

Highland High School IB Language Policy

Language Philosophy

The mission of Highland High School is to create a professional learning community dedicated to academic excellence. We provide and support rigorous academic, cultural, college, and career-readiness experiences for every student. We challenge, empower, and inspire students to become contributing global citizens and life-long learners.

Highland High School is a diverse school of 1850 students, with English as the central language, and English Language Learners speaking over 25 different languages. It is our philosophy to ensure that the value of the learner diversity is not lost, by providing coursework in English for all students, as well as offering a variety of opportunities for study of other languages. We strive to provide equal access to the curriculum at Highland High School for all learners, in an appropriate way. We recognize that the teaching and learning environment is dependent upon high standards of practices in and out of the classroom. For this reason, we review and revise our Language Policy annually in September to keep up with our changing student population. Our Language Policy is published in the IB Handbook and available on the Highland High IB web page.

Language development for all students is a school value and priority. At Highland High School, we believe that language is the gateway for exploring and sustaining cultural identity and intercultural understanding, as well as promoting the growth of the individual student's knowledge, wisdom, character, and confidence. We encourage students to retain and use their mother tongue to promote awareness of other cultures and languages among the student body.

We recognize that systems and practices must be in place to advocate for all students to access language development. Highland High School believes that language is central to learning and literacy, and thus is closely related to the success of all students as they work with curriculum. All teachers, regardless of their subject area, are responsible for providing students with the vocabulary and language skills necessary to be successful in their content area as well as developing comprehensive communication skills.

Language Profile

Language Profile for Language A

The mother tongue language (Language A) at Highland High School is English. Highland High School serves students in grades 9-12. When discussing the whole school, all grades are considered.

1. English is promoted as the language of instruction at Highland High School. Students are required to take a full year course in English Language Arts instruction each year. English is the only course that demands four years of instruction for graduation from the high school. Highland High School offers 17 different English courses for students to choose from during 9th - 12th grades at varying degrees of rigor. There are multiple options for Language Arts coursework including the following:
 - a. Language Arts 9, 10, 11, 12
 - b. Honors Language Arts 9, 10, 11, 12
 - c. Concurrent English 1010 and 2010 (dual-credit through Salt Lake Community College)
 - d. Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition and Advanced Placement English Language
 - e. IB English A Literature HL
 - f. English Electives including: Creative Writing, Journalism, Debate, Reading
 - g. English Language Development courses for English Language Learners

2. The development and maintenance of English for all learners is supported by regular assessment of student learning. Students complete a variety of school, district, and state mandated summative exams to demonstrate their proficiency in English. These include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Essays
 - b. Literature content and comprehension exams
 - c. Presentations
 - d. WIDA for English Language Learners given twice annually to evaluate learning of English
 - e. ACT and ASPIRE testing provided by the Utah State Board of Education for all students.
 - f. Advanced Placement English exams
 - g. IB Language A: English examsStudent results are reviewed and utilized for proper Language Arts course placement annually.

3. Highland High School recognizes that language is central to all learning and therefore all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication.
 - a. Teachers are accountable for teaching the vocabulary of their respective curriculums. Whether the content is based in math, science, art, or a specific career field, the teacher is the provider of the common language for facilitating learning in that subject.
 - b. Teachers are expected to have students reading and writing across all curricula.

4. Highland High School recognizes that administrators, teachers, librarians, and other school staff require professional development in the field of language learning and teaching.
 - a. Annual professional development is provided by looking at the data of Highland High School in regards to English performance on several measures of statewide and national testing. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) at Highland High School incorporates literacy as the first component for school success.
 - b. All school employees are required, within three years of hire, to complete six university courses leading to an endorsement in the teaching of English as a Second Language. English speakers of all levels are found in every class, as appropriate at Highland High School. A focus on language scaffolding is emphasized. On-going professional development is provided for all staff.
 - c. Teachers of IB courses receive training through the appropriate IB sponsored workshops. Highland High School appreciates and highlights the IB philosophy of learning the curriculum from the perspective of a professional in that field. Students must build upon their language skills as they communicate effectively in the various subject areas.

5. At Highland High School all students have equal access to IB courses regardless of their English language background. As related in the Highland High School IB Admissions policy, prior student coursework is considered as part of acceptance. We encourage students to build upon their English language skills during the summer months if deemed necessary by their current English teachers.

6. Highland High School has many practices and resources in place to involve parents in the planning of their student's language profile and development.
 - a. All students have an annual Career and College Readiness (CCR) Conference with their guidance counselor, where student progress in current courses is evaluated and planning for future courses is achieved. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings. Translators are available to facilitate communication between families and school staff when necessary. Parent Teacher Student Conferences are held two times annually. Parents are also encouraged and invited to make an appointment with their student's teacher or counselor at any time during the school year.
 - b. The district ALS Coordinator holds meetings and events specifically for site ALS Coordinators. The site coordinator will disseminate the WIDA ACCESS scores, parent notification letters, and exit letters via US mail, to parents/guardians. Translators are available for use.

