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language framework for International Baccalaureate



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learning | **as unique** | as every student



**Calgary Board
of Education**

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Introduction

The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) has a long-standing relationship with International Baccalaureate (IB) in order to provide a diploma programme for students who choose academic enrichment in their high school career. The IB programme provides a comprehensive, balanced and challenging curriculum with a strong emphasis in the ideals of international understanding and responsible citizenship. Through enrolment in the IB programme students are provided with the opportunity to:

- utilize grade 11 and 12 for intensive university preparation
- undertake rigorous pre-university courses
- receive a year's worth of academic credit upon entry to the University of Calgary (for IB Diploma students)
- promote international understanding through shared academic experience

The International Baccalaureate programme is offered in five Calgary Board of Education high schools:

- Sir Winston Churchill High School (Area I)
- John G. Diefenbaker High School (Area II)
- Lester B. Pearson High School (Area III)
- Western Canada High School (Area IV)
- Henry Wise Wood High School (Area V)

The International Baccalaureate programme provides defined guidelines and policies that an IB school or cluster of schools is responsible for (*Guide to school authorization: Diploma Programme*). One aspect of accountability is the development of a language policy that is designed to “develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.” (*Guidelines for developing a school language policy, 2007*)

A language policy is to be aligned with the philosophy, policy and procedures of the schools, in the case of the CBE with the jurisdiction, and be consistent with the principles of IB.

In order to address the accountability requirement of the International Baccalaureate programme, the Calgary Board of Education is defining a language policy framework that is inclusive of the continued work with language and English language learning in a large, multicultural jurisdiction. This framework, including a model of reporting, takes into consideration the unique social and demographic context of each high school. The framework is also designed to be dynamic, with a review every three to five years.

Background

Canada is a bilingual country, where English and French are the languages that frame Canadian culture. Canada is also a multicultural society that shapes the demographics of Calgary and the Calgary Board of Education and provides an internationally-minded learning environment in every CBE school. The Calgary Board of Education prepares students for life through a focus on four goals:

- academic: excellent results
- citizenship: equipping student to become global citizens
- character: doing what is right
- personal development: a lifelong pursuit

In 2011 the CBE demographics of were:

- 26% English Language Learners (previously called English as a Second Language learners)
- 7% attended French Immersion programs
- 2% attended bilingual language programs (German, Mandarin, Spanish)

- 26% attended second-language courses that included French, German, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Blackfoot and Cree.
- **Statement on # countries/languages represented in 5 high schools.**

Expectations for services and programming for English language learners are outlined in:

- Alberta Education Programs of Study
- Alberta Education Policy 1.5.1,
- Alberta Education High School ESL Program of Study
- **High School Guides to Implementation**
- ESL Language Proficiency Benchmarks¹
- CBE Administrative Regulation 3086: English as a Second Language²
- CBE Administrative Regulation 3044.4: French Language Education³.

International Baccalaureate Requirements

The *Guidelines for developing a school language policy* recommends the following principles be addressed in a language policy:

- 1) recognize that, since language is central to learning, all teacher are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication
- 2) outline how the development and maintenance of the mother tongue for all learners is to be supported
- 3) ensure that there are practices in place to provide inclusion and equity of access to the IB programme(s) offered by the school for all learners, including those who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue
- 4) describe how the language of the host country is to be promoted
- 5) recognize that administrators, teachers, librarians and other school staff will require professional development in the fields of language learning and teaching, and on how to make sure the language policy becomes a working document
- 6) consider that resources and practices are to be used to involve parents in planning their children's language profile and development

Calgary Board of Education Language Philosophy

Language learning in the Calgary Board of Education is supported through two key documents:

- Framework for French and International Languages (2012)
- Standards of Practice For English Language Learners K-12 (2011)

The CBE philosophy of language learning closely aligns with the International Baccalaureate philosophy of intercultural understanding and respect.

