

JCIB Language Policy



Philosophy

The JCIB faculty believe that language is essential for all learning and communicating; that all teachers are language teachers and must work to meet the language needs of our diverse student population. We understand that by enhancing higher order thinking skills, language acquisition is a life-long process that is central to intellectual and personal growth. The school values proficiency in one language as helping in transfer to other languages and to learning in all other disciplines. The faculty and staff appreciate that consistent development of mother tongues is essential to each student's cultural identity and personal growth and that awareness of multiple languages creates cross-cultural understanding and communication. We do not believe that proficiency in English should limit equity of access to IB courses for qualified students. The faculty and staff work to ensure that language instruction should be differentiated to consider students' multiple learning styles and individual development.

IB Requirements

Culture

- 4.1 The school implements and reviews a language policy that is aligned with IB language policy guidelines. (0301-04-0100)
- 4.2 The school describes in its language policy the way the school recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a right and a resource for learning. (0301-04-0200)
- 4.3 The school identifies in its language policy a variety of physical and virtual resources used to facilitate language development. (0301-04 -0300)
- 4.4 The school clearly describes in its language policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and what constitutes good practice within the school context. (0301-04-0400)

School Language Profile and Policy IB Language Offerings

All classes are conducted in English (Language A) and our students take English as the A1 course at the Higher Level. Taking the A1 language at the standard level may be considered on an individual basis. Second Language (Language B) study is offered in French, German and Spanish at the higher or standard level. In both the A and B languages students become proficient communicators using the main strands of language study: reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and thinking. On a case

by case we have offered ab initio languages. Our languages follow a four-year scope and sequence that culminates in the DP years.

Mother Tongue Support

Because the majority of our students are native English speakers, we typically have not offered alternatives to English A1. We currently offer special request self-taught Group 1 options, as seen in the resources below, and continue to improve services for our diverse language school population.

To develop and support the home language and culture, we maintain a resource list to inform students and parents of community opportunities. We are planning to make the home language survey more informative and accessible in order to increase our ability to meet the language needs of each student. To further this aim, we also utilize the Mother-Tongue Language Survey for each student and home to assess “mothertongue” use in the community. This document would then become a part of our language policy review. Options currently for language support include the Open Courseware Resources of MIT, the ACCESS LAB offered by the state of Alabama, the IB accredited Pamoja program and language resources of local universities.

Communication with parents

Communication with parents is generally in English. Translation of documentation is provided through TransAct Communications, Inc. Approximately 90% of our students are from homes where English is the principal spoken language. The remaining 10% are from homes where the family or at least one parent speaks a language other than English, including Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Arabic, Hindi, Gujarati, Spanish, Yoruba, German, Urdu, and Portuguese.

English Language Learners (ELL) and remediation in language

Our school provides ELL support for students entering without English proficiency according to the legal guidelines of our state law. We have a home language survey in the file of each student. We also have an ELL teacher assigned to our school. Special educational needs (SEN) are met according to state and local processes.

Some English-speaking students enter our school with sub-standard grammar and practice in English. The needs of these students are addressed in our ninth grade English classes and reinforced in all other classes. Standard English grammar is expected and MLA is our standard bibliographic style, although some subject areas choose to use Chicago, Turabian or APA for special circumstances in the DP years.

Initial Language Assessment

Most of our students enter with no second language experience. We begin language study at the introductory level in grade nine and differentiate for those who do come with higher levels of proficiency in a second language.

Initial language assessment is done individually as the need arises. We require a short entrance essay and a placement prompt that provide a first look at the student's language skills in English. The county-wide home language survey and the JCIB MotherTongue Language Survey are used to help us evaluate student needs. Our second language teachers use these and other entrance diagnostic tools as needed.

Language Development Committee and Review Process

The language development committee is comprised of members of the JCIB faculty, administration, media services faculty, and language support providers. Annually, the language committee will evaluate the language policy and its implementation. It will examine its effectiveness and any need for revision. The committee will communicate the policy and any revisions through the school website.

JEFFERSON COUNTY INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE SCHOOL

Mother-Tongue Language Survey

JCIB believes that the consistent development of mother tongues is essential to each student's cultural identity and personal growth. We believe that proficiency in one language is transferable to other languages.

The purpose of this survey is to collect information about the level of "mother-tongue" usage in the JCIB community. The information provided will help us know if our students are receiving support in their mother-tongue language outside school hours and how we can better support the needs of our diverse population with regard to language acquisition in English, the mother tongue, and second language studies.

Student's Name _____ Parent Initial _____

1. What language(s) are spoken at home?

- Between student and mother/guardian: _____ •
- Between student and father/guardian: _____ •
- Between parents/guardians: _____

2. Does your child consistently speak in a language other than English? Yes No
What language(s) does your child speak? _____

3. Does your child write in any language other than English?
• Language 1: _____ Fluent Limited None
• Language 2: _____ Fluent Limited None

4. Is your child attending/has attended mother-tongue classes outside school?
Yes, in the past Yes, now No
If yes, for how many years? _____

5. Would your son/daughter be interested in studying his/her mother tongue in a structured and facilitated classroom environment? Yes No If yes, in which language? _____

6. When participating in IB (accelerated) classes that are taught in English, what learning support does your son/daughter need in order to be successful? Additional comments...

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please return this form to JCIB with your application.