

GOOD EVENING!

MY NAME IS ROBERT SLATER. I COME TO YOU AS A 40 YEAR RESIDENT OF THE DC AREA WITH MORE THAN 25 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN PROMOTING AND DESIGNING EDUCATION PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE U.S. STUDENTS WITH THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO INSURE THE WELL BEING OF OUR NATION – ECONOMICALLY, POLITICALLY, SOCIALLY – IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY. I DEVOTED THE PAST 18 YEARS TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY EDUCATION PROGRAM A MAJOR EFFORT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO BUILD CRITICAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION.

**IN THE VERY SHORT TWO MINUTES I HAVE I WANT TO MAKE SURE TO LEAVE ONE VERY IMPORTANT IMPRESSION – TODAY WE MUST PREPARE OUR YOUTH TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY IN A GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT. THERE SHOULD BE NO CHOICE HERE. IT IS AN IMPERATIVE. TODAY WE MUST PREPARE YOUTH TO OPERATE IN A GLOBAL ENVIRONMEN. JUST AS WE APPRECIATE THE NEED FOR A STUDENT TO MASTER THE ELEMENTS OF MATH AND SCIENCE WE MUST COMMIT OURSELVES TO CREATE GLOBALLY ADVANTAGED STUDENTS.**

STUDENTS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GROW UP IN ONE OF THE WORLD’S MOST POWERFUL INTERNATIONAL CITIES. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYS MORE THAN 300,000 PERSONNEL; MANY DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES ARE DESEPARATE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH GLOBAL SKILLS. FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS, SERVICE INDUSTRIES ALL INHABIT, IN LARGE NUMBERS, THE WASHINGTON DC REGION AND SEEK EDUCATED APPLICANTS WHO ARE SENSITIVE TO OTHER CULTURES AND WHO CAN COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH.

IN OUR EFFORTS TO LINK THE DEMAND SECTOR – GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS – TO THIS ISSUE WE HAVE WORKED WITH A NUMBER OF STATES (OHIO, OREGON, TEXAS, UTAH) TO BUILD STRATEGIC ROADMAPS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING INTO THE K-12 EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT. SUCH A ROADMAP EFFORT HAS BEEN PROPOSED FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA. ROADMAP EFFORTS HAVE CONSISTENTLY AND INDEPENDENTLY PRODUCED STATE AND LOCAL POLICY OUTOMES PROVIDING ENHANCED LANGUAGE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS. MANY OF THE INITIATIVES RECOMMEND ENCOURAGING, MOTIVATING, AND REWARDING PROFICIENCY GAINS THEREBY OPENING NEW PATHWAYS TO EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY TO ALL STUDENTS ENGAGED IN SECOND LANGUAGE STUDY. THE INCLUSION OF SECOND LANGUAGE SKILLS PREPARES STUDENTS TO SUCCEED IN A PROFESSIONAL WORLD BREAKING THE CYCLE OF INEQUITY AND LIMITED OPPORTUNITY. LANGUAGE ROADMAPS YIELD EVIDENCE-BASED DEMAND ASSESSMENTS BOTH HIGHLIGHTING AND RESPONDING TO THE NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL LEVEL FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPEAKERS IN STATE AND NATIONAL WORKFORCES. LET ME BE CLEAR...GLOBAL LEARNING MUST NOT BE SEEN AS PART OF A ZERO SUM GAME JEOPARDIZING TIME GIVEN TO OTHER MORE IMPORTANT SUBJECTS. INDEED THE LEARNING OF A SECOND LANGUAGE IS AN EMPOWERING OPPORTUNITY THAT BENEFITS ACADEMIC PROGRESS, BUILDS HIGHER ORDER THINKING, AIDS COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT AND HELPS NARROW ACHIEVEMENT GAPS.

AS WE LOOK AHEAD TO THE FUTURE I URGE THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SCHOOL SYSTEM TO LEAD THE NATION IN PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO BE GLOBAL LEADERS. IT IS AN EMPOWERING OPPORTUNITY THAT IS A CRITICAL ELEMENT OF ANY WORLD CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM.

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