

Mandate and Reality in New Jersey K-8 World Language Education

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Mandate

- “In May 1996, the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted two world languages standards. This represented a key moment in the “evolution” of the study of world languages in New Jersey. World languages was then recognized as an essential component of the core curriculum for all students.”
- 2004 NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards

NJ World Languages Curriculum Framework

- “The ability “to communicate at a basic literacy level in at least one language other than English” (Standard 7.1) and “to demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationship between language and culture” (Standard 7.2) is now considered to be one of the hallmarks of a well-educated citizen in the state of New Jersey.”
- Winter 1999

STANDARD 7.1 Communication

- “All students will be able to communicate in at least one world language in addition to English. They will use language to **engage in conversation, understand and interpret spoken and written language**, present information, concepts, and ideas while making connections with other disciplines, and compare the language/culture studied with their own.”
- Communicative-based instruction
- Proficiency outcomes

Multiple program models

- Districts must offer world languages in K-8 (and HS)
- Duration and intensity of instruction is left open
 - ▣ “The need to provide appropriate time allocations to enable students to achieve the standards is underscored in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1.”
- Some guidelines are given in the NJ CCCS.

Graduation requirement

(7) At least **five credits** in world languages

or

student demonstration of proficiency as set forth in ii(4) below . . . ;

N.J.A.C. 6A:8

Proficiency demonstration

(4) District boards of education shall choose from among the following assessment options to determine if students have achieved **the level of language proficiency designated as Novice-High** as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and recognized as fulfilling the world languages requirement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards:

- (A) The Language Learning Solutions (LLS) online assessment;
- (B) The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) or Modified Oral Proficiency Interview (MOPI); or
- (C) Department-approved locally designed competency-based assessments;

N.J.A.C. 6A:8

2004 New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards

- **Language arts literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**
- Visual and performing arts
- Comprehensive health and physical education
- Social studies
- **World languages**
- Technological literacy
- Career education & consumer, family, and life skills

Undergoing revision 2008-2009 as part of planned 5-yr cycle

2008-2009 Testing Schedule

- **Language arts literacy** **3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11**
- **Mathematics** **3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11**
- **Science** **3, 4, 8, HSBiology**
- Visual and performing arts
- Comprehensive health and physical education
- Social studies
- **World languages** **8 (2006-2008)**
- Technological literacy
- Career education & consumer, family, and life skills

Reality

- What percent of New Jersey Grade 8 students meet the state proficiency standard?
 - Which languages?
 - Which skills?
 - Which assessments?
 - Who will pay?

Real world answers – time and money

- 1. Who will pay?
 - ▣ Federal grant
- 2. Which assessments?
 - ▣ Inexpensive
 - ▣ Multiple languages and skills
 - ▣ Easily deliverable across the state
- 3. Which languages?
 - ▣ Those available after deciding 2
- 4. Which skills?
 - ▣ Those available after deciding 2

Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment in World Languages

- FLAP grant to NJ DOE

- Integration of three key components:
 - ▣ Assessment
 - ▣ Policy
 - ▣ Professional development

Assessment

- STAMP – Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency
- Developed by Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS)
- Licensed to and delivered by Avant Assessment (formerly Language Learning Solutions)

STAMP Skills

- Reading
 - ▣ Semi-adaptive presentation of items
 - ▣ Scores are Benchmarks 1 to 6
 - correlated to ACTFL Novice-Low to Intermediate-High
- Speaking (Presentational)
 - ▣ Samples rated by trained raters
 - ▣ Rubric permitted rating from Benchmark 1 to 6
- Writing
 - ▣ Same as speaking
 - ▣ Not given in New Jersey project

Study details

- 21,477 Grade 8 students (Year 2)
- 166 schools (Year 2)
- 108 districts (Year 2)
- Spanish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Chinese (Mandarin, Simplified & Traditional)
- Reading, Speaking

