Kavod MYP Language Policy

Kavod Middle School Language Policy

Language is a medium of inquiry and is central to each student's intellectual, social and emotional development. Language plays an essential role in all learning areas and is the major connecting element across the curriculum. Language is seen as involving
(1) Learning language itself
(2) Learning about language
(3) Learning through language.

Kavod's Language Mission - Kavod is committed to the development and daily use of multiple languages for our students as we strongly believe that this aids in the development of intercultural awareness and open-mindedness. A fostering of language acquisition, through the model of additive trilingualism, aids in the development of intercultural awareness, thinking skills, communication and self-identity.
Equally, in a school environment where different languages could be spoken, we believe that the primary use of a common language is essential to ensure inclusion for all and to enhance understanding of the many different cultures represented. At Kavod Middle School, the common language is English, through information in Hebrew and Spanish, two languages all Kavod students study, are also used widely in communication to all stakeholders in our community.

1. Principles of Language Learning

Language learning at Kavod is underpinned by the following principles

·   Language is the major connecting element across the curriculum.
·   Language can be seen to develop along a continuum of learning from the earliest stages of language acquisition through to high level proficiency as a 'native speaker'
·   Language is used to construct meaning and deepen our understanding of the myriad cultures of the world.

There are many ways to convey meaning such as through writing, the arts, technology and verbally.
·   Students learn best when they are actively involved in listening, speaking, viewing, presenting, reading and writing.
·   The four dimensions of activating prior learning, scaffolding meaning, extending language and affirming identity promote learner participation and engagement in all subject areas
·   Language is best learned in an authentic context using meaningful and engaging language tasks.
·   Language is used differently in different contexts and an understanding of how to match our language choices to a situation is essential to success in a society driven by communication.
·   Our approach to language at Kavod underpins our identity as an international school.
·   All teachers are teachers of language and, as such, need to teach their students explicitly how to engage with the language conventions and vocabulary of their subject area.
·   Maintaining a student's mother tongue promotes successful academic and cognitive development.
·   Learning a second and third language is beneficial to cognitive development and will help students become more open-minded and better communicators.
·   The use of technology plays a role in language learning and communication.
·   Learning Hebrew and Spanish, the languages required at Kavod, are required as a means to successfully interact with the wider community, extend thinking and communication skills as well and demonstrate respect.
·   Language acquisition at Kavod is cultivated using the Language Proficiency Based Approach
·   utilize 21st century skills as they develop their linguistic and cultural competencies;
·   apply language skills to authentic tasks
·   connect and engage meaningfully with the local and global communities through their own personal lens.

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2. Design Principles in Action

2a. Maintaining a Language Profile
The school maintains data, accessible to teachers and school leaders, which informs planning for teaching and learning by showing the language profile of each individual learner, of the community as a whole, and of various subsets of that community.
These data are maintained and made accessible through the Language department and through biannual MAP testing, along with our ELL team which works through student services.

2b. Language Pathways
The school ensures planning for coherent language pathways to support both language acquisition and the development of mother tongue as follows:
Language Acquisition
· Hebrew
· Spanish

Starting in the Kindergarten students are exposed to the Hebrew language and, as possible Spanish, and culture within the context of an inquiry-based program. At this level the focus is on cultural identity, learning about language and learning through language. There is less emphasis on the actual learning 'of' language.

From TK-5th Hebrew is infused throughout the day. It is taught daily as a mandated subject, used in morning meetings, P.E, and social studies. Spanish is provided as possible on an enrichment basis.

Beginning in the MYP program, and as possible in the elementary program, Kavod offers two levels of Hebrew and Spanish language courses as a core component of the taught curriculum. The focus of these classes is to develop an appreciation and understanding of the respective cultures, to learn about and through language in addition to the actual learning of the language itself.

The key features of the MYP Hebrew and Spanish language acquisition classes are as follows:
1. All students are required to take Hebrew and Spanish, in addition to the core Language and Literature taught in English.
2. Kavod is working toward having a minimum of two levels of language acquisition, to allow for flexible readiness-based groupings at an age appropriate level. Consequently, classes will cater for language needs ranging from complete beginners through to advanced additional language learning.

3. English
The language of instruction at Kavod is English and in order to have the best possible chance of success Kavod strives to develop English language capacity to near-native level as far as is reasonably possible. In a community with such a diverse language profile, the reality is that classrooms contain many students for whom English is an additional language. To that extent, English language acquisition is the responsibility of all teachers at school.

A whole-school approach to English Language Learners is promoted through the ELL strand of the Student Services department.

The key features of this provision are as follows:
(1) Students are tested on their language ability after a parental survey reveals the students Mother Tongue. Once a proficiency level is reached, Kavod begins placement to ensure ELL support.
(2) In the MYP, a model of push-in and pull-out ELL support delivered by support teachers is supplemented by teacher

assistants (TA's) who, under the explicit direction of the class teacher, share a role in supporting the individual learning needs of students identified by the student services department.

(3) Students who are deemed to be capable of achieving success in the curriculum with additional support as an ELL learner may have support provided on a case by case basis through the student services department. Once a student reaches a close approximation to native fluency, supports are assessments are re-examined to determine if continual ELL support is necessary.

4. Languages other than Hebrew, Spanish and English

The school does not offer languages other than Hebrew, Spanish and English as a language course, though clubs promoting additional language may appear in the future.

