



## **Presidential Meadows Elementary**

### **IB PYP Language Policy**

**Revised April 2019**

#### **PME Mission**

Presidential Meadows educates and shapes students by focusing on diversity, academic rigor, and self-reflection to help students become active, compassionate, lifelong learners who take ownership of their environment, respect differences among all people, and are prepared to contribute to a global society.

#### **PME Vision**

Every Eagle, Every Day!

Every student will grow a minimum of one grade level every year in every content area.

At Presidential Meadows, language is fundamental to the success of all student learning. Meaningful learning includes the ability to communicate through all modalities, including speaking, reading and artistic expression; this also includes communication through different languages, including the languages of science, math, and the arts. Language is essential to the construction of meaning and connects all curriculum elements and supports the PYP mission of the school. Literacy instruction is integrated into all units of inquiry by using balanced literacy, authentic assessment, and differentiated instruction that meets the needs of each learner with the aim of building lifelong readers and writers. Through student-centered inquiry, teachers facilitate opportunities to use language in many different formats, including debate, play, and elements of Humanities, as well as the traditional teaching of language both embedded in the units of inquiry and as stand alone subjects. Presidential Meadows understands that every teacher is a language teacher and must work collaboratively to ensure that all languages are

honored, developed, and supported throughout integrated learning experiences in meaningful contexts.

Language is fundamental to learning and permeates the Primary Years Programme.

- The learning process concurrently involves learning language (as students listen to and use language with others in their everyday lives), learning about language (as students try to understand how language works), and learning through language (as students use language as a tool to think about, or reflect on a theme, concept or issue).

Language consists of the interrelated strands of reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and presenting.

In the area of oral communication (listening and speaking) students will learn to:

- listen and respond to a range of texts and to the ideas and opinions of others, improve fluency and accuracy when speaking
- ask and answer questions; relate and retell; persuade; talk about needs, feelings, ideas or opinions; contribute to discussions in a range of formal and informal situations
- recognize their oral language needs to be appropriate to the audience and to the purpose
- communicate orally in more than one language

In the area of written communication (reading and writing) students will learn to:

- read and write for enjoyment, instruction and information
- recognize and appreciate the variety of literary styles, genres and structures; poetry, plays and stories; creative, informative, instructional, persuasive and reflective text
- understand and apply a variety of structures, strategies and literary techniques (spelling, grammar, prediction, plot, character, punctuation, voice)

In the area of visual communication (viewing and presenting) students will learn to:

- understand, critically analyze and communicate information and ideas through a variety of visual media
- make informed choices in their personal viewing experiences
- use appropriate technology for effective presentation and representation

Language is the most significant medium for communication and inquiry.

- Whenever possible, language should be taught through the context of the units of inquiry. The teacher plans language instruction that supports students' inquiries and the sharing of their learning.
- Through meaningful interactions, we communicate with and understand others, the world and ourselves to develop multicultural awareness.

Language is fundamental to learning and is developed across all curricular areas therefore; all teachers are teachers of language.

The school community is a resource to foster language learning. The development of the mother tongue is crucial for maintaining cultural identity.

The acquisition of more than one language enriches personal growth and facilitates international understanding.

- Students will become better able to understand other people's points of view, ways of life, and contributions to the world and extend these learning experiences to multilingual communities at home and around the world.
- Students will reinforce and further their knowledge of other curricular areas through the language classroom.
- Students will examine cultures and analyze similarities and differences through language perspectives other than their own.
- Students will develop effective listening and communication skills beyond their mother language in order to participate effectively in a global community.

Students must be immersed in an environment which enriches their language development.

- Students are surrounded by language and are given many varied opportunities to learn to communicate effectively with an audience, to listen to others, and to respond appropriately.

The IB Learner Profile is integral to teaching and learning language because it represents the qualities of effective learners and internationally minded students. The learner profile, together with the additional four elements of the written curriculum framework of the learning programme (knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and action) informs planning, teaching and assessing in language.

