

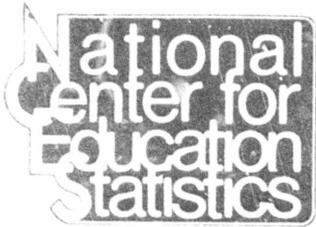
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bulletin

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement

Contact: David A. Sweet
(202)254-7230

REGIONAL

July 1984

Foreign Language Education in American High Schools

Foreign language instruction was widely available in U.S. high schools in the early 1980's, but the majority of academic program students were not required to take any foreign language courses in order to graduate. Furthermore, fewer than one-half of all students chose (or were required) to take any foreign language courses. Of those who did take some courses, only about one-quarter (28 percent) took the amount (more than 2 years) generally considered necessary to develop proficiency in a foreign language.

In its 1979 report, the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies declared that "our gross national inadequacy in foreign language skills has become a serious and growing liability" that undermines the ability of the United States to communicate and compete economically with other nations.¹ The National Commission on Excellence in Education stated that "study of a foreign language introduces students to non-English speaking cultures, heightens awareness and comprehension of one's native tongue, and serves the Nation's needs in commerce, diplomacy, defense, and education." It strongly recommended for the college-bound "2 years of foreign language in high school . . . in addition to those taken earlier."²

The purpose of this bulletin is to present information on foreign language education in U.S. high schools with regard to availability (table 1), graduation requirements (table 2), amount of instruction taken (table 3), and characteristics of schools and students (tables 4 and 5). The estimates presented here were derived from data collected in NCES' longitudinal study, High School and Beyond (HS&B). The statistics in tables 1 and 2 are based on information provided by school principals or other administrators for a national probability sample of about 1,000 public and private high schools. The estimates in table 3, 4 and 5 were derived from information contained on the transcripts obtained in fall 1982 for a probability sample of about 13,000 of these schools' 1980 sophomores who were still attending high school in spring 1982.³

¹The President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, Strength Through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability, U. S. Government Printing Office, November, 1979.

²U. S. Department of Education, the National Commission on Excellence in Education, A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform, U. S. Government Printing Office, April, 1983.

³Early graduates and high school dropouts were excluded from the analysis.

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Access to Foreign Language Instruction

Schools offering at least 3 years of foreign language instruction enrolled the large majority of American high school students in the early 1980's--schools offering third-year Spanish enrolled 72 percent of all students, third-year French 65 percent, and third-year German 39 percent (table 1). At least one of these three languages was available to 79 percent of the students and all three to 34 percent.⁴ In public schools, the opportunity for students to take a third year of one of the three languages generally was greater in:⁵

- schools in the Northeast region of the country than schools in the South (93 vs. 63 percent);
- urban and suburban schools than rural schools (about 88 vs. 60 percent);⁶ and
- large schools than small schools (95 vs. 44 percent).⁷

Russian was available to only 5 percent of all students nationwide--to 10 percent of public school students in the Northeast and about 3 percent of public school students elsewhere.

Graduation Requirements for Academic Program Students

About 58 percent of 1980 academic program sophomores attended schools⁸ in 1980 that had no foreign language graduation requirement in 1982 for academic program students (table 2).⁹ About 14 percent attended schools that required 1 or 2 semester-length courses (1 + 13 percent), 21 percent attended schools that required 3 or 4 semesters (2 + 19 percent), and 6 percent attended schools that required 5 or more semesters. About three-fourths (74 percent) of the academic program students attending private schools were required to take some foreign language, but only about one-third (35 percent) of those attending public schools were required to do so. Almost one-half (47 percent) of the academic program students in the West attended schools with foreign language graduation requirements vs. only one-fourth (25 percent) of those in the North Central region.

⁴Estimates are based on the schools that had a 12th as well as a 10th grade in 1980.

⁵All differences cited in the text are statistically significant at the .01 level.

⁶Suburban schools are those located in Bureau of the Census Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA's) but not in their central cities; rural schools are those not located in SMSA's.

⁷Small schools were defined to be those with 150 or fewer 1980 sophomores, large schools as those with over 600.

