

Pensacola High School International Baccalaureate Diploma Program Language Policy

Purpose

The International Baccalaureate Program at Pensacola High School includes students of many cultures and ethnicities. Language plays a vital role in diversity, tolerance, and appreciation of all humanity and the human spirit. Pensacola High School's International Baccalaureate Program's Language policy is ensure the development of language and learning is being fostered among our students. The purpose of the policy is to do the following:

- Explain why Language A in the PHS IB curriculum is limited to English.
- Remind students, parents, and all other stakeholders that students in the IB program must learn one language in addition to their first language (PHS IB offers Spanish and French)
- Indicate how we support students first language (also called mother tongue)
- Inform stakeholders of the services offered at PHS for English Language Learners (ELL)
- Outline the support services offered for students and parents regarding the development of language

Philosophy

The mission of the International Baccalaureate Program at Pensacola High School is to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. Language encompasses many modalities. Language and its uses are paramount in communicating within our pluralistic societies, cultures, and world. Pensacola High School's IB program aims to do the following:

- Embrace and further develop language in all forms; listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Appreciate and accept intercultural diversity and teach this among the students
- Convey and pursue knowledge inquisitiveness, and the sharing of ideas. Therefore, the systematic study of languages is understood to be an essential facet of social and academic life.
- Teach language and facilitate communication among all subject areas

Principles

While English is the language of instruction, Pensacola High School's International Baccalaureate (IB) Program respects and appreciates the equal status of all languages. Pensacola High School's IB program promotes an academic environment wherein students aspire to multilingualism. Pensacola High School and the IB Program is committed to providing as much diversity of language instruction as possible. Language diversity reinforces literacy and cultural identity and reflects the multilingual society within the IB program and Pensacola High School. The Group 2 curriculum (world language) improves the relationship, consideration, and respect for other cultures. The program appreciates that acquisition of another world language is important in augmenting higher-order thinking skills.

In practice

With an understanding that all teachers are language teachers, encouragement in strengthening one's heritage language as well as the acquisition of additional/world languages is encouraged and nurtured. The IB Language profile at Pensacola High School indicates that 91% of our IB students speak English as their first language. The majority of the remaining 9% of students speak Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Tagalog as their first language.

Pensacola High School's IB program is a full diploma program. When students are accepted, they must complete an English Language survey to identify if there is a need for support services. In rare cases, students enter into the English Language Learners (ELL) program prior to the IB program in order to have specific classes assist with developing their English speaking and writing skills. Due to the requirements of the full diploma program and the course requirements for ELL, ELL students may apply for admission into the IB program upon passing the *Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA)*. A more detailed explanation of ELL is referenced below. In other cases where students do not need ELL services but speak English as their second language, we offer tutoring and other services for support if needed. Teacher meetings are conducted to discuss possible interventions and various teaching strategies. It is the responsibility of all teachers to meet individual student needs through differentiated instruction to include course content, assessment, and the recognition of language diversity.

Pensacola High School IB program recognizes the importance of promoting a student's mother-tongue language. Therefore, students are allowed to complete their extended essays in their mother tongue if desired which fosters their first language. In addition, for bi-lingual students who do not desire to learn a new language, a self-taught option may be designed if possible with the IB Coordinator and current language teachers. This would be determined on a case by case basis. Lastly, our program supports the mother tongue languages through peer tutoring and in addition to the Spanish and French National Honor Societies.

Group 1 - Language A English

Within the educational framework of Pensacola High School's IB Program, Language A is limited to English as the language of instruction. Florida Constitution, article II, Section 9 (1988) states that English is the official language of the State of Florida. Furthermore, according to Florida State education standards, in order to graduate, each student is required to be proficient in spoken and written English. To foster the development of English, all students are required to take English in grades 9 through 12. The literature studied in the Language A category reflects American, South Eastern Regional, and minority cultures. This exposes students of all backgrounds to the host country's language and customs. Although special support is offered to English Language Learners (ELL) at Pensacola High School, classroom instruction must be aligned with state standards and assessments.

Promotion of other languages:

Group 2 - Language B: Spanish and French

Since we are a full diploma program, all of the Pensacola High School IB students must learn at least one language in addition to their first language. Spanish is offered due to the high concentration of Hispanic speaking residents in the state of Florida. In addition, French B is offered due to a large number of Asian students at Pensacola High School who speak French as their second language.

A continuum of Language B courses are offered in both French and Spanish in grades 9 through 12 in order to support the developing needs of all students.

Diploma options include the following:

- Spanish SL
- Spanish HL
- French SL
- French HL
- In some cases, Spanish Ab Initio as well as French Ab Initio

These courses will not only focus on the four major areas of second language acquisition - reading, writing, speaking, and listening - but also on the culture of the French and Spanish speaking worlds as it is important that the student become both linguistically and culturally proficient in the language studied. The Language B courses are assessed using the assessments required by the International Baccalaureate Language B objectives and assessment tools.

Reading

Reading takes place in all subject areas and students will read across curriculum whenever appropriate. All teachers use reading to enable students to develop proficient listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Emphasis is on acquisition of integrated English communication skills in a wide range of content and activities that include but are not limited to texts, guided reading groups, differentiated reading instruction, and word lists.

