



NJDOE News

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LOCAL INTEREST **MEDIA COVERAGE INVITED** **AND ENCOURAGED**

DOE Co-Sponsors First Statewide World Languages Student Showcase

Talented New Jersey world languages students in all grade levels will take center stage on Saturday, May 13, 2006 for the first **K-12 Statewide World Languages Student Showcase**. The event is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. in the College Center at Middlesex County College, Edison.

"We in New Jersey take great pride in including world languages as one of the core content areas in our statewide curriculum standards," said State Board of Education President Dr. Arnold Hyndman. "Ten years after we first adopted these standards, we remain committed to the belief that learning world languages and cultures is essential to the future success of our young people.

"By joining with the Foreign Language Educators of New Jersey to sponsor this event, we hope to start an annual tradition to highlight the exciting things our students are doing, and to underscore the importance of learning about other languages and cultures," Dr. Hyndman said.

Kathleen Dietz, a member of the State Board of Education and a proponent of international education at the state and national levels, said she is looking forward to the showcase. "Student performances will demonstrate the value of long sequences of language instruction that will prepare them to live and work in a world that is more connected," she said. "New Jersey's position in the international marketplace will depend on our students' abilities to interact with the world community both inside and outside of our borders."

Students from the following school districts will participate in the May 13 inaugural showcase: **BayonneHigh School, BernardsTownshipPublic Schools, EastWindsorPublic Schools, EdisonPublic Schools, Fair LawnPublic Schools, LavallettePublic Schools, MarlboroPublic Schools, MonmouthCountyVocational Schools, RutherfordPublic Schools, VeronaPublic Schools, VoorheesHigh School and WestfieldPublic Schools.**

Student performances may involve original creations or re-enactments of known works, skits dealing with real life situations, poetry / interpretive readings, song, dance and / or cultural demonstrations. The Department of Education will present certificates of recognition to the students selected to participate in the showcase, their teachers and school districts.

Parents, school officials, members of local school boards, the State Board of Education, Department of Education staff, and legislators have been invited to this event.

The event seeks to build on the momentum begun during the national *2005: Year of Languages* initiatives and the current *Discover Languages* program sponsored by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. *Discover Languages* is a nationwide effort to raise public awareness about the importance of learning languages and understanding other cultures.

Foreign languages have been getting a great deal of national attention recently. A study released in February by the Committee for Economic Development, a Washington-based research and policy organization of business leaders and educators, called for a comprehensive campaign for improving and expanding foreign / world language learning, complete with federally financed incentives and a public awareness campaign.

Other actions at the national level include recognition that the United States needs to catch up with the more comprehensive language policies of other industrialized nations, and how expanding language offerings to include a more diverse selection is important for economic and security reasons.

NOTE TO REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS: If you plan to cover this event, please report to the registration desk between 1:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday May 13 to announce your arrival.