¹ Proficiency Benchmarks Grades 10-12:

<http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/eslapb/documents/ESL%20Benchmarks%20Division%20Levels%20Summary%20Gr%2010-12.pdf>

² Administrative Regulation 3086 <http://www.cbe.ab.ca/policies/policies/AR3086.pdf>

³ Administrative Regulation 3044.4 <http://www.cbe.ab.ca/policies/policies/AR3044-4.pdf>

Through learning a second language, students have the potential to become global citizens who:

- have the skills, attitudes and values that enable them to work together across countries and cultures
- develop intercultural competencies and communication skills necessary to understand others
- value diversity
- have a global mindset that enables them to see the world from multiple perspectives
- are able to communicate in other languages

Framework for French and International Languages, p.3.

Students who need to acquire English as an additional language are supported in their academic development through a wide range of programming options and personalized instruction strategies that depend on the students' background, grade level and language proficiency level. For example, it is the responsibility of each school to plan and implement appropriate programming which includes:

- explicit English language instruction, i.e. the intentional teaching of language form, function and vocabulary, especially as required in academic subjects; the intentional design of learning activities that address language and conceptual understandings unique to English Language Learners
- differentiation and modification to enable students to access Programs of Study, i.e. attention to the outcomes outlined in the Alberta Programs of Study with an alteration of materials, assessment tasks, learner tasks, or teaching strategies to reflect the unique needs of English Language Learners
- cultural competence, i.e. a pedagogical approach that incorporates and honours diverse cultural perspectives and way of learning; an organizational approach that reflects diversity in everything from hiring practice, philosophy and development plans, to instructional content and materials selection.

Standards of Practice for English Language Learners K-12: A tool to support ELL Programming,

Language Opportunities in the Calgary Board of Education

Language opportunities for students who are interested in full or part-time International Baccalaureate in grades 10 to 12 are many. Pathways to academic success are facilitated by guidance counsellors, learning leaders and an IB Coordinator in all participating high schools.

French and International Languages

- French Immersion: French Language Arts, Social Studies in French, Math in French, Science in French
- French as a Second Language Grades 10-12: 125 hours of French instruction, including development of respect for cultural and linguistic diversity
- Spanish Bilingual Grades 10-12: 25 credits in Spanish Language Arts and another course
- Language and Culture Grades 10-12: Spanish, German, Mandarin, Korean
- Advanced Placement: French, German, Spanish, Chinese Language and Culture
- International Baccalaureate French Immersion: French Language Arts B HL
- International Baccalaureate French B, French ab initio SL
- International Baccalaureate Spanish B, Spanish ab initio SL
- International Baccalaureate Mandarin B

English Language Learning

- [English for Academic Success 35](#)
- [ESL Expository English 15, 25](#)
- [ESL Introduction to Canadian Studies 15, 25](#)
- [ESL Introduction to Mathematics 15](#) (Level 1 (limited formal schooling) and Level 1, 2)
- Alberta Education Distance Learning courses
- Rosetta Stone on-line courses

CBE response to IB requirements

1) Teaching

The Calgary Board of Education believes that every teacher has a professional responsibility to facilitate language and communication learning with every student. Teachers align their practice with the Alberta Education Teacher Quality Standard⁴ expectations and the International Baccalaureate learner profile.

2) Maintenance of mother tongue

Due to the high number of heritage languages and cultures that are represented in the student population of all CBE high schools, it is not reasonable to be able to support each language through staffing. Heritage languages and mother tongue are supported through access to the community, Cultural Liaison staff who visit schools on request and through other students within the school. As the IB diploma programme courses are assessed in English, French and Spanish⁵, these are the languages in which the Calgary Board of Education focusses support for students who choose the IB program.

3) Equity and access for those with different heritage language

a) Assessment for placement

Non-Canadian citizens are assessed by CBE admissions, assessment and settlement department for English language proficiency. Students may be assigned a code that would entitle them to additional supports at the school level.

