



Fairhope High School International Baccalaureate Language Policy

As an IB World School, Fairhope High School recognizes that language is the cornerstone of ALL learning. Communication through the written and spoken language is essential to learning, understanding, accepting, and integrating cultural values of all students. Language acquisition is a life-long process, and each student progresses at his or her own pace. Support for language learning is vital to the personal growth and intellectual development of each student. We as teachers and administrators understand that this responsibility is shared by us, parents, and the students themselves. All teachers at Fairhope High School are language teachers, and all of us work to ensure the success our students, both within and outside of the classroom. Furthermore, we believe that all students should have the opportunity to acquire a second language during their education which will encourage internationalism and multiculturalism. The most desirable attitude for this endeavor is a supportive, encouraging education that promotes positive learning experiences. We believe all students should be given engaging, authentic, and meaningful exposure to other cultures and become sensitive to cultural diversity and the world on a global level.

Language Philosophy

The majority of students at Fairhope High School are native English speaking students. In the 4% who are not, we serve Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, French, and German speaking students. Fairhope High School has a thriving exchange program.

Language Choices and Offerings: Language A

At Fairhope High School, English is the language of instruction. All of our classes, with the exception of Language B, are taught in English. Our students are required to successfully complete four years of English Language study as well as meeting proficiency on the state-mandated End of Course assessments. In the Diploma Programme, our students are required to take English A1 Higher Level. We offer Language A: Literature and follow the curriculum guides set forth in the IB Handbook Language A: Literature Subject Guide.

Language Choices and Offerings: Language B

Our belief at Fairhope High School is that each student should acquire at least one more language apart from his or her mother tongue. We currently offer Spanish B Standard Level and French B Standard Level. Students are required to successfully complete four years of Spanish or French language classes. All curriculum and assessment is developed using the IB Handbook Language B Guide.

Language Development and Support

All teachers at Fairhope High School recognize that they are language teachers employing reading and writing in their content area. In order to facilitate language development. Teachers are offered professional development to include writing across the curriculum and application of writing in their subject area. While the majority of students at Fairhope High School speak English, we do serve a variety of families who speak other languages in the home. Fairhope High School follows Baldwin County policies in supporting students who are learning English as a Second Language (ESL). The goals of our ESL program are to help all limited-English proficient students achieve fluency in all areas of communication. By facilitating acquisition of reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills in ESL students, we hope to help them experience success in the academic content of each classroom. We also hope to foster equity access to all school programs. Our personnel are provided with professional development opportunities to ensure our success in the implementation of this program. Support is provided at the school and county level for not only ESL students, but for their teachers. All students must take an English language proficiency test, and, based on their results, are placed in the ESL program. Services are then provided to address specific and individual needs. We use strategies such as the following: whole language, phonics, oral language skills, cooperative learning, and integrated reading. With the advent of the one to one device initiative in our county, all students are provided a laptop computer equipped with access to Language Dictionaries. We also have open communication with certified ESL Resource teachers and ESL Instructional Aides. These professionals provide teachers with a list of students who have been identified as limited-English proficient at the beginning of the school year. Teachers are instructed on the modifications required so that the student can demonstrate their knowledge. A review of each student's progress is conducted and assessed each quarter. A student cannot be failed due to his or her limited proficiency in English.

Support of Mother Tongue

While we at Fairhope High School hope to improve the fluency of limited-English proficiency students, we also recognize the importance of maintaining and preserving their mother tongue. As previously stated, our students are equipped with laptops that provide access to language dictionaries, and our school system website offers translation of all information provided for students and parents. Our teachers collaborate with ESL specialists on activities which enable connections between student's school environment and his or her home environment. As an extra-curricular support, Fairhope High School has an active Spanish Club and French Club. Spanish Club and French Club take language learners at all levels and immerse them in the target language and cultures. We have fluency levels from beginners all the way to native speakers. These clubs meet twice a month.

Spanish Club hosts a "tertulias," which is a gathering to discuss a particular cultural topic. Sometimes these are scheduled around cultural holidays. Leaders and native Spanish speakers teach the students some new vocabulary terms. For example, if it were Christmas, new terms would be associated with the holiday. Leaders also teach them about different ways Spanish-speaking countries celebrate those holidays. Most of the kids will order their food in Spanish, and they play games in Spanish too. ESL students are brought in to help facilitate learning of others as well as giving them an opportunity to speak their mother tongue. These students come to a tertulias and are able to practice their English and help the class practice some Spanish. Often, these students continue the learning through social media for which they exchange cultural information. Tertulias is the way that Spanish Club promotes cultural awareness and allows the students to practice their Spanish in a non-school setting.

French Club aims to promote French language and culture. French Club activities include French food, cultural presentations, music, cinema, field trips to cities with French history in the southeast region and field trips to Airbus Mobile, a company with many French transplants in the Mobile area.

Role of the Teacher

We realize we are ALL language teachers. We realize that many students come to us from a different language background. We realize these students will progress at an individual pace. We realize we must stay informed as to the latest instructional strategies regarding language acquisition. We realize we must provide strategies to facilitate language acquisition. We realize we must give consistent and frequent feedback on student progress. We realize we must provide students with a comprehensive program which includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing. We realize we must model meaningful language experiences for our students. We realize we must teach our students literacy skills in the context of literature and other subject areas. We realize we must give each student time to reflect on his or her learning, and apply techniques for self-correction.

Role of the Student

Students must read and interpret literature from an extensive variety of cultures. Students must recognize language is a vital tool for learning. Students must endeavor to become fluent in a second (or third) language. Students must learn to appreciate and develop an affection for the language and literature of other cultures. Students must take risks with their language. Students must learn and employ techniques for self-correction and revision. Students must learn to share and evaluate their work in a social or classroom environment.

Role of the Parent

Parents are encouraged to be involved daily with their child's learning. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers. Parents are encouraged to help implement strategies set in motion by teachers. Parents are encouraged to provide their child with guidance and assistance. Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's progress in language acquisition.

Policy Review and Revision

Fairhope High School's language policy will be reviewed each year by our committee to ensure its effectiveness in serving our community. Our committee is comprised of teachers across the curriculum, a parent representative, a student representative, and an administrator. Any changes in our student body or community will be addressed each year with modifications to our policy. We strive to be current, to be effective, and to be a supportive community of teachers, students, and parents.

Communication to Parents and Community

The Language Policy will be placed on our school website and will be available in hard copy to all students and parents from the committee chairperson or the IB administration. Through the website any member of the community will have access to the Language Policy.