



SCHOOL YEAR  
**2025-26**

# LANGUAGES AT CAISL

## MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

This document aims to provide guidelines for the instruction of language within the school community, ensuring a respectful and culturally sensitive atmosphere. It is a working document that will be regularly reviewed and revised by the language committee on a yearly basis.



## MISSION

CAISL is a student-centered educational community in which we challenge ourselves and each other to do our best and to make positive contributions to our diverse and ever-changing world.

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# MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

## CAISL Mission

### CORE VALUE

CAISL is a student-centered educational community in which we challenge ourselves and each other to do our best and to make positive contributions to our diverse and ever-changing world.

### VALUES STATEMENTS

CAISL is committed to:

- Providing an enriching, varied and effective program of academics, arts, and athletics that inspires learners to strive for individual and collective excellence.
- Promoting life-long learning in a meaningful context through active inquiry, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving.
- Providing a caring and safe environment that supports diverse learner needs.
- Promoting active, responsible local and global citizenship.



### PROFILE OF THE LEARNER

The CAISL community includes everyone who shares an interest in the success of our learners. All members of the community strive to help our learners become:

- Life-Long Learners who reflect upon their experiences and actively seek the knowledge and skills necessary for continuous personal growth.
- Creative Problem Solvers who use a wide variety of resources and strategies to meet life's challenges.
- Effective Communicators who express and interpret ideas using appropriate means.
- Conscientious Contributors who are committed to service, show empathy, and act to make a positive impact on the lives of others.
- Principled Individuals who take responsibility for their choices, act with integrity, and demonstrate respect for themselves, others, and the environment.

As a student-centered school, we value the diversity of our students. This includes the wide range of languages and linguistic capabilities of our multi-national student body. Respect for and curiosity about other cultures and languages is encouraged as a part of lifelong learning and as a response to our "diverse and ever-changing world".

The primary goal of the language program at CAISL is to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment where students can develop strong communication skills and appreciate the value of multilingualism. This document aims to provide guidelines for the instruction of language within the school community, ensuring a respectful and culturally sensitive atmosphere. It is a working document that will be regularly reviewed and revised.

# HOME LANGUAGE & MOTHER TONGUE

CAISL recognizes that preserving one's mother tongue is crucial not only for language development in English, but also for fostering a sense of belonging, cultural pride, and overall well-being. A student's mother tongue serves as the base for cognitive and emotional expression. It is the initial language through which thoughts and feelings are understood and communicated, playing a vital role in shaping cognitive processes. Apart from its linguistic role, a student's mother tongue is linked to their cultural identity, fostering a sense of heritage and community. Proficiency in one's mother tongue not only enhances communication skills but also lays a foundation for learning additional languages.

CAISL aims to support this belief through support of home language opportunities where possible. This can take the form of language clubs after school (when the home language is not offered as part of the curriculum), resources for online language support and tutoring, library materials, translation at parent teacher conferences (as available) and events throughout the school year to celebrate the representation of languages and cultures at CAISL.

# LANGUAGE PROFILE AND ADMISSIONS AT CAISL

The majority of our student body and faculty at CAISL speaks English either as a primary or additional language and are fluent in at least one other language.

The language of instruction and the primary language of communication in the school is English. Therefore, students must demonstrate proficiency in speaking, reading and writing English. English is mandated by the American High School Curriculum, and it is the language of instruction of the curricula of all DP subject groups, except language courses other than English.

For formal documents, American English is used, and many documents are translated and distributed in Portuguese as well.

CAISL admissions will review an applicant's language proficiency during the admissions process. Prior to entrance to Grades 9 through 12, students whose mother tongue is not English and who do not present evidence of taking grade level coursework without language support must undergo language competence testing. Engaging the course content and effectively participating in the IB and Diploma programs at CAISL in Grades 11 and 12 depend on command of academic English. All previous school records must be translated to English for evaluation purposes. Student with some proficiency in Portuguese will take a placement test so that they can continue their studies in Portuguese as an Additional Language at the appropriate level.



