in the kindergarten through grade twelve curriculum toward the development of communicative proficiency in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways.

California's Diverse Student Population

California's students bring a rich variety of languages and cultures to the classroom. Students may have learned a heritage language in their homes, be recent immigrants, or acquired the ability to understand and/or produce one or more languages through contact in their communities or abroad. Some students pursue languages they know; others seek out opportunities to learn additional languages and cultures. Thus, the considerable number of languages spoken and taught in California schools and the range of entry points and proficiencies among our students require standards that are tied to student performance instead of level.

Timeframes for Learning Languages and Cultures

The amount of time it takes to learn another language and culture is linked to the linguistic and cultural differences among the languages and cultures students know. The specific language and culture that learners study and their performance profile at entry will determine the amount of time required to achieve a particular level of proficiency.

Categories of languages have been established by the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) based on the time it takes for native speakers of English to develop various levels of proficiency in target languages and cultures. For example, Arabic, a Category IV language, will take considerably longer to acquire than French, a Category I language. American Sign Language (ASL), Classical Greek, Classical Latin, and Native American languages have not been assigned to categories since no formal research studies have been published on these languages.

The Language Learning Continuum (see *Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve*), a framework developed by the College Board, is used to indicate growth in linguistic and cultural proficiency. It provides benchmarks for progress in a series of qualitatively different stages of performance:

- Stage I (Formulaic), learners understand and produce signs, words, and phrases.

- Stage II (Created), learners understand and produce sentences and strings of sentences.

- Stage III (Planned), learners understand and produce paragraphs and strings of paragraphs.

- Stage IV (Extended), learners understand and produce cohesive texts composed of multiple paragraphs.

The Language Learning Continuum includes Stage V (Tailored) proficiency, which represents performance typically achieved through university level study.

It should be noted that secondary learners may require more than one year to progress from one stage to the next and may spend a significant amount of time within two adjacent stages. For example, learners of Russian, a Category III language, may require two years to move beyond Stage I in listening and speaking, but longer than two years for reading and writing. Programs may focus on specific communicative modes. For example, a Mandarin program may emphasize different communicative modalities in order to attain Stage III

proficiency in listening and speaking, Stage II proficiency in reading, and Stage I proficiency in writing. By necessity, Classical Greek and Latin programs will emphasize reading from the very beginning of instruction. Further, it will be common in the elementary school context for non-heritage learners to remain in Stage I for an extended period of time.

California's Language Programs

California offers a variety of language programs, beginning in elementary school, continuing in middle school, and most typically in comprehensive high school. Elementary programs include immersion, Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES), and Foreign Language Experience (FLEX) that differ substantially in the contact hours allocated to the curriculum. These programs need to be age-appropriate in order to address students' cognitive, emotional, and social needs. Some middle schools also offer immersion and FLEX programs as well as introductory courses that may be equivalent to the first and/or second year of high school study. High school programs traditionally offer a four or five-year sequence preparing students for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) II examinations in language and often culminating in the Advanced Placement and, less frequently, the International Baccalaureate program in language and literature. Programs for heritage and native speakers can include immersion, specialized courses designed to meet learner needs, and accommodations for these learners within the foreign language classroom. The standards provide an organizing principle to ensure the continuous development of student proficiency, irrespective of the multiple points of entry and exit from California's language programs.

Organization of the Standards

The *World Language Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* (*World Language Content Standards)* represents a strong consensus that the study of a wide variety of world languages and cultures is part of the core curriculum. The *World Language Content Standards* present the knowledge, skills, and abilities that **all** learners should acquire during thirteen years in the California public school system.

Due to the considerable number of languages in California, the *World Language Content Standards* was developed to accommodate all languages and the various stages a learner goes through to become proficient. Therefore, the *World Language Content Standards* are not language-specific. In addition, due to the various levels of student proficiency and the multiple points of entry and exit from California's language programs, the *World Language Content Standards* that follow are not tied to specific grade levels but rather describe the levels of linguistic and cultural acquisition. For ease of presentation, the standards are separated into five categories: **Content, Communication, Cultures, Structures,** and **Settings**. They should to be taught together and in practice merge into seamless instruction within the various stages of the Language Learning Continuum.

