

## Program Description and Objectives

The teaching of World Languages is mandated in grades K-8 by the state of New Jersey (NJAC 6A:8-1.1). <http://www.nj.gov/education/aps/cccs/wl/regs.htm>

### Foreign Language Exploratory (FLEX)

FLEX is a Spanish language-based program designed to promote practical communication skills, cultural awareness and global competence in all students.

Its focus is to cultivate useful, transferable skills such as confidence in learning and communication abilities, risk-taking, sensitivity and tolerance towards diverse peoples and cultures. It is performance-based rather than grammar- or vocabulary-list-based. Through exposure to engaging language concepts and culture, presented within a fun and meaningful context, we seek to develop practical communication skills while allowing students to grapple with the broader concepts of our global community.

### Our Objectives: *Encourage and support all students in the development of...*

- a curiosity about, an openness, and an appreciation for the Spanish-speaking world, other world cultures and the global community;
- good communication skills for any situation, such as listening carefully and empathizing;
- a range of skills necessary for becoming proficient in any foreign language, such as looking for clues, interpreting words in context, making connections and dealing with “foreign” situations;
- knowledge of their own culture and language through learning about another culture and language.

### Our Curriculum

The curriculum is organized in thematic and interdisciplinary units, which present content in a highly-accessible, sequential and cumulative manner. Students are expected to perform at the Novice-mid proficiency level which is in accordance with the benchmarks set by the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) standards and NJCCCS.

Young learners interact with the content in a dynamic and exciting way by exploring a different theme each year. Content is presented sequentially and cumulatively. However, the upward spiral design of the program allows students to comfortably enter the program at any point and be challenged at their immediate level. Differentiated instruction makes the learning meaningful to a wide variety of learners.

### Performance-based Assessment

Performance-Based Assessments are tasks that generate a more authentic assessment of a student’s knowledge, skills, and abilities by going beyond answering a multiple-choice question. With performance-based items, students can be presented with engaging real-life scenarios, technology enhanced items, open-ended questions, and constructed-response items that help them meaningfully demonstrate their acquisition and application of communication skills, cultural knowledge and work habits.

Traditional testing helps answer the question, “Do you know it?” while performance assessment helps answer the question, “How well can you use what you know?”