

Hutchinson Middle School

Language Policy

The administration, faculty, staff and parents of Hutchinson Middle School work collaboratively to support student learning through integrated units of study, and inquiry based problem solving. Hutchinson celebrates a diverse student population, representing 28 world languages. Ethnic and cultural differences are shared and appreciated. Students learn the importance of contributing to the global community through participation in service-oriented activities with a focus on international mindedness.

LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

Hutchinson Middle School believes that language is the vehicle for all learning. Students read, write, speak, and listen in order to relate to the world around them. Language is used in constructing meaning and is intimately connected to a people's relationship with the world and how they come to feel about the world. *According to Learning in a Language Other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*, language development through the language and learning continuum is constructed through these 3 aspects: learning language, learning through language, and learning about language (12).

The goal of this policy is to outline an inclusion system that allows for teachers and students to work collaboratively to help learners develop an understanding of themselves at a level where they can self-advocate (*International Baccalaureate Programmes*, 2). This document will be used to inform all stake holders of federal, state, district, and school responsibilities. This policy is a living document that may change based on updates in federal, state, or district regulations and/or best practices identified by the school or IB organization.

The chart below shows the number of students identified as English Language Learners.

Number of Students Identified as an English Language Learners	Percent of Population (based on an enrollment of 784)
5	0.6 % (less than 1%)

SCHOOL OBLIGATIONS: CURRENT PRACTICES RELATING TO LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Development and Maintenance of Mother Tongue

Federal guidelines do not require testing students whose primary or home language is other than English (PHLOTE) in their native or home language. However, information regarding a

student's native language proficiency is often useful in determining the most appropriate instructional approaches. It is also helpful when deciding whether or not special education testing might be appropriate. Upon entry into a school district, first language proficiency and academic assessment are important for English Language Learners (ELLs) who have been receiving services in their native languages. Native language proficiency and academic assessment provide information that helps:

- ✓ Determine language dominance and strength
- ✓ Preview language learning abilities as a pre-assessment for special education consideration
- ✓ Measure students' initial academic knowledge in content area subject
- ✓ Measure students' growth in academic knowledge when instructed in the native language
- ✓ Predict student's ability to meet or exceed state standards at selected grade levels

In addition, our media center houses multiple books and online data bases through which students may read books in the mother tongue.

Guidelines for Instruction

Hutchinson Middle School seeks to “encourage students to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.” (*IB Mission Statement*, 2004). In order to support development of the mother tongue, the ELL students are supported in many ways. Through the articulation and specific and targeted teaching of Approaches to Learning Skills, students who are learning in a language other than the mother tongue are receiving scaffolding of their language development.

According to *Learning in a Language Other than Mother Tongue*, Cummins (2007) proposes that the four dimensions of teaching that are particularly important in ensuring learning participation and promoting engagement are:

- 1) To activate prior understanding and build background knowledge
- 2) To scaffold meaning
- 3) To extend language
- 4) To affirm identify

Hutchinson has adopted these principles as good practice and outlined instruction in the Language Policy to match these 4 areas.

Activation of Prior Knowledge

In order for new learning to take place, instruction needs to happen with the learner's prior knowledge in mind. General education teachers work collaboratively within vertical teams

to communicate students' previous learning experiences and prior knowledge. Prior knowledge is considered for differentiation of learning. Differentiation and strategies for building or extending background knowledge is documented in the IB unit planner.

With the given information about the student, teachers use best practices and strategies to activate the prior knowledge of all students. These research-based activities may include:

- ✪ Activating prior knowledge using the student's mother tongue when available through video or text
- ✪ Cooperative learning structures that ensure active engagement can be used before a lesson to prompt students to think about new content. In many cases students whose mother tongue is not English are exposed to the language of learning while being supported by teachers and peers to increase the amount of comprehensible input
- ✪ Image brainstorming whereby students list everything they know about an image related to the lesson
- ✪ K/W/L charts help activate prior understanding and encourage students to building on that knowledge to create new meaning
- ✪ Video clips can be shown to frontload learning through multiple media sources
- ✪ Cross-curricular connections are made to build on learning that students gain in other content areas and synthesize that information for use in their own area. The related concepts and content are documented in interdisciplinary unit planners

Scaffolding

According to Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programmes, scaffolding is a temporary strategy that enables learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be impossible or much more difficult to accomplish (6). Visual aids, cooperative learning structures, modeling of thinking, dramatization, small group instruction, and use of the mother tongue or best language to develop ideas and initial plans are some of the examples of scaffolding strategies. Tutoring is offered before and after school every day. Finally, the Approaches to Learning skills have also been strategically articulated to provide structure to the implementation of important skills.

