

Intentional Foreign Language Advocacy: Skills Set, Mindset, and Core Value

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Abstract—Although a nation of immigrants and although more than 60M speak a language other than English in the home, the United States suffers from a foreign language deficit, in which demand for foreign language skills exceeds supply, and where opportunity to learn another language is actually decreasing. Compared to Europe for example, a significantly smaller percentage of US students study another language, and language study typically begins later. In order to build the foreign language skills needed in the workplace, in the globalized world, and in our society, all students should have the opportunity to learn another language, and in order to increase opportunity, advocacy is needed to promote language learning and to support and defend endangered programs. Effective advocacy needs to be not only strategic, but intentional, a mindset and skills set stemming from a core value of making the world a better place through our everyday actions.

Index Terms—foreign language learning, foreign language advocacy, bilingualism, multilingualism, foreign language deficit, world languages, modern languages, second language learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Advocacy, generally thought of as action in support of an idea, institution, or individual, can also be envisioned as defense, and in terms of language learning and use in the United States, both are needed. With fewer than 20% of American K-12 students study another language (American Councils, 2017), only 7.5% of college and university students are enrolled in a course in a language other than English (MLA, 2019), and the US lags behind other parts of the world in language learning (Devlin, 2018). In an increasingly globalized world, and an increasingly multilingual society, this lack of language skills and cultural understanding impacts not only our personal lives in terms of social, academic, and cognitive benefits, and our careers in terms of potential earnings and opportunities lost, but also negatively impacts our economy in terms of global competitiveness and our national security in terms of language skills needed in government (CED, 2006; NRC, 2007; Stein-Smith, 2013). This situation is further compounded by a national shortage of qualified language teachers (ACTFL, 2017b). Advocacy is needed, if we are to increase interest in language learning and build our language capacity in the US.

Advocacy has long been discussed and written about by foreign language educators (Kettlekamp, 1940), but it is the 1979 report of the President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies, *Strength through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability* (US, 1979), often referred to as the Perkins report, followed in the subsequent year by Senator Paul Simon's *The Tongue-Tied American* (Simon, 1980), that launched the modern conversation on foreign languages in the US.

As language educators, we possess content knowledge and pedagogical skills, but we often have not received any systematic instruction in advocacy, and may not have thought of advocacy as more than part of, or an extension of, what we do in the classroom (Lead with Languages: A Call to Action, n.d.).

While this is at least partially true, as language teachers advocate unconsciously for languages in every interaction with students, parents, and school administrators, there is specific skills set, or toolbox, that every current and potential language advocate needs, and there is need for an advocacy mindset, which is grounded in and framed by advocacy as a core value. Intentional advocacy, both data-driven and values-driven, takes this intrinsic advocacy to the next level. The core value of bringing the benefits of language learning to the largest possible number of students creates and sustains an advocacy mindset, with a wide variety of skills the actual tools to achieve that goal.

Intentional advocacy is a significant addition to our lives as foreign language educators in that it comes from within, and is not part of our professional lives that needs external evaluation or validation. It is also a pathway built by our every decision every day, and an adopted value rather than a value transmitted to us by our education (Rai, 2020), reminding me of the famous quotation from Jean-Paul Sartre, “*Faire, et en faisant se faire et n' être rien que ce qu'on fait*” (Le Monde, n.d.).

Becoming a language advocate has more to do with how you see yourself and your role as a language educator – there are those who could reasonably view themselves as teachers and/or scholars, and never envision themselves as advocates and activists. However, the data on declining enrollments and program closures (Johnson, 2019; AMACAD, 2017), along with teacher shortages, demonstrate the necessity for action among all based on a core value of altruism, working for the greater good, and leaving the world a better place which drives advocacy to ensure that all students have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of language skills and cultural knowledge.

The fact that the role of advocacy stems from our values – essentially from how we envision ourselves as educators and what kind of educator we want to be – indicates that the next step is to develop an action plan as to how we will become a teacher/advocate. For that reason, we have to define what advocacy means to us and what are its component skills in order to develop a road map to advocacy.

