



Global Virginia

“Empowering global competence through language and culture”

Global Virginia is opposed to House Bill 2341. VA HB 2341 is misguided legislation and bad policy for the future of our students and workforce development. We can do better in educating our students for employability and success than by eliminating world language learning for a particular ‘pathway’ to attain an advanced studies diploma. This is a repeated and an insidious effort to dilute and divest the learning and study of world languages. Eliminating world language study to further the attainment of an advanced studies diploma does nothing to advance Virginia’s prestige as a preeminent leader in public education.

It is highly likely CTE graduates will find themselves in a very diverse, if not the most diverse work environment than almost any other career field. Studies and research indicate that employers across the spectrum of CTE career clusters, want employees with language and intercultural skills –soft skills. The construction sector, healthcare and social assistance, social services sector report the highest foreign language skills gap. Thirty-nine percent of employers in the construction sector and nearly 30% in the professional and technical services sector are most likely to be unable to pursue or have lost business in the past three years due to a lack of world language skills in their employee. This is the CTE space; these are the CTE career clusters!

World language study involves perspective taking and sense making; it develops interpersonal skills, intercultural awareness, and empathy. It provides an expanded local and global world view to better understand the other –all others! Increased critical thinking and cognitive clarity are unquestionable outcomes from world language study. Our student’s world is an increasingly diverse and complex place, and students need the cognitive and critical thinking skills that learning world languages and these other disciplines gives them: a well-rounded, career ready education.

Respectfully,
Thomas J. Haines
President, Global Virginia