Content

Language users address a wide variety of topics that are age and stage appropriate. As students develop their ability to communicate in the target language and culture, they are able to more fully address topics that increase in complexity from stage to stage on the Language Learning Continuum.

Communication

Real-world communication occurs in a variety of ways. It may be **interpersonal** in which culturally appropriate listening, reading, viewing, speaking, signing, and writing occur as a shared activity among language users. It may be **interpretive** in which language users listen, view, and read using knowledge of cultural products, practices, and perspectives. It may be **presentational** in which speaking, signing, and writing occur in culturally appropriate ways.

Cultures

Culturally appropriate language use requires the understanding of the relationship between the products a culture produces, the practices that the culture manifests, and the perspectives that underlie them. Students must acquire the ability to interact appropriately with target culture bearers in order to communicate successfully. This category allows students to make connections and comparisons between languages and cultures.

Structures

The *World Language Content Standards* use the term structures to capture the multiple components of grammar that learners must control in order to successfully communicate in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways. Students need to acquire **orthography**, the writing systems in languages that have them; **phonology,** the sound systems of language or parameters in ASL; **morphology**, the rules for word formation; **syntax,** the principles of sentence structure; **semantics**, language-based meaning systems; and **pragmatics**, meaning systems connected to language use.

Settings

Language users need to carry out tasks in a variety of situations representative of those they will experience in the target culture. The success of learner communication will be determined by the requirements of the situation in which the language is used. Understanding social linguistic norms will assist learners in communicating effectively in real-world encounters.

***World Language Content Standards for California Public Schools,
Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve***

Content

As students become literate in the target language, they acquire relevant content through various topics. This in turn expands their access to information from around the globe. At the same time, students use the language to participate in everyday social interactions with members of California's diverse communities. Moreover, the content students acquire in the language classroom enables them to make connections and reinforce knowledge from other content areas of the curriculum. As they progress along the Language Learning Continuum, students address a wide variety of content that is age and stage appropriate.

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
1.0 Students acquire information, recognize distinctive viewpoints and further their knowledge of other disciplines.	2.0 Students acquire information, recognize distinctive viewpoints and further their knowledge of other disciplines.	3.0 Students acquire information, recognize distinctive viewpoints and further their knowledge of other disciplines.	4.0 Students acquire information, recognize distinctive viewpoints and further their knowledge of other disciplines.
1.1 Students address discrete elements of daily life, including:	2.1 Students address topics related to self and the immediate environment, including:	3.1 Students address concrete and factual topics related to the immediate and external environment, including:	4.1 Students address complex concrete, factual and abstract topics related to the immediate and external environment, including:

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
a. Greetings and introductions	a. Social relationships	a. Social norms	a. Societal expectations
b. Family and friends	b. People in the community	b. Historical and cultural figures, stereotypes	b. Cultural and literary archetypes
c. Pets	c. Zoo and farm animals, fables	c. Animals and their habitats	c. Endangered species
d. Home and neighborhood	d. Care of the home, interacting with people in the community	d. community issues, current events	d. World events, social and political issues
e. Celebrations, holidays, and rites of passage	e. Holiday customs and transition points in life	e. Origins of rites of passage, social and regional customs	e. Belief systems
f. Calendar, seasons, and weather	f. Climate	f. Environmental concerns	f. International environmental issues
g. Leisure, hobbies and activities, songs, toys and games, sports	g. Cultural and leisure-time activities, outdoor, recreational activities, music	g. Media, internet, television, radio, film	g. The visual and performing arts
h. Vacations and travel, maps, destinations, and geography	h. Transportation, lodging, itineraries, geographical features and landmarks	h. Cultural, historic and geographic aspects of travel	h. The nature of our interdependent world

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
i. School, classroom, schedules, subjects, numbers, time, directions	i. Curricular and extra-curricular interests and events	i. Curricular and extra-curricular subjects	i. Issues in curricular and extra-curricular subjects
j. Important dates in the target culture	j. Significant historical figures	j. Significant historical events	j. Authors and their times
k. Jobs	k. Professions and the working world	k. Careers and future plans	k. Transnational careers and economies
l. Food, meals, restaurants	l. Cuisine and recipes	l. Nutrition, fitness, and health	l. Issues of world hunger and health
m. Shopping, clothes, colors, and sizes	m. Clothing and fashion	m. Geographically and culturally appropriate clothing	m. Design, production and marketing of clothing
n. Parts of the body, illness	n. Health, medical care	n. Cultural differences in health care	n. Policy issues in health care
o. Technology	o. Technological advances and innovation	o. Effects of technology in the modern world	o. The promise and challenge of technology

Communication
In order to achieve communicative competence, students convey and receive messages effectively. Students actively use language to transmit meaning while responding to real situations. Moreover, they process language in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways while interacting with a wide variety of audiences. As they progress along the Language Learning Continuum, students engage in communication that is age and stage appropriate.

