



# **Mountain View High School**

## **IB Language Policy**

updated 2021

## Key Terms in this Document

**Language A** refers to an IB course in language and literature in the student's native-language, mother-tongue, or language of preference.

**Language B** refers to an IB course in language acquisition, the learning of a second language.

**Higher Level (HL)** refers to a course with a minimum of 240 instructional hours and often with additional IB assessments or IB assessments that measure greater depth of understanding.

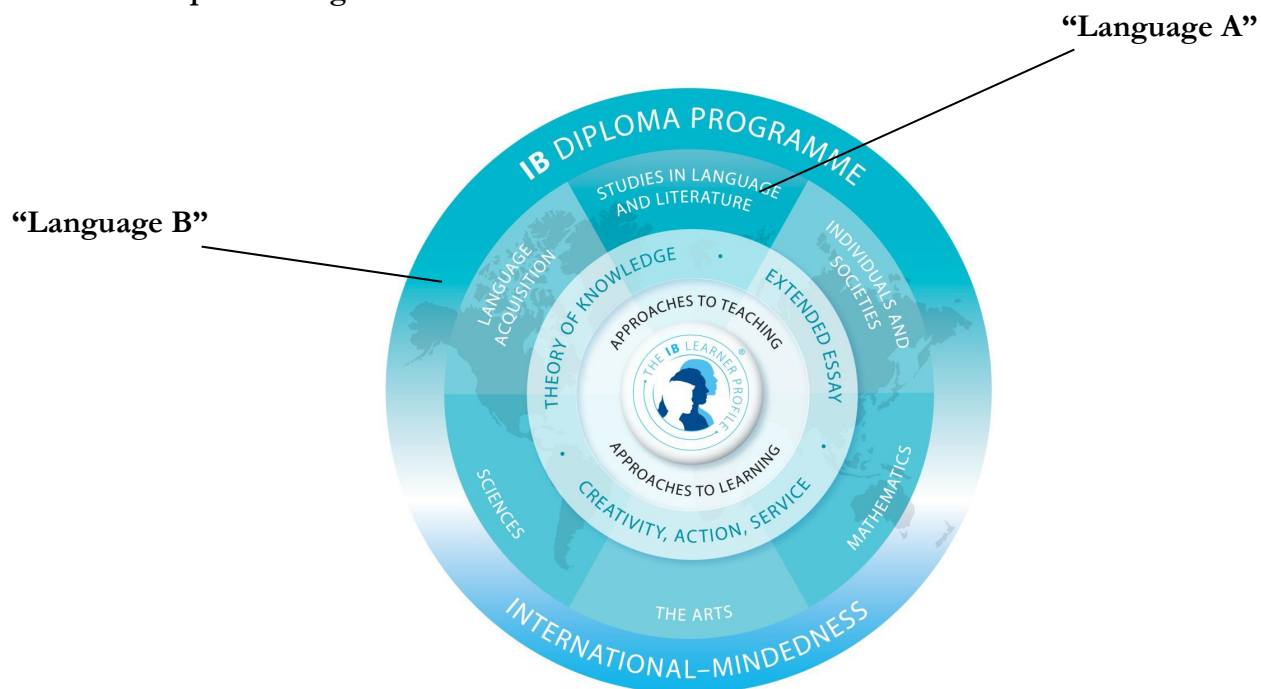
**Standard Level (SL)** refers to a course with a minimum of 150 instructional hours.

**Language of Instruction** refers to the language this school has registered as the primary language for classroom instruction (English).

**Mother-tongue** describes the language that students use at home and/or outside of the classroom environment. Other phrases for this concept are *first-language*, *home language*, *preferred language*, *native language*, *heritage language*, or *best language*.

