

McMullen Booth Elementary IB World School

Language Policy

What are our views?

It is our belief that language strengthens and supports human relationships. Language is used to communicate our needs, feelings, ideas, experiences and to understand others. Our instructional staff members, including specialists in *neurodiversity, are responsible for facilitating communication and our ability to express ourselves verbally and non-verbally 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. Hence, we believe that language development is central to learning and supports multilingualism. Language, in all its forms, allows us to express ourselves, our identities, and develop international mindedness, to become effective inquirers and communicators.

What is our purpose?

- Learn through language interactions with cultures and customs.
- Learn by using oral, written, and visual language throughout the school day (EX: fiction/non-fiction; music/song lyrics; movement; art/artists; recess/play).
- Develop and use the approaches to learning and the learner profile to enhance language learning/ teaching.

What are our guiding principles?

- Multilingualism is respected and its development encouraged.
- Language looks and sounds different depending on where it is used: home, community, family, and school.
- Members of the learning community are interested in, engage with, and inquire about languages.
- Members of the learning community see themselves as language teachers and learners.

What are our essential agreements?

- English is our primary language of instruction.
- All students have access to learning more than one language.
- Language is a primary tool for learning, communication, expression, and understanding.
- Language is developed through inquiry and reflection; woven throughout collaboratively planned units.

What are our practices?

- Daily English and Language Arts (ELA) block for all students.
- Reading intervention and enrichment provided daily.
- Weekly Spanish language instruction for 30 minutes provided for all students.
- Provide support for translanguaging connections to be made between students' home language and the instructional language to foster their sense of self and identity.

Students will have opportunities at some point during PreK – 5th grade to develop each of the following:

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Oral Language – Listening and Speaking	Visual Language – Viewing and Presenting	Written Language – Reading & Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIALOGUE: Intentional and purposeful dialogue with members of the learning community. • INQUIRY: Asking questions and seeking answers using an inquiry cycle. • TARGET: Language specific to audience and or task. • DEBATE: Listening to and sharing varying perspectives and viewpoints. • FOCUS: Listening for understanding. • REFLECTION: Responding by explaining thinking. • ENGAGEMENT: Using read-aloud (teachers and students) to develop critical listening skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MULTIMEDIA used for interpretation, evaluation, and expression. • CREATING and constructing projects as evidence of their learning. • PRESENTING their knowledge with members of the learning community to show understanding in multiple fields. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups: small group/whole group reading and writing instruction. • Practice: Collaborative and independent. • Reading for meaning through interactions with a wide variety of texts (digital, print, audio, multicultural, fiction, nonfiction) • Explicit instruction in authentic ELA instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension). • Authentic writing for multiple purposes.

Home Language Support

Home language refers to the language that the learner first acquired. Most of our students' home language is English, however, a significant percentage of our students, and some of our staff members, are multilingual. Our largest multilingual community are **Hispanic**. We also have members in the community who speak the following languages – **Albanian, American Sign Language, Arabic, Creole, Czech, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Urdu**.

The district's Home Language Survey is a brief screening for families. To encourage cultural identity, we build upon their language experiences and perspectives to develop their language profile.

Home languages at McMullen Booth are supported through:

- English Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) certified teachers and English Language Learner assistants
- Spanish speaking members of the staff who communicate with and translate for parents and students.
- Media Center resources in home languages.
- District and school information/publications *can be made* available to read home languages.
- Telephone access to translators through the district ESOL department and provided services.

What is our responsibility?

- Adjust learning environment based on student needs (visuals & labels).
- Best practices for instruction; plan for learning materials to be accessible to all students.
- Staff participation in professional development- internal and district provided workshops to remain current with best practices in language learning.
- Participate in just-in-time coaching best practices on language acquisition standards, and benchmarks.
- Teachers informally assess language development through oral, written, or visual engagements depending on students' levels of development.
- Formally assess language development and report results of language learning.
- Continually update student data, and WIDA data for ESOL students in the program.