

MZIS Language Policy

Introduction

What is a language policy?

A language policy is a statement of purpose which outlines a school's linguistic goals and defines how its students will attain them. A language policy explains a school's commitment to help all students acquire an additional language, learn through language and learn about language in an academic environment.

What does MZIS' language policy do?

In line with the vision and mission of Mount Zaagkam International School (MZIS), this Language Policy document is designed to give a clear and concise description to all sections of the school community as to the role of language in ensure that: "High quality learning thrives in an environment of tolerance, respect and cultural and linguistic diversity."

Statement of Philosophy

English Language Arts

We believe that every teacher at MZIS is a teacher of language. Therefore, every teacher and parent plays a significant role in the language development and learning of each student. Through language development, students are given the tools they need to interpret the world around them. Language is also a major component in encouraging understanding and tolerance of other culture groups and perspectives. Language is taught in context and addresses the following modalities: listening, speaking, reading, writing, presenting, and viewing. Instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of individuals. Language teaching occurs with the understanding that students bring their own unique cultural backgrounds to any new situation.

English as an Additional Language

Mother tongue languages and students that are in need of additional services provided by our Learning Support teacher will be identified at the beginning of the school year or when the student enters MZIS. All students that are listed as speaking another language other than English as their mother tongue will be screened for our EAL support programme. By identifying our mother tongue language populations we are able to inform our teachers and staff so that we can strengthen our learning community and integrate languages into instruction.

Who do we do it for?

"MZIS is fortunate to have students from all over the world including many students from countries where English is not the primary language. New students from non-English speaking countries are given an English Proficiency Placement examination. The results of this exam, along with several weeks of classroom observation, determine whether said student is in need of additional support to be successful in his/her studies at MZIS.

Additional support may include differentiated instruction in class, in class support with the Learning Support teacher, identified student may be pulled out for one-on-one instruction with the Learning Support teacher, or all of or any combination of the aforementioned. Students identified as in need of additional support will be monitored weekly by the Learning Support teacher and the classroom teacher followed by a quarterly evaluation meeting to assess level of student progress and to determination if less, additional, or the same amount of support is needed for the coming quarter.

Diversity is something that is highly valued at MZIS and having support systems in place to meet the needs of our learners from non-English speaking countries is a school priority." (First Steps)

What is the role of the English language?

Classroom Instruction:

All instruction at MZIS is done in English; language is the foundation of our curriculum. If other languages come about during instruction they will be addressed and students will be encouraged to inquire. Students are instructed in all areas of language arts. Teachers are expected to create a print rich environment, teach with best practice strategies, and to set a model for all students. Students learn from not only their teachers but their peers and their experiences with language.

EAL Instruction:

Students that qualify for EAL classes are pulled out during the school day by a EAL teacher. The time spent with the student is predetermined by their needs and abilities and are adjusted during the school year. EAL students are assessed using the guidelines in our assessment policy.

Host Country Language Philosophy (Bahasa Indonesia)

What is our host country language policy?

Learning languages at an early age opens one's mind, sharpens one's perception and promotes creative and critical thinking. Collaborative work is actively encouraged among students. In the bahasa Indonesia class, students express ideas and explore concepts using bahasa Indonesia; learning the language is not an end in itself.

- Students should be actively involved, feel successful and enjoy the learning experience.
- Students are encouraged to take risks in bahasa Indonesia, overcome obstacles, and accept mistakes as part of the learning process.
- The ability to communicate in bahasa Indonesia is of central importance.
- Learning a new language is a window to different world cultures and a path towards international-mindedness.
- We acknowledge that acquiring fluency in bahasa Indonesia requires 5-8 years of consistent exposure.
- We support students wishing to deepen the knowledge of their mother tongue.

What is the role of Bahasa Indonesia?

The primary focus of bahasa Indonesia teaching at MZIS is the learning of bahasa Indonesia as an additional language. Learning bahasa Indonesia takes on special significance as it is the language of our host country. Students study bahasa Indonesia to gain the communication skills, both in oral and written language, to deal with familiar and practical needs for future study, work and leisure. In addition, through the teaching of bahasa Indonesia, and through links to Indonesian culture across the curriculum, students develop an appreciation of our host country's culture as well as an awareness of different perspectives. The learning of bahasa Indonesia at MZIS seeks to instill an enduring interest in Indonesian culture alongside a lifelong enthusiasm for language learning. Mother tongue language speakers will receive differentiated instruction within the bahasa Indonesia programme.

