

## LANGUAGE ROADMAP FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: OREGON

**The Center for Applied Second Language Studies  
The University of Oregon  
The Language Flagship**

### STRATEGIC VISION

The Oregon Roadmap strives to create the conditions that will allow every Oregon graduate to be professionally proficient in English and functionally proficient in another language by 2025.<sup>1</sup> As this goal is achieved, Oregon will become a place where every guest feels welcome and every citizen can contribute to the social, economic, and cultural life of the state. Oregonians' superior command of languages and cultures will provide a sustainable competitive edge. The Oregon brand will be inclusive, internationally aware, and forward looking.

Public and private employers who need workers able to take advantage of 21<sup>st</sup> century opportunities are the primary drivers for this effort. Many, if not most, of those opportunities will involve overseas partners or competitors. Research shows that small- to medium-sized enterprises in the European Union lose \$140 billion annually due to a lack of linguistically competent workers. Since Europe's language education system produces far more proficient speakers than the U.S., one can only imagine the huge unseen losses incurred by American companies. Positive examples of Oregon companies improving their revenues by hiring bilingual employees is an effective way to prove to the rest of the nation that language education is an economic imperative.

Oregon annually spends approximately \$80 million for K-16 foreign language education in order to produce fewer than 6000 functionally proficient students. At a cost of \$13,600 per proficient student, Oregonians are clearly not getting a good return on their investment. Doing more of the same is not a viable option. The Oregon Roadmap to Language Excellence takes an innovative, even radical, approach to educational reform. Rather than creating new requirements and the bureaucratic infrastructure needed to ensure compliance, The Oregon Roadmap proposes incentives that rewards students who demonstrate proficiency. By assigning real value to language proficiency, The Oregon Roadmap will create a market for proficient speakers and release local and private sources of funding for language education. The Roadmap requires some state government leadership on policy and investment but relies primarily on local communities and businesses acting in their own interests, once value is attached to demonstrated proficiency.

The following chart shows how the Roadmap process challenged and changed fundamental assumptions about educational reform.

---

<sup>1</sup> In technical terms, this translates into every Oregonian being at the Advanced (ILR 2) level or higher in English and the Intermediate (ILR 1) level in a language other than English.

**Traditional thinking****Roadmap thinking**

Let's require every child to take more language classes.	Let's give every child an incentive to become functionally proficient in a language.
Heritage speakers are a liability because we have to teach them English.	Heritage speakers are an asset because they have mastered another language and culture.
A year or two of language study is good for you.	Becoming functionally proficient in another language will tangibly benefit you and your community.
We hear that companies want to do business in China. Let's produce Chinese speakers. Most immigrants speak Spanish. Let's teach Spanish.	Businesses actually told us they want critical thinkers and effective communicators. Let's teach children a language – any language – meaningful to them that engages their imaginations.
Doubling the number of language speakers requires double the budget.	Creating a market for proficient speakers will attract the resources needed to succeed.
Everybody speaks English, so we don't have to learn another language.	Over 90% of potential customers in countries like China, Japan, and Russia do not speak English. We had better learn to communicate with them.
If you teach more language, you have to cut art, music or PE.	Teach art, music, PE and other subjects in a foreign language and let kids absorb the language while mastering those disciplines.
Languages are for the elite: diplomats, international businessmen, and translators	Multilingual nurses, police officers, military personnel, store clerks, and tour guides are essential to Oregon's success in a connected world

**STATE OF PLAY**

Oregon is located on the Pacific Coast with a significant and diverse population of heritage speakers of various languages, particularly Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, and various forms of Chinese. The state is also located between two large neighbors, Washington and California, both of which compete with Oregon for workers, businesses, and brainpower. Oregon is, by far, the smallest economic player of the three. A series of tax limitation measures in the 1990s significantly reduced public funding for education at both the K-12 and higher education levels. A strong tradition of local control and the extremely low population density in the eastern part of the state make centrally planned mandates difficult to enact and enforce.

