



Changchun American International School

Language Policy

Language Philosophy

We believe in the equal importance of all languages because language is empowering and enabling and essential to intercultural communication and preservation of identity and traditional culture.

At CAIS success in language is not only measured by a student's ability to read, write or speak a language but also by cultural competence such that the student has the ability to understand other cultures and to foster a deeper sense of identity and a broader understanding of diversity. Through their learning experiences students should develop not only an awareness of other cultures but a comprehensive understanding of cross-cultural communication that will inevitably prepare them for the current reality of globalized economies and the unpredictable and increasingly international future of the twenty-first century. Languages acquisition is associated with developing cognitive capacities that enable more diverse thinking and facilitate future language acquisition throughout learners' lives.

Language of Instruction

The language of instruction for all students at CAIS is English because it is the modern "lingua franca" and effective means of international communication facilitating multicultural exchange.

Admission language requirements for English and ongoing language assessment are in place to ensure that all of the students at CAIS have equal access to the school curriculum.

PYP (3-11 year olds)



CAIS Programme of Inquiry together with UOI planners embraces the transdisciplinary nature of language acquisition and learning. Due to the manifold language context of the programme addressed in the UOIs, all the main skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening are taught in English through classroom engagements. In consequence CAIS provides all of its students with an English setting allowing English immersion. This should build linguistic foundations required to study in an MYP and DP.

MYP (11-15 year olds)

English is taught in MYP both as a Language A (for native speakers and international students) and Language B to provide children with poor English background with the opportunity to join the programme. Both programmes aim at dynamic and possibly most natural progress in building children's productive and receptive skills as well as their increasing interest in world literature.

Student's transition from English as Language B to Language A is done on a basis of teacher's recommendation and an ongoing assessment of student's work and progress.

DP (16-19 year olds)

In DP1 and DP2 all levels of English as Language A literature as well language and literature, otherwise Language B will be available to students to choose from. Students will be encouraged to choose a programme based on their linguistic abilities, interest and future education plans. English as Language B is generally aimed at students transitioning from other schools with little English language instruction use. Whereas CAIS continuing students, with their strong linguistic PYP and MYP background will be expected to follow their education and take their Diploma exams in English at literature or language and literature.

Chinese at CAIS

Chinese is the language of our host country and as such the mother tongue of many of our students. CAIS recognizes the need to embrace Chinese in our curriculum.

Chinese language learning all throughout the school (PYP, MYP and DP) is facilitated through integrated language learning covered on daily basis, and



through Chinese language teachers' contributions to the programmes. All Chinese teachers at CAIS participate in school projects and initiatives originating from the programmes.

Chinese is used to facilitate our programme content and instruction as appropriate. This stems from the fact that students whose mother tongue is Chinese are exposed to it as they communicate outside school, with their families and friends. This strengthens children's linguistic and cultural confidence.

According to "Learning in a language other than mother tongue on IB programmes" the school considers the following to be an integral part of their language policy:

- mother-tongue support programmes
- admissions policies
- assessment policies
- short- and long-term curriculum planning
- models of language support and programmes
- learner course choices
- teacher professional development
- host-language programmes
- teacher recruitment
- liaison with parents.

Additional Languages

Mother tongues of international students

We recognize the necessity to support children speaking languages other than English and/or Chinese and their diversity both in and outside the classroom. We try to enable the children to remain in touch with their first language either through international reading circles, Reading Buddies, Big Readers Programme, International Languages Day celebrations, inviting international guest speakers and many more.

On every day basis the school supports regular German, French, Korean and Spanish mother tongue classes.



For children whose mother tongue learning cannot be fully facilitated by the school, parents are involved in their mother tongue development as well as of our libraries. We strongly encourage parents to support and help their children develop a fluency of the mother tongue, as this is essential for developing and maintaining their cultural identity, which will in turn, aid the student to attain emotional stability. The school's environment and event calendar allows all the children to celebrate their differences and multicultural backgrounds.

In the future with the school growing in numbers and diversity, we are considering organizing extra-curricular mother tongue classes for interested students and parents.

English Support

CAIS offers two additional programs to support English language learning.

English Immersion Programme (PYP4 - MYP2/MYP3 under special conditions)

To comply with the rising need to include students with no English language background, the school designed an **Immersion Programme** to facilitate a smooth transition into the respective main stream programmes.

The **Immersion programme** provides everyday language classes reinforcing the communicative method language learning with a particular focus on productive skills.

