



Wayside: Sci-Tech High School

International Baccalaureate Language Policy

(Updated January 2021)

The language policy of Wayside: Sci-Tech High School is an opportunity to articulate what we do to promote language development and honor the native languages spoken by our English Learners (ELs).

Philosophical statement

Written and spoken language is the primary means of communication. It is also a gateway into understanding other peoples and cultures around the globe. This understanding is integral to achieving a level of collaboration, which can lead to peace across borders and cultures. Wayside: Sci-Tech High School subscribes to an additive bilingualism mindset. We believe biliteracy and biculturalism are assets and strive to foster these skills in all of our scholars through our Spanish program and English as a Second Language (ESL) program. By focusing on the IB learner profile, teachers explicitly teach and provide opportunities for scholars to engage in these common attributes across the curriculum, which are central to being lifelong learners and local and global citizens.

All teachers are “language teachers”

All Wayside STHS teachers are language teachers. As teachers of specific content courses, regardless of the discipline or IB “group,” these courses have unique languages that reflect a fluency necessary for academic mastery of that subject. Teachers understand that one barrier to understanding the content is a lack of understanding of the language of the course. This proves particularly impactful to EL scholars who might understand the language of the content in their native language but struggle with the academic language of the content area. Thus, as a learning community we use best practices such as sheltered instructional strategies and literacy across the content areas to explicitly teach both academic content, vocabulary, and language. In addition, we believe that the ability to express oneself clearly and precisely is an essential skill to develop in all of our scholars. All classes at Wayside: Sci-Tech High School give scholars the opportunity to voice their opinions and present a variety of information through oral presentations, class discussions, and group work.

The faculty at Wayside: Sci-Tech High School are provided with ongoing professional development in Sheltered Instructional practices, which are best practices for working with

second language learners in academic content area classes. Faculty receive ongoing training on the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and create lessons/unit planners that are aligned to these standards and differentiated to meet the needs of English learners with varying degrees of English proficiency. The instructional leadership team (ILT) also promotes strategies for literacy across the content areas through PLCs and professional development sessions throughout the year. Wayside: Sci-Tech High School has a full time Literacy Coordinator who serves as part of our (ILT) and provides instructional coaching for the ELAR department. This individual collaborates with teachers to differentiate instruction and build literacy skills necessary for success in the full IB Diploma Programme. Faculty also receive annual training on TELPAS writing assessment, and serve as raters or assembly and verifiers for the writing portion of the TELPAS assessment. By providing these opportunities for continued professional growth, Wayside: Sci-Tech High School ensures that all teachers are receiving the support and training necessary to be both language and content area teachers.

Expectations for English proficiency

At Wayside: Sci-Tech High School the primary language of instruction is English. It is critical to assist all scholars in their ability to develop a working knowledge of spoken and written English to give scholars the tools and knowledge necessary to be successful in their academic courses and be prepared to excel in college. Wayside: Sci-Tech High School passionately believes in the “IB for ALL” philosophy and our teachers and instructional leaders work together to provide scaffolds and support for scholars who are in the ESL program and are also taking IB classes. In promoting equitable opportunities for all scholars, Wayside does not restrict access to the Diploma Programme based on levels of English proficiency.

Expectations for study of second language

Second language study at Wayside: Sci-Tech High School considers both groups of scholars, those whose mother tongue is English and those whose mother tongue is a language other than English.

For scholars for whom English is their mother tongue, STHS offers Spanish as a second-language of study. Several scholars come to STHS already having begun the study of a second language. Others begin their study of a second language in high school. It is expected that all scholars study Language B (Language Acquisition in grade 9 and 10) and that that same Language B will continue in the IB Diploma 11th grade Year 1 and 12th grade Year 2. A few exceptions to this standard are made for exceptional scholars who are documented level 1 and 2 per state and federal requirements.

Wayside: Sci-Tech High School also offers an Ab Initio class for scholars who do not have previous instruction in the Spanish language. If a scholar decides to study a language different from Spanish in DP group 2, the online programme Pamoja will be used. This planning/schedule/implementation will give scholars the opportunity for four years of second-language study before leaving high school. Additionally, this plan of concurrent language learning will serve as a foundation for pursuing the Diploma Programme and scholars will also receive a state endorsement.

For scholars whose mother tongue is a language other than English, STHS has an English as a Second Language (ESL) program that provides both pull out classes and inclusion support for scholars. The ESL program at Wayside: Sci-Tech High School follows the Texas Education Agency (TEA) rules and regulations for assessment, progress monitoring, and exiting of scholars. Scholars are assessed annually using the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) which tests scholars ability to use both social and academic English in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Scholars who enroll at STHS from another state or country are given the LAS Links English proficiency assessment in order to determine their English level in accordance with TEA guidelines. The LAS Links assessment is administered by the ESL coordinator. The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) meets several times throughout the year in order to discuss scholar progress in English, and decide on appropriate course placement and support for each scholar through a careful analysis of both formative and summative data. Scholars who are new to the country have the opportunity to be enrolled in the ESOL I and II courses, which teach both the academic content of the English I and II courses while also teaching social English. Those scholars who are more advanced in their English language proficiency receive a variety of services which can include pull out reading classes or ESL inclusion support in their language arts class. Teachers are also trained throughout the year on best practices for teaching English learners. STHS also offers scholars' whose native language is Spanish to take one or two years of Spanish for Heritage Speakers.

