NMIS Language Policy

Refer to Policy Number: C-05



The New Mexico International School (NMIS) recognizes the importance of language development as a component of being an internationally-minded person. Multilingualism promotes cognitive development, personal growth and international understanding.

Acquisition of languages is at the core of our beliefs and a component of our mission. At NMIS, students are encouraged to take healthy academic risks to develop their knowledge of language and communication skills in English, Spanish, and Arabic.

It is the school's goal for all NMIS students to become academically multilingual, demonstrating proficiency in English and Spanish basic communication skills in Arabic.

The language model follows a **"One-Way Dual Language Immersion Model,"** immersing children in the Spanish language in the lowest grades, progressively adding more English instruction as detailed in the table below:

Instructional time in each language

Grade Level	Percent of Instruction in English	Percent of Instruction in Spanish	Percent of Instruction in Arabic
Kindergarten and First Grades	10-20%	80-90%	0
Second Grade	25-35%	65-75%	0
Third Grade	40-50%	50-60%	0
Fourth and Fifth Grades	40-50%	50-55%	5-10%
Sixth and up	50-60%	30-40%	5-10%

Roles and Responsibilities:

- All teachers at NMIS are "language teachers" regardless of the subjects they instruct. Teachers at NMIS are appropriately endorsed in Bilingual Education or possess an

appropriate waiver. They employ sheltered instruction techniques to scaffold learning for children who are taught the curriculum in their non-native language.

- The Bilingual Coordinator is responsible for planning and implementing the AVANT assessment of Spanish language acquisition annually.
- The PLT is responsible for evaluating all language assessment data annually and for setting school language learning goals based on those results. The Head of School will provide feedback and give final approval before school language goals are shared with the school community.
- The Bilingual Coordinator and 8th-grade homeroom teacher will collaborate in preparing 8th-grade students to apply for the NMIS Language Seals in April of each school year.
- Language mentors (K-8 teachers) will meet monthly with 8th-grade students to guide students in the application process for the language seals.

Language Assessments and NMIS Language Seals

Spanish as a second language

- Students take the AVANT assessment yearly in Feb-Mar to assess the development of Spanish language proficiency.
    - Students in K-1 are assessed in speaking and listening, while 2nd-8th are assessed in all four domains of proficiency (speaking, listening, reading, and writing)
- Our school goal is that students achieve a composition score of 6 (proficient) or higher by 8th grade so they can qualify to receive the NMIS bilingual or biliteracy seal upon graduation (Click here to view more information regarding the NMIS Language Seals Criteria)

Arabic as a third language

- Students will begin receiving Arabic instruction in 4th grade. This instruction will account for 5-10% of the instructional day in these grade levels.
- Arabic will be taught as a subject in itself. Curricular areas will not be instructed in Arabic.
- Speaking skills in Arabic are assessed annually using AVANT. Our target is for students to score a 4 or higher by the end of 8th grade to be able to qualify to receive the NMIS Trilingual Seal upon graduation (Click here to view more information regarding the NMIS Language Seals Criteria)

Mother Language and ELL Support:

NMIS has the following systems in place to develop students'mother language and identify and support English language Learners (ELLs):

Mother Language Support

- English is the mother language for most NMIS students.
- To the extent that students' native language does not include English, support will be provided via access to reading materials in multiple home languages in the school's library.
- The school will encourage families to continue reading, speaking and writing their mother language in the home.
- Students needing support in English will receive additional support via the school's program of Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS)

Identification of non-Native English speakers needing additional support in English (ELL Students)

- Parents of all students new to NMIS will complete a *Language Usage Survey* to identify if the child is an English Language Learner.
- If the child is identified as an ELL from the *Language Usage Survey*, he/she will be administered an ELL screening tool. If the child scores below the required threshold, he/she will be considered an ELL and so reported to the state.
- ELL students will receive additional English language support from a teacher with appropriate endorsement in Bilingual Education (grades K-6) or Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) (grades 7-8), or appropriate waiver.
- ELL students will be tested annually for English language acquisition. Students must score a composite of 4.7 or higher to exit ELL status.