



Dorothy C. York Innovation Academy, an IB Candidate School*

Language Policy

Mission Statement: At Dorothy C. York Innovation Academy, we will navigate global waters by providing rigorous instruction that engages students to reach their highest potential as knowledgeable, caring, and collaborative thinkers.

Vision: Admirals will emerge as principled and innovative life-long learners who will create a culturally compassionate world.

Philosophy

At York Innovation Academy, all teachers share the responsibility of helping students become effective communicators, as language skills are key to the academic and social development of each individual. York is committed to providing an environment that promotes, supports, and respects language diversity. All students are language learners of the school's language of instruction (English) and participate in Spanish classes as part of our World Language Program. Because each student has a unique language background, we believe that recognizing and supporting our students' mother tongue languages is crucial to their development. The school acknowledges that language adapts according to audience and purpose in academic, home, play, and other settings. The teachers at York are committed to a multidisciplinary approach to language learning that incorporates academic content knowledge, global thinking, the IB Learner Profile attributes, and the Approaches to Learning skills.

Practices in the PYP Programme

Mastery and application of the language skills [listening, speaking, viewing, presenting, reading, and writing] is the responsibility of all stakeholders.

Within the classroom students will participate in:

- Whole group reading and writing instruction
- Small flexible reading and writing groups
- Independent reading and writing with conferencing
- Discussion
- Asking questions/seeking answers
- Explaining and evaluating ideas
- Listening for understanding/responding
- Collaborative learning projects
- Public speaking
- Vocabulary building techniques
- Formal and informal assessment protocols to determine specific needs of students

- Transdisciplinary units of inquiry which support student agency, action, and inclusion

Students will be exposed to a wide range of text to include:

- Fiction and nonfiction text
- Multicultural text
- Digital and visual text
- Presentations and performances

PYP Language Acquisition

Students in grades 1-5 will participate in second language acquisition through Spanish classes once a week for 30 minutes. Kindergarten students will participate in Spanish classes for 50 minutes twice per month. The PYP Spanish teacher will collaborate with classroom teachers to connect vocabulary and activities to support the central ideas and lines of inquiry of each unit. Classroom teachers will support Spanish instruction in the classroom through the following practices:

- Labeling
- Integration/modeling of key phrases
- Songs/videos/role-play
- Literature

Practices in the MYP Programme

Mastery and application of the language skills [listening, speaking, viewing, presenting, reading, and writing] is the responsibility of all stakeholders.

Within the MYP Programme, students will participate in:

- Interdisciplinary units that strengthen content-based language skills through collaborative activities to include Global Contexts and Assessment following MYP guidelines
- Interactive notebooks/journals in Language & Literature, Science, Math, and Individuals & Societies
- Science lab reports
- Narrative response to math word problems
- Personal written reflections
- Notetaking in various forms
- Student-supported morning news broadcasts
- Short answer responses on formative and summative assessments
- Scaffolded reading enhancement through the use of common assessments
- Written and oral presentations
- Field trips, assemblies, speakers

MYP Language Acquisition

- 6th-8th grade articulated foreign language program (Spanish) is a required course for all MYP students. Students are offered Exploring Spanish, Beginning Spanish, Spanish I, courses. High school credit Spanish classes are offered to students who have met proficiency at the 8th grade level.
- Language Acquisition is also embedded school-wide through cultural celebrations, showcase events, and targeted vocabulary.

Mother Tongue Support

Students whose mother tongue is not English are valued for the diversity and insight they bring to the classroom. Varying background cultures, languages, and traditions are celebrated as part of our international mindset, and students are encouraged to be open-minded and respectful of differences within the school body. All faculty members are responsible for communicating the importance of home languages. Multilingual teachers are encouraged to converse with students in their mother tongue languages and often serve as translators to support others with parent/teacher communication. Students are encouraged to contribute perspectives/knowledge from their culture/language to classroom experiences.

English Language Learners

York's student demographic includes 91% of students whose mother tongue is English, 7% with the mother tongue of Spanish, and 2% with various mother tongue languages to include Chinese, Creole, Portuguese, Russian, German, Hindi, and Arabic. Those who are not highly proficient in their use of the English language and meet eligibility requirements of the English Language Learners (ELL) program receive supports from York's ELL Resource Teacher and Bilingual Paraprofessional. When students register, families complete a Home Language Survey, which consists of three specific questions; 1) Is a language other than English used in the home? 2) Did the student have a first language other than English? and 3) Does the student most frequently speak a language other than English? These questions aid support staff with the identification of potential English Language Learners. Parents of ELL students are invited to campus at least twice a year for conferences with the ELL Resource Teacher so resources can be provided to support the family with school and community needs.

Teachers with ELL students on their rosters are required by the State of Florida to acquire "English to Speakers of Other Languages" (ESOL) certification. This certification equips teachers with strategies and tools to support students whose mother tongue language is different from the host school.

ELL supports provided include the following:

- Access to Heritage Language Dictionary and glossaries
- Extended time
- Manipulatives and realia
- One-on-one and small group support
- Home supports include translated documents and assistance with a translator during conferences

Media Center

The media center is a hub of activity on campus for K-8 students. The book collection has a dedicated section of books at various levels in the mother tongue languages of students who attend York. Cultural diversity is a vital component of York's media collection as it can improve how students view and accept themselves and others. 38% of York's collection (5,910 books) support themes of diversity, equity, and inclusion. 42% of the collection (6,420 books) supports social emotional learning and supports the IB Learner Profile attributes. York has 15,446 texts in its collection. The media center also includes maker-space areas for collaboration along with available technology such as laptops and 3-D printers.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the IB coordinator, media specialist, administration, and staff, allowing for stakeholder input. The coordinator will adjust the policy as needed, insuring compliance with the IB and HCPS (Hillsborough County Public Schools) policies.

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Resources for the development of this document:

Policy practices from the following Hillsborough County Public Schools were utilized as our sites are partner schools within the HCPS Magnet School Community:

Lincoln Elementary IB Magnet School, Riverhills Elementary Magnet School, Greco Middle Magnet School, Williams Middle Magnet School

Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy

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