

The guiding mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE) is that every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st Century.

The first goal states that North Carolina public schools will produce globally competitive students in which “every student excels in rigorous and relevant core curriculum that reflects what students need to know and demonstrate in a global 21st Century environment, including **a mastery of languages**, an appreciation of the arts, and competencies in the use of technology.”

The Future-Ready graduate has 17 skills noted that are necessary for success, including the following that are developed in the study of world languages:

- Multilingual
- Knowledgeable Global Citizen

Learning another language will build those skills, and, as a student builds proficiency in a language, other future-ready skills are also practiced and refined:

- Effective Communicator
- Proficient Reader
- Literate Consumer of Media
- Creative/Innovative and Critical Thinker
- Curious Researcher
- Strong Team Contributor
- Relationship Builder

Besides developing the skills listed above, the study of another language also leads to greater academic achievement overall, which is seen in higher scores on standardized tests (EOG and SAT scores in reading, writing and math); greater cognitive development in the areas of mental flexibility, creativity, divergent thinking and higher-order thinking skills; a broader English vocabulary; a better understanding of one’s own language and culture; and enhanced career opportunities in all 16 of the career clusters outlined in *A Crisis of Relevance: How NC Must Innovate to Graduate All Students Career-and College-Ready*.

### **Proficiency Organization**

The most efficient way to measure proficiency is to use a proficiency scale. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has established a national proficiency scale which currently has 10 levels of proficiency:

1. Novice Low (NL)
2. Novice Mid (NM)
3. Novice High (NH)
4. Intermediate Low (IL)
5. Intermediate Mid (IM)
6. Intermediate High (IH)
7. Advanced Low (AL)
8. Advanced Mid (AM)
9. Advanced High (AH)
10. Superior (S)

In the *ACTFL K-12 Performance and Proficiency Guidelines*, each proficiency level has a description of what students can do with language at each level and with each skill. Skills progress at different levels, due to a number of factors, like student motivation, continuity and quality of instruction;