While relatively small compared with its northern and southern neighbors, Oregon's business community has a history of activism surrounding educational issues, a strong international orientation, and a vested interest in a ready supply of potential employees with linguistic and cultural skills. Several major companies including, Nike and Columbia Sportswear, are headquartered in Oregon, but the state is more dependent than most on small and medium enterprises. Some of these have a strong need to serve local immigrant populations while others wish to expand into overseas markets. The Oregon business community will play a pivotal role in the success of the Oregon Roadmap and they have already been instrumental in constructing this document. While public policy is critically important to the Oregon Roadmap, public-private partnerships at the local level among businesses and educational institutions and the willingness of businesses to hire and reward bilingual workers is of equal importance.

This particular amalgam of geographic, demographic, economic, and political factors argues against traditional top-down mandates and the attendant compliance and monitoring structure. Rather, the Oregon Roadmap relies on incentives awarded to those demonstrating proficiency.

Currently, little or no value is placed on students obtaining functional proficiency in a second language. Highly proficient heritage speakers, for example, are often required to take two years of language classes to fulfill graduation requirements rather than being given the opportunity to develop their heritage language through special courses in grammar, reading, writing, and critical thinking ability. By giving financial and educational rewards to those attaining functional proficiency, Oregon will assign real value to proficiency, allowing market forces to encourage the development of internationally literate students from a range of backgrounds and interests.

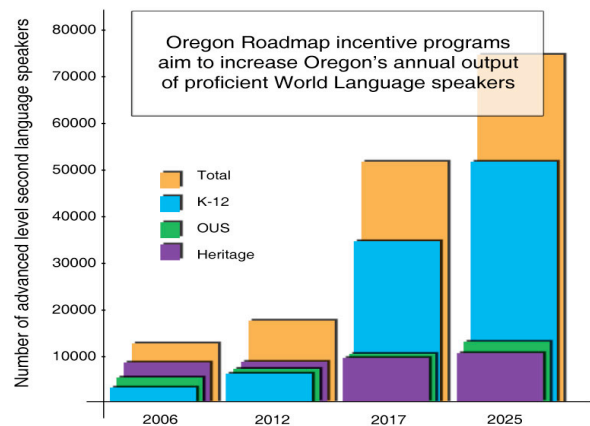
An incentive-based system requires fewer resources from a small state with a limited tax base. Oregon currently spends an estimated \$80 million on foreign language instruction.<sup>2</sup> Yet only an estimated 5% of non-heritage high school graduates and 20% of college graduates – about 6000 per year – reach functional proficiency. A strategically sound and carefully implemented set of incentives could redirect some of those resources from current uses, which produce dimly few functionally proficient students, into programs and strategies that result in language skills that are actually useful for professional and personal purposes.

It goes without saying that every Oregonian must have a professional level of English to participate fully in the economic and social life of the state. Throughout America’s history, the children of immigrants grow up to be fluent speakers of English while leaving behind their ancestral languages. A range of state and federal education requirements ensure that this generation will attain high levels of English proficiency as well. Therefore, the Oregon Roadmap focuses primarily on strategies to enhance Oregonians’ proficiency in languages other than English. For Oregonians who speak English at home, this means innovative programs in schools and universities, study abroad opportunities, internships with international companies that give them a fighting chance to become functionally proficient in another language. For those who speak another language at home, building on and valuing their special linguistic abilities with programs to ensure literacy will allow them to become full-fledged members of American society while contributing their special gift to their country. Maintaining a home language is not an impediment to learning English; it is an asset to be cultivated.

**Timeline and Drivers**

Taking into account conservative demographic projections, an estimated 75,000 students will graduate from Oregon high schools and universities in 2025. Understanding the time required to institute new educational programs and for students to become functionally proficient in another language, the Oregon Roadmap’s interim goal for numbers of proficient speakers is only marginally higher in 2012, with the number accelerating quickly after ten, fifteen, and eighteen years. Specific timelines for each of the thirteen initiatives appear in

Figure 1



<sup>2</sup> This estimate is for the public K-12 system as well as the Oregon University System and includes salaries, but not other expenses such as materials, administration, and training.

appendix 1. Figure 1 indicates the targeted annual output of proficient world language speakers in Oregon between 2006 and 2025.

