Promoting a Language Proficient Society: What Can Teachers Do?

- Find out which languages are spoken by school staff, by students, and in the community at large. Speak with parents and administrators about options for using community resources to promote language and cultural awareness among students.
- Use resources from school and local libraries and from the Internet to enhance foreign language lessons.
- Set up an in-class lending library with foreign language books, magazines, and videotapes for students and parents to use.
- Align your foreign language curriculum with the national standards for foreign language learning.
- Plan activities that encourage students to develop an awareness and appreciation of the linguistic and cultural diversity represented in your classroom.
- Give your students opportunities to use their languages outside your classroom (for example, within your school, at other schools, or at community events or agencies). Encourage parents who speak a language other than English to use it with their children.
- Talk to parents about activities and study habits that can improve their children's language learning.
- Invite community members who use languages other than English in their careers to discuss career opportunities with middle and high school students.
- Collaborate with other foreign language, bilingual, and English as a second language teachers to share resources and work together toward common goals.
- Pursue professional development activities (attend conferences, read journals and newsletters, take courses and seminars) to keep up to date on language learning research and on new approaches to language teaching.
- Travel abroad to expand or update your knowledge of the language and culture.
- Keep up with advances in language learning technology and adopt new and stimulating approaches to teaching languages, such as promoting videoconferencing experiences and international "keypal" (penpal) projects on the Internet.

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