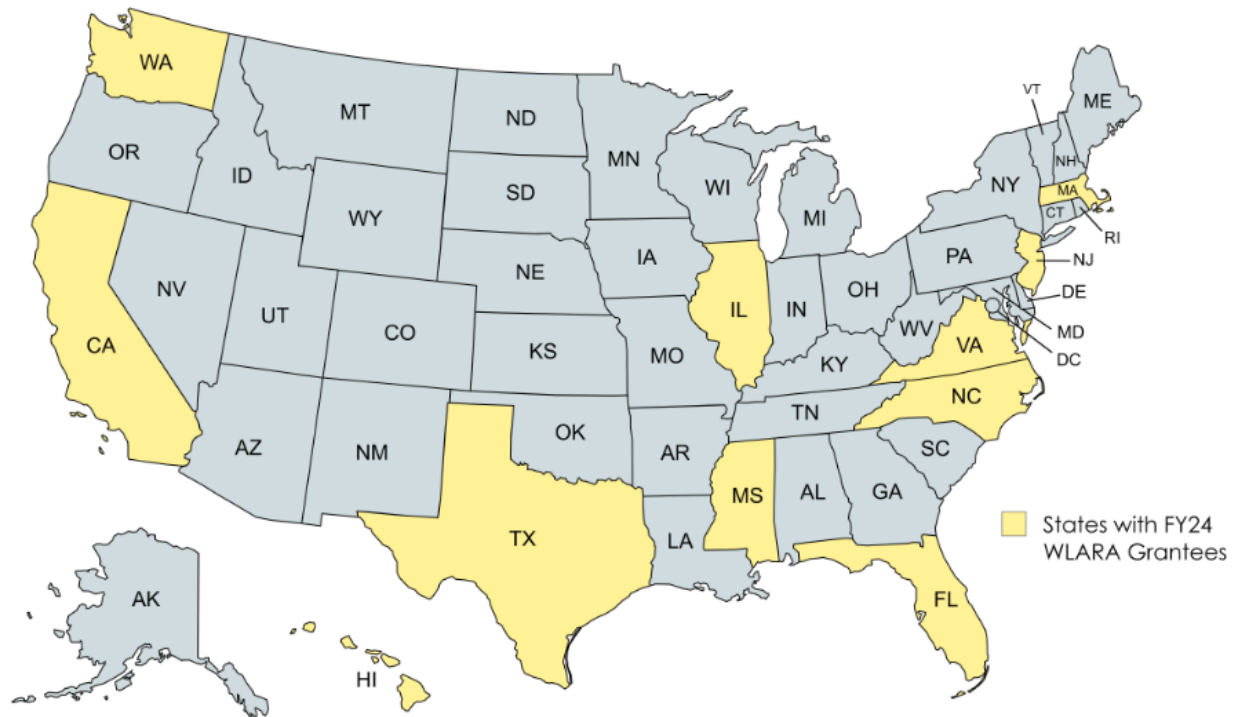


14 Districts Received WLARA Grants in 2024

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WASHINGTON, D.C, September 23rd, 2024 – This month, the Department of Defense Education Activity announced 14 FY24 World Language Advancement and Readiness Program (WLARP) grant awards totaling more than \$18.6 million. This amount is far above the \$10 million in appropriated funds from FY24, thanks to supplemental DODEA support. In this round, districts in 11 different states received three-year WLARP awards that ranged between \$500,000 and \$2 million. They will be able to use these funds to establish or expand existing innovative world language programs in a variety of languages, including German, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish.

