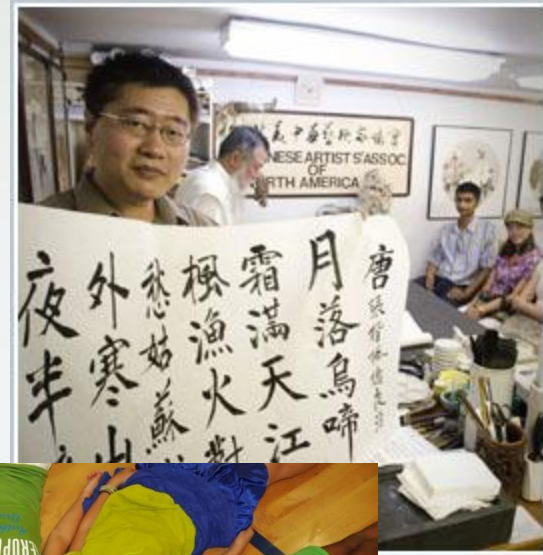# STARTALK: Our mission, accomplishments and direction

ILR

November 12, 2010

Faces of STARTALK

Presenters

- Catherine Ingold, Director National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland and Co-PI for STARTALK

- Meg Malone, Senior Research Associate, Center for Applied Linguistics

Presentation Overview

- What is STARTALK?

- What is STARTALK's impact on language teaching and learning?

- What has STARTALK learned about implementing short-term language programs?

- What STARTALK resources are available?

What is STARTALK?

- Mission
- Goals
- Vision
- Content

Mission

to provide summer language learning opportunities for students and professional development opportunities for teachers in critical languages

Goals

- To have programs in all 50 states by 2011, offering up to 10 languages

- To increase the quality and supply of teachers of critical languages throughout the nation

- To stimulate significant increases in the number of students enrolled in the study of critical languages

- To improve the quality and effectiveness of critical language curriculum

STARTALK Vision

❑Learners

- More students studying critical languages

- Longer sequences of instruction

- More meaningful language learning outcomes

- Effective use of technology

STARTALK Vision

❑Teachers

- ▪ Increased number of highly effective and certified world language teachers

- ▪ A better system for preparing and certifying world language teachers

  - ▪ rigorous preparation

  - ▪ Demonstrated skills and knowledge

  - ▪ Continued opportunities for professional development

- ▪ Increased leadership, coordination and incentives from federal and state agencies

