



world school

## **F.W. Springstead High School International Baccalaureate Program**

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## **Language Policy**

### **Our Language Philosophy**

We believe that language and communication skills are vital to creating an internationally-minded and culturally-aware student who can be successful in an increasingly global marketplace. Exposure to multiple languages, and the societies that have shaped them, also leads to a more empathetic and open-minded individual. We welcome the knowledge and perspective of students of all cultures and ethnicities, and believe that English language deficiencies should in no way preclude a student from participating the Diploma Programme.

### **Our Language Profile**

While the vast majority of students in our Diploma Programme are native speakers of English, we also have many students who speak another language at home (including Creole, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Mandarin, Malayalam, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Urdu, and Vietnamese). Some of these students are only able to comprehend the languages of their parents, while others are fully literate. In the majority of cases, students who may have been in our ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) program at an early age, have exited that program and now receive no additional language support.

### **Our Language Policy**

The importance of developing strong communication skills cannot be overemphasized in the education of those students participating in the IB Diploma Programme at F.W. Springstead High School. We have created the following language policy to aid in our efforts to produce students who will be internationally-minded and culturally-aware, as well as successful in whatever careers they may choose to pursue.

We recognize that “since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication.” All teachers will examine their particular curriculum, and look for ways to emphasize the role that language plays in creating meaning and understanding. All areas of communication – listening, speaking, reading, writing, and media literacy – should be addressed in the context of each group. On a more basic level, all teachers will emphasize the importance of the rules of proper syntax and grammar, and we will use a common method of citation (*MLA*) wherever possible.

All students are expected to learn to communicate in at least one additional language to their mother tongue. Most students will receive instruction in English under Group 1 (language A). English is the language of instruction at our school and the primary language spoken in the United States of America. However, we recognize that English is not necessarily the first language of all of our students. Every effort will be made to include these students in the IB Programme, with additional instruction and support offered to them as needed (included ESOL services and accommodations if they meet state requirements for such). If a student meets the criteria for a school supported self-taught program in language A, every effort will be made to allow the student to pursue that option instead of English.

We currently offer two possible tracks under Group 2 (language B): Spanish and Latin. We have chosen to offer Spanish in particular due to the large population of Spanish-speaking individuals in Florida. This affords students an opportunity to use their newfound communication skills in ways that would not be possible with other languages, as well as a chance to become more culturally-sensitive and –aware of a group of people that have often found themselves marginalized in American culture.

Latin is offered for those students who may wish to study a classical language instead of a modern one. Latin is particularly valuable for those who are interested in how language itself works and is constantly evolving. It is a gateway not only to the Romance languages, but also to English vocabulary-building and in-depth study of grammar and syntax. The influence of the Romans (and Greeks) is deeply felt in all of the other subject groups as well, making for very valuable cross-disciplinary discussion.

Due to the size of our program and the resources available to us, we are not able to offer instruction in any additional languages at this time. However, we would strongly encourage those students who speak a language other than English at home to pursue continued literacy in that language, whether it be through an independent study in place of the standard Group 2 offerings, or simply through continued study with the parents at home. As students enter the school in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and again upon entrance to the Diploma Programme in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, parents will be consulted as to the best choice for the language A and language B components of the curriculum for their students.

We encourage the parents of all students with a mother-tongue other than English to practice and promote the mother-tongue at home. Fluency in multiple languages is highly-valued and appreciated in our students. We will invite these students (and their parents) to participate in our multi-cultural events, and to share their particular perspectives whenever possible in class or through extra-curricular projects or even their CAS project.

This language policy is a constantly evolving document. As such, we will meet at least once each quarter to review and discuss the policy, and address any concerns. This will also enable a continuous dialogue to take place among all the IB Diploma Programme teachers and staff.

We will make a greater effort to identify those students who have a mother-tongue other than English, and discuss the possibility of independent study/self-teaching for either Group 1 or Group 2 language. We will also encourage these students to participate in our Multi-Cultural Night and the World Language Showcase, both of which offer opportunities for these students to share their language and cultural heritage. As opportunities arise, we will offer professional development options in the areas of language, literacy, and communication.

A copy of this policy will be made available to students and parents at orientation and via the school website.