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
1.0 Students use **formulaic language** (learned words, signs [ASL], and phrases).	2.0 Students use **created language** (sentences and strings of sentences).	3.0 Students use **planned language** (paragraphs and strings of paragraphs).	4.0 Students use **extended language** (coherent and cohesive multi-paragraph texts).
1.1 Engage in oral, written, or signed (ASL) conversations.	2.1 Engage in oral, written, or signed (ASL) conversations.	3.1 Engage in oral, written, or signed (ASL) conversations.	4.1 Engage in oral, written, or signed (ASL) conversations.
1.2 Interpret written, spoken, or signed (ASL) language.	2.2 Interpret written, spoken, or signed (ASL) language.	3.2 Interpret written, spoken, or signed (ASL) language.	4.2 Interpret written, spoken, or signed (ASL) language.
1.3 Present to an audience of listeners, readers, or ASL viewers.	2.3 Present to an audience of listeners, readers, or ASL viewers.	3.3 Present to an audience of listeners, readers, or ASL viewers.	4.3 Present to an audience of listeners, readers, or ASL viewers.

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
Functions	**Functions**	**Functions**	**Functions**
1.4 List, name, identify, enumerate.	2.4 Initiate, participate in, and close a conversation, ask and answer questions.	3.4 Describe, narrate, explain, state an opinion.	4.4 Discuss, compare and contrast, support an opinion, persuade.
1.5 Identify learned words, signs (ASL), and phrases in authentic texts.	2.5 Demonstrate understanding of the general meaning, key ideas, and some details in authentic texts.	3.5 Demonstrate understanding of the main idea and key details in authentic texts.	4.5 Demonstrate understanding of the main ideas and most details in authentic texts.
1.6 Reproduce and present a written, oral, or signed (ASL) product in a culturally authentic way.	2.6 Produce and present a simple written, oral, or signed (ASL) product in a culturally authentic way.	3.6 Produce and present a written, oral, or signed (ASL) product in a culturally authentic way.	4.6 Produce and present a complex written, oral, or signed (ASL) product in a culturally authentic way.

Cultures

In order to understand the connection between language and culture, students discern how a culture views the world. Students comprehend the ideas, attitudes, and values that shape the target culture. These shared common perspectives, practices, and products incorporate not only formal aspects of a culture such as contributions of literature, the arts and science, but also the daily living practices, shared traditions, and common patterns of behavior acceptable to a society. As they progress along the Language Learning Continuum, students demonstrate understanding of cultural perspectives by behaving in culturally appropriate ways.

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
1.0 Students use appropriate responses to rehearsed cultural situations.	2.0 Students choose an appropriate response to a variety of situations.	3.0 Students determine appropriate responses to situations with complications.	4.0 Students improvise appropriate responses to unpredictable situations.
1.1 Associate products, practices, and perspectives with the target culture.	2.1 Demonstrate understanding of the roles products, practices, and perspectives play in the culture.	3.1 Use products, practices, and perspectives in culturally appropriate ways.	4.1 Demonstrate culturally appropriate use of products, practices, and perspectives to others.
1.2 Recognize similarities and differences within the target cultures and among students' own cultures.	2.2 State similarities and differences within the target cultures and among students' own cultures.	3.2 Describe similarities and differences within the target cultures and among students' own cultures.	4.2 Explain similarities and differences within the target cultures and among students' own cultures.
1.3 Identify cultural borrowings.	2.3 State reasons for cultural borrowings.	3.3 Describe how products and practices change when cultures come in contact.	4.3 Explain change in perspectives when cultures come in contact.