### Drivers

Three factors drive the Oregon Roadmap to Language Excellence:

- 1) *The demand from Oregon's globally oriented businesses (both multinationals and small to medium enterprises) for highly skilled and internationally literate workers* These companies have consistently expressed a clear need for employees in leadership positions with strong technical skills who can also communicate effectively with domestic and international colleagues, competitors, and co-workers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. To meet the current demand, these employers have turned to operating almost exclusively overseas and hiring every available international employee through H1-B visas.
- 2) *The demand from domestically oriented employers for workers able to deliver services to speakers of various heritage languages and overseas visitors* Government agencies such as the Department of Human Services, service-oriented businesses such as Regence Health and Wells Fargo, and manufacturers with diverse workforces such as Reser's Fine Foods need managers and professionals able to deliver services to first-generation immigrants with limited English ability. Hospitals, school districts, banks, and public sector employers commonly advertise, "bilingual preferred."
- 3) *A general desire to internationalize the Oregon Brand* Businesses realize that an internationally literate citizenry projects a cosmopolitan image which can be a significant competitive advantage in attracting talent, capital, and tourists.

### Which Language Should We Teach?

One of the most striking and surprising conclusions from preliminary research and the Oregon Language Summit held June 1, 2007 was the strong statement from the business community that, while there is an unmet need for employees with functional proficiency in languages, the demand is not for *specific* languages. Where there is need for specific technical language skills, businesses often find hiring overseas talent more effective. What they want from Oregonians is an ability to effectively and appropriately communicate with partners and competitors from all over the world. Even if that communication is conducted in English, those who have attained proficiency in a second language have the cultural sensitivity and communication skills to successfully navigate such transactions. An Oregonian who learns Chinese, for example, may spend a few years in China, return to headquarters for leadership training, then go on domestic assignment before being sent to head the European office. What really counts for multinational businesses is an employees' ability to effectively communicate in a variety of cultures and contexts. Bilingual employees are valuable not only for their language skills but also for their ability to interact effectively with people around the world in either their first or second language.

Domestically oriented government agencies and private companies, on the other hand, need to deliver services to heritage populations in the language spoken by those communities. Statewide, Spanish is by far in the greatest demand, followed by Russian and Chinese. Public entities such as social service agencies, police forces, and schools need to communicate with local speech

communities on a limited number of specific topics. Personnel with general functional proficiency can be trained to communicate at a higher level within a specific domain (e.g., health care, housing, human resources). Fortunately, Spanish is by far the most commonly studied language in Oregon. Enhancing the effectiveness of these existing programs could produce a sufficient number of functionally proficient speakers.

The Roadmap Task Force, therefore, concluded that there is no need for Oregon to promote one particular language over any other, but that different communities or institutions should be able to determine which languages to teach based on community interest levels. The current push to create Chinese language programs demonstrates how the education system can react to demographic, political, or economic changes by offering different languages.

### **Strategic Analysis**

#### *Internal Strengths*

Oregon is well equipped to pursue the 2025 vision: *The Oregon Roadmap strives to create the conditions that will allow every Oregon graduate to be professionally proficient in English and functionally proficient in another language by 2025.*

With a major maritime port (Portland), diverse heritage communities, and a healthy overseas tourist industry, foreigners don't seem as "foreign" as they might elsewhere. The Oregon Roadmap, therefore, can build on the following existing strengths:

- Innovative educational models such as immersion schools and international high schools
- A National Foreign Language Resource Center
- The nation's first K-16 Flagship, a partnership between UO and Portland Public Schools
- A healthy, active, and supportive international business community
- A language teaching community recognized for its contributions to national student communicative proficiency standards
- Strong international ties at the university level
- Well established international student exchange programs

The Oregon Roadmap process has also revealed and galvanized significant political support for quality language education. This support appears to have been latent or unfocused before the Oregon Roadmap process brought together concerned parties from business, government, and education to the table where they discovered mutual interest in expanding the pool of internationally literate Oregonians.

