

# Sand Creek International School Language Policy

## Mission

Our school will develop globally minded citizens who make meaningful contributions to the world through *reflective inquiry*, creativity, and problem solving.

## Philosophy

All educators are teachers of language who promote language growth with our students. This includes the languages of math, science, social studies, art, physical education, music and technology. We strive to create a multilingual community of *principled*, trusting students who love learning in a multicultural setting.

## Purpose

We aim to:

- Empower students as language owners when *communicating* through speaking, listening, reading, and writing
- Promote the enjoyment and correct use of language through *inquiry*
- Encourage students to *courageously* use language through metacognitive skills
- Respect the mother tongue of our scholars, as well as additional languages

## IB Standards

Standards: Culture Through Policy Implementation (0301)

Schools develop, implement, communicate and review effective policies that help to create a school culture in which IB philosophy to thrive.

## Language Demographic

### **Our Students**

The students at Sand Creek International School come from a variety of linguistic backgrounds and languages, which are considered their “mother tongue”.

### **Language Backgrounds**

Language	Number of Students	% of total
Arabic	2	0.4%

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Buriat, Mongolia	1	0.2%
English	392	68.7%
Jamaican Creole English/Patois	1	0.2%
Mongolian, Peripheral	1	0.2%
Spanish	168	29.4%
Tagalog	2	0.4%
Vietnamese	4	0.7%

Total enrolled 571 students.

### Language of Instruction

At Sand Creek International we differentiate instruction based on the **communication** needs of all students to foster the development of American English through:

- The use of curricular resources and classroom structures to support the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in all content areas

Curricular Resources	Classroom Structures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wilson Foundations: K-3 Research based phonics instruction</li> <li>- Interventions Programs to support individual student language needs: Heggerty Phonological Awareness, Road to the Code, Susan Barton, Reading Mastery, SIPPS, Read Naturally, Sound Partners, Wilson Foundations, Voyager Passports, Focus, Write Tools, Rewards, Vocabulary Through Morphemes, Junior Great Books</li> <li>- 7 Steps to a Language Rich Environment</li> <li>- 38 Academic Language Builders</li> <li>- Talk Read Talk Write</li> <li>- StudySync (Middle School Grades)</li> <li>- Novel sets to support units of inquiry</li> <li>- Discovery Education (Science/Social Studies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structured Literacy: Whole group, small group, and independent reading</li> <li>- Socratic Seminars</li> <li>- Before and After School Tutoring and Enrichment Programs</li> <li>- Inquiry-based learning</li> <li>- Making Thinking Visible Routines</li> <li>- Sentence stems for questions and answers</li> <li>- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)</li> <li>- Paraprofessional language support in small group setting</li> <li>- Frequent student reflection</li> <li>- Use of formal and informal assessment to drive instruction</li> <li>- Academic, collaborative conversations (peer-to-peer and student-to-teacher)</li> <li>- Habits of Discussion</li> <li>- Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures</li> </ul>

### **Additional Language**

- Spanish

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Students in kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade receive Spanish instruction 1 hour per week. Students in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> will have a minimum of 50 hours of Spanish instruction which occurs in a semester long course that meets four days a week. The only students not receiving Spanish instruction are those enrolled in a center-based Special Education program who are primarily nonverbal. The percent of students not receiving Spanish instruction is less than 5% of our school population each year.

### **Mother Tongue Support**

At Sand Creek, when a child enters kindergarten or moves into the district, we have parents complete a Home Language Survey. This is how we determine a student's home language. If a language other than English is spoken in the home, a child is eligible for English Language Development (ELD) support and services.

In **communicating** with parents about the first language, we emphasize the importance of maintaining their child's first language at home.

Sand Creek International School students are encouraged to celebrate their cultural identity through the use of their mother tongue (native language) at home and school. Students are encouraged to share their culture and language through informative presentations related to inquiry units, celebrations and other opportunities. The learning commons houses a collection of books in multiple languages and Spanish books are available at our annual book fair.

### **Assessing Language Learning**

District, school and state-mandated language assessments (CMAS, iReady, ACCESS WIDA, Acadience Reading- see Assessment Policy for details) are used by teachers, parents, and students to assess individual and school-wide progress related to language learning. Teachers also utilize a variety of informal language assessments and progress monitoring in their own classrooms on a weekly basis. These assessment tools are used to inform language teaching and learning practices within the school.

The school looks at individual student growth compared to state reading and writing standards. The school's unified improvement plan, required by the state of Colorado, contains goals and strategies teachers use to address the language learning needs of students. This plan is revised annually based on the most current data from state and district.

Feedback on students' language development is given to students and parents through a variety of means, including but not limited to: quarterly progress reports, CMAS reports mailed by the state, iReady results, ACCESS results, English Language Learner plans, verbal **communication** between teachers, students, and parents, the contents of student portfolios, and through student-led conferences.

### **Resources and Professional Development**

The school principal and leadership team work together to find professional development opportunities for staff to further their **knowledge** of best practices for guiding students' language learning, including district and IB workshops, collaboration with other schools, book studies, language-specific graduate level courses, and sharing of best practices through professional learning communities.

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Building funds and grants are allocated for purchase of language teaching materials for classrooms, the school's resource library, and for library books in the learning commons.

Per the state of Colorado, all certified staff will take an approved English Learner Professional Development Pathway through a certified CLDE 45hr PD Program by the educator's next recertification.

### **Language Policy Access, Articulation, and Review**

Sand Creek's language policy is stored in an electronic format on the school's Microsoft Teams where all staff can access it. The language policy is also posted on the school's website for parents to view. All staff is knowledgeable about the policy and can communicate this knowledge to all stakeholders.

The district provides schools with language learning standards (adapted from the Colorado State Standards), curriculum, materials, and required assessments. The coordinators provide staff with the PYP Standards and Practices related to teaching and learning. The coordinators receive information about updates to program standards and practices via MyIB in Curriculum Resource Center and through IB ARMS, and promotes the use of MyIB among staff so they can directly access PYP documentation related to language practices.

The school CLDE teachers participate in staff meetings, weekly team PLC meetings, and collaborative work days. These teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to best support ELD students. They also help to develop the school language policy and language learning practices.

Our language policy is a living document that is formally reviewed annually by the IB vertical team members and coordinators.

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