

Foreign Language Program

The learning of a second language presents to a student a variety of opportunities for intellectual and personal growth. It offers exposure to another culture and provides a new perspective on one's own language and environment. Knowledge of a second language opens doors to understanding and to sharing in the experiences of other people.

The foreign language program at the Concord Middle School consists of courses in French, Mandarin, and Spanish. Students begin their sequential study of language in the sixth grade and continue with the same language in the seventh and eighth grades. All classes are heterogeneously grouped. Classes meet three times per week in the sixth grade and four times per week in the seventh and eighth grades.

The foreign language program seeks to develop proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A major goal of the program is to help students develop communicative skills in a cultural context at a novice level of proficiency.

Students learn to function in a variety of social settings. They acquire the grammatical structures as needed to accomplish these functions. Language skills and cultural knowledge are enhanced by the use of CDs, videotapes and DVDS, on line and computer activities, songs, cultural materials, and readings. Varied methods such as group work, paired work, and direct instruction are used to help all students develop communicative proficiency.

Students are evaluated in three areas: assignments, general performance and conduct. Assignments are an integral component of the program and home preparation is necessary for each class meeting period. Assignments include vocabulary study and practice, workbook and writing activities, role plays, oral preparation, and projects. The general performance grade is based on tests, quizzes, class participation, listening exercises, speaking activities and effort. Participation in individual, paired, and group activities is an essential part of the general performance grade. The conduct grade is based on a student's behavior in class. Students are provided with criteria for each of the above areas of assessment.

The program is fully articulated with courses offered at Concord-Carlisle High School. The high school offers introductory courses in French, Chinese, Latin and Spanish. Satisfactory work in the middle school program ensures that a student will be placed into an appropriate continuing level of French, Mandarin or Spanish at the high school. The middle school teacher's recommendation for high school placement is based on the student's demonstrated achievement and exhibited facility with the language.