

WISCONSIN'S LANGUAGE LANDSCAPE

A Report for Participants in the Wisconsin Language Summit

Madison, Wisconsin | January 2018

Wisconsin Language Roadmap Initiative
www.wisconsinlanguageroadmap.wisc.edu

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The Wisconsin Language Roadmap is a project of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, with assistance from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. It is funded by a two-year (2017-19) grant to the UW-Madison Language Institute from The Language Flagship, with substantial support from the UW-Madison College of Letters & Science and International Division.

Wisconsin is one of two U.S. states, with Indiana, currently conducting a state-level Language Roadmap initiative. Hawaii, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, and Utah conducted Language Roadmaps in the past.

The Language Flagship is a national initiative to change the way Americans learn languages through a groundbreaking approach to language education for students from kindergarten through college. Through a network of 25 Flagship Programs at 21 institutions of higher education across the United States, The Language Flagship graduates students who will take their place among the next generation of global professionals, commanding a superior level of proficiency in one of ten languages critical to U.S. national security and economic competitiveness.

The Language Flagship is a public/private partnership sponsored by the National Security Education Program of the Department of Defense and administered by the Institute of International Education (IIE). The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Government or IIE and no official Government or IIE endorsement should be inferred.

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Introduction

Language is important for many reasons. It is at the heart of what it means to be human. Language is not just a means of communication; it also facilitates the formation of both personal and professional relationships. Language enables self- and artistic expression. It is a primary means for creating and sharing knowledge, for conveying cultural values, norms, and beliefs, and for expressing personal and social identities. The ability to use multiple languages expands the resources that individuals can deploy for many different types of purposes: to communicate, build personal and professional relationships, gain access to and share knowledge, and develop an understanding of other cultures and worldviews. From a societal perspective, multilingualism is beneficial in many areas, ranging from the interpersonal to diplomatic to economic.

For Wisconsin's future economy, the state needs a multilingual workforce that is able to compete in interconnected global markets, participate in meaningful ways in civic life, engage with diverse local communities, and cultivate professional and personal networks that cross linguistic, cultural, and national boundaries. **The Wisconsin Language Roadmap Initiative aims to position Wisconsin to better meet these needs for a multilingual workforce by strengthening and promoting language education for all students.**

This report, prepared for participants in the January 2018 *Wisconsin Language Summit*, provides a broad overview of Wisconsin's "language landscape" in three areas:

1. Wisconsin employers' needs for multilingual talent,
2. Language and culture resources in Wisconsin's indigenous and immigrant communities,
3. Current capacities in Wisconsin's K-12 schools and institutions of higher education for developing students' proficiency in world languages and competencies in intercultural communication.

The report is based on an assessment, conducted for the Wisconsin Language Roadmap Initiative in the summer-fall 2017, that included interviews and surveys of hundreds of Wisconsinites: employers, business and community leaders, and language educators. The report summarizes insights shared by those individuals regarding the current and future needs of our state when it comes to proficiency in world languages.

Key findings include:

1. Proficiency in languages and intercultural communicative competencies are important for the state's future economic growth, both to expand internationally as well as to access domestic multilingual markets.
2. Language and culture skills are critical for providing services to domestic populations.
3. Wisconsin employers recognize the value of multilingual workforce talent to promote international exports and expansion, gain access to global and domestic markets, build strong partnerships through personal relationships, gain a competitive advantage, and provide services to local communities.
4. At a state level, Wisconsin's K-16 educational system has not traditionally prioritized the development of skills in languages other than English to a high level of proficiency through sequential and articulated programs of study. Wisconsin risks falling behind other states that have recognized the importance of proficiency in world languages and are investing in language education.
5. Wisconsin educators identify several areas of acute need, including the dearth of early and sustained language-learning opportunities for Wisconsin students, the critical shortage of qualified language teachers, and the insufficient integration of world languages into the core curriculum.
6. While there exists much local will and commitment to promote and, in many cases, revitalize tribal and immigrant languages across the state, broader governmental and financial support are needed to help sustain community-based efforts.

Wisconsin and the Global Economy: Workforce Language and Intercultural Needs

Whenever the topic of the state's economy is brought up, experts are quick to point out that we now live in a *global economy*. But what does that mean in real terms? In the last century, it may have been adequate to view Wisconsin's economy in relatively limited local and regional terms. In the twenty-first century, however, Wisconsin business entities increasingly operate internationally, and the interwoven nature of supply chains, growing consumer demand overseas, and increasingly complex financial and information systems require that forward-looking companies think and act globally. **In real terms, this means that Wisconsin needs a workforce that can effectively communicate not only in English, but in other languages as well.**

Wisconsin's trade relationships and exports already contribute significantly to the economic profile of the state. A report by the International Trade Administration cited that in 2016, exports alone supported 111,075 Wisconsin jobs.¹ In that same year, Wisconsin exported \$21 billion in goods and services internationally, with the top export markets including Canada, Mexico, China, Japan, Germany, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia.²

With more than 70% of the world's purchasing power outside the United States,³ it is essential that our Wisconsin companies expand their share of the global market... I frequently hear from companies that it is difficult to find the language skills they require to be highly successful in the global market. As Wisconsin works to increase the global competitiveness of our state, workforce language skills are increasingly important.

– Katy Sinnott, Vice President of International Economic Development,
Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The global reach of Wisconsin business brings with it challenges that can be broadly understood as related to *intercultural communication*. Success abroad is critically dependent on the ability to establish and sustain relationships and to communicate effectively with overseas partners. Language is but one important component of successful intercultural communication. It is also important to develop an awareness of and sensitivity to local norms and customs, and to interact with overseas partners in culturally appropriate ways.

Contrary to the widely-held belief that “everybody speaks English,” in fact **only roughly one in eight people worldwide have any competence in English.**⁴ Especially in emerging economies (e.g., Brazil, China, South Asia), widespread competence in English cannot be taken for granted.

In what follows, Wisconsin business and non-profit leaders explain in their own words how language skills and intercultural agility have contributed in important—and at times crucial—ways to their success at home and abroad. Looking to the future, the Wisconsin Language Roadmap Initiative aims to identify ways to advance the language and intercultural skills of the state's workforce and to find ways for various sectors (e.g., K-16 education, private sector) to support the success of Wisconsin businesses in an increasingly global economy.

Intercultural Communication Needs in the Wisconsin Workforce

The findings discussed here represent the beginning of a conversation rather than conclusive results; they should be understood as illustrative rather than comprehensive.

Wisconsin business leaders have highlighted at least six core needs related to language that are critical to their success: expanding exports, accessing new markets, building partner relationships, gaining a competitive

¹ www.trade.gov/mas/ian/build/groups/public/@tg_ian/documents/webcontent/tg_ian_005558.pdf

² www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/state/data/wi.html#ctry

³ www.trade.gov/cs/factsheet.asp

⁴ www.ethnologue.com/statistics/size

advantage, serving local communities, and fulfilling basic business functions. These core needs are interrelated. For example, if a company lacks the language and intercultural skills it needs to develop and sustain successful relationships, it may find it difficult to access new markets in which that language is spoken. It is helpful to understand what each of these needs means to Wisconsin companies, however, to better relate to the challenges they face in meeting these needs.