5. First Language Development/Mother Tongue

English

The language of instruction is English and English is a core component of the curriculum at all levels of the school. The curriculum is fully resourced with L1 texts and other materials. A majority of instructional staff are L1 speakers of English.

Hebrew and as a second language is offered to all students. Differentiation between advanced and approaching occurs from Grade 2 through Grade 8. All Hebrew courses are taught by native speakers of Hebrew. The curriculum is framed within the concept-based context of the IB program.

Mother Tongue Development

Kavod is committed to promoting the mother tongue development for all learners, regardless of their language profile. This challenge is particularly acute where the mother tongue is not taught within the Kavod curriculum (i.e. languages other than English, Hebrew and Spanish).

Kavod supports parents and learners as follows:

(1) Providing opportunities for students to use mother tongue in contextually appropriate ways (i.e. a manner that promotes both learning and inclusivity) within the curriculum and wider life of the school

(2) Providing opportunities to celebrate and share the linguistic diversity of the community (for example through internationalized and language-rich themes within and beyond the curriculum)

(3) Supporting parents in providing for a language- rich environment at home and during vacations, and advising parents on the ways in which additive multilingualism can be supported through the family

6. Daily Language Use at Kavod

Language use on campus or at any Kavod Middle School event/activity is underpinned by three core drivers as follows:

(1 The language of instruction at Kavod is English. This means that the language used to access the curriculum will be English. (note- this is with the obvious exception of language classes which will be founded in the target language)

(2) The community language is English, though Hebrew and Spanish are provided in all major messages to all stakeholders. This means that all staff, students and parents are asked to use English, Hebrew or Spanish as the shared language for communication and collaboration in and out of class.

(3) Points (1) and (2) notwithstanding, in the support of the development of additive trilingual development and of healthy student self-identity, Kavod celebrates the diverse linguistic profile of our school. Consequently, the use of additional languages other than English, Hebrew and Spanish are encouraged provided that the intention is to promote learning and enhance inclusivity. *Language choices which hinder learning, or which have the result of making others feel excluded are not acceptable.*

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Roles and Responsibilities-
7. Role of Administrators at Kavod
(1) Promote and uphold this language policy, ensuring for its timely review to provide for alignment to the school mission, current best practices and other applicable policies
(2) Share responsibility for oversight, implementation and revision of the Language Policy and curriculum efforts with coordinators, teachers, parents and staff
(3) Provide a variety of professional development opportunities to better enable teachers to be effective instructors of students with a range of language proficiencies, to include ensuring that all teachers who do not currently hold an acceptable training qualification for teaching in an ELL environment receive this within a reasonable timeframe

8.Role of Faculty at Kavod
(1) Promote and uphold this language policy
(2) Acquire a professional knowledge base in second language acquisition processes, students'
developmental language behaviors, and familiarity with students' language learning cognitive styles. For example:
a. Integrate language instruction within the content of the curriculum
b. Create classroom environments that are discourse-rich and process-oriented (plentiful
opportunities for students to listen to, read, speak, and write through interactive activities).
c. Support and encourage language self-assessment.
d. Give ongoing feedback to students on their linguistic and cognitive development by using a
variety of balanced assessment strategies.
e. Where possible, differentiate tasks and expectations to suit students' language levels.
f. Hold high linguistic and academic expectations for all students.
g. Emulate dispositions for life in an international world (i.e. tolerance for ambiguity, empathy,
flexibility, respect for others' languages and cultures).
h. Integrate appropriate technology that enhances language development.
i. Select resources that are linguistically accessible and culturally inclusive.
j. Teach English language skills for social interaction.

9. Role of Staff at Kavod
The staff plays an important role in modeling the use of English, Hebrew and Spanish as the language of common communication on campus. They are expected to:
(1) Use English, Hebrew, or Spanish as the primary language of communication
(2) Facilitate communication with parents, visitors and contracted staff whose first language may not be English.
(3) Facilitate communication with students who are beginning English speakers.

10. Role of Parents at Kavod
A number of parental actions will facilitate linguistic and academic success for students. Families are encouraged to:
(1) Have a positive attitude toward both English and home language.
(2) Promote the advantages of learning other languages.
(3) Maintain mother tongue literacy skills in the home or afterschool.
(4) Encourage and support their child's additional language acquisition.
(5) Communicate with other parents to exchange ideas and reduce linguistic isolation.
(6) Support the expectation that students use English as the language of learning and social interaction
on campus.
(7) Supply multilingual materials in the home.
(8) Be knowledgeable about language-immersion in order to support the school's efforts.

11. Role of Students at Kavod

Students are the prime owners of the language policy as it exists to serve them as learners and global citizens. Students are expected to

(1) Promote and uphold this language policy

(2) Foster and develop language competency in at least three languages, ensuring that due care, attention and value is given to their mother tongue

(3) Make language choices which promote inclusion as follows:

a. Recognize that the language of instruction is English and make language choices as appropriate in lessons

b. Recognize that the community language is English, Hebrew and Spanish and make language choices as appropriate outside of lessons

c. Recognize and value additional languages by using these in a manner which promotes learning and inclusivity. This means avoiding language choices which have the result of excluding others.

d. Always try their best to acquire the languages