Language policy

Date drafted: Fall 2016

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Language policy 2021-2022

Marietta Middle School

 Mission Statement

Our mission is to ***prepare all students for success in high school and beyond*** by fostering a caring, globally minded culture that embraces diversity, emphasizes academic rigor, and ignites a passion for learning.

Language philosophy

Our language philosophy supports our school mission. We believe language is essential to learning and contributing to our mission to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people that embrace intercultural understanding and strive to make a better world. Through interdisciplinary, authentic learning experiences, we nurture students to inquire, act, and reflect in ways to do so. To this end, we agree that all teachers must work synergistically to teach language with our purpose and beliefs propelling us towards our vision. Through this process, we strategically work to create an environment where each person in the school community celebrates and has respect for the diverse languages, cultures, and backgrounds present and beyond.   We feel that these actions help to build the self-efficacy and identity affirmations of all.

Statement of language philosophy: We believe that language learning should affirm cultural identity, promote intercultural understanding, and contribute to expanded, effective communication for academic and personal successes so as to make a positive impact locally and globally.

Belief Statements (Whole school guiding principles)

We believe:

> language is vital to developing critical thinking.
> critical thinking is necessary to cultivating intercultural understanding and the international-mindedness characterized by the IB learner profile.
> language plays a key role in identity affirmation.
> language learning contributes to ongoing academic and personal successes.
> language learning expands the ability for effective expression and reflection.

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multilingualism and support for the mother tongue contribute to intercultural understanding, self-identity, and expansion of communication opportunities.

equity in access to high-quality language instruction, high expectations, appropriate scaffolds, and differentiated instruction based upon learners' individual language portraits is a student right.

In constructivist, inquiry-based approaches to conceptual learning alongside practices that emphasize respect for our common humanity.

Language policy review

The language policy will be reviewed bi-annually and with the following considerations for requirements:

• Support for mother tongues

• Support for students who are not yet proficient in English

• Compliance with the local/national regulations for Special Education Needs (SEN)

District curriculum administrators, teachers, academic coaches, and coordinators developed our language policy in a collaborative process. In addition to the original roles, stakeholders that have reviewed and contributed to the revision of the policy include heads of school, media specialists, students, and parents. The school district's IB coordinators serve as the steering committee to be responsible for overseeing this bi-annual/annual process.

Language profile

Languages used in the school community	
Languages of teaching and learning	Language and literature: English Language acquisition: French, Spanish and American Sign Language
Languages of communication used in the school and outside the classroom	English Mother tongue outside classroom
The range and types of mother tongue and other languages in the community	Student Primary Language:

Language	Count	Percentage
English	879	63.47%
Spanish	452	32.64%
Portuguese	29	2.09%
African	9	0.65%
Arabic	4	0.29%
French	2	0.14%
Gujarati	2	0.14%
Haitian Creole	2	0.14%
Chinese	1	0.07%
Europea	1	0.07%
Korean	1	0.07%
Italian	1	0.07%
Turkish	1	0.07%
Vietnamese	1	0.07%

Language education logistics

Marietta Middle School serves a multicultural, multilingual community with a diverse population and robust language needs. Our school practices for **planning,** for language and literature and language acquisition courses, stem from our commitment to going beyond meeting the needs of all students by leveraging resources in ways that create a culture characterized by academic rigor, equity, and caring open-mindedness. Our goal is to take our students to the **T.O.P.** as **T**hinkers that are **O**pen-minded and **P**rincipled young people. To this end, we plan with these aspirations in mind as we seek to infuse a spirit of inquiry throughout the school community to ignite a passion for learning in students.

All teachers are proficient in speaking and writing English and are language teachers.

Grade level subject group professional learning communities adhere to well established expectations and procedures for designing and delivering a coherent, guaranteed and viable approach toward the school-wide development of language. Each PLC meets weekly.

•Teachers with English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) certification and expertise design specialized instruction for English Language Learners (ELL)

•English Language Learners students have total immersion in subject group courses based upon ongoing assessment and achievement of established thresholds.

•English Language Learners are supported with in-class and self-contained support based upon established thresholds.

Diversity of the student/staff body is celebrated through recognition of the mother tongue.

•Trilingual hallway displays

•French and Spanish are offered at various levels including heritage speakers and advanced levels for students in language acquisition.

•English is promoted as it is the host country language.

•All languages are valued and supported by our ESOL services as needed.