Expanding Exports

One of the most important needs for Wisconsin businesses in regard to language skills is the ability to leverage those language skills to help their companies expand by exporting goods and services internationally.

The bigger market opportunities today exist outside of America. Some of these emerging markets like Brazil, India, and China are huge for us, and for us to penetrate those markets, we need to meet people with the right language skill sets.

– Gautam Malik, COO, Gamber-Johnson LLC

Language skills are important to market our products and services around the world. They are also critical skills to manage our operations, customer, investor, partner relationships and business development.

– Ayla Annac, CEO, InvivoSciences Inc.

The primary driver of our growth has been the company's ability to communicate with its customer base in the customer's native language. As the company's foreign business continues to grow, acquisition of additional support staff with foreign-language and business training will be essential.

– Mike Oemichen, Sales Manager, H. O. Bostrom

Gamber-Johnson, InvivoSciences, and H.O. Bostrom are prime examples of both the potential for expansive growth through exports, and the need for language skills within their company to achieve that export growth. Representatives from several Wisconsin companies have stated repeatedly that their language needs are growing rapidly. This is a theme we will revisit in discussing challenges companies face in meeting these needs.

Increasing Market Access

The ability to do business in multiple languages allows Wisconsin companies to access markets that would otherwise be unavailable to them. Either maintaining or achieving market access through multilingual communication is important to many companies in our state.

Our language needs vary a lot, but if you look around the world, and especially for our markets, South America is very big into agriculture and livestock, so Spanish and Portuguese are important. China is also a big market for everything, so Mandarin is very important. If we can find the people that can speak Mandarin and then other Asian languages, Korean, Japanese, Thai—all those languages in that part of the world are important for our business.

– Marcel Petrutiu, Corporate Development Director, MOFA Global

Mandarin is a very important language for us from a sell side. We also sell into Mexico and several of the Latin American countries, so Spanish is important for my international sales. But I also can say that there's some importance in communicating in Spanish for our sales that are happening in California, and even in some of the Southwest regions for native Spanish speakers that are purchasing our product in the U.S.

– Kevin Schleicher, Global Sales Manager, Organic Valley

These examples from MOFA Global and Organic Valley show that Wisconsin companies that have employees with advanced communication skills in multiple languages are better able to access markets for export that would not be as open or available otherwise. It is important to note also that although Spanish and Mandarin

Chinese are noted as important languages here, they do not represent the full range of language needs.⁵ Skills across a number of languages are vital to local businesses wishing to access global markets.

Building Strong Partnerships

When companies are seeking to expand, they often do so through partnerships with overseas companies or through local contacts. Developing these business partnerships requires trust, and in the experience of several business leaders interviewed for this report, language skills go a long way towards helping to quickly establish trust and to build relationships that allow businesses to flourish.

It's all about relationship building, so if you can communicate in that local language, then that connection between the two humans becomes much more intimate, and the trust level increases much faster. So, in the business realm, you get to the end goal of profitability a lot faster.

– Ken Wasylik, Managing Director, E. M. Wasylik Associates LLP

The trust that can be built with local contacts by communicating in their own language helps companies not only to forge stronger partnerships, but also to establish a competitive advantage over other companies.

Our need for multilingual team members is growing rapidly. We find that having folks who can speak to others in their native language provides a competitive advantage.

– Mark Tyler, President, OEM Fabricators, Inc.

Gaining a Competitive Advantage

The competitive advantage that language skills give companies is ingrained with the ability to better build strong relationships and access markets. A story from Chris Gutman, Managing Director at Red Arrow International, highlights how important language skills can be for companies to succeed globally.

When we started working in Russia, the distributor that we signed with, and who we've had for 18 years, ended up working with us because of the bond we formed by speaking Russian with them. The owners of the company came to our booth at a trade show in Germany. They had already signed an initial contract with our competitor, and they came and sat down and talked to my boss, just kind of learning more about our company, Red Arrow, and then the two gentlemen spoke to each other in Russian, not thinking that anyone at the table could understand them. I started speaking to them in Russian, and they were impressed enough to want to learn more about us and our company. Then the next week I actually flew to St. Petersburg, and they ripped up their other contract and decided to work with us.

– Chris Gutman, Managing Director, Red Arrow International

Serving Local Communities

Mr. Gutman's story captures what language skills can do for Wisconsin companies as they seek to expand and grow internationally. We also found that Wisconsin companies, as well as government, healthcare and social service organizations, have critical workforce needs for language skills to be able to provide services to local communities.

In healthcare, you really need to have to make sure people fully and deeply understand what is being explained to them and also that they have the opportunity of explaining in-depth what's going on with them.

– Shiva Bidar-Sielaff, Chief Diversity Officer, UW Health

Multilingual communication is extremely important not only for healthcare, but also for social and government services, including the court system. Large firms and employers, like the University of Wisconsin System, also

⁵The most commonly needed languages as mentioned by interview and survey participants from the Wisconsin business community were, in order of mentions: Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Arabic, Hmong, Italian, Vietnamese, Hindi, Dutch, Farsi, Nepali, Polish, Swedish, and Tibetan.

rely on multilingual services for their employees as one way to attract and retain top talent in their fields. Keeping Wisconsin competitive internationally means providing services to those who live here so they can function and thrive in our local economy and in our local communities.

Fulfilling Basic Business Functions

Beyond helping companies expand, serve local communities, and gain a competitive advantage in the market, language skills are needed simply for Wisconsin business entities and other employers to fulfill basic, everyday functions. To cite just one example, non-profit organizations operating in multiple countries commonly receive expense reports in the stateside accounting office that have been written in the languages spoken in partnering countries. These reports must be translated for the accounting office to be able to process them. These types of language needs are growing more common for businesses in Wisconsin.

Intercultural Competence

In addition to describing needs for proficiency in multiple languages, many Wisconsin employers emphasize the importance of intercultural competence. The ability to communicate not only a high level of proficiency in the language, but also in culturally-informed ways, is seen by business representatives we interviewed and surveyed as key to their success. Languages are embedded in cultures, and while knowledge of both is seen as ideal, companies stressed the critical need for employees to be able to engage in effective intercultural communication.

The whole idea is being able to quickly get past the “that’s not how we do it” mentality and then moving on to the accepting that other cultures, other places in the world may do things differently than we do. How quickly does one develop a personal relationship, or how quickly can you start to get to be familiar with someone? All those things on the relationship building side are really important to have a strong intercultural sense.

– Brian Wagner, CEO, Gamber-Johnson LLC

At a local level, intercultural competencies are also necessary to meet the needs of diverse communities here in Wisconsin.

The marketplace is shifting rapidly, and intercultural competency will be critical for leaders and employees in working in a diverse and inclusive organization. We need talent that will allow us to better reach and remain at the center of our client’s financial lives. We can only achieve that by understanding and appreciating the cultural norms and behaviors that make their communities special.

