

**James B. Sanderlin PK-8, an IB World School  
Language Policy**

**I. Mission Statement**

James B. Sanderlin IB World School is committed to teaching and learning with the brain and heart in mind. Our community of active lifelong learners will use an inquiry approach through our challenging programmes to become internationally minded citizens.

**II. Introduction & Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to communicate to all stakeholders in our IB community - administrators, teachers, students, and parent - the programmatic expectations for assessment for all learners as required by International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). This document also provides clear guidelines and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

At James B. Sanderlin PK-8 we believe that language is central to learning.

All instructional staff members are language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication. Learning a language is part of forming one's own identity, exploring thoughts and having an awareness of the thoughts and identities of others. It is, therefore, key to our personal, cognitive and cultural development. Language is used to communicate our needs, feelings, ideas and experiences as well as understanding others. We do this by appreciating, exploring, and reflecting on our ability to express ourselves using a variety of forms including literacy, math, science & technology, the humanities, visual and performing arts. Language, in all its forms and in all systems, is the fundamental way we learn about ourselves, about others and the world around us

Specifically,

The IB Primary Years Programme (PYP):

- Promotes inquiry-based authentic language learning
- Focuses on the transdisciplinary nature of language learning
- Incorporates the teaching and learning of language into the Programme of Inquiry
- Develops and interrelates the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy
- Provides for the teaching and learning of a second language

The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP):

- Incorporates the teaching and learning of language through the implementation of the programme across all disciplines
- Integrates language acquisition within interdisciplinary planning and teaching
- Utilizes the MYP subject objectives and criterion for Language & Literature and Language Acquisition

**III. IB Learner Profile**

All members of the school community are language learners and strive to be:

Inquirers - One who possesses the skills to conduct inquiry and work independently,

Principled - One who approaches language acquisition with integrity,

Open-minded - One who is open to languages and opinions,

Risk taker - One who has the initiative to explore a new language,

Communicators - One who can express ideas and concepts clearly and articulately in the target language,

Reflective - One who thoughtfully considers strengths and weaknesses in language,

Knowledgeable - One who seeks knowledge about other cultures and their languages,

Thinkers - One who approaches a new language critically and creatively,

Caring - One who demonstrates empathy, compassion and respect towards others and their mother tongue language,

Balanced - One who achieves personal well being through language acquisition.

**IV. Definitions**

At James B. Sanderlin PK-8, we value all languages and encourage the development of all forms of language communication in our effort to promote the international-mindedness of the students and adults in the school community.

**Language A-** The language in which the student has the highest level of proficiency

**Language B-** The language learned at school

**Mother Tongue-** The language learned first and/or the language identified as the primary language spoken at home

**Multilingualism-** Complex, rich, dynamic language portraits that include a range of abilities or proficiencies in more than one language

## V. Practices

### Language A - Primary language of instruction; English

We believe oral, written, and visual language permeates the whole curriculum. Language is the medium through which the entire curriculum is taught and learned. It facilitates communication and incorporates the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and media literacy. There is a reciprocal relationship between using inquiry to facilitate language and using language to facilitate inquiry. All students are provided a safe, nurturing, language-rich environment that supports learning as well as social, emotional development and well-being. Our school community benefits from access to different cultures, perspectives and languages, which increase cultural awareness and international-mindedness. We value and encourage students to respect the language, literature, and culture of their home country. We strive to create a caring language community in which all students feel accepted and supported, thereby feeling confident to be risk-takers.

To add complexity to the student experience, all teachers are viewed and expected to maintain certain literacy standards with their course work. All staff members hold students accountable to proper grammar and structure, both written and verbal in everyday interactions. Vocabulary word walls are found in each classroom with strategies and use expectations. Teacher tools and strategies evaluate student language acquisition. Students' journal entries are tools to evaluate literacy. The criterion used to assess students language development is consistent across subject areas to reinforce the idea that all subjects are connected and skills cross boundaries.

IB language protocols include:

#### *Spelling and Vocabulary*

- Common American spelling protocols such as Webster's are acceptable.
- Academic strategies in place for all students to augment vocabulary - including word walls, flash cards, vocabulary teaching stations, and non-linguistic representations.
- Thoughts expressed in complete sentences. This pursuit acts to ensure students understand that language acquisition and usage influences every aspect of development and college readiness.