## PEDAGOGY AND INSTRUCTION

At CAISL we believe that all teachers are language teachers regardless of the content area they work in. Language is a primary means of learning and communication and the experience of learning a language promotes cohesion among students from various contexts and develops international mindedness. CAISL strongly believes that learning world languages is a fundamental part of becoming a world citizen. Recognizing this, our teachers are expected to support language acquisition and communication skills in their classes. To accomplish this, EAL teachers collaborate through co-planning and co-teaching with subject teachers to share best practices, tools, and materials to support language learning and development across the curriculum.

Additionally, to support this practice, professional development is provided to all teachers on language learning practices through regular training and coaching and professional development workshops. This allows CAISL to maintain an up to date, engaging, and safe setting for language learning, following current trends in language acquisition research, such as promoting translanguaging, building background knowledge, and differentiation.

To guarantee that language instruction is tailored to each learner’s needs, documentation on language profiles and development of each student will be accessible to stakeholders. This information will be used to develop social and academic language skills in English and other languages at all proficiency levels. Student test scores on WIDA and language portfolios will be accessible to teachers on Plus Portals.

The community is dedicated to empowering students to learn and use languages confidently across diverse contexts. It fosters growth in oral and written communication through purposeful assessment, cultivates appreciation and understanding of literary works, encourages the development of diverse perspectives, and supports students in expressing themselves authentically through language.

## ASSESSMENT

Language teachers support, assess and report on language development of their students in a variety of ways at CAISL.

For English Language Learners (ELLs) students take the WIDA MODEL assessment for Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing once or twice a year as needed. EAL teachers may also provide scaffolds and support to student assessments in core classes such as history or science.

All CAISL language teachers assess student language proficiency with a variety of assessments to report on progress and placement.

WIDA scores, as with MAP and report cards, will be shared with families and teachers.



As of fall 2025, the Portuguese Additional Language students in Grade 5 and Grade 8, will do a placement test, to assess their proficiency in Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing.

## LANGUAGE PROGRAMS AT CAISL

### English as an Additional Program (EAL)

Courses and support are offered to support English language learners (Grades 1 through 10). For students who are identified as ELLs in Grades 1 through 10, support is available to help them acquire the language and succeed in their classes. Students will receive this support in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, small group work, additional scaffolds and support materials, immersion, sheltered classes and, when appropriate, monitoring.

The report card will indicate that English Language Learners (ELLs) in Grades 1-10 are still in the process of acquiring the language. When students have English proficiency that allows them to be independent language users in grade-level courses without support they will be considered mainstream and therefore, no longer a part of the EAL program. This is based on evidence through language assessments, class work, and teacher observations.



## Portuguese at CAISL

Any student at CAISL, regardless of proficiency level, can learn Portuguese. Portuguese is offered from EC3/4 through Grade 12. A key component of Portuguese at CAISL is promoting active involvement with the language, history, culture, and society of Lisbon and Portugal's local community.

### LÍNGUA PORTUGUESA (LP) (MOTHER TONGUE PORTUGUESE)

Students with mother tongue Portuguese or equivalent academic level language proficiency will be in Língua Portuguesa classes (LP). Língua Portuguesa courses will develop students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills and explore historical and cultural topics about Portugal and read grade appropriate Portuguese literature.

In Grades 11 and 12 grades, Língua Portuguesa students may continue to study Portuguese in the IB DP, where they will have the opportunity to take Portuguese A: Language and Literature (Academic level Portuguese)/ Portuguese Literature and Composition (11th grade) and Advanced Portuguese Literature and Composition.

### PORTUGUESE AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (PAL)

Students acquiring Portuguese will be in the Portuguese as an Additional Language Program (PAL). PAL Students will develop speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills and explore historical and cultural topics about Portugal. In Grades 11 and 12 grade PAL students have the option to take Portuguese B (Language Acquisition with some knowledge of the language required)/ Advanced Portuguese Language.

