

Mission Viejo High School IB Diploma Program Language Policy

Introduction

International Baccalaureate (IB) World Schools are required to have a written language policy. This document includes provisions for second-language teaching and mother-tongue language support that meets the needs of students and reflects the principles of the program. At Mission Viejo High School the IB Diploma Program Language Policy sets out the philosophy and aims of language teaching and learning.

Philosophy

MVHS faculty and staff believe that:

- Language is a primary means of communicating and learning.
- The acquisition of language is a life-long process and is a central component of intellectual and personal growth.
- Proficiency earned in one language is transferable to other languages, and language proficiency aids the student in acquiring competencies in other curricular areas.
- Language is an expression of culture and must be valued as an integral part of a student's identity.
- The development of the mother-tongue language is critical for maintaining one's cultural identity.
- Language learning promotes internationalism and multicultural understanding.
- Language learning must be fostered in all aspects of the school community.
- All teachers are language teachers.
- Teachers must strive to recognize the language needs of all students and work to serve these needs within and outside of the classroom.
- Equity of access to IB courses is a fundamental right of all qualified students.

Aims

At MVHS our language programs aim to:

- Enable students to learn and use language effectively, appropriately, accurately, and confidently.
- Develop students' powers of oral and written communication.
- Enable students to develop and use language skills in a variety of contexts and purposes.
- Promote the appreciation, understanding, and analysis of literature.
- Encourage students to explore language as a means to understand the differing perspectives of people from other cultures.
- Develop students' awareness of the role of language in other areas of the curriculum and to other ways of knowing.
- To provide an opportunity for enjoyment, creativity, and intellectual stimulation through knowledge of language and literature.

IB Language Offerings

English is the language of instruction at MVHS.

MVHS offers English A1 Higher Level as the only classroom opportunity for Language A. Although we are not aware if it has ever been necessary, even with international transfer students, MVHS will allow students the opportunity to register for English A1 Standard Level. It is not possible to create a separate course for English A1 SL students because of section size mandates from the school district. Therefore English A1 SL candidates will take part in the HL class and the teacher(s) will modify instruction and assessments to meet their needs.

In the Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD), students may enroll in Spanish in Grade 8 and French instruction begins in Grade 9. MVHS offers French B Standard Level and Spanish B Standard Level as classroom courses for Language B. German B, because of declining enrolment and cuts in teaching sections, will be phased out by 2014. On a case-by-case basis and as need arises, MVHS will allow students (especially transfers) the opportunity to register for Ab Initio languages. In the case of Language B HL, teacher(s) will modify their instruction and assessments within the SL classroom to meet the needs of these candidates. In the case of Ab Initio languages, students may enroll in Spanish 1/2 or French 1/2 and teacher(s) will modify their instruction and assessments to meet the higher standard of the Ab Initio course over and above the MVHS College-Prep courses.

English Language Learner Program

SVUSD and MVHS have a comprehensive, state-mandated support program for English Language Learners. Board policies and administrative regulations are set out in BP 6174 and AR 6174.

All MVHS teachers are certified with the Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) certificate or its equivalent. The MVHS teaching staff was trained on an annual basis in methods of differentiating and modifying instruction in support of English Language Learners (before the loss on in-service/training days in 2010).

Communication with Non-English Speaking Parents and Guardians

MVHS recognizes the value of effective and timely communication with parents and works to foster such communication. In the case of communicating with parents who do not speak English:

- SVUSD's Bilingual Parent Committee works to encourage clear communication with all lingual groups.
- A Spanish speaking liaison fills the role of translator between the schools and parents.
- Community volunteers or district personnel act as translators for non-Spanish speaking parents

- If a suitable family cannot be found, MVHS will seek out community organizations to act as translators.

Mother Tongue Support

MVHS acknowledges the importance of developing a student's mother-tongue language in promoting personal identity, cultural heritage, and mastery of local, state, and/or IB standards. Information regarding students' mother-tongue is acquired through the state-mandated, district administered, home language survey. This information resides in the school's student database (AERIES) and is accessible by school staff. A student's language acquisition level and CELDT designation is labeled on AERIES online attendance forms. Teachers are encouraged to use this information in developing lesson plans that emphasize differentiated instruction and that honor multicultural diversity.