

LANGUAGE POLICY

Leland Public School

2015-16

PHILOSOPHY

At Leland Public School, we believe that “language is fundamental to learning, thinking and communicating; therefore, it permeates the whole curriculum.” Language is the foundation of critical thinking and necessary to cultivate “internationally minded and responsible members of local, national and global communities.” (IBO) All teachers at LPS share responsibility for language learning in partnership with students and their families. This policy aims to clarify how language learning is supported throughout the continuum at LPS.

UNDERSTANDING for LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

Through the instruction of language and literature, students will explore the fundamental skills of analyzing, organizing text, producing text, and using language with the purpose communicating.

During IB, students will read a variety of texts including narrative, informational, and argumentative. Through reading instruction, students will learn to read critically, analyze the structure of writing, apply language usage skills, and integrate these understandings in order to enhance comprehension and communication.

These authentic learning experiences will be provided through:

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (CCSS)

The CCSS is an interdisciplinary approach to language learning and “insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school.” (CCSS) The standards define cumulative end of the year expectations for grades K through 8 and bands for grades 9-10 and 11-12.

Classroom Practices

There are many classroom practices associated with language learning at LPS. Broad and balanced independent reading in content areas is a part of the curriculum at each grade level. Independent writing occurs both within and outside the classroom. Collaborative activities such as discussions, Socratic seminars, projects and reader’s theater are all opportunities for language learning.

Assessment

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts are used as a baseline for what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade level. Standards correlate strongly with IB aims and objectives and aim to develop literate students who

- demonstrate independence build strong content knowledge.
- respond to varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- comprehend as well as critique.
- value evidence.
- come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

While assessment is a continuous process embedded in all of the instructional practices described above, some summative assessments should be noted.

MLPP (Michigan Literacy Progress Profile) provide information on milestone tasks to assure that steady progress is sustained through the child's literacy development. The milestone areas are: Oral Language, Oral Reading, Comprehension, Writing, and Literacy Attitudes.

Rigby Running Records used in grades K-2 are another assessment tool. A running record allows staff to assess a student's reading performance as she/he reads from a benchmark book. More importantly this tool allows for teachers to observe and analyze the nature of a student's errors or miscues to inform instruction.

Literacy and the Primary Language of Instruction

The foundation of learning at LPS is literacy: the ability to read, write, listen, speak, and think critically across subject areas, media and grade levels. (CCSS) Literacy is taught authentically and in context through units of inquiry supporting acquisition of knowledge and skills, conceptual development, and growth as an IB learner. English is the primary language of instruction with the exception of language acquisition classes, where Spanish is the primary language of instruction.

UNDERSTANDING for LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

All students at LPS have an opportunity to learn more than one language from their first year of school. Learning a second language provides students the “opportunity to develop insights into the features, processes and craft of language and the concept of culture, and to realize that there are diverse ways of living, behaving and viewing the world.” (IBO) The aims of language acquisition at LPS are to

- encourage students to gain competence in an additional language with the long-term goal of multilingualism.
- enable students to develop lifelong language learning skills.
- encourage students to develop an awareness and understanding of the perspectives of people from other cultures.

The plan for language acquisition instruction is included in Appendix A.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT for LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

LPS has support services available to help students in their language development including the following:

LPS Special Education Services

Students who are eligible for Special Education services are supported by a collaborative effort from classroom teachers and special education staff as articulated in the IEP. All services are provided with consideration to the least restrictive environment.

Instructional Consultation Team (ICT)

The ICT Team is a proactive service that provides academic and behavioral support to all students who are struggling with a goal to enhance, improve and increase student and staff performance. It consists of a systematic, problem solving process for all teachers and staff to help them reflect on and develop instruction for all students.

Regional Migrant Support Services

Provided by the Intermediate School District, this staff person provides group and one-on-one support to migrant students at LPS. This includes instructional support and assessment.

Special Education Services for the Visually Impaired

In order to meet the specific needs of our blind and visually impaired children, TBAISD provides itinerant services from qualified teachers of the visually impaired and orientation and mobility specialists, to students at LPS.

