



THE ROCK SCHOOL

A Foundation *for* Flourishing

LANGUAGE POLICY

The Rock School Vision Statement

The vision of The Rock School is to make disciples of Jesus who possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to courageously cooperate with God in the work of redeeming the world.

IB Mission Statement

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.

The Rock School IB Language Philosophy

Christianity holds that God created the heavens and the earth with language. He spoke the very world into existence with His words (Genesis 1). The New Testament writers described His incarnate son Jesus as “the Word of God” (John 1). We believe that language is powerful (Proverbs 18:21).

Education, like faith, is lacking without language. Language is the vehicle by which teaching and learning take place. The formation of our intellect, our soul, and our spirit are rooted in our written and spoken communications. In the beginning, God created with His words. Humanity carries this same power. We use language in the various disciplines in order that we might fulfill our creative vision to “courageously cooperate with God in the work of redeeming the world” and reshape our local and global communities for good.

The staff of The Rock School believes that the language and literacy skills of our students are of the utmost importance. Language skills underlie a student's ability to succeed across the curriculum and are the main tool of learning.

In order to ensure that students are maximizing their learning potential, we must therefore:

- Acknowledge that all teachers are language teachers who are responsible for facilitating communication and integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum.
- Require students to be proficient in the acquisition of a second language.
- Maintain appropriate conditions and practices to support learners who are not using their mother tongue to access the IB programme. For example, English as a Second Language interventions exist for students who are not native English speakers.
- Require students to take four years of English as part of their standard curriculum. In addition, we encourage students to read and write outside of the school environment. In other curricular areas (world languages notwithstanding) all instruction and materials are in English.
- Be committed to providing all staff (teachers, support roles, administrators, etc.) with the necessary professional development to increase their efficacy as language teachers.
- Create ongoing collaborative, reflective practices which involve students, parents, and faculty where the language progress of students can be discussed and reviewed so appropriate modifications can be made.

Purpose

At The Rock School, we are committed to providing an inclusive and equitable learning environment. As such, we are committed to the following practices:

- The school places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages.
- Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning a language(s) other than their mother tongue.
- Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students. Assessment at the school aligns with the requirements of the programme.
- Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.
- The school utilizes the resources and expertise of the community to enhance learning within the programmes.

The purpose of this policy is to establish:

- The framework for valuing language diversity in our schools.
- The support for all language learners and their families, including those in which the primary language of instruction is not their mother tongue.
- The structure for language learning at our schools.

Definitions

- Mother-Tongue: The language the student uses at home and/or outside of the classroom/school environment. This term encompasses other terms including: first language, home language, preferred language, native language, heritage language, and sometimes best language. This term also includes sign language. This could also include multiple languages since many second-language students are using more than two languages outside of the classroom.
- Language B: describes the language(s) learned subsequently to the first language.
- Language Acquisition: The class that provides instruction and support for the learning of the language B.

Common Practices and Philosophy for All Students

- We promote International-Mindedness and encourage multilingualism.
- We provide pathways to language acquisition for students in addition to supporting mother tongue languages.
- We encourage parents to be involved in the decision-making process of language learning.
- We provide support for students to be successful in language acquisition.
- We encourage students to take action and extend their language learning in ways that help their community.
- We ensure that every discipline includes support mechanisms for language learning, both written and spoken.
- We promote awareness of one's own language and culture.
- We believe that language learning is vital for social, emotional and cognitive development.

Language Curriculum in the DP

- Group 1: This option is for a fluent language user studying his/her most competent language. Students will study literary texts and are responsible for developing communication skills.
- Group 2: Students will build acquisition of a language B. Students will learn to communicate effectively, analyze literary texts, and develop fluent language skills.

Languages Offered

- English:
 - MYP (Grades 6-10): Language & Literature
 - DP (Grades 11-12): English A: Language & Literature SL/HL
- Spanish:
 - MYP (Grades 6-8): Exploratory
 - MYP (Grades 9-10): Level I & Level II

- DP (Grades 11-12): Ab Initio
- Plans to expand are in place to include offering Level I in grade 8, Level III in grade 10, and Spanish B SL/HL.

Language Instruction

- Teachers select and provide access to literature from a variety of cultural backgrounds.
- Teachers provide differentiated instruction for students with special needs, including students with learning disabilities.
- Teachers assess students using a combination of formative and summative assessments and incorporate the IB rubrics.
- Courses are designed to support future academic study by developing higher levels of language competence and language communication skills as well as social, aesthetic, and cultural literacy.

Additional Supports

- The Student Success department actively identifies students who are in need of additional language support and facilitate interventions to help students to become more successful learners in the classroom. See [TRS Inclusion Policy](#) for more details.
- A variety of extra-curricular and co-curricular opportunities afford students the ability to express and expand their Language A and Language B skills.
- Some examples of opportunities in our school include: Journalism, Yearbook, Theatre, and Spanish Club.

Policy Review Cycle

- This policy will be reviewed and revised as needed by members of the Pedagogical Leadership Team and a cohort of language A and language B teachers every other year.

Resources

- IBO Guidelines for developing a school language policy
- IBO Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes
- Portage Central High School Language Policy
- [Monte Vista Christian School Language Policy](#)