



Marietta High School International Baccalaureate Programmes

Language Policy

Date(s) revised: Spring 2019, November 2021, January 2022

Marietta City School's vision is for all students to learn to their fullest potential.

Marietta High School's mission is to foster creativity and critical thinking to develop compassionate citizens and life-long learners in a diverse world.

Marietta High School's work is informed and driven by these values:

- Respect
- Growth
- Integrity
- Achievement
- Encouragement

Language philosophy

The vision, mission and values of Marietta High School embrace the belief that all students should have opportunities to participate in and benefit from educational programs. The MHS IB programs are committed to developing language learning towards the goal of developing inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people that embrace intercultural understanding and strive to make a better world. Through interdisciplinary, authentic learning experiences, we strategically work to create an environment where each person in the school community celebrates and has respect for the diverse languages, cultures, and backgrounds present and beyond. We feel that these actions help to build the self-efficacy and identity affirmations of all.

Belief Statements (Whole school guiding principles)

We believe:

- language is vital to developing critical thinking.
- critical thinking is necessary to cultivating intercultural understanding and the international-mindedness characterized by the IB learner profile.
- language plays a key role in identity affirmation.
- language learning contributes to ongoing academic and personal successes.
- language learning expands the ability for effective expression and reflection.

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multilingualism and support for the mother tongue contribute to intercultural understanding, self-identity, and expansion of communication opportunities.

equity in access to high-quality language instruction, high expectations, appropriate scaffolds, and differentiated instruction based upon learners' individual language portraits is a student right.

constructivist, inquiry-based approaches through a conceptual lens enhances learning that builds respect for our common humanity.

Statement of language philosophy: We believe that language learning should affirm cultural identity, promote intercultural understanding, and contribute to expanded, effective communication for academic and personal successes so as to make a positive impact locally and globally.

Language policy review

The language policy will be reviewed bi-annually and with the following considerations for requirements:

- Support for mother tongues
- Support for students who are not yet proficient in English
- Compliance with the local/national regulations for SEN

District curriculum administrators, teachers, academic coaches, and coordinators developed our language policy in a collaborative process. In addition to the original roles, stakeholders that have reviewed and contributed to the revision of the policy include heads of school, media specialists, students, and parents. The school district's IB coordinators serve as the steering committee to be responsible for overseeing this bi-annual/annual process.

Language profile

The languages of teaching and learning are English for Language and Literature, French and Spanish for Language Acquisition. The languages of communication used in the school and outside the classroom are English and a variety of other mother tongue languages, primarily Spanish and Portuguese.

Language education logistics

Marietta High School serves a multicultural, multilingual community with a diverse population and robust language needs. Our school planning practices for language and literature and language acquisition courses stem from our commitment to academic rigor, equity, and caring open-mindedness.

All teachers are proficient in speaking and writing English and are language teachers.

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Subject group professional learning communities adhere to well established expectations and procedures for designing and delivering a coherent, guaranteed and viable approach toward the school-wide development of language.

- Teachers with English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) certification and expertise design specialized instruction for English Language Learners (ELL).
- English Language Learners have total immersion in subject group courses based upon ongoing assessment and achievement of established thresholds.
- English Language Learners are supported with in-class and self-contained support based upon established thresholds.
- French and Spanish are offered at various levels including native speakers in Spanish and advanced levels for students in language acquisition.
- English is promoted as it is the host country language.
- All languages are valued.

Language development

Language development is paramount to cognitive, affective, and social learning and being. Structured inquiry is the basis of teaching and learning language and it serves as the primary focus of learning experiences. The unit planning process incorporates the state's required standards for language development across all subjects in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in meaningful ways.

Marietta High School student admission is based solely on residency within the school attendance zone, the city of Marietta, which is a diverse community. Student diversity provides a rich opportunity for all teachers to attend to, build upon and support the various language needs of our learners. Students who are identified as English Language Learners receive classroom support through an in-class, co-taught model to the extent possible. They also may receive sheltered instruction services in Language and Literature, Mathematics, and Individuals and Society courses. The strategies used to develop language include but are not limited to the following:

Vocabulary Instruction

- Portions of lessons for explicit vocabulary instruction
- Repeated exposure to new words in multiple contexts
- Opportunities to use new vocabulary in a variety of contexts
- Strategies for developing independent vocabulary learners

Comprehension Strategy Instruction

- Text selection for reading level of students
- Explicit instruction for and guided practice with strategies

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- Application of strategies to different texts
- Specific, directed talk about strategies

