

Richards Middle School

Language Policy

Philosophy

At Richards Middle School, language is a vital instrument for learning and communicating. Language is the key to all learning, therefore, our language program is designed to encourage intercultural awareness, new perspectives and appreciation of our world's diversity. We achieve this by utilizing MYP Language Objectives as well as our district's guiding principles and state mandated standards. In all classes, every teacher is a teacher of language. Students read, speak, write, listen, and view varying passages for a number of purposes. Utilizing the inquiry based approach of the MYP curriculum framework, students explore language and become communicators in a multilingual world. We encourage all students to embrace the Learner Profile words to become lifelong learners, so they will have a chance of creating a better and more peaceful world. The ability to think and to learn is dependent on the knowledge acquired through language.

Learning of the Host Country or Regional Language and Culture

Instruction and assessment at Richards Middle School is primarily taught in English. This includes English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). The Language Acquisition courses are the exceptions because the teachers utilize the immersion approach of learning a secondary language. Primary communication to all stakeholders will be conducted in English. Teaching is a complex activity that occurs within webs of social, historical, and cultural significance. All teachers are responsible for instructional communication via speaking, reading, and writing in the primary school language. Professional development and school initiatives will support this concept.

Mother Tongue Support

At Richards Middle School, we support our families whose native language is not English. We encourage our parents and students to speak and develop their mother tongue at home, club associations and community activities. This immersion strengthens the child's language skills while instilling a sense of importance about his/her culture. Richards Middle School does not offer additional mother tongue instruction. However, we provide active support and development by assisting parents in accessing materials in the mother tongue and provide extended mother tongue resources in the school's media center. When appropriate and feasible, parental communiqués will be translated into Spanish, as Spanish is the most prevalent mother tongue among Richards Middle School students to whom English is a second language.

Language & Literature

In order to promote holistic learning within the context of the IB MYP, students, school personnel, and parents recognized the importance of language throughout the program. The development of Language & Literature is crucial as it allows students to make connections with and across subject areas, facilitated by key and related concepts, and Global Contexts.

Language Acquisition Goals

Learning a language should involve understanding how languages and cultures are a fundamental part of people's lives. Therefore, all MYP students are required to learn at least one language in addition to their mother tongue. RMS recognizes the importance of equipping our students with knowledge, skills and capabilities to communicate and work with our international neighbors. RMS strives to make every student proficient in two languages.

Support for Students

Teachers will support students by incorporating differentiation strategies and/or language acquisition in their teaching practices. All teachers have had and will continue to receive professional development in differentiated learning. Teachers will receive e-mail newsletters from consultants who are formally trained to provide support of learners who have a different mother tongue than English.

The following reading practices will be implemented:

- Teachers will ensure that reading takes place in all subject areas, and students will read across the curriculum whenever appropriate;
- Students will be encouraged to read for information, read for pleasure and read aloud expressively;
- Students will be exposed to a variety of genres, including literature, poetry, plays, short stories, newspapers/magazines, and informational text;
- Teachers will promote and incorporate supplemental reading incentive and support programs, such as Achieve 3000;
- Teachers will encourage students to utilize the foreign language collection in the media center to read a variety of books (picture books, fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels) in Spanish.

The following writing practices will be implemented:

- The written response strategy R.A.C.E.R will be implemented throughout the curriculum;
- The inquiry based project DBQ, Document-Based Question, will be utilized by teachers;
- Lessons utilizing CISM Comprehensive Instructional Sequence Module will be promoted by teachers;
- Teachers will implement the writing portion of the computer software program, Achieve 3000;
- Students will be given opportunities to express themselves in writing through a variety of genres, including but not limited to journaling, essays, poetry, and short stories;
- Development of writing will be supported by providing constructive feedback from teachers and peers

Process for Review of Policy

A committee will be formed consisting of key stakeholders from Richards Middle School to evaluate the Language Policy annually. During this annual evaluation, the policy will be reviewed for needed updates and revisions, as well as to assess the effectiveness of the implementation and to ensure the policy is communicated to all stakeholders.

Language Policy Review Timeline

Richards Middle School staff will review the Language Policy annually.

- This document was created by the Language Policy Committee at Richards Middle School Spring of 2016.
- This document was reviewed by teachers October 2021.

References:

- Muscogee County Schools, Department of Special Education and Psychological Services
- Muscogee County Schools, Department of Accelerated Programs and Gifted Education
- Muscogee County Schools, English Language Learners (ELL) Program
- *Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes (2008)*
- *International Baccalaureate From Principles to Practice; Language and Identity (May 2014)*
- *International Baccalaureate From Principles to Practice; Multilingualism and intercultural understanding (May 2014)*