

Roberto Clemente Middle School
Language Policy

The staff and students at Roberto Clemente Middle School recognize and appreciate the diversity of our school community. Within this diverse school community, we use language as a tool for communication and access to learning. Languages are gateways to rigorous learning and to the appreciation of multiple cultures and perspectives. Since all staff members are teachers of language, it is imperative to implement a language policy which specifies the support for mother tongues, the support for students who are not yet proficient in the language of instruction and how students will inquire into other languages and cultures.

Students attending Roberto Clemente Middle School speak many languages and come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Roberto Clemente Middle School staff members will foster and maintain a caring culture and tradition of helping parents and community members adapt to a new environment. Parent networking groups as well as student/staff mentor opportunities will serve to foster the welcoming school environment. English language learners will have differentiated support as they learn the language of instruction. Every identified ESOL student will be assigned an ESOL teacher to support student proficiency with the English language, as well as differentiated support within all subject area classes. Teachers in all subject areas will facilitate the opportunity for students to share their language and culture with students as a valuable connection to curricular content.

Students attending Roberto Clemente Middle School will engage in daily opportunities to increase proficiency with the English language, as this is the tool to access learning. All teachers are language teachers and will recognize language as a tool for valuing group identity and cohesiveness. In doing so, staff will model the use of appropriate language and awareness of audience, while holding students responsible for the same. Reflection, written and verbal, will provide opportunities for students and staff to identify appropriate use of language in academic and nonacademic settings.

Students attending Roberto Clemente Middle School will be encouraged to study languages other than the language of instruction. If a student is not yet proficient with the language of instruction and it is considered developmentally inappropriate to inquire into another language, the student will be enrolled in courses that provide the differentiated language support that is need to achieve proficiency. Language acquisition is a tool by which students increase cultural proficiency and appreciation of multiple perspectives. Students who study languages other than their mother tongue have a greater chance to experience success in all subject areas. Therefore, teachers of all subject areas will incorporate a variety of languages within their instructional programs.

Staff at Roberto Clemente Middle School will actively participate in professional development opportunities to develop precision with student use of academic language. Students will demonstrate comprehension through structured student discourse in the language of instruction.

Differentiated and subject specific language frames will provide the platform on which every student may experience success.