

Part III Application Narrative:

A. Need for the Project -

The Bremen City School District is located in rural Haralson County, Georgia and is an independently operated system with one school at each of three organizational levels (elementary, middle, and secondary). By all defining criteria, ours is an exceptionally small school system with typically accompanying limitations and benefits that are associated with reduced enrollment. Our community is in transition, moving from a geographical dependency on textile and clothing manufacturing industries that have suffered from foreign competitions and failed, in recent years, bringing about a significant employment base decline and a trend toward becoming a commuter/bedroom community. With this trend comes a decline in local tax base to support community services, including education.

On the other hand, there is growing public awareness of our need to provide educational services geared toward preparing students to compete and succeed, not just in our immediate geographic area or state but nationally and globally as well. It becomes increasingly more evident to the citizens of this community that we must “retool” for an emerging industrial and business climate that depends upon technology and the doors being opened to national and foreign trade related opportunity for our young people in Bremen. This growing awareness and acceptance of that fact brings increased recognition of the importance of foreign language proficiency as an element in the formula for our students’ success.

At present, our school district can offer foreign language instruction only at the secondary level with two part-time teachers. This, again, is due to the lack of resources (fiscal, human, and material) generated on the basis of system population size. Neighboring systems

with greater enrollment have been able to extend foreign language programming into the elementary and middle grades levels, and we certainly would like to follow suit. Our application for federal assistance represents a commitment to the provision of equal access to the opportunity for our students and an attempt to build the continuing capacity for the development of foreign language proficiency beginning at the primary "building block" levels and progressing through the stages leading to their graduation from school and beyond.

Continuing capacity to provide the full range of foreign language programs for all of our students depends largely on timing and setting the stage. There is a documented growth trend in our community in the areas of industrial development and in housing starts. Our geographic proximity to Atlanta (45 miles west) puts us in the path of population and economic growth and the tax base related resources that follow. A part of attracting both families and industries hinges on the program offerings and the general quality of our school system and the addition of a comprehensive program of foreign language instruction, Pre-K through grade 12, would obviously enhance both the perception and reality of our system's quality and ability to deliver. Under these circumstances, then, the issue for us is one of getting started and putting a program in place now rather than later. Now, in our view, is more favorable in that it gives the students currently enrolled an equal opportunity and contributes to the necessary tax base growth needed to sustain foreign language instruction across academic levels in the future.

The need for implementing foreign language exposure and direct instruction at the elementary and middle grades levels obviously goes beyond the role it may play in bringing growth to our community. The larger and more critical reasons lie in the needs of our students, their parents, and the local community we serve. As noted above, the students need to be given equal access to the educational advantages that their peers in other school districts enjoy. This

need is actually their right and becomes even more critical in the light of current job market projections that indicate the future demands of an increasingly global economy and market place. We believe that in order to compete and succeed in industry and business of the future, our students need to be given expanded opportunities for a more well-rounded educational experience, including being taught foreign language proficiency at each level where the prerequisite and foundation skill building elements are so important.

It is clear that without early exposure and instruction, children will not develop the foundations for learning foreign language noted above. In addition, research indicates that failure to lay the ground work for learning foreign language also has a documented link to future academic achievement, not just in acquisition of foreign language skills, but across the board. That research indicates three important factors that also underlie our need for assistance. First: when the optimum time to begin learning a second language is in elementary school, when it is at an early age that children have the ability to learn and excel in foreign language acquisition skills, including pronunciation, and when it is the time that children are most open to appreciating and valuing a culture other than their own: our system is unable to provide the resources and personnel required to do what is indicated as “best practice.” A second suggests that foreign language study can increase students’ capacity for critical thinking, mental flexibility, creativity, tolerance, and problem solving skills. Again, we are presently unable to offer this opportunity and advantage to the children we serve. Finally, research shows that children who study foreign language in elementary school show significant achievement gains and score higher on standardized tests of reading, language arts, and mathematics than those who do not. At this point in time, the children in Bremen schools do not.

Our students do relatively well on standardized tests of academic achievement, but there is room for improvement in all basic academic skill areas. We certainly would want the children served in our schools to have every advantage and opportunity to excel, but our concern with not providing pre-requisite exposure and age appropriate foreign language acquisition skills development goes beyond the immediate to the later stages and levels of learning. Our experience, after years of introducing limited foreign language instruction exclusively at the secondary level, has been that many students opt out of taking these courses and that those who do participate often struggle with learning and fail to reach a full level of proficiency.

Finally, with regard to our need, follow-up data on our graduates indicates that even those who successfully complete their high school foreign language courses and go on to college or university are avoiding taking more or are failing to make the grade in their studies at that level. On the basis of our not being able to provide foreign language exposure and instruction at the foundation building levels of a child's educational experience, we are compounding our failure to do so at the subsequent levels. As we have indicated in expressing our view of the price being paid for not providing a full complement of foreign language programs at all levels, we are seeing the outcomes first hand.

The magnitude of the need in this school district, the extent to which there are gaps or weaknesses in services, and the lack of organizational structures and/or opportunities are evident in what we have already presented. No opportunity for instruction exists at all other than at the secondary level and only two courses are offered for each of the foreign languages (Spanish and French) taught alternately at our high school by teachers who have instructional responsibilities in other content areas as well. There are no foreign language acquisition or exposure programs at either the middle or elementary school level. Perhaps the magnitude of our need can be seen

most clearly in the fact that no staff at either or our lower levels has any formal preparation or special training in the area of foreign languages beyond the minimal college course of study requirements. In the light of that fact, our needs in the area of staff development and in-service training emerge as primary in terms of our preparedness for developing and implementing appropriate foreign language programs for all of our students.

