



IB Language Policy

Cullen Elementary

Philosophy

At Cullen Elementary, we believe that language is an essential part of cultivating the whole child. Diverse languages create connections across communities and cultures that help students feel accepted and safe. Students have social opportunities for multilingualism as a means to connect with others and share their identity.

All students have the opportunity to learn Spanish through songs, books, writing, and speaking in their weekly lessons. Multilingualism is encouraged through exposure of traditions and cultures in Spanish-speaking countries.

At Cullen, students learn about languages that are represented through our student population. Our daily morning announcements spotlight a new greeting and salutation in a different language each month.

School Language Profile

The primary academic and instructional language spoken at Cullen Elementary School is English. In alignment with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills state standards, schoolwide English Language Arts instruction focuses on the development of literacy, fluency, and comprehension skills necessary for students to effectively communicate for a variety of purposes.

Student language profile: The mother tongue of most students at Cullen is English. Other languages are Chinese, Mandarin, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Korean, Marathi, Spanish, Telugu, and Vietnamese.

Language Acquisition Program

From the Hays CISD Guide to Success

World Languages/Languages Other Than English

The Hays CISD World Languages Department is committed to the belief that learning multiple languages is a fundamental component of education that prepares students to succeed as global citizens in our multilingual society. Students become aware of multiple perspectives and means of communication, which lead to an appreciation of difference and diversity. In the 21st century world languages classroom, students gain an understanding



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of two basic aspects of human existence: the nature of communication and the complexity of culture. Communication is the overarching goal of world languages instruction. Students should be provided ample opportunities to engage in conversations, to present information, and to interpret culturally authentic materials in the language of study. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) identifies three modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Students engage in direct oral or written communication with others such as face to face exchanges, participating in digital discussions and messaging, and exchanging personal letters.

INTERPRETIVE COMMUNICATION

Students demonstrate understanding of spoken and written communication within appropriate cultural contexts such as comprehension of digital texts as well as print, audio, and audiovisual materials.

PRESENTATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Students present, orally or in writing, information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers such as presenting to a group; creating and posting content; or writing reports, compositions, or articles for a newspaper.

At Cullen, students participate in Spanish lessons once a week for at least 50 minutes per week. Spanish lessons include the following:

- Vocabulary that is acquired through speaking, listening, repeating phrases, songs, dances, read-alouds, and writing. Advanced opportunities are provided for students to explore Spanish through games and interactive activities.
- The culture of Spanish-speaking countries is explored through geography lessons that include the country's flags, currency, economics, daily routines, cuisine, histories, events, and traditions. Students have the opportunity to make connections and share their own experiences.



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Assessment

Students are currently informally assessed by topic, and future lessons are based on student progress in each individual class. Students are given the opportunity to lead parts of the lesson, and concepts are reinforced through games and partner work once the initial vocabulary is learned.

Students will self assess with graphs and data points at the start and end of a unit to track their language learning progress per topic.

Linguistic Cultural Opportunities:

Parents have the option to translate all Dojo messages to their home language

All students have access to books and other resources to support interests in their home languages. Examples: Media Center/Library includes a collection of authors and diverse fiction/non-fiction titles, Culture Day, assemblies, and curricular units, parent involvement, music, art.

All teachers promote learning about other cultures through classroom activities. Special area teachers use activities such as art around the world, musician/composer of the month, library connections for Women's History Month, etc., games from around the world for PE's Field Day.

Students are able to share about their culture through morning meetings and classroom presentations.

Language Supports

At Cullen Elementary, it is important to meet the needs of all our students by providing accommodations to support language acquisition while still fostering the importance of each student's mother tongue.

All Teachers are ESL certified. We use ELPs (reading and writing), ELlevation, Google translate, and Siri to support communication with all students.

Translanguaging

Here at Cullen we want students to feel comfortable using translanguaging and code switching in social settings.



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For students that are new to our country or students with minimal English proficiency, a procedure is in place to notify all staff who could interact with new students (inclusion, special areas, arrival and dismissal staff, cafeteria, etc.). At registration, the PEIMS clerk sends pertinent information to the language support team so that all areas of the school can make necessary accommodations to support the student's transition to Cullen. A script is utilized by the PEIMS clerk to relay the necessary information specific to each student. The script includes the name of the student, grade level, primary language spoken, time spent in the country, prior schooling & language, spoken/written English ability, and grade level teachers.

Some examples of class supports include, but are not limited to, nonverbal responses/cues, bilingual labels, scaffolded instruction, extended wait time, clarification of instructions, pre-teach and reteach vocabulary, Total Physical Response (gestures), verbal and nonverbal cues, proximity to teacher, peer support, rephrasing instructions for simplicity, culturally responsive teaching, use of sentence stems, and commonly used words and high frequency words are posted.

Language Maintenance Policy

We have cultural celebrations throughout the year. Parents fill out a survey to share what holidays they celebrate. We celebrate Holi, Dia de los Muertos, Lunar New Year, and winter holidays around the world such as Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, St. Lucia's day, Diwali, Latin American holidays, and the U.S. Holidays.

Communication of Policy

The following are ways Cullen will communicate the Language Policy to its community:

- All PYP teachers will be given the opportunity to review the policy
- The language policy will be available on the school's website
- Shared at parent/teacher conferences
- Printed to be shared at school events

Policy Review



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This is a live document that will be updated as needed. We will meet 2 times a year to review, update, or make changes.

References:

International Baccalaureate Organization (May 2014). PYP: From principles into practice. Accessed January 31, 2025 from www.ibo.org