



Language Policy

Mission Statement

Prospect School inspires students to become lifelong inquirers who are globally minded. We create experiences that empower students to express their unique voices, develop a sense of community, and appreciate diverse cultures.

Philosophy

Prospect School's language program is designed to assist students in refining the linguistic skills needed to succeed. Students are given opportunities to use oral, written, and gestural language in authentic contexts as a means of expressing themselves. Students are engaged in interactive language experiences that support communication, inquiry, collaboration, and hands-on learning. Instruction is developed and differentiated based on students' levels of literacy and language proficiency. Students are provided with experiences that allow for verbal and non-verbal, multimodal communication.

Language Profile

Prospect School is a Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten early learner school with approximately 430 students. We are located in Hempstead, New York, within a multilingual community. Our community has a large number of students who speak languages other than English at home.

Our kindergarten multilingual learners are provided with programming that fosters language development. Teachers are dedicated and committed to supporting each student's journey to language acquisition. All teaching staff speak fluent English, with several also fluent in Spanish and French/Creole.

Identification of Language Needs

As students transition to kindergarten, parents and guardians must complete a *Home Language Questionnaire* indicating the language primarily spoken at home. For any student who is not from a home in which English is the primary language, the NYSITELL screener will be

given to determine the student's level of English language proficiency. The screener outcomes determine the mandated services outlined by the NYS Part 154. These regulations describe the legal procedures that must be followed to determine English Proficiency during the initial enrollment

Kindergarteners who received English language services will be assessed with the NYSESLAT exam at the end of the school year to determine English language acquisition.

<http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed>

Language of instruction

Students are instructed in English using culturally responsive techniques that support language acquisition:

- Inquiry-based learning
- Multi-modal strategies (visuals, kinesthetics, gestures, auditory, etc.)
- ENL, AIS and Speech/Language services
- Cross-linguistic resources
- Language instruction across all content areas
- Formal and informal assessment
- Opportunities for student collaboration and reflection

Assessing Language Learning

Assessment is a very important tool used to drive instruction and meet the individual needs of all students. (See Assessment Policy on School website) Data is collected from:

- ENL and classroom teachers engage in formative and summative assessments
- NYSITELL
- NYSESLAT
- Guided Reading and Running Records
- iReady
- Amira
- Star CBM – Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading / Curriculum Based Measurement
- ASQ3
- TSG
- Anecdotal notes, rubrics and checklists
- Next Generation Standards

Support of Language Learners

Language is the most important tool to communicate knowledge and to explore greater understandings. Cultural appreciation is gained when we are exposed to world languages, cultures, and values. Our learning community will support and develop practices to promote proficiency in English as well as each student's native language.

We support the native language of families at home and at school. Families are encouraged to speak and develop their primary language at home through reading, writing, listening, and speaking. At school, during the *Who We Are* unit of inquiry, families take part in a school wide *Who We Are* day in which individual cultures, traditions and native languages are celebrated. Monthly Parent Teacher Organization meetings are held to improve communication between home and school, empower parents and guardians on how to advocate for their children, as well as provide workshops to help parents/guardians support learning at home.

Instruction and Assessment in Language and Literature

The focus of learning is for experiences to be relevant, engaging, and challenging to each student. Early language learning contributes to success in multiple forms of communication (speaking, writing, role-play) and creative expression. Therefore, all students are taught using New York State Next Generation Standards. Teachers assess language skills through formative and summative assessments.

Language and the Program of Inquiry

Language is integrated throughout the Program of Inquiry. Oral, auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and written language are all present within each unit of the inquiry. Higher level thinking, conceptual questions and approaches to instruction all lend themselves to language learning.

Language Resources

Classroom libraries, both physical and digital, are available for students to use as a resource for reading and to support the units of inquiry. The school Media Center and school website are great resources for students and parents to access online programs and a variety of diverse, bilingual and cultural fiction and non-fiction books.

Review and Access

The language policy is located in English and Spanish on Prospect School's website. The policy will be reviewed annually by staff and revised as needed.

Glossary

ENL – English as a New Language

ELL - English Language Learner

NYSITELL – New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners

NYSESLAT – New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test

AIS – Academic Intervention Services

iReady

AMIRA

Star CBM –

ASQ3 = Ages & Stages Questionnaire

TSG – Teaching Strategies Gol