⁸Estimates are based on schools that had a 10th grade in 1980 and a 12th grade in 1982.

⁹Identification of academic program students is based on students' own reports in 1980. Data for nonacademic program students are available but are not shown separately in most of the tables in this bulletin.

Table 1.--Percentage of students enrolled in high schools offering selected foreign language courses, by school control and course, and for public schools, by region, community type and size: Class of 1982

Course taught in school as a separate course	Public schools												
	All schools	Private schools	All public schools	Region				Community type ¹			School size ²		
				North- east	North Central	South	West	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Small	Medium	Large
<u>All students</u>													
3rd-year Spanish	72	77	72	85	74	57	83	87	82	50	30	77	92
3rd-year French	65	73	64	87	59	53	68	76	74	44	23	68	87
3rd-year German	39	37	39	47	44	23	55	48	52	17	4	42	61
Any of above	79	83	78	93	81	63	85	89	87	60	44	82	95
Only one of above	16	8	17	13	22	15	15	12	15	21	32	15	8
Two of above	29	48	26	35	23	28	18	32	23	27	13	30	29
All three of above	34	27	35	45	36	20	51	44	48	11	0	37	58
Russian	5	4	5	10	3	4	3	7	5	3	2	5	8
<u>Academic program students³</u>													
3rd-year Spanish	79	78	79	89	80	64	85	92	86	57	39	81	96
3rd-year French	73	77	72	91	65	62	73	83	80	52	31	74	93
3rd-year German	46	41	47	54	50	29	62	55	59	20	5	47	69
Any of above	84	86	84	96	85	71	87	94	90	67	54	85	98
Only one of above	13	8	14	11	19	13	12	10	12	21	35	12	5
Two of above	31	47	27	33	23	32	15	32	23	31	20	29	26
All three of above	41	31	43	52	43	26	59	52	55	16	0	44	66
Russian	6	5	6	12	3	3	4	8	7	3	3	5	11
Sample size (schools)	951	118	833	167	231	260	175	209	375	249	128	468	188

¹Suburban schools are those located in Bureau of the Census Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA's) but not in their central cities; rural schools are those not located in SMSA's.

²Small schools were defined to be those with 150 or fewer 1980 sophomores, large schools as those with over 600.

³Identification of academic program students is based on students' own reports in 1980.

NOTES: All estimates are based on computation using weights that make adjustments for instrument nonresponse and unequal probabilities of sample selection. Instructions for the computation of standard errors of the estimates are given in the technical notes.

Table 2.--Percentage of students who enrolled in high schools with various graduation requirements for academic program students, by school control and course required, and for public schools, by region, community type and size: Class of 1982

Semester-length courses required	Public schools												
	All schools	Private schools	All public schools	Region				Community type ¹			School size ²		
				North-east	North Central	South	West	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Small	Medium	Large
<u>All students</u>													
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
None	64	31	68	56	77	74	54	54	69	74	77	67	63
1	1	0	2	1	0	2	4	3	0	3	2	2	2
2	12	19	12	20	5	13	9	16	11	10	12	11	12
3	2	4	1	3	2	1	1	0	3	1	0	2	3
4	17	31	15	18	13	9	28	24	15	11	8	17	17
5 or more	4	15	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	3
1 or more	(36)	(69)	(32)	(44)	(23)	(26)	(46)	(46)	(31)	(26)	(23)	(33)	(37)
<u>Academic program students³</u>													
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
None	58	26	65	59	75	67	53	49	68	69	69	66	59
1	1	0	2	1	1	2	4	3	0	4	2	2	2
2	13	16	13	18	6	16	10	19	11	12	16	11	14
3	2	6	2	2	2	1	1	0	3	1	0	2	3
4	19	33	16	17	14	12	27	25	16	11	10	17	18
5 or more	6	20	3	3	3	2	4	3	2	3	3	2	4
1 or more	(42)	(74)	(35)	(41)	(25)	(33)	(47)	(51)	(32)	(31)	(31)	(34)	(41)
Sample size (schools)	816	101	715	142	204	219	150	176	334	205	103	404	152

¹Suburban schools are those located in Bureau of the Census Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA's) but not in their central cities; rural schools are those not located in SMSA's.

