

Language Policy ([Español](#))

Introduction

International Baccalaureate (IB) World schools are required to create a written Language Policy. The purpose of this document is to inform teaching and learning in the classroom, to guide curriculum and to involve families in our goal to educate children in an internationally-minded environment.

EK Powe Elementary School recognizes that, since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication. This includes the ability to communicate through world languages as well as oral, auditory, visual and written languages as it demonstrates proficiency in specific academic disciplines. This document outlines the philosophy and practice of language instruction at EK Powe Elementary School and demonstrates how we support our students' acquisition of our language of instruction (English), and our World Languages: Spanish, French and Mandarin. It also shows how EK Powe Elementary School supports the continued use of a student's mother tongue (the language spoken at home).

Philosophy:

We recognize all teachers are language teachers and language is a primary means of learning and communicating. A student's language acquisition is to be promoted as a partnership between all members of our community including parents, students, teachers and staff. Furthermore, a student's Mother tongue language helps to form cultural and personal identity and should be respected. The shared experience of learning a language creates cohesion among students from diverse backgrounds and promotes international-mindedness. Learning world languages is an integral part of becoming a global citizen.

Language Profile:

EK Powe Elementary School has a population of 433 students. 87 have a Mother Tongue other than English. Languages spoken by students at school include Afghani, Amharic, Arabic, Burmese, Chatino, Farsi, Haitian, Kinyarwanda, Kurdish, Russian, Spanish, Swahili and Tagalog. Along with our English Language students, several faculty and staff members have a mother tongue other than English. Including Arabic, Spanish and Tagalong.

Aims:

All EK Powe teachers, staff, parents and students work to:

- Enable students to learn and use language confidently in a variety of contexts.

- Increase students' powers of written, oral, visual and auditory communication through international assessment.
- Promote student understanding and enjoyment of literature.
- Allow students to explore different perspectives through language.
- Encourage students to have fun and express themselves through language.

Support of Mother Tongue Languages:

- District bulletins, websites and other publications are available in other world languages besides English.
- The school has access to interpreters of several world languages to help facilitate conversations via phone and in person.
- The library includes materials that support continued use of the Mother Tongue.
- Parents are offered language support, through Durham Public Schools district, to learn English to be able to help their students, too.

Support of the Language of Instruction:

English is the Language of Instruction at EK Powe Elementary School. EK Powe will support students with Limited English Proficiency in language acquisition in the following ways:

- Small group instruction with a Highly Qualified English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher.
- Push-in support during Literacy classes.
- Yearly assessment beginning in Kindergarten using the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs 2.0). This assessment is North Carolina's required assessment that complies with Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) legislation.
- Distinct instructional techniques used in all classes to scaffold the acquisition of vocabulary and concepts central to learning by providing visual cues, collaborative learning experiences, and consistent assessment of prior knowledge.

EK Powe Elementary School will support all students in language acquisition in the following ways:

- Implementing reading and writing strategies across the curriculum.
- Selecting and providing access to literature from a variety of cultural backgrounds from all over the world.
- Providing multiple opportunities at all levels of instruction for students to write in a variety of genres.
- Allowing students ample choice in their reading materials and encouraging reading for enjoyment.
- Providing differentiated instruction for students with special needs, including students with learning disabilities and students who are academically gifted.
- Assessing students formally and informally in the classroom using check-ins, writing prompts, reading comprehension checks, reading skills assessments, and visual assessments such as mind maps and graphic organizers.
- Participating in the beginning, middle and end of the year state assessments as well as Read to Achieve assessments.

Support for Global Languages:

E.K. Powe will offer French, Spanish and Mandarin languages to all K-5 students. Students will have a daily language for 30 minutes. K-1 will rotate through all the languages (12 weeks at a time) during the year. By the end of first grade, students will choose which language they would like to continue learning and will have that language daily from 2nd-5th grade. By the end of 5th grade, students will be able to converse in another language. In the Global Language program's initial year, all students will rotate through each language for 12 weeks before choosing a language to pursue from 2nd grade and up.

Parent Support for Language:

- Parents are encouraged to nurture their student's language development at home through homework assignments and suggestions from grade level newsletters.
- All parent communication from the school is sent home in English and Spanish.

- Parents may be asked to read with or listen to their student read, discuss concepts to check for understanding, and encourage oral communication.

Ongoing Review of the Language Policy

This policy will be formally reviewed yearly by EK Powe staff and revised as needed to adapt to changing best practices and the needs of our learning community. This policy is available to all stakeholders in the EK Powe learning community, and the school leadership welcomes comments and recommendations at any time.