



A World-Class Community of Learners



District Language Beliefs and Practices

Fridley Public Schools

District Profile:

Fridley Public Schools offers the full International Baccalaureate continuum to all students from Preschool to Grade 12. We are committed to creating a welcoming, respectful environment that provides an equitable and inclusive education for each student by ensuring opportunities, access, and resources are aligned to support the growth and academic achievement of each student. ([Fridley Public Schools Board Policy 105: Equity and Inclusion](#))

Fridley IB World Schools:

- Fridley Preschool (3 and 4 year olds)
- Hayes Elementary School (Kindergarten through Grade 4)
- Stevenson Elementary School (Kindergarten through Grade 4)
- Fridley Middle School (Grade 5 through Grade 8)
- Fridley High School (Grade 9 through Grade 12)

Fridley Language Demographics:

- Total Enrollment: 2,914
- EL Students: 11.7%
- Number of Home Languages Spoken: 46
- Predominant Home Languages: English, Somali, Spanish, Arabic, Hmong, Oromo

Language Beliefs and Values

Fridley Public schools values and honors multilingualism in the community we serve. Our students, staff, families, and community are our greatest strength and we view our diversity as an asset. We aim to validate, affirm, and support our diverse language identities, including home language(s), the primary language of instruction (English), and additional language(s).

Language learning in the Fridley School District supports the learning of languages, learning about languages, and the development of critical literacy. The goals of language instruction are:

- Understanding that language is socially constructed and impacts identity and thinking
- Development of critical literacy and multiliteracies
- Increasing proficiency in home languages as well as an additional language or languages, with the ideal result being multilingualism

In the Fridley School District, we believe every teacher is a language teacher and that language learning occurs in every subject area, in every classroom, and in all areas throughout the school district. Our goal is to provide our students with the tools they need to effectively read, write, speak, listen, view and present. We believe in the importance of learning an additional language, value the linguistic diversity of our community, and aim to support the home language development of our students and families.

In our language instruction we value:

- High expectations for all students
- High levels of teacher expertise and a culture of continuous professional learning
- Linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity
- Multilingualism (the use of more than one language by individuals and the learning community)
- Teams taking collective responsibility for the success of each student
- Using evidence gained from systematic observation and ongoing assessment
- Effective practices appropriate to whole-class, small-group, and individual contexts
- Students engaging in authentic inquiry about topics that fuel their intellectual curiosity
- Students as powerful agents in their own learning, frequently making choices
- Exposure to lots of texts providing rich, diverse examples of genre, theme, topic, setting, and other literary qualities
- Students thinking, talking, reading, and writing about their world and gaining an understanding of their roles as informed global citizens

Portrait of a Fridley Graduate (Language and Literacy):

Fridley Public Schools graduates have a broad foundation of language and literacy skills and are able to transfer these skills and apply learning in order to:

- pursue a deeper understanding of themselves and the world by examining various perspectives and sources
- become self-directed learners who value expanding knowledge, skills, and understanding through literacy
- communicate clearly and creatively for a variety of audiences, settings, situations, and purposes
- engage others in dialogue about critical and compelling issues
- communicate effectively in more than one language

Primary Language Instruction:

The primary language of instruction in Fridley Public Schools is English. We use a research based, standards driven, balanced, and structured approach to language instruction. With this approach:

- teachers model proficient literacy behaviors,
- teachers and students work together to practice literacy skills, and
- students demonstrate their newly developed skills in independent literacy activities.