²Small schools were defined to be those with 150 or fewer 1980 sophomores, large schools as those with over 600.

³Identification of academic program students is based on students' own reports in 1980.

NOTES: Details may not add to totals because of rounding. All estimates are based on computation using weights that make adjustments for instrument nonresponse and unequal probabilities of sample selection. Instructions for the computation of standard errors of the estimates are given in the technical notes.

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Enrollment in Foreign Language Courses

Forty-seven percent of 1980 sophomores who were attending high school in spring 1982 took some foreign language courses during high school (table 3).¹⁰ The most popular language was Spanish (taken by 28 percent of all students), followed by French (16 percent), German (4.1 percent), Latin (3.4 percent), and Italian (0.7 percent). The mean number of Carnegie units earned by high school students in a foreign language was 0.97 (or about 1 year).

More than 2 years of study of a foreign language is generally needed to develop real proficiency.¹¹ Although a third year of instruction in at least one of the three major foreign languages (i.e., Spanish, French, and German) was available to 79 percent of the students (table 1), only 13 percent of all students earned credits for more than 2 years of any foreign language during their high school years (table 3).¹² Of those students who did take some foreign language courses, only 28 percent persisted beyond the second year--13 percent of non-academic and 38 percent of academic program foreign language students. Among academic program students who studied foreign languages, a lower percentage continued to advanced levels of Latin (14 percent) than of Spanish (26 percent), French (31 percent), or German (42 percent).

Characteristics of Students Who Take Foreign Language Courses

School-Level Variables. Students were much more likely to have taken a foreign language if they attended private rather than public schools (74 vs. 43 percent--table 4). For academic program students, the corresponding private and public school figures were 84 and 70 percent, respectively. Public school students were more likely to have taken a foreign language if they attended:

- schools located in the Northeast or West rather than the North Central or South (53 and 50 percent vs. 39 and 36 percent, respectively);
- schools located in suburban or urban rather than rural communities (47 and 46 percent vs. 36 percent);
- large or medium size rather than small schools (49 and 45 vs. 29 percent).

About 6 percent of all students earned credit in more than one foreign language. They were most likely to have done so if they attended a private school (11 percent) or a public school (10 percent) in the Northeast.

Some fairly large differences also existed in the amount of coursework taken by students of foreign languages. The mean number of credits they earned in foreign languages was 2.6 for private schools and 2.0 for public schools (table 5). Also, students of foreign languages, on the average, earned more credits if they attended a public school in the Northeast rather than one in any other region of the country (2.6 vs. about 1.8 units).

¹⁰Estimates are based on information contained on high school transcripts collected in fall 1982.

¹¹See "Foreign Languages in the American School" by S. Frederick Starr in President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies: Background Papers and Studies, November 1979.

¹²Some students, of course, start foreign language study before 9th grade. The percentage of students who took the third year of any foreign language, however, is essentially the same as the percentage who earned more than 2 credits during the high school years (14 vs. 13 percent).

Table 3.--Percentage distribution of students, by number of Carnegie units earned in foreign languages, mean number of units earned, and percentage of foreign language students who earned more than 2 units in the language studied, by language and high school program: Class of 1982