Setting the stage for a full continuum of foreign language acquisition skills development services across all grade levels is a major undertaking where no foundation in practice exists, and our experience is limited. In order to build the capacity for the development and implementation of quality foreign language programs, we will first have to address the staff development needs noted above, needs that differ according to the age of the children being taught and the nature of the program to be offered. Secondly, the appropriate lesson plans and supportive instructional materials will need to be developed or provided at each level of delivery in accord with the age specific needs and capacities of the students being served. In both regards our partnership with the neighboring State University of West Georgia, with both the Language Department and their School of Education, should serve to guide us and provide a base of experience found lacking in our system. We will also need to expand our support and advisory network to include other school district personnel with experience in practice, Georgia Department of Education staff with expertise specific to our needs, and the Regional Educational Services Agencies that have served well in similar undertakings in the past. Our intent is to involve the support network in strategic planning, advisory, and decision-making functions associated with building a comprehensive foreign language instruction program across all grades. We see the establishment of this network as an essential element in setting the stage for quality programming.

Community preparation and involvement components of the process we envision make up a final set of considerations with regard to the magnitude of our need. In spite of the fact that, at present, our community has no population whose native language is other than English (1% countywide), we realize that change could come rapidly as it has to other school districts in our state. A good base of foreign language preparedness would be a great asset for everyone involved if population demographics changed. Having personnel with experience and expertise to know how to turn a sudden shift in linguistic diversity to the advantage of all concerned, to see it as an opportunity and not as adversity, would be a clear benefit in that event.

On the other side of that coin, we intend to invite our community into this process of planning and capacity building and further intend to take full advantage of a base of experience and knowledge that we are only now beginning to discover and enlist. From this perspective, a local community network of citizens with foreign language proficiency and/or the rich knowledge that comes with travel and exposure to other cultures can be seen as an essential contributor to the programs that we are attempting to build. From the standpoint of appreciation of other cultures, exposure to the experience of others, and/or the supportive roles that some in our community might play in the delivery of quality foreign language instruction; direct community awareness, invitation, and involvement can be seen to be of great potential benefit. Our community has a tradition and documented history of similar community involvement processes that have paid great benefits (i.e., volunteer readers). There are many in this community who can contribute, and we need to find and invite them all to be involved.

Significance of the Project –

The issue of sustaining the foreign language exposure and instructional initiative in Bremen, once begun, was discussed briefly in the preceding section presenting our needs and the justification for assistance. Much of what is needed to put the proposed process in place can be considered “up front” or starting costs. The development and implementation of a series of staff development and training procedures can certainly be considered as such. The same condition applies to the provision of instructional resources and materials identified as needed to insure quality of programming and for reaching our ultimate goal of foreign language proficiency. The community awareness and involvement elements discussed earlier are also, for the most part, processes that, once set into motion, are established as means to the outcomes we have targeted.

Of course each of the elements noted above are recognized as requiring continuing attention and emphasis, but can also be viewed as a part of the initial activity in setting the stage for ongoing implementation. First and foremost, we would look to federal assistance resources for support in establishing the foundations for continuing programs and foreign language service delivery. When the systems and structures for carrying out the programs are set into place, the needs for fiscal and material resources are lessened to a significant degree. At that point, school system resources for staff development, the provision of instructional materials, and for coordinating community and partnership involvement could be relied upon to a larger extent.

Particularly at the outset, the provision of qualified personnel to carry out the foreign language acquisition skills development activities being proposed represent a major area of continuing costs in terms of both money and time. As allowed for in the grant guidelines, we do intend to provide for some of these personnel needs through the use of grant funds. Given the tax base and resource pool conditions spelled out earlier, we have no other options at present.

The model we are building toward calls for the use of foreign language certified personnel at all levels where direct instruction occurs (at grades 3-12), and we recognize that the approach calls for considerable continuing costs. At the levels (Pre-K – 2) where the focus is primarily on exposure, on weaving the fabric of linguistic receptivity, we also know that continuing activity in response to staff change will be required. Here the characteristics of our school system with very little staff attrition and system size have a beneficial effect on continuing costs. In simple terms, it will take fewer teachers and the need to train new staff will be less in our district than would occur in larger ones. Nevertheless, the issue of sustained programming, beyond the grant period, requires further attention.

Our best opportunity for sustained services rests with future enrollment growth and area economic development. As indicated earlier, signs of that happening can already be seen in industry location and housing start indicators in our community. In our view, it is just a matter of time before the resources for continuing this foreign language education initiative will be more readily available. A second consideration emerges when looking ahead toward sustained services. Our experience with other curriculum expansions and enrichments in the past leads us to believe that community expectations play a major role in driving the allotment of existing resources and the establishment of curricular priorities. Given an awareness of the importance of this process to the future success and competitiveness of our students in the employment market conditions being projected, it is our belief that the community will support the continued provisions of foreign language education in Bremen. An ongoing partnership with the Southwire Company, a multi-national corporation with a keen understanding of the increasing need for foreign language proficiency, has led to their support of improved preparation for employment initiatives in our schools in the past, and we believe that we can expect them to lend support in

this undertaking also. With our growing potential for generating increased state and federal resources through the established, long term mechanisms and developing local support, we are confident that we can sustain this effort beyond the stage setting phases that the Federal Foreign Language Grant can assist us through.

