

# Language Policy

---

*Lawton Chiles Middle Academy*  
*Revised September 2016*

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

We are an internationally-minded community committed to fostering curious minds in an educational environment that produces resilient, respectful and empathetic students, empowering them to exemplify academic integrity and exhibit responsiveness to our ever-changing global community.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Lawton Chiles Middle Academy Language Policy Committee was led by the reading teacher and consists of one representative each from Language and Literature, Language Acquisition, Mathematics, Creative Writing and P.E., in addition to the MYP coordinator designee. (Pam Grimes, Kathy McDaniel, Raquel Castillo, Kate Graydon, Juan Debrand, Steven Jones, and Susie Kallan)

## **PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

### **Philosophy**

#### **Basic Assumptions**

- Reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing competencies are integrated throughout students' learning experiences and throughout the eight subject areas.
- Benchmarks for the state standards are repeated as needed in course sequences. As students progress from one course to the next, increases should occur in the complexity of materials and tasks and in the students' independence in the application of skills and strategies.
- Learning tasks and materials accommodate the individual needs of students through differentiation of instruction.
- Updated technology is available for students to develop competencies.
- Students will assume ownership of learning goals based on previous year's state assessment with guidance from content related teachers.

## Major Concepts/Content

Lawton Chiles Middle Academy strives to provide integrated educational experiences in reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking, language, and literature throughout the subject areas. Content includes, but is not be limited to, the following:

- Using the reading process to construct meaning from a wide range of literary, informational and technical texts
- Using the writing process to communicate information and ideas
- Using listening, viewing and speaking strategies
- Understanding the power of language and using language in authentic contexts
- Understanding the common features of a variety of literary forms
- Responding critically to visual, oral and written texts

## School-wide Goals

All members of the Lawton Chiles Middle Academy community are aware that writing and communicating are imperative if we are to participate in a global community. To this end, the members of the Lawton Chiles Middle Academy's Language Policy Committee have established the following goals to be reviewed and evaluated annually:

- ✓ All community members will develop and refine the skills necessary to effectively communicate in a global environment.
- ✓ Students will develop an appreciation for other languages and cultures.
- ✓ All community members will cultivate a global environment within our school.
- ✓ Students will articulate their feelings and experiences in standard language A as well as Language B.
- ✓ Students will use appropriate terminology specific to each subject area.
- ✓ Faculty will emphasize authentic learning experiences and encourage intellectual curiosity among all community members.
- ✓ Students will be equipped with the lifelong skills necessary to function in a 21st century environment.

## LANGUAGE COURSES

### Language and Literature

The primary language of Lawton Chiles Middle Academy is English while Spanish is taught as a second language. English (Language and Literature) is taught according to the guidelines set forth in our state standards and the MYP subject guide. It is our belief that all faculty members are language teachers and, as such, are expected to incorporate the teaching of language into their curriculum. LCMA's "Great Expectations" (see the next page) are posted in every classroom, setting forth the grammatical expectations each student is to maintain in their

classroom work. Faculty members promote “school based inquiry” using library and internet resources.

# LCMA Great Expectations

---

- ✓ I have written in complete sentences.
- ✓ All my sentences begin with a capital letter.
- ✓ All my sentences end with proper punctuation marks.
- ✓ My words are spelled correctly.
- ✓ I use correct grammar when I speak.
- ✓ I have included vivid elaboration.
- ✓ I have used advanced vocabulary.
- ✓ I take pride in my writing.
- ✓ I have great expectations for my future.

## Language Acquisition

All students take foundation-level Spanish each year. Students in year 3 have the opportunity to take high-school credit Spanish; all other students in years 1 – 3 take what is described by our district and state as “advanced Spanish”. We offer Spanish 1 and Latin 1 for high school credit to some of our more advanced 7<sup>th</sup> graders and a year later, Spanish 2 and Latin 2 for high school credit to these students in their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year. Every Spanish course follows the IB subject guide and is taught for a full year, allowing students to build their skills in the areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing. These are the same skills that are identified as integral to our school’s philosophy, emphasizing to students the inter-relatedness of all eight MYP subject areas. In addition, students in language class develop an awareness and appreciation for their own culture and the culture of others. Teachers use differentiated instruction and a variety of teaching strategies in the classroom to maximize student learning.

## Intensive Reading

Students who have scored at level 1 or 2 on the reading portion of the FSA language Arts Florida Standards (LAFS) have been assigned to an Intensive Reading class, which is in addition to their language and literature class. The intensive reading class is designed to increase the student’s specific reading needs – decoding skills, fluency and/or comprehension of text – in order to achieve higher levels of success. The course uses curriculum designed by ACHIEVE 3000 which employs online non-fiction resources to teach and reinforce a variety of critical reading skills.

## ASSESSMENT

Students are continually assessed using formative and summative assessments evaluated with MYP rubrics as well as rubrics created by teachers. Instructors offer a variety of assessment types including projects, presentations, discussions, tests, essays and other forms of written and oral communication, in addition to self and peer evaluations. Students are also be evaluated using district and state-mandated assessments. Parents and students alike receive feedback on student progress in multiple areas including traditional grades; achievement levels related to MYP criteria; performance related to state exams; and performance related to the district grading system. *For additional information related to assessment, please see the school’s assessment policy.*

## INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS

According to surveys originating from our district, languages spoken in the homes of our L.C.M.A. students include English, Spanish, and a variety of other languages. Throughout the year, the school provides opportunities for students to engage in multicultural activities, many of which are embedded within the curriculum of our subject areas, such as the study of various cultures in individuals and societies classes and through language and literature and reading classes. In language and literature class, each grade level studies a translated work with students: 6<sup>th</sup> grade/Year 1: Leo Tolstoy's "The Ant and the Pigeon" translated to English and titled "The Ant and the Dove"; 7<sup>th</sup> grade/Year 2: *Beowulf* for middle school students, originally written in High German, then translated to Old English/Saxon, and finally to English; 8<sup>th</sup> grade/Year 3: from *The Diary of Anne Frank* originally written in Dutch.

In addition, we provide opportunities that enhance the curriculum such as bringing in acrobats to perform and educate our students about the customs, language and culture of China. We also have a Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration that involves a Hispanic Festival for community members, our parents and students. During this festival students try various dances, play trivia and share their knowledge of other countries through art. Our hallways reflect our international mindset as each of the signs is printed in Spanish and Chinese in addition to English. Furthermore, our campus greets visitors with "welcome" signs in fifteen different languages. Our Learning Commons (library) demonstrates evidence of our school's global perspective as it houses multicultural periodicals, books and online resources for students to peruse for research or leisure. We offer students books and magazines printed in other languages in addition to translated works.