Support for development and maintenance of mother tongue

Wayside: Sci-Tech High School's population is made up of native speakers of English, Spanish, Korean, and more. In order to promote biliteracy and biculturalism in all of our scholars, STHS has specific programming designed to reinforce language proficiency in the dominant mother tongue of our scholars, Spanish. STHS offers a course designed specifically for native Spanish speakers, as they are the largest demographic. Also, the school has events that highlight and honor the native languages of our diverse scholar population. Finally, scholars also have the opportunity to take the Spanish National Exam for national recognition and scholarships.

For scholars with limited English proficiency in need of additional language services, we provide individual tutoring and curriculum differentiation in all of our classes. All classes utilize scaffolds and supports such as visual aids, electronic media, graphic organizers, collaborative learning groups, and scholar demonstrations. Finally, in some cases, our ESL support teacher will co-teach and/or collaborate with individual teachers on how to specifically support EL in classroom instruction based on their current language ability.

Wayside: Sci-Tech High School further provides direct instruction in a supportive environment with an ESL teacher. This teacher supports scholars and their families in mother-tongue maintenance by such mechanisms as:

- Developing library resources for scholars in their mother tongue
- Engaging scholars in reflections involving the use of their mother tongue and home culture across the curriculum.
- Analyzing the syntax and grammar of the mother tongue to inform English instruction

Wayside: Sci-Tech High School supports the Wayside Schools vision and IB mission to prepare all scholars to be College Ready, Community Engaged, Global Citizens. This preparation includes providing developmentally appropriate instruction in the English language, maintaining a respect for the scholar's native culture and heritage, and developing a sense of self-worth and pride in the scholar. It will also include active parent involvement and vigorous staff development activities.

Language and development resources

Teachers incorporate sources from a variety of cultures and backgrounds to expand the scholar's perspectives and knowledge. The English Department at Wayside: Sci-Tech High School places a large emphasis on culturally and linguistically diverse texts, in order to ensure that scholars are reading works from a variety of diverse authors. By incorporating these diverse sources into curriculum and instruction, Wayside: Sci-Tech High School ensures that scholars are being presented with opportunities for international mindedness and global citizenship.

Wayside: Sci-Tech High School also promotes sheltered instructional strategies in content area classrooms in order to support English learners, and faculty receive monthly training on best practices and strategies in language acquisition and the resources to implement these strategies in the classroom. In addition, many resources are used to support and develop the mother tongue. Parents are also informed of these practices and resources through ESL Parent Night and individual parent teacher conferences. These resources include:

- Bilingual dictionaries and content area glossaries (for some classes)
- Textbooks in mother tongue (in some classes)

- DuoLingo, Rosetta Stone, and other language learning app
- Explicit vocabulary instruction, with a focus on cognates and root words

Language will not be the barrier to educational opportunities (IB):

Language acquisition assistance is available through formal instruction and informal support from qualified faculty with background and degrees in second language acquisition. Scholars who are identified as needing assistance attend English language classes where the focus is on the language of social interaction, science, math, language arts and social studies while concurrently attending classes within the state curriculum. As they move through English language classes, they continue to receive language support from faculty as needed.

Language profile of the school

The primary language of Wayside: Sci-Tech High School is English. Our population of scholars receiving ESL services generally ranges between 40% and 45% of our student body. Spanish, Korean, and English are the other mother tongue languages spoken at STHS.

Language policy in the DP (Language A, Language B, Ab Initio)

The IB's Diploma Programme (DP) promotes the attention to language learning at STHS. It is a stated expectation that all scholars entering 9th grade, will begin, or in some cases continue, the study of a second language. In DP, all scholars have the opportunity to continue their study of a second language, with the goal of both linguistic and cultural fluency.

Scholars enter the IB Diploma Programme or course candidacy during their 11th grade and continue through their Senior year. During this 2 years programme, STHS's IB DP programme will deepen language skills for scholars with an emphasis on learning for cultural fluency. The Language B program at the Diploma level emphasizes communication in multiple cultural contexts, thus allowing scholars to learn language specifically for the goal of global communication and cultural understanding. As mentioned before, DP/course candidate scholars will be required to continue their study of the target language through their senior year unless their schedule prohibits the ability to continue the study of the target language.

Scholars who join the Diploma Programme and have shown fluency in a language other than English based on an approved language proficiency assessment are given the opportunity to study that language as a literature course in the IB Self-taught Language A category.

How is the language policy communicated?

Wayside Sci-Tech High School's Language Policy is published on the IB section of our school's website, thus accessible to all IB stakeholders in the Wayside community. All documents are accessible in English and Spanish. The language policy will also be translated into other languages represented by the mother tongue of our IB scholars on a case by case basis to ensure equitable access to scholars and their families. Also, at the end of the year a survey is sent by the IB coordinator for feedback.

Language Policy Review Process

This document was created through input from program teachers, Literacy Coordinator, Administration, ESOL coordinator, IB coordinator and in conjunction with IB support materials and in collaboration with other area school leaders who are going through this process. The IB Language Policy Committee will evaluate it every 2 years.

Resources

Learning in a language other than mother tongue in IB programmes, 2008.

Guidelines for developing a school language policy, 2008.

Guidelines for school self-reflection on its language policy, 2012.

Language and learning in IB programmes, 2001, (updated August 2014).

Programme Standards and Practices, 2018, (updated April 2020).

Diploma Programme: From principles into practice, 2015.