

*A collection of information and links to
websites concerning
Early Language Learning*

May 2009

Legislative Summaries

On March 10, 2009 the President signed P.L. 111-8, the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009, to fund federal government programs through the rest of the 2009 fiscal year. Programs had been funded at the FY 2008 levels under a continuing resolution since October 2008, but for the remainder of the fiscal year, there is now new appropriations legislation.

Even in this time of economic distress, foreign languages and international education programs will see numerous small to moderate funding increases. Of particular importance, the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) will gain \$600,000 totaling \$27.3 million; America COMETES baccalaureate and master's STEM grants will increase slightly to \$1.1 million each; Title VI and Fulbright-Hays gain \$9.8 million (to \$118.8 million); and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) will be funded at \$133.7 million. Advancing America through Foreign Language Partnerships (part of America COMPETES) was not funded again because some of the money for FLAP will be allocated toward foreign language partnership programs.

Additionally, there were funding increases for research and development, Byrd honors scholarships and Javits Fellowships, and grants to local educational agencies. The National Endowment for the Humanities received a \$10 million increase to \$155 million, and Department of State programs (Educational and Cultural Exchange, Peace Corp, Inter-American Foundation, and the

National Endowment for Democracy) will all receive increased funding in FY 2009.

*Summary provided by Nathan Lutz.

The Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies, JNCL-NCLIS, includes in its website a legislative summary of the 111th congress concerning foreign language and international education.

Click here to access the [legislative summary](#) for the 111th congress.

Languages in the News**

There is hope! Despite budget cuts and a struggling economy, some districts around the country are starting and expanding their foreign language programs for young students. Here are three that made recent headlines:

Schools report resurgence of foreign-language courses: Children from kindergarten to sixth grade attend Spanish class

“About 60 students — more than 10 percent of the student body — signed up for the after- and before-school program.” Nicole Mercier, coordinator for ACE World Language Programs, said the Black Lake program had one of the highest turnouts for an elementary school language program offered by ACE in several years.

Mercier said that the response shows a resurgence of interest in foreign-language programs for elementary school students in Washington State.

Click here to read more of [“School report resurgence of foreign-language courses”](#).

Language programs aren't foreign anymore

“Language programs are no longer just trendy -- they're here to stay, the experts say.

Katie Constable found herself lost in translation on her family vacation to Europe. But she had a handy translator.

Needing directions to a castle, Katie brought her 5-year-old son Henry into a market with her to ask for help. "I said, 'I don't speak French, but my son does.' "

Her twins, Henry and Isabel, now 6, have been attending the French Academy of Minnesota since they were 2 1/2 -- the typical age at which French children begin their formal education. And now they are fluent in the language.”

Click here to read more of [“Language programs aren't foreign anymore”](#).

Wake wants to expand foreign languages

The only foreign languages most North Carolina elementary students will hear at school are whatever they pick up in the cafeteria or the playground.

The number of North Carolina public elementary schools offering foreign languages has shrunk sharply over the past 15 years in the face of budget crunches and testing pressures. But Wake County school leaders want to buck that trend by asking county commissioners for money to hire teachers to offer foreign-language instruction in every elementary school.

Click here to read more of [“Wake wants to expand foreign languages”](#).

Free Music

Pandora is a free music service for residents of the United States. Users can create “stations” based on artist, song, composer, or genre. The site provides lyrics to the songs, music by similar artists and information about artists, albums, and songs. For the site to be free, some advertisements are played.

The Latin genre includes Brazilian, Latin America, Mexico, Salsa, Flamenco, Latin Pop, Reggaeton, and Tropical. Songs and artists in languages other than English and Spanish are limited.

Click here to access the free music of [Pandora](#).

El Prado in Google Earth

“Viewing a Velasquez or a Rembrandt in a place like Spain's Prado museum is a unique experience. Now you can use Google Earth technology to navigate reproductions of the Prado's masterpieces, delving even deeper into the Prado's collection. In Google Earth, you can get close enough to examine a painter's brushstrokes or the craquelure on the varnish of a painting. The images of these works are about 14,000 million pixels, 1,400 times more detailed than the image a 10 megapixel digital camera would take. In addition, you'll be able to see a spectacular 3D reproduction of the museum.”

Click here to access [El Prado in Google Earth](#).

** Links provided by Stephanie Andersen.

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