

MCTLC Newsletter

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The Legacy of Visionary Educators

Janice Holter Kittok, MCTLC President 2010

In 1958, only two states had foreign language specialists in their Departments of Education, New York and Georgia. There was no MCTLC. There was no Central States Conference. There was no ACTFL. Then came Sputnik followed by federal legislation, the National Defense Education Act. By 1960, 37 states had appointed at least one professional for supervising foreign languages. In 1961, a group of visionary language educators founded the Minnesota Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (MCTFL), now MCTLC. It would be years later, not until 1968, that American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) would be founded. Where would language education be today without the leadership of these revolutionary educators who envisioned a future different from their current reality, came together as a united voice, and took action to make change?

Today I came across a piece of paper where I printed a quote from Al Gore's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech. Although his words are referencing global climate change, I read them with new eyes thinking that these words also could also describe the challenges facing language education in the United States today.

The great Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen wrote, "One of these days, the younger generation will come knocking at my door." The future is knocking at our door right now. Make no mistake, the next generation will ask us one of two questions. Either they will ask: "What were you thinking; why didn't you act?" Or they will ask instead: "How did you find the moral courage to rise and successfully resolve a crisis that so many said was impossible to solve?" We have everything we need to get started, save perhaps political will, but political will is a renewable resource. So let us renew it, and say together: **"We have a purpose. We are many. For this purpose we will rise, and we will act."**

Fifty years from now in the year 2060, which question will the parents, students, communities and our nation be asking when they think about the world language educators of 2010?

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Proposed to US House of
Representatives ... pages 2-3

Learn about the *Excellence and
Innovation in Language Learning Act*
proposed for inclusion in the
reauthorization of *No Child Left
Behind*. Learn how to get involved.



New World Language Bill Proposed to US House of Representatives

The bill summarized below has been introduced for inclusion in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known since 2000 as No Child Left Behind.

Learn more:

JNCL-NCLIS (MCTLC is an organizational member) www.LanguagePolicy.org

Partnership for Global Learning

www.AsiaSociety.org > Education and Learning > Policy Initiatives > National Initiatives

ACTFL www.ACTFL.org Look for this link in the sidebar:

“Your Help is Urgently Needed for New Language Legislation: Please Act Today!”

Minnesota advocacy efforts

Contact: Betty Lotterman, MCTLC President 2011, bettylotterman@hotmail.com

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EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING ACT

Purposes:

- To address 21st century U.S. national security and global leadership challenges by stimulating excellence, innovation and reform in national, state and local policies and programs regarding the teaching and learning of foreign languages at the K-12 levels.
- Provide every student access to quality foreign language instruction as part of articulated K-12 language sequences with the goal of graduating high school students with an advanced level of proficiency.
- Strengthen innovative preparation and recruitment initiatives for future foreign language teachers and enhance professional development opportunities for current teachers.

Authorization: \$400,000,000 for fiscal year 2011 and such sums that may be necessary for each of the succeeding fiscal years, for programs as follows.

National Activities (\$100,000,000): Establish a significant U.S. Department of Education leadership role.

- Coordinate with the Departments of State, Defense, Commerce, and other relevant federal agencies to share best practices in foreign language teaching and learning at the K-12 levels.
- Provide incentives for States to adopt and implement nationally recognized standards for K-12 foreign language instruction.
- Support, collect and disseminate research in the areas of best practices including programs that achieve high levels of student proficiency.
- Require the National Center for Education Statistics to annually collect, analyze, and internationally benchmark data on language learning.
- Provide scholarships to students and teachers for study-abroad opportunities.
- Support partnerships of local and state education agencies with institutions of higher education and other nonprofit educational organizations to identify innovative, state-of-the-art technologies and platforms that have been proven to be successful for effective language instruction.

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State Activities (\$100,000,000): Establish a significant State role to expand and articulate access to K-12 foreign language learning statewide.

- Establish state level policy and build capacity for delivering foreign language and international education to K-12 students statewide.
- Appoint a broad-based State foreign language and international education advisory council coordinated by the Chief State School Officer to:
 - Advise on the development of a state foreign language needs assessments;
 - Recommend approaches to improve the teaching of foreign languages for students statewide based on research-based best practices;
 - Recommend ways to expand foreign language and international education opportunities through innovative approaches such as immersion, online and other language learning experiences;
 - Work with relevant state boards to review and teacher certification requirements and recommend changes as needed;
 - Recommend strategies to address any shortages of elementary and secondary education foreign language teachers;
 - Develop and assist in implementation of statewide outreach to the public on the importance of foreign language and international education
- Designate a State foreign language and international education coordinator or coordinators.
- Adopt nationally recognized foreign language standards and assessments.
- Carry out teacher in-service and pre-service professional development programs, including summer institutes and scholarships.

Foreign Language Education Partnership Programs (\$200,000,000): The Secretary of Education would provide grants for eligible partnerships to develop, maintain, improve, and expand model programs of articulated foreign language learning from kindergarten through grade 12 that increase the number of students graduating from high school with an advanced level of proficiency in at least one foreign language.

- Include as eligible partners local and/or state education agencies and institutions of higher education. Businesses and nonprofit organizations with foreign language expertise may also be included partners.
- Design programs and teaching strategies that are informed by best practices and research, including use of new technologies, and provide for maximum exposure to foreign languages inside and outside the classroom.
- Include activities to expand understanding and knowledge of the historic, geographic, cultural, economic and other contextual factors of countries where the foreign language is spoken.
- Develop curriculum materials based on an articulated framework or approach designed to bring students to an advance level of proficiency by grade 12.
- Develop or improve nationally recognized language assessments where needed.
- Provide scholarships and incentives to recruit teachers, including from heritage populations, and provide in-service and pre-service professional development.
- Provide scholarships for foreign language study abroad for teachers and students in grades 9–12.
- Require each grantee to conduct ongoing research and evaluation of its program. The Secretary must provide guidelines to standardize categories of information collected and analyzed by grantees.
- The Secretary may reserve 3 percent of funds available for this section to collect, analyze and disseminate data and best practices nationally, including through a Web-based clearinghouse.

MCLTC Newsletter
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National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign
Languages (NADSFL)
National Council of Japanese Language Teachers (NCJLT)
National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL)
National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL)

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

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Pre-Convention Workshops • **November 18** | Annual Convention & World Languages Expo • **November 19-21**

Hynes Convention Center, Boston, MA