Language	Total	Number of Carnegie units earned ¹							Mean number of Carnegie units earned ¹	Percentage of students taking foreign language courses who earned over 2 units
		None	0.5 or more ⁽¹⁾	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5 or more		
<u>All students</u>										
Any foreign language	100	53.4	(46.6)	2.5	12.4	1.3	17.3	13.1	0.97	28
Spanish	100	72.1	(27.9)	1.7	9.3	0.6	10.5	5.5	.51	20
French	100	84.4	(15.6)	0.9	5.0	0.2	5.7	3.6	.30	23
German	100	95.9	(4.1)	0.3	1.1	0.2	1.3	1.2	.09	29
Latin	100	96.6	(3.4)	0.3	1.6	0.1	1.0	0.4	.05	12
Italian	100	99.3	(0.7)	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.2	.02	(²)
Other	100	99.1	(0.9)	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.1	.01	(²)
<u>Non-academic program students³</u>										
Any foreign language	100	69.9	(30.1)	3.1	12.2	1.1	9.6	4.0	.49	13
Spanish	100	80.2	(19.8)	2.0	8.7	0.6	6.1	2.4	.31	12
French	100	91.6	(8.4)	1.1	4.2	0.2	2.2	0.6	.12	7
German	100	97.6	(2.4)	0.3	0.9	0.1	0.8	0.3	.04	12
Latin	100	99.0	(1.0)	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2	0.0	.01	(²)
Italian	100	99.6	(0.4)	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	.01	(²)
Other	100	99.5	(0.5)	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0	.01	(²)
<u>Academic program students³</u>										
Any foreign language	100	27.6	(72.4)	1.5	12.8	1.7	29.3	27.2	1.73	38
Spanish	100	59.6	(40.4)	1.2	10.2	1.3	17.2	10.4	.83	26
French	100	73.2	(26.8)	0.6	6.3	0.4	11.2	8.3	.58	31
German	100	93.3	(6.7)	0.2	1.3	0.2	2.2	2.8	.16	42
Latin	100	92.9	(7.1)	0.4	3.2	0.2	2.2	1.0	.12	14
Italian	100	99.3	(0.7)	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.2	.03	(²)
Other	100	98.6	(1.4)	0.3	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.2	.02	(²)

¹Estimates are based on transcripts for 12,915 students--6,994 nonacademic program students, 5,565 academic program students, and 356 not classified by program. One Carnegie unit equals 1 year of study.

²Sample size is too small to estimate with sufficient precision.

³Identification of academic program students is based on students' own reports in 1980.

NOTES: Details may not add to totals due to rounding. All estimates are based on computation using weights that make adjustments for instrument nonresponse and unequal probabilities of sample selection. Instructions for the computation of standard errors of the estimates are given in the technical notes.

Table 4.--Percentage of students who took a foreign language during high school, by school control and language, and for public schools, by region, community type, and size: Class of 1982

Language	Public schools												
	All schools	Private schools	All public schools	Region				Community type ¹			School size ²		
				North-east	North Central	South	West	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Small	Medium	Large
<u>All students</u>													
Any foreign language	47	74	43	53	39	36	50	46	47	36	29	45	49
Spanish	28	42	26	29	23	22	34	30	27	22	18	26	32
French	16	26	14	21	11	13	13	13	16	12	10	15	15
German	4	5	4	4	5	2	5	4	5	3	1	5	5
Latin	3	9	3	6	2	2	1	2	3	3	1	3	2
Italian	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Other	1	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	1
More than one language	6	11	5	10	4	3	4	5	6	4	2	5	6
Sample size (students)	12,915	3,106	9,809	2,051	2,662	2,988	2,108	2,275	4,549	2,985	1,439	5,631	2,006
<u>Academic program students³</u>													
Any foreign language	72	84	70	78	63	63	78	71	72	65	53	72	73
Spanish	40	45	39	39	36	37	49	42	39	38	28	39	47
French	27	32	25	34	19	25	21	22	27	25	24	25	26
German	7	5	7	6	10	4	10	7	9	4	1	9	7
Latin	7	11	6	11	6	4	2	5	6	7	3	7	5
Italian	1	2	1	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	1
Other	1	2	1	1	1	0	3	2	1	1	0	1	2
More than one language	11	14	10	16	7	7	8	8	11	9	4	10	13
Sample size (students)	5,565	2,177	2,388	917	873	940	658	798	1,700	890	386	2,049	737

¹Suburban schools are those located in Bureau of the Census Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA's) but not in their central cities; rural schools are those not located in SMSA's.

²Small schools were defined to be those with 150 or fewer 1980 sophomores, large schools as those with over 600.

³Identification of academic program students is based on students' own reports in 1980.

NOTES: All estimates are based on computation using weights that make adjustments for instrument nonresponse and unequal probabilities of sample selection. Instructions for the computation of standard errors of the estimates are given in the technical notes.

