

Language Policy
IB PYP
Charles Hay World School
November 2015

Statement of Philosophy

Language is central to intellectual, social and emotional development and therefore plays an essential role in all learning areas. Both oral and written language is key to understanding our world and enables us to communicate personally, locally and globally. Reading, writing, listening and speaking are pivotal modes of language transmission. At Charles Hay, the staff is committed to the workshop model for learning. This model includes a focused mini-lesson, followed by independent practice or work time and concludes with a reflection time. This inquiry model of learning is child centered and requires the teacher to reflect daily on student questions and learning. It also encourages students to actively reflect on their daily learning. The workshop model for reading and writing allows teachers to differentiate based on the needs of individual students.

Higher-level thinking strategies are emphasized. Through this model, students are asked to engage in authentic learning experiences in which they integrate their knowledge of language to construct meaning, make inferences, draw conclusions, ask questions, present their learning, reflect on the process, and pursue further lines of inquiry across all content areas.

The Language of Instruction

The language of instruction at Charles Hay is English. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are incorporated across all subject areas based on the Common Core Standards. Various forms of assessments accompany reading and writing instruction. Language Arts expectations are woven into all units and allow for students to learn about language through its' use. Students are assessed for reading and written language needs throughout the school year.

The language components of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are incorporated authentically into all units of inquiry. They are evident in the development of research skills, thinking skills, communication skills, self-management skills, and social skills. Formative assessments addressing grade level reading and writing targets are included with each unit of study. Teachers use the Common Core and Colorado Academic standards to plan their reading units and IB Units of Inquiry. Writing Fundamentals units are aligned to best support the IB Units of Inquiry. Literature to support each unit of inquiry is continually being added to our collection of books. Charles Hay has an instructional media center, leveled books, ebooks, additional iPad resources and a library in each classroom for instructional use by teachers. Materials are continuously being

added to this collection so that students may read at their appropriate instructional level for the majority of their reading block.

Access to resources that support language development through the Internet, books, and iPads are available and encouraged. Computers in the library and classroom, mobile computer labs, and student iPads provide multiple opportunities for students to explore the electronic world of language.

Pre-assessments accompany every unit of study to guide classroom instruction. Teachers adjust the size of groupings, independent reading materials, modes of instruction, and personnel support as indicated by the content of their instruction and the needs of the students.

Our District Director of Analysis and Assessment is responsible for setting up the schedule for Language Arts assessments (Acuity testing, Aimsweb, and writing samples). Data meetings and MTSS meetings are conducted with classroom teachers 3-4 times/month led by the grade level data team leader. The district uses Enrich, an online data storage system to make learning plans available to everyone as needed. Faculty review student learning, adjust instruction, and implement intervention strategies.

The Special Education team assesses oral and written language skills in response to performance in data/MTSS cycles, and in response to teacher or parent referrals. If a student qualifies for special education support, the special education team, the classroom teacher, and the family develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Individualized goals are written for each student. A specific level of proficiency is targeted for each goal. Proficiency levels are based on achievable targets specific to a child's individual rate of growth. ***Include Read Plan and MTSS***

Additionally, we as a staff conduct in-house labs twice a year, which allow teachers to visit each other's classrooms to observe and discuss instructional practice.

The home/school component is essential to language development. Parents are encouraged to read with and read to their children. As students acquire reading and decoding skills parents are asked to listen to their children read appropriate leveled material and discuss it. Constructing meaning is always emphasized as the primary purpose. Parents are invited to discuss and research the content of units of study; reading, discussing, writing, questioning, proof-reading and editing final presentations.

Suggestions to support communication skills are given to parents/guardians at the time of the special education staffing, during parent teacher conferences, in the school's monthly newsletters, during Back to School Night, IB night, and other venues. Recommendations and resources are highly individualized and may address some or all of the following areas: comprehension, articulation, voice, fluency, listening, and language use.

The PYP Coordinator and Head of School support grade level teams in aligning the integration of language skills in all planners and refer to the IB standards and language documents to ensure alignment.

The School's Additional Language – Spanish

World Language is an integral part of the IB program. Children have the opportunity to learn vocabulary and language structures and begin to understand the similarities and differences between cultures. "International-mindedness" becomes a reality as students begin to make connections between other cultures and their own.

All students participate in Spanish classes. The first goal of the Spanish program is to provide students with vocabulary, grammar and cultural foundation necessary to be able to participate in beginning level conversations. Students are encouraged to try out their new skills through games and storytelling. Cultural inquiries and activities are included in classrooms as well, providing opportunities to develop student curiosity. Through songs, native stories and movies, students are able to compare and contrast the experiences of Spanish-speaking children to their own childhoods. Classroom teachers are encouraged to supplement Spanish vocabulary in daily routines (greetings, weather, calendar...).

The second goal of the World Language program is to provide literacy support for the language of instruction (English.) Conventions of language have been appropriately included in each unit of study in a way that builds English language skills while also developing connections to Spanish language skills.

Finally, the World Language program has been designed to inspire a life-long interest in and an ability to learn new languages. Inquiry is utilized in the classroom so that students feel comfortable and encouraged to explore with and through their new language skills.

Native Language Support

The Linguistically Diverse (ELL) Teacher is responsible for assessing students whose native language is not English. We use WIDA Can Do descriptors to inform classroom teachers what the student can do in reading, writing, speaking, and listening based on results from the WIDA ACCESS Assessment. Services are provided to improve English language skills based on the adopted Colorado English Language Proficiency standards (CELP) and the Common Core Standards. In addition, benchmark assessments are given two times per year (Fall and Spring) in order to develop data-driven individual instruction. The ACCESS assessment is given in January to all ELL students to monitor growth and to determine program level status NEP (Non-English proficient), LEP (Limited English proficient), FEP (Fluent English proficient) including two years of monitoring services after testing as fluent English proficient and exiting from the support program. It is also used to monitor our school and district for AMAO (Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives) progress.

The Linguistically Diverse Teacher supports students in connecting their primary language knowledge to the acquisition of English. They also help classroom teachers understand language errors and make connections between ELL instruction and the classroom. They also support the classroom teacher with meeting the CELP standards.

Charles Hay supports the native language of its students and encourages parents to keep their first language alive at home. Students are encouraged to share their language and cultural knowledge in their classrooms. Whenever possible, written communications are provided to families in both English and Spanish. Bilingual teachers are encouraged to apply as openings for new staff members arise.

At Charles Hay World School, every staff member realizes that language learning is fluid in nature. Therefore each student's abilities can be viewed as a continuum of skills, which are constantly being built upon and extended.