



Bulgarian School of Seattle

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BULGARIAN CULTURAL CLUB/ BULGARIAN SCHOOL OF SEATTLE

Guiding Principles For The Bulgarian Language Credit Program

Angela Hasheva
Bulgarian School of Seattle Founder and Principal

At the Bulgarian School of Seattle, we've always believed in standing up for the educational needs of our students. Since 2013, we are supporting the heritage language preservation which is legitimized in the USA under the Seal of Biliteracy. Bulgarian School of Seattle is legally the **FIRST** Bulgarian school in USA which has formally contributed to the recognition of the Bulgarian language in the public educational system in America.

Bulgarian School of Seattle is a key partner in carrying out the project involved with the World Languages Program at the **Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)**.

The **Bulgarian Language Credit Program** provides positive recognition of the value of the Bulgarian language and increases students' pride in and appreciation for their cultural strength. Through this program, students who speak, understand, read, and write Bulgarian language are eligible to receive up to four high school credits—the equivalent of four years of language study—by passing ALTA language proficiency assessments, administered by the Bulgarian School of Seattle. This program was started by the founder and principal of the Bulgarian School of Seattle – Angela Hasheva, and recognized by the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) since 2013.



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About the School

Established in 2011, the Bulgarian School of Seattle – a nonprofit, non-political, scholarly society – is the leading organization, dedicated to the advancement of knowledge about Bulgaria and Bulgarian language in regional and global contexts. As the premier scholarly organization founded in Washington State with more than 2,000 followers, the Bulgarian School of Seattle supports education, training, and learning related to the study of the Bulgarian language and has cultivated the intellectual landscape for over six years through its programs and classes. Our mission is to enrich students' heritage awareness and boost their linguistic self-confidence. The Bulgarian School of Seattle guarantee and inspire the next generation to gain the attitude, knowledge and skills needed to learn and act wisely in a competitive and very dynamic environment.

Name of program

Bulgarian Language Credit Program

Length of time for which approval is desired

Permanent

Objectives

The **Bulgarian Language Credit Program** at the Bulgarian School of Seattle is an innovative project that addresses specific needs:

- To honor and validate students' heritage language and the language of their families
- To provide opportunities for fluent and literate speakers to receive high school credit for their knowledge of Bulgarian language
- To open up opportunities for students to access core subject credits required for graduation



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- To prepare bilingual students for future career opportunities in private industry and to meet government needs for skilled bilingual speakers
- To motivate students to take advanced courses in Bulgarian heritage language at their schools, in college or at ethnic community centers

Linking Bulgarian Language to Common Core State Standards

In November 2013, ACTFL unveiled refreshed standards for learning languages that incorporate the Common Core State Standards, summary available [here](#) .

The four strands of the Common Core State Standards for Bulgarian Language (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language) have been aligned to the National Standards for Learning Languages by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Performance Expectations at the Bulgarian School of Seattle

The *Common Core State Standards for Bulgarian Language* contains four strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. These four strands are represented in the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages by the Communication standards (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) and the level of proficiency demonstrated. In addition, the standards of the other four goals areas for learning languages – Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities – also support and are aligned with the Common Core. These standards describe the expectations to ensure all students at the Bulgarian Cultural Club/ Bulgarian School of Seattle are college-, career-, and world-ready.



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Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening are captured in the standards for learning languages' goal area of **Communication**, by emphasizing the purpose behind the communication:

- Interpersonal (speaking-listening or writing-reading)
- Interpretive (reading, listening, viewing)
- Presentational (writing, speaking, visually representing)

Language is described in **proficiency levels** that outline three key benchmarks achieved in world language programs given sufficient instruction over time:

- Novice (the beginning level, regardless of age or grade)
- Intermediate
- Advanced

Description of how credits shall be determined in accord with WAC [180-51-050](#)

Two years of the same foreign language, Native American language, or American Sign language, based on the State law requirement of the Higher Education Coordinating Board and in conjunction with the established minimum requirements for freshman admission to Washington's public four-year universities and college. The credits include 2 years of Bulgarian Language that can be converted to Personalized Pathway credits based on the student's high school and beyond plan: [Washington State School Board of Education](#)



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Program outline and major learning activities and instructional materials in use:

The **Bulgarian Language Credit Program Guiding Principles** are organized into seven strands, reflecting the major dimensions of program planning and implementation. The Guiding Principles reflect NCLB requirements such as annual achievement objectives for all students; quarterly testing of all students; alignment of curriculum with state standards; research-based teaching practices; whole-school reform driven by student outcome data; and whole-staff commitment to the continuous improvement of student outcomes.

- **Assessment and Accountability:** All scholars are expected to attain high standards. Bulgarian language credit program requires the use of multiple measures in Bulgarian language to assess students' progress toward meeting bilingual and biliteracy goals along with the curricular and content-related goals. Correct interpretation of assessment outcomes involves understanding research in Bulgarian language education and establishing appropriate expectations for students who are taught and tested in Bulgarian language. In addition, because of the significance of assessment for both accountability and program evaluation purposes, the Bulgarian School of Seattle is finding important to establish a data management system that tracks students over time. This requires the development of an infrastructure that ensures that:

- 1) Assessment is carried out in consistent and systematic ways and is aligned with appropriate state standards and goals;
- 2) Assessment outcomes are interpreted correctly and disseminated to appropriate constituents;
- 3) Professional development is provided to enable teachers to develop, collect, and interpret assessment data appropriately and accurately.

- **Curriculum:** Because of the vision and goals associated with bilingualism and biliteracy, Bulgarian language instruction is integrated within the curriculum (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project; Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages).



