



# Southpointe ACADEMY

## LANGUAGE POLICY

### Mission, Vision and Values

#### Mission

We involve, instruct, and inspire our students to learn, lead, and succeed.

Our mission is to develop outstanding citizens who are intellectually engaged, intrinsically motivated, and globally aware. Our balanced approach produces confident, well-rounded students, who are creative, independent thinkers and communicators.

#### Vision

The Southpointe community inspires learning for life.

Our school community aspires to impart a love of learning. We nurture and develop students' passion for learning, preparing them for a successful future.

#### Values

Our shared values reflect our goal to be people of character and substance.

- **Kindness:** We act with compassion and grace. We are empathetic. We help others.

- **Integrity:** We are honest. We have the courage to make the right choices. We take responsibility for our actions and their outcomes.
- **Perseverance:** We have the courage to overcome challenges. We stand committed in the pursuit of our goals.
- **Respect:** We honour the thoughts, experiences and perspectives of others. We treat others the way we expect to be treated.
- **Responsibility:** We are reliable and keep our word, seeing our commitments to completion. We seek to make a difference locally and globally.

## Purpose

The Southpointe Academy Language Policy is a collaboratively developed K-12 document consistent with the principles and practices of the International Baccalaureate Programme. It outlines our language development goals and the programmes designed to help our students achieve these goals.

The Language Policy offers an overview of learning at Southpointe Academy, where all teachers are language teachers. This policy is guided by a school-wide understanding that optimal learning is achieved through best practice in authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment, with inquiry and reflection at the heart of our pedagogical approach. The policy is an agreement made between faculty, staff, and the Southpointe community that facilitates the achievement of our mission.

## Philosophy

All teachers are language teachers at Southpointe Academy. We believe that language development is at the core of learning and is the major connecting element across the curriculum. Language learning is central to a student's intellectual, social and emotional growth, and facilitates the development of internationally-minded students who demonstrate the attributes of the IB learner profile.

Our literacy development focuses on oral, written, visual and media communication, and is embedded across all subject areas. Language is the cornerstone of the Approaches to Learning Skills (ATL) - Thinking, Social, Communication, Research, and Self-Management. Students need language skills in order to comprehend and analyze information, interact socially, inquire into areas of relevant and meaningful material, and effectively demonstrate their learning.

As students learn best when they can identify with their own experiences in the material they read and study; the structure and form of language should be learned in authentic and meaningful contexts. Through reading and reflecting on a variety of texts, students deepen their understanding of themselves and the world around them. Through this, they learn to be open-minded towards diverse global perspectives and develop into compassionate lifelong

learners.

Recognizing that mother-tongue language is important for cognitive development and in maintaining cultural identity, we also believe the acquisition of additional languages enriches personal growth, builds higher order thinking and literacy skills, and enhances the appreciation of cultural similarities and differences through understanding and respect. We endeavour to integrate students' cultural and linguistic heritage throughout our school and our programmes.

## Language Profile

At Southpointe Academy, the language of instruction is English. With a population of 560 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12, approximately 15% report a mother-tongue other than English. Over the past few years, these languages have included French, Spanish, Arabic, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Punjabi, Hindi, Greek, Russian, Hebrew and Portuguese. Southpointe Academy hosts international students on a regular basis from China and Spain.

At Southpointe Academy, students receive instruction in:

- 1) English from Kindergarten to Grade 12.
- 2) French from Kindergarten to Grade 5, with the option to continue to Grade 12.
- 3) Spanish as an option in Grade 6 to 12.

Many Southpointe Academy staff and teachers speak languages other than English. These languages include French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Polish, German, Filipino, Russian, Punjabi, Portuguese and Mandarin.

In order to understand each student's language background and to assist with their placement in the appropriate courses, a Language Profile Form is required as part of the admissions process for students entering the school. These are documented on each student profile in the school's student database. Students entering Grade 6, and new students entering Grades 7-12 in the Senior School, complete their Language Profile Survey before selecting their language course.

\*\*Complete language profile information is included in the MYP Language Profile Survey Analytics and Responses.