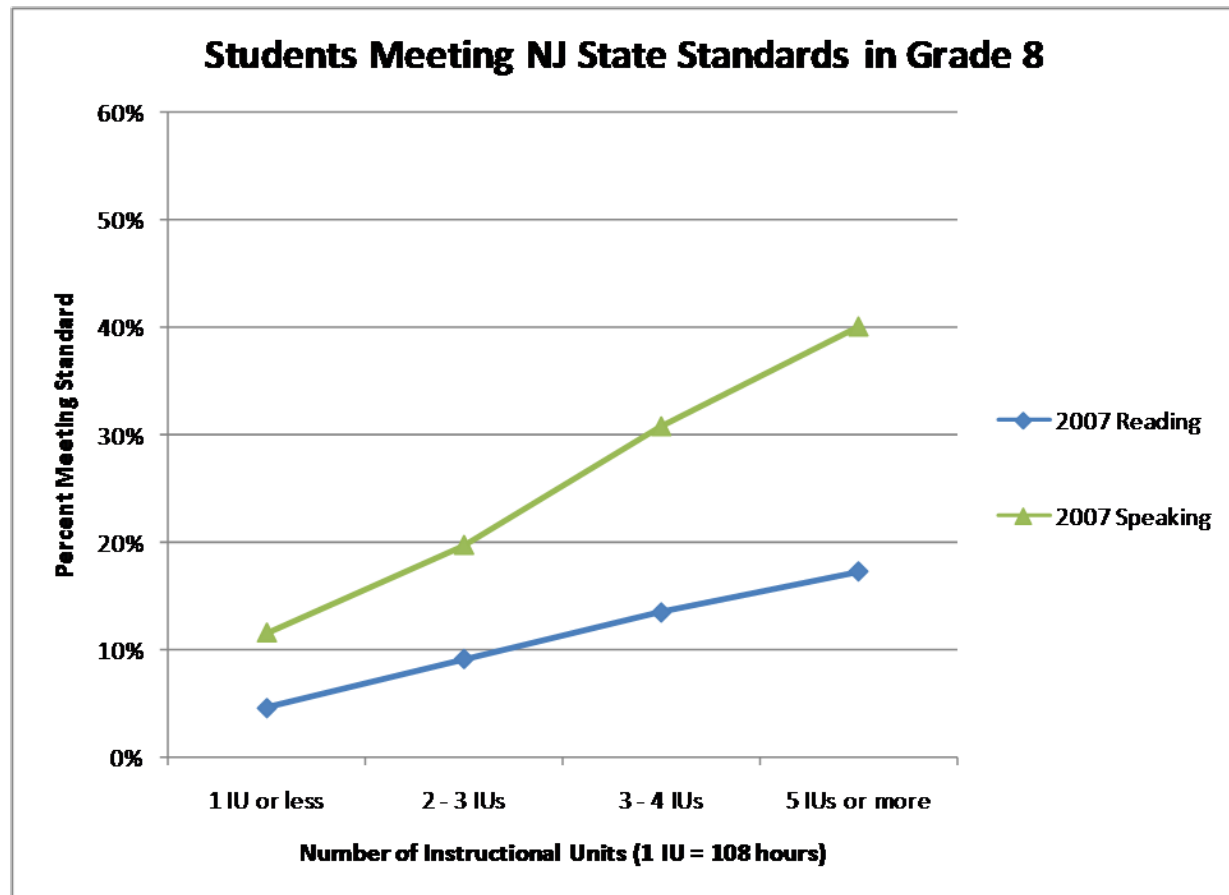
<u>2006</u>	<u>Test #</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>Test #</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Test #</u>
Chinese	63	Chinese	0	Chinese	105
French	2717	French	3,352	French	3,613
German	496	German	766	German	694
Japane se	16 12,684	Japane se	10 16,507	Japanes e	17 15,914
Spanish	NA	Spanish	842	Spanish	1,079
Italian		Italian		Italian	
<u>Total</u>	<u>15,976</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>21,477</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>21,471</u>

Students meeting standard (Year 1)

Language	Count	Reading	Speaking
Chinese	62	3%	61%
French	2,696	20%	26%
German	491	6%	40%
Japanese	16	44%	12%
Spanish	12,593	11%	29%
Total	15,858	12%	29%

