



IB MYP Language Policy Lexington Middle School

Philosophy

At Lexington Middle School, all courses provide students access to instruction in formal, academic language, as it is fundamental to learning, thinking, and communicating. We value language as central to critical thinking. We consider all teachers to be language teachers and therefore responsible for providing opportunities for students to use language to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to be communicators with an intercultural understanding and respect.

Language and Literature

Our Language and Literature courses are limited to English as the language of instruction of the school, since students must meet English language requirements provided by the state standards. The development of Language and Literature is important as it allows students to make connections within and across subject areas, facilitated by *Global Contexts*.

In the past, all students were required to take two courses in Language and Literature. All students had to take Language Arts, with a central focus on literature analysis and writing. In addition, all students were enrolled in a Reading class, with a central focus on reading and responding to informational text, as well as literature. Students who scored a level 1 on the state reading test were placed in Intensive Reading classes which offered extended time, a double block, for learning. Students who scored a 3, 4, or 5 were placed in Critical Thinking reading classes for a normal block of class, every other day. Students who scored a level 2 could either be placed in an Intensive Reading class or a Critical Thinking class, depending on their academic history and needs.

For the 2015-2016 school year, Lexington will be implementing an English Language Arts (ELA) block class which students will receive every day. Students with insufficient scores on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) will be placed in an additional Intensive Reading class. This will provide a better alignment to our state standards.

The Language Arts and Reading departments work together to promote and develop the MYP Language and Literature objectives as well as the Language Arts Florida Standards(LAFS). Both the MYP objectives and the LAFS align to develop critical, creative and personal approaches to studying

and analyzing literary and non-literary texts. Skills are developed that involve listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting in a variety of contexts. Language is used as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning, self-expression, analysis and social interaction.

Skills that are developed in Language and Literature classes are also supported and taught in content area classrooms. All teachers are responsible for providing opportunities to explore language through a variety of media and modes and engage and develop language skills with a variety of texts.

The media center offers over 12,000 titles to encourage language development and include a variety of books celebrating ethnic diversity and cultures around the world.

We have approximately 300 fiction and non-fiction titles in Spanish and 24 titles in Haitian/Creole. We also have dictionaries to support language in over 10 different languages.

Language Acquisition

The importance of students becoming culturally and linguistically proficient in a second language is recognized as a vital part of a student's overall development. All students are enrolled in Spanish (Language Acquisition) unless they are required by the state of Florida to take intensive reading courses due to low performance on state assessed standards. Spanish is offered as a yearlong course in years 1, 2, and 3. Not every student will reach the same level of language proficiency at the same time, therefore, a continuum of Spanish courses are offered that meet both the developing academic and social needs of all learners in order for all students to achieve his or her personal best. Lexington offers a Latin Jazz Band and Spanish Club, and students participate in the district's Foreign Language Fair and Quiz Bowl.

Students receive instruction using an interactive approach that integrates the skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing. Emphasis is placed on grammatical structures and vocabulary development which helps students to become effective communicators in a multi-lingual world. International understanding, cultural awareness, and historical knowledge are enhanced through the study of customs, traditions, songs, and everyday life in Spanish speaking countries throughout the world.

Intensive Reading

Students who are not proficient at Language Arts Florida Standards (LAFS) are required to take a double block of Intensive Reading. In previous years, this was determined by scoring a level 1 or level 2 on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). 2015 is the first year Florida will be using the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) to determine proficiency. At this date, a proficiency score has yet to be determined. These classes are designed to increase the student's specific reading needs- decoding skills, fluency, and/or comprehension of text - in order to achieve higher levels of success. Students use several reading programs including *Inside, Collections, and Teen-biz (Achieve 3000)* online informational text reading program.

Mother Tongue Support

The mother tongue of the majority of students at Lexington is English, which is also the language of instruction. However, within our student population there are bilingual students, including those whose home language is a language other than English.

Upon enrollment, all students are administered a Limited English Proficiency Survey Questionnaire to determine eligibility services. Students have access to all programs and services that all native-born students have available to them. All students identified whose primary language is a language other than English must be referred to the English Speakers of Other Languages Program (ESOL) for English Language Proficiency Assessment and program placement as needed.

Included in our multilingual, multicultural staff are speakers of several languages, who are often called upon to assist when translators are needed for parent communication.

Approximately 45% of our faculty is ESOL certified/or endorsed.

Support Services

Lexington has many support services available to students, including:

- Speech-language pathologist - screen, identify, assess, diagnose, and provide interventions for students with language disorders
- Response to Intervention (RTI) - meetings called for any student who is in need of additional support or early intervention in order to be successful in school.
- Gifted program - students who have an Educational Plan (EP) receive part-time services/instruction in Social Studies classes. These teachers use strategies that further encourage vocabulary development, reading, and writing across the curriculum.
- Exceptional Student Education (ESE) program - students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) receive services/support from a teacher with ESE certification. Students are included in all content and exploratory classes with the general education population. The ESE teacher uses strategies in the inclusion classroom that promote the mastery of essential language skills in an effort to maximize the potential of each student.
- SHINE time - intervention/extension period built into the schedule that allows students to work on building mastery of skills and standards or extending their learning on a deeper level.
- Lunch Bunch - provides students an opportunity to work on missing or late assignments with assistance and staff supervision.
- Media specialist - works closely with teachers, students, parents, and the school administration to ensure that curricular and support materials necessary for the development of language are available.
- Reading Coach - works with classroom teachers and students to improve reading, writing, and language skills. Her responsibilities include:
 - participation in team meetings,
 - sharing information about district and state initiatives

- supporting teachers with instructional strategies and assessments
- providing supplemental resources for struggling readers
- assisting with the reporting and analysis of data to meet the needs of diverse learners
- training teachers and students on the use of computer based programs
- working with small groups of students in their classrooms or in the media center.

Professional development is a vital part of our language policy. Teachers participate in work-shops throughout each academic year. We ensure that the Lexington's language policy is implemented by conferencing with all stakeholders, students, teachers, parents, support staff, and administrators. The IB Coordinator, administrators, reading coach, and leadership team revise and review the language policy.