



**PROVIDENCE HALL**  
**CHARTER SCHOOL**

## Language Policy

### **Philosophy**

At Providence Hall, we believe that language is the primary means of communicating, making it the fundamental basis for all learning. Therefore, all educators are language teachers. With this understanding Providence Hall strives to develop the qualities of the IB Learner Profile in classes and in the school community. The IB fundamental concepts are developed in all classes by providing opportunities for all students to further communication skills, establish intercultural understanding, and make connections for holistic learning.

Each teacher has the responsibility to help students obtain knowledge, understanding, and the ability to communicate in their subject areas. To this end, Providence Hall provides professional development opportunities for all administrators, teachers, librarians and other school staff to help facilitate language learning and development.

### **School Language Profile**

The primary language of instruction and communication at Providence Hall and the surrounding community is English, and is taught as Language A in the MYP and DP. Consequently all classes, with the exception of Language B classes, are conducted in English.

Spanish is taught as our Language B through all years of the program (PYP, MYP, DP). Students at the PYP level are instructed in Spanish along with their classmates and are taught during the week at the appropriate grade level. At the MYP and DP levels students take a benchmark test administered by a qualified bilingual staff member and are placed in a Spanish class at the appropriate phase.

At Providence Hall we believe that each student's cultural background and identity must be realized and respected and that the opportunity to learn a new language and continue to develop one's first language are equally important. We view both teachers and family as important resources to reinforce learning the language of instruction as well as maintaining mother tongue fluency.

Student enrollment at Providence Hall is based on a lottery system; therefore students from any nationality or language background can enter the school upon selection from the lottery. Currently our student enrollment is drawn mainly from the surrounding neighborhood which is middle to upper class, white, English speaking. As such, the percentage of English Language Learners at our school is less than 1% and we provide services to those students in a different way than we would if our percentage were higher. Our ELL learners are identified and leveled using the WIDA screening test (World Class Instructional Design and Assessment). Each year students are re-tested and re-leveled based on their language proficiency. Students are then provided modified assignments and assessment tasks according to their language ability, and their instruction is scaffolded equal to their language ability. ELL students may receive similar accommodations to Special Needs students as described in our Special Needs Policy.



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### **Language A Instruction**

For students to be life long learners and productive members of the global community, a basic understanding of communication is needed. Language A meets this need by guiding students to understand how to communicate through written and verbal language. Oral skills are also improved by the continued practice of listening and responding.

During the MYP, students will be exposed to a balance between language and literature as they develop skills and understanding through the study of a broad range of genres and world literature, as well as language learning in context. MYP students will write a minimum of one response to literature, one essay, one piece of creative writing, and one research paper as well as having numerous opportunities to speak publicly in presentation format and group discussions. IB Rubrics will be the basic grade scale on which each written assignment is assessed.

During the DP, students will build upon the foundation gained in the MYP. Group 1 English courses strive to ensure the continuing development of a student's ability to express themselves in a variety of forms of language. All students in the 2013-2014 school year are enrolled in the English A Literature and Language SL Course. Starting in 2014-2015 school year English A Literature and Language HL will be offered and it is anticipated that students will have the opportunity to choose at which level they will take the exam. At the present time we have not allowed students to choose the School Supported Self-Taught at Standard Level option, but we are exploring that as an option for future years.

Each student at Providence Hall Junior High participates in Language A instruction four days a week for 58 minutes a day. This ensures that all receive the minimum of 50 hours of instruction. Each student at Providence Hall High School participates in Language A instruction four days a week for 58 minutes a day. This ensures that all receive the minimum of 150 hours of instruction for the SL course.

### **Language B Instruction**

As an International Baccalaureate school our objective is to further intercultural awareness and international mindedness. At Providence Hall we understand that language is vital in achieving this objective. The ability to communicate in more than one language is essential to the concept of an international education and intercultural understanding. With this understanding, Providence Hall has chosen the Spanish language to be our second language taught at the school. By exploring the Spanish language and culture, students will start on their journey in taking their place in the human and global community. This exploration encompasses aspects spanning from grammatical concepts to cultural traditions and philosophies. Students at Providence Hall Elementary receive Spanish instruction from highly qualified Spanish instructors with their grade level peers for 60 minutes a week, totaling 35 hours per year. As the students advance through the Junior High MYP Program they are able to move through the three phases offered. All six-grade students enter and start the exploration of culture and language with Phase 1, by continuing their learning of basic vocabulary and phrases to help promote communication. Most seventh-grade students move on to Phase 2, and continue



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their language learning and exploration of culture. Eighth through tenth grade students continue through the Phases, depending on skill level, deepening their understanding and ability to interact with the Spanish language and culture. Tracks are available starting in seventh grade that allow students to receive Spanish instruction every day adding up to 100 hours a year; otherwise students receive instruction two days a week meeting the MYP requirement of 50 hours per year.

As students enter the Diploma Program in eleventh grade they will be placed in the appropriate phase depending on previous experience with the language and will continue with the Language B SL course. Spanish instruction at Providence Hall High School meets the DP requirements of 150 hours for the SL course.

### **Mother Tongue Support**

To promote an intercultural community within our school we welcome students from all cultural backgrounds and languages. All students are able to enter our enrollment lottery and foreign exchange students are admitted when they are living with families of other students at Providence Hall. As students with a mother tongue other than English study within our school we recognize the importance of supporting the student's mother tongue. At Providence Hall we do this through teacher support, media materials available in the mother tongue, and professional development opportunities for teachers to facilitate language growth. Students are provided access to materials and instruction that is appropriate to their language learning level as identified through WIDA testing (World Class Instructional Design and Assessment). Some resources, including translated works, textbooks and resources in the Mother Tongue are already available in our library for languages that we are currently instructing. A portion of the library budget is set aside every year to purchase new or additional resources for students that arrive at our school. Our ELL students receive scaffolded instruction with an ELL certified teacher who also facilitates their accommodations or modifications on assignments depending on need.

We acknowledge that language is central to learning as well as the development of both personal and cultural identity. Thus every attempt will be made to support a student's mother tongue as well as developing proficiency with the English language.

### **Acquisition of Language Resources**

Every month Providence Hall receives magazines and books in Spanish and English for students to read at their leisure. These resources are located in a prominent place within the library and attention is drawn to them by both signage and the librarian to help students access and use them. Multiple copies are provided in the library, and can be taken to teachers' classrooms for use. Books are housed in the library continually. Some resources have been purchased in French and Chinese, which are the Mother Tongues' that we currently support. We are looking to procure more resources in more languages.

### **Policy Use and Review**



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The Language Policy will be reviewed annually as our student body changes and as our needs with regards to language acquisition may change. This review will be led by the IB Coordinators, Language teachers, ESL teachers, and any other subject teachers that wish to be involved in the changes.