

## **Wauwatosa Catholic School**

### **Language Policy**

Wauwatosa Catholic School believes that language acquisition is critical to the development of international understanding. We understand that language is one of the most important tools of communication. Language is essential for cognitive development. Communication, both verbal and non-verbal, is key to intercultural understanding. We believe language is transdisciplinary in nature, so all teachers are language teachers.

Wauwatosa Catholic, although small in population, is comprised of a multicultural mix of race and ethnicity. 13% of our students are Hispanic, 12.5% African American, 8% Asian. We have students whose parents speak a European language or Spanish dialect at home, these students are truly bilingual. Two of our preK students are English Language Learners, learning mainly by immersion. Eleven different mother tongues are represented within our community.

We believe that learning to achieve within a multicultural environment is essential. We want the students to use language effectively as a vehicle for inquiry, self-expression and communication in a range of authentic situations and for a variety of purposes. We will enable students to frame and express their own thinking. They will become more thoughtful and reflective communicators. Our students will better understand, comprehend and appreciate the world around them. By encouraging development of language to support the learner profile attributes, students will have the necessary language tools available to develop into successful lifelong learners. Through the use of technology along with a growing media component, students at Wauwatosa Catholic will have the opportunity to increase their listening skills, an essential element in their language development.

It is our goal at Wauwatosa Catholic to promote oral, written and visual language through experiential learning in a risk-free environment where all learners grow and achieve to their highest potential. Students will recognize that language is truly transdisciplinary in nature. To achieve this goal, we will incorporate the

teaching and learning of language skills in each unit of inquiry as well as in all specials classes.

### **The Language of Instruction**

- English will be the language of instruction
- Teachers will teach language using a variety of programs. Houghton Mifflin, The Six Traits Writing Program, and a consistent spiraled curriculum which meets all district and Common Core State Standards. This curriculum is consistent with the IBO's *Language Scope and Sequence*.
- Teachers use best practices that help advance learners on every level. These practices include, but are not limited to guided reading instruction, Literature Circles, Writer's Workshop, strategies instruction.
- Teachers will use the most current technology and media sites in their instruction.
- Teachers and students will engage in effective descriptive feedback on all oral presentations.
- Students who need extra help will receive intervention through the differentiation of instruction.
- Direct instruction of language occurs during reading, writing, Spanish and English language classes.

### **Second Language Acquisition**

All students, from our 3 year old kindergarteners through 5<sup>th</sup> grade receive Spanish instruction. The time of instruction varies from twenty minutes once a week for our 3 year olds to two forty minute periods a week for our fifth graders.

Students learn an appreciation of languages. They gain an understanding that people use languages other than English to communicate. Spanish classes provide students with an introduction to the Spanish language and culture. Beginning in our youngest grades, students learn basic language which can be used for simple communication. Many songs and creative activities are incorporated into the classes.

The Spanish teacher collaborates with the grade level teachers to incorporate the language into the units of inquiry. All grade levels are learning the prayers and responses used in our weekly Mass in Spanish. The grade level teachers strive to use Spanish for some of the communication used in the classroom.

### **Mother-tongue Support**

- Extra books will continue to be purchased to add to our library in order to show support for our learners whose mother-tongue is not English.
- The Learner Profile will be posted in Spanish.
- Wauwatosa Catholic will celebrate the various cultures represented in our school with a visual representation of countries of origin posted in the library.
- We encourage family members to visit classrooms and share their language and culture with the class.

## PYP Language Expectations

### **3K/4K PYP Language Expectations**

#### **Oral Communication: Listening and Speaking**

Students will use oral language for social interaction and to obtain knowledge of people, places and things in their environment and in the wider community. They will communicate needs, feelings and ideas in order to respond to a variety of experiences. They will participate appropriately in conversations, tell stories and events in sequence, and give and follow instructions. Students will be given daily opportunities to listen and speak in authentic contexts, either independently, in small groups or with the whole class.

#### **Written Communication: Reading and Writing**

Students will be eager to read. They will enjoy playing and experimenting with reading behaviours as they practice reconstructing text. They will show an interest in books, stories, charts and songs as they “read” daily with support and

guidance. They will be encouraged to focus on the meaning of texts rather than on reading word by word with complete accuracy. Students will be read to daily, and they will have opportunities to read with and to one another, and to discuss what they have read. Through these experiences, students will gain an understanding of concepts about print.

Students will be curious about print. They will enjoy playing and experimenting with writing by making marks to emulate writing. They will progress from scribble or “pretend” writing, to writing letters and words. Drawing, sketching and diagramming are important parts of early writing development as students imitate, rehearse and think about the process. Students will use representations of their name in a variety of ways. Regardless of their stage of written development, they will assign meaning to messages, and will gradually produce recognizable spellings of a range of words. Students will be encouraged to write daily with or without support and guidance.

### **Visual Communication: Viewing and Presenting**

Students will play, experiment, talk about and relate to a variety of media. They will use media to make sense of their world, and they will learn to respond both verbally and non-verbally. They will show a natural curiosity and interest in many forms of visual communication and, with guidance and support, they will make connections between the real and the imaginary.

### **K-1<sup>st</sup> Grade PYP Language Expectations**

#### **Oran Communication: Listening and Speaking**

Students will use a variety of oral language appropriately and with increasing confidence. They will talk about their own thoughts, feelings and opinions and they will be able to work in groups to discuss their ideas. They will appreciate that listening is important and listen with increasing concentration and consideration in both small and large group situations. They will be able to pick

out main events and relevant points, and they will increase their ability to anticipate and predict. Students will listen to others carefully and with sensitivity.