As additional modern industries and businesses come to our community, the potential pool for partnership support gets deeper. We fully intend to continue and expand our efforts to build new partnerships with the private sector and with other organizations and agencies with a stake in the future and in the effectiveness of our school system. In addition to our present interactions with the area unit of the State University System, there are two emerging developments that should have a major impact on our ability to sustain and even expand foreign language programs. A satellite campus of Floyd College has located in our county and brings additional experience and expertise to the local picture. Sharing of staff with credentials in foreign language education looms as a realistic possibility and is already occurring as our teachers perform part-time roles for the Floyd institution. A second, the planned and confirmed location of a comprehensive, high-tech oriented unit of the State Vocational-Technical network of facilities in our county brings additional promise of opportunities to share resources, personnel, and to expand access to during and post –secondary experiences and programs with a stated emphasis on preparation for careers in an increasingly global economy. Again, the timing of our present efforts emerges as a big factor. If our educators and students are to be included in the “loop” of opportunities that is growing and expanding in this community, we must not wait to set the stage for our informed participation, for making our share in the contributions required, and for joining fully in the larger circle being drawn.

The emphasis in Georgia is on the operation of a seamless system of educational opportunities and curricular levels, on flexibility of movement between the various units and levels, and on shared resources and responsibilities being coordinated and articulated across programs and levels of flexibility of movement between and the transfer of credit from one to another. In the immediate future, this structural emphasis could have a profound effect on our curriculum and instructional programs including foreign language, particularly at the secondary level. This could also impact our decisions with regard to use of personnel across instructional levels in the middle and high schools.

This brings up a final point regarding the sustainability and impact of our efforts. For the coming academic year, the middle and high schools are exploring coordinated scheduling options that would allow for curricular expansions and enrichments at both levels. Exploratory course offerings at the middle school are being planned which include all students having foreign language instruction. At the high school level, the scheduling models under considerations provide expanded access to foreign language coursework, and as our capacity builds to additional language offerings beyond our present Spanish and French courses and/or additional levels of instruction from two to four course sequences. Again, as our readiness and experience builds, we are committed to exploring distance learning and coursework exchange options to reach our goal of increasing access, opportunity and choice.

The approach to foreign language instruction that we are proposing has great potential for being disseminated to and adopted by other local school districts. It involves beginning at the Pre-K through 2nd grade levels with activities aimed at exposure and at building receptive readiness. It moves at the 3rd grade level and beyond to a sequential language instruction program which progresses through spiraled, curriculum-based stages throughout a student's

educational career (3 – 12). It is designed to allow for seamless movement from stage to stage, to focus first on Spanish as the initial learning target, and to expand to other languages at the 8th through 12th grade levels. It takes advantage of communications media (i.e. The Georgia Public Television “SALSA” programming aimed at introducing the Spanish language at primary and elementary levels) to expand opportunities and resource efficiency. Whenever direct foreign language instruction is involved, our approach calls for the direct involvement of a teacher with language specific credentials. The model allows for the use of full-time, shared, and/or part-time personnel as appropriate and realistic. We believe that the model minimizes continuing resource demands, and it is, by design, in full keeping with the seamless educational services system being promoted in Georgia and other states. In our view it incorporates research based best practice, and has an additional generalized positive effect on student performance in the essential basic academic skills as well as on language learning.

As we have with other innovations and model/pilot initiatives, we welcome the opportunity to serve as a demonstration site for other local education agencies to visit and observe, to provide directions and guidelines for others to follow in establishing similar programs, and to communicate and distribute information on program outcomes in our community and on a state-wide and national basis. We expect that, particularly for smaller rural school districts, our approach will have specific significance, commonality, applicability, and potential for duplication. Size alone, however, does not dictate the usefulness and application of the design structures being proposed. Our approach is based on the documented experience of others and on what has been learned in practice, and we fully expect to continue in that tradition of information exchange in sharing our procedures and results with others. Much of it will be adaptable and applicable to other local education agencies irrespective of their locations or

demographic status. We have drawn on research-based best practice and hope to add to the bank of information for others to draw on.

A final point with regard to the exportability of the proposed approach deserves some mention. As the generalized positive effects of foreign language exposure and instruction on core basic skills development in language arts, reading, writing and mathematics become apparent in our community and in others with similar initiatives, there will be an increasing demand for models and proven approaches to guide duplication and adoption sites. The growing recognition of the relationship between language learning and other basic skills, and the state and national trends toward educational accountability will drive the demand for models to adopt even higher. We believe that our proposed foreign language exposure and instructional approach will result in the predicted other basic skills development and student performance improvements, and when that “news gets out,” others will come looking for what we are doing right. Again, we want to be doing what we know is in the best interest of our students and are ready to assume a role in helping others do the same for their students.

C. The Quality of the Project Design -

The overall quality and comprehensive nature of our proposed project design can be viewed in the goals, objectives, and benchmarks for determining students’ progress to be identified as follows. They reflect the sequential and spiraled design elements that we have developed in our planning to this point and are demonstrative of our attempt to address both exposure to and development of foreign language acquisition skills in an age/level appropriate fashion. The general goals and specific instructional objectives are directly related to the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum, recently revised to take Foreign language learning more

completely into account. At levels where initial exposures are the primary emphasis a complete absence of direct language acquisition skills related instruction is not implied or intended. Rather, the focus at those primary levels (Pre-k through 2nd) is on building the foundations for later, more complex learning that leads to real acquisition and proficiency. Thus, the emphasis at those levels is less on speaking and proficient use and more on weaving the underlying fabric for making acquisitions possible and on increasing actual communicative use as time goes on. This building sequential approach appears to be supported in research related to learning our own as well as foreign languages. It is theoretically in line with language development structures and practices regardless of the origin of the language being learned. As the stages of learning progress, the shift from exposure to proficiency and usage shifts with it, from gradual to accelerated, and the scope of the curriculum and corresponding course offerings move toward expanded levels of learning (four course sequences in one language) and increased opportunities and exposure (the addition of other languages). We envision a time, with increased access to direct instructional resources and personnel, distance learning connectivity, and instructional exchange programs, that we will be able to offer language instruction that has seemed beyond our reach in the past (i.e., Russian, Japanese, Arabic, etc.)