– Raymone Jackson, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company

Challenges in Meeting Intercultural Communication Needs

The depth of need for a multilingual workforce comprised of capable intercultural communicators gives rise to several challenges for businesses in Wisconsin. While Wisconsin has many strong, successful companies, many business leaders say they felt their growth would be stronger if they were able to find more multilingual employees. For those companies that export goods and services, the markets they can reach are, at times, limited to the languages and background of the staff they employ; in addition, leaders of companies that are expanding say they often feel the new growth has made their need for multilingual staff more acute. One of the most commonly mentioned challenges for companies is being able to find enough multilingual candidates for jobs. This concern is often coupled with the challenge of having too few multilingual staff on hand to meet current needs. Others express challenges in training employees and in shifting attitudes around participating in a global marketplace as a partial barrier to finding staff with strong intercultural communicative abilities.

Difficulty Finding Multilingual Employees

Companies in Wisconsin report having difficulty finding job candidates who fit their language needs. The challenges are especially acute in the more rural areas of the state, but even businesses located in urban centers report difficulty finding employees who have both the industry-specific knowledge and language and intercultural communication skills that they need to expand their business.

It has been extremely challenging to find candidates who possess an acceptable combination of foreign-language and business skills. In the current environment, these two skills seem to be mutually exclusive.

– Mike Oemichen, Sales Manager, H. O. Bostrom

The challenge of finding multilingual candidates for positions has left many companies understaffed in these areas, placing a higher burden on current multilingual employees and limiting what they might otherwise be able to accomplish, not only in furthering exports and expanding, but also in meeting local community needs for services.

Too Few Multilingual Employees

Many business leaders report having few current staff who are competent in languages other than English, leaving their companies vulnerable to turnover from the few multilingual employees they do have. In some cases, multilingual staff shortages have led companies to outsource work that they might rather keep in-house.

We employ approximately 20 people and as of now only one has any competency in other languages. Often, I am forced to use google translate to understand messages from customers to get a better idea of context.

– Charles Wachsmuth, Sales and Marketing Specialist, Chippewa Valley Bean Company

Shifts in Attitudes

Employers in Wisconsin also shared stories of more intangible challenges that they feel also indirectly impact their businesses. One of the common threads in these stories is the challenge of attitudes in the state toward international work and the multilingual and intercultural communication it entails. Employers relate that most of the local population is simply unaware of how international Wisconsin companies are, and as such, the workforce they encounter is often unprepared for the kinds of global work that today's economy demands.

I've been in this job for nine years, and when I first started here, the question was, why can't they just take whey in 50-pound bags like everyone else? Why do we need 25 kilos? You know, that was the attitude. Well, most of that workforce is here. They see it going out, but they just don't get that background feeling or understanding that we're here to meet the customer's demand and that customer may be half a world away.

– Paul Bauer, CEO, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery

Extending the Discussion

It is clear from our conversations with business leaders in the state that the needs they have and the challenges they face in meeting those needs should be addressed on a more systemic level. Only through state-wide adjustments and enhancements to language education will we be able to grow the kind of workforce that Wisconsin needs to remain competitive in the global economy. In the next sections, we will examine our current capacities for languages in Wisconsin to better understand what kind of interventions may be helpful in advancing our multilingual capacities in the future.

Languages in Wisconsin

Data from the American Community Survey (2009-2013) indicate that there are well over 100 different languages spoken as native tongues in communities across our state, but the population of present-day Wisconsin remains overwhelmingly monolingual and English-speaking. According to the American Community Survey, among Wisconsin's 5,355,576 residents over the age of five, over 91% reported speaking only English at home. While it is true that millions of Wisconsinites consider English to be their native language, Wisconsin is not among the 27 American states with legislation naming English as the state's official language.⁶ Moreover, historically speaking, it is perhaps more accurate to refer to English as a colonial language as it is far from the first or "native" language of the land that in the nineteenth century would come to be known as Wisconsin.

Language is a central part of who we are as individuals and social groups. It both forms and expresses individual and cultural identity, and encodes the legends, histories, knowledge, and worldviews that comprise culture. When languages are lost, so is culture, and in this sense, language is intimately connected with the very health and wellbeing of communities. This is particularly the case when it comes to indigenous and immigrant communities across the state. Wisconsin has a complex, layered, and often tragic history of settlement, migration, and displacement among indigenous people and immigrants, and maintenance and loss of language and culture is an integral part of this history.

Tribal Communities

Long before European colonizers came to Wisconsin to establish settlements, a number of indigenous tribes already lived here. These tribes spoke languages representing several different language families, including Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Siouan. In Wisconsin today, there are eleven federally-recognized American Indian nations and tribal communities, including the Ho-Chunk, Menominee, six bands of Ojibwe (or Chippewa), Oneida, Potawatomi, and Stockbridge-Munsee. All of their languages—and indeed their very ways of life—are highly endangered owing largely to U.S. government efforts from the nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries to either exterminate tribes or force their assimilation into mainstream America.

Language loss is but one consequence of the violent and traumatic history of Wisconsin's tribal communities. In 2017, there are precious few, if any, living native speakers of these nations' languages. As Jennifer Gauthier, a member of the Menominee County Nation who is a Community, Natural Resources, and Economic Development Educator through UW Cooperative Extension, says, "of the nine thousand members that we have, there are a handful of respected elders who speak the language fluently, and that was the first language that they spoke. Outside of that, there's another handful that are semi-functional and Menominee was their second language that they learned...some researchers say that within my lifetime that the language will disappear." Similarly, Dylan Jennings, a Tribal Council Official for the Bad River Band of Ojibwe and the Director of Public Information for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, states, "in our community here in Bad River, I don't think we have any first language speakers left of Ojibwe, and we have only a very small handful of people that are picking it up second hand and carrying that forward."

Wisconsin's tribal communities have approached language preservation and revitalization in a number of different ways depending on availability of resources and community commitment to the efforts. Examples of language preservation and revitalization initiatives in tribal communities include workshops that integrate language with learning of traditional art forms like bead work, finger weaving, and black ash basket making; language immersion camps where participants learn traditional ways of snaring rabbits, cleaning rice, and tapping maple trees; sequences of language classes taught in local schools and colleges; immersion daycares where staff interact with infants and children exclusively in the tribal language.

⁶ www.usconstitution.net/consttop_lang.html

One particularly compelling example of a grass roots language revitalization project is the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Ojibwe's language immersion school, Waadookodaading, located in Hayward, Wisconsin. Students at Waadookodaading come from English-speaking Ojibwe families, and at school they learn cultural and academic content in and through Ojibwe. Instruction is entirely in the tribal language from kindergarten through third grade; in fourth grade, students begin learning to read and write in English.

Michael Sullivan, who teaches language arts and music at Waadookodaading, has witnessed successes both big and small among the students at the school. One striking example is the fact that as Ojibwe youth learn the language, they transform it and make it their own. "They develop their own slang and their own ways of talking, things we haven't worked on before, so that's really good." Dr. Sullivan also observes, "our sixth and seventh graders can get up and tell our winter legends in front of over a hundred people. The poise that they have, you just don't see with their monolingual counterparts. The respect that they develop for their environment and their peers and their elders. And these ancient teachings that have been passed down generation to generation that they've soaked up through their time here at the school, it's remarkable."

