



Dunbar Elementary School Language Policy

A Candidate School* for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme and pursuing authorization as an IB World School.

The purpose of this document is to provide the language learning philosophies and practices at Dunbar Elementary. It will also define the actions and goals for the teaching and learning of inquiry based language learning. This policy will be communicated to all stakeholders and should be aligned with the philosophy of International Baccalaureate (IB) PYP.

Philosophy

At Dunbar Elementary School, language is a vital instrument for international understanding, intercultural awareness, intellectual growth, and open-minded global citizenship for the 21st century and beyond. We utilize language learning as interdisciplinary with the incorporating of literacy in mathematics, the sciences, the social sciences, the visual arts, and social emotional development. We believe in providing real life, authentic experiences connected to beliefs and values that support multiculturalism among our students and the community. We understand that language is the essential element in expression and communication that supports the theory of equipping students to be global learners and well prepared for college and careers.

Language Practice

Language instruction includes, but is not limited to, using language as a means to inquire, expressing ideas and concepts within our transdisciplinary curriculum, and appreciating the aesthetics of various forms of communication. Dunbar Elementary implements the Balanced Literacy Block that informs all language pedagogy. The components include read-alouds, phonics, guided reading, remedial stations, mini-lessons, writing workshops, word study, spelling, and shared reading. Instructional formats include flexible grouping within the classrooms; i.e., whole group and small group instruction, collaborative partners, and independent practice as well as Literacy Centers.

READING	WRITING	LISTENING/SPEAKING/VIEWING
<i>Concepts of print:</i> environmental print, guided reading, leveled reading material in all genres, word walls, various reading materials (i.e. internet, literacy games, etc.) <i>Phonemic Awareness:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writer's workshop• reports• graphic organizers (semantic maps, Venn diagrams, etc.),• individual, and class made books• writing across the curriculum• writing journals• Write Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Computer based learning activities• listening centers• role-play activities• oral projects and presentations• guest readers

rhymes, poetry, songs, literacy centers, Orton-Gillingham strategies, Foundations, interactive internet sites <i>Fluency/Vocabulary/Comprehension</i> guided reading, leveled readers, read alouds, shared reading discussions – development of critical thinking skills		
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ESOL Program

English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is a federally mandated instructional program for eligible English Learners (ELs) in grades K-12 (Georgia School Law Code 1981, § 20-2-156, enacted in 1985). The purpose of the ESOL language program is to provide English language development instruction and language support services to identified K-12 English Learners for the purpose of increasing their English language proficiency and academic achievement. The responsibility for educating the whole English Learner student is shared by the regular classroom teachers and the ESOL teachers. Classroom teachers, ESOL teachers, and other support staff collaborate to determine the necessary instructional scaffolds and language - focused activities to make language and content as comprehensible as possible for ELs throughout the school day. The WIDA Consortium English Language Development (ELD) standards, integrated with the Georgia Standards of Excellence guide the work of ESOL teachers to enable ELs to both communicate in English and demonstrate their academic, social, and cultural proficiency.

The English to Speakers of Other Languages Program provides English Learners with support and instruction in the English language, American culture, and academic and cognitive areas in order to ensure success in the classroom, school, and the community. The goals of the program are as follows:

1. To develop competency in English in all four domains of language: listening, speaking, reading and writing;
2. To integrate language, cognitive and academic instruction that enables students to develop English language proficiency and content area knowledge;
3. To support the curriculum based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence while emphasizing social and academic language proficiency;
4. To orient students and parents to the American culture and enable them to participate successfully in school and community life;
5. To ensure grade-level appropriate content for all ELs regardless of English proficiency level;
6. To ensure a focus on collaboration and shared accountability for the success of all English Learners.

For more information regarding ESOL in Atlanta Public Schools visit the website:

<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=880>

Mother tongue support

The media centers will serve as the hub of our first language support by providing multicultural and multilingual books and resources. Books and other resources (as well as online resources) will be provided in various languages spoken by students. Home communication, as well as any needed translation and interpretation services, are provided in the students' and/or parents' preferred language. We will use community partners and technology resources to support and develop students in their home language.

Support Staff and Services

Due to diverse backgrounds and prior educational experiences, Dunbar recognizes abilities may vary. In order to meet those needs, support is given through the following programs:

- *Student Support Team (SST)*: SST provides a positive problem-solving process to identify strategies and programs that may alleviate academic, attendance, or behavioral issues experienced by a student.
- *Early Intervention Program (EIP)*: EIP serves students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level. Teachers implement the program using an inclusion and pull-out model. Within these models, teachers provide additional instructional support to help students who are below grade level obtain the necessary academic skills to reach grade level performance in the shortest possible time.
- *Gifted/Talented Education (Challenge)*: Gifted/Talented serves students in grades K – 5 by enhancing critical thinking, problem solving, abstract thinking, and creativity skills.
- *Special Education Program*: serves students by providing support services, strategies, and/or support staff for specific learning or medical needs in the least restrictive environment based on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

World Language Instruction (Spanish)

Spanish is Dunbar Elementary School's second language of instruction for grades PreK – 5. Spanish classes provide opportunities for cultural and linguistic enrichment through authentic interactions and engaging instruction. Students participate in Spanish class for 60 minutes per week. The Spanish teacher has a dedicated classroom space which she arranges and decorates to support language acquisition. The Spanish teacher reinforces the grade level curriculum by making connections with language arts, reading, math, social studies, science, music, physical education, and art. Instruction in Spanish class overlap and link directly, whenever possible, to our IB Planners under development. Spanish instruction includes listening, speaking, reading, writing and expression.

Professional Development

All staff will continue to be involved in state/district/school initiatives involving ELA best practices that revolve around inquiry-based instruction through the workshop model. Professional resources will be provide an understanding of language pedagogy through Lucy Calkins Reading and Writing, Debbie Miller Reading Strategies, Wilson Learning Academy (Foundations) and Guided Reading. Collaborative Planning sessions will highlight best practices from the International Literacy Association and reflections on current classroom practices. The school will utilize a Literacy Team to determine strengths and weaknesses of the Language Program.

Roles and Responsibilities

The faculty and staff at Dunbar Elementary recognize that language is a vital instrument for learning, communication and expression. We further believe that ALL teachers are *language* teachers. In order to promote inquiry-based language learning within the context of the Primary Years Program (PYP), we understand that language instruction takes place all day and in all subjects.

The faculty agrees that language learning at Dunbar will:

- Be consistent and age appropriate
- Support the development of skills, understanding and instruction of English and Spanish
- Be differentiated to meet the needs of learning styles of all students, including but not limited to, needing special services
- Be reflected in the programme of inquiry, transdisciplinary planners, and individual lesson plans

Furthermore, the faculty agrees to:

- Work with all students to achieve mastery of the essential skills – reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing
- Utilize a variety of materials to enhance the development of language skills.