



Williams Middle Magnet School

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme

Language Policy

POLICY

At *Williams Middle Magnet School*, our language program is designed to support language acquisition through a holistic approach to develop effective communicators, while broadening our students' global understanding of other people's cultures creating a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

PHILOSOPHY

At *Williams Middle Magnet School*, all students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language. Children who come to school from non-English backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language. The World Language Program supports the mission statement of *Williams Middle Magnet School* by striving to educate our students so that they may become open-minded, knowledgeable, and responsible members of our global society.

World Language study at *Williams Middle Magnet School*, works to equip students linguistically and culturally to communicate and function both as individuals and within a group. World Language study develops an awareness of other people's views, an understanding of their unique ways of life and a recognition and respect for their diversity and contributions to the world at large. Teachers at *Williams Middle Magnet School*, view the planning, teaching and assessing of languages as an interconnected process. Linguistic proficiency combined with cultural knowledge will enable students to interact in a variety of real-life situations. Effective communication based on knowledge of language and cultures will be a key to success and prosperity in the 21st century.

- 6th – 8th grade articulated foreign language program will be available to all students in Language acquisition courses.
- Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing competencies are addressed throughout our rigorous approaches to learning in Language acquisition.
- Teacher-developed inter-disciplinary units include Global Contexts and Assessments following the IB MYP guidelines.
- Parents and students are provided on-line resources to interact with school activities designed to expand and improve communication skills.
- All staff supports the language policy by protecting instructional time from unnecessary interruptions, providing resources for parents and students, recognizing student achievement, and setting high expectations for all students.
- Our school community regularly reviews changes in current linguistic programs and practices as well as the needs of the school as a learning community.

- The culture of Language acquisition is always embedded in our lessons on a daily basis, such as dances, songs, biographies, research projects, etc.

MOTHER TONGUE/BILINGUAL STUDENTS

- Parents of bilingual students are encouraged to be proactive in continuing their child's exposure to study their mother tongue outside the school, such as *Family Fun Day*, *International Food Day*, etc.
- Many specific communications are translated into non-English languages, such as Spanish, Creole, etc.
- We provide a *Home Language Library* for students recognizing the mother-tongue of our diverse population, such as Spanish, Hindi, Chinese, French, Gujarati, Telugu, etc.
- Virtual Library offering an on-line magazine subscription (Spanish) and encyclopedia (Spanish & French).
- Included in our multilingual multicultural staff are speakers of several languages, who are often called upon to assist when translators are needed for parent conferences.
- We have faculty members who hold a certification in teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) from the State of Florida. The goal of the ESOL program is to encourage fluent language acquisition using state-recommended strategies through immersion in a regular classroom setting.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Williams has a large percentage of students whose mother tongue is not English. Many are highly proficient in their use of the English language, while others meet the eligibility requirements of our English Language Learners (ELL) program. English language levels of proficiency are assessed through extensive testing by a district ELL team following state guidelines.

Like all students at *Williams Magnet Middle School*, ELL students are mainstreamed into regular and advanced classes according to their scores on statewide assessments, such as Florida Writes. A bilingual paraprofessional is on site to assist as needed in the academic classes and teachers of ELL students have received training and are required to include appropriate accommodations in their daily lesson plans.

It is important to note that students, whose mother tongue is not English, play an important role in the rich and diverse fabric of our school. When we celebrate cultures as part of our International Baccalaureate theme, students proudly wear native costumes, perform dances and share their food and culture thus enriching the authentic international experiences of the entire school community. The IB MYP theme of internationalism is an integral part of school life at *Williams Magnet Middle School*.

WORLD LANGUAGE LEARNER GOAL

All students will develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills which will allow them to communicate in Language acquisition and appreciate and understand other cultures. These skills are assessed using the IB MYP criteria.

Provisions for Native Speakers

While Williams Middle Magnet School strives to ensure that all students are engaged in rigorous and challenging coursework, state and district guidelines sometimes prevent the school from providing courses that meet all students' needs, particularly those of native speakers.

Language and literature instruction is offered in English. At this time, mother tongue speakers have not demonstrated a level of proficiency in either Spanish or French that would predicate language and literature instruction in their mother tongue.

Language acquisition instructors administer assessments to ascertain students' previous knowledge and world language readiness. Assessment data is used to provide differentiated instruction in classes of mixed ability levels. Teachers plan relevant instruction that addresses various language acquisition levels in each class and cater to the needs of all learners.

Note: The district world language department and administration at Williams offered students the opportunity to take French I and Spanish I (high school courses previously offered only in year 3 of our MYP) as year 2 students during the 2018-19 school year. Those students are currently enrolled in French II and Spanish II at Williams. The advanced opportunity is no longer available to year 2 students due to scheduling constraints.