Successes such as these are accomplished despite the longstanding challenges that tribal communities grapple with. Tribes continue to suffer the deleterious effects of the violence and trauma brought on by U.S. government policies that sanctioned Indian termination and relocation, and forced assimilation of tribal children who were sent to off-reservation boarding schools, often hundreds of miles from their families and tribal life. Funding for tribal language preservation and revitalization projects has always been scarce and is getting more so; competition for these resources is particularly intense given that nearly all tribes are facing imminent language loss. Where language classes do exist, the shortage of fluent speakers further complicates a dire teacher shortage.

The survival of Wisconsin's indigenous languages and cultures is ultimately in the hands of the young. All of the tribal leaders we spoke with explained that the youth in their communities hunger for more opportunities to learn and use their ancestral language. As Mr. Jennings of the Bad River Band of Ojibwe notes, "It might never have been spoken in their houses, but they know that that language is theirs. They recognize that from a long line of people, understanding and knowing that way of life, so we know that to be true." He continues, "we have some property on Madeline Island that was recently returned to the tribe, and we asked some of the youth, 'What should we do with some of that property?' And the first thing on their minds: an immersion school where we could go out and learn the language on our ancestral homeland."

Immigrant Communities

According to the American Community Survey (2009-2013), of the 462,381 Wisconsinites who reported speaking a language other than English in the home, approximately 62% also claimed to speak English at least "very well", suggesting there is a fairly sizeable population of fluently bilingual individuals in our state whose bilingualism has developed at home rather than through formal schooling. The top three non-English languages in terms of numbers of speakers in Wisconsin are Spanish, Hmong, and German. Of the 462,381 people who reported speaking a language other than English at home, 243,560 (about 53%) speak Spanish, 40,985 (about 9%) speak Hmong, and 36,400 (about 8%) speak German. These numbers allude to the social, cultural, and economic wealth that immigration has brought to our state over the course of nearly two centuries.

In the Wisconsin of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, economic growth through agriculture and industry was bolstered by waves of European immigration. Some immigrants came to the state as a result of the recruitment efforts of the Wisconsin Office of Emigration, which operated from 1852 until 1855 with agencies in Germany and New York.⁷ Early Wisconsin communities were relatively autonomous, supported by local economies, schools, churches, and so on; this type of community structure facilitated the maintenance of immigrant languages for several generations. In fact, contrary to popular belief, European immigrants neither learned English quickly nor assimilated readily into mainstream American society.

⁷ Petty, 2013, p. 38

Modernization and urbanization would inevitably transform Wisconsin's immigrant communities, making them more interdependent and increasingly requiring use of English as a *lingua franca*. Despite societal and economic pressures for immigrant communities to abandon their home languages for English, there are numerous Wisconsinites today who are bilingual speakers of European languages like Finnish, German, Norwegian, and Polish (among others), having learned their ancestors' language at home and in community language schools, and English at school. These languages and cultures continue to have a presence across Wisconsin, in cultural centers and community schools, historical societies, and cultural festivals and celebrations.

More recently, the state has seen an influx of speakers of Pennsylvania German, Hmong, and Spanish. In the cases of Hmong and Spanish in particular, community centers, chambers of commerce, and other organizations provide support and advocacy for speakers of these languages, and help them build social, professional, and economic networks. These networks can be especially beneficial for mitigating issues related to language access, or the breaking down of communication barriers for speakers of all languages. For example, when bilinguals have better command of the non-English language they speak than they do of English, their access to health, legal, and other crucial social services may be restricted due to language barriers and power differentials that in our society tend to disproportionately affect speakers of minoritized languages.

World Language Education in Wisconsin

This section provides a very broad overview of world language⁸ education at the K-12 and postsecondary levels in Wisconsin. It includes a small number of examples that illustrate different models for providing world language instruction, but cannot provide a detailed treatment of the many outstanding and innovative programs in the state. Information in this section is from secondary sources such as state and national reports on language course enrollments and publicly available sources such as school and university websites, as well as from several primary sources: conversations with faculty and administrators in Wisconsin schools and institutions of higher education, and surveys of Wisconsin educators on their perceptions of what the most pressing challenges are for language education in Wisconsin today.

Wisconsin has historically enjoyed a national reputation for excellence in language education. The state was an early innovator in language immersion programs, with Milwaukee's German, French, and Spanish language immersion schools serving as models that inspired other states to develop their own immersion programs.⁹ Today, the Wisconsin Association for Language Teachers (WAFLT), the state's professional association of world language educators, is one of the most active in the country. Wisconsin's K-12 language educators often serve in leadership roles in national professional organizations such as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the National Council of State Supervisors of Languages; and in national K-12 initiatives in less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) such as STARTALK.¹⁰ Wisconsin's college and university language programs are widely recognized as among the top in the country, attracting millions of dollars in federal support for language and international education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison alone. Wisconsin's postsecondary faculty in languages, literatures and cultures are internationally-renowned researchers and educators who are sought-after scholars, leaders in their fields, and, like their K-12 colleagues, active in regional, national, and international professional associations devoted to language teaching and learning.

⁸ The term "foreign language" continues to be widely used in the United States to refer to languages other than English. Given that this set of languages includes indigenous American languages as well as languages spoken by large numbers of speakers in our local communities, the term "world languages," widely used in the context of K-12 education, is used instead of "foreign languages" in this paper to refer to languages other than English. The term "foreign languages" is used only when other sources cited in the paper use that term.

⁹ See: mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/en/Programs/Language-Immersion.htm and carla.umn.edu/immersion/acie/vol3/Jun2000_ParentAdvocacy.html

¹⁰ startalk.umd.edu

K-12 World Language Education

Despite these historical strengths, **Wisconsin risks falling behind other states that are more aggressively investing in language education and prioritizing languages as a core subject area for all students.** A number of states, for example, require at least two years of world language study for high school graduation; Wisconsin does not. Although Wisconsin State Statutes do require that school districts provide access to regular instruction in “foreign language” beginning in grade 7,¹¹ the absence of a statewide world language requirement means that most Wisconsin districts do not require world language study for graduation. Languages in most Wisconsin schools are an elective subject area and, as such, they compete with other electives for students’ time and attention.

Because Spanish is offered as an elective class, and we have Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Art, Industrial Arts/Technology, and Spanish as offerings, I often have students who take Spanish first trimester of 6th grade and not again until late in 7th grade... We are unable to have a consistent language program at our school due to a lack of time.

– Wisconsin middle school teacher

Some other states have also started to invest substantial state funding in dual language immersion (DLI) programs that promote the development of bilingualism and biliteracy starting at an early age. In DLI, instruction in subject areas such as math, science, social studies, and literacy/language arts are learned in a partner language, in addition to English, for at least 50% of core instructional time – starting as early as kindergarten. Given this structure, DLI programs provide a cost-effective model that doesn’t require an extra teacher or time in the schedule since grade-level teachers are responsible for both language and subject-area teaching. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2015), six states – Delaware, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Oregon, and Utah – provide state funding specifically for dual language programs (p. 90), in recognition of the benefits of bilingualism and the academic achievement gains realized by students who participate in DLI programs. Although some individual Wisconsin school districts have established DLI programs, Wisconsin does not provide state funding specifically for DLI. As a consequence, the number of DLI and other language immersion programs in Wisconsin is relatively small, and the diversity of partner languages is limited almost entirely to Spanish. In stark contrast, Utah has DLI programs in 195 schools in the 2017-18 academic year, in Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.¹²

What is Dual Language Education?

