

Language Policy

OLD MILL MIDDLE SCHOOL NORTH YEARS 1, 2 AND 3

Philosophy

Language is crucial to learning, and all teachers at Old Mill Middle School North are considered to be language teachers. We view the ongoing language development for students and the responsibility for all teachers, parents and students. Language learning refers not only to the learning of a second language, but includes activities that enhance both written and oral communication skills. We teach language through context and relate new information to existing knowledge. Through language, students develop critical thinking skills, social skills, and are provided with the building blocks of language necessary for acquiring knowledge related to all areas of the IB MYP curricular framework.

Students in the 21st century must learn to adapt to their ever changing environments. Therefore, the mission of Old Mill Middle School North is to assist all students in becoming productive citizens in a global society. We recognize that students must become both culturally and linguistically proficient in a second language.

The general language profile of Old Mill Middle School North includes:

- English-only background students with no previous second language exposure (77%)
- Bilingual students with have acquired both English and another language since birth (18%)
- Bilingual students with non-English speaking parents who have acquired English as a result of attending school (4%)
- Students with limited English proficiency and non-English speaking parents who are currently learning as a result of attending school (1%)

In addition to English, languages spoken by our students include the following:

Spanish	Farsi	Urdu	Gujarati	Afrikaans
French	Korean	Twi	Japanese	Filipino
			Youruba	Vietnamese

English

Students must meet English requirements provided by the state standards. As English is the language of instruction at Old Mill Middle School North, all students are required to take Language and Literature in English in grades six, seven and eight. For assessment purposes, we use IB MYP Language and Literature criteria in these courses. These courses support both MSDE standards and IB MYP objectives.

Language Acquisition

One of the many strengths of the Language Acquisition curriculum at Old Mill Middle School North is that it allows students to make links within and across subject areas. As students examine global cultures, they are able to gain appreciation of other cultures while coming to the realization that other people, with their differences, can also be right (*IB Mission Statement*).

In realizing that not every student will reach the same level of language proficiency at the same time, we offer a continuum of Language Acquisition courses that meet both the developing academic and social needs of all learners in order for all students to achieve his or her personal best, the aim is for each student is to reach his or her highest level of literacy and proficiency in a second language. We accommodate different learning styles with differentiated instruction according to student needs.

Language Acquisition courses include French, Spanish, and Chinese and are assessed using the Language Acquisition criteria. These courses support both MSDE standards and MYP objectives. Most of our students currently participate in a Language Acquisition course. All students whose academic background suggests that they are prepared to begin a course of Language Acquisition study are required to do so. Students who may be exempt from Language Acquisition include those requiring Reading Intervention course or an ESOL course.

Reading Intervention

Specific reading interventions are provided as an encore course for those students identified as needing focused and intensive reading instruction, in addition to the regularly scheduled Language and Literature class. These classes are designed to increase the student's specific reading need—decoding skills, fluency, and/or comprehension of text—in order to achieve higher levels of success. Students are placed in these programs only after testing and/or evaluation by the school's Reading Specialist.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

English Language learners are introduced to the English language and American culture by applying the theme of changes to their study of the language in all four skills areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Accommodations for students who are non-native English speakers include additional tutoring, curriculum modifications, and assistance from the school's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) instructor. Old Mill Middle School North provides separate ESOL classes for students who are acquiring English as a second language. Based on their language background and level of understanding in English, students are placed in one of three ESOL levels:

- **LEVEL 1** – Beginning level English language learners examine authentic literature with a balance of fiction and nonfiction, analyze types of text structure used in various writing models, and complete research projects and reports. Instruction includes systematic language development including literacy instruction and extended practice in applying the conventions to written English. ESOL teacher recommendation is required.

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- LEVEL 2 – Intermediate level English language learners examine authentic literature with a balance of fiction and nonfiction, write and present narrative, descriptive, technical, and persuasive writing, and complete research projects and reports. Instruction includes application of research and study skills including the use of technology to complete research projects. ESOL teacher recommendation is required.
- LEVEL 3-4 – Advanced level English language learners examine authentic literature. The students who take this course are also placed in a Language and Literature class and they are offered ESOL support services. ESOL teacher recommendation is required.

In addition to specific course offerings, the ESOL teacher collaborates with all staff members to provide extensive modifications and remediation for non-native speakers who struggle with the core language of instruction.