#### *Internal Weaknesses*

Education in Oregon has been chronically under funded. Tax limitations and weak economic performance have put both K-12 and higher education in defensive positions for the past fifteen years. While the current biennium has seen increased funding, the educational community is still wary of new initiatives when basic funding for salaries, facilities, and programs still lags behind national norms. Oregon also has a recent history of high expectations and huge disappointment in language policy. Languages were considered a core content area under standards-based education reform in the mid- to late-nineties. Funding cuts and opposition from school administrators doomed this

ambitious policy, leaving many language educators and advocates with deep skepticism towards other ambitious initiatives such as those represented in the Oregon Roadmap.

#### *External Opportunities*

With a strong economy and increased tax revenue, the Oregon legislature significantly increased funding for both K-12 and postsecondary education in 2008. As important as the actual dollars allocated is the psychological impact of moving educators from “survival mode” to a place where they can consider proposals for new programs beneficial to students. In addition, current members of the legislature include some strong advocates for language education, including a former superintendent who established a dual language program, a former Rhodes Scholar, and a native speaker of Korean.

The federal government’s recognition that languages are essential to the nation’s security and economic well-being presents a great opportunity for Oregon to partner with federal agencies and attract funding and resources. For example, the Oregon Roadmap calls for establishing K-16 programs modeled on the UO-PPS Flagship partnership and for increasing quality study abroad opportunities. The recently-passed America Competes Act could support the development of K-16 Flagship models and Lincoln Fellowships can help Oregonians access study abroad opportunities.

#### *External Threats*

The greatest threat to the Roadmap is the emotional and politically charged immigration debate. Any language policy is in danger of being swept up in the divisiveness of this issue, which appears likely to be a prominent “wedge issue” in the 2008 election campaign. The Oregon Roadmap explicitly states that every Oregonian must be proficient in English, as well as another language. It also makes clear that the goal is not merely linguistic facility but the ability to use language in a cultural context.

The other key threat is a lack of leadership. No entity is currently charged with promoting and supporting language education at the state level. CASLS and the Oregon Department of Education can provide support and services to districts but cannot explicitly advocate and lobby for policy changes. Advocates for educational excellence such as the Chalkboard Project and the Oregon Business Council do not include languages as a core part of their missions. The only advocacy organization is the Confederation in Oregon for Language Teaching (COFLT), a professional association of language teachers dedicated to improving language learning and teaching through cooperation among colleagues, state agencies, the legislature, and the public to make quality second language education a reality for all Oregonians in the 21st century.

None of these organizations, however, is equipped to implement the Oregon Roadmap. Without such an entity to ensure that the Roadmap moves forward, the vision and specified actions of the Roadmap are unlikely to reach fruition. Thus, the consensus of the Task Force is that the state establish an Office of Language Acquisition to be staffed by people whose job it is to coordinate and implement the action plans of the roadmap.

### The Oregon Roadmap to Language Excellence

The Oregon Roadmap to Language Excellence is a set of thirteen proposals designed to provide incentives to individual learners and resources to educational institutions choosing to prepare students in a serious way to thrive in a global economy and society. These incentives are all predicated on demonstrated proficiency, not credits received or teacher recommendations. Furthermore, because key stakeholders and the general public in our monolingual society are generally uninformed about both the problem and the potential solutions, a communications campaign will be critical to long-term success.

