

# **Westbury High School International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Language Policy**

We at Westbury High School are committed to promoting academic excellence, social development, and emotional growth of our students as lifelong learners who will contribute to an ever-changing world and global society. Our goal is to create an empowering, collaborative and supportive learning environment that promotes maximum success for all students. We seek to also create curriculum and instruction that challenge students to meet high expectations and that give them the necessary tools and support to succeed in their future education and careers. We believe that development of effective communication skills, including the acquisition of a second language and further developing one's native language skill, is a necessary attribute for a successful learner in the 21st century global community.

Westbury High School is committed to helping our students foster their own abilities to communicate empathetically with our local community and culture, as well as to reach across cultural and national lines to communicate effectively with the broader global community and the people with whom we share this world. Westbury High School aims to continue its work to create a better world through education where we promote intercultural understanding on a global scale and foster in our students the lifelong learning traits embodied in the learner profile.

## **Language Profile**

Westbury High School is a diverse, multicultural institution with speakers of various languages integrated into the school life. English is the primary language spoken by a majority of students and is the language of instruction in the school, aside from the World Language classrooms and “bilingual instruction” classrooms composed of students (whose home language is Spanish) in which, the academic content is taught in Spanish, where instruction is delivered in the target language. Many of our students are native Spanish speakers and a substantial minority of our students speak Haitian Creole. Students in our school arrive in the United States from countries such as Bangladesh, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, El Salvador, Haiti, Pakistan, Peru, Guatemala and Venezuela, and these new arrivals enter school speaking a variety of languages including Spanish, French, Haitian-Creole, Urdu and Punjabi.

## **Home Language Support**

The Westbury UFSD is dedicated to supporting students with limited English proficiency. Upon arriving at the school, all students are interviewed and tested for placement in their classes based on their language proficiency as established by New York State. Upon placement of the students according to the New York State Education regulations we provide the required number of hours of English as a New Language service to each student per week. We also offer classes in the students native language to help them develop a strong connection between their Home Language and English. Furthermore, we offer support materials within each of the classrooms and in the library which include

but are not limited to multilingual glossaries, novels, dictionaries and translation materials.

### **Connection to Parents**

Furthermore, in order to support the wider Westbury community and the families of these students we offer many other support systems which include but are not limited to translation services via Propio, multilingual blackboard connect communication messages in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole. We also translate all communications with parents and the community into Spanish and Haitian-Creole. We also have multilingual staff that communicate with parents in their Home Language. Lastly, we promote and respect the languages of the wider community through various multicultural programs that are offered within the building in the various languages of the Westbury Community, along with hosting a variety of multi-linguistic community celebrations and assemblies. At Westbury High School we host world language week, where we have a variety of events and activities that represent the languages that are spoken in the Westbury community. During this week we work with all entities in the building and the community to represent not only the language but the culture behind the language as well.

### **Shared Responsibility**

At Westbury High School all teachers are equally responsible for the language development of students. We must provide students with the opportunity to develop all language skills concurrently and expand their vocabulary and grammar structures range not only in foreign language classes. Therefore, each teacher should bear in mind that they all equally contribute to the language development of their students and should plan the teaching in such a way that addresses both subject content and use of the language. It must be highlighted that language competence will serve not only as a means of further academic study, but also as a means of international, intercultural communication in the future life that the school is preparing its students for. With this in mind, collaborative planning takes place on an ongoing basis to reflect on all students' progress and plan for their individual learning needs. We may not diminish the fact that the responsibility for language development lies also with the students themselves and they are expected to utilize their language learning experiences to the best of their abilities. In addition to these responsibilities:

The Student will:

- Take every opportunity to learn and provides feedback on their learning
- Show interest in learning and participate
- Show respect for teachers and peers
- Take ownership of their learning and seeks help when needed
- Provide feedback and reflection on language learning
- Attend additional language classes if required

The Family will:

- Communicate directly with the learning community regarding their child's language development

- Be informed about their child's language pathways at Westbury High School.
- Be involved in choosing modern languages between French and Spanish.
- Participate in regularly scheduled guidance scheduling meetings to review and finalize their child's language instruction.
- Participate in term scheduled parent meetings with World Language Teachers where student progress is reviewed including reviewing any related report/assessment information.

### **Language (A) Offering**

The administration and faculty at Westbury High School believe that language development lies at the core of all learning. Every subject depends on language to seek, acquire and disseminate knowledge. Furthermore, all New York State High School students are required to complete three years of language instruction to earn a high school diploma. All International Baccalaureate Diploma candidates are required to take Language and Literature HL over two years starting in junior year. All students will also have the option to take the Language and Literature HL course as a "stand-alone" offering allowing for an International Baccalaureate experience. This course is designed to develop students' reading and writing skills through a close study of literature from various periods, genres, cultures and literacy styles. Students are asked to prepare both written and oral persuasive arguments and learn to present their ideas with clarity, coherence and fluency. This course provides students with a global view on literary traditions with differing perspectives from all over the world.

