

Macfarlane Park Elementary Magnet Language Policy

Introduction:

The purpose of the IB PYP School Language Policy document is to inform teaching and learning in the classroom, to guide curriculum, and to involve families in our goal to educate children in an internationally-minded environment. This document outlines the philosophy and practice of language instruction at Macfarlane Park Elementary Magnet and demonstrates how Macfarlane Park supports students' acquisition of our language of instruction (English) and our World Language (Spanish). It also demonstrates how Macfarlane Park supports continued use of a student's mother tongue (the language spoken at home). Our Working Language, Language of Instruction, and Response Language is English. With a student population that mirrors our county's broad base of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, Macfarlane Park is committed to supporting multilingualism as fundamental to increase intercultural understanding and international-mindedness.

Philosophy:

The Macfarlane Park Elementary Magnet language philosophy is created with all stakeholders considered. Relevant data from all stakeholders is collected through informal/formal discussions, observations, and language surveys. The resulting philosophy is created as a collaborative effort of the stakeholders involved and is as follows:

Core Beliefs:

- All teachers are language teachers.
- Language is a primary means of learning and communicating.
- Language acquisition is to be promoted as a partnership between all members of our community including parents, students, teachers, and staff.
- Mother tongue languages help form cultural and personal identity and should be respected and use encouraged in various learning situations.
- The shared experience of learning language creates cohesion among students from diverse backgrounds and promotes international-mindedness.
- Learning world languages is an integral part of becoming a global citizen.
- Multilingualism is a right afforded to all students and staff

Language Profile:

During the 2023-2024 school year, Macfarlane Park has a population of approximately 373 students. Approximately 107 have a Mother Tongue language other than English spoken in the home. These 107 students speak a total of 24 different languages including Spanish, Vietnamese, Gujarati, Portuguese, Telegu, French Tamil, and Hindi, to name a few. Our current population consists of students with the following home language backgrounds:

English 71.3% Hispanic 18.2% Other 10.5%

The Macfarlane Park learning community strives to:

- Enable students to learn and use language confidently in a variety of contexts.
- Increase students' quality of written and oral communication through intentional assessment.
- Promote student understanding and enjoyment of literature.
- Allow students to explore different perspectives through language.
- Encourage students to express themselves through language
- Provide inquiry-based transdisciplinary experiences for authentic student language acquisition.
- Provide students with multiple modes by which languages can be explored

Learning Through Language - *Support of Mother Tongue Languages:*

Multilingual Resources

- Administration is responsible for budgeting funds to be allocated for materials that support multilingualism.
- Many staff members speak a language other than English and are available to help translate for a parent during a conference or other meetings.
- District bulletins, websites and other publications are available in many languages, including Cantonese, Mandarin, Russian, German, Hindi, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese.
- The school has access to district translators in all of the languages mentioned above.
- Important school-based communications are translated in-house from English to Spanish, our most common Mother Tongue.
- The Media Center includes literature, videos etc. that support use of mother tongue languages, both materials donated by multilingual families and materials purchased by the school.
- Digital resources such as MagicSchool Translate and MyOn offer opportunities for students to translate text into different languages.

Integrated Instruction

- Teachers are responsible for giving students opportunities in class to access information in different languages, work with other students who speak the same language, and to share their language with others.
- Students are encouraged to “label the classroom” with vocabulary in their mother tongue language.
- Annually, each K-5 class selects a country to study for the year. Within each IB unit, students and teachers make connections between content they are studying and their selected country of study. These connections are made via communications with schools in other countries through MyIB, guest speakers, and collaborative research. As a culminating event to these yearlong country studies, students and parents at Macfarlane Park Elementary organize an International Festival. The festival is a time for students to share information they have gathered, showcasing language, customs, foods etc. from the countries they have studied.
- Each student at Macfarlane Park has a language profile stating their home language and to what degree they speak, understand, and can read or write in that language. All staff members have access to these language profiles posted online.
- A different mother tongue language represented at our school is showcased on the morning show at Macfarlane Park. Students who speak that language have the opportunity to create segments for the morning show, provide writing samples for the front office language bulletin board, and label areas of the school in their language.
- All students are exposed to languages using multiple formats: text, oral presentations/speakers, videos, digital resources.

