

Coit PYP Language Policy

Statement of Belief

At Coit Creative Arts Academy, we believe that language is fundamental to the success of all student learning. This includes the ability to express oneself (communicate) through speaking, reading, writing, drawing, dancing, acting, etc. This also includes communication through different languages, including the languages of science, math, and the arts. Language is essential to the construction of meaning and connects all of our curriculum elements and ultimately supports the mission of our school. We believe that literacy instruction should connect to our units of inquiry, instilling an intrinsic love of literacy by using balanced literacy, authentic assessment, and instruction that is differentiated to the needs of each learner thus building lifelong readers and writers. Through inquiry, teachers provide students with opportunities to use language in many different formats, including debate, dance performances, role-play, visual art, and music as well as the traditional teaching of language both embedded in the units of inquiry and as stand-alone subjects. Coit accepts the responsibility to recognize and support language development of all students through the expectation and understanding that all of our teachers work together to make sure that language is through integrated learning and meaningful contexts.

Language of Instruction in the Classroom

English is the language of instruction at Coit Creative Arts Academy. Learners at all levels are evaluated via multiple formats across the curriculum. These methods include but are not limited to: oral presentations, graded oral discussions, research papers, district writing prompts, a variety of written essays (Persuasive, Expository, Narrative, Memoir, Compare and Contrast, etc), technology presentations, and schoolwide performances in both dance and music.

Here at Coit we strive to continually develop and improve the English proficiency of all of our students. Our staff is dedicated to improving English proficiency through explicit literacy instruction that includes phonics development, fluency, prosody, writing, research and presentation skills. We build this literacy within the context of each PYP Unit of Inquiry and is always a point of emphasis in every classroom.

Support for Language Learners

Our teachers are working to create a caring language community to enhance the language learning of all students. Coit Creative Arts Academy strives to promote a language-rich campus for all students through the implementation of technology, multimedia and library resources. We ask that teachers be well informed of their students who have language needs and other language abilities.

Coit encourages families to continue mother tongue development at home, and support is given to these students whose mother tongue is a language other than English. We also provide support through our parent body (those who speak the same language) and through our professional staff such as our full time health aide (Fluent Spanish) and our Spanish Teacher. Outside of this we help support struggling readers and language learners with our Resource Interventionist and Reading Intervention program. Our resource teacher works with the student to help identify language/reading needs and then develops a plan to help support and improve their reading/language abilities. We also have a fulltime Literacy Parapro that supports students with specific reading deficiencies and helps to provide volunteer tutors and reading programs to meet and address these deficiencies in the classroom.

Parent Support for Language

Parents are encouraged to support language development at home through homework assignments and grade level newsletter suggestions. Parents may be asked to read with students on a regular basis, discuss concepts to check for understanding/comprehension, assist with inquiry-guided research, complete writing prompts, and encourage oral communication.

Language and the Program of Inquiry

Language is integrated throughout the Program of Inquiry. Higher level thinking, key concept questions, and extended research all lend themselves to having a strong vocabulary and language presence within the planners. Oral, visual, and written language are all present within planner activities. Literature selections both in read-alouds and guided reading are chosen to build an understanding of the concepts within the planners.

There are monthly rotations of integrated specials throughout all PYP grades. This would include the language of visual art, music, dance, Spanish, and PE (movement) co-teaching with

classroom teachers to incorporate their specific areas of knowledge and encourage connections with the POI planners.

Additional Language

Spanish is the second language taught here at Coit Creative Arts Academy. Each student in K-5 participates in a 40 minute Spanish lesson taught by our part time Spanish teacher, Ms. Jimenez every Wednesday-Friday.

We are actively trying to showcase our Spanish language learning in our classrooms through showcasing student work in our hallways and classrooms. We are intentional in actively trying to translate our classroom Learner Profiles and Calendars into both Spanish and English to further sharpen our language skills.

Language Resources

Here at Coit we have built and continue to add to an extensive literacy library of leveled books that support our IB planners. The Coit and classroom libraries have an array of fiction and nonfiction books, and we are continuing to grow our collection of books in other languages. In addition, we have a variety of online resources to support student learning and research.

The Grand Rapids Public Schools District has recently purchased the ReadyGen, Pearson, ELA curriculum for Grades K-5. This program comes with online strategies, supports, interventions and assessments to help further deepen our literacy instruction in the classroom. ReadyGen also comes with a variety of texts and supporting texts that are both relevant and authentic for our population of students. Coit Creative Arts Academy also provides opportunities for teachers to pursue their English as a Second Language certification by providing test preparation materials and covering the exam fees.