Table 5.--Mean number of foreign language units earned by foreign language students, by school control and language, and for public schools, by region, community type, and class size: Class of 1982

Language	Public schools												
	All schools	Private schools	All public schools	Region				Community type ¹			School size ²		
				North-east	North Central	South	West	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Small	Medium	Large
<u>All students</u>													
Any foreign language ³	2.09	2.57	2.00	2.57	1.87	1.68	1.82	1.89	2.09	1.89	1.76	2.03	2.03
Spanish	1.84	2.25	1.76	2.15	1.67	1.56	1.68	1.72	1.92	1.68	1.56	1.78	1.81
French	1.93	2.41	1.82	2.20	1.78	1.52	1.65	1.67	1.90	1.75	1.82	1.83	1.80
German	2.08	2.40	2.03	2.37	2.03	1.68	1.91	1.97	2.11	1.86	1.61	2.15	1.84
Latin	1.50	1.62	1.53	1.81	1.25	1.28	1.55	1.71	1.52	1.47	1.68	1.60	1.38
Italian	2.14	2.60	1.97	2.12	1.22	1.00	1.00	1.67	2.08	2.72	(⁴)	1.94	1.83
Other	1.25	1.12	1.30	1.40	.95	.77	1.49	.94	1.60	1.00	1.88	1.16	1.18
<u>Academic program students⁵</u>													
Any foreign language ³	2.40	2.77	2.29	2.77	2.19	1.92	2.10	2.09	2.43	2.17	2.09	2.32	2.29
Spanish	2.06	2.40	1.97	2.32	1.85	1.80	1.84	1.85	2.08	1.85	1.88	1.97	1.99
French	2.18	2.55	2.06	2.34	2.11	1.66	2.07	1.89	2.16	2.00	1.98	2.00	2.00
German	2.35	2.62	2.30	2.60	2.42	1.76	2.12	2.17	2.40	2.10	2.11	2.40	2.02
Latin	1.66	1.64	1.67	1.88	1.38	1.30	1.79	1.84	1.62	1.55	1.89	1.72	1.40
Italian	2.23	2.58	2.06	2.20	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.63	2.31	(⁴)	(⁴)	2.22	1.65
Other	1.24	1.21	1.26	1.38	1.01	.85	1.48	1.08	1.64	1.06	2.00	1.16	1.25

¹Suburban schools are those located in Bureau of the Census Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA's) but not in their central cities; rural schools are those not located in SMSA's.

²Small schools were defined to be those with 150 or fewer 1980 sophomores, large schools as those with over 600.

³Figures tend to be higher than those for individual languages because some students took courses in more than one language.

⁴Not taken by any students in the sample.

⁵Identification of academic program students is based on students' own reports in 198J.

NOTES: Details may not add to totals because of rounding. Instructions for the computation of standard errors of the estimates are given in the technical notes. Standard errors of the estimates contained in this table are given in table 8, and sample sizes are given in table 4.

Student-level variables. Foreign language enrollment varied considerably by high school curriculum, sex, race/ethnicity, performance on cognitive tests, and the amount of postsecondary education planned.

- Academic program students were more likely than nonacademic program students to have taken a foreign language (72 vs. 30 percent--table 3);
- More female than male students took a foreign language (54 vs. 38 percent--table 6);
- Relatively more Asian and white students than Hispanic, black, and American-Indian students took a foreign language (69 and 49 vs. 38, 37, and 23 percent, respectively);
- The rate of foreign language enrollment varied considerably with how well the student scored on the HS&B cognitive tests--from 21 percent for those who scored in the lowest quartile to 72 percent for those who scored in the highest quartile;
- About 72 percent of students who planned to obtain an advanced college degree had taken a foreign language, as compared with 67 percent of those who planned to obtain a 4-year degree and only 31 percent of all other students, including those who did not plan to go to college at all.

Corresponding patterns of subgroups' differences also were observed for enrollment in more than one foreign language. The percentage of Asians who earned credits in two or more foreign languages was particularly high (19 percent vs. 6 percent for whites).

