



**St. Louis Park  
High School**

**IB Diploma Program**

Language Policy



## **Contents**

St. Louis Park School District Mission Statement - 2

International Baccalaureate Mission Statement - 2

Philosophy - 2 - 3

General Language Requirements - 3

Language A - 3 - 4

Language B - 4

Language Development & Support Across the Curriculum - 4

Parents and Community - 4

Policy Revision Process - 5

Bibliography - 5

## **St. Louis Park School District Mission**

The St. Louis Park Schools' mission states: "As a caring, diverse community with a tradition of putting its children first, we will ensure all students attain their highest level of achievement; prepare all students to contribute to society; offer high quality opportunities for lifelong learning; provide multiple pathways to excellence; challenge all learners to meet high standards; and provide a safe and nurturing environment that energizes and enhances the spirit" (ISD 283).

## **International Baccalaureate Mission**

The International Baccalaureate Mission states: "The International Baccalaureate® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right" (IBO, 2013, p. i).

## **Philosophy**

Since language is the foundation for all learning, it is stressed that all teachers at St. Louis Park High School, independent of the subject area taught, are language teachers. Language learning refers not only to the acquisition of a second or third language, but also an understanding and appreciation of other cultures through international mindedness.

St. Louis Park High School values the preservation of a student's mother tongue(s). It is believed that a student's confidence and competence in their native language correlates with academic success and the ability to acquire a second language. St. Louis Park High School is very proud of its cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. It sees this tapestry of cultures as reflective of the society in which students are preparing to work and live.

A teacher's role in the classroom is not only to facilitate growth and proficiency in another language, but also to open students' minds to the interconnectedness of other cultures. In other words, a goal is to foster international mindedness. St. Louis Park High School values the acquisition of a second language and perceives it as a vehicle for students to gain an understanding and respect for other cultures.

As of 2018, 3.3% of Junior and Senior students were identified as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP). St. Louis Park High School supports these students through providing English Language Learner classes as well as Reading, Writing and Math support courses through level two. In 2017, 4 (of 37) LEP students took 5 IB courses.

## **General Language Requirements**

All students are expected to complete four years of English coursework while at St. Louis Park High School, a grade 9-12 building. Students are also highly encouraged to take at least two years of second language instruction. Students, especially those who are four-year college bound, are encouraged to take a full four years of second language instruction. Those students taking IB coursework take four years of a second language.

## **Language A**

The St. Louis Park High School offers IB Language A: Literature Higher Level in English and IB Language A: Language and Literature Standard Level in both English as well as Spanish. Those students who attend our district Spanish Immersion Elementary school enter ninth grade in Spanish level VII or higher, and continue to take Language & Literature Standard Level in Spanish. Historically, some native Spanish speakers also take Spanish Language & Literature Standard Level. In 2010, though, none of the 37 LEP students took the course. Many students

who take Language A Spanish also take IB Literature HL or Language & Literature SL in English concurrently.

## **Language B**

All of the advanced world languages, including IB Language B, are taught in an immersion environment, in which the teacher uses very little English. The courses offered are French, German, Hebrew and Spanish. Language B Hebrew is offered at Standard Level, while the others are offered in Standard Level as well as Higher Level. In each of the Language B courses, students learn to read, communicate and perfect grammar skills in both oral and written forms.

## **Language Development & Support Across the Curriculum**

The primary language of instruction at St. Louis Park High School is English. Those courses outside of Group One and Group Two courses are provided in English. It is the school's desire that all graduates be proficient in the nation's dominant language.

It is required by the State of Minnesota that to retain a teaching license, teachers must have one hour of Reading Strategies and one hour of English Language Learner training every five years (2016). Additionally, we have a goal that all IB teachers are trained on differentiated instruction and scaffolded instructional practices.

## **Parents and Community**

The primary language of communication with parents and community is in English. There are supports available to call families with a translator or to have documents that are sent out translated in primarily Spanish and Somali. Additionally, there is a translate function on the district webpage.

## **Policy Revision Process**

Document revised May, 2017 with input from J. Magdal, S. Meyers.

Initial writing: May, 2017 with input from H. Cosgrove, J. Magdal, S. Meyers, K. Schwietering, and K. Sweeney.

Document will be reviewed annually at the end of the school year by a committee of staff volunteers.

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