

## NorKam Senior Secondary School Language Policy

### **Philosophy**

At NorKam Senior Secondary we believe language learning is central to the promotion of communication, self-expression, creativity, inquiry, cultural awareness and international mindedness. Our language policy is partly informed by the attributes of the IB Learner Profile whereby all members of the IB community must strive to be open-minded and reflective communicators. Similarly, we believe that language learning is integral to the scholastic and social lives of all students in our school community. As we are a Canadian school, we support the learning of our two official languages; English and French. Our philosophy is that by providing strong language support and development through various media, including oral and written formats, we will foster students who are effective communicators, self-advocates, independent thinkers and respectful global citizens who can effectively adapt to a changing world.

### **School Profile**

#### **1. Background:**

The socioeconomic status of NorKam students is extremely diverse. We draw students from the most impoverished areas of Kamloops including North Kamloops and the Reserve as well as the more affluent areas of Brocklehurst and Rayleigh. Students in these neighbourhoods enjoy a higher socioeconomic status and greater family stability than students drawn from the North Kamloops catchment area. Census data (2006) for North Kamloops illustrates this relative instability in the form of greater incidence of single family homes, lower levels of home ownership, more transiency, and lower levels of post-secondary schooling when compared to the municipality and the province. Contrast this with Brocklehurst and Rayleigh where these figures are at or exceed figures for the municipality and the province. Fifty percent more of our families identify as aboriginal than Kamloops as a whole. In addition to this ethnic and socioeconomic diversity, NorKam also deals with a significant number of transient students who spend only part of their secondary schooling with us. The instability faced by our North Kamloops students differs dramatically from the stability that the students from Brocklehurst and Rayleigh enjoy.

#### **2. Organization Language:**

NorKam Senior Secondary recognizes both official languages of English and French.

- Both official languages will be used in the selection of Resources that support student learning will be available for all chosen language courses.
- ~~The library has resources in both languages. Resources include books, audio visual, posters and assessment materials.~~
- ~~We display content in both languages to support student learning and reflect the material covered in each subject area.~~

- ~~For the purposes of communication with parents, school authorities and outside agencies, English is the operational language at NorKam Senior. However, interpreters are available upon request.~~

### 3. Mother Tongue

At NorKam we recognize that students arrive from different regions of the world and come from different cultures. We support students and parents in celebrating their heritage, culture, and native language.

- We are acquiring multi-lingual resources in the library, including Spanish, French *and Japanese*.
- We promote cultural awareness and sensitivity will be done through school celebrations and activities.

### 4. International Mindedness

Teachers enhance curriculum to address local and global issues. They seek resources to provide in-depth inquiry in many areas. The rich cultural diversity of our school is honored by utilizing guest speakers, community leaders, and parents. Internationalism is a focus during ~~our school's celebration of International Days~~ *extra-curricular activities and presentations*. We support student participation in valuable learning experiences to foster the development of international-mindedness to the greatest extent.

### 5. Differentiated Language Support

The school offers language support in the subject: English Language and Literature

- ~~Support for our English Language Learners (ELL) course is provided through the course work, support, and our school counsellor and district settlement worker.~~ *We need something with*
- Students with limited English language proficiency receive additional support in class from ESL teachers. The allocation of Diverse Learning teachers changes from year to year.
- Students who are not yet proficient in the language of assessment may receive accommodations such as readers, scribes and/or additional time for assessments.
- Students meeting criteria for Special Education coding will be supported with Individual Education Plans to adapt curricula to meet their unique learning requirements.
- First Nations Education Workers work specifically with our First Nations students to ensure that all of their educational needs are met.

**Language Curricular : Second Language Instruction and English Language Acquisition Practices**

## Objectives:

The language policy and programs at NorKam Senior aim to adhere to the IB prescribed elements of language instruction as well as the British Columbia Ministry of Education Language.

- to establish and promote inquire-based learning of language at all grade levels;
- to understand and encourage the transdisciplinary nature of language by promoting collaboration across grade levels and content areas
- ~~to implement an intentional integration of teaching and learning of language into the core curricular goals~~
- to develop and implement programs into the core curricular objectives literacy skills that integrate media literacy
- ~~to provide learning opportunities for mother tongue support within the core curricula objectives~~
- ~~to establish and promote a uniform practice of instruction as prescribed in the *Language Scope and Sequence* for BC~~

## 6. French

Students are offered the possibility of taking the DELF (Diploma 'etudes en Langue Francoise) Exam for levels A1, A2, B1 and B2. This International Exam tests a student's language levels against internationally recognized standards.

Our students go to Quebec on a yearly school trip where they practice their French and are immersed in French Canadian culture.

## 7. Japanese /Italian/Spanish/French

Students are offered these courses at the Introductory 11 level as well as Grades 11 and 12 levels. The communicative approach centers on listening and speaking in the introductory courses and gradually incorporating more complex reading and writing in the advanced courses.

## 8. Assessment

At NorKam Senior Secondary assessment is a tool for teaching and learning. We use a variety of assessment strategies and tools throughout a unit to gauge a student's understanding of subject content. All students participate in formative (during the learning) and summative (at the end of a unit

or period of learning) assessments in order to report progress to parents in all subjects. Additionally, we diversify our assessment to meet the needs of our students. We are currently working on higher order thinking skills and critical thinking as outlined in our problem of practice for our ongoing Instructional Rounds.

## **9. Collaborative Time**

Language teachers are provided time on Wednesdays where teachers work collaboratively to share best practices. All language teachers regularly meet in Professional Learning Committees (PLCs) to develop support strategies for our students. We have established essential learning outcomes, common assessments, intervention packages and oral evaluation rubrics. We are planning to implement higher order and critical thinking strategies and assessments as well as a reasonable timeline to meet these goals.

## **10. Professional Development**

Language acquisition teachers attend training in accordance with professional development requirements established by the IBO. Language Acquisition French teachers are also trained DELF examiners.

## **11. Policy Review**

This policy is a working document and is reviewed on an annual basis. The primary mandate of the [school is to promote both official languages](#) within a primarily English setting.

### **References:**

Guidelines for developing a school language policy IBO, 2008

Language Acquisition Guide IBO 2014

St Michaels School