

# **Hartsfield Magnet School for International Studies**

## **Language Policy**

**Established November 2022**

### **School Vision**

Members of the Hartsfield School community are committed to becoming self-directed, life-long learners in a nurturing environment, which fosters connections, relationships, safety, high expectations, responsibility and respect for others.

### **School Mission**

Hartsfield is a diverse School Family that embraces change.

We are committed to providing a rigorous and equitable educational experience. It is our responsibility to produce students who are agents for their learning and are safe to grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

To this end, we seek to facilitate an inquiry-based instructional delivery model that encourages collaboration and problem-solving. We promote international mindedness by developing the ability to connect with others in the interest of acting with compassion and serving the global community.

### **Introduction & Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to communicate to all stakeholders in our IB community – administrators, teachers, students, and parents – the programme expectations for assessment for all learners as required by International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). This document also provides clear guidelines and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

At Hartsfield Magnet School for International Studies, we believe that language is central to learning. All instructional staff members are language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication. Learning a language is part of forming one's own identity, exploring thoughts and having an awareness of the thoughts and identity of others. It is, therefore, key to our personal, cognitive and cultural development. Language is used to communicate our needs, feelings, ideas and experiences as well as understanding others. We do this by appreciating, exploring, and reflecting on our ability to express ourselves using a variety of forms including literacy, math, science & technology, the humanities, visual and performing arts. Language, in all its forms and in all systems, is the fundamental way we learn about ourselves, about others and the world around us.

Specifically,

The IB Primary Years Programme (PYP):

- Promotes inquiry-based authentic language learning
- Focuses on the transdisciplinary nature of language learning

- Incorporates the teaching and learning of language into the Programme of Inquiry
- Develops and interrelates the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media literacy
- Provides for the teaching and learning of a second language

### **IB Learner Profile Attributes**

All members of the school community are language learners and strive to be:

Inquirers - One who possesses the skills to conduct inquiry and work independently,

Principled - One who approaches language acquisition with integrity,

Open-minded - One who is open to languages and opinions,

Risk taker - One who has the initiative to explore a new language,

Communicators - One who can express ideas and concepts clearly and articulately in the target language,

Reflective - One who thoughtfully considers strengths and weaknesses in language,

Knowledgeable - One who seeks knowledge about other cultures and their languages,

Thinkers - One who approaches a new language critically and creatively,

Caring - One who demonstrates empathy, compassion and respect towards others and their mother tongue language,

Balanced - One who achieves personal wellbeing through language acquisition.

### **Definitions**

At Hartsfield Magnet School for International Studies, we value all languages and encourage the development of all forms of language communication in our effort to promote the international-mindedness of the students and adults in the school community.

**Language A-** The language in which the student has the highest level of proficiency

**Language B-** The language learned at school

**Mother Tongue-** The language learned first and/or the language identified as the primary language spoken at home

**Multilingualism-** Complex, rich, dynamic language portraits that include a range of abilities or proficiencies in more than one language

### **Practices**

**Language A** – Primary language of instruction; English.

We believe oral, written, and visual language permeates the whole curriculum. Language is the medium through which the entire curriculum is taught and learned. It facilitates communication

and incorporates the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and media literacy. There is a reciprocal relationship between using inquiry to facilitate language and using language to facilitate inquiry. All students are provided a safe, nurturing, language-rich environment that supports learning as well as social and emotional development, and well-being. Our school community benefits from access to different cultures, perspectives, and languages, which increase cultural awareness and international-mindedness. We value and encourage students to respect the language, literature, and culture of their home country. We strive to create a caring language community in which all students feel accepted and supported, thereby feeling confident to be risk-takers.

To add complexity to the student experience, all teachers are viewed and expected to maintain certain literacy standards with their course work. All staff members hold students accountable to proper grammar and structure, both written and verbal in everyday interactions. Teacher tools and strategies evaluate student language acquisition. The criterion used to assess students' language development is consistent across subject areas to reinforce the idea that all subjects are connected and skills cross boundaries.