The gaps among subgroups of students become even wider in most instances when the amount of coursework taken by foreign language students is considered. For example, foreign language students earned more Carnegie units in foreign language courses if they:

- were in an academic program than if they were not (2.4 vs. 1.6 units--table 7);¹³
- were Asian or white rather than Hispanic, black, or American-Indian (2.5 and 2.2 units vs. 1.9, 1.7, and 1.8 units);
- were in the top rather than the bottom test score quartile (2.4 vs. 1.5 units).

¹³Data for nonacademic program students are available but are not shown in tables 5 or 7.

Table 6.—Percentage of students who took a foreign language during high school, by student's sex, race/ethnicity, test performance, planned college degree, and language: Class of 1982

Language	All students	Sex		Race/ethnicity ¹					Test score quartile ²			Planned college degree ³		
		Male	Female	Hispanic	White	Black	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Lowest	Middle two	Highest	Less Than BS	BS	Advanced degree
<u>All students</u>														
Any foreign language	47	38	54	38	49	37	23	69	21	43	72	31	67	72
Spanish	28	23	32	30	28	25	14	38	15	28	38	19	40	39
French	16	11	19	9	17	11	7	28	6	13	28	9	22	27
German	4	4	4	1	5	1	2	8	1	4	8	3	6	7
Latin	3	3	4	1	4	2	1	4	1	2	7	1	5	8
Italian	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	1	1	1	1
Other	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	9	1	1	1	1	1	1
More than one language	6	4	7	4	6	3	2	19	2	4	10	3	8	11
Sample size (students)	12,915	6,424	6,491	2,667	7,882	1,720	185	346	2,278	5,460	3,368	5,850	3,007	2,640
<u>Academic program students⁴</u>														
Any foreign language	72	66	79	64	75	58	53	86	42	69	81	55	79	82
Spanish	40	37	44	49	39	41	27	47	29	43	41	33	46	42
French	27	21	32	16	29	17	18	34	11	22	34	18	29	32
German	7	8	6	2	8	2	6	11	2	5	9	4	6	9
Latin	7	6	8	3	8	3	2	7	3	5	9	3	6	11
Italian	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other	1	2	1	1	1	1	6	13	2	1	1	2	1	1
More than one language	11	8	13	8	11	6	5	25	6	8	13	7	10	14
Sample size (students)	5,565	2,768	2,797	841	3,747	712	44	202	376	2,087	2,474	1,302	1,871	1,924

¹Students were classified as Hispanic if they indicated their origin or descent was Hispanic or Spanish. The remaining students then were classified by race.

²Students were classified on the basis of their composite score on the 1980 High School and Beyond verbal and mathematics tests.

³Students were classified on the basis of their answers in 1980 to the question, "As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will get?"

⁴Identification of academic program students is based on students' own reports in 1980.

NOTES: All estimates are based on computation using weights that make adjustments for instrument nonresponse and unequal probabilities of sample selection. Instructions for the computation of standard errors of the estimates are given in the technical notes.

Table 7.--Mean number of foreign language units earned by foreign language students, by sex, race/ethnicity, test score quartile, planned college degree, and language: Class of 1982