In developing an advocacy plan, or road map, it is important to think about change, and how to bring it about, in the abstract, rather than as a personal issue, yet for any movement for change to be successful, it has to become important, and personal to many people. Advocates need to become and remain informed on both foreign language education issues and data, as well as on advocacy strategies and tactics, including but not limited to, change management, social marketing, the psychology of influence and persuasion, disruptive innovation, blue ocean strategy, lobbying, negotiation and confrontation, and on the nature and effectiveness of social movements and protest (FLAVA, 2020; Kentucky Governor, 2018).

A challenge is that foreign language educators are busy teaching students, and may not be able to afford the time to become knowledgeable in so many areas, or they may simply not be interested in them. Sometimes they may even feel that advocacy is not their responsibility. However, while a core group of activist advocates can certainly support the advocacy movement, it takes many voices to bring about change, and any successful social movement involves many people taking direct action to bring about desired social change (Satell & Popovic, 2017). So, too, effective foreign language advocacy requires many voices and the engagement of a large number of language stakeholders.

It all comes back to individual engagement and commitment, and to “making it personal,” and many individuals need to come to their own similar conclusions about the need for advocacy. It is also a long-term commitment. Just as the decline in foreign language enrollments occurred over decades, with the decline in college majors being a major cause of the current national shortage of qualified teachers, creating a public conversation leading to substantive change is likely to take time.

Learning from successful campaigns, and developing partnerships are additional steps which are likely to increase the likelihood of success. An example of a successful campaign would be the *Revolution bilingue*, a campaign for immersion programs in NYC public schools, that has resulted in programs in about a dozen languages in NYC public schools, largely through parent and community advocacy (Jaumont, 2017). Bilingual and immersion education have much to offer to foreign language educators in terms of opportunity to learn from successful campaigns and to the potential for partnerships. Examples from higher education can be found in the MLA enrollment survey, the final report (MLA, 2019). Any advocacy success story, past or present, local or international, ranging from French language advocacy in Canada to the development of immersion programs across the US, can inspire (Lead with Languages: Success Stories, n.d.).

Foreign language advocacy, a core value and mindset, is also a data-driven skills set. It is also important to reflect on and be convinced of the necessity of advocacy

II. THE ADVOCACY TURN AND THE RATIONALE FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE ADVOCACY

Educators and other foreign language stakeholders have long been aware of the benefits for foreign language learning and cultural knowledge. However, an advocacy turn among foreign language educators and stakeholders in recent years has been the result of both an increasingly connected world and a more multilingual United States, where more than 60M speak a language other than English in the home (Ryan, 2013), while at the same time foreign language enrollments decline, and programs are lost (Johnson, 2019; AMACAD, 2017).

While foreign language educators can certainly learn and take inspiration from their own successes and history, language learning is a spectrum that includes not only foreign language educators, but also includes bilingual, ESL, and immersion educators, whose areas have enjoyed considerable success in recent years, due in part to engagement and advocacy on the part of educators, researchers, and communities.

It may seem self-evident that advocacy is part of foreign language learning, just as it is of many aspects of our lives and our society. However, advocacy receives relatively little attention within the disciplines and is the subject of relatively few scholarly articles. It is not generally considered part of preparation for a career in foreign language education within schools of education. In addition, foreign language advocacy is typically not included in the preparation of college and university faculty.

However, dedicated foreign language educators, stakeholders, and enthusiasts have long advocated for foreign language learning and use in the United States (Sammartino & Amateau, 1933; Kettelkamp, 1940), and many state and regional professional associations have an advocacy committee, group, or initiative. Advocacy.

Yet advocacy remains generally not part of the formal education and training of the foreign language teachers, but rather something that is learned informally through professional associations and engagement.

As advocacy has become at the same time more complex, yet more accessible, due to the proliferation of online and social media, an organized and systematic attempt to introduce educators to the rationale, strategies, and tactics of advocacy from diverse disciplinary perspectives is needed.

Although not necessarily entirely a discipline in the sense that foreign language skills and pedagogy would be for the language teacher, or a content area might be for college and university faculty, advocacy could certainly be considered part of the skills set of the 21st century foreign language educator.

This type of advocacy is not the same as, but is rather complementary to, advocacy for a particular methodology, department, or even for the humanities in general, for example, but can be used either for foreign language learning and use generally, or for one specific language, and is data-driven.