Dual language education refers to programs that provide grade-level content and literacy instruction to all students through two languages—English and a partner language. In one-way dual language programs, the partner language is the native language of all of the students in the class. In two-way programs, approximately half the students are native speakers of the partner language and the other half are native speakers of English. Dual language programs typically begin in kindergarten or first grade and continue for a minimum of 5 years and have the goals of promoting bilingualism and biliteracy, high levels of academic achievement, and cross-cultural competence. An ideal dual language program would serve students from kindergarten through Grade 12, but the vast majority are implemented in elementary schools.

Kennedy & Medina, 2017, p. 1

Ideally, two-way DLI programs provide opportunities for students whose home language is a language other than English to develop language and literacy skills in both their home language and English, as well as opportunities for English monolinguals, or English-dominant students, to develop bilingual and bicultural skills in the partner language. Unfortunately, with few exceptions, for almost all Wisconsin students for whom a language other than

¹¹ See: docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/121/II/02/1/L/5 and docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/121/II/02/1/L

¹² www.utahdli.org

English is their home or native language, that home or “heritage” language is not further developed through their formal schooling.¹³

K-12 World Language Enrollments

Student demand for language courses in Wisconsin schools is relatively strong compared to other states: in 2014-15, 36.3% of Wisconsin K-12 students were enrolled in a world language course, a larger proportion than in any other U.S. state except New Jersey (51.2%) and the District of Columbia (47.2%) (American Council for International Education, 2017).¹⁴ The proportion of Wisconsin students enrolled in language courses is dramatically different for students at different grade levels, however. In that same year, 57.5% of Wisconsin students in grades 9-12 were enrolled in a world language course, compared to 26.9% of students in grades 6-8. Only 7.9% of students in grades K-5 were enrolled in a world language class, with at least some of those students receiving only limited exposure to the language.¹⁵

The best gift we could give our students is the opportunity to learn a foreign language during the elementary years.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades K-5)

The fact that so few Wisconsin students in grades K-5 are learning languages is recognized as a critical issue by educators and employers alike. The need to begin instruction in world languages earlier was the top concern raised by both respondents to the survey of WAFLT members, and Wisconsin leaders from the private and non-profit sectors when sharing possible educational solutions for meeting workforce needs.

When I compare Wisconsin to language offerings in schools in other states..., I find that Wisconsin is sorely lacking. Our elementary programs offer little to no world language instruction whatsoever... We need more offerings for dual language, bilingual or at least more frequent exposure to language instruction built into our schools starting at the elementary level to give our students real skills.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades 9-12)

A related issue raised by language educators and business leaders alike is **the need for Wisconsin to support long-term, articulated sequences of effective instruction in world languages across grades and educational levels, K-16.** According to Fischer (2016), attrition in world language courses is a major concern: in a review of Wisconsin’s language enrollments, he found “little progress in student retention after the first two years” (p. 8), the number of years of world language study currently required by many Wisconsin postsecondary institutions. Decreasing collegiate language requirements were mentioned by many Wisconsin language educators as negatively affecting K-12 world language enrollments. Regardless of the reason, two years of language study in high school (or at any other level, for that matter) is far from sufficient for students to develop the advanced bilingual and intercultural skills that Wisconsin, its students, its businesses, and its communities need.

Why are our universities lowering expectations and eliminating programs? Universities are the bridge to the global environment Wisconsin kids need to experience.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades 9-12)

Often, the study of language is something done because it's a requirement; I think we should have a bigger push to show the connections between being bilingual and job opportunities.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades K-5)

¹³ See dpi.wi.gov/english-learners.

¹⁴ The data on 2014-15 world language enrollments in Wisconsin and in other states are from the 2017 national publication, *The National K-12 Foreign Language Enrollment Survey Report*.

¹⁵ The 2015-16 Wisconsin world language enrollment data are from the 2012-16 report at dpi.wi.gov/world-language/general-info.

In terms of the specific languages that K-12 students are learning, Wisconsin is similar to the rest of the country in the dominance of Spanish: nearly three out of every four Wisconsin K-12 students who are enrolled in world language courses are studying Spanish (74.8%), followed by French (12.5%) and German (8.9%), with all other languages representing a very small proportion of language enrollments (see Figure 1).¹⁶

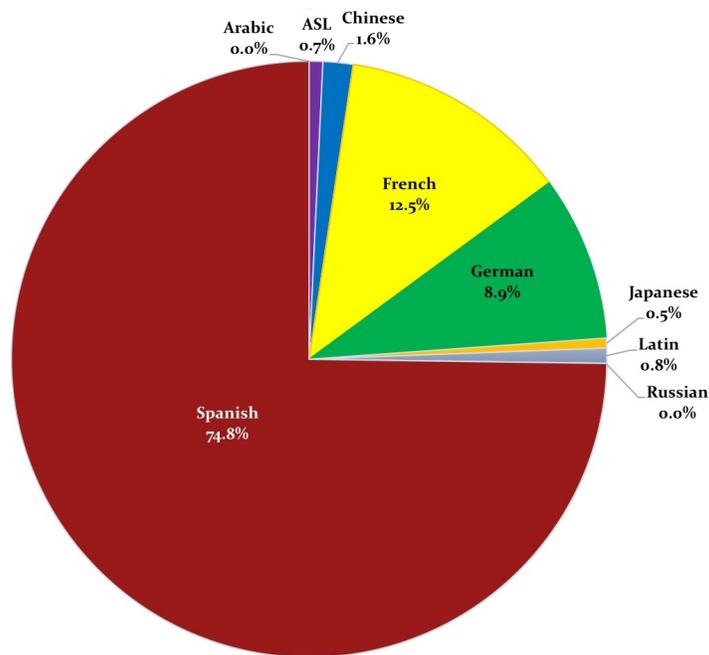


Figure 1. 2014-15 Wisconsin K-12 world language course enrollments, by language.

Opportunities for Wisconsin K-12 students to study languages other than those in Figure 1 are quite limited. **In some Wisconsin high schools, in fact, Spanish is the only language offered.**

French, German, Chinese, etc. teachers (teachers of languages other than Spanish) are spread incredibly thin at many districts, teaching 4 and 5 preps [unique courses, curricula, levels], and traveling from school to school.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades 9-12)

Some Wisconsin high school students are able access instruction in so-called “less commonly taught languages” (LCTLs) through a dual-enrollment program such as Youth Options, the Wisconsin program that enables high school juniors and seniors to petition their school to enroll in a course at a Wisconsin institution of higher education if a comparable course isn’t offered in the student’s home school district. Following a different model, but also leveraging the potential of secondary-postsecondary partnerships, some University of Wisconsin campuses offer college-level language courses in local high schools. Such programs include the College Credit in High School Program through UW-Green Bay, Cooperative Academic Partnership Program (UW-Oshkosh), and Partners in Education (UW-Whitewater). Some Wisconsin K-12 schools are innovating alternative routes to offer less commonly taught strategic languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Korean or Russian through visiting teacher programs or multi-language, blended-learning facilitated language study classrooms. These programs are effective in meeting student interests but require higher levels of support than they currently have to be sustainable and yield meaningful outcomes.

