

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Randall Booker, Superintendent

SUBJECT: Report on Piedmont High School Proposed Courses:

- Chinese IV Honors
- French IV Honors
- Spanish IV Honors

I. **SUPPORT INFORMATION**

Fourth year language courses require students to write and speak with increased accuracy, precision, and depth of expression. Advanced grammar and vocabulary is presented and students are expected to use these new, often complex structures in their original writing and speaking. Students read and listen to primarily authentic materials produced for native speakers of the language. The target language is used consistently with rare exceptions.

Chinese IV Honors

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed Mandarin 3 and are ready for more advanced curriculum. This course aims to provide students with various ongoing opportunities to develop further their language skills within a cultural frame of reference, reflecting the richness of Chinese language and culture, while also immersing them in the Chinese-speaking world. This course will engage students in an exploration of both contemporary and historical Chinese culture and prepare them to demonstrate their level of Chinese proficiency across the three communicative modes (Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational).

Based on the Standards for foreign language learning, proposed by ACTFL and California World Language Content Standards, this course will prepare students in the five goal areas: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. The course is aligned to Common Core State Standards. In addition to our students acquiring the four skills of the language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, the goal is for students to increase their awareness of the differences between the Chinese culture and their own cultures. Students will move beyond a basic knowledge of the products and practices that reflect Chinese ways of viewing the world. Students will be develop the ability to speak Mandarin Chinese outside of the classroom. Consequently, they will develop a long-lasting interest in the Chinese language. This course is designed to prepare students to take AP Chinese.

This course is organized around 10 units, 5 per semester. Supplementary materials such as short readings, newspaper articles, story books, video clips, movie segments, and short TV plays are related to the unit theme. Each unit includes vocabulary preview and pre-reading activities, grammar explanation and

review, exercises, discussion, and reading/writing comprehension and practice. Course activities take place in a variety of formats that emphasize different Chinese language skills. In-class activities include reading and writing exercise, email reply, story narration, dialogue presentation, role-plays, debates, interview, reports, games, character quizzes, lesson tests, and more. Out-of-class activities include preview and review activities, daily homework assignments, individual or group projects, field trip etc.

French IV Honors

Students will explore 6 themes which will result in students learning the essential vocabulary and advanced grammar needed to express themselves accurately and intelligently in writing and in conversation. Students will be required to participate actively in debates; analyze literature; read, listen to, and understand online sources; write in-class essays, stories, blog posts; and engage in other interpersonal communication with their peers. French will be spoken at all times.

The class will view a number of French movies linked to the main themes of the textbook. Using the themes and discussions students will prepare students to participate in a speaking competition organized by a non-profit called Les Amis de la Culture Française. At the end of this rigorous competition, winners are recognized and awarded prizes by the Attaché cultural of the French consulate in San Francisco.

Students will create a digital portfolio with blog posts on cultural comparisons, movies and current events. In addition students will post audio recordings in which they express their point of view on a number of topics.

In order to prepare students more thoroughly for level AP, students will prepare formal compositions and essays on the 6 themes.

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Spanish IV Honors

Students will explore 10 themes which will result in students learning the essential vocabulary and advanced grammar needed to express themselves accurately and intelligently in writing and in conversation. Students will be required to participate actively in debates; analyze literature; read, listen to, and

understand online sources; write in-class essays, stories, blog posts; and engage in other interpersonal communication with their peers. Spanish will be spoken at all times.

Periodically, students will conduct role-playing activities, discuss cultural themes, and write alternate endings or twists in the storyline.

Students will create a digital portfolio with web pages that are focused on a self-selected area of culture, determined by students at the beginning of the year. The web pages will be designed to teach others about the student topics and will be used extensively in the seminar presentations. All research conducted for the course students must provide a source list verifying the websites were written in Spanish (not translated by Google) and their writing is original (using Turnitin.com).

Students will be required to show their ability in speaking Spanish with a formal evaluation of proficiency 12 times throughout the year. Informal practice and some correction of their speech will be provided by the teacher daily. Students will analyze and write scripts of their speech samples in order to create target goals for improving communication and accuracy.

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II. **RECOMMENDATION: REVIEW**

Review Piedmont and Millennium High School Proposed Courses:

- Chinese IV Honors
- French IV Honors
- Spanish IV Honors