The content should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Active reading of varied texts for what they say explicitly, as well as the logical inferences that can be drawn
- Analysis of literature and informational texts from varied literary periods to examine:
 - text craft and structure
 - elements of literature
 - arguments and claims supported by textual evidence
 - power and impact of language
 - influence of history, culture, and setting on language
 - personal critical and aesthetic response

Writing

Teachers of all content areas encourage students to develop their language skills through writing. Writing is implemented to ensure consistency of the writing process (planning, outlining, drafting, editing, proofreading, publishing), as appropriate with each grade level. Student's development of writing will be supported by being provided feedback from teachers and peers.

- Writing will be utilized in all subject areas for the following purposes:
 - developing and supporting argumentative claims
 - crafting coherent, supported informative/expository texts
 - responding to literature for personal and analytical purposes
 - writing narratives to develop real or imagined events
 - writing to sources using text-based evidence and reasoning

Oral Language

Extensive oral language for both social and academic purposes must be incorporated into successful literacy development. The following practices will be implemented to support the development of oral language:

- Teachers exemplify correct academic language usage within the classroom environment while being astutely aware of students' cultures and ethnicities, as well as heritage languages.
- Students are provided sufficient opportunities to develop and apply oral language beyond social language via group and individual oral presentations, debates, and speeches,
- Teachers of second language learners support the school's reading, writing and oral language practices as well as the IB learner profile. Pensacola High School students receive instruction using a collaborating, full-immersion approach to second language learning. Emphasis on grammar, speaking, listening, and writing skills, along with vocabulary development help students cultivate the necessary academic tools they need to become effective, multilingual speakers, readers, and writers.

Materials

The selection of instructional materials to be used by the District will be criteria of age appropriateness, educational purpose, and State and District performance standards alignment. In addition, the broad racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural diversity of the students of the District will be considered (Rules and Procedures of the District School Board, Escambia County, Florida)

Provided informational texts, language is used to solve problems, raise questions, provide information, and present new ideas about the subject matter. Another form of informational text includes functional reading materials (e.g., websites, how-to material) encountered in real-world situations. Informational material must include a variety of proficiency-level appropriate information sources.

Instructional materials should represent different points of view, contexts, and cultures while including issues and problems that persist across time. The texts should have identifiable key topics and relevant supporting details. (Florida Hard-to-Measure Content Area: World Languages, 20)

Support Services

ELL Services

Pensacola High School creates and fosters a multicultural curriculum to enhance the education of all students. Our traditional program at Pensacola High School welcomes our English Language Learners and strive to celebrate, nurture, and challenge them throughout their educational experience. Language and literacy are essential for individual and collective empowerment. Our certified ESOL staff--certification consisting of five ELL approved college courses or the 300 hour Escambia County School District's ELL in-service program, or a combination of the two--helps our students find their voice and reach their goals by supporting the development of their English language skills. (Escambia County, Florida ESOL Website). Over 90% of our IB faculty has met the ELL in-service program requirements to better support our students.

Tutoring

National, Spanish, French, and Science Honor Societies meet with students individually or in small-groups to give learning assistance. Tutoring is also offered before school from 7:40-8:30 and after school 3:15-4:00.

Informational Sessions

Evening informational sessions are presented by the IB Coordinator to involve parents in planning their student's language development and diploma options. Parents are informed about the various Language B options (Spanish SL, HL, Ab initio and French SL, HL, AB initio) and the various options students have for the diploma program (e.g. English SL or HL). Parents and students are educated so informed decisions can be made on what curriculum options are best pending on individual strengths and weaknesses. These events include IB 101, IB 201, IB Junior Informational Session, and Senior Orientation.

Media Specialist

It is the objective of the Media Specialist to offer available tools for students, parents, and staff to direct, enhance, and support the learning process. Knowledge of curricular areas is necessary in order to serve the interdisciplinary needs of the learning community. It is the goal of the Media Specialist to work in a flexible environment, working in partnership with staff, teaching skills to students and staff, and keeping the assets of the Media Center.

Literacy Coach

Pensacola High School's literacy coach works directly with teachers, students, and parents providing classroom-based presentations, cooperative group and individual support, and facilitating teachers' professional development. The Literacy coach helps to improve reading, writing and language skills by providing supplemental resources for struggling readers.

Language Needs for IB Learners

IB students are diverse in their social cultural interests. Language concentrates on how personal philosophies, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Language diversity involves the exploration of ideas that foster artistic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human-condition across many cultures. To this end, necessary language development fosters personal, social, and academic growth in that language course curricula address communication skills, critical thinking skills as well as satisfy the core requirements in Language.

Language Policy Committee:

Thomas Pennington- Language A: Literature Teacher

Kimberly Teasely- Language B: Spanish Teacher

Michael Jones- Group 3: History Teacher

Melanie Gibbs- Group 5: Math SL Teacher

Alyssa Simmons- IB Counselor

Brenda Sutton- ESE Representative

Laura Nelms Brewer- IB Coordinator

References and Resources

Guidelines for developing a school language policy. IBO, 2008

Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy. IBO, 2012

Rules and Procedures of the District School Board, Escambia County, Florida

Escambia County Florida ESOL website

Florida Constitution, article II, Section 9 (1988)

Language Policy of Vangaurd High School, Marion County, Florida

Language Policy of South Fork High School, Martin County, Florida

Language Policy of Coral Gables High School, Miami Dade County, Florida