•Universal design for learning includes the following intentional, consistent actions:

>Assessment for learning
>The teaching of language through relevant, real-world contexts
>The planning and execution of learning scaffolds for all students as needed

Language development

Language development is paramount to cognitive, affective, and social learning and being. Structured inquiry is the approach to teaching and learning language that we focus on in our learning experiences as we strategically integrate these three areas with purpose. Using the MYP unit planning process we incorporate the state's required standards for language development across all subjects in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in meaningful ways.

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Marietta Middle School student admission is based solely on residency within the school attendance zone, the city of Marietta, a very diverse community. Student diversity provides a rich opportunity for all teachers to attend to and build upon and support the various language needs of our learners. For those whose mother tongue is not English, our host country language, students receive classroom support through an in-class, co-taught model to the extent possible and may receive pullout services as well in Language and Literature classes. The strategies used to develop language includes, but is not limited to the following:

Vocabulary Instruction
- Portions of lessons for explicit vocabulary instruction
- Repeated exposure to new words in multiple contexts
- Opportunities to use new vocabulary in a variety of contexts
- Strategies for developing independent vocabulary learners

Comprehension Strategy Instruction
- Text selection for reading level of students
- Explicit instruction for and guided practice with strategies
- Application of strategies to different texts
- Specific, directed talk about strategies

Discussion of Text Meaning and Interpretation
- Engaging content and texts that promote multiple interpretations
- Stimulating, open-ended questions that invite reflection, inference, and connections
- Small-group and whole-class extended discussion
- Discussion protocols and formats

Student Motivation and Engagement
- Meaningful, engaging learning goals
- Positive learning environment that promotes student autonomy
- Relevant literacy experiences connected to
    - student interests
    - real-world application
    - current events
- Conditions to promote higher reading engagement and conceptual learning

Writing Process
- Daily practice in components of the writing process
- Gradual release of responsibility from teacher to student
- Student selection and use of appropriate writing strategies

Writing for a Variety of Purposes
- Expansion of students' concept of audience
- Understanding of different purposes of writing
- Emulation of features of good writing
- Techniques for discipline-specific tasks

Community of Writers

- Collaboration among students as writers
- Opportunities to give and receive feedback
- Student choices of writing topics
- Connection to real-world topics and audiences

Intensive, Individualized Interventions
- Reliable screening assessments
- Interventions to meet student's identified needs

Language acquisition

Language learning is fundamental to students' identity affirmation. The World Languages Department provides a program for 7th and 8th graders that allows the opportunity to earn one Carnegie unit of world language credit. Upon successful completion of two years of study, students will receive Carnegie credit for one year of high school world language. Students will successfully participate in small conversations in the target language. World language courses are offered in French and Spanish. They will also obtain information, knowledge, and understanding of another culture while reinforcing knowledge of other disciplines. The program follows the state standards for the first year of language instruction as outlined in the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

Students that meet entrance criteria indicated by the placement matrix may be scheduled into high school level courses, Spanish or French I or II.

Students may be scheduled in Native Speaker Spanish courses if they already are proficient in speaking the language.

Assessment

Teachers design instructional units according to the Georgia Standards of Excellence and align them to MYP objectives. MYP Assessments are based on holistic learning and IB standards. In order to provide the student with guidance, teachers provide an IB MYP rubric to students when MYP assessments are given. Each subject area has specific assessment tasks and related MYP criteria. Each criterion is assessed in each course at least 2 times each year. Achievement Levels are determined based on performance on the total score of all MYP criteria for each subject area and are assigned using guidelines provided by the International Baccalaureate. MYP final grades accompany the 4th quarter report card. These grades give feedback on student performance on various assessment tasks that measure student mastery of MYP objectives and GA Standards of Excellence content. MYP feedback is not part of a student's cumulative academic average

Formative assessment is used to provide immediate feedback, plan for differentiation, and support learning. Summative assessments of learning tasks are designed using strategies such as Goal, Role, Audience, Situation, Product/Performance, Standards (G.R.A.S.P.S.) approach. Subject group area teachers and academic coaches use their MYP subject guides to plan assessment objectives and activities.

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment is administered three times/year to set goals and adjust instruction for students. State required Georgia Milestones End of Grade assessments, Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA), and the ACCESS for ELLs for English Language Learners) are included in the

summative assessment program. More in-depth information about each of these assessments is included in the Assessment Policy.