*In order to achieve our aims, teachers will:*

- Model and teach the correct use of language
- Teach language in context and address the following modalities: listening, speaking, reading, writing, presenting, and viewing according to the Florida Standards and the IB Approaches to Learning, especially communication skills
- Provide a variety of learning experiences to ensure balance and progression in the acquisition of language
- Differentiate activities to meet children's language needs
- Expose children to new and stimulating vocabulary linked to PYP Units of Inquiry and MYP Unit Planners and encourage them to use this to develop listening, speaking, reading, writing, presenting, and viewing skills.
- Create an atmosphere of acceptance and respect of cultural differences.
- Incorporate and apply literacy throughout the day through meaningful tasks in authentic contexts.
- Recognize and respect the different ways in which students express themselves including mother tongue development.

### Language B - language acquisition taught at school; Spanish

Currently the world language of instruction at James B. Sanderlin PK-8 is Spanish. Fluent-speaking Spanish teachers provide Primary Years students (K-5) with forty-five minutes of Spanish instruction once a week and to Middle Year students (6-8) with three to five hours of Spanish instruction weekly. Spanish is available as a supplement in the classroom through interactive videos (Salsa) in primary grades and through the use of the *Rosetta Stone* interactive computer program in intermediate grades. Spanish is also supported on a daily basis through our PYP morning news program, Sanderlin Universal Network News (SUNN). The PYP Spanish teacher models conversational Spanish with students in a daily segment each morning during the live broadcast.

In the Middle Years, Spanish teachers provide students in the middle school with 88-minute blocks of Spanish instruction on a block schedule rotation. Spanish instruction in the MYP is required of all students in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade to fulfill the Language Acquisition subject requirement. Students are encouraged to use Spanish in a variety of contexts to reinforce the importance of learning a second language by providing opportunities to communicate with the school community and share language knowledge with their families. It is understood that reinforcing, supporting, and extending classroom work is an important role for the additional language teacher.

### Mother Tongue - The language learned first and/or the language identified as the primary language spoken at home

We believe that recognizing and supporting our students' mother tongue languages is crucial to their development. The role of parents is vital in ensuring a positive approach to the development of languages. The school expects parents to value

their home language(s), as home language proficiency and maintenance are essential in the acquisition of additional languages. Appropriate support with English at home is also an essential part of the children's success both for English and non-English speaking families.

Students who enroll at James B. Sanderlin PK-8 IB World School, speaking a language other than English, will be given a Home Language Survey and provided with the appropriate assistance depending on their needs. In order to support students who speak a language other than English, all teachers are required to be ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) endorsed or certified.

Multilingualism- Complex, rich, dynamic language portraits that include a range of abilities or proficiencies in more than one language

As James B. Sanderlin PK-8, an IB World School, becomes a more multi-cultural campus, students identified as multilingual are being recognized and welcomed. Students are encouraged to share their language knowledge and culture with the school community through classroom and school-wide special events.

#### **VI. Assessment of Language Learning**

All students are assessed in English in accordance to the Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS), and the new Florida Standards. Students in Grades 3-8 will also be assessed with the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) in Mathematics, Reading, & Writing. Additionally, all students in fifth and eighth grades are required to take the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in Science. Students enrolled in specific courses are also assessed using an end-of-course (EOC) exam for that subject area. All students in first through eighth grade are assessed using the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) to progress monitor throughout the school year. Students in first and second grade are assessed in Reading & Mathematics utilizing the SAT-10 achievement test. Students in kindergarten are assessed in oral language, vocabulary and comprehension through the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener. In PreK, oral language and vocabulary are assessed through the VPK and GOLD assessments.

In the PYP, formative and summative assessments of the understanding of the six units of Inquiry incorporate several approaches to language learning, including, written responses, collaborative group sharing, whole group oral conversations, visual representations of learning, and self/peer reflections to show understanding of the five essential elements of the PYP, especially the development of Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills.