The general goals that we are proposing to guide our process of program development and implementation are stated below:

1. To increase access and exposure to foreign language acquisition skill development programming for Pre-K through 2nd grade students as evidenced by curriculum guides, written lesson plans, and observed practice.
2. To increase equality of access to direct foreign language instruction for upper elementary (3rd – 5th), middle grades (6th – 8th), and secondary (9th – 12th) students as

- evidenced in curriculum guides, lesson plans, published course offerings, and observed practice.
3. To provide foreign language certified personnel in numbers sufficient for the delivery of direct instruction across the ten grade levels specified (3rd – 12th) as evidenced by staff assignment rosters.
 4. To provide the staff development and training required to allow for informed participation of all system involved in planning, developing, and implementing programs that involve foreign language/other culture exposures, direct instruction, and/or the applied cross curricular integration of foreign language skills in other academic or vocational courses of study (i.e., foreign language proficiency and global economics) as evidenced by records of course completion, training participation, certification, and teacher observation.
 5. To increase the percentage of students who opt to participate and succeed in foreign language course offerings as compared to baseline and year-to-year indicators of enrollment, completion, and performance.
 6. To increase the percentage of students who opt to continue their involvement and succeed in foreign language studies in traditional post secondary settings during or following their graduation from high school as indicated by records of enrollment, completion, and performance.
 7. To increase community involvement and direct participation in the foreign language learning activities of our school system as evidenced by records of participation, planning meeting minutes, community training involvement, and questionnaire/checklist feedback.

Specific instructional objectives are being based on the Georgia Quality Curriculum (QCC) and the Standards in Foreign Language Education developed by a group of foreign language professional organizations funded by the U. S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities and published as *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century*. The foreign language competencies specified in the Georgia QCC were correlated with those standards noted above. At the elementary level (Pre-K through 5th grade) for example, in a spiraled and developmentally sequential process, students would begin and build on their foreign language experiences according to a scheme of activities based on the following points of focus in the standards summarized as follows:

COMMUNICATION: Communicate in Languages Other Than English

Standard 1.1: Students engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange options.

Standard 1.2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

Standard 1.3: Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

CULTURES: Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

CONNECTIONS: Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

Standards 3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Standards 3.2: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are available only through the foreign language and its cultures.

COMPARISONS: Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

Standard 4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studies and their own.

Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

COMMUNITIES: Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World

Standard 5.1: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

Standard 5.2: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

It may be important to note that, in this spiraled and developmentally sequenced design structure, instructional time expenditures go up as the process progresses up through the grade levels involved. Again, this design element is in keeping with the need to build broad and less specialized learning foundations. AT the lower levels, integration across curriculum content areas may be most critical but, as the example above shows, may also be more easily accomplished. The focus on curricular integration and applications is continued, however, throughout the levels of the approach that we are proposing.

As in the example at the elementary level, specific instructional objectives, designed to be measurable and assessed on an ongoing basis, are founded on the Georgia QCC and the Standards for Foreign Language Learning. Further examples of how these translate into instructional practice at the middle grades and secondary levels are presented below.

The curriculum plan for the middle school at each of its three grade levels is as follows:

Grade 6: Continuation of sequential program with more formal language development in reading and writing to complement students' listening and speaking skills developed during the elementary program

Grade 7: Continuation of sequential program with more formal language development in reading and writing to complement students' listening and speaking skills developed during the elementary program

Grade 8: Continuation of sequential program with more formal language development in reading and writing to complement students' listening and speaking skills developed during the elementary program (Proficiency test will be given to students at end of eighth grade to determine foreign language placement in high school.)

At the secondary levels (9th - 12th) language specific content objectives are identified in the Georgia QCC for each of the commonly offered courses of studies (i.e., Latin, Spanish, French, etc.) and proficiency levels (I, II, III, & IV), and these will be used to guide instruction and performance assessment. A full presentation of each of these individual language specific sets of objectives and competencies is not possible with the page number guidelines for this application, but they are designed to be measurable and to reflect a sequential progression of the proficiency of the students engaged in the courses of study that they represent.

Continuing with the curriculum model that demonstrates the full cross level instructional articulation from elementary through secondary grade levels, a brief description of the secondary curriculum structure is offered below:

Grade 9: Modern Foreign Language Level 2 or Modern Foreign Language Level 3 (At the beginning of high school, students from ESFL Model Program and students from other sequential FLES programs, according to their placement, will be "merged" into classrooms with other high school students.)

Grade 10: Modern Foreign Language Level 3 or Modern Foreign Language Level 4

Grade 11: Modern Foreign Language Level 4 or Modern Foreign Language Level 5 or Modern Foreign Language AP

Grade 12: Modern Foreign Language Level 5 or Modern Language AP or World Seminar or Modern Foreign Language for Business, Law, or Translation (i.e., career-related) or Content-area taught in second language (ex. Civilization, Literature, Chemistry, History, Algebra, Art)

At both the middle grades and secondary levels instructional guidelines are being suggested for teachers of foreign languages. The basic tenets are listed below:

- Teach 98 - 100% of the time in the target language.
- Use the target language for classroom management as well as for instruction.
- Avoid using translation as a tool for clarifying meaning.
- Help learners to clarify meaning and express understanding without translation.
- Provide learners with a rich target language environment that includes extended listening opportunities such as narration, descriptions, and explanations.

