

### **Purpose of a Language Policy**

The IB recognizes that language is central to learning as it develops critical thinking, intercultural awareness and global citizenship (From *Language and Learning in IB programmes*, 2014). Language study, including English, modern languages and mother tongue languages, reinforces cultural identity, enhances personal growth and promotes effective communication. The partnership views **all** teachers as teachers of language, **all** parents as essential contributors to the language learning process and **all** students as language learners. Language instruction in the Primary Years Programme values students' multiple learning styles and individual growth.

The purpose of creating a language policy is to ensure that all students can embrace the opportunities and resources to develop the language skills needed for life-long learning. Our aim is to embrace, encourage and support the development of all languages spoken in our school community.

### **School Language Philosophy**

For our ELL students and our native English speakers, we recognize that the students' mother tongue enhances the value and effectiveness of the learning experiences within the taught curriculum. The first of the five essential elements in the PYP written curriculum is knowledge. All students come to school with prior knowledge of language. We develop this prior knowledge into a deeper understanding of what language is and increase the skills needed to continually communicate in an ever changing global society.

### **Practices of the Language Policy**

**Adapted from PYP "Language Scope and Sequence", 2009**

#### **Oral Language: listening and speaking**

Oral communication enables students to construct meaning through the process of articulating thoughts in a variety of ways. Oral communication encompasses all aspects of listening and speaking that allow students to relate to those around them. In the area of oral communication, students will learn to:

- Improve fluency and accuracy when speaking to share thoughts and feelings
- Ask and answer questions, retell information, persuade others, and contribute to discussions in a range of formal and informal situations and in large or small groups
- Recognize the perspective of the audience leads to more effective and appropriate communication
- Identify key ideas in spoken language and synthesize them to create their own understanding.

- Communicate orally in more than one language.

### **Written Language: reading and writing**

Reading is constructing meaning from text by making inferences and interpretations. The process of reading is interactive and involves the reader's purpose for reading, the reader's prior knowledge and the text itself. Writing allows us to develop, organize and communicate thoughts and information in a visible way. In the area of written language, the students will learn to:

- Read and write for enjoyment, instruction and information using a variety of strategies
- Recognize and appreciate a variety of perspectives about how people think, feel and act as we synthesize information and reflect on what they know.
- Understand and apply a variety of literary techniques (including structure, mechanics, syntax, and voice) into their own written communication, in order to help others understand and appreciate it.

### **Visual language: viewing and presenting**

Viewing and presenting means interpreting or constructing visuals and multimedia presentations in a variety of situations and for a wide range of purposes and audiences. They allow students to understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas, values and beliefs. Visual images engage viewers while giving instant access to information so that learners can begin to interpret the data in useful ways. In the area of visual communication, student will learn to:

- Understand, critically analyze and communicate information and ideas through a variety of visual media,
- Select the most suitable form of visual presentation to express ideas and images
- Understand that interpreting visual texts influences our judgement about the intent of the message
- Recognize techniques in visual texts that allow us to interpret presentations and create our own visual effects.

### **Legal Requirements**

Las Colinas Elementary complies with the national and state requirements for ELL students. Upon entrance into the Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District, all students complete a Home Language Survey (HLS) to determine the mother tongue. In response to the results of the HLS, students complete a language assessment to determine the level of proficiency in the mother tongue. A Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) classifies each student according to the language in which the student possesses primary proficiency. If test results indicate the student needs assistance in development of the host school language, the student has the opportunity to participate in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) regularly reviews the decision to change a student's educational language placement. Annually, all ELL students are assessed with the TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment Scales) to ensure growth in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Finally, since most ELL students are taking regular courses, most teachers have their state certification in English as a Second Language requirements.

The ESL program is an intensive immersion program consisting of instruction in English from teachers trained in understanding and supporting students with language differences. The ESL program considers the students' learning experiences and shall incorporate the cultural aspects of the students' background.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) students participate fully with English-speaking students in regular classes provided in all subjects including the arts and physical education. Part of the ESL teacher's role is to be an advocate for the student in the classroom and in the community. ESL teachers invite active inquiry in their classroom while supporting language acquisition. In addition, they monitor students' progress in regular classrooms, collaborate with classroom teachers to create meaningful learning engagements, assist in test modifications, and stay in contact with parents. Teachers assigned to ESL programs must obtain appropriate certification by the state as well as maintain yearly requirements for district mandated staff development. At Las Colinas Elementary, ELL students receive an additional 30 minutes per day of instruction in English vocabulary development and continued practice in reading and writing skills in order to support continuous high academic achievement for these students.

### **Second Language Instruction**

One of the requirements to be an authorized IB World School is that students receive regular instruction in a language other than their native tongue.

At Las Colinas Elementary, all grades K-5 receive 45 minutes of Spanish instruction on a weekly schedule. The purpose of this instruction is not for students to develop mastery of speaking another language, but rather for students to be exposed to other cultural perspectives, using language as a "doorway" to these perspectives. The second language instructor receives students in her room and teaches oral speaking as well as reading as appropriate for the age of the learner.

### **Language Policy Review**

This policy is evaluated every two years by the Head of Schools, IB Coordinator, Director of Advanced Academics, CFB Bil/ESL Director, and ESL and language teachers at the campus. It is the responsibility of the IB Coordinator to ensure the success of the language policy review.