¹⁶ Figure 1 is based on data from American Councils for International Education, 2017, p. 8.

K-12 World Language Teacher Shortage

According to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences 2017 national report on *America's Languages*, the shortage of qualified language teachers nationwide is one of the “biggest obstacles to improved language learning” (p. ix) in the United States. The same is true in Wisconsin, where **world languages are one of several subject areas in which school districts report facing “extreme teacher shortages”** (Wisconsin Budget Project, 2017, p. 4). Given this situation, entire language programs are at risk when an individual teacher leaves or retires.

We do not have enough world language teachers to fill all the vacancies I see on [Wisconsin Education Career Access Network]. If we don't have enough teachers, then I fear that districts will just drop the world language that they can't find a teacher for, and that will be the end of the program.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades 6-12)

Rural areas cannot afford to offer as many years of a language. In my town, students can only begin level one in 9th grade! The teacher shortage is also a problem that especially hits the rural areas.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades 9-12)

At the same time, the question of what qualifications are necessary for certification as a world language teacher in Wisconsin – especially the required level of proficiency in the language - has been disputed. Currently, Wisconsin requires teachers seeking licensure to demonstrate a minimum of Intermediate High proficiency (according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines) in speaking and writing. Most states have raised this minimum level of language proficiency to Advanced Low, the next highest level, to address the skills necessary to teach in the target language, as required by professional best practices.

My biggest concern is the lack of future language teachers and how we are preparing the few future language teachers we have for success. Preparing our future language teachers starts in middle and high school. We have a few problems right now: 1) high school graduates simply do not want to pursue teaching; 2) high school graduates either do not have high enough proficiency to teach or feel they do not 3) university graduates are/or feel unprepared to teach and advance foreign language programs. How might we address this? 1) Our students need to graduate with more advanced communication skills so that universities have more candidates for the Foreign Language teaching programs. 2) High schools and universities need to build more bridges between their programming. More practicum students should be in the classroom earlier. 3) Future language teachers should have classes on second language acquisition research and methods, with time to apply what they have learned in the classroom.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades 6-12)

K-12 Curricular Frameworks and Credentials

The role that world language education plays in developing the intercultural skills and global competencies that are so highly valued by Wisconsin employers cannot be overstated. Language instruction in today's K-12 schools is very different from what it was when most readers of this report studied a language in high school. Instruction is informed by national and state standards that emphasize the development of meaningful, authentic, and culturally appropriate communication skills, integrate language and culture learning at all levels, and encourage and support using the language outside of the classroom and as a lifelong pursuit. These standards for language learning describe “what students should know and be able to do” in five goal areas (commonly referred to as the “five Cs”): Communication, Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities.¹⁷ *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards for Foreign Languages* (1997) were modeled after the national standards, first published in 1996 and revised several times since then, most recently in 2015 as the *World Readiness Standards for Language*

¹⁷ www.actfl.org/publications/all/world-readiness-standards-learning-languages/standards-summary

Learning. Those state standards need to be updated so that they are in line with the state’s current needs and with current professional practices.

To formally recognize high school students’ advanced language abilities, intercultural skills, and global competencies, Wisconsin has established two student talent-marking credentialing programs, the *Seal of Biliteracy* and the *Global Education Achievement Certificate*, which school districts can modify for local contexts and adopt. Wisconsin’s *Seal of Biliteracy*, based on the national framework and implemented in Wisconsin in 2015, is for graduating high school seniors who demonstrate “sociocultural competence” and proficiency in both English and another language. Similarly, the *Global Education Achievement Certificate* (GEAC)¹⁸ provides a statewide credential with minimum standards that local school districts can adapt and adopt. The GEAC firmly recognizes languages as the cornerstone for developing global competencies: among the requirements are four years of instruction in one world language (or demonstrating ACTFL Intermediate High proficiency), in addition to four credits in courses with global content and global service learning.

Partnerships and Possibilities

The GEAC was developed with the support of Global Wisconsin, a non-profit organization established to provide a collaborative infrastructure across educational institutions, professional and community organizations, and the business community to promote global learning in Wisconsin. **A formal statewide structure specifically devoted to providing leadership and collaboration for further developing and supporting language education is needed as well.** This need for coordinated leadership and public advocacy for languages was among the top issues identified by Wisconsin language educators.

I believe that the most pressing issue in language education in Wisconsin and across the country is the education of the general public as to the value of long sequences of foreign languages instruction and the benefit of developing a meaningful level of proficiency in languages other than English. Especially in smaller communities, Spanish is too often the only language offered and it may only be offered at the high school and middle school levels.... I believe that advocacy at the state and national level and partnering with community stakeholders to advance world languages course offerings that are valued locally are the keys to addressing these issues. There is no quick fix, but by continuing to advocate for world languages instruction with state and federal policymakers and by engaging the local community in the world languages programs at our schools, I believe that we will see a change within the next generation.

– Wisconsin world language teacher (grades 9-12)

Postsecondary Education

Opportunities for postsecondary education exist across the state through study at 18 private four-year colleges, two tribal colleges, the 16 technical colleges that comprise the Wisconsin Technical College System, and the University of Wisconsin System, which encompasses 13 four-year schools and 13 two-year schools (the UW Colleges).

Postsecondary Admission Requirements

By and large, language study is not required for admission to Wisconsin’s postsecondary institutions. While two years of high school study of the same world language is recommended for admission to most UW System schools, UW-Madison is the only campus for which there is a minimum admissions requirement of two years of high school study of the same language. The situation is similar across the state’s private colleges. At Alverno College in Milwaukee, for example, two years of foreign language study are a recommended criterion for admission, but not required.

Postsecondary Graduation Requirements

Proficiency in non-English languages does not figure prominently into the graduation requirements of Wisconsin’s postsecondary institutions. Where language study is required for graduation, it is credit hours rather

¹⁸ dpi.wi.gov/international-education/achievement-certificate

than any kind of proficiency assessment that determines whether or not requirements have been met. One stand-out exception is Lawrence University, a private four-year institution located in Appleton, Wisconsin. Lawrence requires completion of six semesters of language courses for all Bachelor of Arts degrees, while also offering flexibility for students to demonstrate language proficiency through alternative means. Another example from among the state's private colleges is St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin, where there is a General Education/Core Curriculum Second Language Proficiency Requirement for graduation. Students may meet this requirement by completing two semesters of language study, or with a score on one of the college's language placement tests that would place them in a third-semester language course.

Among Wisconsin's public postsecondary institutions, UW-Milwaukee, UW-Parkside, and UW-Platteville require two semesters of foreign language study for graduation. At all of these UW System campuses, students may satisfy the language requirement with two years of high school study of the same language. At UW-Madison, only the College of Letters & Science and the School of Business have foreign language requirements for graduation.