**Bilingual** refers to an individual who demonstrates near-equal competence in two languages.

## The IB Diploma Program Model



## **Language Philosophy**

At MVHS, we believe that:

- Language is a primary means of communicating and learning.
- The acquisition of language is a life-long process and is a central component of intellectual and personal growth.
- Proficiency earned in one language is transferable to other languages, and language proficiency aids the student in acquiring competencies in other curricular areas.
- Language is an expression of culture and must be valued as an integral part of a student's identity.
- The development of the mother-tongue language is critical for maintaining one's cultural identity.
- Language learning promotes internationalism and multicultural understanding.
- Language learning must be fostered in all aspects of the school community.
- All teachers are language teachers.
- Teachers must strive to recognize the language needs of all students and work to serve these needs within and outside of the classroom.
- Equity of access to IB courses is a fundamental right of all students.

## **Aims**

At MVHS, our language programs aim to:

- Enable students to learn and use language effectively, appropriately, accurately, and confidently.
- Develop students' powers of oral and written communication.
- Enable students to develop and use language skills in a variety of contexts and purposes.
- Promote the appreciation, understanding, and analysis of literature.
- Encourage students to explore language as a means to understand the differing perspectives of people from other cultures.
- Develop students' awareness of the role of language in other areas of the curriculum and to other ways of knowing.
- Provide an opportunity for enjoyment, creativity, and intellectual stimulation through knowledge of language and literature.

## **IB Language Offerings at MVHS**

The language of instruction at MVHS is English. All classes, with the exception of Language B classes, are conducted in English. Every Diploma Programme student takes one subject from Group 1 and at least one subject from Group 2. Choice of language level in each group depends upon the student's preference, level of proficiency and literacy in that language, and his/her overall program of study.

Students in Stafford County Public Schools may begin studying a second language at the secondary level in eighth grade; students who elect to do so earn credit toward their high school diplomas and quality points toward their GPAs during the eighth grade year. These students may be taught at their base middle schools or transported to a nearby SCPS high school to receive second language instruction, depending on staffing availability and course demand. Typically, these students take three year-long course levels of a second language (for example: Spanish 1, Spanish 2, Spanish 3) before beginning IB coursework in that second language as a high school junior.

### **Group 1**

MVHS currently offers Language and Literature HL in English as the only classroom-based opportunities for Language A.

On a case-by-case basis and as need arises, MVHS will allow students the opportunity to register for Language and Literature SL in English. Due to MVHS student body make-up and lack of demand, it is not feasible to create a separate course for SL students in English. Any English SL candidates will take part in the HL class and the teacher(s) will differentiate instruction and assessments to meet their needs. Language A “School-Supported Self-Taught” at Standard Level is available to students at MVHS. To date, no student has chosen this option for Language A. MVHS will continue to inform students about this option, as appropriate to individual student needs (see *Mother-Tongue Instruction* on the following page).

### **Group 2**

MVHS offers French B SL, German B SL, Latin B SL, and Spanish B SL as Language B classes. On a case-by-case basis and as need arises, MVHS allows the opportunity for students with higher levels of proficiency and interest to register for Language B HL in these languages. In these cases, teacher(s) differentiate their instruction and assessments within the SL classroom to meet the needs of these candidates.

## **Extra-Curricular Language and Culture Opportunities**

The following clubs are available to all MVHS students to enrich experiences in mother-tongue languages, second languages or additional languages, with the aim of increasing cultural awareness and international-mindedness:

- French Club
- German Club
- Spanish Club
- Latin Club
- Spanish Honor Society
- American Sign Language Club
- Amnesty International
- Interact Club
- Model United Nations

## **Mother-Tongue Instruction**

MVHS acknowledges the importance of the maintenance of mother tongue development. Maintaining the mother tongue has the following benefits:

- enabling the students to remain in touch with, and maintain esteem for the language, literature and culture of their home country
- facilitating readjustment to life in the home community and education system should they return to their home country
- facilitating the learning of a second language
- ensuring continuous cognitive development (in parallel with reaching competence in the second language) and additive bilingualism
- increasing intercultural awareness and understanding

