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State Board of Education Supports 1-Year Moratorium On World Language High School Graduation Requirement

TRENTON - The State Board of Education today gave its support to a 1-year moratorium on the requirement that high school students take 10 credits of a world language to graduate.

The State Board adopted a resolution of intent to change current state regulations that students complete 10 credits in world languages. The 1-year moratorium on the world language high school graduation requirement is expected to receive final adoption in October. The regulations became effective with the 2001-02 ninth grade class this past September.

The amendment of the existing code allows district boards of education to exempt students in the 2001-02 and 2002-03 freshman class from the 10-credit requirement, thereby providing immediate relief to those school districts experiencing problems associated with the implementation of the world languages graduation requirement for the 2002-03 school year.

The State Board's intent to amend the code is based on programmatic dilemmas that the 10-credit world languages requirement is posing in some schools, particularly for students wishing to pursue study in the career/technical or practical arts or vocational-technical programs.

The State Board continues to show strong support for world languages as part of the state's Core Curriculum Content Standards. These standards emphasize the need to prepare students to achieve functional levels of proficiency in other languages and cultures in New Jersey's diverse community and global marketplace.

The one-year hiatus at the high school level would not prevent districts from offering or requiring world languages as a local graduation requirement, nor does it affect, in any way, the existing K-8 world languages requirement. The current requirement, that students in kindergarten through eighth grade take a world language, remains in effect.

The State Board is scheduled to review graduation requirements in all content areas after adoption of the new standards in December 2002. The focus will be the alignment of the graduation requirements to the revised standards.

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