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STARTALK Vision

❑Programs

- ▪ Technical assistance to local and regional programs

- ▪ Academic year programs adopting the STARTALK models

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Current STARTALK Languages

- Arabic
- Chinese
- Dari
- Hindi
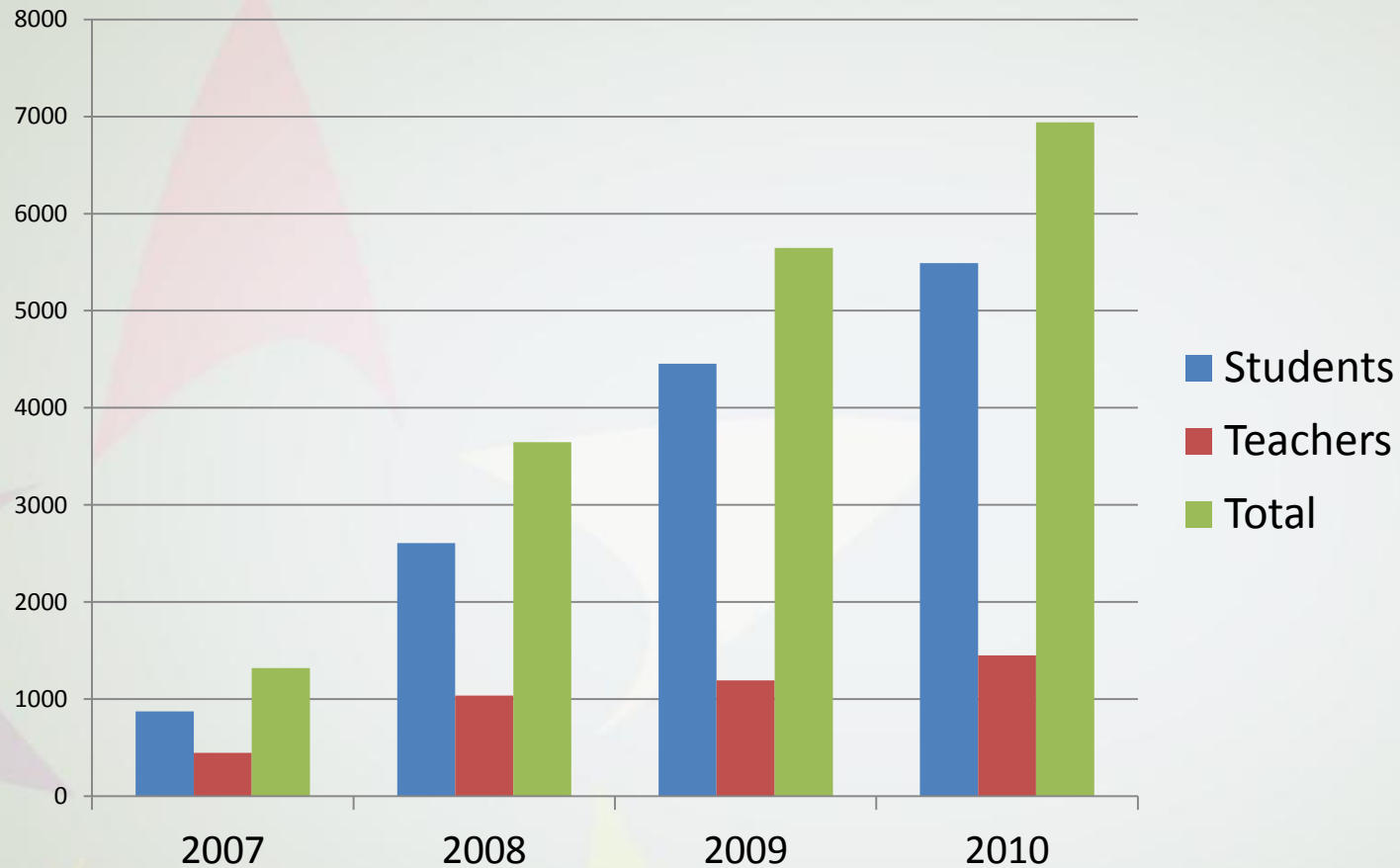- Portuguese
- Persian
- Russian
- Swahili
- Turkish
- Urdu

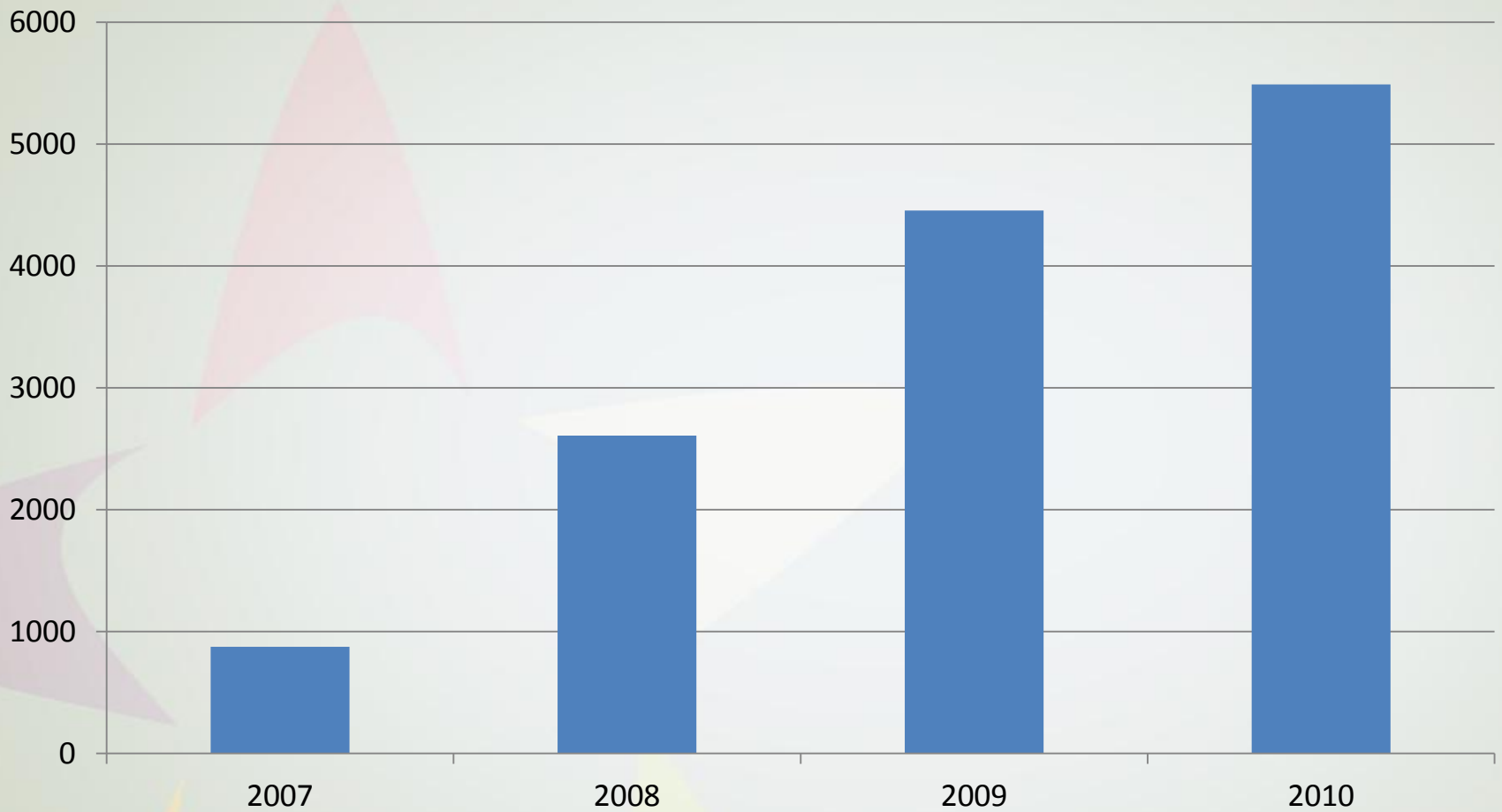# What is STARTALK's impact on language teaching and learning?

