Language Policy
JT Moore Middle Prep, an IB World School

Philosophy:

Language learning promotes a dynamic framework with which to understand other cultures and perspectives. We recognize that all teachers regardless of their academic specialties are language teachers. Therefore, we are committed to working together to ensure we are making connections across the curriculum with the use of language in all content areas where students learn about language and through such learning gain knowledge, understanding, sensitivity and an appreciation of cultures, values, and traditions.

We encourage our students’ facility with Standard American English as situations dictate, and we recognize the varieties of language usage that include slang, jargon, vernacular, and local dialect.

JT Moore students are expected to strive for a confident level of oral and written proficiency in more than one language. We believe such proficiency encourages cross-cultural understanding as well as developing higher order thinking skills. As an IB World School, we seek for our learners to become proficient communicators by developing the Learner Profile characteristics and by studying both their mother tongue and engaging in Language Acquisition.

All students in grades 5-8 study English and at least one additional language. Approximately 28% of our students are learning two second languages during their MYP years. At JT Moore, we offer Language Acquisition in Spanish and Chinese.

Mother Tongue:

Because most of our students’ native language is English, it is considered the mother tongue. English is promoted in all classes and school experiences through:

- Current event discussions & analytical summaries in social studies and science
- Interdisciplinary essay writing
- Journals and interactive notebooks in Language and Literature, Science, and Individuals & Societies
- Personal written reflections based on:
  - Community and Service/Action Hours activities
  - End of quarter self assessments
  - Field trips, assemblies, and speakers
- Note taking in various forms
- Science lab reports
- Research papers and reports
- Personal responses in PE
- Presentations—written and oral—in all classes
- Students in grades 5 and 8 participate in a statewide TNReady writing assessment that counts toward our school’s annual goals.
- Creative writing in Language & Literature classes and participation in writing contests
- Short answer responses on formative and summative assessments
• Narrative response (constructed response assessments) to math word problems
• Student-run news broadcasts
• Advisory meetings that support conflict management through restorative language and conversations
• Response to Instruction & Intervention (RTI²)

Language Acquisition:

Spanish Immersion Continuation: Language Acquisition: Spanish is the primary language of instruction for the cohort of students in feeding into JT Moore from Glendale Spanish Immersion Elementary School. At JT Moore, these students continue Spanish acquisition, building upon their conversational and written language skills. This is an optional program offered before the regular school day begins. Students in this program receive over 180 hours of Language Acquisition instruction, far surpassing the required 70 hours prescribed by the International Baccalaureate Organization.

Related Arts: Language Acquisition (Mandarin Chinese & Spanish) is offered to students in the 5th through 8th grades, but does not meet IB subject hour requirements. Due to limited staffing, our students receive a minimum of 45 hours of Language Acquisition if they are not enrolled in the Spanish Immersion Continuation Program. The purpose of Language Acquisition in Related Arts is to expose students to language and culture.

High School Credit: Language Acquisition (Spanish) is offered over the course of two years in 7th and 8th grade to achieve a proficiency level equivalent to the first year level of high school study. Students can opt into these classes, and are placed based on their proficiency in Language & Literature classes.

Additional Information:

• Coordination of Languages within K-12 Hillsboro IB cluster: Our goal since the 2010 school year has been to coordinate Language Acquisition offerings within the cluster IB schools: Julia Green Elementary (PYP), Eakin Elementary (PYP), JT Moore Middle, and West End Middle (MYP) and Hillsboro High School (MYP, DP, and CC). Alignment and communication about which languages to offer and how best to offer them has been essential to our success as a K-12 International Baccalaureate cluster. Many stakeholders, including parents, community members, and board members, meet regularly to advocate for specific Language Acquisition pathways and continuity.

• Mother-tongue Development: Because of the low incidence of non-native English speaking students at JT Moore, we have an itinerant instructor for English Language Learners, who is responsible for the language instruction of approximately 2% of our school’s total population. In addition, the district offers translators, bi-lingual publications, and homework help in many languages. Grades are available in a variety of languages as needed.

• Professional Development: All teachers participate in ongoing professional development with our school’s instructional coach centered on language development—specifically, interdisciplinary writing in response to informational texts, and project based learning. Various similar opportunities are available to all teachers through the district, as well. In addition, JT Moore has focused on several different resources for effective teaching in all
subject areas, including *Understanding by Design*, inclusive practices, balanced literacy, and book studies on related practices.

- **Parent Involvement:** We involve and communicate with parents in many ways. These practices include parent conferences about student data, feedback on students' writing assessments, report cards, mid-nine week progress reports and additional progress reports for students with special education needs. Such communication keeps a strong focus on parental participation in student language profile development. Parents are also a critical component of our widespread tutoring program that focuses on decoding and comprehension of both fiction and non-fiction texts. A committee meets regularly to advocate for additional Language Acquisition opportunities in the Hillsboro Cluster.

This policy is reviewed yearly by members of our Language Department and other faculty. Most recent review date: 12 October 2015.