Parent Involvement

- Parents are responsible for encouraging students to share their home language with the school and for offering to introduce their home language to other students.
- At the beginning of each IB unit, parents are invited to visit the class and share any cultural connections they may have to the unit or to share their mother tongue language with the students in relation to the IB unit.
- As part of our parent leader groups, Macfarlane Park has parent cultural committees that serve the purpose of promoting language learning and international mindedness. Currently, we have parent groups representing Hispanic Heritage, Indian Cultures, and Black History. These committees provide cultural exploration activities for students throughout the year.

Learning About Language - *Support of the Language of Instruction:*

English is the Working Language, Language of Instruction, and Response Language at Macfarlane Park.

Macfarlane Park will staff will support ALL students in language development in the following ways:

- Implementing reading and writing strategies across the curriculum.
- Providing opportunities at all levels of instruction for students to write in a variety of genres.
- Allowing students choice in their reading materials and encouraging reading for enjoyment.
- Providing differentiated instruction for students with special needs, students with learning disabilities, and students who are academically gifted.
- Assessing students formally and informally in the classroom using writing prompts, reading comprehension, and reading skills assessments.
- Participating in the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) Test for Reading each year.
- Speaking and writing for authentic audiences via contests and service learning projects
- Ensuring all teachers participate in the latest professional development regarding language development.
- Utilizing iReady K-5 online resources (diagnostic data and instructional activities) to assess and practice language learning.
- Periodically providing parents with information and resources for guiding their children in the areas of reading and writing.
- Celebrating reading and writing through dedicated family events such as student-led conferences and IB Unit Showcase presentations.
- University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) and Dibels literacy assessments are used to monitor student progress in language acquisition.

Macfarlane Park will provide additional support in language acquisition to English Language Learners (ELL) in the following ways:

- Small group and individual instruction is support provided by a Highly Qualified English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher.
- Yearly assessments, beginning in Kindergarten, using the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) tools to monitor language development progress.

- Instruction in all classes to scaffold acquisition of vocabulary and concepts central to learning by providing visual cues, collaborative learning experiences, and consistent assessment of prior knowledge.
- ELL students participate in the Imagine Literacy personalized online program for 100 minutes per week.

Learning Language - *Support of Macfarlane Park's Additional Language:*

Macfarlane Park's chosen K-5 additional language is Spanish.

- Students receive instruction in Spanish from a Highly Qualified teacher for 30 minutes twice per week.
- Classroom teachers collaborate with the Spanish teacher each 6 weeks to identify meaningful connections between the Spanish program and classroom curriculum.
- Spanish instruction is tied to the PYP Programme of Inquiry through vocabulary and concepts connected to current Units of Inquiry.
- The Spanish teacher is involved in vertical planning with all grade levels in order to integrate the language throughout the transdisciplinary themes.
- Students participate in language projects that provide data for both formative and summative assessment. In addition to content-specific assessments, students are also assessed on second language acquisition skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.
- Our school facility integrates Spanish into labels, signage, and displays.
- All of our second language standards and assessments are school-based. No district second language standards or assessments are available at the elementary level.

Ongoing Review of the Language Policy:

This policy will be formally reviewed as needed – at least once per school year - by Macfarlane Park staff and stakeholders for the purpose of maintaining and revising the policy to adapt to changing best practices and the needs of our learning community, as well as to monitor its implementation. Effectiveness of the policy is determined by student achievement data in the area of language acquisition (both primary and secondary language), and through feedback from our stakeholders.

Further considerations: Macfarlane Park Elementary is committed to continuous growth regarding our language policy and programs for language acquisition for students. As such, the following areas will be evaluated for possible future inclusion in the Language Policy:

- Further develop student language profiles to include goals, preferences and family interviews
- Further development of opportunities for *Translanguaging* within the IB Programme
- Development of extracurricular language opportunities such as Spanish Club, Handwriting Club, and Keyboarding Club.
- Add signage in additional language(s) related to science terms
- Possibly highlight mother tongue languages at a breakfast event at the beginning and end of the school year. All families who speak additional languages can meet at once.

This policy is available to all stakeholders in the Macfarlane Park learning community, and the school leadership welcomes comments and recommendations at any time.