



Language Policy IB MYP & DP

Hilton Head Island Middle & High Schools

HHIMS Mission Statement

The mission of Hilton Head Island Middle School is to provide challenging curricula with high expectations for learning that develop productive citizens who can solve problems and contribute to a global society.

HHIHS Mission Statement

The mission of Hilton Head Island High School is to prepare each student to become a productive, responsible citizen in a complex, global, technological age that requires lifelong learning.

All Teachers Are Language Teachers

We believe that language is a primary key to all learning, and we support the understanding that all teachers are language teachers. In accordance with the Read to Succeed Act of South Carolina, all teachers are required to earn the Read to Succeed endorsement appropriate for their teaching level, which ensures that they are trained to support reading skill development in their students. Additionally, Beaufort County School District (BCSD) requires that teachers are trained in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), an instructional model that helps teachers support the language goals of our multilingual (ML) students. In both schools, we recognize the importance of the four areas of language development (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) for all students. Teachers have a commitment to improving the language skills of their students so that they can reach full academic potential in all courses, not just language courses.

Students Learn One Additional Language

The study of additional languages provides students with the opportunity for academic and personal growth as they learn the processes of a language and develop an appreciation for the values and traditions of another culture. English is the language of instruction at both schools. At HHIMS, students choose to study either Chinese or Spanish as an additional language. Students that are enrolled as Multilingual Learners receive an additional English Language Lab in lieu of Chinese or Spanish to support them with their transition to an English speaking school.

Students in the MYP at HHIHS continue language acquisition courses with offerings in Spanish I or II, French I, or Chinese I or II in grade 9. Colleges and universities require that students have two language acquisition credits in the same language, and our students have the opportunity to continue language study through all four years of high school with IB offerings in all three languages.

Developing and Maintaining the Home Language of Learners

Nearly 50% of the students who attend either HHIMS or HHIHS speak a language other than English at home. We understand the important personal connection our students have to their home languages, and we try to support that part of their lives on our campuses. We believe that honoring the home language of all students also helps their parents feel respected and connected to the school. Developing and maintaining the home language of our learners is an integral part of our language policy.

Between the two schools, we employ three bilingual liaisons who help students and teachers bridge some of the language gaps. The liaisons translate materials and resources into Spanish, greet guests, meet new students, sit in on parent/student conferences, and help plan events for our community that are in both English and Spanish, such as our Hispanic Heritage Month, Multilingual Learner Parent Breakfast, and International Night. In addition we have various other bilingual employees, including a bilingual counselor and counseling office assistant at

HHIHS, a bilingual assistant principal at HHIMS, and several bilingual teachers.. There are also several bilingual support staff at each school. Lastly, the district provides an additional language phone service, which helps with communication in the home language should we not be able to access on campus language resources for students and families. The media center at each school also carries books and novels in multiple languages. Although instruction is primarily in English in all classes except world language classes, students are able to take notes in their home languages and speak in home languages during breaks and lunch. Students are also encouraged to embrace their home culture through classroom activities and assignments as well as participate in each school's International Night.

Inclusion and Equity of Access to the MYP and DP Regardless of Language Skill

There are no entrance requirements or application processes to participate in with the MYP or DP programmes at either school. Therefore, language skill is not a consideration, thereby ensuring inclusion and equity of access for multilingual learners. For MYP, virtually all students in grades 6 - 10 participate. Some may not meet all MYP requirements if they must have additional supports during the school day, but we include all special education and multilingual teachers in MYP planning and teaching so that their students can benefit as much as possible from the MYP experience. Multilingual teachers follow the language acquisition subject guide when developing their units. With regard to the DP, most students have ample opportunity during the first two years of high school to complete South Carolina graduation requirements while participating in MYP. Those students can also choose in grade 11 to continue IB studies through the DP, or they can choose to take some DP courses. The teachers of those courses must scaffold and differentiate for our multilingual students so that they can find success regardless of English language proficiency.

Support for Multilingualism

The demographics of both HHIMS and HHIHS are such that we could not support our student populations properly without ensuring support for multilingualism. Both schools as well as our feeder elementary schools have robust Multilingual Learner Professional Learning Communities that provide faculty and staff with professional development opportunities about teaching ML students. The teachers in the ML PLC also help teachers navigate the Individualized Language Acquisition Plans (ILAP), which delineate accommodations and modifications for our ML students. The ML PLC, along with the bilingual liaisons, create community and family partnerships that support the students, and they help create communication with students, parents and community in multiple languages. There are additional supports for our ML students and their families through our district's Multilingual Programs Department which staffs a program director and two instructional coaches to serve staff in our district. Additionally, we also have a Welcome Center to assist new multilingual families with transitioning to our school district. The district offers translation services as well through a program called LanguageLine Solutions. Finally, the South Carolina Department of Education provides the opportunity for students to earn a [Seal of Biliteracy](#) on their high school diplomas by showing evidence of multilingualism.

How Languages of the Community are Respected and Supported

Languages of our community include English, Spanish, Gullah Geechee, French, Chinese, Russian, Thai, Ukrainian, and Italian with most community members speaking English or Spanish at home. Still, all the languages are respected. The Spanish language is celebrated and is the additional language of most speakers. Support for the Gullah Geechee language and culture of the Lowcountry is integral in order to elevate the experiences of many of our students not only of African American descent, but all our stakeholders that live in our community. There are annual events such as the Gullah Food Festival and local resources such as the Gullah Museum and Historic Mitchelville that all students on our campuses are exposed to through classroom programming and field trips. Other languages are supported through media center materials.

Resources and Practices to Involve Parents in Planning their Child's Language Development

All students in South Carolina are required to participate with their parents or legal guardians in annual Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) meetings starting in the 8th grade or Year 3 of the MYP. These conferences allow parents to work with school counselors to plan the high school experience for their children, including how best to meet state graduation requirements, special program requirements such as the IB Diploma Programme, and other choices such as taking courses in language development. Both the MYP and DP send

home weekly correspondence, such as school/classroom newsletters, to keep parents informed about the learning in language acquisition classes, provide information regarding enrichment opportunities for scholars.

Sociocultural Circumstances of the School

Students from our schools come to us from dozens of different countries and there is a vast history on our island that dates back over 4,000 years ago. Through joint projects with local artists, students, and the Town of Hilton Head Island, both schools have murals and artwork depicting various time periods from PreColumbian to present day of the island and the impact of Native Indians, Spanish, European, and Gullah Geechee cultures here. Our diverse heritage continues to be alive and well today with the programmes at each school integrating local culture and traditions into classroom and school activities. Additionally, students are encouraged to participate in a multitude of community service projects around the island representing the school.

Professional Development for all Professionals in Language Learning and Teaching

As noted earlier, our teachers are required to have both Read to Succeed and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol training in order to be in compliance with state and district regulations. The middle school has two instructional coaches and the high school has one. Coaches work with teachers in an effort to help them grow their classroom instructional practices as language teachers. Coaches also regularly meet with PLCs. Additionally, the Multilingual PLC teachers offer professional development, and all administrators have received [Title III training](#), Language Instruction for Language Learners and Immigrant Students, which has been instituted to help ensure that English learners, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English. ML students are monitored through the use of WIDA diagnostics and ACCESS testing. Data from their progress is used when scheduling, developing student ILAPs, and determining appropriate student accommodations.

Policy Review Process

This policy is reviewed annually and was last reviewed by each respective school's leadership and staff in the Spring of 2022. Additionally, each school had the policy reviewed by their PTO/PTA and SIC in the Fall of 2022. During each review, participants spent time reading and discussing the policy then offered their feedback regarding the policy.