



# Academy of International Studies Elementary School

## Language Policy



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# What is a Language Policy?

*“A language policy is an action statement ... It is concerned less with where the students in a school are going, and more with how they are going to get there.” — “Language Policy in Schools”*

A language policy is derived from the school’s language philosophy, and it is a statement of purpose that outlines goals for language teaching and learning. It is constructed around pedagogical and learning beliefs, and, it is, therefore, also a statement of action that describes practices for achieving and evaluating goals.

Every International Baccalaureate World School is authorized to offer one or more of the three International Baccalaureate programs and is required to have a written language policy.

## CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School Language Philosophy

CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School aims to develop internationally minded global citizens who take action for a better, more peaceful world. We are committed to providing equity, excellence, and success for all through high-quality educational services.

CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School believes that language is central to all learning and is the responsibility of all teachers. The school believes that the development of language builds interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and incorporates language learning, learning through language, and learning about language. CREC believes that language instruction is transdisciplinary and provides an environment that promotes, generates, and supports effective communication and language development. Throughout the curriculum, CREC fosters the development of language instruction, world languages, and the mother tongue.

CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School believes that language development is a life-long process and that all aspects of our language program require formal and ongoing informal assessments. These assessments are used to plan appropriate instruction and to evaluate student progress. As a community of learners, the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School believes in ongoing professional development related to all aspects of language development.

We demonstrate the traits of the Learner Profile through our work by:

- Reading, writing, listening, and speaking in a variety of ways (communicator)
- Appreciating personal languages and cultures (open-minded)
- Reflecting on individual language profiles (reflective)

## Language Learning

English is taught daily in blocks. However, English language teaching is not limited to that block of time. Features of the English language curriculum include the four Primary Years Programme language strands of reading, writing, listening and speaking, and media literacy. Small groupings for targeting skill development are utilized within the class through differentiated instruction. The school also has purchased books and digital resources to support language development in mother tongue, as well as in English.

# CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School

## Language Profile

The CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School is a public interdistrict magnet school that enrolls students from several districts within the state. English is the native language and is offered to English Language Learners (MLL). English is the mother tongue of 92 percent of our students, and English is the language of instruction at the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School. Other languages represented by our student population are:

- Arabic- 1 percent
- Tamil- 1 percent
- Spanish- 5 percent
- Karen- 1 percent
- Telugu- 1 percent
- Portuguese- 1 percent
- Hindi - 1 percent
- Creole - 1 percent
- Patois - 1 percent
- Twi - 1 percent
- Marathi - 1 percent

The Programme of Inquiry provides a transdisciplinary approach to the acquisition and application of language.

## Multi-Language Learners (MLL)

CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School recognizes that, in a transdisciplinary program, language is essential to inquiry-based learning and the construction of knowledge. Relevant, authentic, and meaningful contexts, social interaction, and connection to prior knowledge are all essential components to effective language learning in the Primary Years Programme, and students who are non-native English speakers, and who have been identified as being in need of additional English language support, are immersed in regular classroom activities for the maximum amount of time possible. In some cases, identified students attend MLL classes for additional support. MLL classes are facilitated by an MLL teacher, and time spent with students is determined by their needs and abilities and is adjusted accordingly. Currently 8% of the AISE student population is identified as multi-language learners.

Parents and guardians of incoming students complete a mandatory home language survey that indicates languages other than English that are spoken at home. The survey results are compiled, a screening letter is distributed to parents and guardians, and if necessary, students are assessed using the Language Assessment System to determine English language proficiency. Students identified as MLL are assessed annually using the assessment system, and students exit the MLL program when they score a 4 (proficient) on the assessment.

## Mother Tongue

CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School encourages parents and students to communicate in their mother tongue whenever possible. The school believes that development of mother tongue language is integral to cognitive development and to maintaining cultural identity. Support of mother tongue and home/personal language provides the opportunity for our community to develop intercultural awareness and understanding, and it allows students to maintain appreciation for the language, literature, and culture of their home country.

CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School is committed to providing an environment that supports students and their mother tongue. It strives to support the diversity of the community by continually developing library resources for mother tongue support. As the school population changes and new languages and cultures are represented, appropriate resources will be purchased. The school will allocate funds through the library budget to purchase mother tongue materials, and it encourages parents to continue developing mother tongue outside of school. Parents are often invited into the school to share language and culture throughout the community. As a community, the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School will continue to develop its resources around mother tongue languages.

## Learning Additional Languages

*“Learning in more than one language is considered essential to an international education and for enriching intercultural understanding.” — “Towards a continuum of international education”*

As an International Baccalaureate World School, the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School is required to offer a second language starting at age 7. Learning an additional language develops multi-literacy skills and attitudes, enabling students to communicate successfully in a global environment. Language learning at the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School is a developmental process whereby students build on prior knowledge and skills in order to progress to the next phase of language development.

The sustained study of an Additional Language provides the opportunity for students to:

- Develop competence in a language other than their mother-tongue
- Appreciate and respect diverse linguistic and cultural heritages
- Develop foundational skills on which future languages can be learned

At the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School, all students, except those identified through appropriate assessments, are required to study at least one language in addition to English. Currently, the school offers Mandarin to preschool through grade five students.

The additional language program both supports and extends the International Baccalaureate units. Students learn about the language and cultures of people in Mandarin-speaking countries. This instruction is provided once a week as a 40-minute essentials class. Although additional language is taught as an essentials class, it is not limited to that block of time. Differentiation occurs in every classroom based on student needs.

## Language Assessment

Language is assessed on a regular basis, and data is collected from assessments and utilized to inform instruction. It is differentiated according to student needs. A variety of formal and informal assessments are utilized to monitor progress related to language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). For more information about assessments, please refer to the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School assessment policy.

# Professional Development

Language development is the responsibility of all staff members at CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School. When there is a district-wide focus on language elements, staff will be sent to appropriate professional development as directed by district-level curriculum coordinators. When there is a school-wide focus on language elements, staff will be provided professional development according to the needs of school professionals, as directed by CREC administration, literacy specialists, and/ or the Primary Years Programme coordinator.

Professional development may occur during weekly grade level and/or staff meetings. The school administration and the Primary Years Programme coordinator will ensure that school staff is made aware of appropriate professional development opportunities whenever possible, and the coordinator will coordinate all Primary Years Programme professional development. Resources for staff will be available throughout the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School community. These resources will provide school professionals with current research and best practices in language learning. Funds will be allocated each year to maintain resources.

## Review

Each year, a language policy committee will form to review the current language policy for the CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School. At this time, appropriate amendments will be made and the updated document will be distributed to staff and parents (both a hard copy and electronic copy). Whenever possible, the committee will be made up of staff, administrators, and parents.

**The next review will take place in September 2024.**

## Works Cited

- International Baccalaureate Organization, *Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy*, Peterson House, Malthouse Avenue, Cardiff Gate Cardiff, Wales GB CF23 8GL. 2008
- International Baccalaureate Organization, *Making the PYP Happen*, Geneva, Switzerland.2009
- International Baccalaureate Organization, *Learning in a Language Other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*, Peterson House, Malthouse Avenue, Cardiff Gate Cardiff, Wales GB CF23 8GL. 2008.

**We also gathered information from the following International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme school language policies:**

- International School Neustadt
- Dwight School Singapore
- The International School at Dundee
- CREC Metropolitan Learning Center for International and Global Studies
- CREC Academy of International Studies Elementary School assessment policy

# Language Policy Committee

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