

# PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

Bloomfield Hills Schools



**Bloomin' Preschool**  
**Lone Pine Elementary School**  
**West Hills Middle School**

## 2014-2015 School Language Policy and Practices

### International Baccalaureate Programme Standards and Practices

#### Standard B1: Leadership and structure

The school's leadership and administrative structures ensure the implementation of the IB programme(s).

- B1.5: The school develops and implements policies and procedures that support the programme(s).
  - B1.5.a: The school has developed and implements a language policy consistent with IB expectations.

#### Standard A7: Philosophy

The school's educational beliefs and values reflect IB philosophy.

- A.7: The school places importance on language learning including mother tongue, host country language and other languages.
  - A.7.a: The school makes provisions for students to learn a language, in addition to the language of instruction, at least from the age of seven. Schools with two languages of instruction are not required to offer an additional language.
  - A.7.b: The school supports mother tongue and host country language learning.

### ***Mission Statements***

The mission of Bloomin' Preschools is to promote a warm, safe, and healthy environment. We believe in educating the whole child, in an environment that promotes self-confidence, risk-taking, creativity, and independence.

The mission of Lone Pine Elementary School is to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which students achieve personal and academic excellence, demonstrate integrity, caring and responsibility, and become empowered, internationally-minded citizens and lifelong learners.

The mission of West Hills Middle School is to ensure academic excellence, promote an enduring passion for learning, and encourage global citizenship while celebrating the success of each individual learner.

## ***Introduction***

This document is designed as a statement of philosophy and beliefs, and as a source of information for our community on our Language Policy throughout the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme continuum at Bloomin' Preschool at Lone Pine, Lone Pine Elementary School, and West Hills Middle School.

## ***School Language Philosophy***

The goal of Lone Pine's and West Hills' language program is to encourage all students to feel competent and confident as they read, write, speak and listen. The schools embrace and respect individual student differences and provide a variety of opportunities for all students to achieve. Language development is fostered throughout the day as it is incorporated within the total school environment.

## ***Practices of the Language Policy***

Bloomin' Preschool, Lone Pine, and West Hills embrace and respect individual differences, providing a variety of opportunities for all students to achieve. All students receive language instruction and support based upon individual and small group needs.

English language instruction is an integral part of the curriculum and is incorporated throughout the units of inquiry. Each grade level utilizes spelling and writing programs that allow for differentiation and acceleration.

Students in grades K-3 receive 60-90 minutes of Spanish instruction each week, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders receive 60 minutes per week, and pre-school students receive Spanish twice per week. Non-English speaking students are a part of the Newcomers Classrooms in K-5 and receive direct English instruction from certified ESL teachers within those classrooms. As their English becomes more proficient, they move out into the appropriate general education grade level classrooms while continuing to receive regular support from the ESL staff.

Qualified students needing support with language development beyond the classroom have additional instruction provided by General Education Resource Teacher (GERT) support (K-5), English as a Second Language support (K-5), and/or special education support (Pre-K-5).

Both the WHMS and Lone Pine Media Centers house a variety of materials to support students and professional staff, including literacy libraries, e-books, software, multiple forms of media, and professional collections. Additionally, a variety of fiction and non-fiction books written in a variety of mother tongues are available to our students.

### **1. Integration of Language Instruction**

Narrative and expository texts related to each unit of inquiry are an integral part of the curriculum. Teachers and students are continually adding to classroom and school collections as new texts become available. Media, such as computer software, internet resources, video streaming and online databases help support units of inquiry. Informational signs around the buildings are in Spanish, English and the languages of our EL students. The Spanish teachers integrate lessons that support the units of inquiry at each grade level. The ESL teachers work alongside the grade level teachers to help their students develop an understanding of the concepts addressed. When possible, English Learners provide an international perspective to the units of inquiry.



## **2. Language Support**

To enable all students to participate as fully as possible, a variety of support services and enrichments are in place. Assignments are differentiated by classroom teachers for students who need additional instruction or enrichment. Materials and books are chosen to meet each child's independent reading level or are modified as appropriate.

If a child qualifies for additional support in language, s/he may receive ESL, GERT, or special education services. The ESL teachers support and reinforce general education instruction with vocabulary development, activation of prior knowledge, introduction of concepts, simplified directions, further discussion, and related activities. The general and special education teachers also assist classroom teachers with instruction as needed, providing additional materials and/or helping to differentiate for specific students through small group or individualized instruction, while maintaining the integrity of the units of inquiry.

In preschool classrooms, materials are labeled to be representative of mother tongue of the students. Spanish speaking students are supplied Spanish texts alongside English texts as visual aids.

Additional integrative technology is provided where appropriate across pre-K - 5th grade.

