

Spring Valley Academy

MYP Language Policy

Mission

In the MYP at Spring Valley Academy, we are determined to empower students to succeed in our ever-changing world by providing a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment for all students, staff and community through an engaging, collaborative and innovative experience.

Definition

A language policy is derived from the school's language philosophy and is a statement of purpose that outlines goals for language teaching and learning. It is constructed around pedagogical and learning beliefs and is therefore also a statement of action describing practices for achieving and evaluating goals. *Guidelines for developing a school language policy*, IBO (2008).

MYP Standards and Practices that focus on language

Standard A: Philosophy

7. The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host-country and other languages.

Standard B: Leadership and Structure

5. The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme.
 - a. The school has developed and implements a language policy that is consistent with IB expectations.

Standard C1: Collaborative Planning

8. Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.

Standard C2: Written Curriculum

10. The written curriculum integrates the policies developed by the school to support the programme.

Standard C3: teaching and Learning

8. Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.

Language Philosophy

We recognize that multilingualism is key to empowering our students to becoming successful in a global society. Understanding cultural identity is an integral part of successful social interactions and building quality relationships. All teachers at Spring Valley Academy are language teachers who support our students as they establish strong communication skills in a variety of ways.

- All teachers excel in basic English. 20% of the staff are proficient in other languages.
- School-wide, cultural identity and diversity is celebrated through exploration into various cultures and the expectation that students share their culture with the school community. All teachers value the diversity the students bring to their classrooms and the opportunities for students to share their cultural and linguistic backgrounds are built into curriculum.
- All languages are valued school-wide.
- Language is taught at an interdisciplinary level. Each teacher is responsible for language instruction across subject areas.
- All teachers value and promote cultural differences by building opportunities into curriculum for students to share cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

All students are provided opportunities and are challenged to learn, maintain and excel in communication skills across the continuum of language (learning language, learning through language and learning about language) and learning domains (discrete skills, basic interpersonal communicative skills, literacy and the art of language, cognitive academic language proficiency, literary analysis and critical literacy).

Language Policy Review

The language policy will be reviewed bi-annually. Key stakeholders will be involved in the annual review of the policy. These stakeholders include but are not limited to teachers, administrators, coordinator, participants of English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) and parents. Factors that must be considered during each policy review include State and District regulations for learning English and support of mother tongues (especially those that differ from English or Spanish). Collaborative efforts are made to include a range of expertise on each review panel.

Language Profile

- Upon school registration, parents/guardians are required to complete a **Home Language Survey**. This form helps our school to identify mother tongue and any other language a student may speak.
- Students who are preliminarily identified as English Learners are given assessments through the La Mesa Spring Valley School District's Language Assessment Department to determine English proficiency levels.
- English proficiency levels are used to determine placement in English Language Development Support classes.
- Upon registration, students are given placement assessments to determine the appropriate placement in Spanish classes.

Language Learning

Spring Valley Academy's language of instruction is English. Spanish is taught across a learning continuum to support students in their quest for multilingualism. Teachers in all subject areas recognize language and communication is at the center of all teaching and learning. All teachers are teachers of language. Differentiation and inquiry are at the heart of all teaching and learning. Teachers regularly collaborate on the learning needs of all students and develop scaffolds and purposeful tasks to support all students across the continuum of language and learning domains.

All teachers are well versed in teaching strategies that support English Learners. They understand the importance of incorporating these targeted supports and the benefit these strategies have for all learners regardless of their current language proficiency levels. The following is a list of possible supports used in all classrooms depending on the context:

- Graphic Organizers
- Visual Supports
- Buddy System
- Activating prior knowledge
- Frontloading
- Collaborative learning tasks
- Technological supports that may include translation systems
- Checks for understanding
- Additional time and support
- Door signs, cafeteria signs, safety directions and exits

Mother-tongue Programs

Students are encouraged to share their mother tongue with the school community. Technologies that support the continued development of mother-tongue languages that differ from English or Spanish are provided to students by:

- Mathematics:visuals, videos, Google Translator, personal iPad
- Language and Literature: visuals, videos, Google Translator, personal iPad, textbooks in other languages, peer buddies
- Individuals and Societies:visuals, videos, Google Translator, personal iPad, textbooks in other languages, peer buddies
- Science:visuals, videos, Google Translator, personal iPad, textbooks in other languages, peer buddies
- PHE:videos, visuals, peer buddies, Google Translator, personal iPad
- VAPA:visuals, videos, Google Translator, personal iPad, textbooks in other languages, peer buddies
- Design:visuals, videos, Google Translator, personal iPad, textbooks in other languages, peer buddies

The school community within all classrooms and outside the classroom environment supports use of these technologies.

Admission Policies

Class size permitting, Spring Valley Academy accepts all students regardless of socio-economic, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. All students are expected to learn English and Spanish. Exceptions to this are students who have a mother-tongue other than English or Spanish, or students whose Individualized Education Plan determines other academic needs should be addressed and supported prior to offering instruction in Spanish. These students are given additional supports and time to learn English.

Assessment

Students who are not yet proficient in English are given the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) annually to assess their English proficiency levels and growth. This test assesses a student's current English proficiency levels in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Additional information regarding assessments may be found in Spring Valley Academy's Assessment Policy.

Depending on the student's ELPAC levels, students are placed in the appropriate English Language Development (ELD) Support classes in addition to the general education setting classes. Certificated teachers with a strong background in teaching and knowledge of the needs of English Learners teach ELD Support classes.

English Learner levels are defined as follows:

Level 1: Emerging/Beginner:

Level 2: Developing

Level 3-4: Expanding

Additionally, each student is assessed for placement in Spanish classes. Information regarding specifics about these assessments may be found in Spring Valley Academy's Assessment Policy. Based on results of the Spanish Placement assessment, students are placed in the appropriate Spanish class. Spring Valley Academy provides Spanish classes that correlate to the Phases of Language Acquisition as outlined in the Language Acquisition Subject Guide. Students with a mother-tongue of Spanish may be placed in a Spanish class that follows the aims and objectives as outlined in the Language and Literature Subject Guide as these students are on a different place on the continuum of language.

Parent Involvement

Parent support is strongly encouraged and celebrated at Spring Valley Academy. Parents are urged to participate in the English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) at the school site level or District Language Advisory Committee (DLAC) at the School District level. Student learning and support is at the heart of all decisions made by ELAC and DLAC. Policies and procedures are presented to these committees for discussion and suggestions for improvement.

Communication of the Language Policy

Our language policy is listed on our public school website along with other policies.

Language Acquisition (Spanish)

Students at Spring Valley Academy are enrolled in Spanish classes. The level/phase of Spanish class is determined by Spanish Assessments given by the Language Acquisition teachers. If parents and students indicate there is no previous experience with Spanish, then the student enrolling in Spring Valley Academy is placed in Phase I/Beginning Spanish.

Sources

Guidelines for developing a school language policy (IBO, 2008)

MYP: From principles into practice (IBO, 2014)

Programme standards and practices (IBO, 2014)

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