Library, Information, and Media Literacy

LPS has a strong commitment to literacy and maintains two Library Media Centers: one in the elementary school and one in the secondary school. Our vision of literacy for the 21st Century learner is broad in scope and is articulated by the American Library Association:

- Reading is a window to the world.
- Inquiry provides a framework for learning.
- Ethical behavior in the use of information must be taught.
- Technology skills are crucial for future employment needs.
- Equitable access is a key component for education.

Library staff collaborates with classroom teachers by supporting inquiry, providing readers' advisory, curriculum support with acquisition of print and digital resources, and digital literacy instruction. The Library also manages AR and STAR Reading with Spanish language support.

Intervention Teacher

An intervention teacher works with struggling learners in language arts and other subject. This includes ELL (English Language Learners) students.

SCHOOL LANGUAGE PROFILE

- The primary language of instruction is English.
- Leland Public Schools offers second language instruction in Spanish.
- Braille is a language need in the LPS school community.

Mother Tongue Support

The faculty and staff at LPS honor and celebrate diversity and work collaboratively to support and embrace mother tongue languages. We invite native speakers to enhance our educational community through a variety of opportunities in our classrooms and school. These include presentations, cultural events and arranging simple interactions like playgroups and reading during story time. We pay close attention to the importance of signage for building navigation and family communications by translating documents to the greatest extent possible. Translation services are offered during parent teacher conferences and other events when requested. Migrant Support Services and classroom aides provide formal individual student support.

WORKS CITED

- IBO. *Guidelines for developing a school language policy*. Cardiff, Wales: International Baccalaureate Organization, 2008.
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- . *Making the PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international education*. OCC. 2009. Web. 31 January 2015.
- . *Middle Years Programme Language and literature guide*. OCC. 2014. Web. 31 January 2015.
- . *Primary Years Programme Language scope and sequence*. OCC. 2009. Web. 31 January 2015
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers. "English Language Arts Standards." *Common Core State Standards*. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010. Web.

REVIEW

The Language Policy is approved by the LPS Board of Education and implemented by all staff. Communication of the policy to parents will occur through formal presentations and access in both print and electronic formats. The IB Leadership Team will regularly evaluate

implementation of the policy as evidenced by classroom observations and school presentations. The language policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier as needed.

Appendix A

Progression of Learning in Spanish Language Acquisition Leland Public School

PYP Year 1 (Kindergarten)

Emphasis of instruction is on comprehensible input, whereby students listen, repeat and gesture their understanding. Basic numbers, colors, alphabet letters and simple daily phrases are learned through repetition, music, stories and games.

PYP Years 2 & 3 (1st and 2nd grades)

Students acquire basic vocabulary along with common expressions. Emphasis is placed on communicative performance.

PYP Years 3 & 4 (Third and Fourth Grades)

Students review past content and continue to build basic vocabulary and common expressions. Once more, emphasis is placed on communicative performance.

MYP Year 1 (5/6th grade)

Emphasis of instruction is on correct grammar usage. Students begin to learn and use verbs with corresponding pronouns in multiple tenses. Students discover identities and relationships with the vocabulary of food, household, places and professions. Language learning study skills are modeled and practiced.

MYP Year 2 (7th grade)

Emphasis of instruction continues with correct grammar usage, as students learn formality of language use, and begin to construct communication in dialogue format. Focus areas include: developments in pronunciation and reading and speaking aloud at a steady pace with confidence. Vocabulary acquisition further develops.

MYP Year 3 (8th grade)

Emphasis of instruction continues with correct grammar usage, especially with the most commonly used verbs. Students master verb conjugations in the present tense, create meaningful questions and answers, and develop their translation skills in writing. Vocabulary acquisition further develops.

MYP Year 4 (9th grade)

Students continue their vocabulary and grammar acquisition by means of frequent reading, listening, writing and speaking activities. Students connect their Spanish language use to local and global communities, while making connections to other subject areas. Students develop reading proficiency, note-taking strategies and storytelling abilities in Spanish.

MYP Year 5 (10th grade)

Students continue their vocabulary and grammar acquisition by means of frequent reading, listening, writing and speaking activities. Students connect their Spanish language use to local and global communities, while making connections to other subject areas. Students develop reading proficiency, note-taking strategies and storytelling abilities in Spanish. Focus is on lengthening communication in the present tense and acquiring the skills of communication in the past and future tenses in Spanish.