Structures
Languages vary considerably in the structures that learners use to convey meaning; therefore, the following standards are general in order to apply to all languages. It is expected that the curriculum will feature language specific structures essential to accurate communication. As they acquire vocabulary in the target language, students grasp the associated concepts, and comprehend the structures the language uses to convey meaning. Moreover, they discover patterns in the language system. A language system consists of not only grammar rules and vocabulary, but also such elements as gestures and other forms of nonverbal communication. A language system also includes discourse, whereby speakers learn what to say to whom and when. As they progress along the Language Learning Continuum, students use linguistically and grammatically appropriate structures to comprehend and produce messages. Students identify similarities and differences among the languages they know.

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
1.0 Students use orthography, phonology, or ASL parameters to understand words, signs (ASL), and phrases in context.	2.0 Students use sentence level elements (morphology and/or syntax) to understand concrete and factual topics.	3.0 Students use knowledge of text structure to understand topics related to the external environment.	4.0 Students use knowledge of extended discourse to understand abstract and academic topics.
1.1 Use orthography, phonology, or ASL parameters to produce words or signs (ASL) and phrases in context.	2.1 Use sentence level elements (morphology and/or syntax) to produce informal communications.	3.1 Use paragraph level discourse (text structure) to produce formal communications.	4.1 Use extended discourse (native-like text structure) to produce formal communications.
1.2 Identify similarities and differences in the orthography, phonology, or ASL parameters of the languages the students know.	2.2 Identify similarities and differences in the sentence level elements (morphology and/or syntax) of the languages the students know.	3.2 Identify similarities and differences in the paragraph level discourse (text structure) of the languages the students know.	4.2 Identify similarities and differences in the extended discourse (native-like text structure) of the languages the students know.

Settings
In order for students to communicate effectively, they use elements of language appropriate for a given situation. Language conveys meaning best when the setting, or context, in which it is used, is known. This knowledge of context assists students not only in comprehending meaning but also in using language that is culturally appropriate. Context also helps define and clarify the meaning of language that is new to the learner. As they progress along the Language Learning Continuum, students carry out tasks in stage and age appropriate situations that reflect the target culture.

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV
1.0 Students use language **in highly predictable common daily settings**.	2.0 Students use language **in interpersonal settings**.	3.0 Students use language **in informal and some formal settings**.	4.0 Students use language **in informal and formal settings**.
1.1 **Recognize** age appropriate cultural or language use opportunities outside the classroom.	2.1 **Participate** in age appropriate cultural or language use opportunities outside the classroom.	3.1 **Initiate** age appropriate cultural or language use opportunities outside the classroom.	4.1 **Sustain** age appropriate cultural or language use opportunities outside the classroom.

GLOSSARY

This glossary provides simple definitions of concepts contained in the standards document in order to facilitate its comprehension by a wide audience of readers.

Abstract topics	Subjects that are not concrete and/or factual but rather represent concepts and ideas.
Academic topics	Subjects that are part of the core curriculum of schools or part of university programs.
Accuracy	In speaking and writing, the quality of the message produced; in listening and reading, the quality of the message received.
Advanced Placement (AP)	A program of the College Board that confers advanced placement in a course sequence for students who successfully complete an end of year examination.
Archetypes	A generic version derived from multiple examples found within a group.
Authentic	Designed by and for use by members of a particular group.
Belief system	The framework of perspectives through which an individual interprets the world.
Coherent	Use of reference to a particular context to give unified meaning to a text.
Cohesive	Use of structures and vocabulary to link parts of a text and give it a unified meaning.
Connections	Language learners gain access to content from other areas of the core curriculum and to perspectives only available through the target language and its cultures.
Content	The topics an individual addresses.
Content standards	Clearly defined statements about what all students are expected to know and be able to do.
Contexts	The situations or settings in which an individual uses a language.
Created stage (Stage II)	The second stage on the Language Learning Continuum in which language users understand sentence level relationships and use sentences and strings of sentences.
Cultural bearers	Individuals within a group who share common behaviors and views of the world.
Cultural borrowings	Tangible and intangible items, behaviors and beliefs of a particular group that are used by another group.
Cultural perspectives	Beliefs of members of a particular group.

