

Alameda International
International Baccalaureate Programme
Language Policy
MYP, DP and CP



Programme Standards and Practices for all Programmes

- o Standard A.6 → The school promotes open communication based on understanding and respect.
- o Standard A.7. → The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages.
- o Standard B1.5 → The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programmes.
- o Standard C1.8 → Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.
- o Standard C3.7 → Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning a language(s) other than mother tongue.
- o Standard C3.8 → Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.

Philosophy

Language plays an essential role in creating identity affirmation, interpersonal skills, and cognitive growth in our students. Therefore, we believe all teachers must engage in language instruction that develops intercultural awareness and empowers students with proficiency across language domains in the mother tongue, the language of instruction, and beyond. Language comprehension skills are the foundation for understanding in all subject areas and communication skills are crucial to students' ability to apply and express their learning. Therefore, we believe our foremost responsibility is to provide diverse and differentiated instruction that supports student speaking and listening, reading and writing, and research and reasoning skills in all subject areas.

Purpose

To promote language instruction across the curriculum; to engage the school community, including administrators, parents, community members, etc., in the development of students' language profile; to prepare students to embrace the aims and objectives of the IB programme which develops inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people; to provide students with the tools they need to demonstrate high levels of proficiency on district and Colorado Common Core Standards; to encourage students to communicate in a variety of ways in more than one language; to maintain and support the mother tongue; to ensure that students become multilingual learners.

Practice

Instruction

- ❖ Language of instruction
 - English
- ❖ Mother tongue (primarily)
 - English
 - Spanish
 - Vietnamese
- ❖ English specific coursework
 - Language and literature in the MYP (years 2-5)
 - Sheltered/ELL Language and literature (years 2-5)
 - Language and literature in the DP and CP (years 1-2)
- ❖ Spanish specific coursework
 - Heritage Spanish in the MYP (years 2-5)
 - Language and literature in the MYP (years 2-5)
 - Language and literature in the DP and CP (years 1-2)
- ❖ Bilingual/Dual Language coursework (Spanish/English)
 - Mathematics MYP (year 2)
 - Individuals and societies MYP (year 3)
 - Bilingual Medical Terminology in the CP
 - Pathways 2 Teaching (11th grade)
- ❖ Language acquisition coursework
 - Spanish in the MYP (years 2-5)
 - Spanish HL, SL, ab initio in the DP and CP (years 1-2)
 - French in the MYP (years 2-5)
 - Mandarin in the MYP (years 2-5)
 - Mandarin ab initio in the DP and CP (years 1-2)
 - ESL English in the MYP (Years 2-5)
- ❖ Other language opportunities
 - Alameda International offers both the IB Bilingual Diploma and IB Bilingual Certificate options within our programming.
 - Independent language study with language portfolio and advisor CP (years 1-2)
 - Service learning in the CP and CAS can include bilingual language opportunities for community engagement, learning, and service.
 - Students who have additional language needs are supported by ELL tutors within the building who focus on English acquisition.
 - DP students may choose to complete their EE in Spanish in courses where Spanish is the language of instruction.
 - CP students may choose to complete their RP in Spanish in courses where Spanish is the language of instruction.
 - DP and CP students may participate in local professional language and interpretation conferences each fall.

- CP students develop two bilingual school wide health fairs each year and present end of program formal capstone presentations to a panel of community members in two languages.
- All students are eligible to earn the Jeffco Seal of Biliteracy upon meeting district criteria.
- Students have the option of completing their MYP Personal Project and Community Project in their mother tongue.

Placement:

In order to construct a language profile for each student, we use standardized test results (WIDA, ACCESS, CMAS, MAP, PSAT and SAT) to identify the proficiency levels of each student in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. We also use the Phases of Language Acquisition from the MYP to assess and place students in all language acquisition courses across all programs. MYP Language and Literature rubrics are used to assess literacy skills in Spanish. In addition, students new to Jeffco are informally assessed in Spanish for Bilingual and Dual Language courses. We are then able to place students in sheltered classes that support their learning of the language of instruction, and identify multilingual students and provide them with courses that support their development of English, Spanish, Mandarin or French.

Principles of Instruction:

Students receive language instruction from all teachers, in all courses, and the following protocols are maintained in our school community.

