

Language Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to clarify the Jefferson Middle Years Programme (MYP) Language Policy. Our schools are committed to supporting multilingualism to increase intercultural understanding and international-mindedness as well as support students from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This policy applies to both schools and is to be communicated to, and understood by, all continuing and new teachers, students, parents, and administrators.

Philosophy:

In the Jefferson MYP, language is an essential instrument for learning, communication, and expression. Through language instruction, we encourage intercultural awareness, inquisitiveness, and an appreciation of diversity by providing students the tools needed to interpret and understand the world around them. Language is taught through different modalities: listening, speaking, reading, writing, non-verbal communication, viewing, presenting, and culture. At our schools, language development is essential to the development of international-mindedness. Because of this, we believe that every staff member of the Jefferson community is a teacher of language.

Through the exploration of language, students become communicators in our multilingual world. In every year of the MYP, language education occurs with the understanding that students bring their unique cultural backgrounds with them to school. To meet students where they are, we endeavor to honor the mother-tongue of our students from different backgrounds in order to respect and learn about different cultures. We provide those with little or no English the opportunity to learn our language through the English Language Learning program on campus. Additionally, we differentiate instruction to meet the needs of individual students. To maintain cultural identity, however, we encourage families to continue to speak, read, and write in their mother-tongue.

Mother Tongue Support:

Within our student population, there are bilingual students, including those whose home language is a language other than English. Included in our multilingual, multicultural staff are speakers of several languages, who are often called upon to assist as translators as needed for parent conferences.

Parents and students are encouraged to speak, read, write, and develop their mother tongue at home. This strengthens the child's language skills while instilling a sense of importance about his or her culture.

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Campus Language Identification:

In order to promote holistic learning within the context of the International Baccalaureate, the stakeholders in the Jefferson MYP recognize the significance of incorporating the teaching and learning of language throughout the continuum. Because English is the primary language of instruction at Jefferson our Language and Literature classes are taught in English. Students must, therefore, meet English language requirements established by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards.

Upon entry into the Jefferson MYP, parents of students complete a language survey to identify the student's proficiencies and needs. Language proficiency is determined by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) which will place the student in either an English as a Second Language (ESL) class or regular English class.

The State of Texas requires that every student with a home language other than English and with limited English proficiency be provided the full support of an ESL program. New students to campus are tested using the Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey (WMLS Tests) and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) to further determine placement and progress (SAISD Administrative Procedure E-1, 2017). If a student is placed in an ESL program, the school acknowledges the student's primary language as something other than English. In our schools, that language is usually Spanish.

ESL includes intensive instruction in English through the use of second language acquisition methodologies designed to develop proficiency in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing of the English language. ESL courses are commensurate with the student's level of English proficiency. Bilingual education or courses taught in the student's native language may be offered when resources are available.

The district provides ongoing coordination between ESL and the regular curriculum. ESL is designed to address the affective, linguistic, and cognitive level needs of limited English proficient students as follows:

- **Affective** - Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are provided instruction using second language methods in English to introduce basic concepts of the school environment which instills confidence, self-assurance, and a positive identity with their cultural heritages. The program addresses the history and cultural heritage associated with both the students' home language and the United States.
- **Linguistic** - LEP students are provided intensive instruction to develop proficiency in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language. The instruction in academic content areas is structured to ensure that the students master the required TEKS and higher order thinking skills.
- **Cognitive** - LEP students receive instruction in English in mathematics, science, health, and social studies using second language methods.

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Instruction in academic content areas is structured to ensure that students master required essential knowledge and skills as well as higher order thinking skills. The use of second language strategies or another language does not impede the awarding of credits/units toward meeting promotion requirements.

Language Instruction:

The Jefferson MYP offers a proficiency-based approach to language learning taught in six phases so that the complexity and range of language profiles that students bring to their MYP classroom is acknowledged and fostered.

Students come to MYP language study from various experiences. For example, MYP students may have exited from any of the five PYP language phases while other students may have completed a different language acquisition program. Conversely, students may have no prior knowledge or experience of the language to be studied in the MYP. (IB MYP *Language Acquisition Guide*, September 2014).

Upon entering the middle years programme, students select a language to study and continue its study until completion of the MYP in 10th grade. Currently language instruction is in Spanish and French.

As explained in the IB MYP *Language Acquisition Guide*, planning, teaching, and language acquisition skills are mapped on continuums to show clear expectations for each phase. Students develop ability to communicate appropriately and effectively in an increasing range of social, cultural, and academic contexts, and for an increasing variety of audiences and purposes. This is demonstrated by:

- The variety and sophistication of vocabulary and structures used.
- The scope of situations in which the language is used.
- The increasing length of text spoken, read, and written.
- The increasing complexity of text spoken, viewed, read, and written.
- The increasing variety of forms of both fiction and non-fiction handled.

As students develop their understanding, increasing expectations are set. Further detail is provided below in the MYP language acquisition global proficiency table. The table provides six holistic statements describing a student's achievement against the course objectives along the continuum from emergent communicator to a capable communicator to a proficient communicator. The characteristics of a communicator in each phase are explained as to what the students should be able to do by the end of the phase.

