LANGUAGE PROFILE/LANGUAGE POLICY

Revised February 2023

IB Philosophy for Languages at Port Moody Secondary

At Port Moody Secondary School, we value the Modern Languages as they enrich and promote a more global and international mindedness approach for students, challenging them to become active participants in a highly competitive global environment.

As Port Moody Secondary is located in the municipality of Port Moody within the Metro Vancouver area of British Columbia, the primary language used for instruction is English. Canada has two official languages – English and French.

With English as the Group 1 language of instruction, French makes up one of the four additional languages offered in Group 2. Currently, just over 30% of the IB Diploma students are enrolled in the IB French program courses. This is significant change over the past 5 years, driven perhaps by more students of different linguistic backgrounds choosing to study languages other than French.

The other languages offered in Group 2 are Spanish, Mandarin, and Japanese. As Spanish is one of the official IB languages, many students choose to enroll in this language since much of the United States, countries in Central America and South America speak Spanish.

As we are located along the Pacific Rim, the importance of languages for the purpose of trade and commerce is paramount to the success of our students. Thus, Mandarin Chinese and Japanese are also offered as Group 2 courses. There has been an increase in interest in learning Mandarin Chinese over the past 10 years with the global significance of China both politically and economically. There has also been a strong increase in the number of students studying Japanese, perhaps as a result of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

A small committee has continued to gather input from the learning community which includes parents, students, and staff. This committee uses this input to guide and shape discussions about best practices and ways to encourage students to view their language acquisition as a lifelong learning process.

There are over 50 additional languages spoken in addition to English by students who attend Port Moody. We continue to encourage our students to try out a new language to allow them to be challenged and for their future benefit.

We have enrichment through language clubs that allow students to learn and practice a language with the assistance of peers and with peer tutors. There are also various community heritage schools that students may enroll in order to help students learn their mother tongue or alternative language.

The four languages offered are the only Group 2 courses offered at Port Moody. There is an opportunity for further discussion on delivery methods for other Group 2 requirements through discussion with the IB coordinator. Processes can be considered to offer the ab initio course depending on the students’ language capacity and the ability to schedule them into a balanced timetable. We continue to explore the options of offering self-taught languages at Port Moody but remain committed to supporting the language programs currently on offer. This is in marked contrast to other schools in our district which have seen their language course offerings diminish drastically over the past five years.

***Response to preliminary matter to be addressed****: “ensures that are practices in place to provide inclusion and equity of access to the IB programmes offered by the school for all learners, including those who are learning in a language other than their home/personal language”- our intake process is open to all students in our school district regardless of their home language. In fact, of our 542 students identified in grades 9-12 of our Pre-Diploma and Diploma programme, 46.08% identify as having a home language other than English. We believe that our intake and admission processes do not limit inclusion or equity of access to students who are learning in a language other than their home/personal language and are able to access the data to support this. This does not feel like information that needs to be included in our language policy but can be if required.*

The aim of our language courses is to enrich students in a new language that is different from their mother tongue. Our languages, French, Spanish, Mandarin, and Japanese, reflect our geographical location, culture, and proximity to Pacific Rim countries. We believe that all teachers in all subjects are language teachers with a responsibility for students’ language development whether that be in English or their additional languages; this is a belief that aligns with both the pedagogical philosophy of the IBO and the British Columbia provincial curriculum.