- Provide learners with meaningful concrete experiences, making extensive use of visuals, props, realia, and hands-on activities

In order to communicate some sense of the measurability of the sequenced objectives and the way in which they are logically sequenced, a few examples from specific grade levels are provided for our readers' review.

K: Students will communicate orally using phrases and simple sentences.

2ND: Students will ask for information and make requests from teachers and other language speakers.

4th: Students will write short texts on topics of personal interest, such as letters and illustrated stories.

6th: Students will describe in oral and written form a sequence of events in present and future tense.

8th: Students will create oral and written questions to seek explanations and expanded information.

Note: The entry level for the secondary level is identified as proficiency Level II and progresses through Level V. The next examples are illustrative of the secondary level progression.

Level II - Expands listening, speaking, reading and writing skills to communicate information about daily life and activities appropriate to the novice - high to intermediate - low proficiency range.

Level III - Goes beyond immediate events to name, narrate, and describe in oral and written language appropriate to the intermediate - low to the intermediate mid-proficiency range.

The full sequence of objectives and benchmarks for assessing progress and placement into the appropriate stage of the process is based on the following assumptions:

- Student performances are supported by appropriate scaffolding and guidance on the part of the teacher.
- Students have been in the program at least from the beginning of the year.
- Accommodations must be made for special needs students and for students who have been in the program less than the full year.
- Some objectives may appear later for Japanese students.

It is apparent that an approach of this complexity and prerequisite progression dependency will have to be phased in over time before it can be implemented in its fullest sense. We are, for that reason, proposing an interim process which allows for the time needed to put the full model in place and provides for the needs of students who are at varied levels and stages of the progression. It involves adapting the model to allow students to move forward from the point that they come in, providing modifications of instruction to meet the needs of students of all ability levels and/or with disabilities, and accelerating instruction where appropriate to maximize the interim benefits for our present populations of students at every level and for those who transfer in. The interim phase model may need to rely on before and after school approaches to instruction and the use of technological support to help address gaps in student levels of preparation and learning experience.

Our proposed model, in its full and interim forms, has potential for exportability, replication, and dissemination to other local education agencies because of the specified curriculum components and coordinated sequences of objectives for foreign language proficiency. Realistically, that potential may be greater in our own state than others due to the

common familiarity with the Georgia QCC in which this model is based. In spite of that, however, our proposed approach and its foundations in the Standards for Foreign Language Learning are generally applicable in other school districts in other states. The basic levels and principles included in the applied for project model are based in research supported effective foreign language proficiency development practices, and can be adopted in and adapted to school settings across varied localities.

D. Quality of Project Services -

The project being proposed, by the very nature and intent, insures equal access to foreign language education services and the resulting benefits for all students in our school districts without regard to gender, grade or age, national origin, race, economic status, disability, or other characteristic thought to create an educationally at-risk condition. It is designed to serve all of our students and to provide educational support for students who may have such needs to further insure equal opportunity to participate and to succeed. The approach is based in raised expectations and academic demands and balanced by elements for supporting learning, modifying and adapting instruction in accord with students' special needs, and technologically enhanced instruction mechanisms for further insuring learning reinforcement and instructional acceleration. No students will be denied the opportunity to participate, and the same assurance exists for the personnel, parents, and community members involved.

The developmentally sequenced approach to foreign language instruction is appropriate for a broad range of student abilities and addresses generic student group needs as well as those of individuals. First and foremost, the proposed project provides access to foreign language learning opportunities and services that are not presently possible. Instructional support systems,

including the use of technology, before and after school programs, and methods to accelerate learning, further insure the appropriate match of services with the needs of the students involved. As is generally true when enrichment of educational opportunities occurs, the benefits of this project spread beyond the children to their parents and the community at large. The specific needs of the direct recipients (students and educators) and the incidental beneficiaries of the proposed foreign language education services (parents and the community) are served appropriately by the process under consideration here.

The generalized effectiveness of providing foreign language instruction has been documented by recent research studies. Dr. Carol Saunders recently completed research which compares the Iowa Test of Basic Skills scores of third graders who have participated in programs based on the Georgia Elementary School Foreign Language model with similar third grade (non-foreign language) students. The findings have shown that the participating students scored higher in reading and significantly higher in mathematics than did the unserved control group population. It is anticipated that by fifth grade, the scores in reading and math will show even greater gains.

Based on the alignment of the approach to foreign language learning with established language development "best practice," the inclusion of early exposure and developmentally sequenced instruction is also supported by research as sound and effective methodology. The foreign language learning specific studies indicate that students, who have been involved with other language learning early on, learn the basic and the subsequent complex foreign language proficiency skills more readily than those who have not been involved in an elementary level program. The research also indicates that early involvement and continuing sequenced

instruction has a positive effect on students' motivation to learn foreign languages and on their being enrolled in courses at the secondary level and beyond.

Consideration of the addition, expansion, and enrichment of foreign language learning programming grew out of our local commitment to involve the students in Bremen in a challenging academic curriculum based on rigorous standards and significantly raised performance expectations. The research cited above indicates both generalized and language learning specific gains for participating students who will certainly bring their performance indicators more closely in line with increasingly rigorous academic demands and standards. We fully intend to assess our progress toward reaching raised academic standards and expect to produce results in keeping with the research base.

E. Quality of Project Personnel -

As a matter of practice, applications for employment in this school district are invited in keeping with nondiscrimination guidelines. No applicant will be excluded from equal consideration on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. Applications will be considered on the basis of qualifications alone.