- Capacity
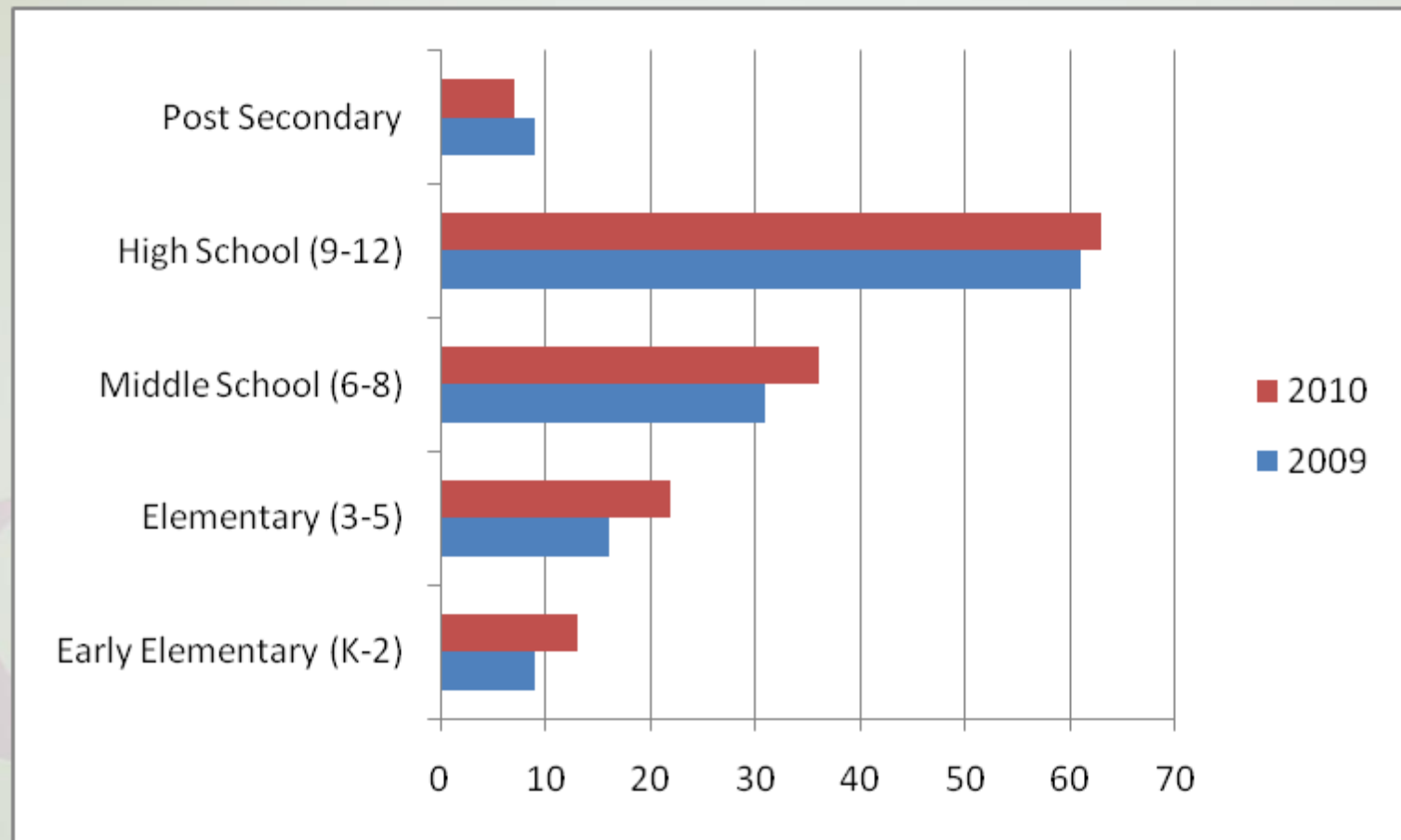
- Infrastructure

- Participants

- Research

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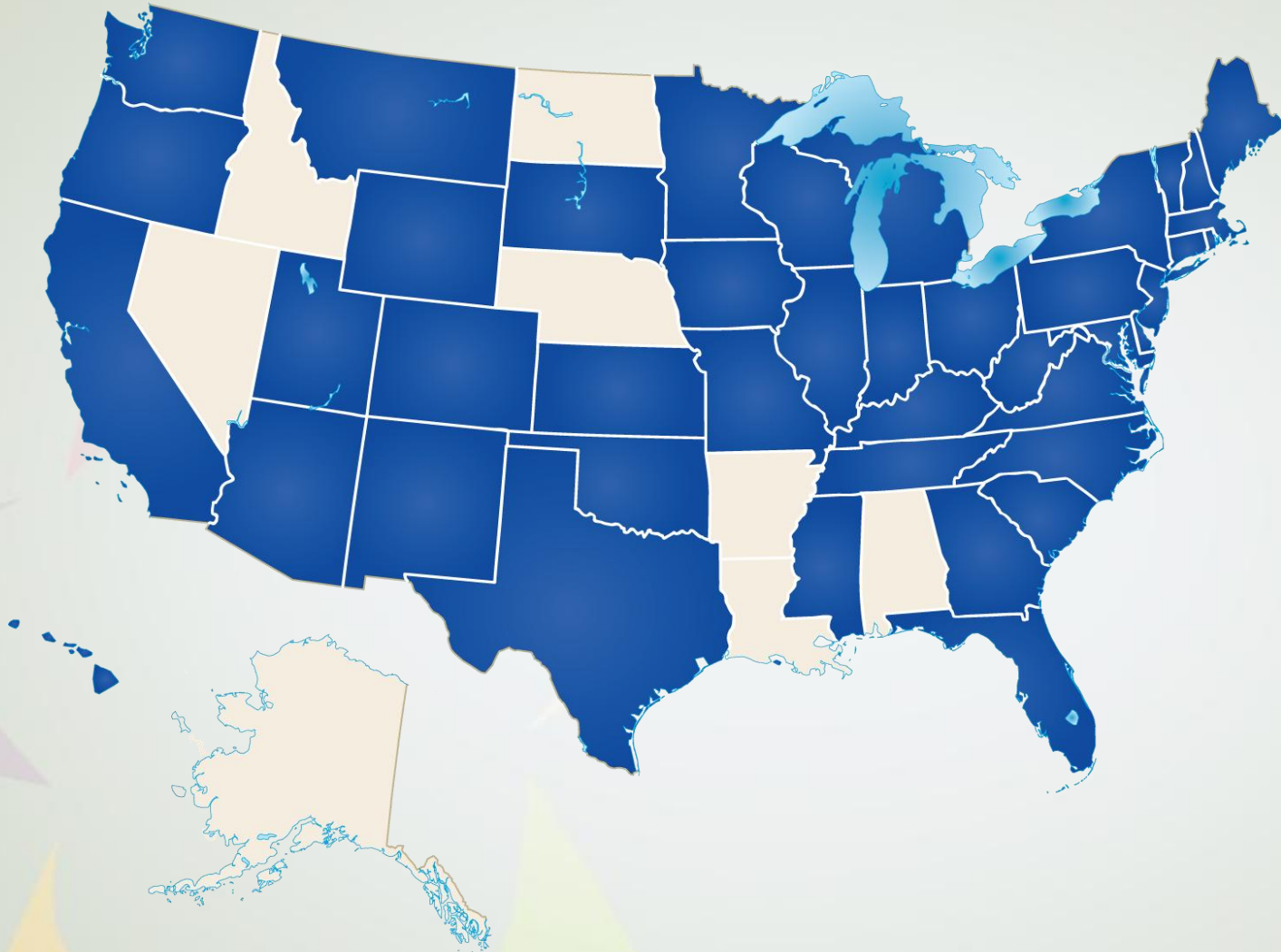# Enrollments: 2007 - 2010

