

Wilson County Board of Education

Policy Description:

Foreign Language Requirement for Students

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Policy Number:

4.2071

Amended Date:

06/04/07

Rescinds:

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04/20/07

1 Students who are native speakers of languages other than English may complete the foreign language
2 graduation requirement without taking foreign language courses if oral and written proficiency in the native
3 language can be documented. Such documented native language proficiency will be noted on the Tennessee
4 High School transcript (see attached).

5
6 Proficiency may be verified by one (1) of the following methods:

- 7
8 1. Students with secondary transcripts showing coursework in their native language may have those
9 language course credits transferred to their Tennessee High School transcript and applied to meet the
10 requirement for foreign language regardless of the native language.

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12 Students with secondary transcripts indicating only one (1) year of coursework in the native language
13 may have one (1) year of credit in that language transferred to their Tennessee High School transcript.
14 The second year of the foreign language requirement may be waived with a statement at the bottom of
15 the Tennessee High School transcript from the school where the student is enrolled indicating the
16 student's oral and written proficiency in his native language (see 2 below).

- 17
18 2. Students who have no secondary transcript or whose transcripts do not show credits in their native
19 language may demonstrate oral and written proficiency in their native language at the novice high
20 school level* (as defined by the proficiency guidelines of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign
21 Languages (ACTFL)) by one (1) of the following methods:

- 22
23 a. If the district offers the language, the student may take a second year comprehensive end of
24 the year test in the language and achieve a minimum score of 70.
25 b. Students may take an approved National Foreign Language Exam at the appropriate level in
26 languages that are offered and achieve a minimum score of 70.

27 The Wilson County School System may collaborate with a college or university, allowing
28 students to demonstrate proficiency by taking the placement test for incoming college
29 freshman in their native language. The college or university must offer the language. The
30 student will be responsible for any fee charged for such an evaluation.

- c. Representative members from community cultural organizations who have the education, English skills, and native language proficiency may be trained to evaluate student proficiency in that language.
- d. Wilson County School System foreign language faculty members who are proficient in other languages or employees of the Wilson County School System who are native speakers of a language other than English may be trained to evaluate student proficiency.
- e. The Tennessee Foreign Language Institute may be used to evaluate a student's proficiency in his native language. The student will be responsible for any fee charged for such an evaluation.

* The "novice high school level," as defined by the ACTFL, is as follows:

1. **Novice high school/speaking** – The student is able to satisfy the requirements of basic communicative exchanges by relying heavily on learned utterances but occasionally expanding these through simple recombination of their elements; can ask questions or make statements involving learned material; and shows signs of spontaneity although this falls short of real autonomy or expression. Speech continues to consist of learned utterances rather than of personalized, situational adapted ones. Vocabulary centers on areas such as basic objects, places, and most common kinship terms. Pronunciation may still be strongly influenced by first language. Errors are frequent and, in spite of repetition, some "novice high" speakers will have difficulty being understood even by sympathetic interlocutors.
2. **Novice high school/listening** – The student is able to understand short, learned utterances and some sentence length utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible; comprehends words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high frequency commands, and courtesy formulae; and may require repetition, rephrasing, and/or a slowed rate of speech for comprehension.
3. **Novice high school/reading** – The student has sufficient control of the writing system to interpret written language in areas of practical need; where vocabulary has been learned, can read for instructional and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases, or expressions (such as some on menus, schedules, timetables, maps, and signs); and at times, but not on a consistent basis, may be able to derive meaning from material at a slightly higher level where context and/or extra linguistic background knowledge are supportive.
4. **Novice high school/writing** – The student is able to write simple fixed expressions and limited memorized material and some recombination thereof; can supply information on simple forms and documents; can write names, numbers, dates, own nationality, and other simple autobiographical information as well as some short phrases and simple lists; and can write all symbols in an alphabetic or syllabic system or fifty (50) to one hundred (100) characters or compounds in a character writing system. Spelling and representation of symbols (letters, syllables, and characters) may be partially correct.