The system level Assistant Superintendent/Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development services will act as primary project director and will perform a coordination role across the school levels involved. The director's educational credentials include an undergraduate degree in secondary education, and master's level degrees in guidance and counseling and special education. Dr. Boyd also earned an Ed.D. degree in curriculum and instructional leadership. He has participated in extensive training related to educational assessment, effective schools research, and curricular alignment. In his thirty-one year career in

public education, experiences include having studied foreign language (Spanish) for five years in high school and college, having taught in middle grades and at the secondary level in regular classroom settings and at all levels (pre-school - 12th) in special education classrooms and programs for at-risk and special needs learners, having served as a director of special education and other federally supported programs, and serving in his present role as assistant superintendent to direct instruction, curriculum, and staff development. This individual will also take primary responsibility for project evaluation.

Key project personnel that are presently employed in our school district are our only two certified teachers in the area of foreign language assigned at the high school, building level administrators, and language arts lead teachers. With the exception of the foreign language certified teachers, the credentials of key people are based in more general areas of educational planning and program development, but all of these individuals are capable of learning and applying the essential concepts to participate and contribute on an informed level and to provide appropriate building level direction. All are masters degree level certified and most hold specialist degrees and all are in a teaching experience range of fifteen to twenty years. Since the model that we propose calls for certified teachers in the direct instructional roles, we will recruit fully qualified educators to perform in those roles. Other involved personnel and those called upon to provide the program elements related to early exposure and rudimentary instruction (building the foundation) will be required to complete appropriate staff development experience and activities that this federal assistance will allow us to develop and implement. Ongoing professional development access for all key personnel is a major element in the model being proposed.

F. Adequacy of Resources -

The proposed budget requests resources in sufficient amounts to adequately support the project processes that set the stage for services and the phased in implementation of direct instruction elements of the approach outlined in our application. The funding level requested insures the provision of planning and development advisory consultation, staff development and training, and the personnel required to implement the project procedures as designed, over time. It also, in the process of reaching full implementation, provides for interim procedures that use existing staff and fiscal resources to build and expand foreign language education services and to give access to the developing range of services to students who had no opportunity to be involved in the full compliment of program elements being set in place. For some time to come, the primary focus will be on building capacity for foreign language instruction at the elementary and middle grades (3rd - 8th). This is viewed as essential to reaching the ultimate goal of a sequenced foreign language learning program Pre-K to 12th. Please refer to the proposed budget for more detailed information.

We believe that the costs accounted for in the budget are reasonable in relation to the complexity and comprehensive nature of the approach being proposed and the goals set forth in our application. The design calls for curricular and instructional restructuring of sufficient magnitude to require significant costs for the start-up stages of the model applied for. On the other hand, the design is based on current and documented research effectiveness in improving student achievement. As indicated earlier, the potential for this project serving as a model demonstration and training site for other local education agencies, particularly small to mid-sized ones, is great. In the process of planning for and making application for this grant, we were unable to find a comparable school district engaged in "doing the whole job and doing it right,"

in line with the "best practice" that the research implies. We invite the opportunity to serve in that capacity, as a model system, in our region of the nation and beyond.

On the basis of the resource limitations of our school system presented in a preceding section of our narrative, we are requesting consideration of a waiver from the LEA share of costs set at fifty percent. This is particularly critical to our situation if the matching amount must be set aside in cash and does not include in-kind contribution categories, including existing staff time, volunteer services, use of facilities and equipment, materials donations, and other similar non-monetary resources. Every possible attempt will be made to support the project with state and local fiscal resources to the fullest extent possible, but the fifty- percent share is prohibitive to our system under the circumstances if cash match is required.

G. Quality of the Management Plan -

An undertaking of this magnitude requires direction, coordination, and systematic management at every level, across school sites and community involvement, within the schools and across age/grade levels, and beyond the community in establishing a broad network of support and advisory input. To this end, the primary project director, from his central administrative base of operations, is responsible for facilitating and coordinating community awareness and involvement elements, cross-school planning and curriculum articulation, resource development, and fiscal management functions. Twenty percent of this individual's time will be assigned and devoted to carrying out the roles and responsibilities specified above throughout the thirty-six month developmental and initial implementation stages of project process.

At the next level, in the elementary and middle schools, the primary direction roles are being given to the instructional leaders at those sites, the school principals. Advised and assisted by their grade level lead teachers, these individuals will direct planning, program development, program activity, level specific staff development and training, and will provide the supportive supervision required for quality services delivery in keeping with established guidelines and time schedules for setting the project in motion. Given the complexity of the process, it is estimated that project specific responsibilities will require time commitments of ten percent from the principals and planning teams involved.

At the frontline/classroom level, where foreign language exposure is the focus, well-trained and qualified teachers will devote approximately ten percent of their planning and instructional time to weaving the fabric for foreign language learning. Where accompanying direct instruction is occurring for the first time (2nd - 8th), one teacher at the elementary level (2nd - 5th) and one half time at the middle grades (6th - 8th) will be assigned to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of project services. Secondary foreign language teachers will assist and advise as called for, meeting to discuss and hear recommendation on a biweekly basis.

