

Janie Howard Wilson Elementary Language Policy

Philosophy:

Mission Statement: Our mission is to provide a safe and caring environment, where all students can be prepared academically and socially for our future society. Providing excellence in education through a rigorous curriculum, international awareness, and lifelong learning skills, to develop future leaders with a passion for to serve and create a more peaceful world. Learning for all, whatever it takes.

Vision Statement Janie Howard Wilson's (JHW) vision is to provide a happy, caring, and stimulating environment where children can achieve their fullest potential. The JHW staff works together to provide a safe, nurturing learning environment that fosters curiosity, inquiry, and appreciation for life-long learning. We collectively work in partnership with parents, community, and all stakeholders to educate our students and prepare them to be productive citizens in the world of work. Learning for all: Whatever it takes!

At Janie Howard Wilson Elementary School (JHW), we believe that language is transdisciplinary in nature and that facilitating effective and meaningful communication is the responsibility of all instructional staff members. We believe that language and communication are critical to creating the cohesiveness and understanding across cultures that is needed in a diverse and changing world. We believe that language and cultural understanding develop best through shared experiences and interactions, and we consider it a privilege and responsibility to teach and learn language alongside our students. We respect and honor the way in which language reflects the individual's and a culture's beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives, and we are committed to creating the opportunity for our students to find their own voice in society and the world.

As we aim to continuously improve our language instruction, we investigate state-of-the-art practices, instructional strategies, and tools that help learners at every level advance and become lifelong readers and writers with a strong appreciation for the role of communication in creating a better and more peaceful world. Accordingly, the IB Primary Years Program (PYP) at JHW

- promotes inquiry-based authentic language learning
- focuses on transdisciplinary nature of language learning
- incorporates the teaching and learning of language into the program of inquiry
- develops and interrelates the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and media literacy
- provides for the acquisition of a second language
- provides support for students in their native language

Identification:

All students in Polk County complete a home language survey to identify the native language of the family. Based on the survey, a screening is given to students whose primary language is not English. Students are then enrolled in English a Second Language (ESL) based on their proficiency levels.

Practices:

Language A – Primary language of instruction; English

We believe oral, written, and visual language permeates the whole curriculum. Language is the medium through which the entire curriculum is taught and learned. It facilitates communication and incorporates the skills reading, writing, speaking, listening, and media literacy. There is a reciprocal relationship between using inquiry to facilitate language and using language to facilitate inquiry. All students are provided a safe, nurturing, language-rich environment that supports learning as well as social, emotional development and well-being. Our school community benefits from access to different cultures, perspectives and languages, which increase cultural awareness and international-mindedness. We value and encourage students to respect the language, literature, and culture of their home country. We strive to create a caring language community in which all students feel accepted and supported, thereby feeling confident and courageous.

To add complexity to the student experience, all teachers are expected to maintain certain literacy standards with their course work. All staff members hold students accountable for proper grammar and structure, both written and verbal in everyday interactions. Teacher tools and strategies evaluate student language acquisition. Students' journal entries are tools to evaluate literacy. The criterion used to assess students' language development is consistent across subject areas to reinforce the idea that all subjects are connected and skills cross boundaries.

Language B - language acquisition taught at school; Spanish

Currently, the world language of instruction at Janie Howard Wilson Elementary is Spanish. Grades K-5 receive at least fifty minutes of Spanish-language instruction per 7 day rotation.

Scope and Sequence

Janie Howard Wilson Elementary School follows the Florida Academic Standards for language instruction.

English as a Second Language (ESL):

ESL students receive English language instruction through their classroom teacher and ESL specialists, depending on student need as determined by the district. This instruction occurs in inclusion classrooms where students receive ESL services until proficiency is achieved. These students are assessed annually using ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and communication in English state to state for English Language Learners) and monitored throughout the year. Student work is modified, in collaboration with the ESL specialists.

Writing;

Formal writing instruction is taught using Wonders writing curriculum and following Florida B.E.S.T. standards. The formal writing instruction takes place during the literacy block and writing is infused throughout all content areas and embedded into our IB units of inquiry.

Speech and Language:

Students may be referred for a speech/language evaluation. The amount of time in which the student and speech-language pathologist meet is determined based on student need and is outlined in the student's Individualized Education Plan(IEP). These services are provided until the goals outlined in the IEP are mastered. In addition, speech-language pathologists conduct hearing screenings to new enrollments.

Hearing Impaired;

Hearing impaired students at Janie Howard Wilson Elementary are mainstreamed with their peers. Classroom modifications are executed based on the student's IEP.

Professional Development:

Ongoing professional development opportunities are available for the entire staff at JHW to support IB instruction as well as language instruction. Our Language Arts Instructional coaches provide teachers with literacy professional development to enhance and support instruction aligned with Florida B.E.S.T. standards. In addition, experts in the field of literacy instruction support our school with site visits and grade level professional development.

Resources:

It is our goal to expand our teacher and student resources to support language instruction , especially in the areas of foreign language and native language. Presently, students and teachers utilize Reading Wonders, iReady, and Renaissance resources to further enhance literacy instruction and student knowledge of the English Language.

Native Language:

We believe that recognizing and supporting our students' native languages is crucial to their development. The role of parents is vital in ensuring a positive approach to the development of languages. The school expects parents to value their home language(s), as home language proficiency and maintenance are essential in the acquisition of additional languages. Appropriate support with English at home is also an essential part of the children's success both for English and non-English speaking families. Letters and flyers sent home will also be translated into Spanish.

Students who enroll in Janie Howard Wilson Elementary School, speaking a language other than English, will be given a Home Language Survey and provided with the appropriate assistance depending on their needs. In order to support students who speak a language other than English, all teachers are required to be ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) endorsed or certified. Translators are provided upon request during parent-teacher conferences and as needed throughout the school year. Any parent letters sent home are

translated so that parents who do not speak or read English may still communicate with us. Ongoing efforts are in place to expand our collection of resources in multiple languages.