

Harrison High School

MYP

Language Policy



Statement of Philosophy that Supports Student Learning:

Harrison High School recognizes that the study of language is the foundation for all learning and that an effective and rigorous language curriculum is crucial to all students. Language study develops international understanding, reinforces cultural identity, enhances personal growth, and promotes effective communication. We view the on-going language development for our students as the shared responsibility of all teachers, staff, parents and students. We pledge to provide challenging curriculum, differentiated and varied instruction, and diverse learning experiences for all students.

Overview of Languages

English is the language of instruction at both Carmel Middle School and Harrison High School. Students at both schools receive instruction in English through an MYP Language and Literature course. If indicated, students also receive ESL support as needed.

Currently, both Carmel Middle School and Harrison High School are offering Spanish in the MYP Language Acquisition courses.

Those students whose mother tongue is not English are able to utilize native language resources and language skills to facilitate their learning within the classroom environment, such as Word-to-Word Dictionaries.

Teaching of Language Learning Beliefs

Definitions and Access

An important distinction is made at Harrison High School between language acquisition and literacy. Language acquisition is the natural process of perceiving, producing, and using words in order to engage in comprehensible communications. According to Krashen's research, this process begins at birth and continues throughout life as increasingly sophisticated communications develop, both in mother tongue language and in second language learning. Literacy is generally described as reading and writing, and involves a myriad of skills needed to access information from a wide variety of sources and to communicate ideas, values, and beliefs in various forms and to different audiences (Graham, 2007). Furthermore, current research shows that we need an ever-expanding definition of what it means to be "literate" in the 21st Century. In the National Council of Teachers of English's Policy Research Brief on Adolescent Literacy, they write "Students should see value in their own cultures and the cultures of others in their classrooms. ... Similarly, they should see their home languages as having value" (p. 5). This convergence of valuing a students' native language and the instructional language is conveyed in the NCTE's findings that "Multicultural literacy is seeing, thinking, reading, writing, listening, and discussing in ways that critically confront and bridge social, cultural, and personal differences." In short, all students benefit from effective literacy instruction that not only recognizes, but embraces the diversity of language in today's classrooms.

Students whose mother tongue is not English receive structured support from highly-qualified Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) instructors who are trained to facilitate early exposure to English. The CLDE faculty works closely with instructors in creating a structured framework leading to full student

integration in subject-area classes. All faculty members integrate subject-specific vocabulary development into their instruction, using strategies tailored to assist developing students' proficiency with the language of the discipline (Biancarosa, 2006).

Language Acquisition

Aligning with MYP language acquisition expectations, all MYP students at Harrison High School must enroll in 5 consecutive years of study of Spanish.

Phases of Language Acquisition

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	As Needed
Phase 1 Phase 2	Phase 3 (teacher can use phase 2 for transition of new students to the program)	Phase 4 (teachers can use phase 3 as transition for students new to the program)	Phase 5/6 for higher level students

All Harrison High School students are offered the opportunity to study a second language. Harrison High School offers Spanish as a continuation of the study students did at the middle school level. Students are placed in phases appropriate to their level when tested at the end of their middle school Spanish courses.

Native Spanish speaking students are placed in Advanced Placement Spanish courses to ensure they are continuing to grow in their knowledge and Spanish language skills.

English Language Learners

As required by federal regulation, students newly enrolling at Harrison High School must complete a Home Language Identification Form. If the student and/or parent/guardian states that a language other than English is the dominant language spoken in the home, the student is assessed using the Colorado W-APT test. Based on the student's results, educators can determine the level of support the student will need to be successful in the classroom.

Students demonstrating a need for additional support are placed in the Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) program. Harrison High School provides differentiated CLDE classes. Students in these courses receive instruction developed and assessed using IB standards and requirements. Emergent ELLs are supported in Sheltered Instruction settings where English language development is balanced with content.

Instruction for Struggling Readers

Newly arrived English Language Learners have the opportunity for further reading and language intervention through a Language Lab elective course. This course implements instruction in IB philosophy, but does not require students to be assessed using IB strands.

Mother Tongue Instruction

The Harrison High School student body population is proud of its vast diversity, which includes students from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Iraq, Afghanistan, DCR, Burundi, Tanzania, Philippines, Vietnam and Germany. We acknowledge the importance of a student's Mother Tongue in promoting personal identity and maintaining cultural heritage. Native Spanish speakers are supported in their mother tongue instruction through the use of Advanced Placement Spanish Literature and Language classes.

Library Media Center

To promote open mindedness and celebrate cultural diversity, the media center includes a global perspectives section that features reference materials and texts mirroring our diverse student body make up and culture.

Works Cited

- Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Education Program*. Harrison School District 2. May 2016. Hyperlink http://www.hsd2.org/pages/HSD2/District/Student_Support/9035354427296171058
- Biancarosa, Gina, and Catherine E. Snow. *Reading Next - A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy: A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York (2nd ed)*. Washington, D.C.: Alliance for Excellent Education, 2006. Print.
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