

Frank C. Martin K-8 Center
Primary Years Programme
Language Policy

PHILOSOPHY

At Frank C. Martin International K-8 Center, language is a vital instrument for learning, communication, and expression. Teaching and learning is driven by the idea that through language instruction, we are encouraging intercultural awareness, new perspectives, curiosity, and an appreciation of our world's diversity. Through the exploration of language, students become communicators in our multilingual world.

PRACTICES

In order to promote inquiry-based language learning within the context of the PYP, the stakeholders at Frank C. Martin International K-8 Center recognize the importance of incorporating the teaching and learning of language throughout the transdisciplinary programme of inquiry. The mastery of essential language skills – reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing – is a vital part of a student's overall development. All students at Frank C. Martin International K-8 Center receive an enriched language instruction in which English is the primary language. The importance of the acquisition of a second language is acknowledged, and all students receive instruction in either French or Spanish beginning at age six.

The following reading practices will be implemented:

- reading will take place in all subject areas, and students will read across the curriculum whenever appropriate;
- a variety of practices will be used when planning for instruction, which includes, but is not limited to guided reading groups, differentiated reading instruction, word lists, graphic organizers, use of leveled reading material;
- phonics and phonemic awareness will be integrated into the reading and reading readiness instruction in pre-k through grade 2, and as needed in grades 3-5;
- students will be encouraged to read for information, read for pleasure and read aloud expressively;

- students will be exposed to a variety of genres, including multicultural literature, poetry, plays, trade books, short stories, newspapers/magazines, and informational text;
- teachers will promote and incorporate supplemental reading incentives and support programs, such as Accelerated Reader, Reading Plus, Ticket to Read, FCAT Explorer, etc.;
- vocabulary-building techniques, such as word walls, word of the day, use of idioms, metaphors and similes will be utilized across the curriculum, whenever appropriate.

The following writing practices will be implemented:

- students' natural desire to communicate through writing will be fostered by giving real purpose to their writing, and by exposing them to varied, challenging, and meaningful writing opportunities;
- ensure consistency of the promotion of the writing process (planning, drafting, editing, proofreading, publishing), as age appropriate throughout the grade levels;
- students will be provided with opportunities to express themselves in writing through a variety of genres;
- students will be provided with opportunities to acquire, develop and use language specific to different subject areas;
- development of writing will be supported by providing constructive feedback from teachers, peers, and other adults;
- teachers will provide instruction in and model the correct usage of language conventions, including spelling, grammar, rules of punctuation, and handwriting.

ORAL LANGUAGE

- teachers will model correct language usage in conversation, while being sensitive to students' cultural background and mother tongue;
- students will be provided ample opportunities to develop and utilize oral language beyond everyday classroom conversations through oral presentations, debates, speeches, role-play, poetry recitations, songs, books on tape, listening stations, etc.;

- teachers will plan activities that expose students to conventions of oral language and aid them in responding appropriately to a range of contexts and audiences.

SECOND LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

At FCM, stakeholders recognize that the acquisition of other languages and learning about different cultures provides students with a multitude of opportunities to develop international-mindedness through the attributes in the IB learner profile. All students in the Primary Years Programme have the opportunity to learn a world language, French or Spanish, beginning in Grade 1 and continuing through Grade 8 in the Middle Years Programme. As a result of exposure to, and experience with these languages, students are encouraged to develop intercultural awareness, new perspectives, a culture of curiosity, as well as an appreciation of the richness of our world's diversity. In the PYP, students are exposed to the language of their choice every other day for a period of 50 minutes.

Students receive instruction using an interactive approach to second language learning. Teaching integrates the skill areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing. In addition, emphasis on grammatical structures and vocabulary development, especially in the upper grades, help students to develop the tools needed to become effective communicators in our multilingual world.

International understanding, cultural awareness, and historical knowledge are enhanced through the study of the customs, traditions and everyday life in French and Spanish-speaking countries throughout the world.

Second language teachers support the school's reading, writing and oral language practices, the IB learner profile, and the PYP attitudes, as well as the programme of inquiry, whenever and wherever appropriate.