While advocacy shares many of the same elements at all levels, higher education presents some specific aspects. At the college and university level, the report, *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World* (MLA, 2007), offered specific recommendations as to interdisciplinary collaborations and elimination of the two-tiered faculty structure. Yet research has shown that although college and university foreign language faculty are generally aware of the report, it has not been universally adopted (Redden, 2017; Lomicka & Lord, 2018). Double majors and joint programs have resulted in increased enrollment (MLA, 2015). However, many foreign language programs offer majors and graduate degrees only in literature, and current advertising for tenure-track foreign language faculty generally still seeks literature specialists as new faculty members.

III. THE FRAMEWORK OF ADVOCACY

The years that followed the publication of *Strength through Wisdom*, and *The Tongue-Tied American* witnessed the publication of reports, along with government hearings on foreign languages -- including most notably (in chronological order) *Securing America's Future: Global Education for a Global Age*, (NAFSA, 2002); *Education for Global Leadership: The Importance of International Studies and Foreign Language Education for U.S National and Economic Security*, (CED, 2006); *International Education and Foreign Languages: Keys to Securing America's Future* (National Research Council, 2007); *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World* (MLA, 2007); *What Business Wants: Language Needs in the 21st Century* (Language Flagship, 2009); *Foreign Language Capabilities: Departments of Homeland Security, Defense, and State Could Better Assess Their Foreign Language Needs and Capabilities and Address Shortfalls* (GAO, 2010); and *A National Security Crisis: Foreign Language Capabilities in the Federal Government* (Senate Hearing, 2012).

At present, foreign language advocacy initiatives in the US exist at the state, regional, and national levels. Lead with Languages, launched in 2017 and spearheaded by ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), is the national campaign for language learning in the US. Its launch coincided with the publication of two major reports on languages and language learning in the US, *Not Lost in Translation: The Growing Importance of Foreign Language Skills in the U.S. Job Market* (New American Economy, 2017) and *America's Languages: Investing in Language Education in the 21st Century* (AMACAD, 2017), which demonstrated the value proposition of foreign language skills in the workplace and the need to build foreign language skills in our society respectively. A subsequent report, *Making Languages Our Business: Addressing Foreign Language Demand among U.S. Employers*, was published by ACTFL and its Lead with Languages campaign in 2019. Alongside these, reports have been published on enrollment at the K-12 and postsecondary level, by the American Councils and the MLA respectively.

Overarching themes include the fact, while language skills and cultural knowledge are increasingly needed in the globalized world, in our multilingual society, and in the workplace, US students lag behind those in Europe (Devlin, 2018) and in other parts of the world, largely because of a lack of opportunity to begin continued study of another language at an early age. At the same time, programs are being lost at the elementary, middle school (AMACAD, 2017), and college and university level (Johnson, 2019, MLA, 2019).

IV. "A SENSE OF URGENCY" AND THE ELEMENTS OF INTENTIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE ADVOCACY

With the increasing need for foreign language skills and cultural knowledge coinciding with a decline in opportunity for foreign language learning and in enrollment, it is clear that "a sense of urgency," the first step in bringing about change (Kotter, 2008), clearly exists.

While educators in all settings have training, expertise, and experience in their subject material, they have not generally received any systematic education in advocacy. Just as language and its teaching, learning, and use, are inherently interdisciplinary, involved in virtually all aspects of our lives, foreign language advocacy is interdisciplinary. However, it is also a specific skills set, complementary to the professional education of foreign language educators and to the literary, linguistic, or cultural specialization of a college or university foreign language faculty member.

Advocacy groups exist at all levels, either on an *ad hoc* or permanent basis, but skills and training vary widely. Depending on the issues at hand, some advocacy activities are specifically involved in defending a threatened program, or in staving off a legislative action that would negatively impact foreign languages, while other are more long-term, involving information, education, and relationship-building. For these reasons, it is important to consider what skills, or tools, the foreign language advocate would need in either case, or more generally.

The first and most important asset for a foreign language advocate is a passionate interest in the language and culture of the language he or she is advocating for, or in the role of multilingualism in our personal lives, our society, and our world. That passionate interest, and conviction that language learning and use makes our lives better and our world a better place, provide the motivation for a proactive approach that is largely beyond the classroom and beyond the workday. This sense of mission, along with the commitment of time and effort beyond what is required, is needed not

only to accomplish the goals of advocacy, but also to clearly demonstrate that foreign language advocacy is for the greater good, and goes beyond mere self-promotion and job protection.

