

## **Woodlawn Hills Language Policy**

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this document is to clarify the Woodlawn Hills Elementary Language Policy. This policy applies to the whole school and is to be communicated to and understood by all continuing and new teachers, staff, students, parents, administrators and community members. It is directly linked to our campus mission statement.

### **Campus Mission Statement:**

The mission of Woodlawn Hills Elementary is to provide a student-centered and safe learning environment where students are excited to inquire, collaborate, and problem-solve using higher order thinking skills while working free of judgment and taking ownership for their learning. We are committed to inspiring our students to become respectful, caring, and globally minded lifelong learners, who will help create a better and more peaceful world.

### **Philosophy:**

At Woodlawn Hills Elementary, we believe that language is at the heart of every social and academic interaction. As educators, we have a responsibility to help our students develop the essential tools of language with which they will interpret and navigate the world. We believe that effective and functional language use is the key to a successful collaborative learning environment. Therefore, every teacher at Woodlawn Hills is a teacher of language. In addition, we believe that all staff members, parents, administrators, and community members also play a significant role in this journey.

In order to meet the needs of our diverse learners, instruction is differentiated and language is taught through a wide variety of different modalities including inquiry, listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as through kinesthetic learning, technology integration, non-verbal communication, and projects.

Language instruction offers a unique platform from which to develop internationally minded learners and global citizens through the study of culture and appreciation of how others communicate. To develop respect for other cultures, we honor the native language of all of our students and encourage each to speak, read, write and continue to develop their mother tongue as they learn to appreciate and speak new languages.

### **Campus Language Profile and Identification:**

Upon entry to Woodlawn Hills Elementary, all parents of students will complete a Home Language Survey to identify students' mother-tongue as well as language proficiencies and needs. Language proficiencies will be determined by the LPAC's (Language Proficiency Assessment Committee) review of the preLAS (The English Language Proficiency Assessment for Early Learners) and the LAS Links (The English Language Proficiency Assessment). The committee, with parent approval, will establish placement of a student in either a Dual Language classroom (PK-5th Grades), or a Monolingual classroom. The state of Texas requires

that every student with a home language other than English and that has Limited English Proficiency be provided the full opportunity of the bilingual education program. Students will be classified as either native language (L1) or as language being acquired (L2) as noted below. The pre-LAS and LAS Links will be used to test new students in Pre-kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> grade who have not been identified as LEP (Limited English Proficiency) by another school and whose Home Language Survey indicated a language other than English. For students in grades 2-5<sup>th</sup>, the LAS Links and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) will be administered to students new to the country. All students new to the US, that have not been identified as a LEP student, will be sent to the SAISD International Welcome Center for testing.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) designed the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) to assess the progress that (LEP) students make in learning the English language. This assessment is taken from Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade each year and aligns with Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). TELPAS includes evaluations in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Teachers are trained to interpret and rate writing samples using the state rubric (beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high) and LEP students in grades 2-12 take 3 online assessments (reading, listening and speaking) that measure their progress during a given school year.

#### **Additional Language Instruction:**

**PYP:** Students at Woodlawn Hills Elementary in grades Kindergarten through 5th, will receive Spanish language instruction for at least 45 minutes once every two weeks by a certified Spanish Teacher. In Spanish class, students will learn to speak the language, learn about the language conventions and structures, and explore cultures of Spanish-speaking countries. This Spanish class will be taught as an introductory course that will include listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The cognates learned in Spanish will assist students in oral language development and vocabulary. This class will also be taught as an exploratory course so that students can be better informed of the world around them as well as be able to make a better decision when moving on to Longfellow Middle School where they will have the option of learning either Spanish, French, or Mandarin.

#### **Dual Language Program**

Pre-K through 5th grade students have the opportunity to participate in a dual language program that focuses on strengthening their first language and at the same time teaching them a new one. The dual language model at Woodlawn Hills Elementary provides students with an enriched learning experience by teaching in English and Spanish. Both the English language learners and native English speakers learn together, learn from each other, and use each other as language and cultural resources

#### **Instructional strategies and practices:**

Primary language of instruction will be English for monolingual classes. English and Spanish will be the languages of instruction for Dual Language. All teachers will enrich the development and acquisition of oral and written language through the following strategies:

1. Language taught through the curriculum
2. Differentiated instruction
3. Eliciting prior knowledge
4. Making connections
5. Modeling
6. Cooperative learning
7. Collaboration
8. Transdisciplinary skills of reading, speaking, writing, and listening
9. SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocols) Strategies
10. Use of the ELPS (English Language Proficiency Standards)

**Parental Support:**

Parents will be included in the language development of their children through the following practices and resources:

- Reading logs, including virtual documentation of reading
- Newsletters/Flyers distributed to parents in English and Spanish (Virtual or in person)
- Bilingual Parent Liaison
- Campus Literacy Night
- Parent Volunteers
- Open House (Virtual or in person)
- Student-led parent conferences
- Grade Level Specific Parent Meeting
- Parent Meetings (Virtual or in person)
- Parent Communication by email or letter
- Class Dojo
- Remind
- Communication via Canvas (Learning Management System)
- PEIMS message (Public Education Information Management System)
- PENS message (Parent Enrollment Notification System)

**Assessment:**

Student language development will be assessed based by state guidelines, district guidelines and campus assessment policy.

**Professional Development:**

Woodlawn Hills will ensure that all teachers receive professional development in order to be effective language teachers. The following are some possible professional development opportunities the teachers will have.

- International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme trainings
- Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)

- Culturally responsive pedagogy
- Language integration training
- SIOP training (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol)
- 7 Steps to a language rich class
- pre-Las and LAS Links (LPAC Committee)
- Dual Language training (for Dual Language Teachers)
- Professional Development provided by the Bilingual Department for all staff.
- Dual language teacher professional learning communities
- English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)
- Teacher training on using data to identify student needs to better support language learning

### **Reviewing the Policy:**

The Language Policy is a working document which requires ongoing review and revision based on the needs of the student population at Woodlawn Hills Elementary.

- The language policy will be reviewed by all
- The IB/ CLT Leadership team will approve edits to the policy yearly

### **Resources:**

The following resources were used in the construction of the Woodlawn Hills Elementary Language Policy.

IBO documents accessed September 2018 from [www.myib.org](http://www.myib.org)

International Baccalaureate Organization Language Policy document (February 2014) Language scope and sequence, IBO 2009

Making the PYP Happen, A curriculum Framework for International Education, IBO, December 2009

Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy, IBO 2008

Language policy examples from various PYP Schools

San Antonio Independent School District Policy E-1 Bilingual

English Language Proficiency Standards, University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency 2009