

**Southside High School and Beck Academy**  
**International Baccalaureate Programs**  
**Language Policy for Students, Parents and Staff**

**Language Philosophy**

Language and intercultural competence touches every aspect of life in a global society. Students must develop language proficiency to communicate with diverse audiences and insight into cultural perspectives that shape those individuals. Greenville County Schools provides all students with rich language and literacy learning experiences across the curriculum that empower students to use language to communicate and collaborate effectively, solve problems competently, think critically and creatively and act responsibly, which are also embodied in the IB Learner Profile.

We believe that...

- Every student brings language, cultural and literacy knowledge and skills that enhance the classroom environment and school climate.
- Through the curriculum and school experiences, language and literacy development are fostered in the language of instruction, other world languages and the mother tongue.
- Students progress toward proficiency at different rates across the different modes of communication. Therefore, language and literacy experiences center around student needs.
- Language is the foundation of all learning and to that end, language and literacy development are the shared responsibility of our students, parents, teachers and school and district leaders.

This language policy reflects district and school goals for language learning and outlines the procedures and practices in place to support language learning. These procedures align with the mission and the Strategic Education Plan of Greenville County Schools and IB expectations.

**Language Learning Across the IB Continuum**

Both IB programmes emphasize the acquisition and use of language in a range of real-world contexts and for different purposes, and at the same time, promote understanding of other cultures through the study of language. The school and district support language learning goals through practices that include the following:

- On-going professional learning that includes the acquisition and use of best practices in the areas of curriculum, assessment and instruction.
- School-based instructional coaches and IB coordinators work together to provide targeted teacher support so that literacy skills are a prominent focus within content standards.
- Ongoing assessment and student feedback are used to monitor students' progress in developing language and literacy skills across subjects.
- Appropriate supports are available to students as needed.

### **School Language Profile**

The schools' community reflects diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and primarily fall into the following groups: Fifty-eight percent, a majority of students who primarily speak English in the home and have limited exposure to additional language study; Twenty-six percent of students who primarily speak English in the home and have participated in an articulated sequence of world language study; twelve percent of bilingual students who have acquired both languages simultaneously since birth; and four percent of bilingual students who have acquired near-native or bilingual proficiency as a result of attending English-speaking schools.

### **Language A**

English is the language of instruction at Southside High School. English A1 is the course offered to students at the school and follows the prescribed course requirements as set forth in the IB Language A English Literature Subject Guide. Students are assessed according to IB Diploma Programme policies as described in the subject guide.

When appropriate, school-supported self-taught Language A1 courses are available to IB Diploma students, provided their language skills allow them to access the curriculum.

### **Language B**

Students are provided opportunities to develop language proficiency in more than one language. French and Spanish *ab initio*, Standard and Higher Levels to meet students' interests and prior language experiences and needs.

Courses follow the prescribed course requirements as prescribed in the relevant IB Language B subject guides. Student progress is evaluated against the appropriate IB assessment criteria.

### **Mother Tongue**

The district currently serves students who come from over 60 countries English for Speakers of Other Languages) Program serves students who come from over 60 countries, including the United States, and speak over 65 languages. Program personnel facilitate English language acquisition, support content instruction, and collaborate with other school personnel to increase student achievement. ESOL services are provided in all schools. Processes are in place to identify, screen and support and monitor the language development of students whose mother tongue is different from the language of instruction. English as a Second Language (ESOL) Program personnel facilitate English language acquisition, support content instruction, and collaborate with other school staff to increase student achievement. The South Carolina Department of Education's English Language Learners Handbooks is the tool used to ensure that the district provides resources available to the students. Additionally, the school has dictionaries, translation of school documents into other languages, and translation services provided at school events.

The school encourages students and parents to be actively involved in language learning experiences. Forensic Team, Cultural Diversity Club, International Day, and International Festival provide culture opportunities in which students can use their native language and cultural experiences to share with peers and the community.

The school's media center provides resources available in other languages and access to authentic materials in other languages. The school and district encourage families to continue heritage language development at home. In addition, the community encourages families to advantage of the many heritage language and cultural opportunities available in the community.

### **Review of Language Policy**

Moving forward, the school's language policy will be a living document that will undergo review and revision as needed. A language steering committee comprised of students, parents, teachers, the IB coordinator and administrators will be formed to review the school's language profile and programs and make recommendations to ensure that the program meets the language needs of the school and community. The language policy will be shared with students and staff new to the school and posted on the school's web site.