

**OLD MILL HIGH SCHOOL**  
**IB DIPLOMA PROGRAM LANGUAGE POLICY**

**Introduction:**

International Baccalaureate (IB) World Schools are required to have a written language policy. This document includes provisions for second-language teaching and mother-tongue language support that meets the needs of students and reflects the principles of the program. The IB Diploma Program Language Policy also sets out the philosophy and aims of language teaching and learning, and reviews the available options in Group 1 and Group 2. Additionally, the document defines our support for learning mother-tongue languages

**Philosophy**

At Old Mill High School it is understood that language is a primary means of communicating and is crucial to lifelong learning. To be successful, students must be able to use language effectively, appropriately, accurately and confidently. Moreover, students must be able express themselves in both oral and written form, and in a variety of contexts and purposes. We recognize that through language, students develop critical thinking skills, social skills, and are provided with the building blocks of language necessary for acquiring knowledge related to all areas of the IB diploma programme curricular framework. Therefore, the acquisition of language is viewed as a life-long process, and every teacher at OMHS is a language teacher. We teach language through context and relate new information to existing knowledge.

Students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must learn to adapt to their ever changing environments. Therefore, the mission of Old Mill Senior High School is to assist all students in becoming productive citizens in a global society. We recognize that students must become both culturally and linguistically proficient in a second language. However, language learning refers not only to the acquisition of a second language, but also includes the importance of cultural understanding and sensitivity, and fosters international understanding.

**Language Profile**

The general language profile of Old Mill High School includes:

- English-only background students with no previous Language B exposure (80%)
- Bilingual students with have acquired both English and another language since birth (15%)
- Bilingual students with non-English speaking parents who have acquired English as a result of attending school (4%)
- Students with limited English proficiency and non-English speaking parents who are currently learning as a result of attending school (1%)

In addition to English, languages spoken by our students include the following:

- |             |            |           |            |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| • Spanish   | • Farsi    | • Urdu    | • Gujarati |
| • Hungarian | • Ukranian | • Thai    | • Tagalog  |
| • French    | • Korean   | • Swahili | • Arabic   |
| • Hindi     | • Kosrae   | • Chinese | • Japanese |

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**IB Language Offerings at OMHS**

The language of instruction at OMHS is English. All classes, with the exception of Language B classes, are conducted in English. Every Diploma Programme student must take Language A: Literature at the HL level, and at least one subject from Group 2. Choice of language level in Group 2 depends upon the student's preference, level of proficiency and literacy in that language, and his / her overall program of study.

Students in Anne Arundel County Public Schools may begin studying a second language at the secondary level in seventh grade at non- MYP schools, and in sixth grade at MYP Middle Schools. There are currently three authorized MYP schools in Anne Arundel County, including Old Mill Middle North, which feeds into OMHS. Typically, students take three year-long course levels of a second language (for example: Spanish 1, Spanish 2, Spanish 3) before beginning IB coursework in that second language as a high school junior.

**Group One:**

OMHS offers English A1 Higher Level as the only classroom-based opportunity for Language A. Due to the OMHS student body make-up, it is not feasible to create a separate course for English SL students. OMHS currently offers Language A: Literature and follows the prescribed course requirements as set out in the IB Language A: Literature Subject Guide. Students are encouraged to appreciate the artistry of literature and to develop an ability to reflect critically on their reading. Works are studied in their literary and cultural contexts, through close study of individual texts and passages, and by considering a range of critical approaches. The response to the study of literature is through oral and written communication, thus enabling students to develop and refine their command of language (IBO, 2012). Students are assessed according to IB policies as laid out in the Language A: Literature Subject Guide.

**Language B**

At OMHS we believe that as students examine global cultures, they are able to gain appreciation of other cultures while coming to the realization that other people, with their differences, can also be right (*IB Mission Statement*). We realize that not every student will reach the same level of language proficiency at the same time; therefore we offer a continuum of Language B courses that meet both the developing academic and social needs of all learners. The aim is for each student is to reach his or her highest level of literacy and proficiency in a second language. Additionally, OMHS accommodates different learning styles with differentiated instruction according to student needs. Currently, students may take French, Spanish or Chinese at either the Standard Level or the Higher Level. As stated earlier, the choice of language level in each group depends upon the student's preference, level of proficiency and literacy in that language, and his / her overall program of study.

## **Extra-Curricular Language and Culture Opportunities**

The following clubs are available to all OMHS students to enrich experiences in mother-tongue languages, second languages or additional languages, with the aim of increasing cultural awareness and international-mindedness:

- National French Honor Society
- National Spanish Honor Society
- Latin Club
- Model United Nations

## **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

We believe that all children in the Anne Arundel Public School System should have the opportunity to develop full proficiency in English. Furthermore, students learning through ESOL should be provided with specialized language preparation that will allow them the opportunity to effectively participate in academic programs and achieve the same high standards as their English-speaking classmates. Therefore, at OMHS the faculty and staff provide comprehensive instruction in English as a second language for linguistically diverse students, which prepare them to handle content area material in English. OMHS teachers are provided professional development opportunities that prepare them to facilitate the language and academic growth of linguistically and culturally different children. Additionally, content teachers collaborate with the ESOL instructor to ensure that instruction is academically challenging, but also tailored to the linguistic proficiency, educational background and academic needs of the student. Where appropriate, materials published in the student's mother-tongue are provided as instructional resources. Moreover, OMHS has several faculty members who speak a variety of languages including, Korean, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, French, Arabic and Vietnamese; these individuals are used as "resources" to facilitate home-school communication. Finally, Anne Arundel County Public Schools provides on line publications in the following languages: Simplified Chinese, Korean, Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Arabic, Urdu, and Tagalog.

## **ESOL Instruction**

English Language learners are introduced to the English language and American culture by two dedicated ESOL teachers. Small group study of the language in all four skills areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing takes place in Levels 1 and 2. Accommodations for students who are non-native English speakers include additional tutoring, curriculum modifications, and assistance from the school's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) instructor continue into the co-taught Level 3 classrooms. Both Old Mill Middle School North and Old Mill High School provide separate ESOL classes for students who are acquiring Language A as a second language. Based on their language background and level of understanding in English, students are placed in one of three ESOL levels:

- LEVEL 1 – Beginning level English language learners examine authentic literature with a balance of fiction and nonfiction, analyze types of text structure used in various writing

models, and complete research projects and reports. Instruction includes systematic language development including literacy instruction and extended practice in applying the conventions to written English.

- LEVEL 2 – Intermediate level English language learners examine authentic literature with a balance of fiction and nonfiction, write and present narrative, descriptive, technical, and persuasive writing, and complete research projects and reports. Instruction includes application of research and study skills including the use of technology to complete research projects.
- LEVEL 3 – Advanced level English language learners examine authentic literature. The students who take this course are sometimes placed in a Language A classroom and they are offered ESOL support services.

In addition to specific course offerings, the ESOL teacher collaborates with all staff members to provide extensive modifications and remediation for non-native speakers who struggle with the core language of instruction.