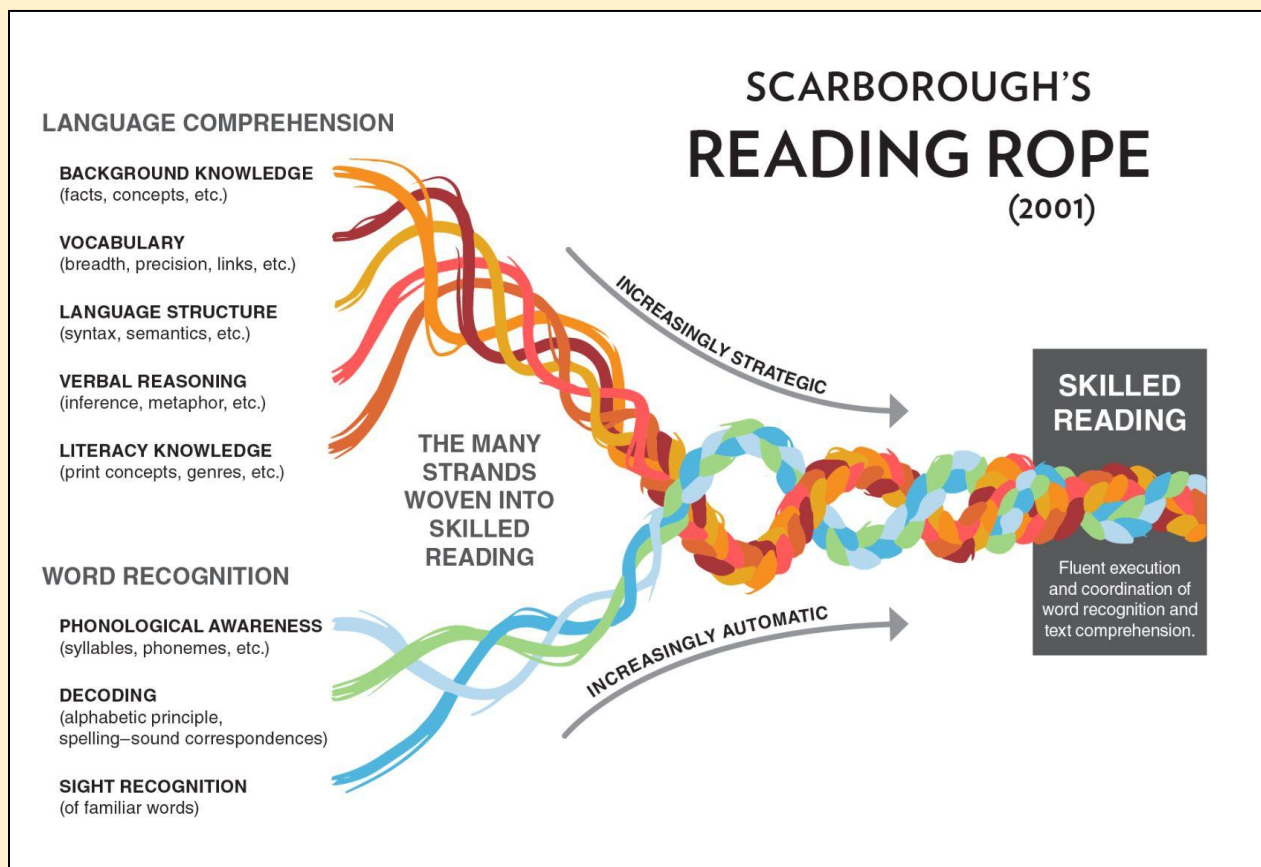
All teachers participate in regular professional development on effective practices for promoting language learning.

Students work to meet their grade level standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and presenting. The scope and sequence of specific skills is outlined by our [Minnesota State English Language Arts Standards](#).

PYP

We implement a gradual release model for teaching literacy content. New concepts and skills are modeled by the teacher, then practiced together, and finally students are provided opportunities for independent application (I do, We do, You do). The core literacy block consists of a balance of whole group instruction, small group instruction, and opportunities for independent practice in reading, writing, and word study. We use [this rubric](#) as a tool for self-reflection and coaching around the different components of our K-5 literacy block.

We recognize that many strands are woven into skilled reading. Both language comprehension and word recognition contain specific skills that are somewhat independent yet influence one another in the development of proficient readers. (Scarborough, 2001)



Preschool Common Guidelines and Expectations

- We value play as a primary driver for inquiry and language development.
- A careful consideration exists between student-initiated play and teacher-initiated experiences.
- Students are engaged in literacy activities daily.
- Language learning is transdisciplinary and connected to the PYP units of inquiry.
- Literacy experiences develop a wide range of playful, inquiry-based explorations into symbolic

and representational learning.

- Teachers model proficient language behaviors.
- Interventions are administered at an age-appropriate level when needed.