Reading

Since language is central to learning, all Hutchinson Middle School teachers are considered teachers of reading, writing, and language. Teachers implement strategies to help scaffold learning for students. *Learning in a Language Other than Mother Tongue* recommends learning about language such as word roots and how linguistic genres work in order to give learners

access to a rich diversity of sophisticated texts (7). In addition, interaction with digital and printed text enhances language development. ATL skills also support reading acquisition.

Writing

All teachers place a strong emphasis on writing. Since all teachers at Hutchinson consider themselves to be reading and writing teachers, they work together to foster strong writing skills in the children. One strategy they have implemented is to provide frequent OER (Open-Ended Response) opportunities for students. In all subjects, teachers design bell ringers (opening activities), classroom assignments, homework, and exit tickets in a format that requires the students to process and reflect upon learning in written form. Students are encouraged to provide as many details as possible to demonstrate their learning of various content areas. In addition, the Language and Literature teachers have placed an increased emphasis on correctly and consistently using text evidence when writing about a piece of literature. In accordance with the Academic Honesty Policy, students are learning how to use and appropriately cite excerpts and evidence from text when defending a position, drawing a conclusion, or making a predictive statement based on their reading. The Language and Literature teachers use the acronym “PEE” to help students ensure they structure their OERs appropriately. “P” is the point they are making (their answer to the question posed). The first “E” reminds students to provide evidence or examples to prove their position. The last “E” prompts students to explain their evidence and to provide further details.

Hutchinson teachers also emphasize the acquisition of a strong, broad vocabulary in order to eloquently express thoughts, ideas, and opinions in writing. Subject-specific academic vocabulary is taught, explored, and practiced; the result is students who are able to process and conceptualize content-related information at a higher level. They are also able to make cross-curricular connections when they recognize and understanding the meaning of vocabulary in various subjects. Sharing key and related concepts, global contexts, and Approaches to Learning facilitates the process of developing common, interrelated vocabulary word and skills throughout the building.

Oral Language

Cooperative learning strategies support students in language use and acquisition. Teachers engage all students in speaking. The Learner Profile attributes are emphasized in this process. The expectation in classrooms is that students will be risk takers and volunteer to speak and attempt to answer questions in class. When students have questions, teachers create classroom environments where students are free to be inquirers and seek out information by asking questions and providing comments regarding the material. Students

are praised for being caring and open-minded and allowing others with different opinions to express those in a safe atmosphere. We want students to learn from each other. This is possible when the Learner Profile attribute of “communicator” is developed. When students express themselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways, all students benefit. (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013). Listening to the perspectives of others fosters high levels of inquiry and understanding.

Extending Learning

All faculty at Hutchinson strive to instruct students at a level that affords them the opportunity to interact with rigorous curricula through inquiry-based education. Learner-centered practices and interaction with rich materials and experiences are combined with high expectations in an environment of inclusion to help all learners be successful. Assistive technology, where needed, is offered to students to guarantee access to such materials. Hutchinson Middle School has a ratio of technology that allows all students access to the internet and technological resources.

Affirming Identity and Building Self-Esteem

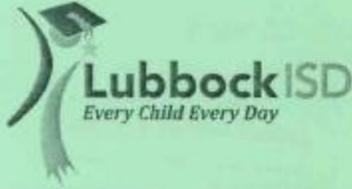
Affirming identity and building self-esteem is achieved through the creation of an inclusive environment where social and emotional conditions value all languages and cultures and affirm identities of each learner. This goal is primarily met through the intentional focus on inquiry, the learner profile, action, and international mindedness. Building programs and practices reinforce these opportunities. Students are encouraged to share their differences. Although 99.6% of our students are proficient in the English language, many speak one or more additional languages. Hutchinson is in Lubbock, Texas, the location of Texas Tech University. This major university draws visiting professors and students from all over the world. Hutchinson is located less than a mile from the university. This, coupled with our consistently high performing academic achievements, leads many of the Texas Tech families to enroll their children at this school. Teachers, administrators, and counselors encourage those students to share their knowledge and experiences with their classmates. Students who travel abroad are encouraged to detail their experiences in classrooms upon their return. As teachers present new information about different cultures, religions, and economies, they seek out and enthusiastically receive information from students who have lived in other places or experienced different cultural influences. One of the tenets of our school is that “differences are shared AND celebrated.” This is in practice on a daily basis.