Proposal	Who	Min \$	Target \$	\$ Recurring	\$ Source
<b>Proficiency Incentives</b>					
1. K-16 Flagship (model district)	CASLS, ODE, OUS, campuses	1.5 m	10 m	Phase out	Fed/State
2. Teacher incentive program	Campuses (Ed), OSAC	100 k	3 m	yes	State
3. Credit for proficiency	ODE / OUS / campuses	0	0	N/A	N/A
4. Language education bonds	State Gov	1 m	10 m	yes	State
5. Enhanced diplomas	ODE, OUS, campuses	0	0	N/A	N/A
<b>Educational Support</b>					
6. Office of Language Acquisition	ODE or joint boards	1.5 m	10 m	Phase out	Fed/State
7. Network of School to Work internships	State coordinator / businesses	0	75 k	yes	Business
8. Study abroad incentives					
a. State incentives	OSAC / Gilman / Lincoln	500 k	5 m	yes	State
b. Federal incentives	Federal Gov		250 per	yes	IRS code
9. Online Language Learning	CASLS	500k	1.5 m	no	Fed/private
10. Information Clearinghouse	State coordinator / CASLS	50 k	100 k	Yes	State
11. Language proficiency registry	CASLS / LLS / NCSSFL	500 k	1.5 m	No	Fed grant
<b>Communications</b>					
12. Stakeholders Outreach Strategy	Office of Lang. Acquisition	1 m	5 m	Yes	?
13. Public Outreach Strategy	State coordinator	0	200 k	Yes	Fees

### PROFICIENCY INCENTIVES

Oregon currently spends an estimated \$80 million per year on foreign language education. This expenditure, however, results in only a handful of functionally proficient speakers of other languages. Currently, most college-bound students take two years of language at the high school level. The State Board of Education recently approved a one-year graduation requirement for languages or arts. CASLS' research shows that students need four to five years of quality language instruction in traditional programs to reach functional proficiency. Requiring this of every student in Oregon would necessitate at least a five-fold increase in foreign language expenditures to \$400 million, recruiting 4000 new teachers, and reducing time spent in other

curricular areas. Such a course of action is financially, logistically, and politically impossible.

Therefore, the Oregon Roadmap relies on a system of strategic incentives that rewards students with functional proficiency. Such a system will assign value to proficiency and create an environment in which effective language instruction can thrive. This approach departs from current practice by:

- rewarding students and educational institutions that succeed, rather than punishing those who fail
- assigning value to proven performance rather than time spent in class
- creating an environment that encourages reform rather than mandating reform from above
- allowing local schools and campuses to determine if and how they will enhance their existing language programs.

All of the incentives suggested below will require the certification of proficiency according to a common standard. The language field is fortunate to have such a standard in place: the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and aligned scales. The Center for Applied Second Language Studies at the University of Oregon is a leader in the field of language assessment and has partnered with Language Learning Solutions (LLS) of Eugene to deliver its STAMP test worldwide. Other assessment alternatives are available to accurately measure student proficiency at a reasonable cost. Furthermore, COFLT has made significant progress in developing common language teaching goals and methods aimed at these standards.

### **1. K-16 Flagship Grants**

The key to producing proficient language users is to start learning early and never stop. Building on the successful K-16 Flagship Model developed by Portland Public Schools and the University of Oregon, the state can jump-start similar programs through a competitive process open to districts, private schools, and universities. At the core of this model is content-based learning, an approach in which regular curricular content (math, social studies, science, etc.) is delivered in a language other than English. Twenty-nine Oregon schools currently employ this model. This approach has been shown to increase test scores in all subject areas while developing high levels of language proficiency. Equally important, this model does not require additional funding after some initial start-up costs.

Interested districts would be invited to engage in a yearlong process of generating district and community approval. Successful proposals would need to demonstrate a commitment to developing serious and sustained programs likely to produce high-proficiency learners. Initial start-up funding for these model language programs will be in the form of state sponsored step grants of up to \$100,000 a year for four years, awarded through a Request for Proposal process. This preparation and state coordination will also further position districts for available federal funding opportunities, such as Department of Education funds through the America Competes Act. The result will be a network of K-12 institutions and universities committed to professional-level language learning that will educate a generation of Oregonians prepared to thrive in a global society, keep the best and brightest at home, and attract top students from other states to Oregon universities.

### **2. Teacher Incentive Program**



A potential limiting factor in the expansion of language learning programs is the lack of qualified and certified teachers and instructors. The teacher incentive program will induce more language-proficient students to pursue teaching careers by providing scholarship support. Naturally, this would include those who wish to pursue an endorsement in language teaching, but would also include bilingual individuals seeking certification in other content areas who can staff dual language and immersion programs. Based on the Aerators model, students receiving these scholarships must become certified educators and fulfill a predefined term of service of at least two years in Oregon schools. Incentives should be both short and long-term in design. Short-term incentives could include funding to help defray living costs. Long-term incentives could be in the form of outright tuition repayment upon graduation.

