
International Baccalaureate Diploma Program

CHS Language Policy

Updated for the 2023-24 School Year

Values & Beliefs

Carmel High School believes that language is essential to all learning and ALL teachers are language teachers. Language, in the forms of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, is essential in all courses and enriching language development is a joint effort by our administration, counselors, teachers, media center, parents, and students. We believe that students who need additional English language support should be identified, provided resources, and monitored to ensure that support. In addition, we believe that the study of language provides a powerful path to understanding other cultures and creating global citizens. Thus, Carmel High School provides robust pathways for language acquisition in addition to supporting the heritage languages of our students.

Language Profile

Carmel High School serves the community of Carmel, Indiana, USA. While English is the primary language used by our community and within our school system, our 2020-21 enrollment data shows that our study body of over 5000 students represents 51 countries of origin and 57 different linguistic backgrounds.

Language Program

Carmel High School offers Language A and Language B courses at the Higher Level (HL) and Standard Level (SL) of study. Students work with the IB Diploma Coordinator, their counselors, and their teachers to create a schedule that balances their academic needs with their individual language background and language goals.

Language A

Our diploma program students take English Language A: Literature HL to satisfy both the IB Diploma requirements and the State of Indiana graduation requirements. In addition to our DP students, this course is available to any students at CHS who choose to study at a course level.

Language B

Our diploma program students have the opportunity to learn Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Japanese, or Latin in our IB Language Acquisition courses. In these courses, students learn to communicate effectively, develop fluency, and appreciate culture. We offer higher level, standard level, and ab initio standard level courses in Language B. Placement for students is decided based on prior language learning, academic record, level of proficiency, and diploma program scheduling needs.

School-Supported Self-Taught Language A

The CHS IB Programme is committed to providing students whose mother tongue is something other than English with the opportunity to maintain and develop their mother tongue through the option of Language A: Literature in their mother tongue on a school-supported self-taught basis. Our DP Coordinator will supervise this course and ensure that students receive the resources to understand the course requirements and assessments. Students will be provided with course guides, timelines, text selection support, and detailed assessment information. The school will provide logistical support, but it is the responsibility of the student to cover any costs associated with hiring a language instructor, as needed.

Language Support

Support for All Students

- At Carmel High School, we provide language support in every course. Our teachers are expected to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of every student.
- Teachers are empowered to make accommodations for an individual student's unique language learning needs.
- Teachers provide access to literature which represents a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- Teachers use a combination of formative and summative assessments to monitor learning and adjust teaching.

Support for Multilingual Learners

- Carmel High School supports our Multilingual Learners (MLL) Program, a state-mandated support program for Multilingual Learners.
- Upon enrollment at CHS, we identify students who are Multilingual Learners through an initial screening process
- These students are evaluated to see if they qualify for MLL support services
- Academic schedules for our MLL students are created via conference with the student, parents, counselor, and MLL Coordinator and can include a variety of course combinations including mainstream classes and/or MLL courses

- The MLL Coordinator creates an Individual Language Learning Plan (ILP) for these students
- CHS teachers provide accommodations and differentiated instruction based on the student's ILP
- Evaluation and monitoring of student language proficiency occurs annually to determine placement or adjustment in servicing needs
- All students, including those that have exited the program, can seek additional help from our MLL support staff
- CHS has smaller class sizes available for MLL students
- CHS can provide co-taught/team-teaching with content teachers to provide additional support for language learners in mainstream classes
- Support study halls and peer tutoring is available for our MLL students.

Support for Staff

- Carmel High School has an MLL Coordinator who specializes in helping students who are Multilingual Learners
- We have an Instructional Coach who is assigned as a support for our teachers as they work with MLL students
- We have staff members with TOEFL endorsements who assist our MLL Coordinator in providing services to our students who are Multilingual Learners
- During our professional learning community meetings each week, staff members meet to discuss best practices for helping MLL students who are part of their courses

Additional Support

- Language and culture clubs, which are available to all students, help students use their mother-tongue language skills and build cultural ties.
- The MLL Coordinator, counselors, and IB Coordinator work in conjunction with families to ensure every student receives the appropriate level of language support. Translation services are available to assist in this communication process.
- The CHS Media Center provides print and digital resources in the primary languages spoken by our student body. Our three full-time Media Specialists work with the IB Coordinator and course teachers to ensure diverse languages and cultures are represented in our print and electronic resources.
- Our World Language and TOK teachers as well as our CAS Coordinator encourage participation in culturally and linguistically diverse community activities including festivals, lectures, presentations, and other outreach opportunities.

Admissions Considerations

At Carmel High School, there is a belief that students who wish to challenge themselves both academically and personally should be afforded the opportunity, this includes our students with diverse language backgrounds. We encourage students to select an academic path that is appropriate for their academic level and personal maturity. As part of this decision, awareness of their own language strengths as well as any limitations should be considered.

Communication & Policy Review

All IB DP policies are available on the school website and within Canvas courses so that parents, students, and teachers can access the policies as needed.

We recognize that our school community is not static. Rather, it is continually changing, and as a result, this language policy is annually reviewed. We are committed to being responsive to the language needs of every student in our programme, and it is important that we regularly consider if changes need to be made. Key stakeholders -- teachers, administrators, parents, and students -- were involved in framing this policy and are a part of the annual policy review process. During the annual review, parties will ensure the document reflects current standards and practices both for IB and Carmel Clay Schools.

RESOURCES:

- *Guidelines for developing a school language policy* (www.ibo.org)
- *Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy* (www.ibo.org)