

Education for Global Leadership

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“To solve most of the major problems facing our country today— from wiping out terrorism to minimizing global environmental problems to eliminating the scourge of AIDS—will require every young person to learn more about other regions, cultures, and languages.” Former Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Knowledge of Foreign Languages and Cultures is an Economic Necessity

- U.S.-based multinational corporations employed 21.8 million workers in the United States in 2003, accounting for one-fifth of total U.S. non-government employment.
- American companies lose an estimated \$2 billion a year due to inadequate cross-cultural guidance for their employees in multicultural situations.
- U.S. students are “strong technically” but “shortchanged” in cross-cultural experience and “linguistically deprived.” (RAND Corporation survey)
- 30 % of the companies cannot capitalize on their international business opportunities due to insufficient personnel with international skills.

Foreign Language and Intercultural Skills Enhance Our National Security

- Our effectiveness in communicating America’s message to the world could be decisive in encouraging countries throughout the Middle East and South Asia to embrace democratic pluralism and reject violent extremism.
- To make our case persuasively, we will need credible, articulate representatives who have attained a high degree of proficiency in a host of strategic languages and dialects as well as an understanding of the cultures and geographic contexts of these regions.

The Challenge to Our Multicultural Society

- Currently, racial and ethnic minority groups make up more than 50% of the population in California, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Texas, and approximately 40% in Arizona, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, and New York.
- By 2050, non-Hispanic whites will constitute only one-half of the U.S. population
- 48% of Americans have at least weekly dealings with someone whose first language is not English (Roper Poll)
- Although 75 % of Americans think that English should be our official language, the same percentage thought that all students should know a second language. (Roper Poll, 2005)
- ELL students accounted for 9% of all students enrolled in American elementary and secondary institutions in 2003-2004
- Both white- and blue-collar U.S. workers are experiencing a more culturally diverse workplace: 26.5% of the professional/management and 22.8% of the service workers are foreign-born
- As our communities and workplaces become more diverse, foreign language proficiency and cultural knowledge will become critical in conducting business in the United States

Source: *Education for Global Leadership: The Importance of International Studies and Foreign Language Education for U.S. Economic and National Security – A CED Publication*
http://www.ced.org/docs/report/report_foreignlanguages.pdf

Student Knowledge of International Studies and Foreign Languages

Most young Americans lack geographic knowledge. Surveys conducted by the Asia Society in 2001 and by the National Geographic Society in 2002 found that⁸⁶:

- Although roughly 85% of young Americans (between the ages of 18 and 24) could not locate Iraq or Iran on a Middle East/Asia map, most knew that the island featured in the previous season's television show "Survivor" was in the South Pacific;
- 25% of college-bound high school students could not name the ocean between California and Asia;
- 80% did not know that India is the world's largest democracy;
- 37% could not locate China on a map of Asia and the Middle East; and
- 56% could not find India, despite the fact that China and India are the world's most populous countries, and major emerging markets.

Out of the nine countries surveyed, young Americans finished second to last in the average number of correct answers. According to the National Geographic Society, young adults who spoke more than one language and who engaged in international travel fared better. Most AAPI students and young adults grow up with knowledge of other countries, peoples, and places in additional to languages and cultures!

- Students in low-income, minority and urban school districts have few opportunities to learn other languages and cultures
- The average high school student receives 150 hours of language instruction per year.
- Elementary-school students receive less than 50 hours of instruction per year when foreign languages are taught in schools
- Children who are exposed to a foreign language at a young age achieve higher levels of cognitive development at an earlier age.
- It takes an average of 600 class hours to reach general proficiency of a Roman language (e.g. German, French, Spanish)
- It takes at least 2200 class hours to be proficient in an Asian language (e.g. Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, etc.)

Many AAPI students speak or experience another language at home, attend community-based heritage language schools on the weekends and participate in native language activities outside of schools.

Given proper support and a quality education, our AAPI students are great assets to our national economy, security and development

We must act now because:

- Americans know too little about the world around them and about the international issues that affect their present and their future;
- Too few Americans are proficient in other languages, especially those critical languages
- that are vital to our security;
- The lack of international skills and knowledge threatens America's economic competitiveness and national security; and
- Our inattention to other languages and cultures undermines our ability to be good citizens, both in our own country and in an increasingly interdependent world.