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MYP language acquisition global proficiency table

Emergent Communicator		Capable communicator		Proficient Communicator	
Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6
Emergent communicators in phase 1 understand and respond to simple phrases, statements and questions. They identify basic messages, facts, opinions, feelings and ideas presented in oral, visual and written language, and demonstrate their comprehension in simple oral and written phrases. They convey basic information in a limited range of everyday situations, using oral and written language appropriate to a very limited range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. They begin to be aware that language use is connected to	Emergent communicators in phase 2 understand and respond to simple spoken and written texts. They identify messages, facts, opinions, feelings and ideas presented in oral, visual and written language, and demonstrate their comprehension in short oral and written form. They interact to share information in a limited range of familiar situations, using basic language appropriate to a limited range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. They are aware that language varies according to purpose and audience.	Capable communicators in phase 3 understand and respond to a limited variety of spoken and written texts. They understand specific information, main ideas and some detail presented in oral, visual and written language, and demonstrate their comprehension in a limited range of oral and written forms. They engage in conversation and write structured text to express their ideas, opinions and experiences in a range of familiar and some unfamiliar situations, in a limited range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. They understand that they can	Capable communicators in phase 4 understand and respond to a variety of spoken and written texts. They interpret specific information, main ideas and some detail presented in complex oral, visual and written language, draw conclusions and recognize implied opinions and attitudes in texts read and viewed. They engage in conversation and write structured text to share informative and organized ideas on topics of personal interest and global significance, in a range of interpersonal and cultural contexts. They can communicate substantial	Proficient communicators in phase 5 analyse specific information, ideas, opinions and attitudes presented in oral, visual and written language. They draw conclusions, infer information and recognize implied opinions and attitudes. They respond and react to questions and ideas in a range of spoken, visual and written texts. They engage actively in conversations in social and some academic situations to contribute substantial information containing relevant and focused ideas supported by examples and illustrations. They organize	Proficient communicators in phase 6 evaluate the important information, details and ideas presented in spoken, written and visual language in social and academic contexts. They analyse the information, draw conclusions and make inferences about ideas, opinions and attitudes implied in a wide range of spoken, visual and written texts. They engage actively in conversations in social and academic situations to contribute substantial information and give detailed analysis and explanation. They organize information

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a purpose and an audience.		speak and write in different ways for different purposes and audiences.	information containing relevant and developed ideas and justified opinions on events, experiences and some concepts explored in class. They identify aspects of format and style, and speak and write with a clear sense of audience and purpose.	information and ideas into a clear and effective structure to express their understanding and opinions on topics of personal interest and global significance. They interpret and are able to adapt aspects of format, register and style of language.	and ideas logically and effectively to communicate their understanding, opinions and perspectives to a wide range of audiences, and for a variety of social and academic purposes.
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(IB MYP Language Acquisition Guide, September 2014)

There are many paths to further language study. MYP language acquisition courses are developed assuming students will continue to either the Jefferson’s DP classes or further formal language study. For example, Jefferson students transition smoothly from their MYP language acquisition courses in phases 1 to 6 into the Jefferson Diploma Programme. Some of these middle school students will be qualified to start in group 2 courses while others may be placed in group 1 courses at the high school level upon admission.

Instructional Strategies and Practices:

The primary language of instruction is English. Teachers support the development and acquisition of oral and written language through the following strategies, among others:

1. Language taught through the curriculum
2. Differentiated instruction
3. Multi-sensory stimulus
4. Eliciting prior knowledge
5. Making connections
6. Modeling
7. Cooperative learning
8. Trans-disciplinary skills (reading, speaking, writing, and listening)

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Parental Support:

Parents are included in the language development of their children through the following practices and resources, among others:

- Reading Response and reading logs
- Newsletters or Flyers distributed to the parents in English and Spanish
- Bilingual Parent Liaison
- Campus Literacy Night
- Parent Volunteers

Assessment:

Student language development is assessed based on the district guidelines and campus assessment policy.

Professional Development:

- International Baccalaureate Primary Years and Middle Years Programme category trainings
- Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)
- Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)
- Cultural Diversity
- Language integration training

Communicating the policy:

- Campus website
- Letters
- Student/parent handbook
- Staff handbook
- Family events

Reviewing the Policy:

The Language Policy is reviewed annually at the beginning of the year by the Jefferson MYP stakeholders. Amendments to the policy will be considered, especially based on IB policy changes, school district policy changes, changes in the school community, or changes in community needs.

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Resources:

International Baccalaureate Organization (April 2008). Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy. Accessed August 29, 2017 from www.ibo.org.

International Baccalaureate Organization (May 2014). MYP: From Principles into Practice. Accessed August 28, 2017 from www.ibo.org.

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme Subject Brief -- Language acquisition http://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/brochures/myp-brief_language-acquisition_2015.pdf

Learning in a Language Other than Mother Tongue in IB Programme. Accessed August 24, 2017 from <http://xmltwo.ibo.org/publications/migrated/production-app.ibo.org/publication/84/part/1/chapter/1.html>

San Antonio Independent School District Policy E-1 Bilingual. Accessed August 24 from http://nova.saisd.net/storage/uploads/Policies/E1_revised_8_2_2014.pdf