**Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School Language Policy 2020-2021**

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**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 the curriculum and to involve families in our goal to educate children in an internationally-minded environment. This document outlines the philosophy and practice of language instruction at Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School and demonstrates how Joseph A. McNeil supports students' acquisition of our language of instruction (English), our World Language (Spanish). It also shows how Joseph A. McNeil Elementary School supports the continued use of a student's mother tongue (the language is spoken at home).

**Philosophy**

The Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School language program is designed to assist students in acquiring and refining their linguistic skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century. This goal is achieved by employing the IB Language Aims and objectives as well as our districts guiding principles and state-mandated standards to our instructional practices. Students are encouraged to use written language in authentic contexts as a means for expressing themselves powerfully, purposefully and creatively while reflecting on their lives, as well as connecting with the world. All International Baccalaureate students are encouraged to embody the Learner Profile Attributes to become lifelong learners who realize that they have a role in creating a better and more peaceful world. In all classes, students read, speak, write, listen, and view authentic realia in a variety of ways. Utilizing the Inquiry-based approach of the IB curriculum frameworks, students explore language and become communicators in a multilingual world.

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

**Scope and Sequence**:

* The language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are developed with a close alignment to the PYP language scope and sequence.
* The teaching and learning of language throughout each unit of the programme of inquiry in both the language of instruction and the mother tongue language to the best of our ability
* The development of critical understanding and use of language to construct meaning and higher-level thinking skills.
* Weekly Spanish language instruction in grades 1-6.
* English Language Development (ELD) support integrated throughout the curriculum using the primary test as well as supplemental materials
* We have collaborated with teachers, administration, and experts in the field to create a policy that meets both IBO and state/national standards

**Instruction and Assessment in Language Literature**

By participating in language instruction, students explore the fundamental concepts and analyzing text. Through literacy-based inquiry methods, students will locate, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to create new knowledge, another critical aspect of Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School language instruction is the acquisition and application of listening and speaking skills in order to enhance comprehension and communication.

In order to provide students with an authentic and diverse language and literature learning experience, teachers will:

* Use the PYP aims and objectives as best practices
* Instruct with Reading/Writing methodologies where appropriate
* Facilitate reading in all subject areas
* Provide cross-curricular connections between texts when available
* Utilize a variety of texts and media including global works and perspectives
* Group students based on interest, ability, and data
* Use formative and summative assessments to drive instruction
* Design reading/writing instruction with authentic summative assessments
* Provide opportunities for students to take action within the larger community
* Focus on multiple learning experiences
* Provide opportunities to increase intercultural awareness through language instruction

**Instruction and Assessment in Language Acquisition**

Becoming culturally and linguistically proficient in one or more languages is the essence of Language Acquisition instruction for Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School. However, the acquisition of language is seen as a continuum along which each individual student progresses.

Classroom Instruction:

* The development of critical understanding, as well as the use of language to construct meaning and higher-level critical thinking skills, are important goals of our language instruction.
* Teachers integrate all disciplines into the Units of Inquiry to provide transdisciplinary teaching and learning throughout the day
* Language is taught and practiced throughout each curricular area throughout the day by all teachers.
* Inquiry-based learning of language is encouraged
* Teachers are expected to provide a print-rich environment, teach with best practices, use a variety of strategies, and differentiate for all students.

ELD (English Language Development) Instruction:

* Students who qualify as English Language Learners (ELLs) are given English language instruction at their level every day.
* Teachers use the ELD component from the Wonders Program.
* They have also been trained in the use of academic vocabulary, sentence frames, Thinking Maps, and precision partnering.
* ELL students are assessed using the guidelines in our assessment policy.

**Language Assessment**

* The learning and assessment of our language program are based on oral (listening and speaking), written (reading and writing), and visual communication (viewing and presenting) strands, and district benchmarks.
* Throughout instruction, the teacher will establish a language skill level to create an appropriate language learning plan for the students.
* A range of assessment strategies and tools are used based on our assessment policy.
* A range of appropriate assessment methods such as portfolios, conferencing, writing sample analysis, writing a journal, writing prompt, self and peer assessment is used.
* All teachers consider language development in their planning and assessing and support language acquisition in their teaching

**Language Profile:**

The primary language of instruction for Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School is English. Through schoolwide direct instruction, students develop the fluency and literacy skills necessary to ensure their ability to communicate effectively. As required by the State of New York, the Next Generation Learning Standards are implemented in all grades.

In the 2018-2019 school year, Joseph A. McNeil has a population of approximately 600 students. Nearly 300 have a Mother Tongue other than English. Languages spoken by students at school include Spanish.

