



Language Policy Grove Park Elementary

“IB World Schools share a common philosophy--- a commitment to improve the teaching and learning of a diverse and inclusive community of students by delivering challenging, high quality programmes of international education that share a powerful vision.” ** It is with the same vision that Grove Park strives to reach our diverse population of students and creates an inclusive environment that facilitates growth and learning. We have students from 19 different countries around the globe and while we all do not come to the table speaking the same language, our mission is for all to learn the languages of respect for diversity and international mindedness.

Language Philosophy

At Grove Park Elementary, language is an essential tool for both teaching and learning. Through language, one is able to improve communication skills, form his or her own identity, explore their environment, solve problems, and impact the thinking of others. We view language as a tool for making meaning in the world. We also believe that every student has an individual and a cultural set of experiences, skills and interests, which must be considered in the teaching and learning process. At Grove Park, we create a challenging and motivating multilingual environment where all students experience an enriched language program in which English is the primary language of instruction, and Spanish is taught as a second language, using the Florida Next Generation World Language Standards.

As an IB Candidate School, we are committed to the following Practices:

- The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages (IB Standard A, Practice 7).
- Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning a language other than their mother tongue (IB Standard C3, Practice 7).
- Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C3, Practice 8).
- Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the programme. (IB Standard C4, Practice 1).
- Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students (IB Standard C1, Practice 8).
- The school utilizes the resources and expertise of the community to enhance learning within the programmes (IB Standard B2, Practice 11).

Support for the Language Learners

We strongly believe that all teachers are language teachers as language transcends curriculum areas, so we foster a caring language community to enhance the development of all students and families. Differentiation in language lessons is based on best practice according to the standards and practices of the IB. All teachers respond to students' needs and may therefore provide individualized instruction guided in some cases by specific learning goals and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Teaching strategies may include working in small groups, using different resources with different levels of language complexity, as well as, changing the level of questioning and tasks for individual students. Students may also have choices so they can follow their own interests or use a preferred learning style. In addition to this, the School provides a range of specialist support including profiling, individual support, speech and language specialists, and so forth. All students' language needs are determined through initial and ongoing assessments throughout the year. Teachers differentiate for the range of students' needs in different ways according to aforementioned assessments. The following are the array of Practices we have in place to meet the needs of each child.

Reading and Writing Instruction

All teachers are teachers of language with responsibilities in facilitating communication. Students learn to read and write through a variety of strategies:

- Whole group read aloud
- Small group reading instruction
- Small group writing instruction
- Independent reading and writing instruction
- Digital reading resources
- Varied levels of reading materials
- Adding written responses to charts and graphs (ex. KUD chart, wonderwall etc.)
- Interactive Word Walls

Oral Language

Listening and speaking learning engagements are provided throughout the day in a variety of lessons as noted in each Unit of Inquiry. Examples include:

- Class discussion
- Partner discussion
- Presentations
- Asking questions
- Responding to peers and teacher
- Collaborative projects and presentations
- Creating digital projects
- Play Centers in Primary grades
- Morning Meetings

Visual Language

Students are provided visual texts in the form of posters, charts, labels, word walls, anchor charts, digital media, movies, flags etc.

- A variety of visual texts are available in each room
- Classrooms are labeled with visuals using our Host and World Languages (Spanish)
- Visual vocabulary strategies
- Performances and presentations
- Digital media

World Language Instruction

Grove Park Elementary provides World Language instruction in Spanish in grades Kindergarten through Fifth grade. The language is taught through cultural connections utilizing a variety of strategies:

- Connecting to the grade level unit of inquiry
- Music
- Collaboration
- Books/stories/literature
- Videos
- Digital Media
- Spanish labels in classrooms
- Cognates

Mother Tongue Language Support

Mother Tongue refers to a language which a person has grown up speaking since childhood. Many of our students speak a language other than English as their mother tongue and many are bilingual. Parents are continually encouraged to speak and read to their children at home in their mother tongue as they develop the host language at school and in the community. Maintaining their mother tongue is as important as learning the host language to us at Grove Park because cultural identity and continuing traditions through language are vital for healthy growth and development. We provide support for all parents and students through the use of translators and translated material. We highly encourage parent participation at school, especially if they do not speak the host language, as we strive to translate every parent workshop and meeting, so everyone can participate and enjoy the experience of learning and being a part of our school culture. Parents are encouraged to communicate in the language with which they are most comfortable speaking and we make every effort to accommodate their language needs. We support mother tongue language at our school using the following strategies:

- Teachers are encouraged to earn ELL endorsement
- ELL teachers who speak other languages provide push in support to students during reading and math every day
- Parent meetings/workshops are translated on the spot into Spanish and Creole.
- Written parent communication is always translated in Spanish and Creole
- Language Facilitators are always on staff to support home/school communication, including for parent conferences or phone calls
- Learning strategies are specifically designed to support ELL students

- Materials in the media center are in multiple languages and also about a variety of cultures

Language and the Program of Inquiry

Language is integrated throughout the Program of Inquiry. Higher level thinking, key concepts, questions, and extended research all lend themselves to developing a strong vocabulary and language presence within the units of inquiry. Oral, visual, and written language are all present within learning engagements. Literature selections, both in read-alouds and guided reading, are purposefully chosen to build an understanding of the concepts within each unit. Further integration of language through the transdisciplinary skills of the Fine Arts team (Music, PE, Art, Spanish, Character Ed. and Media), fosters connections with the Program of Inquiry. All students at Grove Park Elementary receive Second Language instruction in Spanish once a week for a 30 minute period. Students also practice informal conversation with the Spanish teacher outside the classroom daily as she walks the halls and purposely converses with the children in Spanish by asking them questions.

Common Language

At Grove Park, we not only believe that Host Language and Mother Tongue are important to focus on, but we also strive to use a common IB Language amongst the staff and students. We celebrate the IB Learner Profile monthly and speak of it every day during announcements, so the children become accustomed to hearing the terms and definitions. We also speak of Social and Emotional Learning so the staff, students, and their families can gain insight and practice self awareness. We use visual displays to promote unit-related work, concepts, and terminology for both the students and the parents to see. The Teachers and Administrators all know and speak in common IB terms because at Grove Park, IB is not just a common language, it's a culture.

**Mission Statement from the IB