## **3. Identifying Language Needs**

Pre-K-5 students are given a variety of formal and informal assessments, which may include but are not limited to DIBELS, Marie Clay's Observational Survey, Creative Curriculum Assessment System, the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2), the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP), the NWEA MAP or MPG in reading and language, Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) writing assessments, the Lone Pine K-3 writing rubric assessments, the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI), the Woodcock Munoz (WM), teacher created Spanish assessments, annual district common grade level Spanish assessments (currently under development), and the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) tests in reading and writing.

In addition to the above (as appropriate) identified special education students and or students identified for additional literacy support are regularly assessed using Curriculum Based Measurement (CBM) assessments in reading, language, and writing. Special education students are also assessed formally with comprehensive evaluations every three years. English Learners are assessed with the WIDA W-APT upon initial enrollment and every spring thereafter with the full WIDA ACCESS. Special education, 504, and ESL students' assessments are modified as determined through their IEPs, 504 plans, or by recommendation of their caseworker. Each of these assessments provides teachers with insight into students' reading and/or writing levels and helps identify individual student's language needs.

Assessment results are reviewed and analyzed by each school's Building Instructional Team (BIT) upon referral of a student for assistance. These teams meet weekly and work with classroom teachers to design interventions, suggest modifications or accommodations, or determine appropriate support services for individual students. Grade level teams also meet to look at assessment results by grade level, refining and redefining lessons if assessment results demonstrate a need.

## **4. Differentiation**

Reading workshop, guided reading, and writing workshop approaches are used in all K-5 classrooms to offer students instruction at individualized levels.

Instructional techniques in Spanish are designed to appeal to a variety of different learning styles, and utilize a variety of differentiation techniques including: wait time, opportunities to build upon the responses of others, technology to support instruction, a variety of classroom learning areas, a variety of available resources, extensive visual displays, and the extensive use of gestures, content integration, and activation of prior knowledge.

In addition to the differentiated approaches above, English Learners are provided with available mother tongue dictionaries at school, and are encouraged to bring electronic translators from home. These assist with content vocabulary and concepts that can be difficult to grasp without mother-tongue support. Students with the same mother tongue who have been in the United States for a longer period of time will frequently assist those who have less language acquisition. English Learners may be paired up with others to work together on projects and assignments.

Special education staff (including the Academic Resource Room teachers, the Resource Room teachers, and the Speech and Language Pathologists) collaborate to develop instructional programs in language for their identified students. Teacher created activities and available resources are customized to meet students' language needs. Students whose Individual Educational Plans (IEP's) include language goals receive individualized instruction in language utilizing research-based strategies. Vocabulary development, the introduction of concepts, simplification of directions, and development of knowledge and skill foundations are all fundamental to the language support of special needs students.

Academically talented students are encouraged and supported in taking their learning to the next level by classroom teachers. Materials are provided to enable students to utilize their advanced skills. In addition, MAP (Maximizing Academic Potential) services are available to all students and may involve developing a personalized curriculum for individual students utilizing the support of the General Education Resource Teachers (GERTs).

## **5. Classroom Libraries and the Lone Pine and West Hills Media Centers**

The Media Specialists at both Lone Pine and West Hills take part in each grade level's team planning, working alongside each team to assess the media and technology needs of the school. Media Center materials' collections are regularly updated to support the Units of Inquiry: additions to the world language collection are made continuously to reflect languages spoken in the school. Titles are often donated by parents of our English Learner students, ensuring that these collections accurately reflect the languages spoken by this population.

Classroom libraries include fiction and nonfiction leveled resources which coordinate with each Unit of Inquiry. The resources within the classroom are diverse to appropriately address each child's reading level.

The World Language teachers participate fully in the staff development training in the buildings. Whenever possible, language instruction is coordinated with the classroom curriculum. World Languages teachers are also involved in selecting multimedia resources in Spanish or French (at WHMS) to enhance their instruction.

Internet resources and Promethean boards in every K-5 classroom, iPads in all general education classrooms, laptops, and Chromebooks available for check-out continue to add depth and dimension to the Units of Inquiry.

## **6. Parent Support**

Elementary parents attend intake conferences at the beginning of the school year to set goals for their children with the classroom teachers and provide the teachers with information that may be helpful in tailoring instruction to meet student needs. All parents are asked to complete a MAP services form for intake conferences. Additionally, parents attend a beginning of the year Curriculum Night where they are provided with information regarding content area expectations and an overview of the Programme of Inquiry. Extensive information for parents regarding our curriculum and programming is also available on our school websites and is provided at the start of each unit through the unit overviews.