**Aims:**

All Joseph A. McNeil 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 and oral communication through intentional 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.
* Bilingual Education
* FLES Education (Foreign language in Elementary Schools)
* ENL (English as a New Language)
* ESL (English as a Second language)

**Support of Mother Tongue Languages**

At Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School, we support our families whose native languages are not English. We encourage our parents and students to speak and develop their mother tongue at home. This strengthens the child's language skill while instilling a sense of importance about his/her culture. Furthermore, we aim to support students and families in the maintenance and development of both. Accommodations are made for students needing additional language support. Students acquiring English as a new language participate in ESL support-based instruction in order to expedite English language learning, enhance acculturation, and to receive the support that helps foster success in general education classes.

* District bulletins, websites and other publications are available in Spanish.
* The school has access via telephone to translators in the languages mentioned above.
* Building communications are translated in-house into Spanish, our most common Mother Tongue aside from English.
* The library includes materials the support continued use of the mother tongue.

**Support of the Language of Instruction**

English is the Language of Instruction at Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School. All educators are responsible for the development of student language. Therefore, teachers, administrators, and support staff will engage in ongoing professional development to continue to improve literacy instruction.

Students are supported in language development by holistic instruction through inquiry-based instruction. Differentiated practices are noted in instructional units to meet diverse learning needs.

Joseph A. McNeil Elementary School will support students with Limited English Proficiency in language acquisition in the following ways:

* Daily pull-out and push-in small group instruction with a Highly Qualified English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher.
* Yearly assessment beginning in Grade one using the New York State English Language Proficiency Assessment to monitor language development progress. (NYSESLAT)
* Sheltered Instruction in all classes to scaffold acquisition of vocabulary and concepts central to learning by providing visual cues, collaborative learning experiences and consistent assessment of prior knowledge.

Joseph A. McNeil 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.
* Assessing students formally and informally in the classroom using check-ins, writing prompts, reading comprehension checks, reading skills assessments, speeches, and essays.
* Participating in the iReady Assessment of Knowledge and Skills for Reading each year.

**Support of** **Joseph A. McNeil 's Adopted Second Language**

 Joseph A. McNeil 's chosen second language is Spanish

The scope and sequence of language acquisition will reflect and support Units of Inquiry where applicable and relevant. Each language instructor will encourage a continuum of language development beyond the IB Primary Years Program of language acquisition and exploration. The students will be prompted to use multilingualism as a tool to foster global awareness and agency beyond their local community

The Language Program will also yield opportunities for sharpening the IB Learner Profile Attributes. Students will determine the proper words, tone, and attitude to use when communicating as a knowledgeable and open-minded thinker. They will develop a vocabulary that will help them express responsibly and carefully.

Extensions of the program will include FLES Instruction and Bilingual Instruction. Multicultural exploration will take place throughout the school year. During the language of acquisition instruction, instructors will provide an in-depth study of the peoples who speak the language being acquired.

  Grade 1-6:

* Students receive instruction in Spanish from a Highly Qualified teacher (FLES) for approximately 35-40 minutes once per week.
* Spanish instruction is tied to the PYP Programme of Inquiry, with students learning vocabulary and concepts connected to their current unit of inquiry.
* Teachers support Spanish (2nd language) in classrooms (labels, Google translate, books, and other technologies).

**Ongoing Review of the Language Policy**

This policy will be formally reviewed yearly by Joseph A. McNeil IB committee 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 Joseph A. McNeil Learning Community, and the school leadership welcomes comments and recommendations at any time.

**Definitions**

* Mother Tongue: The language that the student uses at home. In some cases, that is not English.
* Language A: The primary language of the school, and most likely considered the language of operation in the general education classes.
* Language B: The language that is considered foreign to the learner. There is no indication of fluency in this language, and the student is acquiring it.
* Language Acquisition: The process of developing Language B. Increasing vocabulary, syntax, and word distribution to communicate. The continuum of attaining fluency of a second language.
* Word Languages: Language is other than the mother tongue.
* ELL/MLL: English Language Learners/Multi-Lingual Learner Student that enters the learning community without having English as their primary language.
* ENL: English as a New Language: A program to support language acquisition for students who need to acquire English as a working language.
* FLES: Foreign Language acquisition program for Elementary Schools.
* Bilingual: Speaking and learning fluently in two languages. Expand upon this due to the large population of students who do not speak English for their first language
* Language of Instruction: The language used to instruct the student due to their level of competency. For the vast majority, the language used is the language that is primarily spoken in the student’s home. If the mother tongue is English, the student is taught in English. If the mother tongue is Spanish, the student will receive instruction in Spanish and English when in bilingual classes if the student is not able to speak English.

The following Language Policies were used as a guide to craft The Joseph A. McNeil IB PYP Candidate Elementary School Language Policy: *International School of Paris, and Rungta International School.*

* *School Philosophy*
* *Primary-Years Language Policy*
* *Procedures for Diverse Learners in the PYP Programme*
* *Primary Years Programme Assessment Policy*

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