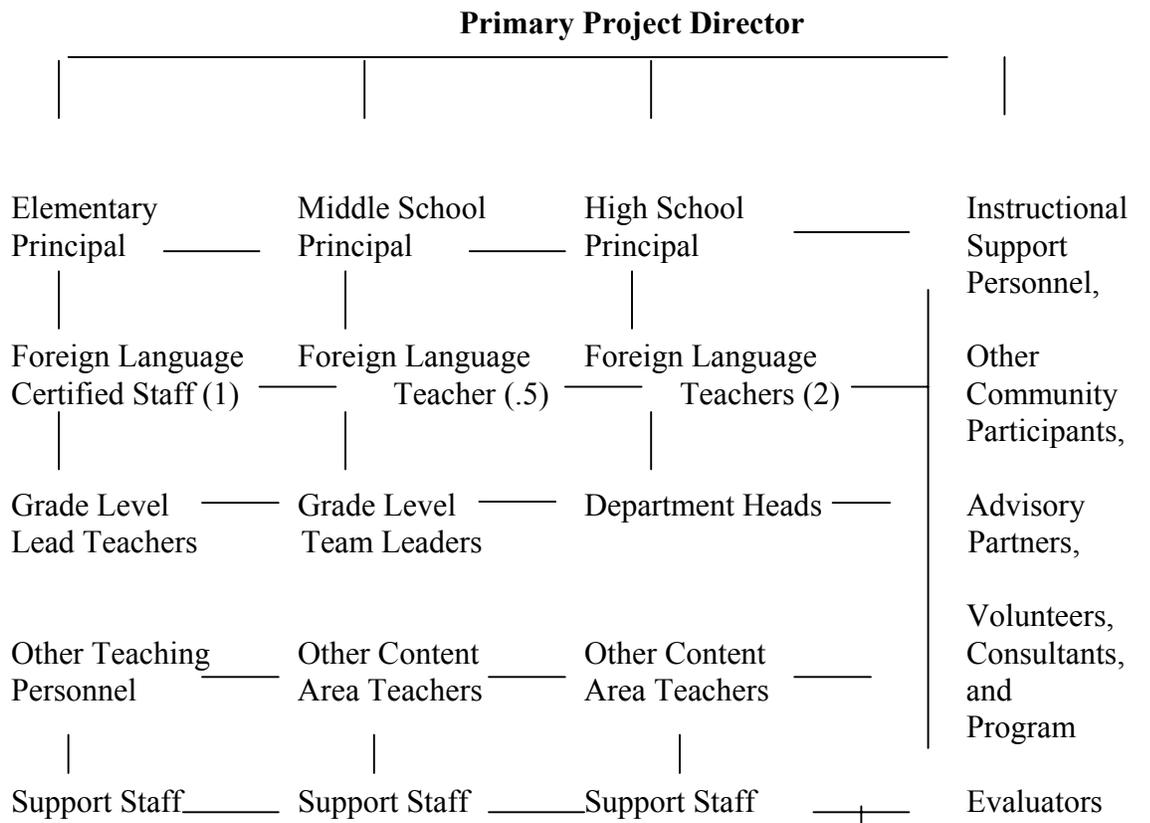
Other school and central level support staff will contribute as their areas of expertise interact with the proposed project processes and related strategies. Media specialists, for example, will support the project by providing access to print audiovisual, and multi-media materials for students and teachers, the technology coordinator will provide advisory directions and direct facilitation in the area of technologically enriched and individualized teaching and learning approaches and accompanying staff development, and special education staff will provide consultation and facilitation in the implementation of the learning support systems that help to ensure equal access and opportunity for students with disabilities and special needs.

Instructional lead teachers and administrators will team up to guide instructional practice, modifications, staff development and integration of foreign language instruction with other academic content areas. As it is with other curriculum areas, everyone has a role to play in carrying out the program that we are proposing, and the effort will require a system-wide team approach.

Parents and other involved community members will play active roles in planning, implementing, and evaluating the progress and outcomes of the project. Particularly those individuals with foreign language proficiencies and first-hand familiarity with other cultures will perform roles related to providing exposure experiences for students and supplementing direct instruction. For example, a developing partnering relationship with a Japan based company recently located in Bremen holds great promise for developing mutually beneficial exchanges. We are exploring agreements which will result in Japanese speaking employees being in our schools performing the roles noted above and our system serving in return by providing specialized technological and job-related skills instruction which the Honda facility employees have had a hand in developing. In our view, this example represents the ideal in community involvement and exchange.

With the numbers of people in active involvement roles, managerial orchestration becomes an essential element, and this brings the management plan full circle. Leadership and coordination in this respect shifts back to the primary project director at the central administrative level in keeping with the responsibilities and functions that he has and continues to be assigned in. Dr. Boyd's experience, with a strong suit in instructional leadership and coordination/team building skills, and his direct involvement improves the likelihood of project success.

The organizational chart presented below represents our attempt to illustrate the management and coordination flow of the proposed project. It further represents the commitment to a team approach and, where direct services are involved, to site-based management.



The chart above illustrates horizontal and vertical lines of communication, interaction, and coordination and the circular spiraled nature of the management plan and the team process that it implies.

Another illustration related to time management and scheduled stages should assist in seeing the picture more clearly. It is important to understand at the outset that two implementation processes will be taking place at the same time, one aimed at building the model from bottom to top in terms of age and grade (Pre-K - 12th) and another in interim adapted form to avoid not giving our current student populations the same access and opportunity that those to follow will have. It is the best that can be done under the circumstances and brings benefits, not only to the interim period student population, but also in terms of laying foundations and

groundwork for full cyclical implementation down the road. The decision to pursue both pathways was based in more than a view that "something is better than nothing." To the contrary, it emerged from a belief that adopted and accelerated implementation across all levels can be accomplished while the full model evolves and that it can be done effectively and to the direct benefit of our students.

It is apparent that it will take several years to establish the full model (K -12th). The following timeline, however, will capture realistic and systematic activity across the next thirty-six months in keeping with the initial grant period. When the stage is appropriately set, including staff development and training, recruitment and employment of certified staff, community education and involvement, and like foundation building elements; the more global adoption process will occur as it only can, in a gradual evolutionary fashion. The next thirty-six months, on the other hand, are critical to setting the stage properly, to posturing for sustainability, and to the eventual outcome that we would like to see, the development of an optimally effective foreign language education program that "takes hold" and continues. In order to differentiate between steps to full implementation and interim processes and activities, those specific terms will be used.