The students are admitted to the programme based on criteria listed in the Admission Policy and can stay in EIP for a maximum of 2 terms.

English Support. Students who qualify for EAL classes are the ones with a below average English skills. In MYP, a student could not be admitted with NO knowledge of English.



EAL students are granted two consecutive years EAL support during which they are either supported during the school day or taught after school by an English support teacher. The number of hours and the content of classes is predetermined by the student's needs and the programme.

It is our aim to enable students to use the language confidently and effectively as a means of communication within their social, cultural and academic circles.

Next year it's proposed to combine English Support and English Language B, creating a B1 and B2 levels.

Language assessment

The process of language assessment at CAIS is an ongoing one based on continuous observation and feedback concerning all language areas and skills.

We have implemented a wide range of assessment methods, such as portfolios, self and peer assessment rubrics, student-led conferencing, standardized test and many more that can be found in our assessment policy.

Language Admission

PYP (3-8)

We do not require any prior knowledge of English for the children to start the programme in preschool. Since our primary language of instruction is English children have sufficient language immersion during preschool experience to be fully linguistically prepared for school language requirements.

PYP (8-11)

As we continue with English being our primary language of instruction at school children require a sufficient amount of language knowledge to follow the curriculum and take part in the UOIs. Therefore, all the applying candidates undergo a language admission process consisting of an informal interview with our PYP coordinator followed by a short math/language competence test.



The test are not marked or graded in any way as they provide an excellent opportunity for the coordinator to interact with the prospective students and be able to get to know their language awareness. All the observations are later on reported to the main teacher and can serve as a basis for enrolling into English support or Immersion programme.

MYP(11-15)

For students coming from schools that do not provide English language rich programmes there's a language\math competence test prepared, after completing which candidates have an interview with the MYP Coordinator and a teacher from English Language B or EIP.

DP (16-19)

New candidates enrolling into DP are invited to an interview with the DP Coordinator in which they express their educational and personal interests which may lead to a specific subject course preferences.

Roles and responsibilities

School Principal

The principal is involved in the development and final agreement on the Language Policy and its content. He is also responsible for communicating the content of the policy to all the members of the school community and acting as one of the bodies granting its complete implementation. The principal is also in a position to grant professional development choices and decisions (regarding teaching and learning English) made by the coordinators.

IB Coordinators

PYP, MYP and DP coordinator develop, shape as well as review and revise the Language Policy of CAIS. They are also responsible for active implementation of the aforementioned policy and professional development of teaching staff stemming from that policy being put into place. Coordinators supervised by principals provide regular evaluation of teachers and classrooms and gather evidence that teachers are supporting the implementation of CAIS Language Policy.

Teaching staff



All teachers are to refer to the language policy on daily basis in their in and out of classroom schoolwork and cross-reference it with all the other school policies and documents. Teachers are expected to research school and classroom resources and let the Coordinators and the Principal know of any book/material purchases that need to be made. Teachers should express and promote the school's Language Policy with their teaching actions and decisions.

Students

Students are encouraged to take active part in the school's language rich community and express their individual learning styles and approaches.

Professional Development

Our teaching staff is expected to attend a wide range of required trainings and professional development meetings, such as: in-school workshops, regional workshops and conferences, collaborative meetings and 1on1 meetings with coordinators, study visits and many more.

In addition, teachers are encouraged to suggest professional development opportunities to the Principal and Coordinators. However, it has to be kept in mind that these opportunities will only be looked into if the budget allows.

Resources

CAIS is in continuous process of compiling its books and multimedia resources that will support the learning experience in the classroom. The Principal and the School Board are aware of the necessity to expand our library resources and its budget and fully support its ongoing development. All teaching staff are encouraged to make suggestions concerning the books and other teaching tools that would act as a reference point for work in the classroom.

Language Learning Technology

CAIS is equipped with two full computer labs each of which can be used for language support. There is ongoing investment in language learning software to



support students throughout all language learning levels from phonics and the basics of letter/character recognition to support for advanced reading, typing and assessment of language levels.

The school is also working on introducing more technology into the classrooms and developing a digital literacy policy.

References:

Guidelines for developing a school language policy, IB, April 2008

Learning in a language other than the mother tongue in IB programmes, IB, April 2008

MYP Second language acquisition and mother tongue development, IB, January 2004

DP: From Principles in to Practice, IB, August 2008

MYP: From Principles into Practice, IB, August 2008

Making PYP Happen, IB, December 2009

Language policy committee:

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