With this fourth round of annual grants, WLARP has now provided more than \$68 million in funding to 31 different school districts spread across 18 states. Amanda Seewald, JNCL-NCLIS Executive Director shared, “JNCL celebrates the continued growth of programs funded by WLARP. We are thrilled that every applicant received funding in this round despite the limited appropriations of \$10million for FY24. JNCL advocates continue to work to restore \$15million in appropriations for FY25 and beyond.” JNCL’s recent [America’s Languages Caucus briefing](#) demonstrated that these WLARP investments are beginning to pay real dividends in terms of both language acquisition and academic achievement. In North Hanover, New Jersey, which received a \$1.7 million grant in FY21, recent data shows significant increases in world language speaking, listening and reading levels in just two years. In Newport News, Virginia, which received two grants totaling more than \$3.6 million, student enrollment in the district’s elementary Spanish dual language immersion program has exploded and the student language proficiency has grown exponentially with each year of participation.

Hawaii received the most funding in WLARA’s FY24 grant competition, securing two grants totaling \$3.25 million. One grant, for its Radford Complex, aims to “create a world language pathway from K-12 by establishing world language offerings at the elementary and middle levels and promote high school students to enroll in higher level language courses, thereby, equipping our students with world-ready skills to increase their marketability in the workplace, entrance into college, and prepare them for success in a global community.” The other grant, for its Windward Complex, will support the expansion of “the Kalāheo world language pipeline to the Kailua Complex so that more military-connected students, beginning in kindergarten, have access to world language instruction in Spanish or Japanese and provide access to world language programs through out-of-school time learning

experiences such as summer learning opportunities, intersession experiences, and family engagement activities in Spanish or Japanese.”

The FY24 competition also witnessed a number of first time awardees, including: Bedford Public Schools in Massachusetts; Biloxi Public Schools in Mississippi; Masscoutah Community School District in Illinois; Oceanside USD in California, Pemberton Township in New Jersey; Portsmouth Public Schools in Virginia and Randolph Field ISD in Texas. Each of these new winners incorporated interesting angles into their proposals that WLARA’s dollars will help implement. For example, Randolph Field proposed to initiate a pre-K language learning program by “leveraging the unique experiences of RFISD’s military students who have ventured to non-English speaking nations as military dependents, who through that exposure, are more likely willing learners of languages outside the Americas.” Biloxi aimed to support its Bridging Cultures program by, among other things, “involving families in the educational process through effective communication and active participation in school activities.” Bedford’s proposal was very high tech, seeking to “create a pathway through Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and a hybrid instructional model that would allow students to continue their path towards proficiency in any of the languages they study at Bedford High School. With access to a CALL Lab, students could continue their language study even if the school they transfer to does not offer the language they were studying.”

Beyond these first time winners, a number of previous year awardees received new funds to start or expand existing programs. For instance, Wayne County Public Schools in North Carolina received its third \$500,000 WLARP grant in as many years in this round. It will use WLARP funds to establish and implement an elementary school Mandarin Chinese

program. International Leadership of Texas also received its third WLARP award in the past three cycles in FY24. This \$2 million grant includes support for piloting “one new Advanced Chinese Language Course centered around Fine Arts Content and one new Martial Arts course integrated into our robust Physical Education program, aligning with research that shows incorporation of fine arts and physical movement into instruction have been shown to improve language acquisition.”

The complete list of funded projects is as follows:

- Bedford School, MA – \$500,000
- Biloxi Public Schools, MS – \$1.25 million
- Clover Park School District, WA – \$2 million
- Escambia County School District, FL – \$2 million
- Hawaii Radford Complex, HI – \$2 million
- Hawaii Windward Complex, HI – \$1.25 million
- International Leadership of Texas, TX – \$2 million
- Mascoutah Community School District, IL – \$1.657 million
- Oceanside Unified School District, CA – \$2 million
- Pemberton Unified School District, NJ – \$500,000
- Portsmouth Public Schools, VA – \$500,000
- Randolph Field Independent School District, TX – \$500,000
- Wayne County Public Schools, NC – \$500,000
- York County School Division, VA – \$2 million

Abstracts and awards for the FY24 WLARP grants will be linked here when available.

About JNCL-NCLIS: *Established in 1972, the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS) unites a national network of leading organizations and businesses comprised of over 300,000 language professionals to advocate for equitable language learning opportunities. Our mission is to ensure that Americans have the opportunity to learn English and at least one other language.*

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