Discussion of Text Meaning and Interpretation

- Engaging content and texts that promote multiple interpretations
- Stimulating, open-ended questions that invite reflection, inference, and connections
- Small-group and whole-class extended discussion
- Discussion protocols and formats

Student Motivation and Engagement

- Meaningful, engaging learning goals
- Positive learning environment that promotes student autonomy
- Relevant literacy experiences connected to
 - student interests
 - real-world application
 - current events
- Conditions to promote higher reading engagement and conceptual learning

Writing Process

- Daily practice in components of the writing process
- Gradual release of responsibility from teacher to student
- Student selection and use of appropriate writing strategies

Writing for a Variety of Purposes

- Expansion of students' concept of audience
- Understanding of different purposes of writing
- Emulation of features of good writing
- Techniques for discipline-specific tasks

Community of Writers

- Collaboration among students as writers
- Opportunities to give and receive feedback
- Student choices of writing topics
- Connection to real-world topics and audiences

Intensive, Individualized Interventions

- Reliable screening assessments
- Interventions to meet student's identified needs

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Language Acquisition

Language learning is fundamental to students' identity affirmation. The World Languages Department provides a variety of sequences for studying Spanish and French. Placement of students in World Language courses depends on both their initial study in Middle School or their recognized language ability. For students who are proficient native speakers of Spanish, we offer a specific sequence of courses that allows them to build their mastery through a native lens.

For students who have no documentation of their existing proficiency, we offer placement through taking the Avant Assessment, which is used to assign course credit based on their tested level of proficiency. The Avant Assessment is available in a variety of languages and also can be used to assign a Seal of Biliteracy.

Assessment

Teachers design instructional units according to the Georgia Standards of Excellence, MYP standards, and the IB subject guides as appropriate. Assessments are based on holistic learning and IB standards of teaching and learning.

MYP assessments in World Language courses assess students' listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills to develop multiliteracy through spoken, written, and visual text. Assessments are designed at the emergent, capable, and proficient levels in accordance with the students progress through the levels of language acquisition courses.

IB Diploma Programme assessment aligns with the aims and objectives of the IB Language B guide, and unit planning is built on the goal of assessing students through authentic work that reflects the IB internal and external assessment rubrics.

Formative assessment is used to provide immediate feedback, plan for differentiation, and support learning.

More information about assessment in the MYP and IBDP/CP is available in the MHS Assessment Policy.

Mother tongue development

Students are able to use their native language in activities and settings that do not require the host country language for academic learning experiences.

The school offers Spanish for Native Speakers at multiple levels. Additionally, students have translation access through the school's learning management system.

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English Language Learners (ELL) and support for students who are not yet proficient in the language of instruction

The ESOL program provides support services for students according to their assessed proficiency levels. The state determines the process for identifying and providing services for English Language Learners (ELL). A developmental language profile is kept on ELL students in order to meet local and state guidelines for supports and all ELL monitored students have a designated case manager.

Students entering MHS with a limited ability in English skills are given small group, specialized instruction in the Language and Literature course with students needing intensive English instruction. The English proficiency levels further determine the classes in Mathematics and Science that they are scheduled to with an ESOL teacher present to co-teach with the teacher of record.

The effectiveness of the differentiated strategies and supports is measured with the ACCESS for ELL state test and the Measures of Academic Progress assessment, which measures academic growth and English language proficiency.

Additionally, MHS employs 4 full-time trilingual/bilingual support staff and 31 ESOL certified teachers.

Language policy alignment with other IB school policies

The language philosophy and policy align with the admissions, academic honesty, inclusion, and assessment policies.

Alignment to our academic honesty policy

Our language policy aligns with our academic integrity policy in that both support our students' development as principled, reflective communicators, and our commitment to helping all of our students develop into ethical citizens and leaders who are prepared for the 21st century.

Alignment to our admissions policy

The language philosophy and policy align with the admissions policy in our belief that all students should challenge themselves academically.

Alignment to our inclusion policy

The language policy aligns with the inclusion policy in that we have a universal design for learning for language learning that provides supports and structures so that all have access to the MYP and opportunities to experience rigorous and challenging curriculum.

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Alignment to our assessment policy

The language policy aligns with the assessment policy in that both acknowledge that assessment is integral to all teaching and learning and should empower all students, teachers, and parents in order to maximize student growth.

Communication of the Policy

The language policy is posted on our school's public website.

Language and Learning in IB Programmes. IBO, 2014

Guidelines for school self-reflection on language policy. IBO, 2012

MYP: From Principles into Practice. IBO, 2021

This district policy should be reviewed annually and revised as necessary following the review.

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