

Adopted: January 23, 2012

Revised: _____

625 LANGUAGE POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the framework of language, including learning an additional language, valuing the linguistic diversity of our community, and working to support the mother-tongue development of our students and families.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Mother-Tongue - The terms that describe the language students' use at home and/or outside the classroom/school environment include first language, home language, preferred language, mother tongue, native language, heritage language, and sometimes best language. Many second-language students are using more than two languages outside the classroom arena.
- B. Second-Language or Language B - describes a language learned subsequently to a first language, and implies that a student also has access to the language for communicative purposes outside the context of the classroom language.

III. INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE: PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAM (PYP)

- A. Primary Language Instruction: The Language of Instruction at the elementary level is English. We use a research based, standards driven, comprehensive balanced literacy approach to language instruction. Students work to meet their grade level standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.
- B. Language B Instruction: Language B instruction at the elementary level begins in kindergarten. Learning a second language creates a more open-minded and international-minded individual. The students learn to ask questions and reflect on language, culture, and community.

IV. INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE: MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAM (MYP)

- A. Primary Language Instruction: The Language of Instruction (LOI) in the MYP is English. All students will develop a fluency in the LOI.
- B. Language B Instruction: The primary aim of Language B in the Middle Years Program is to encourage students to gain competence in a second language other than their native tongue, with the long-term goal of balanced bilingualism. Language B instruction must be sustained in the same language over the four years of the program.

C. Language B Continuum: MYP Language B builds on experiences in language learning that students have gained during their time in the IB Primary Years Program (PYP). Knowledge, conceptual understanding and skills will have been developed through trans disciplinary units of inquiry. Students continuing on to the DP will have grounding in at least one Language B that will enable them to continue on to the DP courses as suggested above, and will have developed an inquiring, reflective approach to language learning.

V. INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE: DIPLOMA PROGRAM (DP)

- A. Primary Language: The primary language of instruction in the Diploma Program is English (Language A). All teachers in the Diploma Program are language teachers and are responsible for fostering communication skills.
- B. Language B Instruction:
 1. Group 1: A1 Higher or Standard Level. This option is designed for a fluent language user studying his/her most competent language. Students will study literary texts and demonstrate analytical skills in writing and speaking.
 2. Group 1: A1 School Supported Self-Taught. This option is designed for a fluent language user studying a second language that is not his/her most competent language. Students will study literary texts and demonstrate analytical skills in writing and speaking.
 3. Group 2: B HL or SL. This is for the student who has three or more years of experience in the language. Students will learn to communicate effectively, analyze literary texts, and develop fluent language skills. Students are encouraged to continue to build on the proficiency of their Language B choice within the Middle Years Program.
 4. Ab Initio Standard. This option is for the student who has little or no experience in the language.

VI. MOTHER-TONGUE SUPPORT

South St. Paul Public School District supports families whose native language is not English and we encourage our parents and students to speak and develop their mother tongue. This strengthens the child's language skills while instilling a sense of importance about his/her culture.

VII. REVIEW COMMITTEE

Each program level will review this policy and its implementation throughout the International Baccalaureate evaluation process.