MOTHER TONGUE IDENTIFICATION AND SUPPORT

Hutchinson Middle School has few students who are second language learners. In 2015-2016, there are 5 English Language Learners (ELLs) enrolled.

Step 1 – Identification of Students whose Primary or Home Language is Other than English

A Home Language Survey must be completed for each student upon initial enrollment in the Lubbock ISD. It should be provided in the language most frequently spoken in the local community. It is advisable that this be one of the first forms completed during the registration process for all students. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) provides suggestion regarding the information to include in the Home Language Survey. Lubbock ISD utilizes the HLS shown below:

	LUBBOCK INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY (PK – 12) (English)	ORIGINAL Home Language Survey DO NOT REMOVE or DISCARD Date: _____
Student Name: _____	School: _____	
Student Address: _____	Home Phone: _____	
Date of Birth: _____ Month Day Year	Grade: _____	
The Texas Education Code requires schools to determine the language(s) spoken at home by each student. This information is essential in order for schools to provide meaningful instruction to all students. Please answer the following questions.		
PART A		
1. What language is spoken in your home most of the time? English _____ Spanish _____ Other (Specify) _____		
2. What language does the student speak most of the time: English _____ Spanish _____ Other (Specify) _____		
Grades PK – 8 _____ (Parent or Guardian) _____ (Date)	Grades 9 – 12 _____ (Parent or Guardian or Student) _____ (Date)	
PART B		
Place of Birth (Country of Origin) City _____ Country _____	Date of initial entry into U.S. schools Month _____ Day _____ Year _____	Number of complete years in a U.S. School: PK _____ K _____ 1 st _____ 2 nd _____ 3 rd _____ 4 th _____ 5 th _____ 6 th _____ 7 th _____ 8 th _____ 9 th _____ 10 th _____ 11 th _____ 12 th _____
When your child lived outside the U.S., did he or she attend school regularly? (Check one)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, my child attended school regularly in all previous grades outside the U.S. If yes, length of time attended _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> No, my child missed significant portions of one or more school years. If no, length of time missed _____		
NOTE TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL:		
1. Signed copy of the Home Language Survey (HLS) must be filed in the student's permanent folder 2. Part A, an answer of a language other than English to either Question #1 or #2 identifies a student for oral language proficiency assessment 3. Part B, is required for identification of immigrant students. An immigrant student is one who was born outside of the United States or its territories and has been attending schools in the United States for less than three complete academic years	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, NEEDS OLPT ENTRY TESTING (if entering grades PK-12) Student must be tested, identified, and placed in an appropriate program within 4 weeks of enrollment.	
ORIGINAL HLS – Student LEP Folder		
Revised June 2015		

The district must ensure that all students have a completed home language survey on file (including monolingual English speakers). If any response on the home language questionnaire indicates the use of a language other than English by the student or another person in the home, further investigation must be conducted to determine the student's English language proficiency. The use of a language other than English does not signify that the student is not a competent and proficient English speaker. The school district must establish an effective and systematic procedure to identify all ELLs. The identification, assessment, and placement procedure in Lubbock ISD includes the following:

Home language surveys (HLS) are completed as part of the registration process to identify PHLOTE students. Surveys remain on file and easily accessible to school and district staff and available for state audits.

- ◆ Assessment for all students who are new to Lubbock ISD and identified as PHLOTE is conducted to determine English language proficiency
- ◆ Parents are notified regarding the testing results and the services available for their children
- ◆ When appropriate, students are identified as ELLs and scheduled for services
- ◆ Ongoing assessment and monitoring of language and academic growth occurs

Step 2 – Assessment of English Language Proficiency (confirmation of the Home Language Survey)

When all HLS responses indicate that English is the primary language used by the student and all individuals in the home, the student is considered an English-only speaker. Procedures established by Lubbock ISD for placement in the general student population are followed.

When the survey indicates that a language other than English is the primary language spoken, the district uses the Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey-Revised (Oral Language Proficiency Test) to assess the English language proficiency of all PHLOTE students. Based on the results of the assessment and a body of evidence, each PHLOTE student will be identified as either proficient in English (non-LEP) or as an English Language Learner (ELL). Program placement and instructional decisions will be based on the student's English language proficiency designation and the body of evidence. Lubbock ISD has identified scores that determine the categorization.

Purposes of Language Proficiency Testing

A well-planned, appropriate program of language proficiency assessment is critical to ensure that the instructional program complies with legal requirements and that the educational needs of ELLs are being met. The district plan includes an ongoing program of assessment of student progress to support educational planning and monitor student achievement. It is

essential that all five language proficiency areas are assessed in English and in the student's native language when possible: comprehension, speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In Texas, ELLs are assessed each spring in all 5 areas. The STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) assesses reading comprehension, and the TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System) assesses the other 4 areas as noted below).