### **Determining Mother-Tongue Language Provision**

In order to determine the best option for Language A instruction for a student, Mountain View High School employs the flowchart provided on page 25 of the IB document *Guidance for the Support of Mother Tongue in the Diploma Programme* (see appendix). It should be noted that all students that have gone through the IB Diploma Program at MVHS to date have identified as either having English as the mother-tongue or as being equally competent in both a mother-tongue other than English as well as English. Though the option has been provided to students who have a mother tongue other than English, no student to date has expressed a preference to pursue Language A as School-Supported Self-Study in a mother-tongue other than English.

The majority of MVHS IB Diploma students who speak a mother-tongue other than English indicate that mother-tongue to be Spanish. These students typically opt to take Language A HL in English and Language B HL in Spanish. In order to ensure that our Spanish-speaking population is better served in terms of appropriate rigor and challenge, and to open the IB Diploma Program to a wider segment of the student population, MVHS is currently in the process of adding Spanish Language A SL. This will provide more rigor and growth in Spanish for students with that mother-tongue; it will also allow those students who identify as bilingual in Spanish-English to pursue the IB Bilingual Diploma.

In individual student cases where MVHS cannot provide direct instruction in a mother-tongue language through Language A as a class, the school will seek to support students and their families in mother-tongue maintenance by such mechanisms as:

- allowing diploma programme students to enroll in a school-supported self-taught Language A as feasible, appropriate, and necessary
- encouraging students to take advantage of MVHS independent study opportunities in the mother-tongue language, with the guidance and assistance of the Focus program teacher – supported by both online and traditional language-learning materials
- providing guidance for provision of specialists in mother tongue instruction (as part of self-taught courses or independent study)
- developing library resources in a range of languages used by students
- engaging students in reflections involving the use of their mother tongue and home culture across the curriculum

### **Practices and Resources**

Mountain View High School has many practices and resources in place to involve parents in the planning of their student's language profile and development.

- All students have an annual conference with their guidance counselor, where student progress in current courses is evaluated and planning for future courses is achieved. Parents are encouraged to review course curriculum with students and discuss future courses. Translators are available to facilitate communication between families and school staff when necessary. Parent Teacher Student Conferences are held two times annually. Parents are also encouraged and invited to make an appointment with their student's teacher or counselor at any time during the school year.
- STAMP scores are available when applicable to parents and students. These scores are used to evaluate student language progress and proficiency to determine proper class placement. Teachers are available to discuss scores and class placement with parents.

## MVHS Counseling Procedures for Potential IB Students with a Mother-Tongue other than English

This procedure is NOT restricted to full IB Diploma students. It should be used for any student who is high-achieving, personally-motivated and may want to study a language other than English as an IB Language A.

<b>STEP 1</b>	Determine whether the student has a “mother-tongue” that is spoken at home and outside the school environment.
<b>STEP 2</b>	Determine whether the student is interested in pursuing the mother-tongue as an IB Language A option in order to “develop language skills and affirm cultural identity” in that native language.
<b>STEP 3</b>	Refer the student to the IB DP Coordinator by emailing her with the student’s name, grade, and mother-tongue language.

