

Francisca Alvarez Elementary

Language Policy

2017-2018

School Language Philosophy

At Francisca Alvarez Elementary, we believe that language is essential to all learning. Teaching of a second language has a crucial role in equipping scholars with the language skills they need to become accomplished learners in their community, society and the world. Recognizing and supporting our students' mother tongue and culture is crucial to the development of the whole child. Our philosophy promotes respect and understanding of intercultural communication and embraces all languages.

Goals

Students are expected to:

- **Communicate** and express themselves through **speaking, writing**, and fine arts.
- Use a variety of resources to obtain information and share it through **oral, visual, and written** formats.
- Exhibit tolerance toward cultural diversities through appreciation of different languages.

Teachers are expected to:

- Validate mother tongue.
- Promote a balanced approach to literacy development (**listening, speaking, reading, and writing**).
- Provide a learning environment that encourages language diversity.
- Place an emphasis on instruction that addresses individual learning styles.
- Provide different modes in which students can access language through **oral, visual, and written** methods.
- Model and create opportunities for students to apply their second language.

The Parents and the Learning Community are expected to:

- Support and maintain the development of the mother tongue language.
- Demonstrate a positive attitude toward a second language acquisition.
- Encourage the use of the mother tongue and the newly acquired language(s).
- Model the appropriate use of the mother tongue and newly acquired language(s).

Practices of Instruction

Admissions into Instruction of Mother Tongue (student language profile):

Upon a student's initial enrollment, the parent conducts a Home Language Survey to determine the student's primary language (mother tongue). If the language is something other than English, the

student is tested with an English Language Proficiency Test, which establishes the child's placement in an appropriate language program. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) makes decisions on the need for testing and the delivery of services the student will receive to support their language development. The Home Language Survey remains in the student's permanent record.

Language of Instruction:

Instruction at Francisca Alvarez Elementary is conducted in English and Spanish through research-based practices including but not limited to: differentiated instruction, opportunities for authentic language use, scaffolding of instruction, pre-teaching of key concepts and vocabulary, modeling, collaborative learning and identification of language objectives for each unit of inquiry. In addition, teachers create a print rich learning environment to teach and model effective language for all students.

Bilingual/ESL Instruction:

Bilingual and ESL teachers provide instruction for all students whose primary language is not English. The amount and intensity of services are determined by the students' needs and abilities. The students are monitored during the school year as appropriate, and services are adjusted as necessary. Francisca Alvarez Elementary adheres to McAllen ISD the time and treatment model provided by the Bilingual Department.

Additional Language (Spanish/English) Acquisition:

All students, Pre-K through fifth grade, at Francisca Alvarez Elementary receive Spanish (English for Bilingual classes) language instruction as an additional language. Students attend additional language classes at least 30 minutes twice a week. The additional language teacher provides instruction to support **reading, writing, listening, and speaking** as age appropriate.

Mother Tongue Language Support:

We provide opportunities for the students to actively use their mother tongue. School communications including newsletters, notices to parents, progress reports, and report cards are provided in mother tongue languages to families and interpreters are used for translation at conferences and parent meetings. Our parental involvement coordinator maintains contact and researches communication tools to assist families with their mother tongue.

Integration of Language into the POI

- Inquiry-based instruction
- Use of transdisciplinary skills
- Class discussions
- Cooperative grouping activities
- Student presentations (**oral, visual, written**)
- Display of student work
- Summative and Formative Assessments

Language Support

At School:

- *Sheltered Instruction*
- *Bilingual/ESL strategies*
- *Dyslexia Program*
- *Special Education/Inclusion/Resource classes*
- *Gifted and Talented/High Achievers classes*
- *Music classes*
- *Art*
- *Technology*
- *RTI*
- *Physical Education classes*

At Home:

In addition to all the support at school, we encourage parent to keep up the use of mother tongue development at home through **Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Audio-Visual**. We encourage parents to instill a passion in their child for a second language. Parents also have access to our school website (<http://alvarez.mcallenisd.org>), homework, and newsletters.

Monitoring

- Benchmarks
- Rubrics/Checklists/Teacher Observations
- Differentiated instruction and assessment
- Tutoring
- DMAC
- Weekly in class assessments
- iStation
- Guided Reading
- Fountas & Pinnell
- RTI
- LPAC every 6 weeks

Assessment

Language will be assessed according to the campus assessment policy.

Tools:

- Fountas and Pinnell
- CIRCLE (Pre K)
- State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR)
- Texas Curriculum Management Program Collaborative
- Teacher developed assessments
- State Adopted Reading and English as a Second Language Resources (iStation)
- TELPAS
- LasLinks
- PreLas
- DMAC reports

Strategies:

- What you know/What you want to learn/What did you Learn (KWL)
- Observed Think Question (OTQ)
- Realia
- Multi-media resources
- Six Traits of Writing
- Related Literature
- Graphic Organizers/Thinking Maps
- Refer to Sheltered Instruction Manual for additional strategies
- iStation activities
- small group intervention
- HEAT Framework
- Instructional Rounds

Continuing Professional Development

- Sheltered Instruction trainings
- Primary Years Programme (PYP) Category 1,2 and 3 trainings (on going)
- Gifted and Talented trainings
- Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) trainings
- Reading published resources/discussions/collaboration to deepen the understanding of teaching language through inquiry.
- Additional trainings based on staff development needs
- iStation
- Fountas and Pinnell
- Curriculum trainings such as Sharon Wells, Diana Ramirez, Guided Reading, Dyslexia (every six weeks)

Resources

Library: Our school librarian maintains the circulation of books and media to support the mother tongue and the newly acquire language(s). Our school librarian also maintains a designated section for books which support each unit of inquiry, attitudes, and attributes. Our classrooms are equipped with their own classroom libraries that are an essential resource to our students' success.

Technology: IPAD integration into our instruction aids in the support of students' mother tongue and the new language(s). Resources used are Epic, iStation, Sci-Tech

- Mackinvia app (students have access to an abundance of English and Spanish literature through the use of their IPADs).
- Accelerated Reader (AR) program

Language Policy Review

As a staff, we will review the language policy annually or as needed to integrate district initiatives.

Adopted: December 2012

Reviewed/Revised: August 2013

Reviewed/Revised: January 2018 (by staff and McAllen ISD Director of Bilingual Education & McAllen ISD Strategist of Bilingual Education)