In the MYP, formative and summative assessments of the conceptual understanding of each unit include multiple opportunities for language development. Students are expected to practice speaking, listening, & viewing, along with providing oral and written responses, collaborative group tasks, grand conversations, Socratic seminars, visual representations of learning, and self/peer reflections to further develop the Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills throughout the programme.

Many systems are in place to track student progress in English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy. Meetings are held regularly with the teachers of each grade level and an administrator to analyze student assessment data and plan for the needs of each unique group of students. Intensive interventions are provided to students in need. If a child is found to have a significant learning obstacle, he or she may be referred to the Response to Intervention (RtI) team for further evaluation and placement.

#### **VII. The Media Center**

The media center is a large open space with a clear delineation of the books appropriate for PYP and MYP students. The Media Specialist works with classroom teachers to ensure that student needs and interests are met through the selections in the media center. A constant and deliberate effort is made to provide a wide variety of textual media in all of the native languages of the students at Sanderlin PK-8. Because Spanish is the taught Language Acquisition class, there are many resources available to teachers and students to assist in their language development in the media center. Furthermore, as the diversity changes at the school, the Media Specialist analyzes school needs on a yearly basis when placing orders to replenish the texts available to ensure there are selections available for all students who speak languages other than English at home.

#### **VIII. Professional Development**

Pinellas County School District offers a wide variety of professional development opportunities to help keep teachers informed of state standards and best practices. The Leading the Learning Cadre (LLC) composed of the administrators,

magnet coordinators, & a selection of teachers of varying grade levels, with input from the Literacy School Improvement Plan (SIP) workgroup (representatives from each grade level), discuss the needs of our professional development on an ongoing basis. The school is committed to IB training of staff through regional trainings and by the attendance and participation at the Florida League of IB Schools quarterly meetings and workshops. These workshops include Reading and Writing in the PYP, Language B in the PYP, Arts in the PYP, Inquiry in the classroom, Category 1-3 workshops in each of the 8 MYP Subject Areas, etc.

Several models have been instituted which also promote understanding and adherence to the IB programme standards:

- ◆ Professional Learning Communities (PLC) - opportunities for grade level or subject area teams to work collaboratively on PYP Units of Inquiry and MYP Unit Planners, planning and differentiation of instruction.
- ◆ Progress Monitoring Meetings- to discuss reading data results and student protocol discussions within the PLC.
- ◆ The Leading the Learning Cadre (LLC) - a team of teachers, the magnet coordinators, and Principal who attend district developed workshops in order to facilitate the transition to the new Florida Standards for Mathematics and English/Language Arts
- ◆ Coaching and mentoring of staff by experienced teachers and coaches

#### **IX. Communications with Parents**

Parents of all language learners are encouraged to actively participate in their child's education and in school activities. Parental involvement opportunities include:

- ◆ Open House/Meet and Greet/Parent-Teacher conferences
- ◆ School Advisory Council (SAC)
- ◆ Parent/Teacher/Student Association (PTSA)
- ◆ Newsletters
- ◆ Student Agenda books
- ◆ Family Fun Nights
- ◆ IB Parent Nights
- ◆ Reading and language "competitions":
  - Junior Jousts
  - Book Boxing
  - District wide Battle of the Books
- ◆ School web page resource material available to parents including articles on language acquisition, tips for parents when working at home with students, strategies for developing the ATL skills at home, etc.
- ◆ Parent communication through Parent Focus

When necessary and appropriate, assessment criterion and other home/ school communications will be sent to parents in the language spoken at home. Links to videos in other languages from IB will be communicated with families as needed.

#### **X. Resources**

The Pinellas County School District provides each classroom with county adopted textbooks and materials to teach learning points in accordance with the Florida Standards. We also utilize electronic resources to utilize with students, teachers, staff and parents within the district for progress monitoring, communication, and learning. These resources include, but are not limited to:

- Online library catalog
- Online encyclopedias
- Electronic databases
- Literature text sets
- PCS Focus
- Online Courses through PCS Focus & Moodle
- E-Pals
- Think.com
- SUNN (PYP News broadcast)
- Turtle Talk (MYP News broadcast)
- Sea Turtle Tidings (monthly school-wide newsletter)