Mother tongue development

The mother tongue development is supported by literature in a section of the media center that are written in the languages of the student body. Students are able to use their native language in activities and settings that do not require the host country language for academic learning experiences.

The school has an honor Spanish Club to support the mother tongue of native speakers as well as assisting Spanish language learners the opportunity to immerse themselves into the language and culture beyond the language acquisition courses offered.

English Language Learners (ELL) and support for students who are not yet proficient in the language of instruction

The ESOL program provides support services for students according to their assessed proficiency levels. The state determines the process for identifying and providing services for English Language Learners (ELL). A developmental language profile is kept on ELL students so as to meet local and state guidelines for support.

 Students entering MMS with a limited ability in English skills are given small group, specialized instruction in the Language and Literature course with students needing intensive English instruction. The English proficiency levels further determine the classes in Mathematics and Science that they are scheduled to with an ELL teacher present to co-teach with the teacher of record.

The effectiveness of the differentiated strategies and supports is measured with the ACCESS for ELL state test and the Measures of Academic Progress assessment, which measures academic growth.

Library Support- Learning Hub

The Learning Hub is a student-centered "place" with a feeling that communicates a sense of care and belongingness. The school mission statement excerpt, "…fostering a globally minded culture that embraces diversity, emphasizes academic rigor, and ignites a passion for learning." is the mission for the Hub. As such, the Learning Hub provides opportunities that invite learning in MYP Global Contexts, promote the IB Learner Profile, support the Inquiry-Action-Reflection Cycle, and serves as a space for practicing Approaches to Learning Skills. By creating an environment that reflects our school's philosophy and mission for an experience that builds agency through Voice, Choice, and Ownership, our hope is for students to know that we believe in them as people and their abilities.

Language policy alignment

The language philosophy and policy align with the admissions, academic honesty, inclusion, and assessment policies. Each is centered on the learners and all they can become, our belief in the IB's mission, and the premise that all students belong. As such, the policies support the idea that students and staff will aspire to exhibit the traits of being principled, caring, open-minded, reflective thinkers and communicators.

Alignment to our academic honesty policy

Our language policy aligns with our academic honesty policy in that both support our students' development as principled, reflective communicators. The MYP action cycle, Inquiry-Action-Reflection,

process is ongoing in language planning and learning as well as how students are guided to implore academic honesty at all times.

Alignment to our admissions policy

The language philosophy and policy align with the admissions policy in that we support all students to help them progress in language learning. We believe that all students belong and plan structures, staffing, and learning experiences to empower them to achieve linguistically.

Alignment to our inclusion policy

The language policy aligns with the inclusion policy in that we have a universal design for learning (UDL) approach for both. UDL provides support and structures so that the broadest number of students have access to the MYP and opportunities to experience rigorous and challenging curriculum.

Alignment to our assessment policy

The language policy aligns with the assessment policy in that both encourage student voice, choice, and ownership of learning. The use of formative and summative data allows for specific feedback for learning. This process is an inclusive practice and programs, staffing, materials, and learning experiences are put in place to provide learners with the best opportunity to become knowledgeable, inquiring, caring communicators.

Communication of the policy

The language policy is posted on our school's public website.

APPENDIX 1-MYP language acquisition continuum

The developmental phases are used to provide a differentiated progression for students once placement is determined. The placement in the six phases guide scheduling so that not more than two consecutive phases are in one class.   The planning of courses throughout the continuum use the philosophy and practices presented in the Language acquisition guide (2020) and Language acquisition teacher support material 2020.

APPENDIX 2-Policy for ELL, SEN, and Gifted at MMS

<u>English Language Learners (ELL)</u>

ELL specialists use strategies to accelerate the learning of students, whose first language is not English. These strategies maximize access for ELL students to the International Baccalaureate curriculum, and social environment in the school and beyond.

The ESOL program develops the student's language skills in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. TESOL principles for supporting ELL students are icons of the program which are to "know our learners, create conditions for language learning, design high quality lessons for language development, adapt lesson delivery as needed, and monitor and assess student language development.

   Strategies used to develop ELL students include, but are not limited to the following:

- The use of cooperative groups to provide opportunities to problem solve, discuss, negotiate, and think with peers
- The use of a constructivist approach
- Application of knowledge to provide lots of opportunities for students to apply language and literacy skills
- The provision of clear expectations, rubrics, and high quality work models
- Professional learning for staff through an ESOL coach and ESOL teacher specialists

Special Education Needs (SEN)

Our students are at the center of all learning. Their diverse backgrounds, strengths and challenges are considered when planning and implementing places, people, processes, and procedures to remove barriers to learning and providing access to an IB education. As such, we have adopted the principles presented in *The IB Guide to Inclusive Education: A resource for whole school development* of "affirming identity and building self-esteem, valuing prior knowledge, scaffolding, and extending learning".

