



### Philosophy

At Burgess-Peterson Academy, language is a vital instrument for international understanding, intercultural awareness, intellectual growth, and open-minded global citizenship for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. We believe infusing language into all subject areas is a fundamental practice, supporting that all teachers are language teachers sharing the responsibility of developing communication. We believe language development is a process established utilizing inquiry within a balanced, transdisciplinary approach. Our approach creates knowledgeable connections promoting a global perspective with emphasis on; listening, speaking, reading, viewing, and writing.

We believe in providing real life, authentic experiences connected to beliefs and values that support multiculturalism among our students and the community. Teachers value each student’s unique background, experiences and learning style. Our goal is to make our students life-long lovers of learning, caring citizens, responsible risk-takers and effective communicators. Our belief also includes valuing students’ independent use of language as a way of expressing, relating, and self-assessing their own growth and progress.

### Language Practices

Language instruction within the Primary Years Programme at Burgess-Peterson Academy includes reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing skills, interpreting and understanding drawings and other visual displays. Language skills mastery is essential for enrichment and life-long learning. Students need multiple opportunities and varied experiences to build the skills needed in the classroom. The following are the components of our language-based instruction:

| Reading   | Writing  | Listening/Speaking/Viewing  |
|---|--|---|
| Concepts of Print;<br>Environmental print, guided reading, leveled reading materials in all genres, Wilson Language Foundations for explicit phonics instruction<br>Phonemic Awareness:<br>Rhymes, poetry, songs, literacy centers<br>Orton-Gillingham approach to teaching phonics<br>Fluency/Vocabulary/Comprehension:<br>Fountas & Pinnell<br>Guided Reading and Leveled Readers<br>Accelerated Reader Program to incent student growth in time with print | Reflections on Units of Inquiry<br>Graphic Organizers (thinking maps, Venn diagrams, etc...)<br>Reports<br>Individual and class-made books<br>Writing across content areas<br>Writing journals | Computer based learning activities<br>Listening centers<br>Role-play activities<br>Oral projects and presentations<br>Guest readers |

The media center provides resources for literacy including a growing collection of multicultural and multilingual text, videos, audio/visual equipment, and computer usage both for individual and group research. Assessment of literacy knowledge and skills is both formal and informal using language practices above.



**Methods and Programs:**

The teachers and support staff utilize a variety of methods to support language across subject areas. We strive to meet a wide range of learning styles by differentiating instruction and creating engaging lessons in the following experiences:

- Hegherty Phonemic Awareness Lessons
- Wilson Language-Fundations for explicit phonics instruction
- Orton-Gillingham approach to teaching phonics
- Accelerated Reader to enhance and increase time with print and foster a love of reading
- Interactive Read Alouds
- Shared reading and writing
- Current Events- magazines, newspapers, etc...

**Specialists Supporting Language Acquisition (Visual Art, Music, Physical Education)**

| Art Practices   | Music Practices  | Physical Education Practices  |
|---|--|---|
| -Analysis / discussion of cultural art and technique derived from student population and guest artists<br>-Word Wall<br>-Reflection-creative writing in association with art and expression (ie; Frederick Douglass)<br>-Literature<br>-Story sharing<br>-Analysis, discussion and creation of art with emphasis on aesthetic variances to beauty | -Introduction to songs in languages other than English<br>-Reading of musical notation<br>-Literature-Poetry and song correlations, storytelling<br>-Incorporation of drama combined with musical drama/comedy | -Use of task cards / visual cues<br>-Use of content specific language based on PE classroom and regular classroom content<br>-Word Wall<br>-Kinesthetic role play |

**Support Staff and Services**

Due to diverse backgrounds and prior educational experiences, BPA recognizes that students come to us with a wide variety of readiness and ability. In order to meet the needs of every student support is given through the following pathways and programs:

- MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) – MTSS provides a positive problem-solving process to identify strategies and programs that may alleviate academic, attendance, or behavioral issues a student may demonstrate.
- EIP (Early Intervention Program) - EIP serves students at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level performance in reading and/or mathematics. Teachers implement the program using an inclusion, reduced class size or 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 and Talented – serves students by enhancing critical thinking, problem solving, abstract thinking and creativity skills and talents.
- Special Education Program – serves students by providing specific support services, strategies and/or supportive staff for specific learning or medical needs in the least restrictive learning environment based upon Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

### **English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

Currently, BPA has four students whose mother tongue is not English including Russian, Ukrainian, Farsi, and Arabic. As part of the Atlanta Public Schools, we have support for these students in place to aid in their transition of learning via a new language. This support is summarized here.

The goal of the Atlanta Public Schools ESOL program is to enhance language acquisition and to introduce and practice/develop transdisciplinary skills used in the classroom. Students enter the program through the following process: First, a home language survey is given to all students to identify the mother-tongue language spoken in the home. Based on survey results, students whose home language is not English are given a district approved assessment, the W-APT (WIDA ACCESS Placement Test) to determine eligibility in the ESOL program. The ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension communication English State – to State) is given in the winter to determine eligibility and language proficiency level for the upcoming year. The ESOL teacher is responsible for assessing students' language proficiency on a regular basis. The identification of proficiency determines eligibility in the ESOL program.

The ESOL program develops the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and speaking skills are developed through choral reading, question and answer exercises, shared-inquiry discussions, and the use of technology. Reading and writing skills are developed through phonics instruction of target language, visual and real-life models for the development of vocabulary, and materials/literature used in classroom to enhance skill development in order for students to participate more independently in the classroom.

District level ESOL department provides workshops and meetings with teachers and parents on an as-needed basis to familiarize each group with goals/expectations of the program and learning strategies to help classroom instruction and support strategies for the home.

### **World Language Instruction (Spanish)**

Spanish is Burgess-Peterson's second language of instruction for grades 2-5. Spanish classes provide an immersive language and teachers commit to speaking Spanish at least 50% of the time. Movement, music, art, drama, and food are used to teach the target language and culture. Student in grades 2, 3, 4, 5 participate in Spanish class twice weekly for 35 minutes. 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. Thematic units in Spanish class overlap and link directly, whenever possible, to our IB Planners. Spanish instruction includes listening, speaking, reading, writing and expression.



## Roles and Responsibilities

BPA is committed to developing our understanding and implementation of the IB program standards and practices in relation to teaching and learning. We are informed regarding current research and best practices and language learning through district workshops, professional learning communities, conferences, and in-school redelivery. BPA relies on the support of our district and our Parent Teacher Association to further our work and training and for the provision of additional resources to support our implementation of our Programme of Inquiry.

The BPA Pedagogical Leadership Team serves as the policy team, ensuring the language policy is re-evaluated and revised as appropriate. Collaborative planning and IB training will ensure that teachers are familiar with the PYP philosophies. Teachers, support staff, and administrators are responsible for communicating policies to all Burgess-Peterson constituents. The principal, PYP Coordinator, Instructional Coaches and district program coordinators are responsible for professional development regarding language teaching and learning. BPA communicates policies via the school website, newsletters, e-blast, and PTA/School Governance Meetings. This communication of the policy guarantees its implementation, comprehension, and support by a wide assortment of constituents.

The faculty and staff of Burgess-Peterson recognize that language is a vital instrument for learning, communication, and expression. We further believe that ALL teachers are *language* teachers. To promote inquiry-based language learning within the context of the PYP, we understand that language instruction takes place all day, across all subjects.

The Primary Years Programme faculty agrees that language learning at BPA 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 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 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.