### **3. Credit for Proficiency**

This program allows students to earn high school and college credit for demonstrated language performance. Students passing proficiency-testing requirements would be rewarded with credits needed for graduation at the high school and university levels. The Oregon Department of Education is already piloting a credit for proficiency program in various standardized subjects. Adding language to this offering is an excellent way to value heritage speakers, encouraging them to further develop already strong language skills into marketable assets. The goal is to offer proficiency tests at no charge or on a sliding scale. Students will be encouraged to further their language learning in university Language Flagship programs.

### **4. Language Education Bonds**

Language education bonds will be financial instruments in the form of non-interest bearing bonds tied to demonstrated proficiency. Returns will be linked to proficiency outcomes, allowing for market forces to work for improved levels of functionally proficient speakers. Floated at auctions and freely tradable, these bonds will be sold by school districts or at the state level. Buyers will be private citizens, non-profits, or businesses. Every bond would have a lifespan defined by the sustained achievement of language proficiency outcomes, such as consistent high proficiency placement test scores.

These bonds can operate in the framework of existing policy or be adapted to future policy goals, without prejudgment on how outcomes are to be achieved. This allows for innovative, adaptable and diverse solutions to be imagined and implemented, and gives the private sector a direct and immediate stake in the success of the language learning enterprise. Bond issuance is also a creative way to address state education funding limits.

### **5. Enhanced Diplomas**

At both the K-12 and postsecondary levels, certification of language ability on diplomas will reward individual performance and create demand for effective programs. More important than the certificates themselves are the rewards that can be attached to them. Universities may wish to earmark scholarship support for students with language certificates, and businesses could recruit and offer pay incentives to graduates of either the K-12 or higher education system. In addition, proficiency-based scholarships would reward heritage speakers for their special language and cultural abilities and promote diversity of campuses and treating bilingualism as an asset rather than a liability. These scholarships should be based on demonstrated proficiency and be contingent on continued language learning throughout the college years. Foreign students would

not be eligible.

## **EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT**

Current practice is very expensive and failing to produce functionally proficient students. A paradigm shift towards proficiency-based second language instruction is necessary to produce any substantial improvement in the number of functionally proficient students. Doing more of the same will not help us reach the 2025 goal. Merely mandating more or even better language education, however, will leave districts without the intellectual and financial resources to make this happen. The proposals described below build on existing infrastructure within the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon University System, but enable the development of fundamentally different approaches in individual districts and campuses.

### **6. Office of Language Acquisition**

The Oregon Language Roadmap is envisioned as an 18-year effort (2007-2025). To implement the Roadmap over such an extended period of time, it is essential to identify or create an entity with primary responsibility for the success of the Roadmap. Coordinating and supporting the efforts of state government, local school boards, higher education, the business community, and the public at large is a task beyond the scope of any existing agency or organization.

This document leaves open the question of how such an office should be authorized and organized. We recommend that a high-level commission including the heads of key government agencies work over the coming year to determine how the Office should be organized.

Regardless of how the Office of Language Acquisition is organized, it is imperative that the Oregon Department of Education have sufficient staff and expertise to support districts choosing to participate in the Roadmap. Oregon is currently one of 14 states without a full-time foreign language coordinator. While hiring a full-time person to serve as coordinator would be the minimum needed, we recommend that ODE be funded to create an office with at least two professional-level people supported by clerical and technical staff. This office will support the implementation of the Oregon Roadmap; provide leadership and coordination for the expansion of dual language programs and international exchanges, while providing support and guidance for proficiency development and assessment, state proficiency goals, world language teacher licensures, and professional development.

### **7. School to Work Internships**

The skills that the students acquire can be greatly enhanced through the use of internship programs that provide quality hands-on experience and an opportunity to become future employees. Company-sponsored internships would be created for both students and teachers to experience practicing their language of choice as well as skills related to the industry. These language and skill-based internships will target workers without degrees with the aim of recruiting soon-to-graduate new hires. The participants would be able to use the Online Language Learning program (see below) and have the opportunity to practice their language skills in a professional setting.

