

## **Myers Park School International Baccalaureate Program Language Policy**

### **Philosophy**

In order to support primary and secondary language acquisition, we believe that all teachers are language teachers. Language is one of the driving forces that connects all of the IB disciplines. Effective language learning is a natural precursor to global understanding and awareness. The goal is for students to achieve proficiency in English, the language of instruction, as well as in a second language offered at school: French, German, Latin, or Spanish. We recognize the transfer of cognitive skills from language A to language B and vice versa. This process encourages the acquisition of higher order thinking skills and the development of multiple perspectives. The language policy also recognizes the importance of all teachers differentiating instruction for students at different levels of language acquisition.

As spoken and written language are the primary means of communication in an academic setting, we emphasize the study of English as it is the primary language spoken in our community. Since we live in an interconnected world where we must communicate across cultures to solve problems, students should become proficient in a second language in order to become responsible world citizens. As a result, we require all students to study a second language throughout their participation in the IB Program. We support English Language Learners by appreciating their mother tongues and by helping them become proficient in English.

### **Language Profile of Myers Park High School**

The primary language of Myers Park High School is English, but the school has a significant (and increasing) number of students who are not native English speakers. The school's population of students receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) services is the largest among the Charlotte Mecklenburg High Schools. These students are also known as English Language Learners (ELL). The school offers direct language instruction or consultative support for these students. The most prevalent mother tongue (after English) is Spanish. There are 20+ mother tongues spoken at Myers Park. However, they make up only approximately 5% of the total school population.

The English as a Second Language (ESL) program seeks to help English language learners (ELL) gain English proficiency and achieve at high levels in core academic subjects such as math, science, social studies and language arts.

### **Enrollment Procedures English Language Learners (ELL)**

Students who speak a language at home other than English enroll in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools through the International Center. ESL services are provided for all students qualified as ELL based on the state English language proficiency test.

## **Language Instruction Educational (LIEP) Program Services**

LIEP services are provided at all Charlotte Mecklenburg schools. Teachers use the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Development standards to plan and deliver instruction. English Language Learner (ELL) Services receives local, state, and federal funding to support program initiatives, which align with Title III federal requirements. ELL Committees have been established at all schools to ensure that English language learners receive appropriate testing accommodations, classroom modifications, and program placements

## **Types of LIEP Services Available at all Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools**

- English as a Second Language (ESL) classes
- Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). Teachers trained in the SIOP model help English language learners develop academic English while learning grade-level content.
- Dual Language/Two-Way Immersion. In Dual Language programs, students are taught literacy and academic content in English and a partner language.
- Spanish for Heritage Speakers. Spanish courses offered in middle and high school focusing on literacy development for heritage speakers of Spanish.

## **IB Entrance Requirements**

Proficiency in English is not a requirement for admission to the IB Program. However, it is very rare to have a student in the IB Program who is not proficient in English. Although very few IB students need additional help with English, Myers Park offers a full range of services for students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or who use English as their second language (ESL). Myers Park teachers must use differentiated instruction in their classrooms, which takes into account English language proficiency, as well as the many other factors that can affect learning.

## **Language A**

Myers Park acknowledges the importance of including the teaching and learning of language continuously throughout the program. The primary language used in school is English. The school offers the Middle Years Program for grades 9 & 10. All students are involved in Language A learning from grades nine through twelve, and it aligns with the requirements of Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, North Carolina Standard Course of Study, and the International Baccalaureate Language A objectives. Students take MYP Language and Literature in grades 9 & 10 and English A Literature Higher Level in graded 11 & 12.

## **Second Language Acquisition (Language B)**

Myers Park offers six years of IB language B- French, German, Latin, or Spanish. Students complete at least one year of one of these languages in middle school. All IB students must

complete five years of a Language B to sit for the Standard Level IB exam, which is an IB Diploma requirement. Students must complete level III Language B by the end of their sophomore year to enter the IB Diploma program in grade 11. Students, who complete level II French, German, Latin, or Spanish in middle school, are able to complete level VI their senior year and sit for the Higher Level IB exam.