Cultural practices	Behaviors of members of a particular group.
Cultural products	Tangible and intangible items created by members of a particular group.
Culturally appropriate	Patterns of behaviors widely acceptable to members of a group.
Discourse (paragraph/extended)	The use of language and context to connect sentences or paragraphs to give them unified meaning.
Discrete elements	Language that refers to concrete objects in a particular culture.
Extended stage (Stage IV)	The fourth stage on the Language Learning Continuum in which language users understand and produce cohesive texts composed of multiple paragraphs.
External environment	The settings for language use in which paragraphs or extended discourse are used to carry out complex tasks.
Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES)	Elementary school programs that meet for a minimum of seventy minutes a week with the goal of developing proficiency in language and culture.
Foreign Language Experience (FLEX)	Elementary school programs that expose students to the study of a language or languages and cultures in order to motivate them to pursue further study.
Formal settings	Situations requiring the use of careful, impersonal forms of language and behavior.
Formulaic stage (Stage I)	The first stage on the Language Learning Continuum in which language users understand and produce words and phrases without knowledge of their internal structure.
Functional proficiency	The ability to use language for real-world purposes in culturally appropriate ways.
Functions	The ability to carry out tasks with language. May be receptive (listening, reading, and viewing) or productive (speaking, signing, and writing).
Generic standards	A set of outcomes that is valid for all languages, for all ages, and for all levels of proficiency.
Grammar	The rules governing the use of a natural language.
Heritage learner	An individual who has acquired any level of proficiency in a language used at home.
Highly predictable settings	Common situations requiring the use of learned formulas and formulaic behavior.

Immediate environment	The settings for language use in which sentences are used to carry out transactional tasks.
Immersion	A program used to teach at least fifty percent of the core curriculum in the target language.
Informal settings	Situations in which rapport and friendly relationships require personal forms of language and behavior.
International Baccalaureate (IB)	A two-year curriculum and testing protocol that lead to a diploma that is widely recognized by the world's leading universities.
Interpersonal communication	Language users listen, speak, sign, read, write, and view as they negotiate meaning with others.
Interpersonal settings	Situations requiring the use of sentence level language and appropriate behavior to carry out a variety of transactional tasks.
Interpretive communication	Language users individually listen, read, and view using knowledge of cultural products, practices, and perspectives without interaction with others.
Language category	Groups of languages that require similar amounts of time for native speakers of English to acquire.
Language Learning Continuum	A framework designed by the College Board characterizing the development of language learner proficiency within various performance stages.
Linguistic system	The study of language in human communication that includes phonology/parameters, orthography, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.
Morphology	The field of linguistics that studies the internal structure of words or signs.
Native learner	An individual who has acquired any level of proficiency in a language of a country where she or he was born.
Negotiated language	Situations that require participants to create a shared communication.
Negotiation of meaning	Communicative processes in which participants create understandings through interaction.
Non-negotiated language	Situations in which one-way communication requires culturally appropriate interpretation and/or behavior.
Orthography	The writing system or systems of a language.
Parameters	Linguistic features (hand shape, location, movement orientation, and/or non-manual signals) of sign language equivalent to the phonology of a spoken language.

Performance standards	Clearly defined statements about how well all students are expected to meet content standards.
Phonology	The field of linguistics that studies how sounds and ASL parameters are organized and used.
Planned stage (Stage III)	The third stage on the Language Learning Continuum in which language users understand and produce paragraphs and strings of paragraphs.
Pragmatics	The field of linguistics that studies meaning systems linked to language use.
Presentational communication	Language users speak, sign, and write in culturally appropriate ways without negotiating language.
Proficiency	The ability to use language for real-world purposes in culturally appropriate ways.
Real-world	Behaviors that occur in the target culture.
Rites of passage	Rituals that mark a change in an individual's status within a group.
Semantics	The field of linguistics that studies language-based meaning systems.
Signs	Linguistic features of sign language equivalent to the words of a spoken language.
Stereotypes	Generalizations made about the characteristics of all members of a group.
Syntax	The field of linguistics that studies the internal structure of sentences.
Target language and culture(s)	The language and culture(s) that a learner seeks to acquire.
Text types	The form of the message produced or received (oral and written formulas, sentences, paragraphs, extended discourse).
Transactional	Tasks which require the use of sentences and have as a goal soliciting simple information, goods and services.
Transition points	Major events in the human life cycle with changes in individual roles and responsibilities.
Viewing	Interpretive communication that relies on non-linguistic elements.
Viewing (American Sign Language)	Attention, comprehension, and interpretation of visual information of a signed language in person or from various media.