7. Highland High School is rich in diversity of language and culture. Students come from over 148 different countries with approximately 25 different mother-tongue

languages spoken. Of the 1850 student population, 217 students report that another language is spoken at home. Overwhelmingly, English is the language of instruction and communication used in the school. However, district level translation services exist to develop documents and communication in the most frequently spoken languages other than English.

- a. Highland High School currently has 150 students enrolled in English Language Development courses. The primary purpose of these courses is to develop high level academic language. This includes vocabulary, grammar, academic writing skills using informational and literary texts, and a strong focus on oral academic language. The classes are designed to provide ELL students with the comprehension and fluency necessary to succeed in their core classes.
 - b. Highland High School's IB Diploma Program has expanded to include 3 IB Language B courses; Spanish, French, and German. Because students apply for IB at Highland in 8th grade, students are prepared and have 4 years to acquire a second language.
8. It is the policy of the Salt Lake City School District Board of Education, the governing body for Highland High School, to comply with federal regulations and state rules while proactively providing instruction and individual accommodations for linguistically diverse students.
- a. The Utah State Board of Education requires four years of English study for high school graduation, meeting the critical language needs of all students in the United States. www.schools.utah.gov. Students are assessed annually with the ASPIRE and ACT.
 - b. English Language Learners are served by meeting the instructional policies outlined by the federal requirements and the Utah State Board of Education. The Salt Lake City School District has provided these guidelines in the following document, entitled the Alternative Language Services Master Plan and Manual for Implementation.
<https://www.slcschools.org/departments/school-leadership-and-performance/alternative-language-services/>
 - c. The Office of Civil Rights and the American with Disabilities Act are considered when implementing such practices, as outlined in the IB Special Needs Policy.
 - d. All IB students are served under the policies outlined by the IB World Organization.

9. As part of the admissions process, previous English assessment results coupled with success in prior coursework is taken into consideration for placement for all students at Highland High School. English Language Learners are assessed twice annually using the WIDA assessment to determine English language acquisition progress, throughout all years of their education in Utah. This information is used for placement in coursework at Highland High School and continues to be used throughout subsequent years at the school.

Language Profile for Language B

In the state of Utah, there is no second language course requirement for high school graduation. Highland High School strongly encourages students, knowing that university admissions require a minimum of two years of study of the same world language, to take a Highland High School world language course. We provide three different languages to encourage students to fulfill this expectation. English Language Learners are required, as are all students, to take four years of English language instruction, as outlined in the Language Profile for Language A.

The development and maintenance of the mother-tongue language is encouraged at Highland High School. Spanish courses have increased out of the need to serve the growing number of students enrolled at Highland High School for whom this is their first language. New immigrants are encouraged to enroll in world language courses of their first language as a support for the development of English.

IB students are required as per the IB Diploma Programme requirements to study a Language B. Highland High School offers world languages based on student interest. Currently, students have a choice of three world languages to pursue including, French, German, and Spanish. We currently offer the following IB course options.

1. French B SL
2. German B SL
3. Spanish B SL

Initial placement in Highland High School world language courses is determined by previous experience with or coursework in the language of interest.

Current Considerations

Highland High School continues to monitor the interest in particular languages annually and adjusts offerings as necessary.

Highland High School continues to increase the diversity in the IB DP by offering Information Meetings to a wide variety of student and parent populations.

Future Considerations

Highland High School may consider creating Higher Level options for Language B courses with growing student interest.

Review Process

The IB Language Policy, as a working document, will be reviewed by the IB Committee each March, as course requests are completed. New course requests are handled through the School Improvement Council (SIC) and School Community Council (SCC) each October. The reviewing of this document in March will allow ample time for new proposals in languages to be completed during September. The IB Committee will address necessary adjustments to the Language Policy each September in preparation for these deadlines. The SIC will approve any new courses for language in their October meeting annually. The SCC will approve any new courses for language in their November meeting annually.

The English Language Learning Coordinator will provide updates and changes to the law for English Language Learners, Office of Civil Rights Requirements, Utah Board of Education, and Salt Lake City School District Policy. Changes in services and testing will be implemented with appropriate timelines.

Influence of Other IB Policies

The IB Admission Policy will be evaluated for effectiveness with regards to placement in both English Language Arts courses and World Language courses. The IB Special Education Needs/Inclusive Education Policy is a document based on the federal requirements for the service of English Language Learners and Special Education students served either with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan. Highland High School will continue to monitor changes to these laws and make adaptations to both the IB Special Education Needs/Inclusive Education Policy and IB Language Policy, as appropriate. The IB Assessment Policy incorporates formative and summative assessment results for the placement of students in language courses, as well as assessing for future directions of the course instruction.

Communicating the Policy

The IB Language Policy will be distributed amongst relevant groups within Highland High School including, but not limited to, the following:

- Highland High School Faculty and Administration
- Highland High Handbook and website IB page
- IB Community Members
 - Teachers
 - Parents
 - Students
- School Improvement Council (SIC)
- School Community Council (SCC)