Parents are encouraged to explore the concepts and ideas from the units of inquiry with their child at home through literature, discussions and experiences. Within many PYP units opportunities exist for students to showcase their learning for an audience that includes parents, as a way of communicating their learning and encouraging parent support. Teachers highlight the current unit of inquiry in weekly classroom newsletters or classroom websites, and through unit overviews which include suggested home connections.

Parents are encouraged to serve as resources for student inquiries. Parents who speak different languages or who have lived in different countries frequently share their cultural knowledge and experiences with students as guest speakers or classroom volunteers.

Our Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) are active partners in supporting the schools' curricular programming, and provide many venues for parents with questions or concerns to be heard. The PTO also hosts guest speakers to offer parents information and guidance in understanding the schools' curriculum and programming.

## **7. Staffing and Professional Development**

A variety of ongoing staff development opportunities exist for teachers at Bloomin' Kids Preschool, Lone Pine, and West Hills. Classroom teachers have attended professional writing workshops such as Lucy Caulkins, and EET (Expanding Expression Tool), and have received training in reading and writing instruction and assessment through our county servicing agency, Oakland Schools. Many Lone Pine/West Hills teachers and support staff have participated in an after-school book club, choosing selections which will enhance knowledge and skills in a variety of curriculum areas. Several Lone Pine and WHMS teachers have attended PYP Category III workshops on reading and writing through inquiry.

Staffing to support language needs includes a full time certified ESL teacher and paraprofessional in each building, K-5. Special education support services (resource room teachers and paraprofessionals, Functional Resource Program teachers, Academic Resource Program teachers and paraprofessionals, and speech and language pathologists) are available in each building for qualified students in pre K-5<sup>th</sup> grades. GERT services are available for all K-5 students as determined through the BIT process. Representatives from multiple grade level receive WIDA training, facilitated by the Title III district coordinator.

## **8. Resources for Language Learning**

The school district and individual buildings provide professional development to teachers in a variety of areas, and recommend/provide professional resources and instructional tools for teachers as needed. Teachers attending workshops outside of the district are required to share their learning with their staffs using a train the trainers model.

Our ESL, speech pathologists, and Spanish teachers share current materials relevant to language learning. ESL teachers, students, and families recommend books and activities to help students maintain and grow in their primary languages. The Building Instructional Team, which includes the Speech Pathologist, Social

Worker, Psychologist, General Education Resource Teachers, Special Education Teacher and Principal, also recommend strategies and materials to assist with language learning. Each of these specialists themselves is a valuable resource.

Our resources are constantly growing and evolving. The following are some but not all of the resources that are currently used to implement the language policy: Reading Recovery, Developmental Reading Assessment, Writing Workshop, Read Naturally, Accelerated Reader, Literacy Library, Leap Frog, On Our Way to English, Language!, Reading A to Z, MLPP (Michigan Language Proficiency Profile), Reading Connections parent newsletters, Babelzone, LinguaFun, Creative Curriculum, Atlas Rubicon, Visible Thinking routines, Making Meaning, Being a Writer, Words Their Way, Guided Spelling, internet resources, audiobooks, various iPad apps, Promethean Planet resources, Activboard shared lessons, EET, Media Center resources, teacher designed lessons and units, diagnostic testing, classroom libraries, classroom novel sets, listening centers, and classroom informational reading texts. Lastly, the best resource for implementing the language policy is the staff themselves.

## **9. Student Proficiency Levels**

Language Proficiency levels are monitored on an ongoing basis utilizing the assessments outlined above in Section 3. Students failing to achieve required proficiency levels or who fail to show expected growth over time are closely monitored and/or referred to the BIT for intervention.

## ***Mother-Tongue Support***

### **1. Resources**

Teachers encourage students to view English Learners (ELs) as resources in the classrooms. ELs are proud to share their linguistic, cultural, and geographical knowledge with classmates in their primary language whenever relevant.

The Media Centers are continually updating and adding to their collections of materials in other languages. Books, magazines and other resources are available for all levels. Families from the Newcomers Class often donate materials that are no longer needed at home. Students researching online often have the information translated into their mother tongues for reading/comprehension purposes. Signs throughout the schools are labeled in the languages spoken by students in the school.

When students need assistance in their mother tongue, staff will look to older students with more advanced English skills, parents, community members, Google Translate and/or staff members with experience in that language. The Intermediate School District will provide a list of translators if they are needed during IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) meetings or for specific translation tasks for parent communication.

### **2. Information for Parents**

Our ESL teacher shares information with any family requesting information on mother-tongue classes offered through external agencies (currently available in our community in German and Japanese). Formal translation services for parents are available upon request through our county service agency (Oakland Schools).

