

"People who have foreign language skills gain instant credibility with the company with which they are dealing. Doors for job opportunities are opened for such people...The study of foreign languages broadens the horizons of American children and puts them on an equal playing field with students from other countries ..."

Executive Director, WTC of Westchester

"Entering the 21st Century with one language is like facing a row of doors with only one key."

CEO, Technology Support Group

"Knowing another language has helped me to be more successful than my peers...when you study a foreign language, you get an insight into the culture and the advantage of recognizing the subtle clues that let you know how well you're doing in negotiations."

President, ITTS

"Words are power. The more words you know, the more powerful you become."

Graduate Student (Law)

"Learning a foreign language has been great for me. Nobody can take away that knowledge. Nobody can take away my voice."

Professional Musician

"When I started studying languages, I never thought I'd ever use them. Now, when I travel, I am able to communicate and feel more secure in new surroundings."

Advertising Executive

"By birth, I am a citizen of the United States of America. Through language, I become a citizen of the world."

Graduate Student (Education)

\* To find answers to many of these questions, visit the following websites and links.

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

<http://www.actfl.org>

Center for Applied Linguistics

<http://www.cal.org>

ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics

<http://www.cal.org/ericll>

National Network for Early Language Learning

<http://www.nnell.org>

New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers

<http://www.nysafit.org>

New York State PTA

<http://www.nyspta.com/>

New York State United Teachers

<http://www.nysut.org/>

New York State Education Department  
Commissioner's Regulation on LOTE

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/part100/pages/1002a.html#1002aindex/>

For additional copies of this brochure,  
please call:

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**nysut**

New York State United Teachers

## Helping Your Child To Be A Successful Second Language Learner

Language isn't foreign  
once you learn it!



**New York State  
Association of Foreign  
Language Teachers**  
[www.nysafit.org](http://www.nysafit.org)

**New York State  
PTA**  
everychild.one voice.®

**New York State PTA**  
One Wembley Square  
Albany, NY 12205  
[www.nyspta.org](http://www.nyspta.org)

## Why is the study of a second language important?

### Students of foreign languages:

- Score statistically higher on standardized tests conducted in English, such as SATs, ACTs, MCATs and LSATs.
- Display enhanced memory, listening, and reading skills.
- Acquire a deeper understanding of their own culture as they explore the culture of other countries.
- Exhibit accelerated cognitive brain development in areas such as mental flexibility, creativity, divergent thinking and higher order thinking skills.
- Are poised speakers in front of small and large groups.
- Demonstrate better complex problem solving skills than non-language students.
- Develop empathy for and a lifelong ability to communicate with more people.
- Have opportunities for a greater number of career choices.

As a result of increased activity in international business, a second language is a vital part of the basic preparation for an increasing number of careers. The skill that most top executives see as lacking in their workers is knowledge of other languages.

Corporate recruitment of bilingual employees has ballooned and they can command excellent pay.

## What You Can Do To Help Your Child

- Talk to the teacher about what you can do to reinforce the learning that takes place in the classroom. Ask about the curriculum, text-related websites, homework requirements, etc.
- Encourage your child to practice with you at home. Let your child read to you in the language. Run through vocabulary with flashcards. Make it a game to have your child teach you a few new words or phrases every day.
- Expose your child to people from varied language and cultural backgrounds.
- If you speak a language other than English, use it with your child. Students who are learning one language are able to add a second.
- Speak positively to your children about the value of learning another language.
- Encourage your school to begin second language study as early as possible. Studies show that the earlier you begin, the more likely you are to achieve fluency.
- Provide videos, music and books in other languages. Your local library or the internet can be an excellent (and free) source of these materials.
- Assist with developing the school's LOTE needs assessment program.
- Help in identifying the community second language resources.
- Participate in local and regional events where language and cultural diversity are celebrated. Help sponsor these events in your school.
- Encourage programs which will highlight student success in LOTE for the school, families, and community at large.

Recent world events have underscored the importance of language study for national security.

## Parents Should Ask the Following Questions\*:

- What are the state regulations for Languages Other Than English (LOTE)?
- How is the school district meeting the state mandates for LOTE?
- Are all children included in the program?
- Are parents, staff, and other members of the school and local community involved in and supportive of the LOTE program?
- What opportunities and facilities are available for students to use the language inside and outside of school?
- Does the school offer the New York State Second Language Proficiency Exam?
- Are the LOTE teachers certified in a second language and knowledgeable in the four areas of LOTE instruction?
- Does the LOTE program include interdisciplinary connections?
- Do LOTE classes give students opportunities to expand their view of the world?
- What can we do to advocate for and support Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) programs?

Linguistic and cultural competence will be the mark of the well-educated citizen of the 21st century. Demographic, economic, and social realities make linguistic and cross-cultural competence essential skills for today's students.