

Joseph C. Wilson Foundation Academy

PYP Candidate School

*Excellence for all students in all aspects of their development.*

***Language Policy***

“The development of language is fundamental to the need to communicate; it supports and enhances our thinking and understanding. Language permeates the world in which we live; it is socially constructed and dependent on the number and nature of our social interactions and relationships”.

-Making the PYP Happen, 2009, pg. 68

At Wilson Foundation Academy, we believe that language is fundamental to the success of all learning. All teachers at Wilson Foundation Academy are language teachers, and all of our scholars are language learners. Language is essential to the construction of meaning, connects all of our curriculum elements, and ultimately supports the mission of our school. We support the three aspects of language as highlighted by the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program in their publication of *Making the* *PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international primary* education.

1. Learning language
2. learning about language
3. learning through language

Language is an integral component across the curriculum and in the school wide program of Inquiry.  It is critical that students have an understanding of the English language and can use language to construct meaning and higher-level thinking. Because children of all ages need to experience a wide assortment of interesting, informative, intriguing, and creative reading materials, teachers provide a print-rich classroom environment and teach with best practices in mind. In addition, language is supported in the classroom through direct phonics and phonemic awareness instruction, guided reading, writers’ worship, writing in content areas, classroom libraries, daily read alouds, class discussions, presentations.

**English Language Learners:**

As required by federal and state guidelines, all scholars enrolled in Wilson Foundation Academy must complete a Home Language Questionnaire indicating the language most often spoken in the home, as well as additional languages spoken. Any scholar who is not from a home in which English is listed as the primary language is given the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL). This helps us determine how well a scholar understands, speaks, reads, and writes in English. The information obtained is used to determine the level of ESOL (English for Speakers of other languages) services needed. In spring of each school year, all English Language Learners are given the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). The NYSESLAT includes multiple choice, short written response questions, long written response questions, and oral response questions in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.

Based on the score of the NYSITELL and NYSESLAT, scholars are leveled as *entering*, *emerging*, *transitioning*, or *commandin*g. Scholars receive less support as their English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills increase but will continue to receive services from a certified ENL (English as a New Language) teacher for two years after testing at the *commanding* level.

While supporting our scholars in becoming proficient in the English Language, we simultaneously celebrate their diverse languages and cultures. Our teachers learn about the culture, values, family, and home environment of our English Language Learners. We also have translators available in all mother tongue languages to ensure a language barrier does not hinder home/school communication.

**Additional Language in the PYP**

All scholars enrolled in Wilson Foundation Academy receive an additional language beginning in kindergarten. Language acquisition instruction supports the Primary Years Program’s fundamental concept of Intercultural Awareness and the IB Learner Profile. Scholars receive Spanish instruction from kindergarten through 3rd grade and are introduced to Kiswahili beginning in 5th grade. We appreciate the importance of learning to speak the language, yet also value the importance of students learning the culture expressed through the language. Learning an additional language helps students understand other cultures and develop an international mindset.

Additional language teachers are important in supporting and extending classroom learning. Our Spanish and Kiswahili teachers work closely with classroom teachers in the creation and implementation of the school wide PYP Program of Inquiry. Their classroom practices and curriculum add to the transdisciplinary nature of each Unit of Inquiry.

**Professional Development**

All staff is committed to staying current with the latest IB *PYP* curriculum development, the national common core standards, as well as the latest trends in language instruction. Teachers are provided regular opportunities to participate in both IB and district sponsored professional development.

**Ongoing review of the language policy**

Wilson Foundation Academy’s Policy committee meets regularly to create, review and revise the current language policy. The committee communicates suggestions as needed and ensures information is shared with all stakeholders.

*Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education*. (2009). Cardiff, Wales: International Baccalaureate organization.

Mrs. Gambeski

Mrs. Kramer

Mrs. Chinappi

Mrs. Watts

Mrs. Webster