

North Woods International Language Policy

Philosophy statement

Language acquisition and literacy are essential to all learning. Language is the connective tool through which we construct meaning, acquire knowledge and express our understandings. The acquisition of languages and the development of communication skills permeate our entire curriculum. Our Program of Inquiry provides an integrated, authentic and transdisciplinary approach to language expression and development. Because language is an integral means towards fostering communication and building social awareness, all teachers at North Woods International are accountable as language teachers.

Goals, Standards, and Practices

Goals

North Woods International is committed to nurturing the various processes involved with developing language acquisition and literacy. Language connects all subject areas and is woven in to our Program of Inquiry.

Our primary goal involves ensuring that all students become proficient in all areas of communication. We also strive to ingrain a love for reading and writing that permeates into other forms of expression. Our hope is that while our children's communication skills develop, they thoroughly enjoy the process.

Standards

Our language of instruction is American English. We explicitly teach and support student growth in six interconnected literacy strands. These strands are separated by three modes of communication.

- Written communication
 - Reading and writing
- Oral communication
 - Listening and speaking
- Visual communication
 - Viewing and presenting

The Wisconsin Common Core state standards provides a scope and sequence for developing communication skills across our grade levels; addressing all three modes of communication. Collaborative planning infuses this scope and sequence into our Program of Inquiry. Purposeful classroom focus engages students in inquiry based, active, and critical thinking. The strategies integrate language throughout all learning experiences.

Practices

Assessment data is collected and analyzed to ensure teachers are attentive to the diverse range of learning needs. By differentiating and modifying instruction, we accommodate the various levels of understanding and learning styles. The teaching and learning cycle is constantly employed. The result is a classroom environment designed for support and success.

We understand that developing literacy includes fostering a love for literature. Teachers create welcoming environments where imagination, creativity and self-expression are fostered. We instill courage the students require to stretch beyond their approximations, engage in divergent thinking and celebrate curiosity along with their subsequent discoveries. To this end teachers choose from an array of strategies that support and challenge the text being used, including but not exclusive to:

- Read Alouds
- Whole group mini-lessons
- Literature circles
- Guided/shared/independent reading
- Student presentations
- Independent book projects
- Reader's Theater
- Writer's Workshop
- Independent writing projects

Differentiated methods are incorporated into our spelling and grammar instruction.

Infusing all three modes of communication into our Program of Inquiry creates opportunities for exposure to both narrative and expository literature. These pieces represent a cross section of ideas, cultures and perspectives through a broad range of concepts and subject matter. Teachers adhere to the prescribed ratio of fiction to nonfiction as laid out by the Common Core State Standards, in order to facilitate skill development and comprehension.

All students engage in research utilizing primary and secondary sources. Exposure to print and a variety of electronic formats creates opportunities for students to practice compiling, summarizing and citing their research in an age-appropriate format.

Additional Language Acquisition

Learning more than one language enhances linguistic skills and broadens cultural understanding. All students at North Woods International School will receive instruction in Spanish. We currently have all students in kindergarten through 2nd grade receiving Spanish instruction. While in 3rd through 5th grade, only the students who are enrolled in our Spanish immersion program receive Spanish instruction. We are in the process of

phasing out the Spanish immersion strand so that we can provide Spanish instruction for all students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade.

Spanish Delivery at North Woods

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| K | Spanish instruction is given by the classroom teacher. Spanish is taught every day in either whole group, small groups, and centers. Interns assist in whole group and small group lessons daily, in the non-Spanish speaking teacher's classroom and every other day in the Spanish speaking teachers' classrooms. |
| 1 | Spanish instruction is taught through a rotating Spanish teacher and two interns. Students have a Spanish teacher all morning. Every 3 days they receive instruction from the first grade Spanish teacher, and from interns on the days when they are not with the Spanish teacher. |
| 2 | Spanish instruction is taught through a rotating Spanish teacher and two interns. Students have a Spanish teacher all afternoon. Every 3 days they receive instruction from the second grade Spanish teacher, and from interns on the days when they are not with the Spanish teacher. |
| 3 | Spanish instruction is given by bi-lingual instructors in the Spanish immersion strand. Spanish is taught every day in either whole group, small groups, and centers. Interns assist in whole group and small group lessons daily. |
| 4/5 | Spanish instruction is given by the bi-lingual instructor to both her classroom and the English teacher's classroom. Spanish is taught every day in either whole group, small groups, and centers. Interns assist in whole group and small group lessons daily. |

English Learner Support

English Learners receive in-class and small group support from two EL teachers and two EL aides. These staff members possess fluency in Hmong, Spanish, and Mandarin which uniquely equips them to address the diverse language needs of North Woods EL students in their primary language. North Woods EL teachers work closely with the classroom teachers to provide direction and collaboration in determining how to best support ELs in class.

The underlying philosophy of the EL program reflects strong adherence to the principles of teachers co-planning to co-serve to co-learn, which means that the EL program works to serve program students in the inclusive, non-marginalizing domain of the universal

classroom. As defined by DPI, the building's EL model reflects the district's alignment with the DPI approved service model "*Content-based ESL*." In this service model, students are supported by EL as often as possible in the context of the universal classroom. This model allows EL staff to support content-based learning related to both academic and linguistic dimensions while maintaining an inclusive environment.

EL students are identified for service through a state approved Home Language Survey leading up to a state approved language screening. Service for identified ELs then takes on several dimensions. Identified PK students are monitored and supported as needed in the context of their classrooms. Students in grades K-5 are served regularly, based on their level of proficiency and the level of linguistic demand they experience in their distinct grade level. Level 1 through 4 students are served and/or monitored on a regular basis to support language acquisition and academic success. EL students are exited from the program after attaining a level 5 score on a state approved assessment, and are then monitored for two years to assure continued success in school.

Review dates:

10/23/19