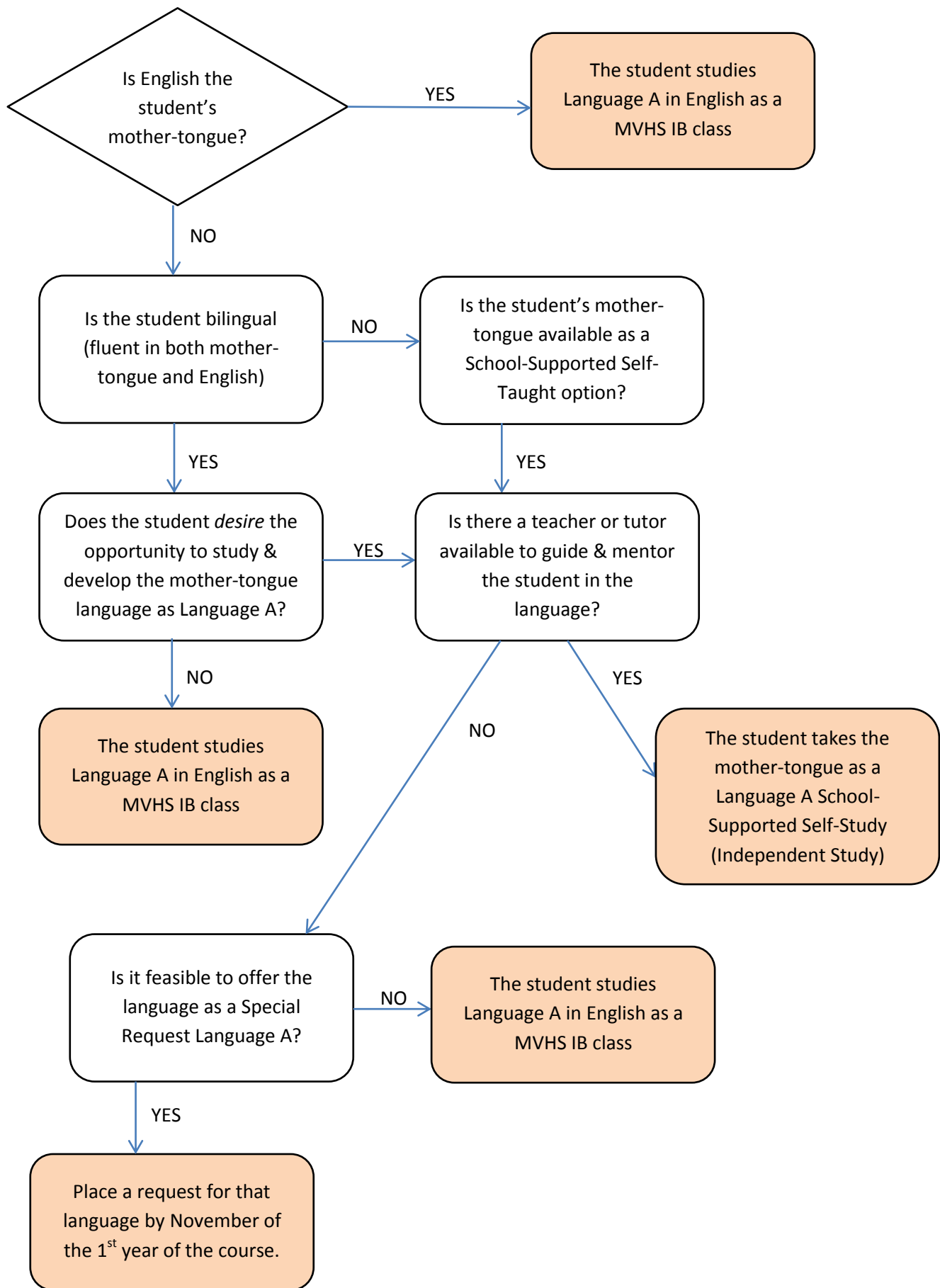
### What will happen next:

1. In conjunction with the ESL Specialist, the IB DP Coordinator will determine whether the student’s level of fluency in the mother-tongue is sufficient to be successful in IB-level study in terms of all relevant language areas (speaking, reading, writing, spoken interaction, spoken production).
2. The IB DP Coordinator will determine whether it is feasible to offer the student his or her mother-tongue language as a *Language A School-Supported Self-Taught* option (SL) as an independent study (using the flowchart attached).

### Special Note about Full IB Diploma Students:

Most MVHS IB DP students take Language A English HL and Language B SL in another language.

