



Riverhills Elementary Magnet IB World School Primary Years Programme

Language Policy

Vision: "Empowering children to create a better future."

Mission Statement

To guide all learners by providing meaningful opportunities which inspire life-long innovators to be caring, responsible and successful. Students will develop into globally minded citizens through collaboration, reflection, action and inquiry.

Philosophy

At Riverhills Elementary Magnet School, we believe that acquisition of language is foundational to all learning and understanding. It is the thread that connects and supports all other disciplines. We believe in developing a language-rich environment that allows children to experience a range of literature and nonfiction texts, as well as give them many opportunities to communicate and express themselves in different ways. Concept of language is broadened through instruction of a second language (Spanish) and through honoring and incorporating home languages that contribute to the rich diversity of each classroom.

Second Language Acquisition

At Riverhills Elementary Magnet School, students in Kindergarten through 5th grade participate in Spanish instruction for 45 minutes, once a week. Teachers also support Spanish instruction in the classrooms through labeling of objects/furniture and use of common phrases. Whenever possible, the Spanish instructor connects vocabulary and activities to the POI to support the central ideas and concepts. Lessons

include the study of cultures from Hispanic countries. The Spanish teacher also occasionally sponsors an after-school to extend learning. The Media Center has multiple resources in Spanish and helps teachers integrate Spanish into the POI.

Mother Tongue Support

All faculty and staff are responsible for communicating the importance of home languages. Students are encouraged to contribute their knowledge of their language to the classroom experiences. The media center has books in different languages and continuously seeks out more resources to support our school's diverse population. There is an additional ELL library with many books in other languages that can be accessed by students and families. The school district offers translators for many languages to assist with communication with a family who hasn't mastered the English language. Families are invited to participate in culture studies and share their language within the classrooms and at RiverFest International Celebration. Families have also contributed to a multi-lingual display in the main school hallway featuring messages in their home language. As our language program develops, we explore more ways to support and honor our home languages.

Language of Instruction

All stakeholders at Riverhills Elementary Magnet School collaborate and plan for effective and enriching language experiences through the transdisciplinary units of inquiry. Language is integrated into authentic context through the Program of Inquiry (POI). Mastery and application of the language skills – listening, speaking, viewing, presenting, reading and writing – is a critical piece of all learning and is the responsibility of all stakeholders. Through a balance of literature and informational text, language is used as a vehicle to learn and understand all areas of content, central concepts, the Learner Profile and PYP Attitudes.

Language practices implemented:

- Language skills are integrated into all subject areas and students when appropriate.
- There is a balance in the use of fiction and nonfiction reading with exposure to a variety of genres - multicultural, poetry, newspaper, informational text, plays, editorials, etc.
- All students have access to grade-level text, as well as text appropriate to their individual performance level.
- Students receive small group, guided reading instruction on a daily basis at their appropriate reading level.
- Vocabulary-building techniques will be used across the curriculum where appropriate – i.e.UFLI (district mandated phonics instruction K-2) word walls, parts of the vocabulary 5-day plan, similes, metaphors, tenses, etc.
- Students are encouraged to read for different purposes.
- Students master and use various reading strategies to expand understanding.
- Students are given opportunities to reflect and write in different ways about their learning and understanding in all content areas.
- Students are encouraged to communicate and present in multiple ways to support different learning styles.
- Instruction promotes the full writing process (planning, drafting, editing, and publishing) in meaningful experiences.
- Teachers model correct use of reading, writing, listening, and speaking strategies.
- Development of language skills are supported through individual conferencing.
- Instruction incorporates a variety of visual avenues to support learning – i.e. websites, videos, graphic organizers, photography, etc.
- A variety of instructional practices are used when planning for instruction.
- Reading planning and instruction is directed by formal and informal assessment determining the specific needs of the students.

Support for Language Development

Riverhills Elementary Magnet School has many programs in place to support language development at all levels.

- Exceptional Student Education (ESE) – Students who meet eligibility guidelines to receive ESE services have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed that outlines special needs and accommodations of instruction. These students receive support from classroom teachers and the ESE staff to decrease learning barriers.
- Academically Gifted Program (AGP) – Students who meet eligibility requirements for AGP develop an Education Plan (EP) based on their strengths and building on their talents. These students are supported by enrichment from classroom teachers as well as working with a Gifted Specialist who supplements instruction and works on the POI.
- English Language Learners (ELL) – Students who meet ELL criteria have limited English mastery. Modifications are made by the classroom teachers to scaffold instruction. Many of these students also work with an ELL resource teacher or bilingual paraprofessional who aids in those modification and supports the students as they learn the English language.
- Response to Intervention (RtI) – Students are grouped for a portion of each day based on their performance level. Students receive targeted instruction based on areas of need or enrichment. Academic assessments and performance are reviewed regularly to determine if goals are being met and if any changes need to be made to move students to the next step.
- Reading Resource Teacher – The Reading Resource teacher works with students in need to additional reading support. They provide supplemental resources, support, and differentiated instruction to help students implement reading strategies across the curriculum. They also collect data and closely monitor students and their reading progress.

Plan for Implementation and Review

The school's Leadership Team along with the PYP Coordinator are responsible for the implementation of the language policy. Teachers and administration will communicate the policy to parents. The Leadership Team will ensure the policy is put into practice and monitored via classroom observations, participation in team planning sessions, school presentations, etc.

Resources

Making the PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education, IBO
Guidelines for developing a school language policy, IBO
Language Scope and Sequence, IBO