

Rockville High School

Language Policy

Philosophy

Our philosophy is that all teachers are language teachers. Language is the driving force that connects all of the IB disciplines. Effective language learning is a natural precursor to global understanding and awareness. Our goal is for students to achieve proficiency in English, the language of instruction, as well as in a second language, French or Spanish.

Language Profile

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is offered for students whose second language is English. Potential ESOL students are evaluated both orally and in writing to determine if they need to be placed in ESOL classes or can be placed in mainstream classes. Students placed in ESOL classes move fluidly through the classes based on their rate of progress, not the number of years in the program. ESOL classes are taught in math and social studies as well as specifically in English language, with support from both a content area instructor and an ESOL teacher. As students' progress through the ESOL continuum, they are increasingly placed in language of instruction (LOI) classes until they "graduate" to a full LOI schedule. ESOL students receive classroom and testing accommodations to help them as language learners; bilingual dictionaries and extended testing and assignment time are the most common ones. Professional development is provided for staff to learn instructional strategies to use in assisting ESOL students in their classes.

Additionally, many of our diploma candidates list a language other than English as their first language, often speaking a heritage language at home. Because of our location adjacent to Washington, DC, many of these students maintain studies in their home language and culture outside of the normal school day.

We also welcome and accommodate students who matriculate to Rockville HS from the language immersion programs at nearby elementary and middle schools.

Language A Instruction

English is the primary language of instruction (LOI) at Rockville High School. In the Diploma Program, English A1 (literature) is offered as an HL (higher level) course. In addition to English language instruction, reading and writing is supported across the content areas, as the responsibility of all teachers is to improve students' ability to communicate both orally and in writing.

Second Language Acquisition

The goal of the Montgomery County Public Schools' foreign language program is to educate students in a language and culture in order to make them knowledgeable and active members of a global society. Students learn to use foreign languages for meaningful communication in both spoken and written form. The foreign language program emphasizes language as it is used in real-life situations that students are most likely to encounter. Through foreign language study, students develop sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic heritage of other groups, understand their influence on U.S. culture, and become prepared to participate in a society characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity.

Students often complete one or more years of a second language, Spanish or French, before entering Rockville HS in Grade 9. At Rockville High Schools we offer French and Spanish classes for all grade levels. Students are assessed to determine their placement in advanced Language B classes.

Native speakers of Spanish have uniquely designed curricula for three levels of Spanish for Spanish Speakers which focus on giving these students the written component of their native language instruction since the majority of them have often been exposed to the language only in its spoken form.

Mother Tongue Support

Rockville HS supports and respects the mother tongue and culture of all students. Culture is celebrated through many avenues: International Night, Spanish Honor Society, Latin Dance Team, and Hispanic Club, to name a few examples. Our Media Center subscribes to foreign language publications and continues to expand its collection by adding foreign language reading materials. Additionally, Rockville HS and Montgomery County Public Schools make parent communications and promotional materials available in many native languages.

This policy will be implemented in the following manner:

- a. It will be posted on the school IB web page so that stakeholders may view it at any time
- b. It will be included in the IB Manual which is distributed to students and parents at the time of enrollment in the program.
- c. The policy will be made available to all IB students through their TOK class.

This policy will be reviewed and revised each school year by the school leadership team