CED Recommendations – (AAPI Roles)

1. International content be taught across the curriculum and at all levels of learning, to expand American students' knowledge of other countries and cultures.
 - Schools and programs recognize and highlight the international, global and intercultural experience of our AAPI populations and find way to integrate it into school curriculum
2. Expanding the training pipeline at every level of education to address the paucity of Americans fluent in foreign languages
 - Federal language initiatives should recognize and award funding to support community-based schools and organizations who promote retention and development of heritage languages
3. National leaders— political leaders, as well as the business and philanthropic communities, and the media— inform the public about the importance of improving education in foreign languages and international studies.
 - Include AAPI community leaders and AAPI heritage language advocates in education policy making bodies

California and the World: A Global International Education Summit

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On May 6, 2008, the Fullerton International Resources for Schools and Teachers at CSU Fullerton hosted a State-wide Conference titled "California and the World: A Global International Education Summit" that brought together over 200 participants including university and high school foreign language teachers, faculty of international education programs, and leaders and representatives of businesses and local community groups. The Summit was funded by the National Geographic Society and the Fullerton International Resources for Schools and Teachers.

The focus of the Summit was on preparing our students for the increasing global society and economy. To highlight the importance of collaboration between K-12 and colleges and universities, Dr. Charles Kolb, President of the Committee for Economic Development, stated in his keynote address "*To confront the twenty-first century challenges to our economy and national security, our education system must be strengthened to increase the foreign language skills and cultural awareness of our students. America's continued global leadership will depend on our students' abilities to interact with the world community both inside and outside our borders.*" He cited some relevant statistics on U.S. foreign language study:

- Approximately 25% of American public schools offer foreign language instruction
- Only 5% of elementary school students study foreign language
- Only 33% of seventh to twelfth grade students study a foreign language
- Fewer than 1/10 college students enroll in a foreign language class
- Most foreign language students take only introductory level courses.
- Nearly 70 % of high school and 50% of college foreign language students study Spanish
- Very few students study the less-commonly taught "critical languages" such as Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Persian/Farsi, Russian, and Turkish
- While Arabic is attracting an increasing number of students, it still accounts for just 0.8 percent of foreign-language enrollments in American postsecondary institutions
- Approximately 1 million students study French, a language spoken by 70 million people worldwide
- Fewer than 40,000 students study Mandarin Chinese, a language spoken by 1.3 billion people
- Approximately 1% of undergraduates study abroad

According to Dr. Kolb, there is an urgency felt among various segments of government and industries due to the shortage of professionals and workers with advanced language skills, especially in less-commonly taught languages. Recently, the Committee for Economic Development just issued a report titled *Education for Global Leadership: The Importance of International Studies and Foreign Language Education for the U.S. Economic and National Security*, downloadable at (http://www.ced.org/docs/report/report_foreignlanguages.pdf) The report calls for increased funding for early language education in elementary schools, expanding the number of foreign language teachers, and strengthening immersion and study abroad programs.

Another keynote speaker from the business world is Chris Harrington, the Vice-President of Strategy & Business Development for Toshiba and Chair of the Workforce Development Alliance, working with local schools and community groups. He also questioned “*Are we preparing students for the global economy?*” “*Are we giving our students knowledge, skills and perspectives that they need to live and work in an increasingly connected world?*” Anthony Jackson of the Asia Society asserted that the current national education legislation, No Child Behind was not enough and may leave our students behind in the global society. As the Chief Executive Officer of International Studies Schools Network for the Asia Society, he affirmed that International Education and Language Studies provided relevancy to learning which naturally led to better student engagement and motivation. International and Language Education should be included and integrated in K-12 curriculum/instruction and served as a pathway to more advanced language study in higher education institutions.

A panel of teachers and practitioners shared their best practices in promoting international education and language study in their local high schools: Barbara Doten – California World History Project – had students interested and inquiring world conflicts and developing international perspectives; Debbie Rugani with the Irvine Public School Foundation established the Persian Summer Institute last year and will add Korean Summer Institute this year; and Tracy Ross of Mission Viejo High School developed and taught a Cultural Geography course and provided her students with simulation activities to connect students’ daily experience with the worldwide issues.

Summit participants were informed and asked to endorse a resolution in support of federal legislation to establish the U.S. and the World Act to allocate an annual funding of \$250 million to develop students and teachers’ international competence and foreign language proficiency, especially in the critical languages. Leading this effort is Dr. Ronald Herring, the executive director of the California International Studies Program (CISP).

The Summit concluded with the congressional addresses by Congressman Ed Royce, the ardent support of the CSU Strategic Language Initiative Consortium and Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez, an international education advocate. Both emphasized that “*America better be versed in the languages, cultures, and traditions of other world regions, particularly the Middle East, so we can build a more secure future for both our nation and the world.*” and that “*As citizens of the world, we must teach our students the importance of working well with other countries to advance our common goals of peace and prosperity.*”

At the CSU Consortium on Strategic Language Initiative, we are looking for committed high school graduates and college students who are either heritage speakers or language learners who possess intermediate fluency in Arabic, Chinese/Mandarin, Korean, Persian or Russian. Once admitted into our SLI Program, students will have sustained and on-going opportunity to advance their language and culture study through summer intensive, online language mentoring, and study abroad. Our SLI primary goal is to enable our students to become future professionals who can function in their target language in international and cross-cultural settings.

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