Although specific methods are likely to vary depending on the size of an advocacy group, its funding, the personal interests of the members, etc., all language advocates should have some familiarity with the relevant theories and best practices in use in both the corporate and non-profit sectors.

An understanding of change management, of the psychology of influence and persuasion, of social marketing, negotiation, and of blue ocean thinking are just a few of the relevant theories driving change. In addition, a general understanding of the principles of marketing and public relations, along with a basic understanding of print and online media, are helpful. While one does not need to be an expert in all areas, understanding the thinking behind current practice, and the relative benefits of different types of means of communication can only be helpful. In addition, as many decisions concerning language learning are political decisions, an understanding and awareness of the legislative process, and of lobbying and grassroots campaigns can be useful.

One important thing to remember is that an 11th hour effort to save a program that is in danger or has been targeted for cuts or even for elimination is an uphill effort, as an idea already on the table is difficult to dislodge even temporarily. Far better to advocate proactively when possible to prevent the discussion from reaching that point through education and information. The following is just a brief overview of only a few of the many potential tools of advocacy.

As the goal of foreign language advocacy is to bring about change, or a paradigm shift (Jaumont & Stein-Smith, 2019), in the way we envision, learn, and use languages in the US, change management needs to be understood, its 8-step processing beginning with the creation of a sense of urgency. The following steps include developing a coalition, developing a strategic vision and initiatives, recruiting volunteers, enabling action, achieving short-term wins, sustaining momentum, and institutionalizing change (*8-Step*, n.d.).

While change management theory can be applied to many environments, foreign language learning is intended for the greater good and, for that reason, the concept of social marketing, influencing behaviors for good (Lee & Kotler), needs to be studied. Rather than using the strategies and tactics of marketing to manipulate people, social marketing uses marketing methods to make the world a better place. Intentional foreign language advocacy is yet another example of the same intrinsic motivation generally associated with successful foreign language learning outcomes.

Important elements in bringing about change – in this case, a change in the way Americans typically think about languages, language learning, and use of other languages – are influence and persuasion. According to Cialdini (2006), there are six principles of persuasion: reciprocity; scarcity; authority; consistency; liking; and consensus. Influence, an understanding of how to change behavior, is essential to language advocates, who must also be “influencers,” who influence behavior change by having a clear goal, maintaining focus on that goal, and knowing how they will measure success. In addition, they leverage six sources to achieve their goal: personal motivation; personal ability; social motivation; social ability; structural motivation; and structural ability (Grenny, Patterson, Maxfield, McMillan, & Switzler, 2013).

Social marketing, or influencing behaviors for good, using the strategies and tactics of marketing, the Four Ps of product, price, promotion, and place, commonly referred to as the marketing mix, to bring about the needed paradigm shift in attitudes toward languages and language learning, is yet another approach to advocacy (Lee & Kotler, 2015).

As foreign languages may be in competition with other disciplines in terms of requirements and funding, which is counterproductive, as all disciplines have their place, it is important to embrace blue ocean thinking, in which market boundaries and structure of the sector can be reconstructed by the actions and beliefs of the participants (Kim & Mauborgne, 2010), and envision foreign language learning differently, bringing a new aspect to the conversation, in order to create a program that is not in direct competition with other competing areas. Disruptive innovation (Christensen) would create a new market for foreign language learning, and new communication networks and partnerships among those who advocate for them and support them. For example, if more students had access to immersion and an early start to foreign language learning, it is likely that there would soon be more students with more advanced proficiency at all levels, including the postsecondary level.

Negotiation is likely to be necessary at times, and successful negotiation strategies and techniques from Harvard based on *Getting to Yes* (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 2011), include separating the people from the problem, focusing on interests, learning to manage emotions, expressing appreciation, putting a positive spin on the message, and escaping the cycle of action and reaction (Harvard, n.d.).

At times, lobbying, protest, and social action may be needed, and an understanding of successful social movements is important, especially in that advocacy is often directed toward an individual or organization, but people themselves need to want to take social action. Elements that characterize successful social movements include defining the change, shifting the spectrum of allies and opponents, identifying the pillars of power, seeking to attract and not to overpower, and building a plan to survive victory (Satell & Popovic, 2017).