Other UW System campuses include language study as one way to meet general education requirements for the undergraduate degrees that they offer. For example, general education requirements at UW-Green Bay include at least three credits (typically one course) in Ethnic Studies Perspective and another three credits in Global Culture. The latter of these two categories offers language study as an option. Similarly, general education requirements at UW-La Crosse include a minimum of six credits in international and multicultural studies, which may be satisfied through language study.

Postsecondary Course Offerings and Enrollment

According to the Language Enrollment Database of the Modern Language Association (MLA), between 2002 and 2013, there were 60 different world languages taught in at least one of Wisconsin's postsecondary institutions. UW-Madison has long been considered a leading institution nationally in terms of the breadth of its language programs. UW-Madison ranks first in the country in the number of Bachelor's students earning degrees in languages other than English. According to the Website thebestcolleges.org, in 2017, UW-Madison was rated second among all U.S. colleges and universities for innovation in foreign language study.¹⁹ Furthermore, UW-Madison leads the Big Ten Academic Alliance in terms of the number of courses in less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) that are available to students.

The MLA Language Enrollment Database confirms that across Wisconsin's postsecondary institutions, Spanish is by far the most commonly offered and studied language. In 2013, for instance, 17,543 postsecondary students enrolled in Spanish courses across the State; by contrast, combined enrollment in *all* other non-English languages the same year was 13,593. French and German are also offered at a large number of colleges and universities, as are Chinese and Japanese, though to a somewhat lesser extent than the other two languages. In addition to these more commonly studied world languages, Wisconsin students may study locally-important languages such as Menominee, Ojibwe, and Oneida at a number of postsecondary institutions across the state. And on campuses where there are considerable numbers of students who grew up using Spanish or Hmong at home, such students may take sequences of courses designed specifically for heritage speakers of those languages.

Wisconsin colleges and universities have undertaken initiatives to expand students' access to language study. These initiatives include the UW System Collaborative Language Program (CLP), which was established in 1998 to diversify language offerings on UW System campuses. Today, the CLP, a national model for inter-institutional collaboration in language education, leverages instructional and communication technologies to support

¹⁹ www.thebestcolleges.org/rankings/10-most-innovative-colleges-for-foreign-language-study

distance and blended learning in critical languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Hmong, Japanese, and Russian, as well as diversified course offerings in more commonly taught languages such as French and German.

Advanced Language Study

According to the MLA Language Enrollment Database, of the 60 languages that were offered statewide over the 2002-2013 period, just 16 had average total enrollments of more than 100 students across Wisconsin's postsecondary institutions. Among these 16 languages, enrollments either held steady or increased for 11 languages, and decreased for 5 languages.²⁰ Across languages, enrollments in upper-level language courses were proportionally low, suggesting that many of Wisconsin's postsecondary students undertake language study largely to fulfill graduation requirements (if such requirements exist), or perhaps to earn retroactive college credit for language study they completed in high school.

As an example of the relative scarcity of students taking more advanced language classes, of the 17,543 students who enrolled in Spanish courses across the state in the fall of 2013, the MLA Language Enrollment Database shows that just 5,870 (approximately 34%) of those students were taking an upper-level Spanish course. Still, the percentage of Spanish students enrolled in upper-level courses was among the highest for the 16 languages with more than 100 students enrolled statewide. A comparable proportion of Russian students were taking upper-level classes, and only Portuguese surpassed these two languages, with about 37% of enrolled undergraduates taking upper-level Portuguese classes. **These numbers call into question whether or not Wisconsin's postsecondary institutions are producing adequate numbers of graduates with the kind of advanced language proficiency and intercultural competencies required for them to operate in multilingual professional contexts.**

Nevertheless, there do exist innovative programs at the postsecondary level whose objectives are to promote and support the achievement of advanced proficiency in world languages. Examples of such programs include UW-Madison's Russian Flagship Program and South Asian Flagship Languages Initiative. The Russian Flagship Program is a federally-funded program for highly motivated undergraduate students majoring in any discipline at UW-Madison to achieve a professional level of competence in Russian by the time they graduate, through an intensive, articulated program of language study, at both UW-Madison and overseas. In addition to its objectives of advancing students' Russian language proficiency and intercultural competencies, the program seeks to connect students' intensive language study with their other academic interests and professional goals. Students in the program study abroad twice, with the program culminating in a yearlong overseas capstone program in Almaty, Kazakhstan, where students complete a professional internship. The South Asian Flagship Languages Initiative is a federally-funded program through which Boren Scholarship or Boren Fellowship²¹ recipients engage in intensive study of Hindi or Urdu, first in residence at the South Asia Summer Language Institute on the UW-Madison campus, and then overseas in India for a semester of intensive language study and cultural immersion.

Individual instructors across the state undertake initiatives whose goals are to work with students in ways that are responsive to more local needs and objectives. To cite just one example, a language instructor at a two-year

²⁰ The languages with increasing enrollments were American Sign Language, Arabic, Chinese, Hmong, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Ojibwe, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish; those with decreasing enrollments were French, German, Ancient Greek, Hebrew, and Latin.

²¹ Boren Scholarships and Fellowships are awarded by the National Security Education Program through a highly-competitive national competition. Boren Scholars represent a vital pool of highly motivated individuals who wish to work in the federal national security arena. In exchange for funding, Boren Scholars commit to working in the federal government for at least one year after graduation. See www.borenawards.org.

UW college is “working to make communicative goals the priority in [their] classes and... familiarizing [students] with the ACTFL *Can-Do Statements* so that language study isn't simply characterized by grammar points and vocab lists, but instead by the ability to reach new communication goals.”

Challenges Going Forward

From the perspective of over 200 Wisconsin language educators who responded to online questionnaires that asked them about challenges that language education faces in the state, there is a need to provide early and sustained access to varied, high-quality language study options. Language study must be prioritized and supported in all school districts from the earliest possible grade so that any Wisconsin student who chooses to pursue postsecondary education will already have language skills to build on in more advanced language courses. There is simply no replacing sustained time and effort applied to the development of advanced language competencies, and as such, language study must begin as early as possible in any K-12 or postsecondary educational trajectory. Moreover, beginning language learning at a young age may be particularly beneficial for (1) developing positive attitudes toward other languages, cultures, and worldviews, (2) fostering students' interest in and commitment to developing language skills over the long term, and (3) preparing all Wisconsin students for advanced classroom study and/or immersive language practice experiences like study abroad or service learning by the time they get to high school or college.

At the postsecondary level, colleagues in professional programs and interdisciplinary majors for which advanced language competencies stand to increase the marketability of their graduates in the workplace would do well to revise language requirements and/or curricular structures to create articulated pathways for students to dedicate the substantial time and effort needed to develop the advanced language skills that are required for success in professional contexts. In a similar vein of economic competitiveness, it is incumbent upon language departments to design and offer suitable curriculum that is responsive to the particular language development goals and needs of heritage speakers so that they may (1) benefit from and build upon the bilingual skills and cultural agility they already have, and (2) appreciate and leverage the “marketability” of these skills in a variety of career paths.

