

# **Thornton Township High School Language Policy**

**Last updated August, 2025**

## **I. Language Overview**

The IB Diploma Programme (DP) requires students to study at least two languages, achieving proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in both their mother tongue and a second language.

Language is central to all learning. It encompasses skills in literacy as well as the ability to derive meaning. Developing students' proficiency in their mother tongue supports personal growth and emotional well-being. Mastering a second language is vital for success across all levels of the IB programmes. Communication in multiple languages is fundamental to the concept of an international education, a core principle of IB practice.

The IB learner profile defines a communicator as someone who can confidently and creatively express ideas and information in more than one language.

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## **II. Language Philosophy**

We believe language forms the foundation for all learning, which is why every teacher is also a language teacher. Mastery of more than one language is essential for an international education, fostering cultural and intercultural understanding. Through language, all students acquire knowledge and develop skills to succeed. Language acquisition is vital for learning, thinking, and communication, enabling students to become global citizens.

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## **III. Language Beliefs**

- The ability to communicate effectively in multiple languages is fundamental to international education and promotes intercultural understanding.
- Providing opportunities and resources to support language proficiency for all learners is essential.
- Students will receive learning experiences in both their mother tongue and a second language.
- Language learning experiences will be tailored to meet the needs of each student, with varying levels of complexity.
- Ongoing assessments of language acquisition will be conducted, with feedback provided to both students and parents on progress.
- Differentiated instruction will be used to accommodate individual language learning needs.

- The school is responsible for identifying and addressing the language needs of each student.
  - Consideration will be given to the needs of students learning in a language other than their mother tongue.
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## **IV. Language Profiles**

### **IB Diploma Programmes**

- Focus on the distinct disciplinary role of language.
  - Create a supportive environment for students who do not speak the language of instruction.
1. Provide literacy support to maintain high expectations for all learners.
  2. Supply resources and materials in students' mother tongue languages, and select works from the prescribed book list for the chosen language, or the Prescribed World Literature List (PWL), which applies to all languages.
  3. Students will study subjects in the language of instruction, except for Group 1 and Group 2 subjects. All teachers recognize their role as both subject specialists and language instructors.
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## **V. Language of Instruction**

At the start of each school year, all IB Programme team members will be introduced to the language policy. The policy will be reviewed during the school improvement cycle to ensure it remains up-to-date and reflects feedback from current stakeholders. Teachers, staff, students, and parents are committed to fostering high-quality language opportunities for all students.

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## **VI. Language Options**

All IB DP students will have the option to take ab initio Spanish or French. This option is designed for students who have not previously studied a foreign language. Students wishing to take four years of a foreign language may choose a different language during their first and second years of high school.

## **VII. Native Speakers**

The IB DP values the linguistic and cultural richness that native speakers bring to the learning environment. Special consideration is given to ensure that their language skills are appropriately challenged and developed.

- **Language Ab Initio:** Native speakers of Spanish or French will be required to enroll in the ab initio course for the language they do not speak as their mother tongue. This ensures they are placed in a course that provides an appropriate level of challenge.
- **Language and Literature:** Native speakers will be enrolled in the IB Language and Literature course, which not only enhances their skills in a second language but also enriches their experience with literature in their native language.
- **Support for Non-Native Learners:** Native speakers are encouraged to mentor and collaborate with peers learning the language as a second language. This fosters an inclusive and supportive environment that strengthens intercultural understanding.
- **Assessment Considerations:** For native speakers, assessments are designed to challenge their advanced language abilities. These assessments focus on higher-level critical thinking, analysis, and the application of language in various contexts. Care is taken to ensure native speakers are assessed in ways that reflect their advanced understanding of the language, while also promoting continued personal growth and new learning.

Native speakers are integral to promoting a linguistically diverse learning environment, and their unique perspectives help enrich the international and intercultural aims of the IB Programme.

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