- ❖ Students...
 - read, write, and speak in the language of instruction in every course
 - use their mother or strongest languages to process and engage with content in their classes
 - express themselves, orally and in writing, through a variety of media and for a range of different audiences and purposes
 - pursue the study of a language other than the mother tongue
 - apply their skills to a range of academic and social contexts in multiple languages
 - study literature from a variety of cultures
 - use appropriate citation guidelines when referencing researched information
 - reflect on their work
 - develop and pursue their own lines of inquiry
 - have access to support services
 - incorporate their cultural knowledge and background in all areas of learning
 - expand their cultural knowledge in all fields of inquiry
- ❖ Teachers...
 - maintain open, two-way communication with students and parents
 - use translation services provided by Jefferson County Public Schools when communicating with parents or community members who do not speak the language of instruction

- support students' continued use of their mother tongue
- differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners
- teach students through a variety of technological and information resources
- provide opportunities for reading, writing, and oral language development
- instruct students to make valid linguistic choices that consider purpose and audience within the full range of sociocultural and academic contexts they will encounter
- relate new information to existing knowledge
- give relevant, focused, and timely feedback on student's progress
- view the on-going language development of students as the responsibility of all teachers, parents, and students

Planning for Instruction

Teachers work collaboratively on unit planners to develop curriculum that explicitly addresses students' cultural - linguistic needs. The development of units is facilitated by coordinators and subject group leaders who ensure that intentional and explicit literacy instruction is part of every unit at Alameda International. Each MYP unit planner includes a section for differentiation in which teachers can identify how they adapted instruction to meet the needs of language learners in their classes.

The entire instructional staff is also committed to developing the protocol of close reading which improves students' reading, speaking, and critical thinking skills. Teachers ensure that they are incorporating close reading into their classrooms with fidelity by including this strategy in their planning process and by participating in close reading professional development.

Mother Tongue Support

We support the notion that comprehensive use of the mother tongue vastly increases the potential for linguistically and culturally diverse students to be academically successful. Further, we believe that maintaining and continuing to develop students' fluency in the mother tongue is crucial to students valuing their history and culture.

Language and literature classrooms provide a wide variety of multicultural literature, so students can study the works of their own culture, as well as gain exposure to and understanding of cultures other than their own; language and literature classes may include a study of at least one work in translation.

Alameda has two bilingual community liaisons who focus primarily on family engagement and bridging the home/school connection.

District translation services are employed to ensure ongoing communication with families and community members who do not speak English as the mother tongue.

English Language Learners

Students qualify for ELL services when a body of evidence (comprised of home language surveys, school transcripts, and standardized test scores) demonstrates that the student needs additional supports in their acquisition of English. The ELL program at Alameda provides English Language Acquisition classes for students who are Non-English Proficient (NEP) and sheltered classes for students who have been identified as NEP or Limited-English Proficient (LEP). Sheltered courses are available in the following subject groups: Language and literature, Individuals and societies, Mathematics and Science.

Language instruction in ELL classes is guided by the following principles:

- ❖ Instruction should be organized to maximize students' ability to take what they know in one language and express it through the other
- ❖ Second language instruction must be organized to provide students the time, experiences, and opportunities they need to fully develop academic language proficiency
- ❖ All students can meet rigorous standards when they are provided a high level of content that is differentiated according to their proficiency levels, as determined by English language development standards and appropriate assessments
- ❖ Socio-cultural factors and political context must be considered in making decisions regarding every aspect of program planning
- ❖ Instruction must be organized to help students understand and respect themselves and their own culture as well as the cultures of the broader society

Dyslexia Support Program (Bright MINDS)

Alameda International's *Enhanced Dyslexia Support Program* empowers bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related language-based learning differences. Explicit, systematic, and intensive reading instruction, along with building-wide systems of support, are used to help students overcome obstacles to learning and thus more fully achieve their potential, resulting in enhanced feelings of academic and personal success. Direct, individualized instruction and support in the areas of writing and executive functioning (e.g., study skills, planning and organization, task initiation/monitoring/completion) are also provided to students, serving to complement and reinforce the benefits of specialized reading instruction.

Academic interventions and support are provided to ensure that language skill challenges do not prevent students from reaching their full potential. These include:

- ❖ Direct instruction in reading and writing
- ❖ Explicit instruction in executive functioning skills
- ❖ Social-emotional supports/self-advocacy skills
- ❖ Individualized accommodations to meet students' unique needs
- ❖ Organizational strategies (e.g., a color-coded notebook, folder system)
- ❖ Students meet every day at Homebase with their literacy teacher for homework help and advisory support

Policy Review Process:

A steering committee will review the language policy annually. It will be revised as needed to reflect current best practices. Once the policy has been reviewed and revised by the steering committee, it will be shared with the programme pedagogical leadership teams for final notes and feedback. Upon completion, the policies will be shared with all stakeholders.

All policies will be published on the school website where they can be accessed by students and community members.

Language Steering Committee:

Erin Murphy: MYP Coordinator
Steve Houwen: CP Coordinator
Merinda Sautel: DP Coordinator
Chris Curtis: EE Coordinator
Rachel Fisher: MYP Coordinator
Roya Juracek: ELL Coach
Cate Orive: CP Language Portfolio Coordinator
Todd Ognibene: Bright Minds Coordinator

Relevant Acronyms:

MYP – Middle Years Programme
DP – Diploma Programme
CP – Career related Programme
ELL – English Language Learner
SL – Standard level
HL – Higher level
CAS – Creativity, activity and service
EE – Extended essay
RP – Reflective project
Bright MINDS - **M**ultisensory **I**ntensive **D**yslexia **S**upport Program

Works Cited

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