

LANGUAGE POLICY



Tates Creek Elementary School is a program for Kindergarten through fifth grade serving primarily English speaking students. We believe that all learning takes place through linguistic means. Therefore; TCE has created a language program which centers around both native English support and instruction as well as the introduction of Chinese as a second language. Additionally, TCE has in place a support system for those students and families whose mother tongue is not English.

At TCE, language is the conduit for learning throughout the curriculum. Students will utilize language to receive and express themselves in order to solve problems, explore their environment, influence change in others, and identify their own self-concept. All students will be surrounded by the English language in Visual, Oral, and Written ways. Chinese, our second language, will also be explored in this way. TCE recognizes math, the fine arts, and technology as valuable, tertiary languages to be respected and promoted as a means of interpretation and expression.

At TCE, we are making a VOW to teach language in a systematic, research-based way exploring both modes(receptive and expressive) in the primary areas of linguistics-Visual | Oral | Written. Students will utilize all three areas and both modes to express the ways in which they understand the world they live in.

VISUAL

Visual Arts as they pertain to the language policy will take place primarily through the use of graphic art samples(receptive) In a similar manner, graphic art samples will also show students' understanding of concepts(expressive). New technologies will allow for an expanded role within the classroom and beyond as it pertains to a digital presence. This may take shape in the form of blogs, wikis, web pages, and glogs.

ORAL

Speaking (expressive) and listening(receptive) skills continue to develop through collaboration, discussions, and reports. Being productive members of conversations requires that students compare, contrast, analyze, and synthesize a multitude of ideas in various domains. New technologies have broadened and expanded the role that speaking and listening play in acquiring and sharing knowledge and have tightened their link to other forms of communication. Digital texts confront students with the potential for continually updated content and dynamically changing combinations of words, graphics, images, hyperlinks, and imbedded video and audio.

WRITTEN

For students, writing is a key means of asserting and defending claims, showing what they know about a subject, and conveying what they have experienced, imagined, thought, and felt. To be college- and career-ready writers, students must take task, purpose, and audience into careful consideration, choosing words, information, structures, and formats deliberately. They need to be able to use technology strategically when creating, refining, and collaborating on writing. They have to become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources, and citing material accurately, reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear and cogent manner. They must have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality, first-draft text under a tight deadline and the capacity to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it. To meet these goals, students must devote significant time and effort to writing, producing numerous pieces over short and long time frames throughout the year. (ALCCS2011)

PRACTICES

We believe that students are best served through opportunities to utilize language in the following ways:

- reflection on learning and self
- writing throughout the curriculum
- responding to constructed response prompts/questions
- participate in school-wide enrichment
- use the fine arts to increase vocabulary
- use technology in increase communicative circle
- reflect on language through the use of comparisons to Spanish and languages from alternate cultures

We believe that teachers teach language best through the following methods:

- presenting language in authentic contexts
- integrate language across varied curricula
- help students to identify language structures
- encourage students to reflect on language structures beyond form and audience
- embrace alternate forms for student expression including mother tongue development

- provide a physical space which enriches language development
- support positive attitudes toward improved communication skills and provide opportunities to do so
- provide authentic challenges encouraging students to reach their highest potential
- acknowledge differences in student experiences and skills as well as learning styles
- utilize a variety of assessment strategies

Facilitation of language instruction will take place in the following ways:

- implementation of Units of Inquiry
- teachers as facilitators
- teachers as mentors in the writing/speaking process
- implementation of a writing progression through each grade
- encourage socratic discussions among student groups
- model effective language use
- provide authentic learning experiences with student-created presentations
- provide opportunities for student-centered, student-selected research
- model expression of thoughts and feelings
- actively take part in the acquisition of a second language
- encourage parent involvement
- publish student work
- facilitation of student led conferences

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY

At least one time per marking period, the principal will meet with each team of teachers to review student performance and plan interventions for students not making adequate progress. Following each of these meetings, the principal will use the assessment data to create a report. This report will include the percent of students not meeting standards, meeting standards, and exceeding standards, with data for the entire grade-level and subject area and each demographic group with 10 or more students. The report will be distributed to all teachers, council members, and committee members. These reports will be considered part of the school council's School Improvement Plan Implementation and Impact Checks.

MOTHER TONGUE LANGUAGE

At TCE, nearly all students are native English speakers. Nevertheless, TCE provides any non-native speakers with adequate resources from the district level. On a monthly basis, students and their families with a mother tongue different than English, are invited to attend a language circle/breakfast. Language circle's purpose is to promote confidence, practice in mother tongue, and making family connections. The system provides an ELL teacher when needed. Additionally, our library and media program has allotted resources to provide literature in Chinese and additional languages.

CHINESE INSTRUCTION

TCE provides weekly instruction in Chinese using the Confucius program. Students in grades Kindergarten-5 are instructed in Chinese through traditional and creative means. The goal of this program is proficiency in the second language. Cultural awareness and understanding are integral to the instruction practices. The use of second languages is a continuum, not a mastery-laden program. Students will all learn and progress along the continuum, but at varying rates. TCE's master schedule has allotted 30 minutes of Chinese instruction for all students K-5 every six days. An additional 25 minutes Chinese lesson is integrated into the classroom every six days in grades K-3.

Language in the Learner Profiles

Keeping with the Learner Profile and the PYP, TCE utilizes a language-specific Learner Profile as it pertains to the students and teachers.

Inquirer-use language to gain new information or knowledge in order to make sense of the world

Thinker-able to express thoughts and ideas clearly, succinctly

Communicator-competent users of oral and written language in variety of situations; listen attentively to details; speak confidently; read and write with fluency and comprehend what is conveyed

Risk Taker-willing to attempt to read, write, and speak in all situations

Knowledgeable-have acquired vocabulary and understanding to discuss literary styles

Caring-show caring in use of language and affect language has on others

Principled-aware that language is powerful and has a profound affect; must use it responsibly

Balanced-express themselves orally, visually, and in written form and balance listening and speaking when communicating with others

Reflective-reflect on their language usage and development and consciously work toward proficiency

Open-minded-respect the differences and similarities in languages, dialects and personal communication skills

NOTES ON USING THIS POLICY

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT: These guidelines must be revised to fit your situation and will need teacher input.