

## Mercyhurst Preparatory School

### IB DP Language Policy

Mercyhurst Preparatory School recognizes that language is fundamental to all learning because it permeates the entire curriculum. Therefore, we believe in ongoing language development for all students and we foster the development of English as the language of instruction, world languages, and the mother tongue.

Every teacher at Mercyhurst Preparatory School is a language teacher and recognizes the importance of that role within the IB philosophy. By integrating language into every aspect of the curriculum, we are teaching students the importance of culture, diversity, and sensitivity toward others.

Consistent with the International Baccalaureate, Mercyhurst Prep believes that:

- Language is the primary means of communicating and learning
- The acquisition of language is a life-long process and is a central component of intellectual and personal growth
- Proficiency earned in one language is transferable to other languages, and language proficiency aids the student in acquiring competencies in other curricular areas
- Language is an expression of culture and should be valued
- The development of the mother tongue language is critical for maintaining one's cultural identity
- Language learning promotes international and multicultural understanding
- All teachers are language teachers
- Teachers must strive to recognize the language needs of all students and work to serve these needs
- Equity of access to IB courses is a fundamental right of all qualified students

The Mercyhurst Preparatory community aims to:

- Enable students to learn and use language effectively, appropriately, accurately, and confidently
- Develop oral and written communication
- Provide a variety of opportunities for students to develop and use language skills
- Develop student awareness of the role of language in all areas of the curriculum
- Encourage students to explore language and literature as a means to understand the differing perspectives of people from diverse cultures

Schoolwide expectations:

- As a graduation requirement, each MPS student must successfully complete at least two years of second language study
- MPS recommends pursuit of three to four years of study of a second language

#### IB DP Courses:

- The language of instruction in the program is English.
- English HL and SL are offered for Language A: Literature
- Spanish SL and French SL are offered for Language B
- On a case by case basis, School Supported Self-Taught Language A: Literature is offered in Chinese; qualified first language tutors must be arranged

#### Mother Tongues:

Mercyhurst Preparatory School recognizes the need to have a system in place for respecting and supporting a student's mother tongue. Mercyhurst Prep's partnership with PIA for housing of international students affords access to a translator to facilitate communications between school staff, students, and families.

#### Extracurricular Language Opportunities:

- French Club
- Spanish Club
- Chinese Culture Club
- International Club

We recognize that effective implementation and expansion of this language policy will require conscious commitment and development among school personnel. This policy is intended to be a working document to be reviewed and updated at least biennially.