

OMS and OHS 6-12 Language Policy

Language Philosophy

Learning is a language-intensive activity. Throughout their lives, students are immersed in language, using it as a tool both for inquiry and for communication. Oxford Community Schools believe that all teachers are language instructors and all students are language learners. Accordingly, stakeholders in Oxford Schools

- Support the development of student language learning
- Facilitate proficiency in English and the pursuit of competency in language other than the mother tongue
- Create a community that demonstrates an openness to multi-culturalism and global awareness

The achievement of these goals will ensure the refinement of language skills and knowledge and support students as members of a global community.

Language Profile

Oxford Community Schools is a public school located in the state of Michigan. Being a public school, our schools enroll all resident students without entry requirements. The language of instruction in Oxford School District is English. In Oxford, there are students from a variety of cultures that represent over twenty different language groups. District-wide, there are currently over three hundred students identified as having a home language other than English and almost two hundred students that are recognized as English Learners (EL). While the list of languages changes yearly at the secondary level, past languages have included: Spanish, Chinese, Hmong, German, Krio, Danish, Hindi, French, and Tagalog.

Oxford Community Schools believe that the students' diverse language backgrounds enrich the school community and should be celebrated. EL students are absolutely encouraged to maintain their home language while simultaneously honing their English skills at school. The EL program communicates with building teacher and administrators early each year to make them aware of the wealth of home languages present in their classrooms, reminding them to acknowledge these students' unique backgrounds and to take every opportunity to facilitate the exchange of culture between the EL students and their classmates. Language is so integral in developing our sense of self and we want students to know that the culture of their family is valued in our school, as well. Parents are invited to a district-wide EL Informational Meeting at the beginning of each school year, providing translators for as many languages as possible. Every effort is made to make EL parents feel welcome and respected in their home languages (through

written correspondence, website content, etc.) as often as possible.

Language A:

We acknowledge the importance of including the teaching and learning of language continuously throughout the program. It is through language that crucial connections are made by students across the curriculum. Language A is limited to the English language and students are taught English syntax, grammar, and communication skills in all IB classes. All students are involved in Language A learning from grades K through twelve. The district scope and sequence has been created to support both the Michigan State Standards, National Common Core Standards, and the MYP Aims and Objectives found in each subject-area's guide (see "Secondary Protocol of Services" chart).

Language B:

The study of languages provides a profound understanding and respect for cultures other than our own. Thus, Oxford Community Schools has created the Fifth Core, an eleven-year World Language Program that is required for every kindergartner through tenth grade student in either Spanish or Mandarin Chinese. At the Secondary level, our program follows the curricula outlined for the Middle Years Program as well as the Diploma Program. Our Language B students receive preparation for their MYP assessments in grades 6 through grade 10. We recognize the importance of students becoming culturally and linguistically proficient. Reading, writing, listening and speaking are all vital parts of language development. Emphasis on grammatical structures, verbal and writing skills, and vocabulary development help students develop the tools they need to become effective, multilingual communicators. The Language Acquisition courses are assessed using the assessments required by the Oxford Community Schools and the International Baccalaureate Language Acquisition objectives and assessment tools.

Language Development and Support across the curriculum

Oxford teachers use "best practice" instruction techniques to assist students with Language A development. All teachers are teachers of reading; therefore, informational reading takes place in all subject areas. It is supported by the regular use of close reading strategies and other reading comprehension strategies. In Language and Literature classes, teachers are encouraged to help students develop language skills by reading aloud in all classes. The curriculum supports the development of reading comprehension through varying text complexity. Students are also exposed to a variety of genres, including but not limited to poetry, fiction, books, plays, short stories, newspapers/magazines, and informational texts.. In addition, teachers use a variety of practices and tools such as word lists and graphic organizers to differentiate instruction for differing reading levels and levels of language proficiency. Students are encouraged to read outside of the classroom for information and for pleasure. Students are encouraged to develop their language skills through writing in all subject areas. Writing skills are fostered by giving the students choice through their writing prompts. In Language and Literature classes, teachers use a variety of genres to develop student writing skills. These genres include but are not limited to blogging, essays, journaling, reflection

journals, and writing lab reports. Students receive skill-building feedback from teachers and peers on the correct usage of the written language. Lastly, students are provided opportunities to develop and utilize oral language across the curriculum. Through daily classroom discussions, activities, and projects, students develop oral presentation skills. These skills are used by students in speeches, debates, songs, poetry recitations, and dramatic readings. Teachers model the correct language usage in conversations and instructional presentations while maintaining sensitivity to the students' language proficiency and cultural background. All students working towards the IB Diploma are actively involved in CAS activities and projects through the diploma years. Many of the projects and activities provide student opportunities to use the language of their heritage and develop their communication skills in both their mother tongue and English. Students are encouraged to select activities and projects that have personal deep meaning and many select projects that give back to the countries and cultures that their families represent.

Even though the majority of the students at Oxford Community Schools are considered English speakers, within the student body are many students who are bilingual and multilingual. These students are given opportunities to use the language of their heritage in many ways. During class, students are encouraged to bring in their own language experiences and cultural observations to share with all students. This practice supports the students' mother tongue while helping to promote a global mindedness among our students. Teachers may select literary works that represent the cultural background of some of our students. This practice enhances the class discussions and helps all students develop an open mind about those cultures that are different from their own.

