

## WORLD LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR K-12

- Whereas, The study of internationally spoken world languages results in higher academic performance, stronger critical thinking skills, problem solving and memory capabilities, as well as increasing global and cultural awareness and understanding; and
- Whereas, The ability to speak, read and write in a world language in addition to English is essential to attract business, engage in world trade, participate in scientific research, foster diplomacy, and respond to global humanitarian emergencies; and
- Whereas, According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than sixty-five million U.S. residents or 20.7 percent of the total U.S. population speak a language other than English at home, yet most multilingual adults acquired their language skills at home and only a fraction speaks, reads, and comprehends their non-English language well enough to use it fluently; and
- Whereas, According to the U.S. Department of Education, there is a shortage of qualified K–12 world language and/or bilingual teachers in nearly every state in this country; therefore, be it
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent associations support development of a K-12 world language instructional sequence that provides students with exposure to one or more languages and cultures beginning in elementary school that makes use of age and developmentally appropriate curriculum, instructional activities and materials; and allows students to not only sustain but to progress toward fluency, and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent associations support community and student feedback when developing and revising world language programs, and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent associations support programs and advocates for funding to increase the number of language teachers at all levels of education so that every child has the opportunity to learn a language in addition to English, and be it further
- Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent associations support providing language learning opportunities and college credits for heritage speakers who may have been informally exposed to, but are not fluent in, a world language, Native American, or American Sign Language.

**Rationale for the Resolution:**

Language enables us to present ideas and discoveries, to express needs and aspirations, as well as convey how we comprehend the communities and cultures around us. Numerous studies show that learning a second language increases academic achievement and provides cognitive benefits to students. Additionally, being exposed to world languages at a young age increases the likelihood of acquiring a high level of fluency.

American businesses, as well as the federal government report that in today's world, there is a greater demand for multi-lingual speakers to support economic, diplomatic, scientific and cultural needs. While the United States prides itself on being a multi-cultural nation and our citizens speak more than 350 languages, the majority of Americans remain monolingual.

When they can converse in the languages of others and understand the world around them, students will increase opportunities to collaborate, communicate, demonstrate creativity, critical thinking and good citizenship. We must advocate for all schools to have adequate instructional teachers, both in-person and virtually, to be able to offer world language as part of a well-defined K-12 instructional sequence.

By doing so, they can provide students with exposure to one or more languages and cultures and allow students to not only learn a world language but also progress toward fluency.

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