V. DEVELOPING INTENTIONAL ADVOCACY SKILLS: A FRAMEWORK AND OPPORTUNITY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Developing intentional advocacy skills can be considered as a form of professional development and can include formal learning as academic coursework or a certificate, as well as more informal learning at conference sessions,

workshops, and consultant visits (MLA-ADFL, web). In addition, aspiring foreign language advocates can develop advocacy skills through coaching, working with a mentor, supervisor, or peer. The most important initial action step is to create a sustainable learning program.

Once a goal of advocacy education and training for advocacy has been established, a road map to developing a program for learning about advocacy would include developing a framework of skills to be learned, including both universal skills and those that may be slightly different depending on the grade levels (including college and university), languages, methodologies, etc. In addition, opportunity for learning – including time and potentially, funding – needs to be created, scheduling and budgetary constraints notwithstanding.

A framework for providing specific information on advocacy to educators at any level who would like to get started as intentional foreign language advocates – as opposed to the informal actions and conversations that take place every day both inside and outside the classroom – as well as providing more advanced skills to those who have been doing advocacy, but would like to expand the scope of their advocacy, would be beneficial.

The greatest necessity -- and top priority -- is to make languages and language learning part of the public conversation beyond faculty meetings and professional conferences, and for that, active engagement of language educators, language supporters and partners, and language enthusiasts is essential. Whether we are advocating for an immersion program, traditional programs in K-12, or language offerings on our campus, it is necessary to start an ongoing conversation with our community – students, faculty, staff, and administrators on campus, fellow educators across the disciplines, as well as parents and community leaders. Involvement in community organizations and use of available media play an important role, and events that highlight the culture and authentic use of the language are essential. Creators and creativity, whether by artists, musicians, writers, and performers, gives added vibrancy to the language and culture in the community, especially to students and prospective students.

Additional learning activities for advocates could include event planning, writing a press release and communicating with local media, creating and maintaining a website, blog, or social media presence, writing to public officials in support of language learning, attending or participating in a public meeting where languages are being discussed, learning the basics of theory and best practice in change management, psychology of influence or persuasion, marketing, PR, social marketing, negotiation, lobbying and grassroots political action, and blue ocean strategy. Engaging in exchange programs, either in person or virtually, and collaborating with colleagues in other disciplines, can also provide opportunity to grow as an intentional foreign language advocate.

The important thing to remember is that not every foreign language advocate needs to be actively engaged in all of the above-mentioned activities. Bringing about a resurgence of foreign languages in the US and embracing our multilingual cultural identity is a major task, requiring many hands and many voices, empowering each one of us to engage in the advocacy project in a way that suits our own individual abilities and interests.

However, despite the importance of advocacy and of training and education to develop and enhance the advocacy skills set, challenges exist. As many PD plans are district-, campus-, or institution-wide, it may be difficult to include an issue that some may see as subject-specific. Strategies to overcome this challenge include seeking out partners, perhaps in other areas experiencing enrollment or budgetary challenges, and encouraging professional engagement in state, regional, and national professional associations.

In addition, challenges to professional development generally also impact training and education in advocacy. Time away, travel, and funding not always available, especially to newer professionals, while of course, they could well be the ones who would benefit most from the training and have long-term opportunities to build and use their advocacy skills. It is important for departments, school districts, and higher education institutions to provide opportunities for professional engagement, and when this is problematic, educators need to highlight the importance of professional development through engagement both to their representatives in local education associations and through faculty governance.

Scholarships and other funding benefits are often available to attend conferences, and can help to alleviate any hardship. Webinars and other online learning and discussion opportunities can complement conference attendance a little or no cost to the school district or to the environment.

VI. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND METHODS OF INTENTIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE ADVOCACY

The primary goal of foreign language advocacy is to support, promote, and defend foreign language learning and use in the United States. In order to achieve this goal of language proficiency, it is necessary to increase access to continued, sequential foreign language learning, whether in an immersion or traditional program from the earliest grade levels, available to all, and to develop opportunities for authentic use and appreciation of additional languages in all sectors of our society. Interdisciplinarity, experiential learning, study abroad, and rewards and recognitions can create and sustain interest in language learning and language requirements at all levels support proficiency and achievement.

