

Developed - Fall 2017

Language Policy

ThunderRidge High School and Ranch View Middle School

Douglas County School District
Highlands Ranch, Colorado

References:

International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO): *Standards and Practices*
Parent –Student Handbook IBO Publication: *Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy*
IBO Publication: *Second-Language Acquisition and Mother-Tongue Development*
IBO Publication: *MYP: From Principles to Practice*

Philosophy:

Educators at Ranch View Middle School and ThunderRidge High School promote literacy as a process and offer an education that will provide continued access to the world of ideas. Teaching operates as the art of expanding literacy, most fundamentally linked to teaching students to read, to write, to listen, and to speak. Literacy is not only a skill; it is also an art, which can and should constantly evolve over an individual's lifetime. Learning to read and to write should not function as ends in themselves.

Furthermore, we recognize that all students, regardless of their language background, are language learners. It is our responsibility as educators to not only impart information, but to also promote a literate society.

Definitions:

Language of Instruction (LOI): English
First Language - Languages of Influence (Native Language)
Language Acquisition - Second Languages
ELLP- English Language Learner Plan

Language Profiles:

All students currently enrolled and new students admitted will have a Language Profile and students and parents will subsequently be informed as to the extent of language supports that will be provided by the school. Levels of proficiency in English are re-evaluated annually until the student no longer qualifies for ELA services.

ADAPTED FROM DOUGLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL IB FEEDER LANGUAGE POLICY

Policy Statement:

The Language of Instruction (LOI) in the ThunderRidge High School Feeder is English. All students at our schools are encouraged to learn a second language as well as to develop literacy in their first language.

All students will be provided support to develop fluency in the LOI. For students who do not have English as their native language, English as a Second Language (ESL) will be required at an appropriate level following a needs assessment. There will be no punitive measures that impact students using their native languages in our schools.

Language Policy:

ThunderRidge High School IB feeder:

1. Provides opportunities for all learners to acquire a language other than English.
2. Provides opportunities for all learners to develop cultural understandings of their own and other cultures.
3. Provides opportunities for students to maintain and develop their first language. These opportunities could include:
 - a. Physical resources
 - b. Technology supports (e.g., Distance Learning, access to community based instruction)
 - c. Direct instruction
4. Provides support for students who are enrolled with English as their second language to develop competence in both spoken and written English in accordance with the school's curricular frameworks for ESL in order to support their academic progress.
5. Ensures that teachers are making the necessary adjustments to classroom practices to support the language needs of all students.
6. Allows second language acquisition and first language development of all students enrolled. Students will be counseled towards a sustained language experience.

➤ **Language Acquisition Structures for English Language Learners:**

- An ELLP (English Language Learner Plan) will be created for each qualifying student.
- Teachers will receive detailed information about students' language backgrounds and needs as language learners.
- Students are placed in ESL classes based on their level of English acquisition.
- Courses offered to support ESL students include:
 - ESL English as needed
 - Subject classes taught with an ESL teacher as needed
 - At TRHS: ESL Elective Course (this provides supplemental support with coursework from general education classes)

- Reading/Writing Strategies Course may be offered/encouraged to as an additional support.

➤ **Expectations of Classroom Teachers of English Language Learners:**

- Teachers are expected to collaborate with students, families and the ESL teacher to better understand and meet the needs of language learners.
- Teachers are expected to provide necessary adjustments to classroom practices to support the language needs of all students.

➤ **Expectations of ESL Teachers:**

- The ESL teacher will ensure English Language Learners are placed in classes with the appropriate supports, based on the assessment data gathered during the creation of the ELLP.
- The ESL teacher will utilize a consultation time in their teaching schedule to address strategies that may help specific teachers or students.
- The ESL teacher will provide additional resources and strategies to the teachers to assist in meeting the educational needs of the students.
- The ESL teacher will utilize assessment data to determine the effectiveness of the strategies.

➤ **Additional Considerations:**

- Teachers are encouraged to identify distinctions between social and academic language proficiency, and to recognize that students often master social language prior to mastering more nuanced academic discourse.
- Teachers are encouraged to provide opportunities for all learners to develop cultural understandings of their own and other cultures
- Through MYP unit plans, international mindedness is developed at the instructional level through “Global Contexts” as connections are made to the cultures around the world in each subject area.