

**Berta Palacios Elementary
Language Policy**



Berta Palacios Elementary Mission Statement

Through a supportive partnership with parents and the school community we, the staff of Berta Palacios Elementary School, are committed to provide all students with a strong foundation for life-long learning through inquiry that will produce internationally-minded and productive bilingual/biliterate, caring, global citizens.

Language Philosophy

Berta Palacios' focus is on preparing nationally, internationally, responsible, and multilingual/biliterate 21st century lifelong learners. Dual language plays a significant role in supporting our school's mission statement and furthermore prepares students cognitively and academically with skills that are developed through multilingualism and biliteracy. At Berta Palacios Elementary student's work successfully in the Spanish and English language and are provided with the opportunity to learn a third language such as Mandarin.

Goal

Our goal is for all Palacios students to become biliterate/bilingual life-long learners which is a valuable factor to equally develop academically. All teachers at Berta Palacios Elementary are bilingually certified since it's an essential means of communication to promote a necessary core for learning which develops throughout the academics. Our dual language approach provides numerous opportunities for second language learners to connect nationally and internationally. The acceptance of an additional language through school community serves as a resource to foster dual language learning and expects students to maintain higher levels of academic achievement, behaviors, enriches personal growth, enhances first language development, and promotes national and international mindsets.

Second Language Instruction

The school's focus is on preparing internationally minded, responsible, and productive bilingual/biliterate world citizens. In supporting dual language, the students developed stronger cognitive and academic skills through the development of bilingualism and biliteracy. Spanish and English are the languages of instruction at Berta Palacios Elementary, and the focus is that students will work successfully within the dual language enrichment guidelines. In addition, we also encourage students to grow and develop proficiency in other languages. At Berta Palacios Elementary our philosophy about dual language is an essential means of communicating, forming a necessary core to learning, and is developed throughout the academics; in essence, all teachers and staff are instructors of language.

Acquiring a language is geared towards all students becoming biliterate/bilingual life-long learners which is a key factor and equally valuable to develop academically. An effective teaching practice comes from a dual language approach to learning a second language, providing students

new opportunities to connect internationally to build personal meaning. The school community is a resource to foster dual language learning. The acceptance of an additional language expects students to maintain higher levels of academic achievement and behaviors, enriches personal growth, enhances first language development, and promotes internationalism. The students are given the opportunity to enhance and develop the ability to fluently speak, read, write, and listen to both languages, which will allow them to successfully compete in the world.

Multilingualism

In addition to our Dual Language Program, we also encourage students to grow and develop proficiency in a third language; Mandarin. We have welcomed a Mandarin teacher from China to enhance and promote cultural awareness. Students are exposed to firsthand cultural celebrations and customs once a week for 45 minutes. Curriculum is developed to ensure all students receive an opportunity to understand, read, write and speak in the Mandarin language. We believe all students have the opportunity to be global citizens that can compete in the real world without language barriers.

Instructional Practices

At Berta Palacios, the faculty will follow these language practices:

- Faculty will create a risk-free environment to foster dual language and IB practices. Teachers and staff will encourage students to demonstrate both languages along with the IB Learner Profile in all subject areas, throughout the campus, with classmates and the world. Teachers will model language of the day daily, use and teach vocabulary, and language proficiency standards across each subject.
- Curriculum will be designed to give students the opportunity to gain positive cognitive effects, personal choice, and display greater mental flexibility, greater ability to think abstractly and form concepts. There will be opportunities to use language, including the mother tongue, for making personal connections and global interactions. Teachers will plan effectively, relevantly, and incorporate the language proficiency standards.
- Opportunities will be given for reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Students will learn about language as they discuss and reflect on what they have learned.

Language Assessments

Assessments are aligned to state and district guidelines. Assessments will communicate relevant feedback and information pertaining to the student's ongoing learning in their native and second language. Teachers will have a better understanding of student's growth in their second language by assessing them formally and informally using the following assessments:

- Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)
- LAS
- Home language survey that evaluates the home language
- District ELL programs (REACH)
- TPRI and Tejas LEE
- STAR assessment (English and Spanish)
- Mandarin student's objective (SLOs)
- Sonrisas Curriculum

Assessments results will be used to target learning, challenge, motivate, and inspire all children in their multilingual learning environment.