



Seaquam Secondary School – Language Policy

Philosophy

Language plays an essential role in creating identity, promoting interpersonal skills, developing new enduring understandings, and accessing information. We believe all teachers must engage in language instruction that develops intercultural awareness and empowers students with proficiency across language domains while respecting the continuous development of mother tongue. 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. Language permeates all subject disciplines and provides a connection between aspects of curriculum. We believe our responsibility as a school is to provide diversified and differentiated language instruction that supports student speaking and listening, reading and writing, and research and reasoning skills in all subject areas. Language learning through inquiry is not only learning language, but also learning about language and through language.

Purpose

To promote language instruction across the curriculum by engaging the school community (students, teachers, administrators, parents, community members, etc.) in the development of students' language skills. In addition, to prepare students to fulfill the aims and objectives of the IB Diploma Programme which develops inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring individuals. Students are encouraged to communicate in a variety of ways and in more than one language, while maintaining and supporting the mother tongue proficiency.

Our Practice

English is the primary language of instruction. Second languages offered include French, Spanish and Japanese. French as a second language is introduced in grade eight to students building on previous knowledge acquired in grades 5-7. A portion of our students have completed Early French Immersion (grades K-7) and are advanced in their French language learning. These students continue their language learning at the grade 9 level. Spanish and Japanese instruction begin in grade 9. Seaquam also has a diverse population of students, many of which have international origins, and we offer programming to support the language needs of students whose first language is other than English through our ELL program. Many students choose to challenge provincial language examinations for graduation course credit in their mother tongue language as well.

We recognize that each discipline has a unique language as well. Learning about, through and with language in the context of each subject discipline helps students develop multiple

literacies. Developing literacy and fluency with language comprises a significant portion of each student's day. Students engage in literacy activities to foster literacy independence and growth. Reading and writing for the self and others provides balance in literacy instruction.

Mother Tongue Support

The 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 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.

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 (ELL)

ELL support is available for students whose first language is not English. Students qualify for ELL support based on their number of years of English language learning (levels 1 – 5), in combination with language testing to determine their proficiency level. Additional support is also available through a scheduled ELL support block in a student's timetable, as well as ongoing support through the Delta School District International Programs to promote English language learning.

Examples of how language learning is integrated follows:

- Reading
 1. Biographies
 2. Fiction / Non-fiction
 3. Novel Studies
 4. Factual Accounts
 5. Read aloud
 6. Comics and graphic novels
 7. Newspaper and Magazine articles
 8. Stories in French
 9. Sustained independent reading
 10. Guided Reading
 11. Subject specific content reading
 12. Reader's theatre
- Writing
 1. Writer's workshop
 2. Vocabulary development
 3. Word work – structure of language
 4. Writing to express ideas, communicate thoughts, record keep and plan in subject areas.

5. Journals
 6. Essay preparation and writing to demonstrate language development
- Speaking and Listening
 1. Theatre performances
 2. Assemblies
 3. Listening to reading
 4. Drama classes
 5. Group work (large, small, partner)
 6. Presentations – individual, group, informal and formal
 7. Body language/social skills

Best Practices in Language Instruction

Language learning is focused on making meaningful connections; thus, communication takes precedence over rote memorization strategies. At our school many teachers have received training in teaching reading to secondary students within subject disciplines. This framework is a selection of instructional strategies that focuses on comprehension and transference skills.

Reading Instructional Strategies include:

- Accessing background knowledge
- Graphic Organizers
- Guided reading
- Independent reading
- Literature circles
- Questioning and making inferences

Writing Instructional Strategies include:

- Modeled writing
- Interactive writing and editing
- Guided writing
- Outlining
- Independent writing with conferences
- Scaffolding
- Reflecting

How do we identify student needs?

Our teachers believe that quality assessments inform teaching practice. As a result, frequent assessment is necessary to determine individual student needs and provide guidance for instruction. Assessments can be formal and informal and may involve pre-assessment, formative assessment and summative assessment.

- Informal reading inventories
- Interest surveys
- Reading and writing conversation
- Student surveys
- Anecdotal notes
- Collegial conversations with other staff members
- Work samples

- Teacher developed criteria

How will we support struggling learners?

- Individualized Education Plans (IEP) are established with school counselor, classroom teacher, learning support teacher and parents
- Intervention plans are developed for students with some needs but not coded
- Differentiated Strategies
- Use of District specialist when available
- Homework Club

How will we meet the needs of advanced learners?

- Selection of engaging reading resources
- Differentiation
- Extension/Enrichment opportunities
- Access to a K-12 literature rich library
- Cross grade activities
- Challenge courses
- Placement in classes above grade level

Adaptations related to assessment strategies

- granting of extra time
- the use of alternative forms of assessment such as oral interview
- learning logs
- portfolios
- the use of simplified language and instructions

How can we involve parents in language acquisition?

- Parent information evenings
- Handouts, newsletters home
- Encourage and support the importance of reading at home with home reading program

Library and Media Resources

Current printed material, audio-visual and information technology are integral resources to support language learning.

Language policy review

The language policy will be reviewed annually, at the commencement of each school year to ensure it meets the needs of language learners and reflects the changing views of the whole community.

*Reviewed November 2025