

## **Introduction**

South Dakotans are part of a growing and dynamic global society that increasingly requires us to communicate knowledge and ideas within and across geographical, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. Languages learned and used in South Dakota include: Native American languages, modern and classical world languages, and American Sign Language.

Individuals who effectively communicate in more than one language with an appropriate understanding of cultural contexts are globally literate and workplace ready. The study of other languages and cultures enables us to communicate in appropriate ways with people from other cultures. Exposure to other languages and cultures improves cognitive abilities such as critical thinking skills, problem solving abilities, and creativity.

## **Vision**

The world language vision is to empower language learners to effectively communicate in more than one language with an appropriate understanding of cultures, to be globally literate, and to be workplace ready.

## **Rationale**

South Dakota world language standards reflect the themes in the ***World Language Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*** (2015), known as The Five Cs: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, Communities. These standards describe the "what" (content) of world language learning and form the core of standards-based instruction.

## **Performance Targets**

Realistic performance targets for South Dakotans enrolled in a sequential language learning experience at various points are outlined in the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Performance Descriptors for Language Learners* (2012). The chart below graphically illustrates the influence of time-on-task on language performance and shows what outcomes are reasonable to expect of students who begin language instruction at a various points in the K-16 spectrum. If a language is studied for only two years of traditional instruction (one hour per day), only Novice proficiency should be expected. Advanced-level speakers have studied the language for at least 10 years, have spent significant time abroad, or have been in an immersion setting.

### TIME AS A CRITICAL COMPONENT FOR DEVELOPING LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE



13 | ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners © ACTFL, Inc., 2012

While ACTFL uses proficiency levels novice through distinguished, K-12 education typically spans levels novice through advanced. Language proficiency is tied to language ability, cognitive development, and educational levels. For example, a distinguished speaker of a language is a “highly articulate, well-educated language user...They can reflect on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts in a culturally appropriate manner.” Not all native speakers of a language reach a “superior” or “distinguished” proficiency level.