How do we teach Bahasa Indonesia?

To implement the overall purpose of learning Bahasa Indonesia at MZIS, a variety of teaching methods and strategies are used. These strategies are in keeping with the pedagogy of the IB PYP. The bahasa Indonesia programme gives students practical real life language skills which they can use outside of the classroom. Students are provided with meaningful and authentic listening, speaking, reading, writing, presenting and viewing tasks. Through these tasks, students develop confidence to use the language in their daily lives.

Roles within our Learning Community

What are the roles of the MZIS pedagogical leadership team and the language specialists?

A responsibility of MZIS' pedagogical leadership team is to support teachers in their delivery of instruction. The PYP coordinator manages issues regarding curriculum, instructional techniques, assessment and student progress. The superintendent and primary principal(s) observe teachers and provide constructive feedback, materials, planning time and professional learning opportunities.

MZIS language specialists (bahasa Indonesia, EAL, etc) have knowledge of language development, culture, grade-level subject matter, instructional resources, and assessment tools. The following goals set out the range of activities that the specialists undertake:

- Promote effective language teaching and assessment practices
- Nurture the articulation of language expectations in all curricula and programmes
- Work with the pedagogical leadership team to enhance the language programmes

What are the roles of MZIS staff?

Since learning and language are inextricably bound, the responsibility for the implementation of this language policy belongs to every teacher.

Specific facilitating behaviours include:

- Acquiring a professional knowledge base in additional language acquisition processes, students' developmental language behaviours and familiarity with students' language learning cognitive styles
- Integrating language instruction with content instruction
- Providing responsive learning conditions as recommended by the IB (activating background knowledge, scaffolding meaning, extending language, and affirming identity)
- Giving strategic feedback to students and parents on their linguistic and cognitive development
- Holding high linguistic and academic expectations for all students
- Involving parents in the linguistic and academic development of their children

MZIS teachers collaboratively plan instruction in developmentally appropriate ways, are reflective about curriculum and instruction, scaffold teaching in response to formal and informal assessment of students' progress and model for students how to learn.

What is the role of the MZIS community?

A number of parental actions will facilitate linguistic and academic success for MZIS students. They include:

- Having a positive attitude towards English, bahasa Indonesia and their mother tongues
- Modeling how much is to be gained by learning languages (other than mother tongue)
- Maintaining mother tongue literacy skills in the home
- Encouraging and emotionally supporting their children's additional language acquisition and schooling efforts
- Supplying mother tongue materials in the home
- Having realistic expectations of their children and their school

Parent involvement is integral to MZIS success. The importance of home-school communication cannot be over-emphasized, and volunteering or providing assistance at school is always welcome.

School-wide Language Policies

Literacy Policy

Primary Resource: *First Steps*

First Steps is to be used in conjunction with the PYP language scope and sequence documents. First Steps will emphasis *how* students learn, and the PYP language scope and sequence document will emphasis *what* students learn.

The PYP language scope and sequence sets out what all students should know, understand, be able to do and value as a result of the MZIS literacy programme. First Steps has been designed to help teachers make decision about instruction.

First Steps has a strong focus on supporting our teachers and school as we embrace an outcome-based approach to teaching. An outcome based approach in our school means a shift in emphasis from grade level specific learning outcomes to identifying a student's next step in language learning, towards differentiation. Therefore, First Steps helps teachers to maintain a focus on a student's personal learning journey.

The International Schools Assessment (ISA) will accompany the PYP language scope and sequence and First Steps to measure whether the outcomes of the MZIS literacy programme have been achieved.

Handwriting Policy

Primary Resource: *Handwriting Without Tears*

Handwriting Without Tears is to used in conjunction with the PYP language scope and sequence documents.

Handwriting Without Tears will emphasis how students learn, and the PYP language scope and sequence document will emphasis what students learn. Handwriting it to be integrated with the literacy programmes from preschool to Grade 5. The manuscript writing programme begins in preschool and the cursive writing programme begins in Grade 3.

Spelling Policy - to be reviewed

Primary Resource: *Words Their Way*

Words their Way is to be used in conjunction with the PYP language scope and sequence documents as well as the First Steps literacy programme. Words Their Way will emphasis how students learn and the PYP language scope and sequence documents will emphasis what students learn. Spelling is to be integrated into the greater literacy programme from Kindergarten to Grade 8.