

## **WARREN T. JACKSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LANGUAGE POLICY 2014-2015**

### **Philosophy**

At Jackson, we respect the dignity and culture of every person. We believe that every person has the capacity to learn through effective use of language and communication. We value other cultures and the rich diversity represented in our school. We believe students learn language best through inquiry-based and authentic learning experiences. Students are emergent learners in both English and French.

### **Landscape**

Warren T. Jackson has approximately 835 students ranging in age from four to eleven years. All six ethnicities (American Indian, Asian, Black, Multi-Racial, Pacific Islanders and White) and four world languages are represented within the student body at Jackson.

### **Language of Instruction**

The primary language of instruction at Warren T. Jackson is English. Throughout their time at Jackson, students experience the French language program and instructional strategies that help develop the knowledge and skills necessary to become successful communicators. The transdisciplinary curriculum focuses on the areas of phonological awareness, phonics (Orton-Gilligham Approach), fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension (locating evidence within a text, using primary and secondary resources and comparing/contrasting two texts), writing inclusive of the conventions, listening and speaking, and viewing of multi-media. All teachers use whole group, small group and individual instruction, as well as cooperative learning, to focus on the development of language skills.

- **ESOL**

Approximately two percent of our student body receives ESOL (English for Speaker of Other Languages) services. We have one part-time ESOL teacher to serve this population, although 9 staff members are ESOL certified. Atlanta Public Schools also offers ESOL certification training. The ESOL teacher provides a Home Language Survey for all students, which is kept in students' public record (PR) folders. If students speak a language other than English, the listening, speaking, reading and/or writing portions of the WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT) will be administered. The students will be placed in ESOL if his/her English proficiency level is low on this test. Kindergarten through third grade ELL students receive a 45 minute ESOL segment daily. Fourth through Fifth grade ELL students also receive daily ESOL segments, totaling 50 minutes. ESOL offers support in reading, math, science, and social studies texts. The students will be exited from ESOL two years following entry if the student's 2013-2014 CRCT Reading score is above 800, and the WIDA ACCESS Test level is 5.0 and above on Tier B or C and with an ACCESS Literacy subscore of 4.8 or higher. . The ESOL teacher continues to collaborate with classroom teachers that have students in their rooms who have recently exited the ESOL program. Close contact is also kept with the classroom teachers of the mainstreamed students to ensure that the transition is smooth.

### **Mother Tongue Support**

The ESOL classroom and media center house a number of books in the students' mother tongue. Students occasionally read books in their native language to maintain reading skills. In addition, bilingual books are used for instruction and independent reading, as well as multiple online resources, including Renaissance Learning and Reading A-Z.

A small number of people on staff are fluent in a variety of languages, such as Spanish, French, and Portuguese. All documents from the district can be requested in any mother tongue language. If needed, a translator will also be provided by the district for parent-teacher conferences, SST meetings, school and classroom documents and phone calls.

At Jackson, our additional language instruction is in French. Students begin French classes in grade 1 and continue through grade 5. Students in grades 1-3 receive 90 minutes of French instruction weekly, or three 30-minute segments. Fourth and fifth grade students receive 120 minutes of French instruction per week, or four 30-minute segments. There are currently a total of 3 French teachers on staff at Jackson Primary campus and Main campus.

### **Additional Language Instruction**

The French teachers use the Georgia Elementary Foreign Language (GA ESFL) standards for second language instruction, which is based on the foreign language CCGPS (Common Core Georgia Performance Standards). Based on a comprehensive study by the International Center of Accelerated Learning (ICAL), student achievement in the GA ESFL exceeds performance of any known results in similar U.S. programs. Within the program, students study different themes that build upon one another as they progress through the grade levels. The French team also supports each grade level planner in the Program of Inquiry by focusing on making connections to the central idea, lines of inquiry, and/or related concepts whenever possible. The teachers use the "Images" and "Visages" book series published by Addison Wesley to support instruction.

### **Community Support**

Peachtree Presbyterian Church of Atlanta is a partner with our school and offers an after school program, La Amistad, for the Spanish-speaking ELL community. Students go to La Amistad Monday through Friday from 3:00-6:00PM. Volunteers read with the students and work collaboratively with the classroom teachers to help them with assignments. The volunteers also assist them with social growth and integration into the Atlanta, English-speaking community for both parents and students. The ESOL teacher as well as classroom teachers serve as a liaison between the school and the after school program. Teachers communicate with LaAmistad volunteers via phone, email, or visits to the church. Students are also given the opportunity to participate in team sports both within La Amistad and within the church's recreation program. Mentors are also provided for those students in greater need of an adult's guidance and support. If requested, the La Amistad director will participate in Student Support Team (SST) meetings.