Full IB Diploma students who study Language A in English (HL) as well as another language (SL) can earn the IB *Bilingual* Diploma. These students do NOT then need to take an additional Language B.



## Limited English Proficiency

MVHS supports and adheres to the philosophy and mission statement of the Stafford County Public Schools ESL Program, outlined on the SPCS website as follows:

### We believe that:

- All children in Stafford County schools should have the opportunity to develop full proficiency in English.
- Language minority students are “resource persons” who bring a special and highly desired combination of knowledge, experiences, and skills to their classrooms, peers, and schools.
- Students learning through ESL should be provided with specialized language preparation that will enable them to participate effectively in academic programs and achieve the same high standards as their English-speaking classmates.

### Therefore we:

- Provide comprehensive instruction in English as a second language for linguistically diverse students, which prepares them to handle content area material in English.
- Seek opportunities to develop appreciation of LEP students’ languages and cultures in mainstream classrooms.
- Provide professional development opportunities for both ESL and other classroom teachers that prepare them to facilitate the language and academic growth of linguistically and culturally different children.
- Collaborate with content area teachers to ensure that instruction is academically challenging, but also is tailored to the linguistic proficiency, educational background and academic needs of student.
- Facilitate home-school communication.
- Direct the identification of students who qualify for ESL instruction.
- Monitor academic achievement and make recommendations for placement of students in general academic programs.
- Serve as advocates for LEP students.

## All Teachers are Language Teachers

The 2012-2013 *MVHS School Improvement Plan* includes the following explicit shared goal: “The classroom teacher will implement literacy strategies in their curricular areas,” under the following philosophical rationale:

*Literacy is a school-wide endeavor; therefore, the incorporation of literacy strategies is important to all curricular areas.*

Toward that end, the following practices/strategies have been put into place at MVHS to reinforce that each teacher is, in effect, a language teacher:

- Teachers in all curricular areas and classrooms employ literacy strategies, in addition to a school-wide root program facilitated by the school literacy specialist. Each major classroom assessment includes a reading comprehension selection that employs higher level Bloom’s questions and a written essay assessed by a common rubric.
- School-wide, all students complete a grade-level reading diagnostic test. Scores are posted on a staff shared drive to provide access to all teachers to facilitate remediation and differentiation.



## Language Policy Steering Committee

Ms. Camila Cazon-Guzman, student  
Mr. Matthew Bello, MVHS Spanish teacher  
Ms. Theresa Gaddy, MVHS IB Diploma Program Coordinator

### Roles and Responsibilities of the Steering Committee

The MVHS IB Diploma Coordinator is responsible for assembling the Steering Committee, informing the committee of regulations regarding the IB Diploma Program as it relates to language learning and teaching, disseminating relevant IB documents pertaining to the formation and/or revision of a Language Policy (see box inset), and creating a timeline for review and revision of the MVHS IB Language Policy.

All members of the Steering Committee are responsible for reading relevant IB documents related to the formation and/or revision of a Language Policy and evaluating the current MVHS IB Language Policy document in light of these documents, the current school Language Profile, and community input.

### The Language Policy as a Working Document

The MVHS IB Language Policy is to be considered a working document that is reviewed and revised every five years in conjunction with the school's IB self-study review cycle or more frequently if changes in the school's student population make-up or IB course offerings dictate review and revision.

### Communicating the Language Policy

The MVHS Language Policy is available to all current and prospective students and families as part of the comprehensive MVHS IB web site; this site serves as the MVHS IB "Handbook" for potential and current IB Diploma Program Students.

[<https://www.staffordschools.net/domain/2807>]

#### IB Documents Related to the MVHS IB Language Policy

*Guidance for the Support of Mother  
Tongue in the Diploma Programme*

*Learning in a Language Other Than  
the Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*

*Guidelines for Developing a School  
Language Policy*

*Guidelines for School Self-Reflection on  
Its Language Policy*

*Language & Learning in  
IB Programmes*