



LANGUAGE POLICY

Revised January 2023

Reviewed Annually in August

PURPOSE

Language development is the basis for all learning and this policy is critical for helping direct our efforts to achieve our mission and vision. As such, this working document developed by a language policy committee is to be used for the MYP, DP and CP. A purpose of this document is to also outline the linguistic goals and how to help our students achieve the goals.

Assume responsibility

This language policy supports the shared responsibility of all school leaders, teachers, students and parents for all students' language development. As a school, our students will assume responsibility to continue to achieve language proficiency. Empowering our students through language will provide the basis for understanding, interpretation and well informed responses that are included in effective and purposeful communication. Our policy is a statement of agreement, one to which the entire school community commits.

School registration policy

All students entering our public school system are required to complete a language section as part of the enrollment process. The New and Returning Student Registration Form 0636 explicitly asks the following questions:

1. Is a language other than English used at home?
 2. Does the student have a first language other than English?
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3. Does the student most frequently speak a language other than English?

Students entering the school requiring language assistance are referred to the ESOL department. The ESOL department reviews the information and assists with appropriate placement of each student. The admission of English language learners will adhere to the specific School Board Policies as it relates to admission policies.

Language programme overview

Assessment

While language acquisition follows distinct stages, students' rate of acquisition varies greatly from individual to individual. Therefore, language teachers assess all language skills (*reading, writing, listening and speaking*), regularly differentiating through scaffolding or extension as required. Formative and summative assessments in the classroom provide information for language growth. Language teachers regularly standardize students' work to ensure a fair application of assessment criteria. Standardized tests and external examinations provide evidence of language acquisition levels. Students who are identified as requiring additional support in English to access the curriculum will be placed in the appropriate English language acquisition class and assessed regularly to monitor progress.

Professional development

As it is an expectation for all teachers to be language teachers, on-going training focused on integrated language instruction will be offered throughout the year. Our schools are committed to providing embedded professional development for language learning across the curriculum. The administration will ensure that staff receive ongoing professional development opportunities and monitor that strategies are successfully implemented in all aspects of MYP, CP, and DP.

There is an emphasis on the use of differentiation in language acquisition strategies.

Through this model, all teachers will receive the necessary administrative support and professional development for integrating these strategies on a regular basis.

All teachers will provide ideas for developing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of all students through the subject area. Pedagogical leading teachers also offer school-based workshops throughout the school year for all staff. Professional development is embedded into the regular school day as often as possible to facilitate transfer to the classroom. Follow-up coaching with school leaders and teachers is an integral part of every workshop offered. Other professional development opportunities that focus on differentiated instruction include, but are not limited to: curriculum, curriculum review and assessment moderation, and off-site IB moderated workshops and conferences.

Support services

Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. An information literate individual is able to:

- Determine the extent of information needed;
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently;
- Evaluate information and sources critically.

The role of the library is to promote and facilitate information literacy across all curricula and to all members of the IB Community. The library has access to databases that contain professional material, scholarly articles, newspapers and magazines in many languages.

Individual learning sessions are offered to the school community on information literacy, APA and/or MLA formatting for source citations, and research skills. Sessions may be requested with the school librarian.

Parents and community

Parents are an integral part of our community of learners and provide tremendous support for language learning at both Conniston and Forest Hill. As such, our schools use multiple methods to communicate to parents the critical importance of maintaining language academic proficiency.

We make every effort to communicate with parents in their native language (*i.e., translate documents, interpreter resources during meetings*)

Primary language of instruction

At Forest Hill, approximately 65% of our students have some degree of fluency in at least two languages. Becoming bilingual and bi-literate in our school involves two processes: learning language and using language to learn. These two processes move forward simultaneously and are mutually supportive. We have a world language department offering Spanish and French academic programs devoted to the development of communication skills common to both English and French. The content objectives remain the same regardless of the language being used for instruction. Our program promotes cultural respect among students, enriches academic instruction, and provides students with future career opportunities. This program also maintains the child's native language while also acquiring a second language. English is the primary language of instruction, however it is noteworthy that at least 50% of our administration, faculty, and staff are proficient in at least two languages.

33% of students at Conniston Middle School are enrolled in the ESOL program and have the opportunity to receive services from our school CLF, monitoring through WIDA testing, and testing and classroom accommodations.

Language B policy

As defined by the IBO, Language B is a language, other than the student's mother tongue. Our schools serve a diverse population, which requires that we evaluate each student individually. As a school, we take into account the special individual circumstances and the courses that best suit the needs when scheduling a student in a Language B course.

Second-language learners as defined by IBO

We have an English Language Learner (ESOL) Department that exists for the purpose of meeting the needs of students who must acquire English in order to access the primary language of instruction. Students are placed in classes based on the results of a battery of English proficiency tests that include reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. This population of students receives language instruction in their native language as well as support in their English classes. All efforts are made to genuinely address the process of English language development and help ELL students accessing higher level classes and encouraging enrollment into the Diploma Program (DP) and Career-related Program (CP). At Forest Hill, we are currently offering both English ab initio and English B classes that are open to advanced level ELL students in grade 11. In addition, we are offering Maths: Applications & interpretations (SL) and History (SL) with the main language of instruction being Spanish and a bilingual teacher to ELL students in grade 11. In MYP we are providing students the opportunity to take Algebra 2 with a bilingual teacher (Home Language Instruction) as well as Spanish 1 and 2 for Spanish speakers.

Language committee

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