Number of Students

Student Programs by Grade Level

2010 Distribution of Programs

States where participants resided
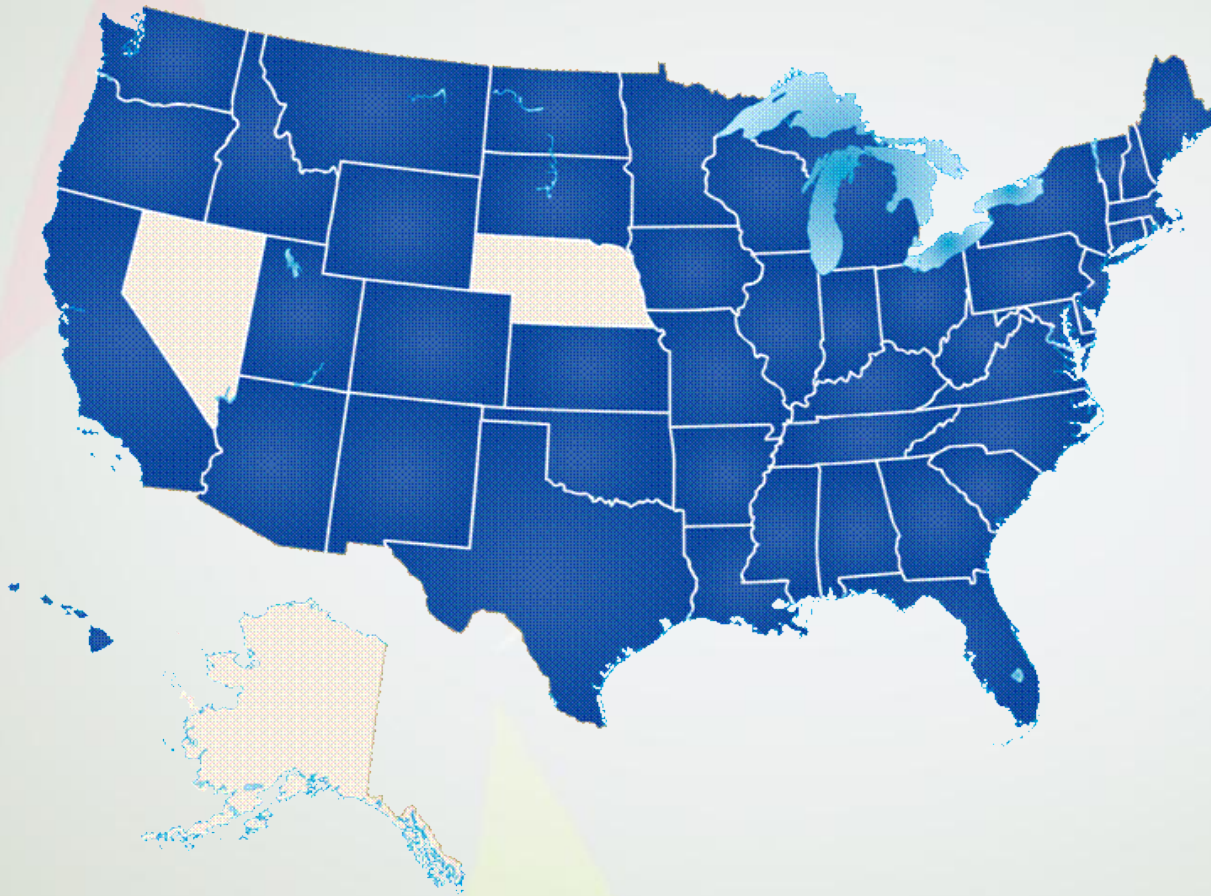
Impact: Capacity

- New Academic Year Programs

- Additional Opportunities for Students

- More Effective Programs for Students

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Impact: Infrastructure for Critical Languages

- Increased number of highly effective teachers
- Improved resources for language instruction and assessment
- Innovative online resources for teacher development

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Affective Impact: Students

- 96% enjoy learning languages
- 98% think it important to learn about other people and places
- 78% plan to continue studying the STARTALK language

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Affective Impact: Teachers

- Increased confidence in teaching
- Increased willingness to implement effective strategies
- Increased collaboration among STARTALK trainees

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What has STARTALK learned about short-term language programs?

