Cloverleaf Elementary School
Language Policy

Our Philosophy:

We believe all teachers are responsible for facilitating language instruction through reading, writing, listening and speaking in English while also honoring Spanish, our school's additional language emphasis, and students' home languages. While English is our primary academic language, we celebrate all languages. Language is one of our most important tools for learning. It is a cumulative effort with all staff to model language instruction throughout the school day and across all disciplines in order to support the shared vision of creating globally minded, connected citizens.

Identification:

Students new to Cloverleaf are screened and evaluated if their enrollment information indicates the first language is not English. At the time of enrollment, parents fill out the Home Language Survey (HLS). If any language besides English is on the HLS, a copy is given to the ESL teacher, and the W-APT screener is administered. The WIDA/ ACCESS Placement test evaluates student levels of English proficiency. Based on the test results, placement in ESL classes can be determined. We also measure proficiency in phonemic awareness and early literacy skills in Primary grades. Teachers may refer students for Speech and Language evaluations.

Language of Instruction:

Cloverleaf's language of instruction is English. We are incorporating principles of the Science of Reading into instruction, as all teachers are participating in state mandated LETRS training - Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling. We use a small group differentiated instruction model, with both decodable text and leveled readers, using student data to inform instruction. While students are working on independent and small group work, teachers have the opportunity to work with small groups and conference on writing and reading. Additional support personnel offer differentiated activities and strategies for English Language Learners, academically gifted students, and those students with special needs. Our MTSS model supports students who need remediation, especially if they are behind in out of grade level skills.

Scope and Sequence: Cloverleaf Elementary follows the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for English Language Arts instruction including all essential standards. In addition to the NCSCOS, K-2 classrooms participate in the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness program. K-1 students are taught using the Letterland curriculum to build foundational skills in reading and writing; 2nd grade students are piloting the Heggerty Bridge to Reading programme, all of which focus on reading and language foundational skills. Students in grades 3-5 receive instruction using the Magnetic Reading curriculum, which incorporates the reading, writing, and language standards from the NCSCOS. All students K-5 use the iReady Reading diagnostic and personalized online instruction.

Created October 2018
Revised October 2023

English as a Second Language: English as a Second Language (ESL) students receive English language instruction through collaboration between classroom teachers and the ESL teacher on a schedule created to address students' needs. Classroom teachers modify student work with support from the ESL teacher. Students receive the ACCESS test each year to determine the services needed and levels of proficiency in the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. English language learners use the WIDA curriculum to guide their language learning.

Speech/Language and Hearing Impaired: A Speech/Language referral can be made by staff or parents to determine if a student qualifies for services by our licensed speech-language pathologist. If the student qualifies for services, the amount of service time is based on individual need outlined in the student's IEP (Individualized Education Plan). Hearing screenings are also conducted, and specialists offer both consultative and direct services as well as supporting inclusion methods in the regular classroom setting. All modifications are executed based on the specific IEP goals. If a student is sufficiently hearing impaired, a district specialist provides additional support with assistive technology.

Professional Development: Ongoing professional development opportunities are provided for the staff to support IB and language instruction. Through IB PYP training, district professional development in reading and writing, and weekly Professional Learning Community meetings, we work to increase our knowledge and application of best teaching practices. Our ESL, Speech, and EC teachers present information to staff according to a regular schedule and are available for individual consultation as needed.

Resources: It is both a short and long term goal to expand parent, teacher, and student resources to support language instruction in English and additional languages. Both digital media and print materials are available in the media center and students can access content through digital learning programs accessed on student iPads according to needs. Classroom libraries and a leveled book room provide additional resources for needed materials. We continue to add resources to increase availability and to provide materials which support best teaching practices. Staff members use Google Translate regularly to assist communication with students and families whose primary language is not English.

Parents: Parents are encouraged to take an active role in supporting their child's language instruction and to support them at our school. The ESL teacher serves as a liaison who can connect our parents with community resources for academic needs. Students with non-academic needs are served by several district level interpreters. Parents are also provided training on what is happening in the classes and what to expect during different stages of a second language acquisition and support strategies for home assignments.

***Home and Family Languages*:**

Created October 2018
Revised October 2023

Interpreters and translators are available for many parent teacher conferences, programs and communications as needed throughout the school year. Students whose primary language is not English are supported both in the regular and second language classroom. Bilingual staff and stakeholders provide additional support as needs arise. We are currently adding resources and books in our media center to reflect and respect the language and culture of mother tongue groups represented in our school. We also offer cultural celebrations throughout the year showcasing the variety of cultures in our school. By collaborating with parents, students, and community partners we hope to increase respect and awareness of the traditions and languages representing our students and their heritage.

Additional Language Acquisition:

Additional language classes in Spanish began during the 2017-18 school year, for all students in grades K-5. For the 2023-24 school year, 50 minute classes are held weekly. Students are working towards acquiring a new language with a focus on the goals of foreign language learning: language acquisition, exploring cultures, and exploring the influence of the Spanish language globally in our local communities. This opportunity helps students comprehend the diverse aspects of this culture and further promotes the importance of understanding and respecting other cultures in order to live in peace and respect. Classroom teachers also include appropriate Spanish vocabulary labels in the classroom and Spanish acquisition is encouraged schoolwide through features on our daily morning news program. An extracurricular opportunity for students to participate in a Spanish Language and Culture Club is also offered to interested students.

***Responsibilities*:** The Cloverleaf Leadership Team and PYP Goal Team are involved in developing and communicating the language policy to staff. Professional development associated with language acquisition and learning will be offered to staff as well. Teachers are responsible for communicating the language policy to students and parents. All current policies will be posted on the Cloverleaf website.

***Review*:** *The Language Policy was created and reviewed by the Staff, PYP Goal Team and School Leadership Team and will be reviewed annually. Last revised: October 2023.*

Policy created based on "Making the PYP Happen Language in the Primary Years- Beliefs and Values in Language" IBO, 2009

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Revised October 2023