## Additional Language Learning at CAISL

Students will have the opportunity to learn an additional language from Grades 7-12. Current course offerings are Spanish, Portuguese, and French (Beginning in Grade 9, CAISL offers online course offerings which include Latin, Chinese and American Sign Language (ASL). Students in grade 11 and 12 can take entry level language courses (ab initio or Language B for IB) in the languages of French and Spanish. This aim is in recognition that learning new languages is crucial to cultural diversity, global and international mindedness.

## LEARNING SUPPORT

Our school is committed to inclusive language practices that support students with both EAL and learning support needs. We recognize the unique challenges these learners face and aim to provide equitable access to the curriculum through differentiated instruction, visual supports, and culturally responsive teaching. The differentiation strategies recognize that students come to class with different backgrounds, levels of readiness, learning preferences and interests. Collaboration between EAL specialists, learning support staff, and classroom teachers ensures targeted interventions, and is fundamental to meet each individual student's needs, ensuring that they receive the right support to reach their full potential.

## PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

Parents and the wider community play a vital role in supporting the language development of students. We value partnerships with families to promote bilingualism and cultural identity, encouraging the use of home languages alongside English. Open communication between school and home ensures consistent support and shared strategies. Community involvement, including cultural events and multilingual resources, enhances student engagement and belonging. We actively seek input from parents to shape inclusive practices and recognize their insights as essential to each learner's success. Together, we create a supportive, language-rich environment that nurtures every child's growth.



# ADDENDUM

## Communication of Language Guidelines to Community

These guidelines will be shared with the community through parent meetings, the school website, and the normal communication channels for Faculty. If needed, Faculty will also engage with families during conferences and workshops to explain the guidelines and encourage active collaboration.

### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Administration

- Approve the school's official language guidelines aligned with its mission and values.
- Determine the languages of instruction, communication, and assessment.
- Access data and feedback related to language learning outcomes and use.
- Allocate resources for language learning (e.g., staffing, materials, training).
- Make final decisions on staff hiring and professional development related to language needs.
- Ensure the language guidelines are inclusive, clearly documented, and regularly reviewed.
- Communicate the guidelines effectively to all stakeholders (students, staff, parents).
- Support multilingualism and respect for linguistic diversity within the school.
- Provide appropriate support for students with additional language needs (e.g., EAL/ESL programs).
- Offer professional development for teachers on implementing the language guidelines.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of language instruction and support systems.

#### Teachers

- Receive clear guidance on the school's language expectations and policies.
- Access support and resources for teaching in a multilingual/multicultural environment.
- Participate in professional development related to language teaching and language acquisition.
- Be included in guidelines discussions and have their input considered.
- Adapt instruction to match guidelines, to meet student language needs.
- Implement CAISL's language guidelines in the classroom and school activities.
- Foster a respectful, inclusive environment for all language backgrounds.
- Support students in developing both academic and social language proficiency.
- Collaborate with colleagues to ensure consistency in language use and support.
- Identify and refer students with language learning challenges or needs.
- Promote the development of students' home languages alongside the language(s) of instruction when appropriate.

# GUIDELINES REVIEW PROCESS AND COMMUNICATION

To ensure that the Language policy remains appropriate and according to CAISL and the IB Guidelines, it will be reviewed annually according to the below timeline:

August – September	October – December	January – March	April – May
IBDP Coordinator, Principal, and teacher committee review guidelines	Suggested changes discussed and agreed with teachers	Changes finalized and confirmed by SMT	Updated guidelines for upcoming year

These guidelines are available to all stakeholders on our school website and all school publications.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**English Language Learners (ELLs)** Students who are receiving extra support to access the curriculum and acquire English skills they need.

**Translanguaging** Allowing students to use their entire linguistic repertoire