### **Written Communication: Reading and Writing**

Students will read for pleasure and information with increasing independence. They will be confident about their own reading and will continue to develop a range of reading strategies to decode and make sense of text. They will discuss stories heard and read, demonstrate an awareness of the role of the characters and plot, and will respond to the ideas and feelings expressed. They will begin to use a variety of reference books independently. A balanced learning experience includes opportunities to participate either independently, in small groups or in whole class situations. Daily independent reading and guided reading at the instructional level are essential.

Students will write confidently, with developing legibility and fluency. They will write for a variety of purposes and will develop an understanding of different story structures. They will begin to plan, edit and review their own writing, showing an increasing ability to spell high-frequency words. They will begin to use spelling patterns and will continue to use their phonetic skills to spell, especially when constructing more complex words. As risk-takers, they will demonstrate confidence in attempting to write unfamiliar words using a variety of strategies. Daily independent writing and explicit writing at the instructional level are essential.

### **Visual Communication: Viewing and Presenting**

Students will understand that communication involves visual, verbal, and kinesthetic features. They will understand that signs and symbols carry meaning and will begin to read a range of signs widely used in their immediate environment. They will be able to read and use texts with fluency and proficiency.

A range of signs are widely used in students' immediate environment. They will be able to read and use texts with different types of layout and will understand information presented by a range of visual media. Using a variety of visual and

technological media, the students will search for, record and present information. As they continue to develop an increasing understanding of what they view, they will make more informed choices.

## **2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Grade PYP Language Expectations**

### **Oral Communication: Listening and Speaking**

Students will appreciate the power of oral language and use speech with increasing awareness and responsibility. They will participate appropriately in discussions and will talk about a wide range of topics. They will use increasingly complex language confidently and creatively, with increasing accuracy, detail and range of vocabulary. They will become increasingly aware of the use of oral language to articulate, organize and reflect on learning. They will begin to communicate in more than one language.

### **Written Communication: Reading and Writing**

Students will read a variety of fiction and non-fiction books confidently, fluently and independently. They will be able to select books appropriate to their reading level and for a specific purpose. They will be interested in a variety of literature and will begin to show an appreciation of different literary styles. They will understand and respond to the ideas; feelings and attitudes expressed in various reading materials, and will be able to use reference books, dictionaries and information technology independently. They will read daily in class and will regularly read for a sustained period of time, both in class and at home. Students will develop fluency in writing, and will write independently and with confidence. They will begin to use a wide and vivid vocabulary with supporting details. They will understand that different types of writing have different structures. They will write for a range of purposes, both creative and informational, and will plan, edit and review their own writing. They will spell most high-frequency words accurately and use a range of strategies to spell words of increasing complexity. They will present their writing appropriately using a consistent, legible style.

## **Visual Communication: Viewing and Presenting**

Students will experience a wide variety of visual media materials. They will respond to viewing experiences orally and in writing. They will interpret visual media and recognize the power of visual media to influence thinking and behavior, and will begin to learn how to make informed choices in their personal viewing experiences. They will use a variety of materials to plan and create projects with different media and will use electronic media to find information.

## **4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Grade PYP Language Expectations**

### **Oral Communication: Listening and Speaking**

Students will show an increasing awareness of the power of oral language and how it helps them to construct meaning and connect with others. They will use speed responsibly to inform, entertain and influence others. They will understand that oral language is a medium for learning and use the speaking and listening processes as learning strategies as well as for individual enjoyment. They will interact confidently with others in a variety of situations. They will use a wide variety of linguistic structures and features of spoken language to develop and present ideas and information, adapting their speaking and listening strategies to the purpose, context and audience. By reflecting on their own approach to communication and the ways in which others interact, they will monitor and assess their own learning.

### **Written Communication: Reading and Writing**

Students will read a wide range of texts with understanding and accuracy and will be able to use a variety of reading strategies for different texts and purposes. They will recognize and appreciate the various literary styles, forms and structures, and appreciate the structural and stylistic differences between fiction and non-fiction. They will be able to discuss what has been read, reflect on and talk about the feelings and motivations of the characters in a story, and analyze details of plot and characterization. They will appreciate the author's use of

language and they will begin to recognize meaning beyond the literal. They will locate and use a range of reference materials to find information and they will understand that this information can be used to generate ideas and opinions and guide research. They will read for enjoyment and information daily for sustained periods, both in school and at home. Students will write fluently and effectively for a wide range of purposes, both creative and informal, using a range of styles. They will understand that different types of writing have different styles and structures, and are used for different purposes. Their writing will show a clear awareness of audience. They will use relevant and appropriate supporting details, a wide range of effective vocabulary and a variety of sentence structures and sentence lengths. They will use an appropriate writing process independently and confidently; planning, revising, and editing their own writing. Considering and acting upon the responses of others, students will gain an awareness of themselves as authors and will develop their own voice and style to personalize their writing. They will write for enjoyment and communication daily for sustained periods both at home and at school.

### **Visual Communication: Viewing and Presenting**

Students will demonstrate appropriate viewing behavior for a large range of visual material. They will respond to viewing experiences orally and in writing using specific vocabulary and terminology. They will show an understanding of media elements and the effect of design on the meaning of the visual. They will identify stereotypes and the purpose of visual material. They will be willing to work with a variety of materials to plan and carry out different projects. Will recognize the implications of commercial media and will make informed judgments about television, film and video productions.