## Language Programs and Practice

At Southpointe Academy, our language programmes aim to:

- Enable students to learn and use language effectively, appropriately, accurately and confidently.
- Develop both oral and written communication skills (reading, listening, speaking, writing, viewing, presenting)
- Develop and use language skills in a variety of contexts and for different purposes

- Promote the appreciation, understanding, and analysis of literature
- Explore language as a means to understand different perspectives and cultures
- Develop an awareness of the role of language across all disciplines
- Provide an opportunity for enjoyment, creativity and intellectual growth
- Support and develop English as the language of instruction

### **Role of the Administrator**

Administrators at Southpointe Academy promote and uphold this language policy, ensuring that it is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with the school's mission, current best practices and other applicable policies. Administrators share responsibility for oversight, implementation and revision of the Language Policy and curriculum efforts with coordinators, teachers, parents and staff. Southpointe administrators encourage a variety of professional development opportunities to become effective instructors of students with a range of language proficiencies. Administrators ensure that mother-tongue resources continue to grow in number and continue to reflect our student population.

### **Role of the Student**

Students are encouraged to speak the language of instruction within the classroom to promote inclusivity and sharing of learning. When appropriate, students are encouraged to use mother-tongue for clarifications and to promote deeper understandings.

### **Role of the Teacher**

All teachers will promote and uphold this language policy and recognize and respect the language diversity of our student body. All teachers are responsible for assisting students with English language support and differentiating language learning in all subject areas. Teachers will:

- Integrate language instruction within the content of the curriculum
- Create classroom environments that are discourse-rich and process-oriented (plentiful opportunities for students to listen, read, speak, and write through interactive activities)
- Support and encourage language self-assessment
- Give ongoing feedback to students on their linguistic and cognitive development by using a variety of balanced assessment strategies
- Where possible, differentiate tasks and expectations to suit students' language levels.
- Hold high linguistic and academic expectations for all students
- Model intercultural understanding (i.e. tolerance for ambiguity, empathy, flexibility, respect for others' languages and cultures)
- Integrate appropriate technology that enhances language development
- Select resources that are linguistically accessible and culturally inclusive
- Teach English language skills for social interaction

This support takes various forms, including: explaining materials and assignments; clarifying instructions and requirements; providing exemplars, rubrics, and vocabulary lists; using a

variety of graphic organizers and presentations, and allowing peer support in their mother-tongue to understand concepts.

### **Role of the Parent**

Parents are encouraged to support the development of the languages of instruction and additional language(s) at home. Parents can provide formal and informal opportunities to use languages in a variety of settings through use in family life, travel, choices of media and literature, etc.

## **Additional Language Programmes**

Students begin learning additional languages in Kindergarten. French instruction continues until the completion of Grade 5. Spanish is offered as an additional language starting in Grade 6, Year One of the MYP. Students choose to learn either French or Spanish from Grade 6-12.

### **Recognition of Mother Tongue Languages other than English**

Southpointe promotes awareness and respect towards the diverse cultures and mother-tongue languages within our community, encouraging the preservation of mother-tongue languages inside and outside of school. Celebrating our diversity within the school allows for students to appreciate, understand and maintain their cultural identity.

Some of the ways we do this is by:

- Building our library collection with book titles and resources for students in their mother-tongue
- Staff members and parents who help to communicate and translate for our Punjabi and Mandarin speakers during parent-teacher meetings
- IB documents available in various languages on the Parent Portal

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Southpointe does not offer an EAL programme to students whose first language is a language other than English. Through the admissions process, it is ensured that new students to Southpointe are proficient in the language(s) of instruction.

### **English Language Practices in the PYP Balanced Literacy**

All teachers are language teachers, and use best practice in literacy to enhance instruction and language development, using inquiry as the primary pedagogical approach. Language practices in the PYP reflect a balanced literacy model, and teachers pull from a wide variety of resources to deliver differentiated language instruction. Literacy and language instruction is transdisciplinary, with explicit literacy instruction delivered by the classroom teacher. This approach includes, but is not limited to:

- Modeled Reading (Reading Aloud) and Modeled Writing
- Shared Reading and Shared Writing
- Guided Reading and Guided Writing
- Viewing and Presenting
- Listening and Speaking
- Independent Reading and Independent Writing
- Working with Words

### **Language inquiry focuses on 4 strands:**

- **Reading** - decoding skills, comprehension, critical thinking, genre study
- **Writing** - encoding skills, ideation, sentence fluency, organization, voice, working with words, conventions and mechanics, purpose, audience
- **Oral communication** - comprehension, fluency, articulation, presentation skills, purpose, audience
- **Media literacy** - critical thinking, viewing, creating, technology use, purpose, audience

Assessment-based planning is at the core of this literacy model. Language assessments are varied and are used to inform instruction. The balanced literacy approach is characterized by explicit skill instruction and the use of authentic texts. Through various modalities, the teacher implements a well-planned comprehensive literacy programme that reflects a gradual release of control, whereby responsibility is gradually shifted from the teacher to the students.