Language	All students	Sex		Race/ethnicity ¹					Test score quartile ²			Planned college degree ³		
		Male	Female	Hispanic	White	Black	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Lowest	Middle two	Highest	Less than BS	BS	Advanced degree
<u>All students</u>														
Any foreign language ⁴	2.09	2.02	2.15	1.92	2.15	1.68	1.80	2.49	1.50	1.87	2.41	1.72	2.19	2.43
Spanish	1.84	1.80	1.87	1.82	1.87	1.62	1.58	1.97	1.40	1.74	2.05	1.58	1.97	2.06
French	1.93	1.90	1.94	1.51	2.00	1.45	1.79	1.94	1.24	1.63	2.25	1.53	1.98	2.23
German	2.08	1.94	2.21	1.38	2.11	1.84	2.13	2.20	1.67	1.82	2.29	1.72	2.10	2.31
Latin	1.56	1.70	1.48	1.66	1.57	1.27	1.00	1.27	1.27	1.41	1.62	1.41	1.52	1.65
Italian	2.14	1.81	2.35	2.05	2.18	1.04	(5)	(5)	2.04	2.05	2.31	2.05	2.24	2.20
Other	1.25	1.20	1.30	.95	1.19	.87	.90	1.94	.80	1.29	1.26	1.19	1.18	1.35
<u>Academic program students⁶</u>														
Any foreign language ⁴	2.40	2.25	2.51	2.31	2.43	1.91	2.16	2.75	1.68	2.12	2.57	2.05	2.35	2.57
Spanish	2.06	1.94	2.15	2.17	2.08	1.81	1.92	2.15	1.55	1.92	2.17	1.80	2.11	2.15
French	2.18	2.14	2.21	1.81	2.23	1.64	2.25	2.28	1.32	1.86	2.37	1.88	2.11	2.35
German	2.35	2.18	2.54	1.75	2.37	2.10	3.16	2.21	1.89	2.39	2.32	2.06	2.32	2.46
Latin	1.66	1.70	1.60	1.79	1.65	1.26	1.00	1.29	1.30	1.47	1.71	1.51	1.59	1.69
Italian	2.23	2.08	2.34	2.10	2.29	1.06	(5)	(5)	1.42	2.12	2.28	1.96	2.36	2.25
Other	1.24	1.10	1.50	.58	1.19	1.20	.50	1.92	.57	1.34	1.30	1.29	1.20	1.30

¹Students were classified as Hispanic if they indicated their origin or descent was Hispanic or Spanish. The remaining students then were classified by race.

²Students were classified on the basis of their composite score on the 1980 High School and Beyond verbal and mathematics tests.

³Students were classified on the basis of their answers in 1980 to the question, "As things stand now, how far in school do you think you will get?"

⁴Figures tend to be higher than those for individual languages because some students took courses in more than one language.

⁵Not taken by any students in the sample.

⁶Identification of academic program students is based on students' own reports in 1980.

NOTES: Details may not add to totals because of rounding. Instructions for the computation of standard errors of the estimates are given in the technical notes. Standard errors of the estimates contained in this table are given in table 9, and sample sizes are given in table 6.

Technical Notes

Classification of courses

All courses in each transcript were assigned a 6-digit code based on A Classification of Secondary School Courses (CSSC), developed under contract with NCES, July 1982. The number of credits earned in each course was expressed in Carnegie units. (A Carnegie unit requires a minimum of 200 minutes for a regular class and 275 minutes for a lab class per week for 36 weeks. Some schools, however, may require more time for credit.) This bulletin included all courses assigned a foreign language code except for those identified as "multiple emphasis," which are primarily "English as a second language" courses.

Standard errors

The approximate standard errors of estimated percentages (p) presented in this bulletin may be estimated from the formula $s.e.(p) = D[p(100-p)/n]^{1/2}$, where n is the realized sample size and D is a factor that adjusts the estimates for departures of the actual sample from a simple random sample. For estimates based on school questionnaire responses (tables 1 and 2), D is approximately equal to 1.6 for all students, 1.8 for academic program students, and 1.9 for nonacademic program students. For estimates based on transcript data (tables 3, 4, and 5), D is approximately equal to 2.0.

These values of D generally will produce conservative estimates of standard errors for subgroups of schools and students, with one major exception. The standard error estimates obtained by this procedure for private schools should be increased by about 50 percent because of the great diversity of private schools and the relatively large variation among private schools in sample selection probabilities.

The standard errors of the estimated means presented in tables 5 and 7 are given in tables 8 and 9, respectively. It should be noted that the standard error reflects primarily the imprecision of the estimate due to sampling. The standard error does not include the effects of any biases due to nonresponse, measurement error, processing error, or other systematic errors that would occur even in a complete survey or census.

All group differences cited in the text are statistically significant at the .01 level.

For More Information

For more information about this bulletin, contact William B. Feters or Jeffrey A. Owings, Division of Multilevel Education Statistics, National Center for Education Statistics, (Brown Building, Room 609), 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Washington, D.C. 20202, telephone (202) 254-7361.