YEAR ONE

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| Summer 1999:
(June to August) | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recruit and employ certified personnel2. Indicate Staff Development and Training3. Complete Community Awareness Campaign4. Complete 1st year Implementation Plan5. Focus on Resource and Partnership Development |
| School Year 1999-
2000:
(August to June) | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Initiate interim implementation at all elementary and middle grade levels (1st - 8th)2. Initiate full implementation (exposure and Georgia QCC based instruction at Pre-K levels) |

3. Initiate community education and involvement activities
4. Continue Staff Development and Training
5. Conduct ongoing program evaluation and assessment activities
6. Focus on Career Level Planning

YEAR TWO

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|--|--|
| <p>Summer 2000:
(June to August)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand and Build on Staff Development 2. Complete 1st year summative project evaluation and assessment report and publish results 3. Continue and expand community education and involvement activities 4. Refine and modify 2nd year Implementation Plans based on evaluation data and input of participants 5. Focus on expanding community involvement in classroom level of implementation activities |
| <p>School Year 2000-2001:
(August to June)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue modified interim implementation at levels 2nd - 8th 2. Continue full implementation at level K and expand to grade 3. Continue and expand community education and involvement and activity 4. Expand staff development and training activities 5. Continue ongoing project assessment and evaluation 6. Focus on integration of instruction at levels 2nd - 8th |

YEAR THREE

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|---|---|
| <p>Summer 2001:
(June to August)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue ongoing staff development and training activities 2. Complete 2nd year summative project evaluation and assessment report and publish results 3. Provide ongoing community education and involvement activities 4. Refine and modify 3rd year implementation plans 5. Focus on acceleration of instruction for interim group students |
| <p>School Year 2001-2002
(August to June)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue modified interim implementation at levels 3-8. 2. Continue full implementation at levels k-1 and expand to grade 2. 3. Provide on-going community education and involvement activities. 4. Provide on-going staff development and training. 5. Conduct on-going project evaluation and assessment activities. |

7. Focus on transition to the more rigorous foreign language proficiency at Grade 3 and accelerating instruction accordingly.

End of Grant
Period 2002
(June to July)

1. Continue all on-going project activity until completed.
2. Complete 3 year summative evaluation report and publish/disseminate results.
3. Focus on continuation and sustainability.

Though presented briefly, the full complexity and complement of elements are reflected in the timeline included above. The specific activities noted in the timeline are components of the model in and of themselves or are sub-elements of the larger project processes involved. They are intended to be viewed as interdependent and integrated parts of the whole. Any additional grant related products or requirements will be accomplished in the process of addressing these individual elements, according to the identified roles and responsibilities specified in the narrative and the supporting organizational flow chart as presented. Some specifics will be identified and included as the process unfolds and developed further over time. The basic structure for full implementation is cast in the Georgia QCC based plan for foreign language instruction, in the standards noted earlier, and in the information gained from our review of the research literature. Interim procedures are being developed and refined at present and are viewed as an ongoing process.

H. Quality of the Project Evaluation Plan:

The primary focus of the proposed project evaluation plan is on student achievement as measured against rigorous and challenging academic standards, general performance and that directly associated with foreign language learning. The specific methodologies being proposed include the use of nationally normed and standardized general academic performance instruments (i.e., Iowa Tests of Basic Skills) and others specific to the achievement of foreign

language proficiency. Further student oriented quantitative indicators will be drawn from state developed criterion referenced tests, student progress reports and grades, developmentally sequenced skills checklist based on Georgia curriculum guides and local enrichments developed at the system level, and on records of enrollments and completion of courses of studies in our schools and beyond graduation on the basis of the following information.

Further quantitative information can be gained from review of involvement and participation/completion records maintained for teachers, administrators, other staff, and community participants. Skill development data can also be gathered for involved educators by using a locally developed observation rating rubric.

Wherever it applies, a pre-/post-test model will be applied to our qualitative measurement design to provide summative data and point-to-point progress information, and ongoing processes will also be employed. Our goal is to gather and report relevant achievement information that can be used to plan and guide instruction and that is useful in improving services and programs for all students.

Our plan also calls for gathering qualitative information on our project from four key participant groups, students, parents, educators, and community members. Instruments (questionnaires, checklists, interview formats) drawn from other model programs and developed locally will assess change in attitudes, perceptions, and values placed on project processes (such as staff development and program effectiveness) and examine responses from all participant groups. This information can pinpoint, for example, where we may need to focus or redirect our community education, direct instructional, staff development, and similar efforts to bring about improved results. To carry this example further, as awareness and satisfaction of parents and community members improve, we believe that we can expect accompanying increases in

participation and involvement; and as teachers knowledge and skills rise in relation to foreign language instruction, we anticipate greater support and cooperative interaction and integration.

Each of our student goals and objectives are taken into account by this evaluation plan, and the information gained from following through on the assessment processes described should provide data in relation to our progress and position on a sequence of benchmarked stages. The proposed evaluation plan has general applicability in most school settings, perhaps greater in Georgia, but also across state and regional lines. In our view, the plan is both comprehensive and efficient. It relies on existing data gathering systems and does not have associated unreasonable monetary or time expenditure disadvantages. Certainly as a model program site, we will be willing and prepared to share instruments and procedural information with other interested local education agencies. Our plans for the development of implementation guides certainly include the inclusion of project evaluation resources and samples.