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To Whom it may concern:

I am an eleventh-grade student at Colorado Academy, and I am concerned with the increased budget cuts in foreign language programs of our public schools. Even though I am not currently a public school student, I am concerned that, due to the changing nature of social and business interaction in the twenty-first century, our public school students will not be competitive enough in "the global village". Due to the internet, more people are communicating faster and more easily and more cheaply with one another. Even now, we can see the progression of business on the "net". As other countries become more advanced with their technology the web will cease to be a solely English-speaking dominated entity and become more like what its name implies: "World-Wide". Students without a firm foundation in a language (or two) could easily become lost in the many business opportunities available on this revolutionary communications network, and lose out to other countries' students where part of the curriculum is the study of another language.

On a more personal note, my experience with learning French (and previous to my time at Colorado Academy, German) has been both pleasurable and helpful. Due to my exposure to both languages, my English vocabulary and been enriched, my knowledge of syntax and proper grammar has increased, and my knowledge of history has grown as well. Also, the knowledge of these two languages has been helpful in dealing with the cultures of the countries that speak those languages in my visits to France and Germany. With an enhanced knowledge of the culture (thanks to my classes), I was more easily able to interact with the natives, utilizing another benefit of studying a foreign language.

Being knowledgeable of another country's culture is another reason to study a foreign language. In this time of a "Global Economy", not knowing about the idiosyncrasies of another culture can be business suicide. Even with a translator, one can still do things with the body that can be considered very insulting to a foreign culture. If the person who accidentally does these things is trying to negotiate a business deal, he will have a lot of explaining to do if he has insulted those with whom she is trying to negotiate.

As to the pure enjoyment of discovering another language, to that as well, I can attest. It is fun and exciting to realize that you could communicate with someone across the globe, or even just across the room. In our modern times, expression is power and with the knowledge of another language, one has twice as much of that power.

Thank you for your time,

Daniel McVicker