My big plug would be to really be more focused in the teaching around industries where language is going to be needed, so that we get more functional language learning. There is a lot of focus that is given to kind of the classical language teaching of reading the books, and delving into literature and history, but not as much focused on what kind of functionally you will have and how are you going to be using that language in today's and tomorrow's work environments.

– Shiva Bidar-Sielaff, Chief Diversity Officer, UW Health

It is clear that increasing the competitiveness of Wisconsin's workforce relies in no small part on the state's existing and potential linguistic capital. The ability of Wisconsin's citizens to function through and between various languages and cultural paradigms, to flexibly deploy language skills and intercultural competencies in a wide range of professional contexts, will be a key component in the professional and personal fulfillment of Wisconsin's next generation. The successful achievement of the advanced levels of language proficiency that are required to perform in the increasingly multilingual professional landscape of Wisconsin will require first and foremost governmental and institutional policies that unequivocally support language education. It will also require (1) protracted financial commitment to support school and community language programs at all levels, (2) attracting and retaining highly qualified language instructors of a variety of languages, (3) delivery of state-of-the-art language curriculum that captures learners' imagination and motivates prolonged personal investment in developing advanced language proficiency and intercultural competencies, and (4) expanded opportunities and financial support for all Wisconsin students to further advance and refine their language skills in immersive settings.

Other Language Learning Resources

Although it didn't come up in our interviews with Wisconsin employers, recent research conducted by Forbes, in partnership with the language learning software company Rosetta Stone, revealed that across the globe, some companies have started to integrate language training into their workforce development programs and into the professional development plans of individual employees (Forbes Insights, 2017). Although current employees enrolled in workplace language training programs largely preferred to learn in-person (Ibid., p. 14), the Forbes/Rosetta Stone report highlights the affordances of digital platforms for delivering instruction.

New and emerging technologies are used by the broader public to support their multilingual development as well. One current popular resource is Duolingo, a free app that provides exercises and challenges related to grammar, vocabulary, and translation in a number of languages in a game-like environment. For a more interactional experience, technology-enabled language exchanges provide opportunities to build intercultural relationships with speakers of other languages. A Wisconsin physical therapist, for example, reported signing up for a language exchange to practice Spanish so that she could interact more confidently with her Spanish-speaking clients. Another resource is meetup.com, a social-networking site where users can discover or organize social or cultural gatherings to practice using a language of common interest. Groups convene regularly, allowing learners to build a community and practice their multilingual abilities with each other and with native speakers. A meet-up participant in Milwaukee commented on the site, "Great to meet up with folks who want to socialize while practicing the German language skills, great folks and great fun!"

The Wisconsin Language Summit

The **Wisconsin Language Summit** will be held at the Fluno Center on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm on Friday, January 26, 2018. **The Summit is an invitation-only working meeting** that will build on the findings in this report by bringing together Wisconsin leaders from business and industry, non-profit organizations, K-16 education, state and local government, and Wisconsin communities to:

- exchange perspectives on the value of languages in national and Wisconsin contexts, focusing on how language skills contribute to the state's economy and how language education contributes to future workforce development.
- review the “language landscape” in Wisconsin in terms of current and future multilingual workforce needs, K-16 educational capacities (and major issues and constraints), and community resources.
- collect stakeholder input on priorities, recommendations, and future directions of language education in Wisconsin for college, career, and community readiness for all students.
- identify next steps to advance the goals of this project, provide opportunities for additional stakeholder engagement and incorporate recommendations for the Wisconsin Language Roadmap.

The outcomes of the Summit will form the basis of the **Wisconsin Language Roadmap**, a document that will provide a vision and strategic plan for language education program development in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin leaders across sectors who contributed to this assessment expressed a desire to see greater investment in world language education. In several cases, the recommendations made by business leaders mirror those from educators and language professionals. According to these stakeholders, in order to be effective in developing multilingually proficient citizens, Wisconsin would do well to:

- begin world language education earlier.
- support long-term, sustained language education programs that provide pathways to proficiency across levels, K-16.
- offer courses aimed at developing students' language and intercultural skills for different domains of use.
- develop clear standards for language learning and expand opportunities for students to participate in high-impact educational programs such as local and overseas internships, and study abroad.
- provide programs to help students to sustain and further develop their home languages.

Meeting these goals will require sufficient resources to achieve success. Building a language learning infrastructure is not easy, but mustering the political will to do so will be of incalculable value to the generations of students we will better prepare for the global economy, and who will go on to be innovative, globally-minded leaders. The Wisconsin Language Summit represents the next step in this endeavor.

On Wisconsin!

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to express their sincere gratitude to the many individuals who contributed their time, expertise, experiences and ideas to the preparation of this report.

Individuals with the following companies and organizations participated in interviews, completed questionnaires, or met with project team members to discuss Wisconsin's multilingual workforce needs:

Chippewa Valley Bean Company, Inc.	Organic Valley
Cultural Linguistic Services, UW-Madison	PreventionGenetics
E.M. Wasylik Associates LLP	Promega Corporation
Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery	Red Arrow International
Epic Systems Corporation	The Geo Group Corporation
Gamber-Johnson LLC	UW-Extension, Cooperative Extension
Glyph Language Services, Inc.	UW Health
H.O. Bostrom	Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington Workforce
Idiosynch	Development, Inc.
InvivoSciences, Inc.	Wisconsin Supreme Court
Madison Region Economic Partnership	Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
ManpowerGroup	Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce
MOFA Global	World Council of Credit Unions, Inc.
The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co.	
OEM Fabricators, Inc.	

Hundreds of Wisconsin educators completed written questionnaires about pressing needs and challenges for language education in the state: 117 members of the Wisconsin Association for Language Teachers (WAFLT), 93 language faculty with Wisconsin institutions of higher education, and 13 administrators of K-12 bilingual/ESL programs. Additional language educators, researchers and educational administrators met or shared resources with the project team.

Tribal and other community leaders met with the project team to discuss indigenous and heritage language issues and to share information about programs to promote language revitalization in their communities.

The Wisconsin Language Roadmap Advisory Board provided invaluable input on all aspects of this assessment and feedback on this report. Advisory Board members Katy Sinnott (WEDC) and Lora Klenke (UW-Madison) were critical resources for making contacts with Wisconsin business leaders and provided feedback on the section in this report on Wisconsin's multilingual workforce needs. WMC shared the project's questionnaire on workforce with Wisconsin business leaders. SuAnn Schroeder and Lauren Rosen with WAFLT facilitated the distribution of the project's questionnaire to WAFLT members; Audrey Lesondak (DPI) did the same for the questionnaire to bilingual/ESL administrators. Pamela Delfosse (DPI) provided detailed feedback on the section in this report on world language education.

UW-Madison students Yuka Shiotani and Frankie Hermanek assisted with compiling data for the report, Ashlyn King assisted with making contacts to the business community, and Emily Buchberger designed the report's cover and assisted with the graphic layout. Language Institute Assistant Director Wendy Johnson reviewed a final draft of the report.

Any errors are those of the authors.

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