A public-private collaboration should establish summer internship programs for language teachers (in Oregon or abroad) to experience professional language use while helping employees improve their language and culture skills. The insight gained will help them become more

effective teachers while assisting the private sector meet its linguistic and cultural needs.

## **8. Study Abroad Incentives**

### ***a) State Incentives***

High-quality study abroad programs are a cost effective way to develop functional proficiency. The goal of this initiative is to eliminate financial concerns as a barrier to study abroad. At the postsecondary level, a year of study at a public institution overseas costs an average of \$4000 per year more than studying on an OUS campus at in-state rates. Federal programs should be able to bridge much of this gap. New or reallocated state funds should guarantee that any qualified Oregonian should be able to study abroad at approximately the same cost as they can as in-state students at state schools.

While the security of younger students is a major concern, many high school students also possess the maturity and basic language skills to take advantage of study abroad opportunities. Exchange agreements with overseas partners whereby foreign students come to Oregon and Oregonians go abroad would minimize costs and enhance the international experiences of both students going abroad and the communities that host overseas students coming to Oregon. To promote international sister-school exchange relationships, the state could offer start-up support grants for districts/schools.

Scholarships for study abroad participation should give preference to students who already possess at least limited functional proficiency (Novice-High) skills. Research shows that those below that level are not able to take sufficient advantage of the opportunity. State funds should also be limited to long-term programs shown by empirical research to be effective. Short-term consciousness raising tours can be wonderful entrees into a culture, but contribute little to the development of functional proficiency and would not be supported by this program. Through pre- and post-testing, it is possible to determine those programs that result in real gains, and state support should be limited to those effective programs.

### ***b) Federal Incentives***

Direct support and/or tax breaks for families hosting or sending students abroad should eliminate the financial barriers to these life-changing experiences. The federal government currently gives a \$50 a month tax break to families hosting foreign exchange students.

Raising this amount to \$250 a month and offering to those families committed to sending students overseas will serve two important functions. First, it will create incentives for more families to host or send exchange students, therefore enriching communities and schools by broadening cultural horizons and language learning experiences. Second, raising the tax incentive to \$250 will reimburse host families in a more fiscally realistic manner, helping meet the real financial costs associated with hosting.

## **9. Online Language Learning**

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has failed to reach its potential because programs have lacked interpersonal contact and sociocultural context, both critical for language acquisition. Recent technical advances in online virtual worlds promises to overcome these

limitations and usher in a new generation of effective online learning. These new approaches include features of formal language learning and study abroad as learners enter virtual worlds where languages are spoken. The great advantage of online learning is that it can reach learners in places where no full-time language teachers are available for reasons of geography (e.g., rural schools) or demand (e.g., small to mid-size companies). CASLS has recently been awarded a \$100,000 grant from the federal government to develop a prototype of such a system.

### **10. Information Clearinghouse**

Only the most savvy districts, parents, or administrators are familiar enough with the language education system and research to access relevant and comprehensible information on program design, online learning, and study abroad opportunities. The information clearinghouse functions as a broker to language learners that shows where language learning opportunities are and how to access those opportunities. From the existence of language programs to the availability of scholarships for study abroad, the information clearinghouse would provide a one-stop source for students seeking out opportunities to advance their proficiency in world languages.

Districts and campuses responding to increased demand need access to a variety of models to find one appropriate to their needs and limitations. Consolidating information on existing language curricula and organizing this information in a “menu” style will show proven type of programs and language education strategies that exist, are active or have failed. This information will be useful in generating and improving language education programs tailored to the opportunities and constraints within regions, school districts and other communities throughout Oregon.

### **11. Language Proficiency Registry**

The key to assigning value to language proficiency is documenting that proficiency and making that information available to employers, financial aid offices, and others willing to pay significant rewards to Oregonians able to demonstrate language proficiency. An online system in which student performances are documented will help the education system track progress and help private and public employers find the talent they need. The means for accurately assessing student proficiency and organizing that in a standardized portfolio already exist. What remains is to put this system online and connect these records with employers and others interested in people with language ability.