Objectives and methods include, but are not limited to, language requirements (MLA, 2012; ECS, 2019) – both for high school graduation and for college admission and graduation, the existence of a state-level supervisor for foreign languages in every state (fewer than 30 states at present) (NCSSFL, web), and increased use of technology in language learning to increase both access and achievement (MLA, 2014).

We also need to advocate for interdisciplinarity and joint degrees at the postsecondary level, and for professional language and business culture courses, and for language for specific purposes across the disciplines (MLA, 2007; MLA, 2015). At the college level, examples include many of the programs highlighted as success stories in the final version of the MLA enrollment survey (MLA, 2019). Other examples include the CIBERs (Centers for International Business Education and Research) and CLAC (Culture and Languages across the Curriculum) programs. French language examples include the Professional French initiative (*Français professionnel*, 2018), that has offered faculty training in French for a variety of specific purposes at several institutions across the country in the summer of 2019, and going forward, the Professional Master's in French at University of Wisconsin, as well as Master's programs at the University of Pennsylvania and New York University. Experiential and project-based learning, minors and second majors, and combined and joint degree programs, as well as high school to college collaborations.

Traditional study abroad and short-term study abroad can create and sustain interest in language learning, and area/international/global studies programs can include a foreign language component. Rewards and recognitions, including honor societies, certificates, and the Seal of Biliteracy, can strengthen interest and motivation, and maximizing opportunities for rewards and recognition, both large and small, can sustain interest in language learning. Relationship-building and the development of partnerships within your community, across the disciplines, and with language stakeholders in business and government can be another advocacy goal.

VII. CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Effective intentional foreign language advocacy requires a multi-faceted approach. While it is important to increase access to language learning and to work to address the shortage of qualified teachers, it is equally important, if not more so, to keep languages and language learning in the public conversation at the local, state, and national level.

However, in order to develop a multilingual society, it is essential to plan and promote authentic use of languages in addition to English in the workplace, at community events, in the media, the arts, the popular culture, and in all aspects of society. In addition, the growth and popularity of immersion programs has been a catalyst for a re-thinking of the role of languages in our society, of our mission as foreign language educators, and of significance of foreign language advocates as change agents.

The good news is that many advocacy-related groups and initiatives exist, within and beyond foreign language education professional associations. Many advocacy initiatives that offer learning and networking opportunities, as well as information and support exist at the state, regional, and national level, including the AATF (American Association of Teachers of French) Commission on Advocacy, of which this author serves as Chair). Lead with Languages, the national advocacy campaign, and Language Advocacy Day, initiatives of ACTFL and JNCL-NCLIS respectively, have provided high-profile focus and momentum at the national level. Most recently, the creation of the America's Languages Congressional Caucus and signing of the World Language Advancement and Readiness Act in late 2019 are clear signs of the impact of the *America's Languages* report (AMACAD, 2017; AMACAD 2019; AMACAD, 2019b).

The most important message to convey every day, in every way, through our words and actions, is that language is a gift, not a burden, to our children and to our society.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS: INTENTIONAL ADVOCACY AS LEADERSHIP

As fewer students in the US have the opportunity to begin continued study of another language at an early age, foreign language advocacy is an essential part of the skills set of the language educator or stakeholder.

While advocacy is, of course, data-driven, and a powerful message based on the lack of language skills among Americans and its current and potential impact is central to the discussion, it is also values-driven, based on knowledge of the benefits of language skills and cultural knowledge for all our children and students, and on an altruistic core value of working for the greater good and of leaving the world a better place.

With the goal of expanding access and opportunity as recommended in the *America's Languages* report (AMACAD, 2017), advocacy strategies and methods can draw from theory and best practice in many areas, ranging from social marketing to the psychology of influence, persuasion, and social movements. The strategies and methods of effective advocates and advocacy initiatives also vary, depending on the interests and talents of individuals, ranging from social media, to research and writing, to active engagement in the national campaign for languages, Lead with Languages.

Leadership is often thought of as influence on and empowerment of others to bring about change. The adoption of intentional advocacy as a core value, a mindset, and a skills set empowers language educators to grow, not only professionally as educators, but also, through advocacy, as leaders.

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