MOTHER TONGUE SUPPORT

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

multicultural staff are speakers of several languages, who are often called upon to assist when translators are needed for parent conferences.

One-third of faculty members at FCM hold certification in teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) from the State of Florida. The goal of the ESOL program is to encourage fluent language acquisition using state-recommended strategies through immersion in a regular classroom setting. Students who have been identified as having limited English proficiency are placed with those teachers who have ESOL certification. Teachers use ESOL strategies to effectively deliver instruction to those students who have limited proficiency in reading, writing and/or speaking English.

The media center contains a wealth of resources that support the development of mother tongue languages. Among these resources are over 1,000 books, 7 foreign language magazine subscriptions, an online subscription to El Herald (the Miami Herald in Spanish), World Book Encyclopedia in Spanish, access to Rosetta Stone software in French and Spanish, videos, books on tape, and access to Tumble Books in English, French and Spanish.

SUPPORT SERVICES

The school has several formal and informal support services available, including:

- **Response to Intervention**
Response to Intervention (RTI) meetings can be called whenever a student is in need of additional support or early intervention in order to be successful in school. The RTI team members include administrators, PYP coordinator, special education teacher, general education teachers, reading coach, student services personnel and the student's parents.
- **Gifted Resource**
Students who have a current gifted education plan receive mathematics and science instruction from certified gifted education teachers. These teachers use strategies that further encourage vocabulary development, reading and writing across the curriculum, and the exposure to various forms of literature and informational text. Gifted education teachers work very closely with the grade-level teams in order to ensure a continuity of the delivery of instruction as well as the school's programme of inquiry.

- **Special Education**
Students with special education needs receive services from a special education teacher. The special education teacher implements the student's IEP uses strategies that promote the mastery of essential language skills in an effort to maximize the potential of each student. The special education teacher works with students using both "push in" and "pull out" models, as appropriate, and works with the classroom teachers to support the activities in the homeroom.
- **Listeners program**
Specially trained school volunteers work one-on-one with those students who need someone to listen and lend a sympathetic ear. This program helps to increase students' self esteem and oral language skills.
- **Media Specialist**
The media specialist works closely with teachers, students, parents and the school administration to ensure that any curricular and support materials that are necessary for the development of language are available. The media specialist holds workshops for both teachers and parents so that they can effectively access the many online resources that are available to all stakeholders in the school district. Additionally, the media specialist is able to obtain print and non-print material for teachers, students and parents through inter-library loan. These materials include over 175,000 items in French, Spanish, German, Russian, Mandarin, Portuguese and Italian, as well as books on tape and large-print documents for the visually impaired.
- **Reading Coach**
The 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, and working with students in small groups in their classrooms and in the media center.

- **Lunch Bunch**
The Lunch Bunch program helps to enhance students' speaking, listening and oral language skills. Approved volunteers read to small groups of students once a week during the students' scheduled lunch time. This activity is organized and sponsored by the PTA.

**Frank C. Martin International K-8 Center
Primary Years Programme
Essential Agreement for Language Instruction**

The faculty and staff at Frank C. Martin K-8 Center recognize that language is a vital instrument for learning, communication and expression, and that all teachers are language teachers. In order to promote inquiry-based language learning within the context of the PYP, it is understood that language instruction takes place all day and in all subjects.

The Primary Years Programme faculty agrees that language learning at the school will:

- ✓ be consistent and age appropriate;
- ✓ support the development of skills and understanding in the language of instruction (English) as well as the additional languages offered at the school (French or Spanish);
- ✓ be differentiated to meet the needs of learning styles of all students, including but not limited to those needing special services;
- ✓ be reflected in the programme of inquiry, transdisciplinary planners and individual lesson plans.

Furthermore, the PYP faculty agrees to:

- work with all students so they may achieve mastery of the essential language skills – reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing;

- **utilize a variety of materials to enhance the development of language skills.**

Approved by consensus of the faculty April, 2010, revised October, 2012