HAMILTON ELEMENTARY

IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) Language Policy

At Hamilton, we believe that **language is fundamental to learning, identity, belonging, and global mindedness**. All students bring rich linguistic and cultural resources that contribute to our school community. We honor and celebrate these languages as assets that strengthen inquiry, connection, and understanding. Aligned with our school vision, we commit to fostering an **inclusive and supportive environment where every student is valued**, and every family feels welcomed. Language plays a vital role in ensuring every child can "learn from different perspectives while finding their voice to tell their own story.

We believe:

- **Every teacher is a language teacher.**
- **All languages matter.** Students' home languages are essential to identity, belonging, and academic development.
- **Multilingualism is a strength**, supporting students in becoming internationally minded citizens.
- **Family languages enrich our school**, and collaboration with families supports student success.
- **Language learning happens everywhere**—through listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and presenting.

Purpose of the Language Policy

This policy outlines the school's beliefs, expectations, and systems for supporting:

- The development of English language proficiency
- The maintenance and celebration of students' home languages
- High-quality language instruction across the curriculum
- Communication practices that support all families
- The integration of IB PYP language expectations

School Language Profile

Our school is a **highly diverse multilingual community** serving students who speak many languages at home. We commit to:

- Identifying every student's home language during enrollment
- Maintaining updated language demographic data
- Reviewing student needs through the MTSS team, ML team, and IB team
- Ensuring learning experiences are accessible for multilingual learners (MLs)
- *Teaching Spanish to 2nd-5th grade students*

Language of Instruction

English is the primary language of instruction at Hamilton Elementary. We support language development through:

- Research-based literacy instruction
- Explicit teaching of academic language and vocabulary
- Use of clear learning targets and success criteria
- Integration of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing across all disciplines

- Inquiry-based learning consistent with IB PYP principles
  PLC structures that focus on student language development and equitable access

Additional Language

Spanish is the secondary language of instruction at Hamilton Elementary. We support this through:

- Taught to 2nd-5th grade
- 1X per week

Support for Multilingual Learners (MLs) and Home Languages

We believe MLs thrive when instruction is collaborative, inclusive, and asset-oriented. To support and celebrate home languages, we commit to:

Our school provides:

- Encouraging students to use home languages to support learning and concept development
- Providing translated school communications in our top languages
- Using bilingual books and multilingual classroom labels
- Incorporating student and family languages in school displays, announcements, and celebrations
- Engaging multilingual families in leadership and collaboration
- Leveraging community members, interpreters, and cultural liaisons

Language Learning Across the Curriculum

In the PYP, language is embedded within all Units of Inquiry. Teachers will:

- Integrate authentic reading, writing, speaking, and listening opportunities into every unit
- Use inquiry cycles to build vocabulary and conceptual understanding
- Provide explicit language teaching within content instruction
- Reinforce the IB Learner Profile traits and ATL skills through language experiences
- Collaborate with specialists and EL teachers to align language goals and strategies

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff

- Provide scaffolds and differentiated supports for all learners
- Encourage development of home languages
- Model inclusive, equitable communication practices
- Collaborate with classroom teachers to design instruction
- Provide targeted language development instruction
- Integrate language objectives in their content areas (art, PE, music, library, etc.)
- Use visual supports and vocabulary routines

Families

- Share home language information, cultural traditions, and communication preferences
- Maintain and encourage home language use at home
- Partner with the school through two-way communication

Students

- Develop communication skills in English/ Spanish
- Use their home languages with pride
- Demonstrate the Learner Profile attributes through meaningful communication

Professional Learning

The school will provide ongoing staff learning on:

- Language development and acquisition
- Scaffolding for multilingual learners
- Culturally responsive communication practices
- Inquiry-based language instruction
- IB language expectations and implementation
- Collaboration structures across PLCs and the global mindset team

Assessment of Language Learning

Language progress is assessed using:

- Formative assessments from classroom instruction
- Reading and writing conferences
- District benchmarks and literacy screeners
- WIDA assessments for MLs
- Student work in Units of Inquiry
- Performance tasks and presentations

Assessment practices prioritize equity, student voice, and multiple ways to demonstrate understanding.

Communication With Families

We commit to:

- Translating school communications into the top languages
- Providing interpreters at conferences, meetings, and school events
- Ensuring the school website and newsletters support multilingual access
- Using clear, family-friendly language
- Maintaining two-way communication channels that honor family voice

Review and Policy Maintenance
This policy is reviewed annually in collaboration with the IB team, the Hamilton Leadership Team, the PTC, the Central Office team, classroom data practices, and IB PYP standards. Revisions will reflect:

- Changes in curriculum
- IB evaluation feedback
- Feedback from the Hamilton Elementary learning community