



LANGUAGE POLICY

Updated: April 2025



At North Middle School and William J. Palmer High School, we believe that language is central to learning and fundamental to the development of students as globally minded thinkers, communicators, and lifelong learners. We recognize that all teachers are language teachers, that every student has a unique language profile that must be supported, that language learning strengthens intercultural understanding and identity development, and that multilingualism is a valuable asset in academic and personal success.

Language learning and literacy development are integrated across all subject areas and supported through intentional collaboration between teachers, librarians, coordinators, and language specialists. Students receive explicit instruction in academic vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, and speaking in all content areas. Teachers use research-based strategies to scaffold language acquisition and promote disciplinary literacy.

All students study at least one language in addition to English, beginning in the MYP. The school encourages the development of proficiency in multiple languages through rigorous coursework and culturally responsive teaching.

We currently offer:

- World Language options in Spanish and Mandarin (MYP – 6th through 8th)
- World Language options in French, German, Spanish and Mandarin (MYP – 9th and 10th)
- Ab initio and SL/HL options in French, German Spanish, and Mandarin (11th and 12th grades)
- Spanish for Proficiency and Spanish Language Arts for heritage speakers.
- Structured Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) support for multi-language learners.

While most students' mother tongue is English or Spanish, Palmer recognizes and values all best languages. We provide heritage language support where population size and staffing permit.

North Middle School and William J. Palmer High School support students learning in a language other than their mother tongue through certified CLDE instructors and co-teaching models, WIDA assessments to monitor growth in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, opportunities to process content in a student's best language, and classroom strategies to make input comprehensible (visuals, scaffolds, modeling, repetition). All faculty are offered professional development in supporting culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

All programmes support language development through access to multilingual resources in the media center and EBSCO databases, clubs and extracurriculars that celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity, and collaboration with the district's ELL Community Liaison for outreach, interpretation, and family engagement.