

Mingus Union High School District #4 Course Proposal Overview

To: Mingus Union High School District #4 Board of Education

From: Justin A. Monical, Assistant Principal - Curriculum & Instruction

Date: Nov 25, 2025

Subject: Addition of New Course ▾

Course Title:

American Sign Language 1 thru 4 (sequence)

Course Type:

Addition of New Course ▾

Department:

World Languages

Grade Level(s):

- ☐ 8
- ☒ 9
- ☒ 10
- ☒ 11
- ☒ 12

Course Type:

- ☐ Advanced Placement
- ☐ Career Technical Education
- ☐ Dual Enrollment
- ☐ Off-Campus
- ☐ Online (Asynchronous)
- ☐ Remediation/Intervention
- ☐ Core
- ☒ Elective

Credit Value:

- ☒ 1.0 ~~Carnegie Unit~~

ABOR Core Competency:

- ☐ English
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Second Language
- ☐ Social Science
- ☐ Fine Arts/CTE
- ☒ ~~World Languages~~

Course Length:

- ☒ Year

NCAA Approval:

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Pre-requisites:

No pre-requisites for American Sign Language 1; Subsequent courses will require successful completion of preceding courses within this domain.

Course Description:

American Sign Language 1 is a beginning course designed to introduce students to the basics of ASL vocabulary, grammar, and fundamental signing, as well as reading and writing skills. Students will explore Deaf culture and the Deaf community by examining Deaf history, traditions, and current events. The course emphasizes the practical importance of ASL as a communication tool for everyday interactions and as a gateway to understanding cultural and linguistic diversity. Through immersive practice, students develop receptive and expressive skills, cultural awareness, and the confidence to communicate effectively in ASL.

ASL 2 builds on foundational skills from ASL 1, guiding students toward intermediate proficiency in expressive and receptive signing. Students will expand their vocabulary and learn to construct more complex sentences, including conditional statements, sequences, and descriptive narratives. Receptive skills advance to understanding longer dialogues, stories, and conversations, emphasizing clarity, comprehension, and conversational strategies. Students continue developing reading and writing skills through glossing, analyzing ASL texts, and documenting signed narratives. Cultural instruction deepens, exploring regional Deaf communities, historical advocacy movements, and social norms, while practical applications focus on career pathways, volunteer opportunities, and connecting with the Deaf community in authentic contexts. By the end of ASL 2, students will demonstrate intermediate-level fluency and increased confidence in both academic and social ASL interactions.

ASL 3 focuses on advanced communication skills, enabling students to participate in extended conversations, narrate stories, and engage in discussions across academic, social, and professional contexts. Vocabulary and grammar instruction emphasizes precision, nuance, and register, while receptive skills train students to comprehend longer dialogues, presentations, and authentic media in ASL. Reading and writing skills expand to analyze figurative language, classifiers, and role-shifting, strengthening comprehension and expressive capabilities. Cultural exploration deepens understanding of contemporary Deaf identity, social issues, and advocacy movements. Practical applications extend to professional and academic contexts, including interpreting strategies, workplace communication, and leadership in the Deaf community. Students completing ASL 3 demonstrate high intermediate proficiency with confidence in both expressive and receptive ASL across multiple settings.

ASL 4 represents the culminating course in the ASL sequence, emphasizing advanced fluency, nuanced expression, and comprehension across complex social, academic, and professional contexts. Students engage in persuasive discourse, debates, and extended narratives, using figurative language, classifiers, and role-shifting to convey meaning with subtlety and precision. Receptive skills focus on interpreting lectures, media, and authentic ASL content for full comprehension, including emotional tone and cultural context. Reading and writing skills enable analysis, documentation, and presentation of research and professional content using glossing conventions. Cultural study extends to global perspectives, policy, and leadership within the Deaf

community. Practical applications focus on career readiness, college preparation, and community leadership, culminating in capstone projects that integrate language proficiency, cultural understanding, and professional skills. Graduates of ASL 4 demonstrate advanced-level proficiency, capable of participating in authentic ASL interactions with fluency, accuracy, and cultural competence.

Rationale and Need:

The addition of American Sign Language (ASL) courses 1 through 4 to the high school curriculum, beginning in the 2026–2027 school year, aligns with the district’s commitment to fostering inclusive, diverse, and college- and career-ready learning opportunities. Offering ASL expands world language options for students, supports communication with Deaf and hard-of-hearing community members, and provides pathways for careers in education, interpretation, social services, and healthcare. These courses will enhance students’ linguistic and cultural competency, meet Arizona State Standards for world languages, and promote equitable access to language learning without requiring additional instructional resources or staffing beyond the existing world language department.