*IB PYP Making the PYP Happen 2009/with enhanced PYP modifications*

### **Identification of Language Needs**

As required by federal and state guidelines, all students enrolled in a Texas school must complete a Home Language Survey indicating the language most often spoken in the home, as well as additional languages spoken. For any student who is not from a home in which English is the primary language, testing must occur to determine the level of ability in English. This information determines whether the student is classified as an English second language learner, and informs the school of the primary language. Any student who is determined to officially be ESL or Bilingual is placed with a teacher who is certified in ESL or Bilingual instruction through the State of Texas Board of Education. Students who test not fluent in English are also given a yearly assessment, the TELPAS, an online state test which determines their progress in the acquisition of the English language. Students who test at the highest level of competency are placed in monitored status to make sure they continue to progress in their abilities.

The campus utilizes a state-required LPAC (Language Proficiency Assessment Committee). The LPAC includes the assistant principal, teacher representative, a parent representative, and other members as appropriate. The purpose of the LPAC is to ensure proper placement of multilingual students and to monitor ongoing progress toward language proficiency.

### **Support for Language Learners**

The classroom environment is rich in print and literature to equip students with the tools they need to become lifelong readers, writers, and communicators. Teachers act as facilitators who model writing, reading strategies, and listening skills.

Presidential Meadows students are encouraged to preserve their cultural identity through the use of their cultural identity through the use of their mother tongue at home and school. Students are also encouraged to share and celebrate their culture and language within their classroom and school learning communities through presentations related to the program of inquiry units and a variety of other formal and informal opportunities. The library houses a collection of books in mother tongue is a language other than English are provided with resources and information necessary to be involved in their child's academic endeavors.

All teachers are certified in ESL/Bilingual and trained to support student development and success using best practices and strategies. Teachers are well informed of their student's language during presentations and collaboration.

### **The Language of Instruction**

Presidential Meadows Elementary strives to promote a language-rich classroom through various literacy activities such as guided reading, read aloud, writer's workshop, content writing, classroom libraries, visuals, interactive word walls and opportunities for students to use language during presentations and collaboration.

Learning is differentiated in the classroom in a variety of ways. Students are individually assessed in their reading ability using data from achievement tests and running records to help target specific learner needs. They participate in balanced literacy strategies, word meaning, word studies, comprehension, and writing strategies to support learning at their level and beyond. The focus of the learning is for the experience to be meaningful, engaging and challenging for each student.

### **Belief Statements K-5:**

- Literacy is power.
- Integrated literacy instruction is relevant and meaningful.
- Success occurs for children when instruction is developmentally appropriate and when a variety of learning styles and rates are addressed.
- The language arts are interrelated and key to all content areas.
- Daily reading and writing are done for a variety of purposes.
- Assessments are diverse and on-going.
- Students become "agents" of their learning.
- Parents, teachers, and children are partners in literacy learning.

Our language arts curriculum combines the five essential components of a scientifically research-based reading program as identified by the National Reading Panel Report in 2000. These components include:

1. **Phonemic Awareness** is the ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words. Before children learn to read print, they need to become aware of how the sounds in words work. They must understand that words are made up of speech sounds or phonemes.
2. **Phonics** instruction teaches children the connection between the letters of written language and the individual sounds of spoken language. It teaches children to use these relationships to read and write words.
3. **Vocabulary** refers to the words we must know to communicate effectively. Vocabulary can be described as oral or reading vocabulary. Oral vocabulary refers to words that we use in speaking or recognize in listening. Reading vocabulary refers to the words we recognize or use in print.
4. **Fluency** is the ability to read a text accurately and quickly. When fluent readers read silently, they recognize words automatically. They group words quickly to help them gain meaning from what they read. Fluent readers read aloud effortlessly and with expression. Their reading sounds natural, as if they are speaking.
5. **Text Comprehension** is the reason for reading. Comprehension is defined as “intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader.”

