

Hoover High School IB Language Policy

updated October 2019

Introduction to the HHS IB Language Policy:

Hoover High School is the largest high school in the state of Alabama, and it is also the most diverse. We recognize that diversity includes not just a student's mother-tongue language but also cultural identity.

Definitions:

- **Mother-tongue:** the native or home language spoken by a student. This is not limited to a single language, as several of our students report speaking two or more languages at home.
- **ELL:** English-language learner.
- **Language acquisition:** the learning of a language other than the mother-tongue language.
- **Language B:** courses offered as part of our IB instruction in a language other than English.

Philosophy:

- We promote international-mindedness and encourage multilingualism.
- We believe that language learning is vital for social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- Language competence has a direct relation to a student's ability to learn and to develop and express complex thoughts and ideas.
- All languages are valued.
- Students should be given as much support as possible so that they can participate fully in the learning experiences and the discourse of the school.
 - Students in need of additional support can talk with their homeroom teachers to learn more about peer tutoring, writing lab, and other resources available.
- The school has a crucial role in helping students appreciate diverse perspectives and to develop international-mindedness and intercultural awareness through the use of language.
- The continuous acquisition of language is a process that develops and progresses along a continuum.
- We emphasize all IB Learner Profile traits in our IB courses grades 9-12, which includes a focus on being Communicators: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Language Policy Goals:

- Recognize that language is the foundation upon which learning takes place, and strengthen our classroom instruction to meet the needs of all of the students in our program.
- Bring awareness to the diversity not just for our school's total population but also for our IB students specifically.
- Communicate our expectations of language instruction and learning in the HHS IB program.
- Provide a framework for our linguistic and academic goals.
- Provide guidance for our language program and the development of students through the language program.

School Profile:

This data is all from the 2019-20 school year. We recognize these numbers will fluctuate from year to year, but we feel they are indicative of the overall linguistic diversity of both our school and our IB program.

- According to the parent-reported data, 7.8% of our school population of 2822 report having a native language other than English, for a total of 23 different languages spoken. 3.9% of our total school population is currently receiving EL services (English learners) or received services at some point.
- According to the data reported by our 265 IB students who took our separate language survey, 28% reported using a language other than English at home. This number jumps to 42% when we add in students who are fluent in another language, for a total of 26 different languages spoken. None of our IB students currently receives EL services, but 9% of our IB students did receive services at some point.
- The most common languages other than English among our IB students are Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Spanish, Tamil, and Telegu.

Language Course Offerings:

- Every IB Diploma student must complete courses in all 6 IB categories, which includes Group 1 (English A Literature) and Group 2 (Language B).
 - All of our IB diploma students take English A: literature at HL (higher level). While requiring English as an HL subject appears daunting, we have had a number of non-native English speakers successfully complete the Diploma program.
 - Our IB students are able to choose between two Group 2 subjects at SL (standard level): Spanish B SL or Latin SL. All IB diploma candidates in the school are required to take one of these languages at SL.

Professional Development for Faculty

- Ongoing staff development related to language and literacy that includes but is not limited to the following:
 - ELL Training at the beginning of every school year.
 - Discussion of results of IB student language survey during IB PLC (professional learning community) meetings.
 - Specific faculty and student activities and discussions focused on the IB Learner Profile trait of Communicator.
- Our district is in the beginning stages of specific ATL training, and as we develop our plan to implement ATL, we will continue to work on ways to promote a school culture that values the cultural and linguistic diversity within our student body.