## **COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**

The results of the language demand assessment made by CASLS verify the growing need for language skills in Oregon. In addition to this study, studies by the Council on Economic Development, the Modern Language Association, the Council of Europe, and others confirm the centrality of languages to economic, social, and intellectual vigor. These studies, however, have not entered the consciousness of our monolingual society. It is difficult to explain the value of speaking another language to those who have never done so. A sophisticated and persistent communications strategy designed to convey both the need for languages and the rationale behind the approach taken in the Oregon Roadmap is essential to the success of the effort. This effort will be directed at key stakeholders, including school administrators, legislators, parents, and faculty as well as the general public.

### **12. Stakeholder Outreach Strategy**

Policymakers, like the general public, are generally monolingual or had unsatisfying experiences in formal language classes. Explaining to them the imperative for proficient language users is extremely challenging. A meeting or a briefing paper will not be sufficient. The Office of Language Acquisition, CASLS, and COFLT should collaborate on a concerted and sustained efforts at educating and demonstrating to them the value of language ability and the dire consequences if we fail to act

### **13. Public Outreach Strategy**

As successes are achieved and goals are being met, the Roadmap would become ready to reach the general public. Part of this effort would be to create a culture among Oregonians that embraces languages and supports the Roadmap's mission. Public events related to cultural festivals, public service announcements, press releases, and Web-based strategies all hold promise as means to raise the consciousness of Oregonians about the centrality of languages to the social, economic, and cultural health of the state.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

While this Roadmap may serve as a source of ideas and strategies for other state and federal policies, it will not be a success unless Oregon actually makes measurable progress towards the 2025 goal. This final section, therefore, outlines the structures and processes in place for ensuring that this document becomes a template for action, not just a collection of good ideas.

Three key functions must be carried out for the Oregon Roadmap to succeed: 1) Lobbying and advocacy for policies and legislation; 2) Coordination of efforts by various governmental and private organizations; and 3) technical and pedagogic support to districts, campuses and others involved in developing proficient students. The Oregon Department of Education, COFLT, CASLS and other entities have a role to play in performing these functions. None, however, has the resources, the mandate, or the legal status to perform all three. The Oregon Roadmap proposes the establishment of an Office of Language Acquisition to spearhead Oregon Roadmap implementation. This new office could be structured in a number of different ways. Among the options are the following:

Option #1: Create a non-profit "Language Acquisition Institute" with a mandate to coordinate and advocate for the provisions of the Roadmap. The Board of Directors would consist of agency heads and other state leaders with a stake in the success of the Roadmap. While the Language Acquisition Institute would be charged with coordination and advocacy, CASLS, COFLT, and ODE would provide technical and educational support to educational institutions. The advantage of an independent non-profit is that the Office would be less vulnerable to the vicissitudes of political change. This structure, however, would preclude direct lobbying for the provisions of the Roadmap.

Option #2: Create a Political Action Committee to lobby for policy and legislation necessary to implement the Roadmap. ODE would coordinate various agencies involved in implementing the Roadmap. CASLS, COFLT, and ODE would provide technical and pedagogic support to educational institutions. The advantage of this arrangement is that it would allow for direct lobbying. CASLS, COFLT, and ODE would need additional state resources to perform the

support functions. The weakness of this model is that there is no central coordinating body with any authority. The current collaborative relationship between CASLS and ODE bodes well for the short term, but political and staffing changes could necessitate more formal structures for ensuring coordination.

Option #3: Create a quasi-governmental office reporting to the Joint Boards of Education and charge it with advocating for and coordinating activities related to the Roadmap. CASLS, COFLT, and ODE would be charged with providing technical and pedagogic support. The advantage of this approach is that the Office would be entrenched within the governmental structure with the stability and authority that implies. The Joint Boards, however, are limited in authority and members are political appointees, opening the possibility of oversight of the Office by some who may be hostile to its mission.