

Asa Philip Randolph Elementary Language Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Language Policy is to define the framework for Asa Philip Randolph Elementary School. The policy will communicate to parents, students, school stakeholders, and the community the importance placed on language at Randolph Elementary School. It also reflects on the instructional practices and guiding principles that are communicated to all stakeholders while defining the importance language plays in our curriculum. This document provides an overview of the language learning policy at Asa Philip Randolph Elementary. The policy is written in accordance with the principles and practices of the International Baccalaureate (IB).

Philosophy

All students at A. Philip Randolph Elementary School are included in the Primary Years Program. Each student from Pre-Kindergarten to fifth grade benefit from the IB educational program as teachers assist the students in becoming knowledgeable through the study of language. “Language permeates the world in which we live; it is socially constructed and dependent on the number and nature of our social interactions and relationships” (Making the PYP Happen, 2009). Through motivational language activities, Randolph’s teachers teach students to expand on new ideas and teach language concepts that transfer one content area to another, which is focused on the application of language contents. We believe A. Philip Randolph’s Language Policy will motivate students to learn and expand new ideas while exploring language concepts, transdisciplinary themes, global issues, as well as promote multicultural understanding. At A. Philip Randolph, we seek to develop life-long learners who are culturally responsive and communicate in a global society.

Admissions

A. Philip Randolph Elementary is a public school in the Fulton County District and follows the policies set forth by the Fulton County Board of Education. Although basic knowledge of English will increase the likelihood of student success at Randolph, it is not necessary for a student to know English before he/she enrolls in any Fulton County School. Upon enrollment, students are placed in an appropriate grade level according to his or her age or as indicated by previous school records. New students enrolling in Randolph are not placed in a lower grade level based upon their foundation in the student’s mother tongue (first language). At our school, English language learners are supported through our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program.

Language of Instruction and Curriculum

English is mostly the monolithic language and is the language of instruction for all students at A. Philip Randolph Elementary where teachers teach reading, phonics, writing, as well as communication skills. We explicitly dedicate 90-120 minutes for our language curriculum where we utilize whole group, small group, collaborative and independent practice through the three PYP strands of language, oral, visual, and written. We provide a print rich learning environment

to extend students' knowledge through different text. We also encourage inquiry-based learning of language by promoting reading through classroom libraries where students select text according to personal interest.

Language Assessments

The students' English Language skills will be assessed and reported three times a year using the iReady Reading Universal Screener. The diagnostic results from the iReady Reading Screener are used to identify students who will receive additional assessments and early interventions by Randolph's teachers. During our Transdisciplinary Theme Planners, language will be assessed both written and orally across the curriculum on an on-going basis. Language assessments are based on the Georgia Standard of Excellence (GSE) and Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). Both the GSE and GPS standards drive instruction and assessments by providing guidelines for teacher and students. The standards also inform parents and students which skills, and knowledge must be mastered according to each grade level. Fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing and conventions, listening, speaking, and viewing are represented in the GPS for all grade levels. Concept of print, phonological awareness, and word identification is also a part of the standards in kindergarten through second grade classes.

Support of All Learners

Asa Philip Randolph Elementary welcomes different languages and cultures that contribute to the make-up of a diverse learning environment. Teachers keep the unique needs of each learner at the forefront when planning and implementing instruction. We believe that the cultural differences and varying perspectives among all stakeholders contributes to the development of internationally minded students.

Language B – Language Learners- (Spanish)

We believe that instruction in an additional language inspires a meaningful interaction that results in the broader development of personal understanding, linking the student to the world. Spanish is the additional language taught at A. Philip Randolph Elementary School. Spanish instruction is given to students beginning in Kindergarten and continues through fifth grade. Each grade level receives 45 minutes of additional language instruction. The language model used is content enriched by concepts from the general curriculum and focuses on communication and culture . Our ultimate goal is that by the time students exit our school at the end of fifth grade, they will be able to read, write, and conduct simple Spanish conversations and show respect and understanding of other cultures.

Mother Tongue (First Language Support)

At our school, teachers value differences and perspectives as it contributes to language and understand it is imperative to preserve and deepen students' understanding of his or her mother tongue. Randolph's administration, teachers, and staff make sure effective communication in the mother tongue is available through translators upon request of the parent. We embrace and

celebrate cultural diversity and awareness by encouraging students to share artifacts to provide cultural perspectives and experiences while developing language and communication skills throughout the curriculum.

Second Language Support

The goal of our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program is to develop English proficiency, particularly through the acquisition of academic English in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The ESOL language instruction educational program for EL students should also increase academic language proficiency in content-area subject matter. Successful ESOL Language programs focus on collaboration and shared accountability for the success of all EL students.

Potential ESOL students are identified through the Home Language Survey, then through the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium (WIDA) Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State (ACCESS) Placement Test (W-APT) screening instrument. This determines if a student is eligible for ESOL services. If a student is found eligible, they will attend a surrounding school that supports ESOL instruction.

The responsibility for educating the whole English learner child, both in language development and academic content, is shared by regular classroom teachers and English language specialist teachers alike. Classroom teachers, ESOL teachers and other support staff should collaborate to determine instructional scaffold and language focused activities needed to make language and content as comprehensible as possible for ELs throughout the entire school day. As a result, all teachers function as academic language teachers when EL students are enrolled in their classes.

Professional Development

Every member of the staff is encouraged to share language experiences, knowledge, and strategies with other staff members. They are also encouraged to collaborate effectively with others to make teaching and learning language more meaningful. Language focused professional development opportunities include but are not limited to:

- Differentiated Language Instruction
- Reading and Writing across Content Areas
- Assessing Language skills and Implementing Strategies for Improvement
- Analyzing Language Data
- IB Level 3 Reading and Writing in the PYP
- IB Level 3 PYP Language B

Policy Review

This policy will be formally reviewed, as needed, by Asa Philip Randolph Elementary staff and community stakeholders to adapt to changing best practices, changes in Primary Years Program, and changes in the needs of our community. The effectiveness of this policy will be reflected in

our language achievement data and feedback from stakeholders. We welcome comments and recommendations on this policy at any time.