## **Language Pathways**

### **MYP (Grades 6-9)**

All students in the MYP at Southpointe Academy are enrolled in Language and Literature (English) and Language Acquisition (French or Spanish). Some students with IEPs may receive a language exemption, depending on a specific learning need.

Students entering Grade 6 are given a choice of Language Acquisition French or Language Acquisition Spanish. Students are placed in the appropriate phase based on their previous evidence of language learning, information from the Language Profile Survey, and the results of a language placement test.

New students entering the MYP are placed in the appropriate phase based on their previous evidence of language learning, information from the Language Profile Survey, and on the results of a language placement test. Students will be given a choice of languages (French or Spanish) depending on the offering of an appropriate phase.

### **English**

All students take English Language and Literature from Grades 6-9.

### **French and Spanish 6-9 Language Acquisition**

The MYP Language Acquisition framework comprises of a six-phase continuum that students progress through. They are expected to develop the competencies to communicate appropriately and effectively in an increasing range of social, cultural and academic contexts, and for an increasing variety of audiences and purposes.

### **High School: AP Capstone - Grades 10-12**

#### **English**

**Grade 10:** Literary Studies and New Media 10; Literary Studies and Spoken Language 10  
(Strands dependent on student enrolment)

**Grade 11:** Accelerated Literary Studies 11/ and English Studies 12; Creative Writing 11;  
Composition 11 (Strands dependent on student enrolment)

**Grade 12:** AP English Literature and Composition; English Studies 12

### **Language Acquisition**

French and Spanish: one additional language is required in grade 10; additional languages are electives in grades 11 and 12.

### **Language A Practices in the MYP and Grades 10-12**

Language practice for Grades 6 – 12 includes a focus on:

#### **Oral Communication**

- Listening to understand
- Speaking to communicate
- Reflecting on skills and strategies
- Reading and literature studies
- Reading for meaning
- Understanding form and style
- Reading with fluency
- Reflecting on skills and strategies

#### **Writing**

- Developing and organizing content
- Using knowledge of form and style
- Applying knowledge of conventions
- Reflecting on skills and strategies

#### **Media Studies**

- Understanding media texts
- Understanding media forms, conventions, and techniques
- Creating media texts
- Reflecting on skills and strategies

## Language B - Language Acquisition MYP and Grades 10-12

Language practices for Grades 6 - 12 include a focus on:

### Listening

- to understand
- to interact
- to develop intercultural understanding

### Writing

- purpose, audience, and form
- the writing process
- intercultural understanding

### Reading

- comprehension
- purpose, form, and style
- intercultural understanding

### Speaking

- to communicate
- to interact
- to develop intercultural understanding
- In addition, Communication is an assessed criteria in some subject areas.

## Language and Literacy Assessment

At Southpointe Academy, English, French and Spanish are assessed using the British Columbia Ministry of Education expectations and the relevant IB PYP and MYP assessment documents. These subjects are reported on formally through Interim Reports and Full Report Cards. For more detailed information on assessment practices at Southpointe Academy, please refer to the [Southpointe Assessment Policy](#).

## Admissions Policy

When new a student seeks enrolment at Southpointe Academy, they submit a completed application form with two years of prior report cards. Students are then admitted according to the [Southpointe Admissions Policy](#). For additional language learning, the suitable phase for the student's ability in French or Spanish is assessed during the admission process. Students are then placed in the correct phase for their learning .

## Related Policies

International mindedness and Intercultural Awareness Statements

Inclusion Policy

Assessment Policy

Academic Honesty Policy  
Admissions Policy

### **Supporting Documents**

2018-2019 MYP (Grades 6-9) Language Profile Survey Analytics and Responses

[BC Ministry of Education Language Education Policy](#)

[Guidelines for developing a school language policy - IB](#)

[Language and learning in IB programmes](#)

### **Policy Review**

The Language Policy is reviewed annually in May by a panel that may consist of teachers and administrators. Any recommendations for change are forwarded in writing to the Head of School. Approved policy changes are then vetted by and discussed with staff at a divisional or whole school meeting.

Reviewed: Sept., 2015

Reviewed: 2016-2017

Reviewed: June 2018

Reviewed: May 2019