Strategies used to develop students with Special Education Needs (SEN) include, but are not limited to the following:

- Avoid long periods of direct instruction
- Use visuals and multimedia
- Think aloud
- Provide instruction for background knowledge and academic vocabulary gaps
- Guided instruction including adequate wait time
- Breakdown complex material into manageable chunks
- Teach pre-requisite skills
- Allow for additional time
- Deliver instruction in meaningful ways
- Reciprocal teaching, listening and viewing stations, visual displays, graphic organizers, inquiry circles, labs, and simulations

These strategies are enacted in a holistic and interdisciplinary approach.

Gifted Program

Eligibility and delivery of services for the gifted program is determined following the state department of education rules. The school Gifted Committee actively searches for potential candidates for gifted testing and considers referrals from teachers, parents, or students.

The Marietta City Schools Gifted Standards are used to guide the planning for advanced learning opportunities.

MCS Gifted Standards K-12					
Strand 1: Advanced Research Skills	**Strand 2:Creative Thinking Skills**	**Strand 3: Higher Order Thinking and Problem Solving Skills**	**Strand 4: Advanced Communication and Collaboration Skills**	**Strand 5: Emotional Development of Self**	**Strand 6: Self-directed Learner**
Students will develop and	Students will develop and utilize creative thinking	Students will develop and			Students will become

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utilize advanced research skills among various topics.	through variety of products and problem solving.	utilize critical thinking, higher order thinking, logical thinking and problem solving skills in various situations.	Students will develop advanced communication and collaboration skills in working toward a common goal with shared accountability for the final outcome.	Students will develop understanding of self and how one's own unique abilities influence interactions with others.	self-directed, independent-learners.
MCS.Gifted.S1A. Formulate thought-provoking questions to guide in depth research. **MCS.Gifted.S1B**. Devise and manage a research plan. **MCS.Gifted.S1C**. Gather, organize, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize data from multiple sources for research applications.	**MCS.Gifted.S2A**. Recognize and evaluate how the process of creative thinking improves ideas, products, and solutions to problems. **MCS.Gifted.S2B**. Develop and apply the cognitive components of creative thinking: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. **MCS.Gifted.S2C**. Develop and apply the affective components of creative thinking: *risk-taking, curiosity, complexity, and imagination.* **MCS.Gifted.S2D**. Apply components of creative thinking in finding, solving, and evaluating solutions to authentic real-world problems and dilemmas.	**MCS.Gifted.S3A**. Develop and apply core critical thinking skills of metacognition, observation, questioning, prediction, analysis, interpretation, inference, summarization, evaluation, synthesis, explanation, and transference. **MCS.Gifted.S3B**. Develop critical thinking, inductive and deductive reasoning to analyze and evaluate logical reasoning within a variety of problems and dilemmas. **MCS.Gifted.S3C**. Use a variety of strategies for solving authentic, complex, real world problems through evaluative thinking and the engineering design processes.	**MCS.Gifted.S4A**. Develop skills and techniques associated with effective verbal and non-verbal communication, adjusting for a given audience or task. **MCS.Gifted.S4B**. Recognize and examine the value of others strengths, thoughts, ideas, and feelings during collaboration. **MCS.Gifted.S4C**. Establish a common goal utilizing strengths of each group member. **MCS.Gifted.S4D**. Respectfully collaborate and effectively communicate exchanges of constructive /critical feedback. **MCS.Gifted.S4E**. Use a variety of multi-media and innovative technologies as tools to effectively communicate the individual or collaborative group work.	**MCS.Gifted.S5A**. Explore personal beliefs, feelings, and understanding of self, regarding one's own unique giftedness. **MCS.Gifted.S5B**. Recognize and build upon strengths and limitations. **MCS.Gifted.S5C**. Develop and practice critical analysis in judgment of owns actions, feelings and thoughts. **MCS.Gifted.S5D**. Develop a shift in actions, feelings and thoughts. **MCS.Gifted.S5E** Advocate for self.	**MCS.Gifted.S6A**. Set appropriately high standards for work and behavior. **MCS.Gifted.S6B**. Establish and work toward short and long term goals. **MCS.Gifted.S6C**. Persevere in the face of obstacles. **MCS.Gifted.S6D**. Take initiative to pursue opportunities share and use abilities. **MCS.Gifted.S6E**. Seek opportunities for self-growth through risk-taking, and curiosity in various situations. **MCS.Gifted.S6F**. Seek opportunities to be productive and proactive in various situations.