Language A Support (As detailed in Board Policy- 2225 - LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PROGRAM)

Identification and Assessment of EL Students

Each student enrolling in the District for the first time will be required to complete a Home Language Survey (see [Form 2225 F1](#)) indicating a.) whether or not their child's primary language is one other than English and b.) whether or not the dominant language in their child's home is one other than English. Each completed survey will be included as a part of the permanent record of each student in the District. If either response is affirmative and the student has not been previously screened in the state of Michigan, the English Learner (EL) staff quickly (within 30 days at the start of the school year or 10 days after the start) tests that new student with a state assessment known as the WIDA Screener. This brief screener provides an idea of the student's English language abilities in four categories: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Based on these scores—and conversations with building staff and parents of the student—the EL staff determines whether the student has Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and if/how often they should receive EL support services.

Parental Notification and Consent

If a student is identified and assessed as LEP and determined to be eligible for services, the District will send written notice to the student's parent. Such notice shall be provided within thirty (30) days of the start of the school year or within two (2) weeks of assessment (if the student is not identified prior to the beginning of the school year) and include information regarding:

1. The reason for the identification and need for placement of the student as EL
2. The student's level of English language proficiency, how the student was assessed and the status of achievement
3. Method(s) of instruction that will be used to increase language proficiency and the methods of instruction used in other available programs, including how the programs differ
4. How the EL program will meet the strengths and needs of the child and how the EL program will help their child learn English and meet state standards
5. The exit requirements for the program and the expected rate of transition to a classroom not tailored for ELs, and expected rate of HS graduation
6. How the program meets the needs of an EL with disabilities in an IEP
7. The parent's right to refuse service or choose another program
8. That the EL must continue to participate in the ELP annual assessment if the parent refuses service(s).

Students are placed in the LEP Program unless a parent request is made to decline services from the program, as indicated in the LEP Program notification letter. Additionally, the student's parent(s) will be given an opportunity to participate and provide input into the student's program and will be informed yearly on the student's progress. If the student fails to make progress on measurable objectives, the Board shall provide the parent with notice of such failure within thirty (30) days after the failure occurs.

Placement and Services

- Each student who participates in the LEP Program will be placed in a setting that is appropriate for his/her age, grade level, and language and educational needs.
- Each student is to be placed in a classroom with instructors who individually or in combination, are fluent/proficient in English, with respect to written, as well as oral communication skills.
- In addition to placing a student in a setting that will help him/her learn English and attain State academic content and achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation, the Board will provide additional services (based on the needs of individual students) including, but not limited to, individual language instruction. The Alternative Language Program provided to English Learners (ELs) is based on "Best Practice" English as a Second Language instruction.

MME Tests

Limited English Proficiency students may be given accommodation on the Michigan Educational Achievement Program (MME) Testing in accordance with the Regulations and Rules governing this testing.

Annual Evaluation

- Each student shall be tested on an annual basis and monitored to determine how well s/he is learning English and becoming more

proficient in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing of the English language as demonstrated on the WIDA-ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment.

- Students will also be tested in the academic content areas of reading/language arts, math, and other core academic subjects. The District will provide each student's parent(s) with the results of the tests so that s/he will know how the student is progressing.
- At the end of each year a state approved reading assessment is given to students. Those scores are evaluated with the students WIDA scores and teacher recommendation of writing abilities to determine adequate growth to achieving proficiency to exit the program.

Exit Procedures

Once a student has been placed in the LEP Program, s/he will be provided with services and evaluated on an annual basis until it is determined that the student is proficient enough to meaningfully participate in the District's regular educational program as determined by the State's Entrance and Exit Protocol.

In determining whether a student is able to participate in the regular educational program, the District will evaluate factors including, but not limited to:

- A. the results of the assessment;
- B. the results of a local reading assessment and writing sample;
- C. the EL Coordinator's recommendation that the student is ready and qualifies to be exited from the program; and,
- D. whether the student is able to participate successfully in essentially all aspects of the District's curriculum without the use of simplified or modified English language materials,

Additionally, the overall retention in-grade and dropout rates of LEP students may be evaluated to determine whether such rates are similar to the student's non-LEP peers.

Upon exit from the LEP Program, a student will be monitored for a period of up to four (4) years in order to determine whether s/he is achieving academically and continuing to achieve English language proficiency or should be reentered to the LEP Program.

Language Policy Review Process

This policy has been created using IB support materials, district data and input from stakeholders in the IB learning community. It is an ongoing process that will be evaluated every two years by the IB faculty, coordinators and administration.

OCS Language Terms and Definitions Not Defined in the document

Language Term	OCS Definitions
Proficiency	A student is considered proficient when their academic English skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in all content areas is comparable with that of a native speaker and is able to meet expected college and career readiness standards as defined by the State.
Exit Protocol	Student must be successful in all three parts: 1. Scores a 4.5 overall and no less than 4.0 on the reading and writing testing domains on the WIDA 2. Scores at or above reading level on a local reading assessment 3. Deemed proficient by LEA on local writing piece

Updated: October 2018