

Lakes International Language Academy - Upper School Language Policy

Lakes International Language Academy Mission Statement

Our mission is to prepare tomorrow's critical thinkers and global citizens through language acquisition and inquiry-driven study.

Lakes International Language Academy Action Statements

Think for yourself
Think about others
Think beyond today

- We believe that the development of multiple languages is imperative to the process of becoming a global citizen.
- We believe students can learn rigorous academic content through the medium of a target language without detriment to their home language or academic success. We believe, as is supported by a myriad of research, that students' home language and their academic success will be improved by becoming multilingual.
- We support the development of a student's mother tongue as well as continued language development.
- We believe that language development is a process of constructing meaning in which learning language, learning through language, and learning about language are happening at the same time.
- We believe that learning about cultures and learning languages are both necessary for our students to understand people and know how to build relationships with them.
- We recognize that, since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication and developing students' literacy skills.

**LILA Language Profile
2017-2018**

Range of Home Language of LILA students:

97% English, 3% (or less) speak another language at home.
This information is obtained from a home-language survey given at time of enrollment.

Language of Communication Outside the Classroom:

The primary language spoken in Forest Lake, MN is English.
School-Parent Communication is done in English unless otherwise necessary. We provide interpreter or translation resources for families in our community or that may move into the community whose primary language is not English.

Language needs as a result of legal requirements set by state government:

English for the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments:

MCAs are the state tests that help districts measure student progress toward meeting Minnesota's academic standards. The reading, science and mathematics tests are used to determine whether schools and districts have made adequate yearly progress.

Reading and mathematics tests are given in grades 6-8, 10 and 11. Science tests are given in grade 8 and once in high school, depending on when students complete their life sciences curriculum.

LILA Language Policy:

At Lakes International Language Academy, our mission statement specifically identifies "language acquisition" for our students.

I. Models of language programs:

All programs work to develop and interrelate the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy in inquiry-based authentic language learning experiences.

A. Language Immersion program (subject-related):

For students with previous language-immersion experience, including students who attended LILA Lower School Spanish or Mandarin Chinese programs, LILA Upper School offers subject-area immersion classes in those languages. Depending on our staffing, we may have Sciences, Individuals & Societies, Maths, or Arts classes available for continuing language-immersion instruction. We also offer language classes in Spanish, French or Mandarin Chinese for previous immersion students to build greater skills in grammar, reading, and writing in the target language.

LILA offers a one-way language immersion program in which 97% of students have English, the primary language for our community, as their home language.¹

Students are allowed to use English (or their home language) to process and develop concepts collaboratively after exhausting their target language abilities, and with the expectation that they will present their learning in the target language.

B. English program (mother tongue): Students have access to all subject area classes, with the exception of Language Acquisition, in English. The school uses state standards to provide the guidelines for English language and literacy instruction.

C. English as a Second Language (ESL): For the very small percentage of students who need extra support, ESL services are provided.

D. Language Acquisition (French, Spanish, Mandarin):

For students without previous language-immersion experience or students wanting to learn an additional language, LILA Upper School offers language acquisition in Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and French. Our instructors guide students to write, read, gain vocabulary, and speak in the target language, encouraging language acquisition.

II. **Professional Development:**

To be effective teachers and to support language development, LILA administrators, teachers, and other school staff receive a full array of professional development, such as:

- A. Language Immersion Education
- B. International-mindedness
- C. Inquiry-based learning
- D. Assessment
- E. Collaboration
- F. Curriculum Development
- G. Balanced Literacy components such as guided reading, writing, literature circles, etc.
- H. Social Language and development of classroom and school community (Developmental Designs)

III. **Parent Involvement:**

All members of the school community work to support the success of the student.

- a. LILA recognizes the value of parent education in supporting their child's home language development and works to facilitate the sharing of best practices with and among parents in ways such as
 - o developing an appreciation for reading outside of the classroom.
 - o building successful study habits.

¹ Research shows that for majority speakers 1) more majority/home language instruction (English) does not mean more academic achievement in the majority/home language (English); and 2) the more time spent in the students' target language (Spanish or Mandarin) has a significant impact on the target language (Spanish/Mandarin) acquisition. For information regarding immersion education research see: <http://mylila.org/about-lila/research-resources>

- b. LILA recognizes the value of parent-school communication and promotes communication through Infinite Campus, formal reporting periods, parent-teacher conferences, and a school newsletter. When deemed necessary by families or LILA staff, more frequent communication is encouraged regarding individual progress of students.

IV. **Roles and Responsibilities:**

LILA recognizes the diversity of its school community and the power of everyone working together to support LILA's Language Policy. Below are essential agreements that all members of the LILA community use as guidelines when working toward this end.

- a. Administration:
 - o To encourage an environment of collaboration and good communication with all members of the school community.
 - o To instill an environment of multilingualism by supporting the use of English, French, Spanish and Mandarin inside and outside the language classrooms, whenever possible.
- b. Teachers:
 - o To recognize the value of home/school communication and education as a means to support student development.
 - o To use assessment data as a tool to monitor student learning and help make effective choices for instruction.
 - o To encourage students to speak the target language of instruction.
- c. Parents:
 - o To provide ongoing encouragement for learning of English, Spanish, Mandarin, and French as well as academic content. It is not necessary for parents to speak the target language to provide encouragement.
 - o To encourage their child to read at least 30 minutes a day in his/her mother tongue and/or the target acquisition language.
 - o To support and encourage the development of the target acquisition language.
- d. Students:
 - o To do their best to use the target language(s).
 - o To speak the target language(s) with each other in academic and social situations.
 - o To be committed to learning outside of school by completing their reading and homework responsibilities.

V. **Policy review:**

Annually, a committee comprised of teacher representatives and members of the leadership team will review and update this policy. When revising the policy, the committee will refer to the guidelines established by IB for this area. The updated policy will be reviewed annually with staff during our pre-service professional development days and updated on the website for all stakeholders to access.

References

(2014). *MYP - From principles into practice*. www.ibo.org