

Proclamation

Declaring the West Valley City English Language Initiative

Whereas West Valley City is the most ethnically diverse city in the State of Utah, and desires to promote the benefits and engage in the challenges of having such diversity; and

Whereas West Valley City wishes to continue its history of welcoming and supporting its ethnic population, as it has with, among other things, the Utah Cultural Celebration Center, the Mayor's Summit of Ethnic Leaders, and the planning of the soon-to-be constructed Jordan River International Marketplace; and

Whereas West Valley City promotes the American dream held by all our immigrant ancestors of freedom and opportunity in our movement, association, worship, education, employment, housing and access to government; and

Whereas many languages are spoken in West Valley City, yet English is spoken by the majority and has a long tradition of being the common language in this area that binds the community together; and

Whereas it is a practical impossibility for any given individual to communicate in each of the many languages spoken in West Valley City; and

Whereas English is the Official Language of the State of Utah and of West Valley City as a political subdivision of the State of Utah (UCA 63G-1-201); and

Whereas it is in the best interest of West Valley City to educate its residents on the ordinances and laws that those within our city are expected to obey, and yet the City is challenged by those who do not understand the English language; and

Whereas according to the 2000 Census, fluent English-speaking immigrants earn nearly double that of non-English speaking workers and have substantially lower unemployment rates; and so immigrants learning English improves the economic well being of West Valley City families; and

Whereas the ability of all residents to communicate with each other in English is the glue that binds our community together, creates cohesive neighborhoods, and provides the best opportunities for education, employment, housing and access to government.

Now, therefore, Mayor Mike Winder and the West Valley City Council proclaim an English language initiative, which encompasses:

- 1) Encouraging all of its businesses and housing providers to use English in signs, advertisements, promotions and menus; and encouraging all who live here to take advantage of every opportunity to learn and speak English, thereby creating a more

cohesive society and inviting all the opportunities and advantages available to individuals who search for the American dream.

- 2) Inviting all who may not speak English or who would like to improve their English to visit the new website www.englishwvc.org to view a comprehensive list of English class opportunities throughout Salt Lake County generally and West Valley City specifically; and to take advantage of one of these many opportunities.

- 3) Recognizing individuals with a Certificate of Achievement from the city at a City Council meeting in the spring or in the fall each year applauding them for embracing the West Valley City English Language Initiative. Students who complete a recognized English class are invited to have their instructor notify City Hall so that they can be on the list to be recognized.

- 4) Applauding and recognizing the value of learning multiple languages, including ancestral languages, while emphasizing the importance of learning and speaking English as quickly as possible for their own benefit and for the overall good of the West Valley City community.