

## World Languages: Which course is best for me?

*Bienvenue! Willkommen! Bienvenidos! Salvete!*

At Hinsdale Central High School, French, German, Latin, and Spanish are offered. Our goal is for all of our students to become lifelong language learners beginning with a positive language experience at Central. A positive experience for each student begins with correct placement in our language courses. To make a placement recommendation, we use our best professional judgment supported by several sources of information including knowledge of our curriculum, the student's previous language coursework, the student's performance on standardized tests, the student's current language teacher's assessment of the student's performance, our knowledge of how students with a specific profile have performed in our courses during previous years, and a written placement test. Etymology is also offered as a semester course. Many sophomores, juniors, and seniors take Etymology in conjunction with a language course. Below are some commonly asked questions. Please contact the World Language Department with questions, so we can best help you to choose your 9<sup>th</sup> grade language course. We look forward to meeting you next year.

### How will I know for which course I am recommended and my other course options?

- On your registration sheet provided by our Guidance Department, the courses listed are the recommended courses. Students may choose from those courses.
- The recommended courses are based on the sources of information listed above.
- Students can study more than one world language at the same time!

### What language should I study?

- Our research shows that students are most successful if they get to choose which language they study.

### If I have already completed level 1 in middle school, will I be prepared for level 2?

- Students who are recommended for level 2 are prepared for level 2. First semester of last year, 93% of freshmen enrolled in a level 2 course earned As or Bs. Repeating French 1 or Spanish 1 after a successful middle school experience is not recommended (earning As and Bs). We strongly encourage students to follow the recommended placement or consider starting a new language.
- French 1 and Spanish 1 at Hinsdale Central are aligned to French 1 and Spanish 1 at the public feeder schools. We communicate and meet regularly throughout the school year to discuss curriculum alignment and success of current freshmen. This ensures a smooth transition for students starting level 2 as freshmen after successful completion of level 1 in middle school.
- Many students who do not want to repeat a course are most successful starting a new language when they enter 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Students who did not have two full years of level 1 in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade may not be prepared for level 2. This could include students who transferred into the district or students with excessive absences during 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Our quantitative and qualitative data indicate that students who repeat a middle school course in our program because they struggled tend to encounter a variety of challenges. We strongly encourage students to start a new language.

### Should I take Regular or Honors?

- Students who are recommended for Honors are prepared to handle the more rigorous coursework.
- Students who enroll in Honors should have a strong desire to communicate orally and in writing using the target language. They should look forward to immersing themselves in the target language during class.
- Students who take an honors-level language class should be comfortable with brisk pacing and be self-motivated, independent learners. There is an expectation of greater retention of previous learning, higher communicative proficiency, and greater grammatical accuracy.

- We strongly encourage students to consider their entire schedule when deciding to take a World Language honors course. Our regular and honors level courses are aligned, so honors courses are accessible at all levels.

**If I have taken French 1 in middle school, can I enroll in French 1 Honors in 9<sup>th</sup> grade?**

- Students who have taken French 1 in middle school are well-prepared to succeed in French 2 or French 2 Honors and may not take French 1 Honors in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Questions?**

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your student's placement, please contact:

Hinsdale Central World Language Department

Dr. Jay Lawrence

(630)570-8390,

[jlawrence@hinsdale86.org](mailto:jlawrence@hinsdale86.org)