The English Language Learner (ELL) learning leader in each school may do additional testing (including Canadian Test of Basic Skills) to assess readiness for English A1 HL and if English reading and comprehension level is high enough for Group 3, 4 and 5 courses. The recommendations are shared with parents and IB coordinator before final course selection.

b) School support

- Interpreters are available for parent/teacher/student interviews
- Trained ELL teachers within school support and build capacity in curriculum design, lesson planning and assessment with all staff working with English Language Learners
- ELL students can access an extra year of high school funding to spread courses over more time

⁴ Available: <http://education.alberta.ca/department/policy/standards/teachqual.aspx>

⁵ *Diploma Programme assessment: Principles and practice, p. 14.*

- Technology support through translation programs are used to support teachers working with students in a requested language
- Library resources for ELL have leveled reading and adapted versions of classics (e.g. graphic novels)
- Students requiring full IB may enrol in non-IB English to improve proficiency in English
- Locally developed courses

c) Strategies used for English language learners

Standards of practice within the CBE recommend several models of programming options depending on numbers, grades and proficiency levels.

- Smaller class sizes with ELL trained teaching staff
- Cross-grade classes organized by proficiency level
- Sheltered core courses with ELL support for core subject teacher, often as an adjunct class in high school (for Levels 1,2 and 3)
- Resource tutorial with ELL trained staff and peer support
- Supported integration with differentiated instruction and teacher support
- Extra time for assignments
- ELL students enrolled in English A1 study literary works in their mother tongue; assisted by parents, teacher and ELL coordinator

4) Promotion of Host Language

Canada is a bilingual country, where English and French are the languages that frame Canadian culture. In Alberta, English is the predominant language of education, with opportunities for Francophone education and for French Immersion and French as Second Language learning within public education. Opportunities for students whose heritage language is not English are discussed in the section on “Language Opportunities in the Calgary Board of Education.”

Five high schools are host to the International Baccalaureate programme. Each school represents a different student demographic and adjusts its language programming to meet the needs of the students.

5) Professional development

A model of just-in-time professional development is used to encourage professional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012⁶), where communities of teachers and specialists within and across schools use best and next practices together to improve student learning.

6) Parent involvement

Engaging our public, including parental involvement, is a key strategy of the Calgary Board of Education.⁷ Parents are an integral part of the conversation regarding the academic pathways of every student.

⁶ Hargreaves, A., Fullan, M. (2012). *Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School*. New York: Teachers College Press.

⁷ Annual Education and Results Report 2010-2011 and Three-Year Education Plan 2011-2014: <http://www.cbe.ab.ca/aboutus/documents/1011AERR.pdf>

- parents are informed about all student assessment and proficiencies in written and oral language
- parents are communicated to in ways that inform them, including through translators
- parents are invited to volunteer and offer opportunities to share cultural and linguistic diversity

Adjustment Cycle

The Calgary Board of Education focuses school and system planning on a problem solving approach to improved student learning, based on the model from *Data Wise*.⁸

Data collection includes personalizing learning for each student by creating a student language learning profile, done in collaboration with school assessment and strategies staff, teachers, parents and the student.

Data is also aggregated across each school (Appendix I) and across all five schools in order to inform planning improvement for the next steps in offering the best International Baccalaureate program possible.



The cycle of data collection, planning and action takes place every three to five years, guided by the demographic and staffing changes that naturally occur in the life of a school

⁸ Boudett, K., City, E., Murnane, R., (2005). *Data Wise: A Step-by-Step Guide to Using Assessment Results to Improve Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press

APPENDIX I

International Baccalaureate Language Policy Data Collection Tool

School _____

Year _____

Language Profiles:

The language profile information is taken from whole school data, representing inclusive access to a program of choice.

Language(s) of instruction

- English
- French through Immersion
- French as a Second Language
- Spanish through Immersion
- Spanish language and culture
- Mandarin language and culture

Other(s) _____

Number of heritage languages spoken by students enrolled in school _____

Number of countries represented by students enrolled in school _____

Percentage of student population where English is not their first language _____%

Percentage of student population who are enrolled in a second or third language _____%

Second Language Teaching

Languages offered (HL) _____

Languages offered (SL) _____

ab initio language(s) _____

Number of teachers specifically assigned to international languages _____

English Language Learning

Number of ELL teachers/learning leaders assigned to support language learning _____

Number of ELL students enrolled in Locally Developed or on-line courses _____