



RECOMMENDED MODELS: MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

One of the most effective methods to ensure students access to a quality long-series program of study is to offer standards-based language instruction at the middle school level. Districts across Georgia have developed programs of instruction that include eligibility best suited to the needs of their community and school.

Benefits of language learning at the middle school level include:

- Students who begin language study at an earlier age develop greater cognitive flexibility, increased attention control, better memory, and superior problem-solving skills as well as an enhanced understanding of their primary language
- Students who begin study at an earlier age are more aware of and show more positive attitudes toward other cultures
- ❖ In the *Exceeding the Bar Companion to the College and Career Ready Performance Index Model for Middle Schools*, middle schools may earn an additional point for the following:
 - Percent of students earning at least one high school credit by the end of grade 8 in a World Language.

Georgia Performance Standards for World Languages 6-8 can be found at the link:
<https://www.georgiastandards.org/standards/pages/BrowseStandards/MLLStandards6-8.aspx>

Two Year Model (most common statewide model)

Overview: Level one of GPS is split over two years – 7th and 8th grades. Students earn one high school credit for completing two levels of study.

Benefits:

- Students gain from the ability to begin language study at an earlier age
- Language study becomes ingrained as a regular curricular pursuit at an earlier age
- Greater time is given to the basic forms of the language, providing a strong foundation
- Eligibility requirements can be moderate, as students will have an opportunity to focus on foundational skills. This allows for language study access to a moderate number of students

Challenges:

- Lateral entry points for students who transfer into the school after 7th grade can present a challenge

Three Year Model

Overview: Students earn one high school credit for completing all three levels of study. Level one of the Georgia Performance Standards is split over three years – 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

Benefits:

- Students gain from the ability to begin language study at an earlier age
- Language study becomes ingrained as a regular curricular pursuit at an earlier age
- Considerably more time is given to the basic forms of the language, providing a strong foundation
- Eligibility requirements can be considerably lower since more students will have an opportunity to focus on foundational skills more slowly.
- This allows for language study access to the greatest number of students

Challenges:

- Lateral entry points for students who transfer into the school after 6th grade can present a challenge
- Higher levels of staffing might be required

One Year Model

Overview: Level one is taught in 8th grade only. Students earn one high school credit for completing 8th grade.

Benefits:

- Students gain from the ability to begin language study at an earlier age
- Language study becomes ingrained as a regular curricular pursuit at an earlier age
- Lateral entry points are not an issue
- Lowest number of teachers required (however, this teacher may need to teach two subject areas in order to be considered full-time)

Challenges:

- Eligibility requirements must be high since students will need to complete a high school level course in one year of study
- Fewer students might be able to take part in this program due to rigor

Grade Only / No Credit Model

Overview: Any of the models described above can be offered for high school placement / middle school grade only

Benefits:

- Same as above, and students will still be required to complete two years of high school credit-bearing levels
- Can be beneficial to higher-level high school courses, as students will be required to continue on with language study for at least two years beyond their middle school program

Challenges:

- Parental concerns regarding lack of credit offered for high school level work
- Program may not be eligible for additional point per the Companion Index to the College and Career Ready Performance Index

Grade Only / Credit Offered Retroactively

Overview: Once students complete a further two years of language study in high school, the credit for level one is offered retro-actively. Any of the models described above can be offered for high school placement / middle school grade.

Benefits:

- Same as above, and students will still be required to complete two years additional years of high school credit-bearing levels
- Can be beneficial to higher-level high school courses, as students will be required to continue on with language study for at least two years beyond their middle school program

Challenges:

- Guidance departments must track students who studied language in middle school and apply the credit upon completion of two additional years