



PAHOKEE MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL

IB Programme Language Policy

School Language Profile and Philosophy

Pahokee Middle High School is a choice school, located in the small, rural community of Pahokee, Florida, next to Lake Okeechobee in Palm Beach County. This region is home to the largest sugar cane industry in the country. Ninety-seven of our students are minorities, with African-Americans and Hispanics making up the majority of our student body. While English is the main language of instruction at PMHS, for many of our parents, English is not the spoken language. We have students with diverse linguistic backgrounds such as Spanish, Haitian, Bengali, and Arabic.

We believe that language and literacy are the foundations to all learning. Therefore, every teacher at Pahokee Middle High School is a language teacher, helping to develop and foster reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in our students. We use language to communicate our ideas and emotions, as well as to develop our social skills and cultural awareness. We encourage students to value their primary language and culture, while at the same time respect and appreciate other languages and cultures. At PMHS we celebrate cultural and language diversity through engaging lessons and activities.

Our teachers:

- ✓ Design curriculums that support the development of interpersonal communicative skills and literacy in IB students
- ✓ Understand their role in implementing appropriate teaching practices that facilitate learner participation and engagement
- ✓ Demonstrate effective teaching practices that utilize constructivist approaches in activating prior knowledge and constructing personal meaning during instruction
- ✓ Foster meaningful interactions within the school community and provide a richness of school culture with intercultural awareness
- ✓ Build and reinforce students' sense of identity

Language Practices

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English is the school language of instruction. IB Students in grades 6th through 8th take Language Arts courses, and students in grades 9th and 10th grade course take either AICE Language course or English 1 and English 2. All Pahokee Middle High School Diploma candidates take the Group 1: English Language and Literature Higher Level exam in grade 12. We ensure that students:

- ✓ analyze a variety of texts, such as literary, non-literary, poetry, and prose
- ✓ utilize the internet and web tools to facilitate research for all internal and external assessments and follow the MLA referencing protocols for citations.
- ✓ receive the necessary help and interventions when having difficulties with the course
- ✓ progress through language development.

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (Spanish)

We offer Spanish as the language acquisition course from 6th through 12th grades. To meet graduation requirements, all PMHS students take at least two years of language acquisition, usually in the 9th and 10th grades. We offer Spanish B as the Group 2 subject in the Diploma curriculum. Ideally, students should enter the Diploma Programme with at least Spanish 1 and Spanish 2 completed. For students who have taken only one year of Spanish prior to senior year we offer Spanish ab initio SL. All IB students, 6th through 12th, should be able to transfer the skills learned in language acquisition courses to other subjects, whereby utilizing all IB teachers as language teachers. In addition, all teachers should

inculcate in students an intercultural awareness, understanding, empathy, and open-mindedness to others.

Language Support

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION (ESE)

PMHS is committed to providing exceptional students a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in accordance with federal, state, and local mandates. In keeping with this philosophy, the school:

- ✓ provides every exceptional student with an appropriate individualized education program (IEP)
- ✓ offers exceptional students services that are available to every other student
- ✓ provides placement alternatives that enable students to be educated in the least restrictive environment
- ✓ encourages the participation of parents in the educational process
- ✓ ensures the right to due process and equal protection under the law

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

With the help of the school district's Multicultural Education Department, PMHS ensures the academic progress of ELLs through the following:

- ✓ Support services in schools to comply with District, State, and Federal requirements
- ✓ Professional learning opportunities to offer instructional strategies and support aligned to the unique needs of ELLs in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Dual Language programs
- ✓ Bilingual/bicultural counseling and social services to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of English Language Learners
- ✓ Facilitation of ESOL required training to satisfy requirements of the Florida Consent Decree
- ✓ Language related instructional resources aligned to the standards and designed to meet the needs of English Language Learners
- ✓ Advocacy for all students to ensure equitable educational opportunities are provided at all schools
- ✓ Parent engagement opportunities to increase parental involvement
- ✓ Allocation of resources to schools to serve English Language Learners
- ✓ Support families with student registration through the Welcome Center
- ✓ Translation and interpretation services to provide comprehensible input for students and families.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of School and Administration

- ✓ Provide professional development training of language teachers
- ✓ Provide resources to teachers and students for language development
- ✓ Communicate the values and expectations of the IBO to teachers, parents, students, and community stakeholders
- ✓ Deliver resources for library and media services
- ✓ Attract and retain highly qualified and experienced language teachers to support the program
- ✓ Ensure that the IB learner profile is firmly entrenched in the school culture
- ✓ Encourage IB teacher articulation meetings to foster an interdisciplinary approach to learning

IB Coordinators

- ✓ Collaborate with the ELL Coordinator to monitor student progress
- ✓ Inform all the staff of IB procedures and assessment practices
- ✓ Oversee the implementation of the language program
- ✓ Ensure that appropriate textbooks, resources, and facilities are available
- ✓ Ensure that parents are informed of their student's progress in language acquisition and development
- ✓ Organize meetings for vertical and horizontal planning with language teachers

Spanish Language Teachers

- ✓ Collaborate with English and Spanish B department teachers to ensure smooth transitions of student skill acquisition between instructional levels
- ✓ Focus on the assessment of student learning outcomes in language proficiency more so than covering subject content in textbooks
- ✓ Develop discrete skills in students through concentrated instruction in reading, writing, speaking and listening exercises

IB Teachers

- ✓ Plan instructional strategies, identify instructional resources for language teaching, and to address the goals and objectives of the IB Programme
- ✓ Assign meaningful and varied tasks to students that encourage proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening language skills
- ✓ Provide timely written and verbal descriptive feedback to students on assignments and assessments
- ✓ Communicate students' academic progress with parents

School Community

- ✓ Offer tutoring and additional help for struggling students
- ✓ Organize culturally diverse celebrations/activities

Policy Review

Last reviewed: September 2022

The policy will be reviewed: Annually

Policy Committee: IB assistant principal, MYP and DP coordinators, ELL coordinator, department chairs

Supporting Documents

Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy, 2008

Language and Learning in IB Programmes, 2011

Learning in a Language Other Than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes, 2008

Programme Standards and Practices, 2014

(Revised: January 2016, May 2019; Updated: November 2020. Revised: August 2021, September 2022)