



# **NORTH DADE MIDDLE SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME**

## **LANGUAGE POLICY**

### **Language Philosophy**

Communication is vital to developing and maintaining successful interaction in today's world. Language as a form of communication, whether spoken or written, is key to this end. Language Learning entails the acquisition of proper speaking, reading, and writing skills which occur in a natural order.

Language Learners begin to acquire speaking skills through the repetition of auditory and visual cues and concrete examples. This usually begins in the home with their mother tongue. When learning a second language, the learner becomes accustomed to the sounds of the new language in much the same way. However, the process is accelerated in a formal learning environment.

Reading then commences with the learning of symbols known as the alphabet and its phonemes. This occurs in an educational environment with reinforcement at home when learning the mother tongue. When learning a second language, the reading process begins in combination with acquiring speaking skills. Because there is usually no reinforcement at home when learning a second language, the acquisition of reading skills is a longer process. Additional reinforcement or rigor is necessary in the educational setting.

Writing skills develop with practice, utilizing the rules of grammar. These skills are obtained mainly in formal education and are very rarely reinforced at home. It is through practice and evaluation that the learners fully develop writing skills. Exposure to quality literature plays a key role in developing this stage of communication. When learning a second language, the development of writing skills begins in the more advanced classes, usually after speaking and reading skills are fluent. Writing skills then continue to develop much in the same fashion as in the mother tongue.

Language learners truly capture the essence of a language and its culture through the adaptation of idiomatic expressions. In the mother tongue, this occurs naturally from the beginning of cognizance and is expanded upon through experience, usage, and maturity. However, learners of a second language rarely capture this essence unless an opportunity for immersion occurs. This can be remedied through the planning of international integration through public speakers, field trips, and travel.



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### **Purpose and Goals**

The language of instruction (LOI) for North Dade Middle School (NDMS) is English. Students will develop a fluency in this language. All teachers support the learning of reading and writing across the curriculum. Reading endorsement through professional development is offered and encouraged by the school district for all teachers, regardless of subject. Additionally, intensive reading courses are mandated for students not achieving minimum requirements in state level testing. All students are required to take Language A courses in which speaking, reading, and writing are emphasized and taught. Specific standards for each competency, as mandated by the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, are taught in combination with the IBMYP objectives and standards for Language and Literature. Learners' progresses are assessed periodically in classroom settings as well as through formal quarterly and annual assessments. Deficiencies are measured and addressed accordingly as needed. Student achievement determines placement in advanced or basic level classes.

Bibliographic instruction is provided through the Media Specialist in conjunction with the classroom teachers. Such items covered are: research using valid resources provided by the district, creating a "reference list" using MLA style (formerly 'bibliography'), taking notes and outlining as well as other related instruction. The subject of plagiarism is stressed most emphatically and is not tolerated.

North Dade Middle School offers Spanish and French as second languages (Language Acquisition). Should the need dictate yet another language or languages, they will be added. All students entering our Middle Years Program (MYP) are provided an opportunity to acquire a second language. Students choose Spanish or French for the three years of the MYP as part of their curriculum (at no extra cost.) Incoming students take a language placement test to determine level of entry. Language B courses are highly rigorous and guided by the standards of the New Generation Sunshine States Standards in combination with the IBMYP objectives and standards. Second Language learners are required to meet specific competencies for promotion in Language B courses. All Language Acquisition instructors are highly-qualified certificated foreign language teachers in the state of Florida, as well as trained in IBMYP. Language Acquisition instructors work in collaboration with other teachers across the curriculum for interdisciplinary planning in order to integrate the language to a practical end.



## **NORTH DADE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### **INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME**

English as a second Language (ELL/ESOL) is required (from lowest level to fluency) for those students whose native tongue is not English. In August, 1990, a judge of the United States District Court, Southern District of Florida, signed a Consent Decree giving the court power to enforce an agreement between the Florida State Board of Education and the coalition of eight groups represented by Multi-cultural Education, Training, and Advocacy, Inc. (META). Every teacher employed by the district is required to complete a minimum of 18-36 hours of training for META certification. Therefore, all teachers, regardless of subject taught, are capable of providing necessary adjustments to classroom practices in order to support the language needs of all students. These students are taking English as their second language and are placed in inclusive classes, English only, as well as in ELL courses for reinforcement. Therefore, their participation in the IBMYP is unique as it is a reverse of our English speaking students learning a second language.

#### **Communication**

All teachers and staff are provided access to this document in conjunction with a formal introduction as part of annual in-service training. Through recruitment efforts, parents and students are informed of NDMS' language learning opportunities and therefore become involved in the students' development of language. All stakeholders continue to be informed of any updates or news through access to the school website as receiving automated phone messages.