- Implementing quality assurance measures
- Developing best practices

Challenges

- Duration
- Program variety (length, level, focus)
- Teacher experience
- Standardization and flexibility across programs
- Assessment

Quality Assurance (1 of 3)

- National competition
  - Eligibility requirements:
    - demonstrate the capability to offer age-appropriate standards-based language learning summer programs in a culturally rich environment for students in K-16 levels
    - have prior experience with summer foreign language camps, programs, courses or academies for students to gain and improve their linguistic and cultural competence
- Review process
  - Review criteria include:
    - Clearly stated goals with measurable outcomes and performance indicators
    - Assessment plan
    - Qualified staff

- Spring Conference: Expectation Setting
  - Networking opportunities
  - Team meetings and team leader support
- Curriculum Approval
  - Improvements to the curriculum template
  - Approval process

Quality Assurance (3 of 3)

- Site Visit
  - Purpose and procedures
  - Feedback to programs
- Fall Conference: Sharing
  - Plenary sessions
  - Training sessions
  - Networking opportunities

STARTALK-endorsed best practices

1. Implementing standards-based and thematically organized curriculum
2. Facilitating a student-centered classroom
3. Using target language for instruction
4. Integrating culture into language instruction
5. Adopting and using authentic materials
6. Conducting performance-based assessment

(1) Standards-based curriculum

- Implementing standards-based and thematically organized curriculum
  - Defining expected outcomes for all five Standards ("Students can…")
  - Developing themes and unit subthemes

(2) Student-centered classrooms

- *Facilitating a student-centered classroom*
  - Professional development (STARTALK conferences; multimedia tools)
  - Site visit feedback

(3) Target language instruction

- *Using target language for instruction*
  - Differences between teacher perceptions and actual practices
  - Professional development for teachers using the target language with Novice-level students
  - Importance of visual support and active response

(4) Integrating culture

- Integrating culture into language instruction
  - Selecting culturally appropriate themes
  - Defining clear outcomes for the Culture Standard
  - Incorporating field trips
  - Developing tools for assessing culture

(5) Authentic materials

Adopting and using authentic materials.

- Emphasis on using materials in an appropriate way (proficiency and grade level)

- Collaboration across programs (teams and online)

- Need for expanded online resources and venues for sharing materials

(6) Performance-based assessment

Conducting performance-based assessment.

- Authentic, contextualized task-based assessment

- Backward design

- Formative and summative assessment

- Multiple methods (Linguafolio, teacher assessment, language tests)

Program Priorities

- Additional features of successful short-term programs
- Priority given to applicants with the following features:
  - Distance learning
  - Collaboration with other programs
  - Teacher professional development (student programs)
  - Plan to integrate language and culture;
  - Opportunities for continued student learning beyond the summer program
  - Opportunities for earning academic credit

Stakeholder Feedback

- Importance of continually gathering feedback from stakeholders (program directors, instructors, students)
  - Surveys
  - Focus groups

What STARTALK resources are available?

- STARTALK Multimedia Workshop Collection
- STARTALK Classroom Video Collection
- Online Curriculum Template Development Guide
- Sample Planning and Classroom Materials

www.startalk.umd.edu

The STARTALK Legacy

Did former students or teacher trainees come to work in your program.	
Yes, at least one former STARTALK student program participant came back this year as a teacher, assistant or tutor in a student program	33.3%
Yes, at least one former STARTALK teacher development program participant came back this year as a teacher, assistant or tutor in a teacher program	**45.3%**
Yes, at least one former STARTALK teacher development program participant came back this year as a teacher, assistant or tutor in a student program	36.0%

Next steps

- Research with CASL
  - Pre-pilot 2009
    - How can student results be assessed in short-term programs?
    - N= 96
  - Pilot 2010
    - How can student results be assessed in short-term programs?
    - Three instruments
    - On-site observations
    - M-393
- STARTALK 2011

Reflections & Conclusions

- Continual process of feedback and improvements
- STARTALK's impact and future directions
- Support needed for short-term language programs
- Professional development needs of LCTL teachers