



## Language Policy

### Philosophy and Rationale

Sinagua Middle School (SMS) serves a diverse population of students with diverse language needs. SMS welcomes all students and strives to create a learning environment that embraces diverse language backgrounds while preparing students to succeed in the 21st century. All teachers at Sinagua Middle School are responsible for language instruction. In all classes, students read, write, speak, view, and listen in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes.

These skills are the crux of the academic standards that our curriculum is aligned with. The language of instruction at SMS is English. The exception to this is The Puente de Hóhzó (PdH) Language Academy, which offers students a unique opportunity to become bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural in either Spanish or the Navajo language, Diné. Students in the Spanish program take language classes such as Language and Culture and Spanish Immersion as well as content-area classes in math and science in Spanish. Students in the Diné program immerse themselves in language and culture classes.

### Language A: Language and Literature

As stated, SMS believes that all teachers are language teachers, but Sinagua Middle School students participate in specific language A instruction daily. A portion of instructional time is dedicated to Language and Literature in English. Time is spent each day with a focus on English Language Arts and reading skills, including analyzing text, producing text, and using the English language to communicate effectively as well as understand competently.

Students explore a variety of texts including expository, argument, and narrative. Students read high-quality, culturally diverse literature both independently and as a class. They analyze the reading and practice the skills through whole group discussions, small group practice, and Socratic seminars; they answer text-dependent questions and cite their evidence. Students produce verbal and written responses to real-world issues or events as well as in response to their reading. They also use citations when applicable.

### Language B: Modern and Heritage Languages (Spanish, ASL, and Navajo)

At Sinagua Middle School students have the option to enroll in a Language Acquisition course.

Each student can choose from one of the three languages offered: Spanish, ASL, or the Navajo language, Dine. SMS also offers English as a Second Language for students who are not proficient in the language of instruction, which would be considered their Language B course.

Modern and Heritage Language courses are offered as stand-alone or articulated progression courses.

Through Language B courses, students will also have the opportunity to explore cultural context. As students develop language proficiency, they will also begin to understand how language provides a window into another culture. Language Acquisition courses at SMS support students as they become more balanced, open-minded, and better communicators in their global community.

Students identified as EL, whose proficiency is Intermediate or below, will receive Language B classes through the ELD or SEI model utilized by the school. They will be exempt from taking the Modern and Heritage Language classes offered.

### **English as a Second Language**

Sinagua Middle School's student population includes those students who are non-native speakers of English. Our goal at SMS is that they become fully integrated into the culture of the school. As students enroll in Sinagua Middle School, they are asked to complete a PHLOTE (Primary Home Language Other Than English) survey. Students who indicate a language other than English are evaluated using AZELLA (Arizona English Language Learner Assessment) to determine their English proficiency levels. Students who score less than Proficient are identified as EL students. They are monitored annually using AZELLA.

SMS has two SEI Models: the Pull-Out Model and the 2-Hour Model which have been recently approved by the Department of Education. Both models require that students receive 100 minutes of ELD instruction per day. For the 2-Hour Model, the students will receive 100 minutes solely in the SEI classroom. For the Pull-Out Model, students will receive 50 minutes in the SEI classroom and the other 50 minutes will be taught and implemented by grade-level content area teachers.

ELD instruction uses the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards, instructional practices, and curriculum designed to support students' acquisition of the English language. The students receive instruction on how English functions within the four domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

The ELD Specialist along with the grade level/content area teachers who are responsible for a portion of the integrated ELD minutes will ensure that growth in language development is documented. Evidence can include grade book data, lesson plans, collaborative data talks,

informal classroom walkthroughs as well as formal observation protocols.

SEI and mainstream teachers must have a Structured English Immersion endorsement (Provisional endorsement or full endorsement), an English as a Second Language endorsement, or a Bilingual endorsement.

### **Stakeholder Responsibilities**

- **Responsibilities of the Teacher:**
  - Engage students in learning to effectively communicate with respect to their subject area
  - Model and teach effective use of language
  - Provide the necessary support to students in order to allow them to access content in the language of instruction or in the acquisition of a second language.
  
- **Responsibilities of the Student:**
  - Select to study a Language B of personal interest.
  - Actively participate in their courses in both Language A and Language B.
  - Put forth a diligent effort in developing effective communication skills in every subject area.
  
- **Responsibilities of the Guardian:**
  - Review the language policy with their student(s) to ensure understanding.
  - Support their student in selecting an appropriate Language B course of study.
  - Support the efforts of teachers and staff at Sinagua Middle School.
  
- **Responsibilities of the School Administrators/IB Coordinators will:**
  - Lead the creation, review, and adoption of the language policy.
  - Ensure that all stakeholders receive training and communication about language instruction and expectations.

### **Connection to IB Learner Profile:**

- **Knowledgeable** - language instruction promotes knowledge of other cultures, societies, and peoples
- **Reflective** - throughout their studies, students will engage in reflection in order to consider how to communicate more clearly and effectively
- **Caring** - by working to understand the world through the lens of language, students develop compassion for and understanding of cultures beyond their own
- **Risk-Takers** - students will have to go outside their comfort zone to learn a new language or develop skills in the language of instruction

- **Thinkers** - consider how to convey information accurately and effectively through the use of language
- **Balanced** - managing time, selecting a Language B of personal interest
- **Inquirers** - ask for help, consider multiple points of view
- **Open - Minded** - remain open to shifts in perspective and an expanding worldview
- **Principled** - act with integrity, take responsibility for your own work and actions, consider the cultural context of language and learning

### **Programme standards and practices**

**Standard A7:** The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language, and other languages.

**Standard A9:** The school supports access for students to the IB programme(s) and philosophy.

**Standard B1.5a:** The school has developed and implements a language policy that is consistent with IB expectations

**Standard B2.6:** The library/multimedia/resources play a central role in the implementation of the programmes.

**Standard C3.7:** Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning in a language(s) other than their mother tongue.

**Standard C3.8:** Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.

**Standard C3.10:** Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students' learning needs and styles.

### **Guarantee of revisions**

SMS will review the Language Policy annually.

- Written: Fall 2020

### **Works referenced**

- Language Policy for Madison Meadows Middle School
- Language Policy for Global Academy of Phoenix
- Language Policy for Kyrene Middle School
- Principles to Practice 2017