Manheim Township International Baccalaureate Language Policy

Language is integral to identity, which in turn determines how a person will act. A mother tongue and any other languages used in constructing meaning are intimately connected to a person’s relationship with the world and how they come to feel about that world. (*Learning in a Language other than the Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*, p. 8)

Facility in linguistic expression is foundational to academic success, and both the International Baccalaureate Organization and the Manheim Township School District are committed to fostering fluency as students progress through their course of study. This policy outlines the Manheim Township International Baccalaureate approach to Language Instruction with the aim of supporting the cultivation of fluency in our students.

Because fluency in language comprehension and production is the basis of all learning, all teachers share the responsibility of fostering the acquisition of linguistic skills. Language development takes place daily in classroom discussion and formal and informal composition, and is assessed and monitored in all subjects through the use of formal and informal assessments including oral and written language production.

While the language of instruction in our school district is English, our students come to the classroom from diverse backgrounds and diverse linguistic experiences. Some native English speakers have had their primary year instructions in Spanish through our school district’s Spanish Immersion Program. Some speak multiple languages, some come to English as a second language. For students who are English Learners (EL), our English Language Development department offers support services, and classroom teachers collaborate with ELD specialists to adapt instruction and assessment according to individual students’ English Language Learner Profile, which is developed on an individualized basis with support from the ELD department.

The International Baccalaureate Programme at Manheim Township High School actively encourages students to develop fluency in multiple languages and does not assume that the school’s language of instruction (English) is the student’s native or first language. The program actively fosters multilingualism, and supports students who are learning English as a second language while pursuing the IB diploma. All IB Diploma Programme students are required to study a minimum of two languages, typically English and a second language (French, German, or Spanish). Most IB diploma candidates study their second language (French, German, or Spanish) at higher level over two years.

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