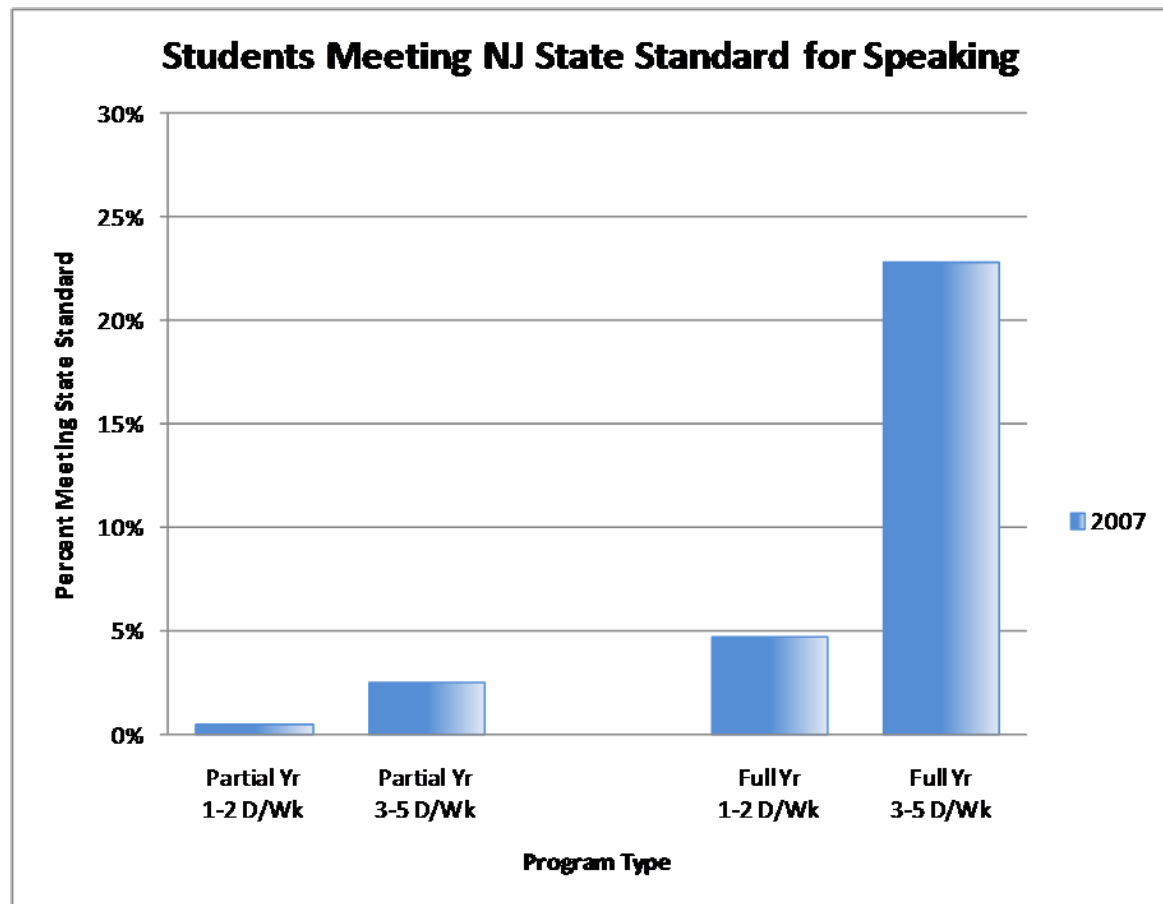
Duration of instruction

- Estimated lifetime hours of instruction
- Non-heritage students
- “Instructional Unit”
 - 1 IU = 108 hours
 - 3 hours / week for 36 weeks a year



Intensity of instruction

- sessions / week & weeks / year
- Non-heritage learners
- Students with more than 3 IUs excluded
- Reading and speaking show similar patterns



How much time for measurable proficiency outcomes?