The writing curriculum includes a balance between grammar, mechanics, and spelling while using the writing process to express ideas. Teachers use a developmental continuum of the six-trait writing model to help students improve their written language.

### **Language and the Program of Inquiry**

Language is integrated throughout the Program of Inquiry. Higher level thinking, key concept questions, and extended research all lend themselves to the development of a strong vocabulary and language presence within the planners. Oral, visual, and written language are all present within planner activities. Literature selections both in read-aloud and guided reading are chosen to build an understanding of the concepts within the planners.

There are daily rotations of integrated specials throughout all PYP grades. This would include the language of visual art, music, PE (movement), and **Spanish** working with classroom teachers to incorporate their specific areas of knowledge and encourage connections with the POI planners.

Language is promoted throughout the building by connecting content with the program of inquiry. Teachers support the development of common language by connecting to the themes, central ideas, lines of inquiry and key concepts in their daily practice.

### **Reaching All Learners**

We believe that curriculum and instruction must be carefully planned to provide for students who need varying levels of intervention and challenge. Students require additional instruction, practice, and extension at different times and in different degrees. Some students need occasional reteaching and slight modifications in pacing, while others are at greater risk and require more intensive intervention. Students with learning difficulties may need more review and practice to perform a new task automatically. Instruction should cumulatively integrate simpler or previously learned tasks with newer, more complex activities.

- Reading difficulties can stem from inaccuracy in identifying words.
- Intervention should be geared toward a student's level of reading development.
- Diagnostic testing results should show what students know and what they need to know; frequent assessment is critical.
- Instruction should be direct and explicit.

We believe that students who already meet or exceed grade-level expectations need opportunities for enrichment or acceleration. They need to be challenged by vocabulary extension study and exposure to sophisticated literature in a variety of genres. Students may also be encouraged to carry out investigations that extend their learning. Such activities should promote sustained investigative skills: raising questions, researching answers, and organizing information. An instructional program that clearly provides for differentiation at a variety of levels can be the tool teachers need to provide universal access to high-level standards.

We believe that assessment is integral to instruction. By choosing the appropriate assessment tools and methods, we can find out where students are instructionally and plan accordingly. Knowing how well a student can use literacy skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking is vital to effective instruction.

- Assessment is the process of collecting information in order to make instructional decisions about students.
- Systematic assessment informs instruction and helps teachers differentiate instruction.
- Assessments for monitoring progress should be used to determine ongoing priorities for instruction.
- Students take responsibility for their individual growth with the support of teachers and parents.
- Student progress needs to be communicated to parents and guardians on a regular basis.

The staff at Presidential Meadows Elementary recognizes the significance of establishing a professional learning community of learners who work collectively to guarantee academic excellence and the development of principled young people who become active, inquiring and compassionate life-long learners.

### **The School's Additional Language**

We have a full time Language and Culture (Spanish) teacher. Students in Kindergarten will receive 25 minutes of direct instruction in the Fall 2019 and work up to 40 min of direct instruction once a week by Spring 2020. First through Fifth grade will receive 45 minutes of

direct instruction once a week. Whenever possible, the approaches to language teaching content with the IB PYP Units of Inquiry and are integrated with other disciplines in the curriculum.

Students acquire language through a focus on meaning. Various strategies are used such as: songs, dances, rhymes, games, Total Physical Response (TPR), etc. Lessons draw on all five aspects of the National Standards: Connection, Culture, Communication, Comparison, and Communities.

### **Policy Review**

The following process will be followed to ensure Presidential Meadow's language policy remains a working document:

- Annually, through collaborative reflective practices, grade level teams will review the language policy, as well as all documents referred to in policy, to ensure accuracy and sustainability
- Policy is updated by the IB coordinator, based upon the feedback of the staff
- Grade level and subject level teams work together throughout the school year to ensure the policy is implemented with fidelity
- Updated language policy is uploaded to the Presidential Meadow's website for community members to access and provide feedback.