

# Language Practices

## Preschool

### Overview

“Kindergarten readiness” is a term often used when talking about entering Kindergarten. Our 3- and 4-year-old preschool programs are designed to provide the child with the necessary learning experiences to be ready for Kindergarten. Utilizing an approach that aligns with our district’s International Baccalaureate program, each child in the 3- and 4-year-old program will participate in learning that will enrich his or her educational journey. As each child progresses through the preschool program, indicators of progress will be used to insure a successful transition into Kindergarten and beyond.

In language, literacy, and communication, we identify these components as essential in the foundations for ongoing language development.

- Begins to recognize letters and sounds
- Recognition of legal first name in print
- Recognition and naming of most upper and lower case letters
- Use of words to communicate needs and wants
- Listens to stories for 5-10 minutes without restlessness
- Follows two-step directions
- Recalls stories and events, including key details
- Description of relationship between illustrations and story
- Recognition of environmental print
- Uses scribbles, shapes, pictures, or dictation to represent thoughts correlated to topic in print
- Use of five exchanges with peers and/or adults (strive for five)

At the Fridley Preschool, every teacher is a language teacher, and language learning occurs in all areas throughout the school. We believe in the importance of learning an additional language, value the linguistic diversity of our community, and work to support the mother-tongue development of our students and families.

### Language Instruction

#### ***Primary Language:***

The primary language of instruction at the Fridley Preschool is English. We use the above listed components to help drive our language instruction. With this model:

- Teachers model proficient language behaviors

- Teachers and students work together to practice language development and
- Students demonstrate their newly developed skills in whole group and independent activities
- The three strands of language will be incorporated throughout the curriculum as integral components of instruction and learning. These three strands are:
  - Oral language
  - Visual language
  - Written language

***Primary Language Essential Agreements and Understandings:***

- Different components of language development may be happening in the classroom simultaneously
- Teachers will conduct whole group, small group, and independent reading groups with students
- Students will have opportunities to write every day for a variety of purposes
- Units of Inquiry content is integrated with reading, writing, language, and communication
- Interventions will be given when needed as indicated by each child's progress
- Support will be provided through speech articulation interventions at an age-appropriate level when needed.

***Exposure to Additional Language:***

Language acquisition occurs best in the preschool years by integrating a balance of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning activities. Students engage in many activities while learning concepts including, but not limited to, singing songs, playing games, participating in question and response circles, interacting with literature, using manipulatives, and participating in cooperative learning groups. Students will engage in a balance of receptive and expressive language learning (i.e. receiving, listening, and understanding language and expressing thoughts verbally and through other mediums such as drawing and writing).

***Assessment and Interventions:***

Pre-readers at the 3- and 4-year old Preschool are assessed on the knowledge of letter names, letter sounds, and overall phonemic awareness. Students are also assessed on the early reading areas of:

- Concepts of print
- Letter names
- (Onset) letter sounds

From these assessments, teachers and staff will deliver interventions in whole group, small group, or individually. Instruction in these core reading areas will to be differentiated to meet the needs of individual children and additional support will be provided if necessary.

***English Language Learners:***

We provide services to ELL students through the use of SIOP interactive strategies and lessons with the classroom teachers.

***Review of Language Agreements:***

Our building team members will review the language policy as needed, especially at times where there may be changes in our language practices.

During our PYP candidacy, our language policies will be reviewed by the building principal, PYP coordinator, EL district teacher, and our IB consultant. These team members will review this language policy, revise if needed, and set forth a plan to communicate our language policy to the staff.