**New Town High School**

**International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme**

**Language Policy**

This Language Policy reflects New Town High School’s staff agreed upon philosophy to promote, nurture and establish academic honesty as a core principle. In keeping with the mission of the school and requirements of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IB), a language policy has been agreed upon by the teaching faculty to inform teaching and learning in the classroom, to guide curriculum, and to involve families in our goal to educate children in an internationally-minded environment.

# I. Vision and Mission

The mission of New Town High School is to prepare students for success as knowledgeable and global citizens, future leaders, and life-long learners. We commit to a rigorous 21st century learning environment that is safe and supportive. We exist to help our students grow into resilient, empathetic, and inquisitive individuals who think both critically and creatively and possess the courage and conviction to take action. This will ensure that all students develop their individual potential based on the standards outlined by Baltimore County Public Schools.

# II. Philosophy

At New Town High School, we understand that through language and language learning we make connections and become globally minded. The staff at New Town High School recognize and emphasize the importance of supporting the many facets of language for all students. Language can take the form of verbal, nonverbal and written communication, which are all instrumental in supporting our students’ ability to interact with and respond to the world around them. Students should have the knowledge necessary to apply literacy and language skills to varying concepts to build deeper understandings. Students should be immersed in all forms of language through authentic and meaningful contexts. Students need multiple opportunities to practice and then apply language skills at a level that is developmentally appropriate and responsive. As such, all teachers commit themselves to be teachers of language as they promote effective communication skills that are necessary to be competitive in a global society.

**III. Language Profile:**

English is the main language spoken at home for our students. At New Town High School, we have students who speak the following languages at home:

* Yoruba
* Igbo
* Swahili
* Spanish

The language of instruction at New Town High School is English (Language A) and students then take an additional language for a minimum of two years. We offer Spanish and French (Language B). Through the MYP language acquisition classes, we aim to help students to be successful in the DP Language B classes and exams. English is the main language spoken at home for our students.

English is used for administration, management, planning etc. Interpreters are available through Baltimore County Public Schools, at any time via phone and scheduled in person.

# Language Needs of the Community

Many of our students go on to a two-year or four-year university after earning their high school diploma. The University of Maryland school system requires a minimum of two years of second language acquisition courses in order to be considered for admission. The Maryland State Department of Education offers varying completer options for students to earn their high school diploma. The world language completer requires two years of language acquisition courses at the high school level. High school graduates who can function in two or more languages are equipped with the knowledge and skills to participate successfully in college, careers, and a diverse 21st century society. The Maryland State Seal of Biliteracy is established to recognize and reward excellence in language learning as measured by rigorous proficiency assessments.

Beginning in School Year 2017-18 (and for some 2016-17 graduates), students who qualify will be awarded the Seal of Biliteracy at graduation. The Maryland Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by participating school systems that recognizes a student’s high level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing in one or more languages.

Language acquisition waivers will be provided for students in New Town’s CALS program or for any student with an IEP who have demonstrated an inability to obtain proficiency due to their linguistic difficulties in the mother tongue.

**IV. Classroom Instruction**

# Language Learning in Practice in the Classroom

All teachers are involved in teaching language and literacy to our students. Baltimore County’s literacy initiative requires that each class, regardless of content, incorporates some aspect of literacy content, for at least 30 minutes.

In practice, students receive support in the language classroom in a variety of ways including:

· Visuals

· Tutoring from the honor societies

· Access to graphic organizers

· Access to resources provided ahead of time by the teachers via Schoology

· Checks for understanding

· Opportunities to redo work to demonstrate mastery of concept

· Feedback from the teacher

# MYP Requirements

Students in grades nine and ten receive instruction in English two to three days per week for 85 minutes each day. Students also receive instruction in either Spanish or French for 85 minutes per day two to three days per week. Criterion are assessed throughout language courses and feedback is provided to students and families on a regular basis to ensure progress.

All students regardless of mother tongue are provided access to learning a second language. Students can choose either Spanish or French in addition to their English course.

We believe that incorporation of language acquisition as well as mother tongue preservation are ways to address the learner profile attributes. Our students understand the importance of each learner profile attribute and are consistently working towards becoming an IB learner.

## V. Mother Tongue Development

New Town High School recognizes the importance of supporting the mother tongue in order to preserve culture, communicate with parents and families, and to support students cognitively. For bilingual students, we recommend placing students in language acquisition courses where literature, science, and current events are integral to the class content so as to develop academic vocabulary and strengthen knowledge across the disciplines.

1. **ESOL**

Baltimore County Public School’s ESOL Office approves student’s proficiency in English before they are sent to our school. If additional accommodations our professional counseling team will create a plan to assist students and teachers in delivery of instruction.

1. **Language Support:**

### a. (Media Center)

New Town High School’s library offers online as well as print resources in a variety of languages. Students can easily access language resources. Our databases also offer resources online in a variety of languages other than English.

# b. (Supporting Language Development)

New Town High School is developing a Spanish language honor society to provide an outlet for students to connect with community members and utilize mother tongues to complete community service. We work closely with families and community members to ensure collaboration and cooperation.

# c. (Parental and Family Language Support)

Language policy information is made available on the school website. Fundamental documents can be made available upon request in Spanish and other languages.It is our goal to involve families in our students’ learning plan and encourage second language acquisition as well as preservation of mother tongue. Language policy information is made available on the school website. Fundamental documents can be made available upon request in Spanish and other languages.It is our goal to involve families in our students’ learning plan and encourage second language acquisition as well as preservation of mother tongue

# d. (Support from the ESOL Office)

Baltimore County Public School’s ESOL Office approves student’s proficiency in English before they are sent to our school. If additional accommodations our professional counseling team will create a plan to assist students and teachers in delivery of instruction.

e. **(Technological Support)**

Students at New Town High School assigned a device for use throughout the school year. Teachers utilize this technology to promote disciplinary literacy in all classes via tools that promote collaboration, inquiry, and feedback.

## VIII. Interdisciplinary responsibility for language development (Further Considerations)

Teachers and staff are committed to engaging in continuing professional development around the topics of language learning and literacy throughout the school year. Inquiry-based instruction and authentic assessment are key aspects in each classroom and support language acquisition. The library media specialist is an invaluable resource and is available for professional development as well as classroom instructional support.

**IX. Alignment with all policies**

# Alignment to the Mission Statement

Our mission statement explains that our goal is to prepare students for success as knowledgeable and global citizens who are empathetic, caring and principled. Language is essential to being globally competitive and being multilingual is the best way to communicate and open doors for our students.

# Alignment to IB Principles

Our policy recognizes and represents the MYP principle of communication by promoting second language learning as well as mother tongue preservation and development. We support a holistic language learning environment that is rich in opportunity and real-world application and experiences. We also work to allow our students to see and understand perspectives that may be different from their own. The IB embraces multiculturalism and our policy of language learning and communication reflects this same embrace.

# Alignment to the Admissions Policy

Our language policy aligns with the admissions policy by accepting all students from within our zoned and out of zone area regardless of mother tongue or language experience. It is our goal to provide support for all students and provide them with a multicultural education and a language- rich environment.

**X. Communication and Revision**

The Language Policy is available to all stakeholders on our school website. New Town High School’s Language Policy was developed in collaboration with teacher, leaders and New Town’s magnet office coordinators during the 2017-2018 school year. The Language Policy will be reevaluated on a yearly basis.

**X1. Resources**

IBO. Language Policy Document. [ONLINE] Available https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/ib-language-policy-en.pdf