### **Language Acquisition (B) Offering**

At Westbury High School International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme students are required to fulfill the requirements of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme through one of the following offerings:

- ❖ Spanish HL
- ❖ French SL

Furthermore, all students will have the opportunity to take a Language B course in isolation as an International Baccalaureate experience without the full diploma programme. Students who choose not to enter the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme receive instruction in language acquisition, as well as, increase their native language in a variety of courses:

- ❖ Spanish I, II, III,
- ❖ Spanish IV-Pre-AP Spanish
- ❖ AP Spanish
- ❖ French I, II, III, IV and V
- ❖ 9th Grade HLA (Home Language Arts)
- ❖ 10th Grade HLA
- ❖ 11th Grade HLA
- ❖ 12th Grade HLA

### **Extracurricular Clubs and Activities**

Second language development is supported through a variety of after school clubs and events. Westbury High School has a selection of clubs and activities designed to deepen students' intercultural understanding and support their second language learning. Students are able to develop their new language communication skills in a variety of settings:

- ❖ Cultural Navigation Club
- ❖ Newcomers Club
- ❖ Ambassador Club
- ❖ Council for Unity
- ❖ Asian American and Pacific Islanders Heritage Month activities
- ❖ Westbury Student Explorers Association
- ❖ Multicultural Assemblies
- ❖ Hispanic Heritage Month
- ❖ Black History Month
- ❖ World Languages Week
- ❖ CREC - Culturally Responsive Education Committee

### **New York State Seal of Biliteracy**

The New York State Seal of Biliteracy is an award achieved at Westbury High School in accordance with the requirements set by the New York State Department of Education. The school district recognizes students who have studied and achieved proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. The Seal of Biliteracy takes the form of a gold seal that appears on the transcript or diploma of the graduating senior and is a statement of accomplishment for future employers and for college admissions. The Seal of Biliteracy marks the attainment of high level mastery of two or more languages. Students must demonstrate proficiency in both the English language and another language (not necessarily a language provided by our district World Language Department). Proficiency will be measured by use of New York States approved rubric that depicts various pathways for students to receive the seal. Requirements involve a combination of course completion, proficiency on select examinations, and a culminating project involving scholarly essay or portfolio.

### **Equity and Access**

Westbury High School believes that all children learn best when they are challenged by high expectations and given the support to meet those challenges. The school is committed to providing access to all aspects of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme to all students who wish to challenge themselves academically and personally. To support this philosophy the Westbury High School's International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme maintains an open enrollment policy that places no criteria for entrance to the program by grade point average or other testing measures. Although students are required to complete certain pre-requisite courses, we seek to inform all students prior to entering 9th grade of the course requirements to allow them the time and opportunity in the first two years of high school to gain the needed preparation. Once students have enrolled in the programme, the school district commits financial resources to maintain equity and access. All subject and assessment fees are

paid for all International Baccalaureate students regardless of academic or financial standing. In addition, students who need academic support are able to receive extra help via tutorial after-school.

Students who come from homes where a language other than English is spoken are screened to determine if they are eligible to receive English as a New Language (ENL) services. Students who qualify for such services are assigned, in accordance with guidelines established by the NYS Education Department, according to their level of language acquisition as assessed through the NYSESLAT exam each year. While receiving these services, every effort is made to ensure that students have the ability to participate in mainstream classes in English when they are ready. We value the contributions of our ENL students and the contributions they make to the learning process for all students is invaluable. The perspectives on life outside the United States that they share with other students are thought provoking and enhance cultural understanding for all learners. We believe our school's cultural and linguistic diversity is a tremendous asset and we strive to utilize this strength by encouraging access and promoting equity in all of our school's academic programs.

### **Links to other written policies:**

#### **☰ Admissions Policy**

We at Westbury High School maintain an open enrollment policy for our students. We encourage all students to take either the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme or an International Baccalaureate Course as a "Stand alone" experience. We believe that an open enrollment policy contributes to the development of key learner profile attributes among all International Baccalaureate learners. We at Westbury High School pride ourselves on creating learning environments that support all students regardless of their individual differences or language spoken.

#### **☰ Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy**

Westbury High School's Academic Honesty Integrity policy is reviewed with all students before entering the diploma program. Students are informed that in all International Baccalaureate courses their work will be reviewed for originality and analyzed for copied, unreferenced, or improperly cited material in order to educate students about plagiarism and prevent academic misconduct or malpractice.

#### **☰ Inclusion Policy**

Since Westbury High Schools admissions policy is an open enrollment policy, we support the inclusion of all students regardless of special education status or language spoken. Prospective IB diploma candidates with learning disabilities or physical impairments are informed about their rights with regards to accommodations and modifications. They will be provided with testing and other assessment modifications as outlined in their individualized Education Plans (IEP) or 504 plans. If the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) allows for similar accommodations during summative examinations, the students will be provided with them, after formal approval is sought and received. All accommodations provided when special needs students take

International Baccalaureate exams are based on the approved procedures and practices of the International Baccalaureate Organization, which may differ to some extent from the assessment modifications outlined in the students local IEP and 504 Plan.

### **Assessment Policy**

The primary purpose of assessment at Westbury High school is to support student learning. International Baccalaureate teachers at Westbury High School use assessment to inform instructional decisions, to better understand the academic needs of individual students, and to analyze the effectiveness of instruction. Effective teaching will prepare students for both formative and summative assessments which are designed to measure understanding of course aims and objectives. These assessments are used to measure and report student understanding to students, parents and teachers; provide ongoing and consistent feedback to students and teachers; and to guide decisions about instructional content and practice.

### **Language Policy Review Process:**

This policy is a living, breathing document. It has been created using International Baccalaureate support materials, models graciously shared from other International Baccalaureate World Schools, as well as Westbury High School district data and input from stakeholders in the International Baccalaureate learning community. It is an ongoing process that will be systematically reviewed, evaluated and modified as needed by the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme faculty, coordinators and administrators.

\* Last Updated & Reviewed 05/2024