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize and produce basic ASL vocabulary (alphabet, numbers, colors, common greetings, and everyday expressions).
- Demonstrate proper fingerspelling and number usage in common contexts.
- Use facial expressions and body language to convey tone and emotion in ASL.
- Understand and apply basic ASL grammar and sentence structure (subject–verb–object, yes/no questions, WH-questions).
- Identify key aspects of Deaf culture and history, including common social norms and values.
- Expand ASL vocabulary to include school, home, hobbies, and community activities.
- Engage in short, structured conversations using complete sentences with proper grammar.
- Express time, frequency, and sequence using temporal markers in ASL.
- Understand and use classifiers to describe movement, size, and location.
- Demonstrate increased comprehension of signed narratives, conversations, and stories.
- Explore Deaf culture and social practices in greater depth, including regional differences in ASL usage.
- Participate in extended conversations on academic, social, and personal topics.
- Use ASL grammar accurately, including conditionals, negation, role-shifting, and topic-comment structures.
- Interpret and produce ASL narratives, stories, and dialogues with appropriate pace, rhythm, and expression.
- Expand vocabulary to include abstract concepts, professional settings, and current events.
- Analyze and discuss aspects of Deaf culture, history, and community advocacy.
- Develop receptive skills through understanding videos, dialogues, and live communication with native ASL users.

- Demonstrate advanced ASL proficiency in academic, professional, and social contexts.
 - Accurately interpret subtle meaning, emotion, and context in ASL conversations and texts.
 - Gloss and analyze academic, literary, and professional ASL materials.
 - Produce formal presentations, reports, and analyses in ASL, demonstrating clarity, expression, and structure.
 - Explore leadership, advocacy, and global perspectives within Deaf culture and the ASL community.
 - Engage in professional networking, mentoring, and interpreting practices.
 - Prepare for college readiness and community engagement opportunities, including ASL-related careers and service learning.
-

Standards Alignment:

Relevant Arizona WNL Standards for an ASL Program (ASL 1–4)

- Interpersonal Communication: Students exchange information, reactions, feelings, and opinions in ASL (e.g., via conversations, role-plays)
 - Interpretive Listening & Viewing: Students understand, interpret, and analyze what is signed in ASL from a variety of sources (stories, dialogues, cultural materials)
 - Interpretive Reading: Students interpret signed or glossed texts, identifying main ideas, details, and cultural context
 - Presentational Signing (Speaking): Students produce coherent signing (monologues, presentations) to inform, narrate, or describe using ASL appropriately for different audiences.
 - Presentational Writing / Glossing: Students create written glosses or annotated ASL texts (e.g., stories, dialogues) expressing ideas clearly.
 - Cultural Competency – Cultures Strand: Students investigate, explain, and reflect on ASL and Deaf culture, norms, beliefs, and practices.
 - Cultural Competency – Communities Strand: Students use ASL to participate in the Deaf community, service projects, or real-world activities, extending learning beyond the classroom.
 - Cultural Competency – Comparisons Strand: Students compare cultural practices between Deaf culture and other groups, noting similarities and differences.
 - Cultural Competency – Connections Strand: Students connect ASL learning to other academic content areas and real-life applications.
-

Assessment Methods:

Performance Assessments / Signing Proficiency

- Conversational role-plays and dialogues
- Narration or storytelling in ASL
- Presentational signing (monologues, class presentations)

Interpretive Assessments

- Comprehension of signed videos, stories, or dialogues

- Reading and interpreting glossed ASL texts

Written / Glossing Assessments

- Written reflections or summaries of signed content
- Annotated glosses of ASL narratives

Vocabulary & Grammar Quizzes

- Sign identification and meaning
- Fingerspelling accuracy
- Use of ASL grammar (e.g., non-manual markers, word order)

Cultural Competency Assessments

- Projects on Deaf culture, norms, and history
- Comparisons between ASL/Deaf culture and other cultures

Participation / Practice Checks

- Daily signing participation in class activities
- Engagement in group work or peer communication exercises

Instructional Resources and Materials:

Over the next four years, as each new American Sign Language course (ASL 1–4) is offered, the cost of textbooks will be a one-time purchase per course level. For ASL 1, the required materials include the Signing Naturally Units 1-6 Teacher Book and Student Book (Dawn Sign Press) and the supplemental Learning American Sign Language Levels 1 and 2 (Pearson). ASL 2 will utilize the Signing Naturally Units 7-12 Teacher and Student Books, while also continuing to use the ASL 1 supplemental book. ASL 3 requires the Signing Naturally Units Level 2 Teacher and Student Books, and ASL 4 will require the Signing Naturally Level 3 Teacher and Student Books. This phased implementation spreads costs across the four-year period, aligning purchases with course offerings and ensuring that each class has the necessary instructional resources without requiring simultaneous bulk expenditure.

Staffing and Budget Implications:

As the program grows, staffing needs will scale in proportion to student interest and course enrollment. In the first year, with only a few sections offered, minimal staffing is required, likely covered by part-time or shared instructors. As awareness and participation increase, additional sections may be added each year, gradually necessitating more dedicated instructional support. By year four, if student demand reaches projected levels, the program could justify the equivalent of a full-time faculty position (FTE) to maintain quality instruction, manage course logistics, and support student engagement. This phased staffing approach allows the program to expand sustainably while aligning resources with demonstrated interest.

Recommendation:

Approval is requested to adopt the American Sign Language 1 thru 4 (sequence) for implementation in the 2026-2027 school year.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Board of Education Action:

☐ Approved

☐ Denied

1st Read:

Board President: _____

Date: _____