- Duration

- at least 540 total hours during Grades 1-8

- Intensity

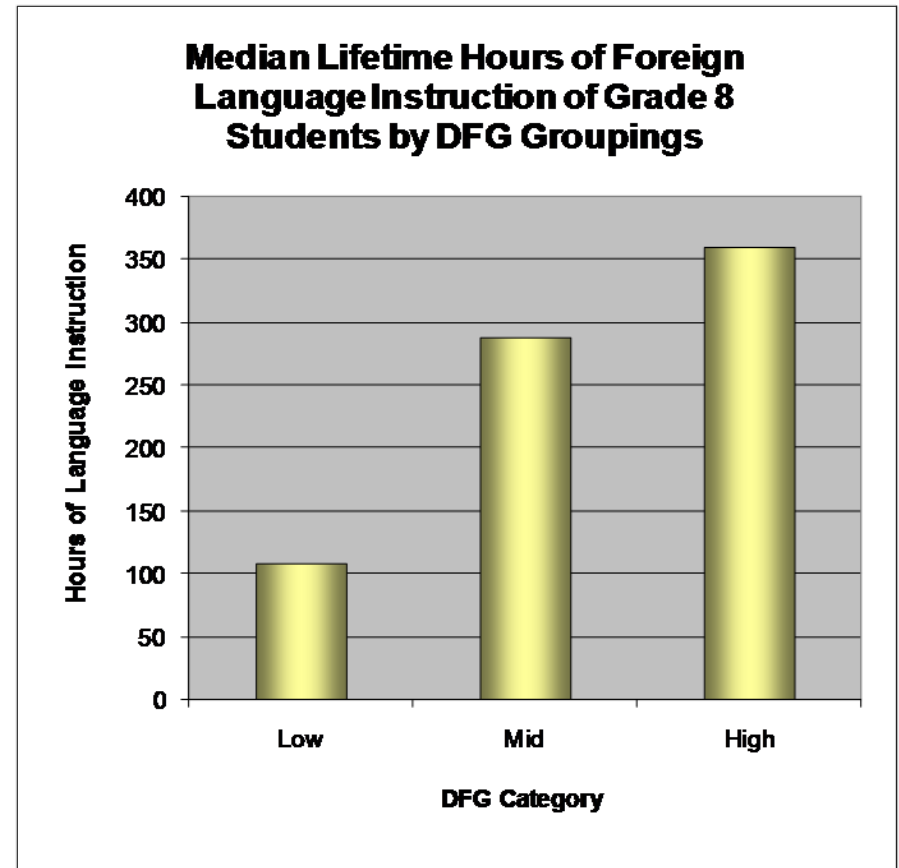
- every week all year
- 3 – 5 class sessions per week
- a minimum of 5,000 minutes per year

SES Factors

- District Factor Groups (DFG)
 - 'Low', 'Mid', 'High'
- Total lifetime hours of instruction estimated for each student and lifetime IUs calculated
 - 1 IU = 108 hours
- Non-heritage learners

Hours of instruction & SES

- Low DFG students schools receive only 1/3 the hours of instruction as in High DFG students
- Few students get 540 hours in Grades 1-8



Reading, Speaking & SES

□ Reading

- Similar to other academic subjects: lower SES schools tend to lag higher SES schools.

□ Speaking

- All SES groups have similar speaking proficiency after 5 IUs of instruction.

NJ Response

- “Results do not reflect anticipated student proficiency levels as a result of K-8 instruction.”
- Policy Recommendations
 - ▣ Assess all 8th graders annually.
 - ▣ Provide districts with incentives to offer exemplary language programs.
 - ▣ Provide students with incentives to reach higher levels of proficiency.
- Revised standards document scheduled for adoption contains recommended time allocations
- N.J.A.C. revised to require world languages each year during high school

Issues

- “Important” subjects are assessed
- Languages may not be equal in terms of “time to proficiency”
- State standards embody the values and the vision more than the reality
- Achieving proficiency may take more time than is available, require more teachers than available
- Lower SES schools less likely to meet goals
- World language assessments are exponentially more challenging and costly than other subject areas
 - ▣ “1 language” = 4-5 separate tests * multiple languages

Thank you!

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Summary

- Since 1996, New Jersey has mandated world language instruction in all grades K-12 and specified student learning outcomes in terms of proficiency. From 2005 through 2008, New Jersey Department of Education conducted its first statewide proficiency testing of Grade 8 students as part of a research study. This presentation will show the results of that study and discuss issues it raised about the consequences of mandating and assessing foreign language learning outcomes in U.S. public schools.