Entering 9<sup>th</sup> graders who have not completed a Level I Language B, typically take both Level I and Level II in their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year or Level II and III in their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year to catch up. All IB language B courses are taught all year (on an A/B Day schedule). All MYP Language B courses are taught on the 4x4 block. This means 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders take their Language B either 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> term. This allows 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders to catch up before entering the IB Diploma Program in grade 11. With special permission of the Language B (aka World Languages) department chair, students can take lower level Language B courses online through the North Carolina Virtual School to catch up, because all students must be ready to take Level IV at the start of their junior year.

### **North Carolina Virtual Public School**

Myers Park High School students have access to the online North Carolina Public School. By virtue of their online course delivery, students have access to courses and highly qualified teachers in subjects not available at Myers Park. Myers Park does not allow IB students to take courses available at school. However, students may take a wide variety of language B courses online as non-IB electives. Examples include Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. With special permission of the Language B (aka World Languages) department chair, students can take lower level Language B courses online to catch up and meet IB Diploma prerequisites.

### **All Stakeholders Must Support Language Learning**

Language instruction must be trans-disciplinary and touch upon all aspects of expression and communication, whether in a class setting or outside of the classroom.

### **Administration and IB Coordinator**

- Encourage students to maintain and value their own native language and to respect the native language of other students.
- Encourage students to become fluent in more than one language.
- Encourage all students to share and develop their work in a social context through new and traditional technologies.
- Give students access to a variety of technological and informational sources.
- Provide faculty with language education strategies, professional development, and assessment help.

## **Teachers**

- Use a variety of strategies to help students comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and respond to a variety of sources (verbal and written) even when the sources are in a language other than the students' first language.
- Expose students to a wide range of sources reflecting a variety of cultures.
- Give students specific and constructive linguistic feedback.
- Seek continuing education regarding language instruction.

## **Students**

- Become an active language learner through inquiry and authentic real-life applications.
- Become fluent in another language other than his or her mother tongue.
- Be respectful of another individual's language and culture.
- See language as a tool for life-long learning

## **Parents**

- Value the development of language skills.
- Participate in meetings regarding the IB Program and language instruction.
- Agree with the Language Policy of the school.

## **Support for the development and maintenance of the mother tongue**

Myers Park's population is made up of native speakers of many languages from around the world. While it is critical to ensure that the language of instruction (English) does not serve as a prolonged obstacle to learning, it is equally important to support the development and maintenance of our international students' mother tongues. We do this in a variety of ways:

- When enrollment is sufficient, the Language B department offers Spanish for Native Speakers Levels I and II, since Spanish is the predominant second language in our area. This course increases students' academic literacy in Spanish and prepares them for transition to higher-level Spanish courses.
- A number of student clubs and organizations exist to foster cultural and language development, including French Club, Spanish Club, German Club, and International Club.
- Our Media Center offers an increasing number of magazines, newspapers, and books in the most common mother tongues of our students.

- We encourage students to write their Personal Project or Extended Essay in their mother tongue or investigate it as a topic, assuming a teacher who speaks or understands that language is available to serve as their advisor.
- We are exploring the possibility of allowing students to take two Languages A, perhaps through independent study or virtual learning.

### **Respect for the Mother Tongue**

Our teachers take opportunities to demonstrate respect for our students' mother tongues whenever possible in class. We have two goals: we want our English Language Learners to feel that their language and culture are appreciated, and we want to model our appreciation of other languages and cultures for our English speakers. As a staff, we have on-going conversations about how to teach respect for other cultures and increase international mindedness in our students.

### **Parental Involvement**

Since our population of non-native English families is growing, we recognize the need to improve our ability to communicate with parents in their language. While we recognize that English is the functional language of our nation, some parents are missing essential information about their children's progress in school because of a language barrier. Our district already offers some printed materials in Spanish and Vietnamese, including letters informing parents of students' academic difficulties. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools is working to make translators available for parent phone calls and conferences, have parent meetings in Spanish as well as English, and provide IB materials in Spanish and other languages so that all parents are informed.

### **Life-long learning**

The language policy promotes life-long learning. Developing language learning skills gives students the capacity to solve problems, think critically, and act creatively. Language empowers students to understand, interpret, and respond to ideas, attitudes, and feelings. Information literacy and technology also provide a gateway to life-long learning and a rich range of language learning opportunities.