Elementary Common Guidelines and Expectations

- Students are engaged in literacy activities for a **minimum** of **90 minutes** per day.
- Students read and write every day for a variety of purposes.
- Classroom teachers confer with individual students regularly to provide feedback.
- Different components of literacy may be happening in the classroom simultaneously.
- Teachers conduct regular guided reading groups with every scholar. Grouping should be flexible and based on specific skills that need development.
- Students reading below grade level benchmarks receive additional reading instruction that is targeted to their individual needs. Intervention takes place outside of and in addition to the core literacy block.
- To promote transdisciplinary learning other subject areas should be integrated into the literacy block. For example, a specific literacy skill or strategy may be taught using a text that relates to science or social studies content.

MYP Common Guidelines and Expectations

- We recognize that all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication.
- Students use language as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning, self-expression, analysis, and social interaction.
- Students in the Language and Literature courses engage in diverse literary and non-literary texts from multiple perspectives, historical periods, and cultures.
- Teachers provide instruction in discipline-specific writing processes, strategies, and conventions.
- Teachers must address all strands of all four MYP Language and Literature objectives at least twice each year.

DP/CP Common Guidelines and Expectations

- We recognize that all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication.
- All students in grades 11-12 participate in DP Language & Literature SL or HL, unless a special education or English Learner course is more appropriate.
- Students in the Language and Literature courses engage in diverse literary and non-literary texts from multiple perspectives, historical periods, and cultures.

Reading Intervention and Enrichment Supports

Fridley Public Schools uses a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to differentiate instruction and to support the literacy development of each and every one of our scholars. We administer universal screening assessments to all students two to three times a year, depending on the grade level. We aim to identify any student who is starting to fall behind well before large gaps in achievement are apparent, allowing for early intervention.

We use universal screening data to make decisions about core instruction as well as the need for tiered intervention and enrichment. Screening may be followed by further diagnostic assessments, interventions matched to identified needs, and regular progress monitoring.

PYP

Interventions

- Data meetings are held after fall and winter universal screening periods.
 - Classroom teachers, reading intervention teachers, literacy coach, and EL teachers attend
 - Teams collaboratively identify which students will receive Tier 3 interventions (with an intervention teacher), Tier 2 interventions (with classroom teacher), and extension activities
- Tier 3 Intervention times are 15 - 30 minutes per day.
- Tier 3 Interventions are provided 5 days per week.
- Tier 3 interventions are delivered in small groups of at least 3 or more students.
- Teachers collect and use progress monitoring data to evaluate and adjust interventions as needed

MYP

Interventions

- Data meetings are held after fall and winter screening periods.
 - Administrators, curriculum coordinators, the literacy coach, and reading teachers review data. Students who are reading significantly below grade level benchmarks are assigned to Tier 3 reading intervention classes.
 - Language and Literature teachers determine which students would benefit from additional intervention or extension within their literacy block.
- Tier 3 Interventions take place outside of and in addition to the core Language and Literature courses
- Tier 3 intervention times are at least 40 minutes per day
- Tier 3 interventions take place 5 days a week whenever possible
- Tier 3 exit criteria are established

Multilingual Learners:

Fridley Public Schools recognizes language as an important component of our complex cultural identities. As a learning community, we celebrate and honor multilingualism as one way to affirm identity and develop international-mindedness. We are committed to providing effective and targeted instruction to our multilingual learners who are learning English as an additional language (EL). The goals of our English language instruction program are to:

- Create culturally sustaining and linguistically supportive learning environments where students can draw on prior linguistic resources and use their home language(s) with pride.
- Develop students' translanguaging skills by facilitating and actively encouraging opportunities to make connections between languages.
- Help students reach their fullest potential by attending to language demands and scaffolding

instruction by language proficiency.

- Provide equitable access to high-quality, grade-level curriculum in all subject areas.

In Fridley Public Schools, we assess new students for EL if their families indicate on their registration form that they speak a language at home other than English. We use the WIDA W-APT test as our assessment tool to determine if a student needs EL services.

Please see our district EL Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) plan for more information about our EL identification and placement procedures, a description of EL programming, and exit procedures.

Student Language Portraits

We aim to develop cumulative student language portraits in each of our IB programs as a tool to capture and share a learner's complex language profile. The compilations of these language portraits can be used to help us celebrate identity and to support effective language learning experiences at all age levels. Our student language portraits will:

- Be initially developed during the 22-23 school year
- Be stored in common locations (e.g., portfolios, Xello, CUM folders)
- Prompts students to reflect on their own language identities, experiences, attitudes, and goals
- Include information about home, family, and other social language experiences outside of school
- Include information about literacy and language learning in school

Language Acquisition:

We aim for each student in Fridley Public Schools to communicate effectively, confidently, and creatively in more than one language.