Resources: NAGC Program Standards, GA DOE Curriculum Program Goals, 1999 MCS Manual for Gifted Service, 2013 Cobb County Gifted Resource Standards, TAG Fulton Co. standards, "Advancing Differentiation Thinking and Learning for the 21st century" by Richard M. Cash

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APPENDIX 4- Language and Literature Advanced Placement Criteria

Placement Criteria for Grades 6, 7, and 8

Marietta city schools — A Georgia Charter System

Final Grade and all Achievement Scores must be met for initial placement.

Last revised January 2022

Marietta Middle School 7th Grade Placement Criteria Class of 2028

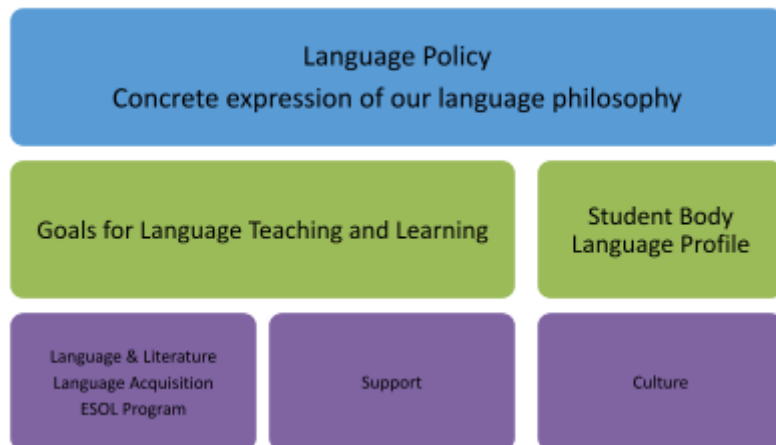| Current Course	Final Grade	Achievement Score(s)	Recommended Course	Notes
Accelerated Math 6/7	≥ 80% in Math	NA – Accelerated Math 6/7 required	Accelerated Math 7/8*	A Gifted/Advanced Content course.
**Honors Math 6	≥ 80% in Math	Math MAP ≥ 65% NPR or Math EOG ≥ Proficient	Honors Math 7*	A Gifted/Honors course.
Math 6	NA	NA	Math 7	
**Science 6	≥ 80% in both Science and ELA	Reading MAP ≥ 65% NPR or ELA EOG ≥ Proficient	Honors Science 7*	A Gifted/Honors course.
Science 6	NA	NA	Science 7	
Advanced Content ELA 6	≥ 80% in ELA	Reading MAP ≥ 65% NPR or ELA EOG ≥ Proficient	Honors ELA 7*	A Gifted/Honors course.
**ELA 6	NA	NA	ELA 7	
Advanced Content Social Studies 6	≥ 80% in SS	Reading MAP ≥ 65% NPR	Carnegie World Geography*	A Gifted/Advanced Content High School course.
**Social Studies 6	NA	NA	SS 7	

*Probationary status will be in effect for all students who do not maintain an average ≥ 80%.

**For the 2021-2022 school year, students who were in the Enhanced course for Math 6 are now eligible for Honors Math 7 if the criteria are met. Students who were in the Enhanced course for ELA 6 are eligible for Honors ELA 7 if the criteria are met. There is no longer an Enhanced course offering for Science or Social Studies in grade 7, but the criteria to qualify for Honors in these areas has been changed to ≥ 65% NPR in Reading on the MAP test.

Gifted identified students are automatically served in Honors Social Studies. Placement in one of the other Accelerated/Honors courses is subject to meeting the placement criteria.

Students working above grade level may submit a waiver to be considered for placement in an Honors course.

APPENDIX 5- Communication of the Policy Visual Supports

Language Policy
Concrete expression of our language philosophy

Goals for Language Teaching and Learning

Student Body Language Profile

Language & Literature
Language Acquisition
ESOL Program

Support

Culture

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APPENDIX 6- Documents Used to Inform Policy

Coordinator Support Material
Language and learning in the IB
Guidelines for school self-reflection on language policy
MYP: From Principles into Practice