

Semper Elementary Language Policy

Philosophy

At Semper Elementary we instruct in English through a transdisciplinary lense, supporting learning through inquiry experiences. Language is the key to expressing our learning, be it through oral, visual, or written language. We provide a learning environment with language supports for all students to fully participate in the academic programme. We believe that oral, visual, and written language are all equally important to the learning experiences of our students, and provide opportunities for each student to fully engage in the world around them through each domain of language. We are all teachers and learners of language.

While English is our language of instruction at Semper, we realize that our students come from many backgrounds and cultures, many of whom also speak another language at home. We provide an atmosphere where we honor the mother tongue of our many students who are learning English as a second language, allowing all students various opportunities to express who they are and teach their peers about the world we live in through genuine experiences. We believe it is important for students to take pride in their identity and be teachers of their language and culture.

Purpose

The purpose of this language policy is to establish a systemic understanding throughout the community regarding the language of instruction. We are all expected to teach and learn content in English, understanding that we also have a focus on learning Spanish as an additional language. We demonstrate our learning through the oral, written, and visual language. Students will use all three modes of language (oral, visual, or written) to show their learning across content area to express their understanding of content.

Language is learned authentically through our transdisciplinary Programme of Inquiry. This provides students with a more meaningful learning experience for the acquisition of the English language. When possible, Spanish is also embedded into our unit of inquiry, allowing students and teachers the opportunity to learn another language through these authentic experiences. Multilingualism is critical to communication and collaboration within diverse groups. That is why we infuse Spanish instruction into our weekly explorations.

Implementation

Every teacher at Semper has the responsibility to teach all domains of the English language- reading, writing, speaking, listening.

Language Experiences

- See, Think, Wonder

- Collaborative thinking opportunities
- Theatrical performances by grade level
- Oral presentations
- Teacher read-alouds
- Whole group discussion and instruction
- Modeling and guided practice
- Independent and guided reading
- Writer's workshop
- Written responses in all content areas

Students whose home language is not English have the opportunity for sheltered practice through work with their classroom teacher and the ESL teacher. The ESL teacher works with all teachers to make sure that these students' needs are being met through in class instruction or with pull-out groups.

Parents who need interpretation in order to fully participate in their children's education have access to interpreters for school and classroom meetings.

Resources

At Semper we employ a full time English Second Language Teacher (ESL) to support our language learners. Ninety seven percent of our general education teachers hold an endorsement in ESL.