

# Tracey's Elementary School -Language Policy 2017-18

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## ***Purpose***

The Tracey Elementary School community recognizes that language forms the basis for all learning and plays an essential role in the education of a child. In the PYP language plays a vital role in student's construction of meaning. Our aim at Tracey's Elementary is to foster an appreciation of language where children can express themselves confidently and skillfully. The goal of this policy is to ensure that through the process of language development and acquisition, that the school's mission statement promoting the growth of positive relationships and life-long learning can be achieved.

## ***Language Philosophy***

At Tracey's Elementary School, we believe that all teachers are teachers of language. Our support staff, including specialists, contribute to each child's learning experiences and alongside the grade level teacher are responsible for the language of instruction. Embracing cultures, supporting the language of instruction and mother tongue languages of non-English speakers are goals set forth by our staff and implemented in our teaching. We understand that English language learners (ELL) are a diverse group of students, who have unique language, social-emotional and academic needs. We believe that instilling confidence in our students will lead to positive learning experiences and inspire a love of learning which will enable students to attain their goals. In order to develop language skills needed for success, we work collaboratively with the ELL specialist to build vital communication and foundation skills in literacy. Developing proficient skills in reading, writing and listening skills will help students make connections to other disciplines and their mother tongue. To meet their individual needs, our ELL students are supported with differentiated instruction and assessments. A variety of strategies are used to develop and reinforce language skills. We believe that an engaging and comfortable environment where students can construct meaning and make connections between their home culture and communities is vital to language acquisition. Extending social and academic interactions in class between the English Language Learners and their peers will develop language skills and motivate all students to learn about each other's cultures and promote the learning of an additional language.

## ***English Language Instruction***

### **Mother Tongue**

At Tracey's Elementary School, English is the primary language of instruction. We believe, that in order to be a life-long learner, a high degree of proficiency in reading, writing and spoken English is essential. As such, language instruction is integrated into all teaching and learning. To promote the development of language, we will focus on:

- Helping students obtain/maintain fluency. Continuous practice in reading, writing, speaking and listening
- Implementation of best teaching and learning practices throughout the transdisciplinary programme of inquiry
- Building on foundational skills in literacy
- Student instruction in all areas of language arts

- Vocabulary usage and development
- Reading in all content subject areas/disciplines
- A variety of practices used when planning for instruction
- Exposing student to a variety of genres including multicultural literature, poetry, short stories, plays, magazines, newspapers and informational text
- The development of writing supported by constructive feedback and reflection from teachers and peers
- Modeling language expectations
- Clear instructions
- Visual aids; pictures, word walls, non-verbal demonstrations
- Engagement in meaningful activities that strengthen English Language across disciplines
- Differentiation to facilitate growth and meet student needs
- Reflection on research based instructional practices
- Reading interventions
- Integrated into the reading program Reading practices
- Planned Community activities/events i.e. book fairs
- Conferencing

### ***Support for English Language Learners (ELL)***

Students whose dominant language is not English will receive support for their English Language development. At Tracey's Elementary we have 36 students whose mother tongue is not English and need additional support services to access the curriculum and develop communication skills.

Tracey's Elementary School supports our ELL students, their cultures and languages. The school has formal and informal services to support language development. Support consists of:

- Mother tongue literacy support. Providing resources such as books in the school's media center
- The use of translators to provide support with documents- report cards, conferences, meetings,etc
- Information regarding family of community resources that support their culture and language
- Instructional support for students with ELL specialist and reading intervention groups
- Building on prior knowledge; content/skills
- Ongoing school/parent communication
- Involvement in community events
- Support for Spanish Speakers- Spanish Language teacher
- Differentiated instruction and assessments; support for vocabulary development, grammatical structures, comprehension of instruction/directions, content related learning experiences
- Bilingual Outreach Facilitators
- Conferencing

### ***Spanish Language Instruction-Language B***

Tracey's Elementary school supports a culture of language that values multiple languages. Spanish is the additional language (Language B/PYP) taught at Tracey's Elementary from Kindergarten to Grade 5. A full time language teacher provides weekly lessons to students for one hour per week. Additionally, we have a

part-time language instructor that the Spanish language and culture into the classroom through games, songs, dance, and vocabulary development each week. At Tracey's Elementary, we believe that learning another language is beneficial to students and supports the development of the PYP Learner profile attributes, by helping students become more open-minded, knowledgeable, inquiring communicators. Students also benefit by gaining a greater awareness and understanding of cultures.

***Spanish Language instruction:***

- Weekly lessons that promote language skills and incorporate content from the Units of Inquiry
- Collaboration with the class teacher to reinforce Spanish vocabulary during regular classroom instruction (i.e. Greetings)
- The planning of developmentally appropriate lessons and assessments
- Collaboration between language teacher and media specialist to develop a section of developmentally appropriate Spanish books
- The use Rosetta Stone software to reinforce Spanish language
- Cultural element infusion
- Professional development presented to teachers and staff to aid them in learning common phrases to use in the classroom and office
- Display of signage of Spanish in classroom and around the school
- Development of school based activities: school announcements, presentations, etc.
- Authentic and meaningful engagement with the language
- Differentiated groups to allow for students to grow