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Language objectives are incorporated into the curriculum planning and language and literature are developed across the curriculum to ensure that students learn the content as well as the academic language associated with the content. Further, the Bulgarian language credit program curriculum reflects and values the students' culture. Bulgarian books of many genres and a variety of types of materials (e.g., visual, audiovisual, art) are incorporated to meet the goals of foreign language learning and biliteracy. Also, the program integrates technology into curriculum and instruction (Blackboard collaborative platform) in Bulgarian language. Students also work together effectively using computers in spatial visualization tasks.

In summary - The Bulgarian Language Credit Program Curriculum:

- 1) Is aligned with standards and assessment;
- 2) Is meaningful and academically challenging and integrates higher order thinking;
- 3) Is thematically integrated;
- 4) Is enriching, not remedial;
- 5) Is aligned with the vision and goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, and multiculturalism, and includes language and literature across the curriculum;
- 6) Reflects and values students' cultures;
- 7) Is horizontally and vertically aligned;
- 8) Incorporates a variety of materials;
- 9) Integrates technology.

• **Instruction:** Instruction is associated with higher student outcome. The program features:

- 1) A variety of instructional techniques responding to different learning styles and language proficiency levels;
- 2) Positive interactions between teachers and students and among students;
- 3) A reciprocal interaction model of teaching, featuring genuine dialog;
- 4) Cooperative learning or group work situations, including. Students working interdependently on tasks with common objectives. Individual accountability and social equity in groups and in the classroom. Extensive interactions among students to develop the Bulgarian language learning;
- 5) Language input that: Uses sheltering strategies to promote comprehension. Uses visual aids and modeling instruction, allowing students to negotiate meaning. Is interesting,



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relevant, and of sufficient quantity. Is challenging enough to promote high levels of language proficiency and critical thinking;

6) Language objectives that are integrated into the curriculum;

7) Structured tasks and unstructured opportunities for students to use language.

• **Staff Quality and Professional Development:** The program selects and trains high quality teachers who:

- 1) Have appropriate teaching certification and knowledge of subject matter, curriculum and technology, instructional strategies, and classroom management;
- 2) Have appropriate academic background and experience;
- 3) Have knowledge of bilingual education and second language acquisition;
- 4) Have native ability in the Bulgarian language of instruction.

Professional development is aligned with goals and strategies of the program, specifically focusing on • Language education pedagogy and curriculum • Materials and resources • Assessment • Development of professional language skills in the partner language • Educational equity (particularly with regard to high expectations for all students) • Dual language (Bulgarian/English) theory and models • Examine teacher own beliefs and practices in light of theory and the school's vision and goals • Partnerships with university teacher training institutions to align coursework and provide internships • Teacher study groups • Retreats to make decisions about the model or curriculum • Training for non-teaching staff • Professional development collaborations with public districts middle and high schools

• **Program Structure:** The program has a cohesive, shared vision and set of goals that:

- 1) Provide commitment to and instructional focus on Bulgarian language and bilingualism;
- 2) Establish high expectations for achievement for all students;
- 3) A safe and orderly environment;
- 4) A warm and caring community;
- 5) Ample support and resources;
- 6) Awareness of the diverse needs of students of different linguistic needs.



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Effective leadership is provided by the principal and management team, including:

- 1) Program advocacy and communication with public school administration;
- 2) Oversight of model development, planning, and coordination;
- 3) Professional development, including the fostering of staff cohesion and collegiality;
- 4) Appropriate allocation of funding.

The program engages in ongoing planning, including:

- 1) A focus on the vision and goals of the program;
- 2) School-wide vertical and horizontal articulation;
- 3) Proper scope, sequence, and alignment with standards that are developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate.

A language education model is in place that upholds:

- 1) Principles of heritage language development;
- 2) Bilingual and immersion theory and research;
- 3) Effective instructional methodologies and classroom practices;
- 4) Belief in and commitment to the heritage language education model

• **Family and Community:** The program

- 1) Incorporates a variety of home/school collaboration activities;
- 2) Maintains a welcoming environment for parents and community;
- 3) Values heritage culture, bilingualism and biliteracy;
- 4) Hires office staff who speak the first language;
- 5) Makes announcements in both languages;
- 6) Posts signs in both languages;
- 7) Values multiculturalism;
- 8) Fosters a sense of belonging;
- 9) Establishes parent liaisons who are bilingual (Bulgarian & English) and reach out to parents and community in both languages.



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• **Support and Resources:** The program is supported by the community and the parents of the students, in that:

- 1) Resources are allocated equitably;
- 2) The program is seen by all stakeholders as a permanent and enriching part of the Bulgarian School of Seattle governance;
- 3) Understand, support, and advocate for the program;
- 4) Facilitate integration of the program across the public school districts in WA;
- 5) Ensure equitable access to resources for all. Families and communities are knowledgeable about the program and can advocate on its behalf.

How and by whom the student will be supervised: Angela Hasheva (Bellevue School District)

The reasons for approval or disapproval shall be communicated to the students and parents or guardians. Yes.

Relevant Washington Administrative Code (WAC)

[WAC 392-410-350](#) - Seal of Biliteracy

[WAC 392-415-070](#) - Mandatory high school transcript contents

[WAC 180-51-068](#) - Graduation Requirements for the Class of 2019 – includes 2 credits of World Language

[WAC 180-51-050](#) - High school credit — Definition

[WAC 180-51-025](#) - Local school district application of state requirements

[WAC 392-210-025](#) - Credits earned in academic core subjects