TELPAS Assessment Components

TELPAS assesses the English language proficiency of K-12 ELLs in four language domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. English language proficiency assessments in grades K-12 are federally required to evaluate the progress that ELLs make in becoming proficient in the use of academic English. The assessment components for grades K-1 and 2-12 differ in the following ways:

- **Grades K-1:** TELPAS includes holistically rated listening, speaking, reading, and writing assessments based on ongoing classroom observations and student interactions.
- **Grades 2-12:** TELPAS includes multiple-choice reading tests, holistically rated student writing collections, and holistically rated listening and speaking assessments. The listening and speaking assessments are based on ongoing classroom observations and student interactions.

English language proficiency tests in reading have been administered as part of the Texas Student Assessment Program since 1999-2000. The holistically rated assessments have been administered since 2003-2004.

Historical information about TELPAS may be found in the annual Texas Student Assessment Program Technical Digest at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/techdigest>.

Each spring, the LPAC (Language Proficiency Assessment Committee) convenes to review student progress. The committee considers performance on TELPAS, STAAR, and report cards as they review each student. In order to be considered non-LEP, the student must achieve the district-determined levels on the measures above. In addition, other assessments, such as ITBS, TPRI, Tejas Lee, or other norm-referenced standardized achievement tests may be conducted and considered. If a parent is not in attendance, summarizing documentation from the meeting is mailed to them.

Throughout the time a student is identified as ELL, the LPAC committee, teachers, and administrators monitor academic progress. Grades are monitored each 6 weeks. If an ELL student has a failing grade (69 or below), the LPAC reviews services and adjusts as necessary to improve success. Teachers store all paperwork regarding ELL students in a secure location. The counselor who oversees the program and services for ELL students utilizes a computer-based program called Project ELL. This system automatically populates current grades, test scores, and other information helpful to the LPAC for the purposes of planning effective instruction for ELL students.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Hutchinson Middle School has ESL-certified teachers on every grade level. They have earned this certification after participating in professional development and passing a state-level ESL test. In addition, continued research into best practices occurs on a continuous basis, and

teachers have opportunities to participate in district- and region-sponsored professional development.

The state of Texas offers resources on its website. These tools can assist teachers in finding methods for successfully instructing ELLs in the classroom. An informational portal is available at <http://www.elltx.org/>



FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Spanish is the foreign language offered to the students at Hutchinson Middle School. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, every 6th grade student and approximately one-half of the 8th grade students were enrolled in Spanish. With the hiring of an additional Spanish teacher, all 6th and 7th grade students, and one-half of the 8th grade students (the ones who took Spanish the previous year) are enrolled in Spanish during the 2015-2016 school year. Hutchinson will hire 1 more Language Acquisition teacher for the 2016-2017 school year, and every student in the building will be enrolled in a language other than English. Foreign language instruction consists of students being placed in Spanish as they enter Year 1 (6th grade). In the event that we offer another option for foreign language instruction in the future, students will remain in the same Language Acquisition content throughout their three years at Hutchinson.

The decision to offer Spanish instruction was based on the large number of citizens in the local community and in the state of Texas who speak Spanish. In addition, students from Hutchinson may continue their instruction in Spanish, regardless of which of the 4 district high schools they choose to attend. All Lubbock ISD schools have a Spanish program within their schools.

COMMUNICATION AND REVIEW OF THE LANGUAGE POLICY

All policies in relation to the implementation of the IB program are available on the school's website. Review and revisions of the Language policy will take place annually with the Language Acquisition teachers, the administrative team, the LPAC/ELL support services coordinator, lead teachers, and the MYP IB Coordinator each spring. This policy is a living document that may be updated due to changes in laws or policies.

RESOURCES

Added by Acts, 1975, State of Texas 74th Legislature, Chapter 260

“Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004.” US Department of Education. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) IDEA. Web. 11 November 2014.

Educator Guide to TELPAS Grades K–12 , Texas Education Agency (PDF posted 12/20/11)

IB Learner Profile. International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013.

Lubbock Independent School District website, GT informational page.

“Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme, and Diploma Programme: Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programmes: Special Education needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes. Cardiff, Wales: International Baccalaureate organization, 2010. Print.

Webb, Norman L, et al. “Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Levels.” Wisconsin Center of Educational Research. University of Wisconsin-Madison. 2 February 2006. PDF File.