For information about High School and Beyond, contact David A. Sweet at the same address, telephone (202) 254-7230.

Table 8.--Estimated standard errors (in Carnegie units) of means presented in table 5.

Language	Public schools												
	All schools	Private schools	All public schools	Region				Community type			School size		
				North-east	North Central	South	West	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Small	Medium	Large
<u>All students</u>													
All languages	0.03	0.08	0.03	0.09	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.04	0.06
Spanish	.03	.06	.03	.06	.04	.04	.06	.04	.04	.04	.07	.04	.04
French	.05	.05	.05	.09	.05	.07	.08	.09	.07	.07	.12	.07	.10
German	.08	.13	.08	.16	.12	.17	.09	.20	.10	.12	.31	.10	.14
Latin	.06	.06	.08	.12	.17	.11	.34	.19	.18	.13	.17	.12	.14
Italian	.16	.19	.19	.23	(*)	(*)	(*)	.18	.33	(*)	(*)	.29	.45
Other	.11	.16	.14	.23	(*)	(*)	(*)	.36	.15	(*)	(*)	.13	.28
<u>Academic program students</u>													
All languages	.04	.09	.04	.09	.05	.04	.04	.05	.06	.06	.08	.05	.07
Spanish	.03	.06	.03	.07	.07	.05	.07	.04	.05	.06	.12	.04	.06
French	.05	.05	.06	.08	.09	.08	.10	.10	.08	.07	.16	.08	.11
German	.09	.19	.11	.17	.16	.18	.21	.23	.11	.17	.57	.11	.23
Latin	.06	.05	.08	.12	.15	.14	.34	.19	.15	.15	.33	.10	.18
Italian	.17	.27	.26	.26	(*)	(*)	(*)	.14	.38	(*)	(*)	.39	.24
Other	.10	.16	.14	.32	(*)	(*)	(*)	.38	.16	(*)	(*)	.14	.34

*Sample is inadequate for estimating standard error using the "PROC BRRVAR" program.

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Table 9.--Estimated standard errors (in Carnegie units) of means presented in table 7.

Language	All students	Sex		Race/ethnicity					Test score quartile			Planned college degree		
		Male	Female	Hispanic	White	Black	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Lowest	Middle two	Highest	Less than BS	BS	Advanced degree
<u>All students</u>														
All languages	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.04	0.05	0.12	0.07	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04
Spanish	.03	.04	.03	.07	.03	.05	.16	.09	.04	.02	.04	.03	.04	.04
French	.05	.06	.05	.07	.05	.07	.30	.18	.06	.05	.05	.05	.05	.06
German	.08	.07	.10	.19	.07	.45	(*)	.45	.24	.10	.09	.10	.11	.13
Latin	.06	.09	.08	.26	.06	.12	(*)	.13	.19	.08	.07	.09	.11	.08
Italian	.16	.20	.16	.49	.17	(*)	(*)	(*)	.64	.19	.30	.27	.24	.25
Other	.11	.15	.13	.29	.13	(*)	(*)	(*)	.20	.16	.15	.19	.20	.16
<u>Academic program students</u>														
All languages	.04	.05	.04	.11	.04	.07	(*)	.09	.10	.04	.04	.05	.04	.05
Spanish	.03	.05	.04	.13	.03	.07	(*)	.06	.09	.04	.05	.05	.05	.06
French	.05	.07	.06	.10	.05	.10	(*)	.15	.14	.07	.05	.09	.06	.06
German	.09	.09	.12	.32	.10	.51	(*)	.60	(*)	.16	.11	.19	.16	.15
Latin	.06	.10	.07	.30	.06	.12	(*)	.15	(*)	.10	.06	.14	.11	.08
Italian	.17	.22	.18	(*)	.22	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	.20	.31	.39	.30	.27
Other	.10	.13	.20	(*)	.13	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	.26	.17	.38	.22	.17

*Sample is inadequate for estimating standard error using the "PROC BRRVAR" program.