Language protocols include:

#### Spelling and Vocabulary

- Common American spelling protocols such as Webster's are acceptable.
- Academic strategies in place for all students to augment vocabulary – including word walls, flash cards, vocabulary teaching stations, and non-linguistic representations.
- Thoughts expressed in complete sentences. This pursuit acts to ensure students understand that language acquisition and usage influences every aspect of development and college readiness. In order to achieve our aims, teachers will:
  - Model and teach the correct use of language
  - Teach language in context and address the following modalities: listening, speaking, reading, writing, presenting, and viewing according to the Florida Standards and the IB Approaches to Learning, especially communication skills
  - Provide a variety of learning experiences to ensure balance and progression in the acquisition of language
  - Differentiate activities to meet children's language needs
  - Expose children to new and stimulating vocabulary linked to PYP Units of Inquiry encouraging them to use this to develop listening, speaking, reading, writing, presenting, and viewing skills.
  - Create an atmosphere of acceptance and respect of cultural differences.
  - Incorporate and apply literacy throughout the day through meaningful tasks in authentic contexts.

- Recognize and respect the different ways in which students express themselves including mother tongue development.

### **Language B** – language acquisition taught at school; Spanish

Currently the world language of instruction at Hartsfield Magnet School for International Studies is Spanish. The fluent-speaking Spanish teacher provides learners (K-5) with forty-five minutes of Spanish instruction once a week. Students are encouraged to use Spanish in a variety of contexts to reinforce the importance of learning a second language by providing opportunities to communicate with the school community and share language knowledge with their families. It is understood that reinforcing, supporting, and extending classroom work is an important role for the additional language teacher.

**Mother Tongue** - The language learned first and/or the language identified as the primary language spoken at home.

We believe that recognizing and supporting our students' mother tongue languages is crucial to their development. The role of parents is vital in ensuring a positive approach to the development of languages. The school expects parents to value their home language(s), as home language proficiency and maintenance are essential in the acquisition of additional languages. Appropriate support with English at home is also an essential part of the children's success both for English and non-English speaking families. In order to support students who speak a language other than English, all teachers with ESOL learners in their classrooms are required to be ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) endorsed or certified.

**Multilingualism**- Complex, rich, dynamic language portraits that include a range of abilities or proficiencies in more than one language

As Hartsfield Magnet School for International Studies becomes a more multi-cultural campus, students identified as multilingual are being recognized and welcomed. Students are encouraged to share their language knowledge and culture with the school community through classroom and school-wide special events.

### **School Student Language Profile**

Languages spoken at Hartsfield: English (94.5%), Spanish (2.8%), and Other (2.7%) [Gujarati, Tagalog (Philippines), Kosraean, French Creole, and Arabic].

Approximately 5% of student population are Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students.

### **Identification of ESOL Language Needs**

Learners are identified through the Home Language survey during the registration process. If parents indicate any language other than English is spoken at home, learners are tested using the WIDA Screener tool. The WIDA screener assesses learner listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills at a grade-appropriate level and determines if learners qualify for ESOL program and also the placement of the learner within the ESOL program.

Identified ELL's in the ESOL program are administered the ACCESS for ELL's test during the spring semester to test their current levels of language acquisition. ACCESS for ELL's has 4 components: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Scores from ACCESS are used to determine placement and if any additional supports are needed.

### **Ongoing Review of Language Policy**

The Language Policy is a working document, which requires ongoing review and revision based on the needs of the student population at Hartsfield Magnet School for International Studies. The pedagogical leadership team, composed of administrators, the IB coordinator, the reading coach, and teachers will review the Language Policy annually. Feedback from all invested parties will be taken into consideration and subsequent revisions will be completed each year by the end of September. The updated policy will be shared with all staff during an IB Professional Learning Community and with the PTO and SAC during a given meeting. The final document will be posted on the school's website.