### **3. Mother-tongue Development at Home**

Students and parents are encouraged to keep up the mother-tongue development through after school and

weekend classes provided by outside agencies. Our schools accommodate those students who might need to leave early certain days for mother tongue language classes. Teachers are aware of the homework and responsibilities that students have outside of the normal school day, and work with them to ensure that they are able to be successful with their mother-tongue class work as well as their grade level assignments in English. Teachers are invited annually to the Japanese School of Detroit to learn about their educational programming for students.

## ***Roles and Responsibilities***

### **1. Development and Review of the Language Policy**

The entire staff participated in the initial development of the Language Policy through the use of professional development time and through Leadership Team meetings, with input and oversight from administrators and the PYP coordinator. The responsibility for communicating the language policy is that of the administrators, the PYP coordinator and the teachers in our buildings.

The PYP coordinator and building administrators will be responsible for ensuring that the language policy is reviewed and revised annually with the help of the Leadership Teams. Review is an ongoing process and revisions may be made as necessary throughout the school year.

### **2. All Staff**

Our staffs are responsible for staying informed and committed to the IBO Programme standards through regular contact with our PYP coordinator, our district PYP and MYP colleagues, our IB educators on staff, and our colleagues in other school districts who are authorized, or working toward authorization. Additionally, staff who are trained IB Educators are asked to share out following any experiences as trainers, site visitors, and consultants.

Overall school progress will be monitored through grade level and whole school meetings. Scores on standardized and district assessments will be analyzed and changes will be made to our practices as necessary through the school improvement process.

The school meets as a whole at the end of the year to reflect on successes and review changes for the following school year.

### **3. Leadership Team**

Our school leadership teams meet twice a month throughout the year. Updates and decisions are shared with and between staffs utilizing essential agreements regarding reporting out. The leadership team reviews all aspects of our schools' curriculum, our assessment programs, our positive behavior support system, our school improvement process, and our compliance with State, district and IBO guidelines.

### **4. Media Specialists and Building Administrators**

The media center specialists and building administrators, with input from the classroom teachers, are responsible for acquiring and maintaining the schools' media center resources. Building administrators oversee budget allocations and expenditures for classroom materials and resources, supervise the PYP coordinator and the Leadership Teams, and guide building level professional development.

### **5. Grade Level Teams**

Grade level teams meet throughout the year to reflect on the Programme of Inquiry. Classroom teachers



work together as grade level teams to determine which resources would best support their grade level's units of inquiry. Our PYP coordinator and Media Specialists work with grade level teams and are involved in all aspects of language development.

## **6. Individual Teachers**

All staff members have access to, and are encouraged to frequently visit the IBO World website and the Online Curriculum Center for information and inspiration.

Teachers have open access to a variety of resources on current research and best practices in language learning. Teacher participation in university coursework, book clubs, school and district professional development opportunities, PYP training opportunities, online communities of learning, and professional dialogue with language specialists on staff are a few of the ways that staff members are responsible for keeping themselves informed and up-to-date regarding language learning.

The State of Michigan has specific course requirements for new teachers. To obtain a permanent certificate, teachers must complete a specific number of credits within a time frame determined by the State. These credits include language teaching and learning.

The district requires professional development throughout the school year. Teachers must complete some of this training on their own time.

Teachers are responsible for monitoring individual student progress systematically, utilizing tools such as Pearson and NWEA MAP (Measure of Academic Progress). Our district requires teachers to complete a MAP (Maximizing Academic Potential) form for each student that compiles relevant data related to language learning. These forms are utilized to transition students from one grade level to the next. Classroom teachers are also responsible for maintaining and transitioning student PYP portfolios per the staff essential agreements.

Each classroom has a budget for supplies and resources. Teachers will often supplement classroom libraries with paperback books earned through reward points from the various book order clubs. Teachers also add to their resources through personal purchases and donations from parents.

## **7. Specialists**

Specialists are involved with collaborative unit planning 1x per month, rotating grade levels annually. The specialists have access to all Units of Inquiry at each grade level through Atlas Rubicon. They work to incorporate their interdisciplinary connections and support of language learning into these units.

## ***Admission and Assessment***

Appropriate language assessments will be completed on all incoming students by the classroom teachers or GERT's per district guidelines. These assessments will provide professional staff with useful information about each student's proficiency and instructional level.

Students with suspected special needs are referred for discussion at Building Instructional Team meetings. These meetings are held weekly and individualized intervention plans are developed.

### **Review of the Language Policy:**

This will be reviewed and updated annually by the Bloomin' Kids, Lone Pine, and West Hills community.

- Updated, May 2011
- Updated, January 2012
- Updated, May 2013
- Updated, January 2014
- Reflected upon and updated May 2014
- Reflected upon and updated September 2014
- Reflected upon and updated November 2014