



MILES ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE POLICY

Est. 2021-2022

Miles Elementary IB-PYP Language Policy

Purpose

The Miles Elementary School community recognizes the essential role that language plays in any child's education. We believe that it is therefore also essential that the beliefs, expectations, and practices of the community are documented, shared and understood by all stakeholders. The goal of this policy is to clearly state those shared beliefs, expectations, and practices to ensure that the mission of guiding all learners through the process of language acquisition and development can be achieved. The IB believes that "exposure to a language other than one's native or dominant language is beneficial in a wide variety of ways, not limited to language issues."

Philosophy (What We Believe)

We believe language development goes beyond learning language mechanics and is inquiry-based learning. Language is an avenue to understand and relate to a global community, while encouraging international mindedness.

Language acquisition and development involves multiple interdisciplinary approaches that engage learners in reading, writing, listening and speaking.

All teachers are language teachers and are responsible for supporting a culture of language that values language traditions, and personal abilities.

Language development is ongoing across disciplines and is reflected in our school's Programme of Inquiry.

We engage the entire learning community in learning Spanish as a second language. While we understand that language proficiency will not be an outcome, we feel strongly that authentic learning exposure to Spanish and the cultures of Spanish speaking countries enriches personal growth and helps facilitate international as well as intercultural understanding.

We believe in respecting and encouraging personal/home language development as a way to honor and ensure cultural equity.

Language of Instruction and Curriculum

At Miles Elementary School, English (Language A), is the primary language of instruction in grades Pre-K through 5 and in single subject classes. We believe that language is a connection to academic, social/emotional growth that can be transdisciplinary in nature and integrated across all content areas. Oral, visual, and written language help to cultivate social, research, thinking, communication and self-management skills which are reflected in the Units of Inquiry. We believe that Miles Elementary teachers promote language development by:

- Utilizing research-based instruction practices to improve English-Language proficiency.
- Fostering communication, and social skills with the classroom.
- Modeling effective communication for a variety of situations.
- Respecting and valuing diverse communication styles.
- Differentiating instruction to meet the needs and learning styles of all learners.
- Building a print-rich environment that is relevant and age-appropriate.
- Focusing on language exposure and connections across language A, B, and mother-tongue.
- Implementing instructional approaches that build on conceptual understanding in meaningful context and inquiry.

English Language Learners & Mother Tongue

Through the Department of World Languages, Atlanta Public Schools (APS) provides an English acquisition program that provides instruction and support for all English Language Learners (ELL). At Miles Elementary, students whose dominant language (mother tongue) is not English will require additional support services to access the curriculum and develop communication skills. To serve ELL's effectively the school ensures that supports are in place to help students work toward their full potential in the area of language development. These supports include, but are not limited to:

- A Certified English as a Second Language (ESOL) Teacher using the push-in or pull-out model.
- Interactive read aloud & Guided Reading
- WIDA ACCESS Placement Test
- Digital Learning Platforms (Lexia Core 5, MAP)

- Reading/Math Intervention Groups
- Special Education Services
- School-wide Accommodations
- Books in Mother Tongue
- Media (Flyers, Morning Announcements, Newsletters)
- Department of Fine Arts (Music and Visual Art)
- Translation and/or Interpreter Services

English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Approximately 5% of our student population receive ESOL services. The ESOL program develops English proficiency through the acquisition of academic language and vocabulary through the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and ensures that students receive continued support with their mother tongue. ESOL teachers collaborate with homeroom teachers to provide additional resources and strategies that allow students to progress toward independent English proficiency and academic success.

Students who have indicated that they speak another language other than English on the Home Language Survey portion of the Student Enrollment form will be screened for ESOL services. Students in Kindergarten through first semester of first grade will be assessed using the Kindergarten Model test and students beginning the second semester of first grade through fifth grade will be assessed using the **WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test** (W-APT) by the WIDA Consortium to determine eligibility.

The ESOL students' progress will be assessed using the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) test. The ACCESS assessment is a secure large-scale English language proficiency assessment administered to Kindergarten through 12th grade students who have been identified as ELLs. It is given annually in WIDA Consortium member states to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English.

Language B: Spanish Language Instruction

Miles Elementary School supports a culture of language that values multiple languages. The school supports multilingualism, cultural awareness and the development of international-mindedness through the instruction of the Spanish language. A full-time World Language teacher provides weekly Spanish instruction to students at the Kindergarten through Fifth Grade level. All students receive 45 minutes a week of

additional language instruction. The language model used at Miles Elementary is Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES), in which the second language instruction is enhanced by concepts from the general curriculum.

The Miles Elementary FLES program focuses on communication and culture. We integrate content with language learning, using National Standards for Foreign Language Learning aligned with the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE). The goal of our program is for students to apply language skills to the world beyond the classroom and assist them in making meaningful comparisons.

Assessment

All students are assessed on their English language skills three times a year using a universal screening. The results of the universal screener will be used to identify students who will receive additional assessments and early interventions. Language will also be assessed on an on-going basis through the planners.

Support for all Learners

Any student who experiences academic difficulties in language will be recommended to the Student Support Team (SST). The SST is a state mandated school-based intervention process. The purpose of the Student Support Team is to provide teachers with a broad spectrum of strategies and models of intervention to improve their delivery of effective instruction. The Student Support Team process comprises six sequential steps:

1. Identification of needs
2. Assessment
3. Education plan
4. Implementation
5. Follow-up and support
6. Continuous monitoring and evaluation

The Student Support Team consists of a committee of school-based and resource personnel, as well as the parents and when necessary, the student. The team brainstorms, collaborates, and develops modifications, strategies, strategies, and/or accommodations for teachers and staff to implement in order to ensure student progress, success and the receipt of appropriate and effective assistance. Students recommended to the /SST for language difficulties will be monitored based on their area of weakness more frequently using progress monitoring.

Special Education students are expected to be included in all aspects of the language curriculum at Miles Elementary. The Special Education teachers plan collaboratively with the grade-level teachers to ensure that modifications are being made based on the Individual Education Plans (IEP) of their students.

Language Policy Review

The language policy of Miles Elementary will be reviewed annually by staff as well as community stakeholders to adapt to changing best practices, changes in the Primary Years Program, and changes in the needs of our community.

Resources

IBO, 2020 Language in the PYP

Overlook Elementary, 2022 Language Policy

Beecher Hills, 2021 Language Policy

Eastport Elementary, 2020 Language Policy

Sunset Elementary School, 2018 Language Policy

Georgia Department of Education, 2014 Georgia Standards of Excellence

<https://wida.wisc.edu/resources>