Abstract:

The project being proposed here outlines a two-track implementation process (interim and phased in over time). The model presented attends first to building a foundation for language learning (pre-k to grade 2), with a primary emphasis on exposure and age appropriate instruction. At that level, basic service delivery is in the hands of elementary teachers trained specifically to carry out the early process. Beyond grade 2, the emphasis shifts to direct foreign language instruction, seamless movement from level to level, and focuses on escalating proficiency in the initial target language, Spanish. The direct instruction proposed for the grade 3 through 8 reflects an approach based on research supported "best practice", developmental skill sequences, and levels of proficiency achievement in determining advancement. At the 3rd to 8th stages, certified foreign language teachers play the primary roles in instruction while other content area teachers act in support and integration roles. At the secondary level, the emphasis shifts again to broadening access through the addition of levels of instruction for a particular language and expanded course offerings in other foreign languages.

The model was developed according to the competencies outlined in the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum that was, in turn, based on the National Foreign Language Education Standards. The full implementation plan involves students, from pre-k to graduation, in formal language learning activities aimed at proficiency in one or more foreign languages. For the interim implementation process, a student is taken from where he or she enters forward, according to an adapted curriculum that accommodates for level of entry. The model also calls for integration of foreign language education with other academic content areas, the establishment of learning support systems, extensive staff development and training, community education and involvement, and the use of technology in instruction and learning.