We recognize that learning additional languages contributes to the holistic development of our students. Proficiency in an additional language gives students access to a broader range of input, experiences and perspectives, is believed to raise achievement in other subject areas, and provides the enjoyment of being able to communicate in a language other than their home language(s).

PYP

The PYP offers Spanish as an additional language. All students in grades K-4 receive direct Spanish language and culture instruction. We offer students a second language at the elementary level because research supports that language acquisition occurs best at an early age, and it is an integral part of being an internationally-minded school.

The focus of Kindergarten to 2nd grade instruction is learning the spoken word. In 3rd and 4th grades, students learn to communicate in both the written and spoken forms. Learning about the diverse cultures of the Spanish-speaking world is a focus in all grades.

Second language acquisition occurs best in the elementary years by integrating a balance of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning activities. Students engage in many activities while learning concepts including, but not limited to, singing songs, playing games, participating in project based learning, interacting with literature, using manipulatives, and participating in cooperative learning groups.

For students already fluent in the Spanish language, this is their chance to be the experts and share their knowledge. Our goal for them is to achieve Spanish literacy. We differentiate classroom instruction to meet their individual needs.

MYP

The study of languages in the MYP aims to encourage in the student a respect for and understanding of other languages and cultures, and to provide a skill base to facilitate further language learning. The development of communication skills in more than one language supports the concept of an international education and promotes multilingualism and multicultural understanding.

Students in grade 5 continue with Spanish instruction and are also introduced to Mandarin as an additional language.

Students in grades 6 through 10 choose to enroll in Spanish or Mandarin classes.

DP/CP

DP Language Acquisition offerings build from previous language instruction in the MYP and include:

- Mandarin B SL
- Mandarin B ab initio
- Spanish B SL
- Spanish B ab initio
- Other offerings, including school supported self-taught language, are considered in individual cases.

Previous language instruction, including PYP and MYP, are considered when placing students in DP Language Acquisition classes.

The CP Language Portfolio requirements may be fulfilled through:

- Additional instruction in Mandarin or Spanish, including DP courses in those subjects
- Individualized plans that support a student's home language development

The school partners with the Minnesota Department of Education to offer the Bilingual Seal recognition for students who show fluency in more than one language. This recognition includes college credit for language fluency and includes our Language Acquisition languages as well as the 5 most common home languages spoken by our student body.

Home Language Supports:

In Fridley Public Schools we value our families whose native language is not English. We encourage our parents and students to speak and develop their home language(s) inside and outside of school. We recognize that supporting multilingualism and translanguaging skills strengthens language and cognitive skills while also instilling a sense of importance about our diverse cultural backgrounds. We use a number of resources to support the development of home language(s) and to assist in our communication with these families.

- We translate important written communication from the school or district into the home language(s) of the parents and families when possible or upon request.
- Interpreters are regularly used when communicating directly with families at school, either in person or through telephone interpretation services.
- Our media center collections include materials printed in a variety of languages, especially those that are most commonly spoken in our learning community.
- Teachers and students are encouraged to use translation resources such as Google Translate.
- Native Spanish speakers may take Spanish courses to support literacy and writing skills in their home language.

References

Fridley Public Schools. (2020). 105 Equity and Inclusion Policy.

Fountas, I., & Pinnell, G. (2018). Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day: From Vision to Action in Literacy Learning. *The Reading Teacher*, 72, 7-19.

Minnesota K-12 English Language Arts Standards. (2020). Retrieved from <https://education.mn.gov/mde/dse/stds/ela>

Scarborough, H. (2001). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds), *Handbook of early literacy research* (Vol 1, pp 97-110). New York, NY. Guilford Press.

Related IB Documents:

DP Language and Literature Guide

MYP Language and Literature Guide (2014)

PYP From Principles into Practice (2018)

Review of Language Policy and Practices:

Our language policy and practices provide transparency to our learning community regarding our language instruction. We share this policy annually with new and returning teachers. Each IB program will regularly review and revise the language policy to keep it up-to-date with our evolving practices.

During our IB self-study and evaluation (once every five years), a stakeholders committee is formed to formally review all areas of the language policy. The committee is composed of the director of teaching and learning, IB coordinators, principals, literacy coaches, teachers, and parents.

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