



Southwest Middle School

MYP Language Policy

Philosophy

Savannah is known for its rich culture and diverse populations because of global industries and military families that reside here. SWMS seeks to prepare all of the students with a global perspective through language acquisition and Language and Literature courses that align with state guidelines and requirements. The MYP Programme at SWMS strives and believes that all students can learn and experience success in a second language; to that end, we provide a foundation for the lifelong process of language acquisition along with the MYP Programme will:

- fosters respect for other cultures,
- prepares students to become productive members of a global society,
- promotes awareness of one's own language and culture
- allows opportunities for interdisciplinary connections, and
- prepares students for collegiate endeavors.

Identification and Support

SWMS does follow the guidelines set for through the district office. SCCPSS IB Middle School students speak many different languages. The majority of our students speak English with others speaking languages such as Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Chinese, German, and Arabic. Because of this diversity, our students may fall into the following categories: English speaking students with limited or non-English speaking students with no prior English instruction, bilingual students who speak their mother tongue as well as English, and non-English speaking students.

Language of Instruction: The language of instruction is English with the exception of our language acquisitions courses where instruction is delivered in the target language.

English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) - Students enrolled in ESOL classes are assessed using Language and Literature (English) criteria. Students with low proficiency in English are considered to be Language and Literature courses with tutoring options available for support. Students' progress from Foundation to Standard level within the English classes with the goal of reaching Advanced Level and/or near native proficiency. These students must be enrolled in Language and Literature courses due to Georgia state promotion and graduation requirements.

English Language Learners are identified and placed through several avenues. Students may enroll with a current ELL status in their records from the previous school with either Active or Monitored status. "Active ELL/ESOL" refers to those students who meet the eligibility criteria for participation in the ESOL Cluster Program at West Chatham Middle School where they receive intensive language instruction in English. Parents may decide to waive the services available at West Chatham Middle School and enroll their children in their home school. Such students are regarded as Active ELL students who have waived services at the cluster school and are enrolled in their home school.

Some ELL students arrive directly from their home country and enroll in their home school. Based upon the information available upon the student's enrollment, such students are



screened using the instrument known as the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT). This instrument assesses students in the Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing domains for Grades 1-12. Students who score below a “5” on the W-APT are eligible for services at the ESOL Cluster School or, if they elect to waive this program, will attend their home school and receive support through accommodations. Some students are identified by their teachers based upon the language skills they demonstrate in class. Such students are then screened with the W-APT.

After the screening process, the needs of each ELL student are addressed at the Language Assessment Conference (LAC) and Test Participation Committee (TPC) meeting. At these meetings, held at least annually, the committee reviews test scores, reports from teachers, and comments from the student and parent to determine the most appropriate placement and accommodations for the particular student. Some ELL students will require no instructional or testing accommodations.

Active ELL students are assessed annually with the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. This instrument assess students in the Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking domains. Final scores on this assessment identify a student’s progress as well as determine if a student will remain on Active ELL status or will transition to Monitored ELL status. A student may exit the ELL program and become a Monitored ELL student based upon the ACCESS score and/or based upon the results of the Language Assessment Conference. Students who have transitioned to Monitored ELL status will remain in this category for two school years following the exit from Active ELL status to ensure that the student is successful and to address any concerns that may arise.

Mother Tongue Support - Students whose mother tongue is not English are screened by a language proficiency test. Students receive additional support as determined by the ESOL designee. Resources available to these students include tutoring during the school day and after school, parent sessions presented in the native language, language dictionaries and translated written texts. Students are encouraged to maintain their cultural identity and native language while celebrating other countries that share the language. SWMS Media Center has been purchasing literature for our students who may have a different language in the hopes of giving them the opportunity to have resources to embrace and maintain their culture and home language.

Instruction:

All teachers are language teachers. The teaching is done through discourse, writing compositions and emails, presentations, and other means of communication. Language promotes the development of the whole student. Throughout their language studies, students tackle issues that are relevant to young people and important to their development. English is the language of instruction at the both Southwest and Windsor Forest and is the key ingredient for student success in other subject areas. The Language and Literatures courses play an instrumental part in reinforcing language skills needed in other content areas; however, as all content area teachers are language teachers, all teachers continue to strive in the development language skills for all learners.

This document is a combined policy with SCCPSS expectations along with MYP requirements for SWMS students.