

Credit for Competency/Proficiency

World Languages Credit for Competency/Proficiency

A. Definition:

For purposes of this procedure, a world language is defined according to the definition used by the Higher Education Coordinating Board as “[a]ny natural language that has been formally studied [...], including American Sign Language (AMESLAN, the language of the deaf community), and languages no longer spoken, such as Latin and ancient Greek. However, neither computer ‘languages’ nor forms of deaf signing aside from AMESLAN are acceptable.”

B. Demonstrating Competency/Proficiency in a World Language

The district will manage the assessment process so that students seeking competency based credit can demonstrate competency/proficiency across language skills.

Assessments will be aligned to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines in order to ensure consistency across languages. The district will select the appropriate assessment instrument(s) from the following:

1. Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) in reading, writing, and speaking (and listening, if available) for all languages for which it is available (as of 2011, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Chinese). STAMP is offered by Avant Assessment (<http://avantassessment.com>).
2. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) assessments Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) or Oral Proficiency Interview Computer Based (OPIc) and Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) — for languages for which STAMP is not available or for which ACTFL assessments are deemed to be more appropriate. ACTFL assessments are offered through Language Testing International (<http://www.languageesting.com>).
3. Appropriate assessments for American Sign Language such as the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI).
4. For languages that do not currently have any other nationally available proficiency based assessment, the district will work with local language communities and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) World Languages Program to develop a collection of evidence process, such as LinguaFolio, that is aligned with ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

C. Determining Competency and Credit Equivalencies

The district will award one or more credits based on the student demonstrating an overall proficiency level according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines as follows:

1. Novice Mid – 1 credit (Carnegie Unit)
2. Novice High – 2 credits
3. Intermediate Low – 3 credits
4. Intermediate Mid – 4 credits

Since students may demonstrate varied levels of proficiency across skills, credits will be awarded based on the lowest common level of proficiency demonstrated across the skill areas.

(Example: If a student demonstrated Intermediate Mid level proficiency in Speaking, but Novice Mid in Reading and Writing, then credits would be awarded based on the lowest common level of demonstrated proficiency: one credit for Novice Mid. The student would not receive individual credits for separate language skills. In this example, the student

would not receive four credits for Intermediate Mid in Speaking and one credit each for Novice Mid in Reading and Writing. The total award is one World Language credit.)

D. Offering Testing Opportunities

The district will manage the assessment process so that students have multiple (*district may insert here the number of opportunities*) opportunities to take or retake the assessment(s) required to demonstrate proficiency. Assessments must be offered in a proctored setting with appropriate technology. The district will approve the site(s) where the assessments are offered, which could include individual schools, district buildings, community colleges, universities, educational service districts, or other community settings.

E. Paying for Assessments

The district will set a fee for the assessments to cover administrative costs, test fees, and/or proctoring. Fees may vary depending on the assessment costs. The district will offer financial assistance to students who demonstrate need, such as qualifying for free or reduced price lunch. (*Insert language here if the district plans to pay the assessment fee or subsidize the student's cost.*)

Current fees and financial assistance information are available from (*insert specific district location here*).

(*Insert assessment fee schedule here.*)

F. Reporting Results

The district will receive official test results for each student participating in the assessment process. The district will provide a letter to the student with a copy of the test results and an indication of how many world language credits, if any, may be awarded. If requested by the student, the school counselors will record the world language credits earned on the official transcript. Credits will be awarded with a grade of "Pass."

Guiding Questions for the Competency-based Credit Panelists:

Questions for the student in the Open Doors Youth Reengagement Program, Next Generation Zone:

1. What led you to leave high school?
2. What could the school or district have done to help you stay in school?
3. What might have helped you earn the credits needed for graduation?

Questions for educators:

1. In 2011, the Washington State Board enacted competency-based crediting by removing the 150 hr. seat-time requirement for awarding of high school credit (WAC 180-51-050). In your role, what changes have you seen, if any, as a result of this regulatory change?
2. What best practices have emerged in this area? What schools or districts are utilizing competency-based models in innovative ways that improve student outcomes?
3. What potential does competency-based crediting have to strengthen pathways to the 24 credit high school diploma, in particular, for credit deficient students who are motivated to earn a diploma with their graduating class through out-of-class crediting options, rather than dropping out or earning a GED?
4. What improvements could be made to competency-based crediting to help the state achieve its student achievement goals? What role can the state board and other stakeholders play in making these improvements?