



# LA JOYA HIGH SCHOOL

A COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE



*"THE STRENGTH OF THE PACK IS THE WOLF, AND THE STRENGTH OF THE WOLF IS THE PACK"*

## **IB Language Policy**

### **Philosophy**

La Joya Community High School's International Baccalaureate program serves a student population and community with diverse language needs and experiences. We welcome these students and strive to create a learning environment that validates diverse language backgrounds while preparing students to enter and become successful in the global marketplace. Our campus remains a place of love, acceptance, and support for ALL.

In this effort, IB program faculty and staff:

- Recognize that all teachers, regardless of content area, are language teachers.
- Prepare all students to be fluent in English.
- Encourage students to pursue competency in multiple languages.
- Foster an environment where all languages and cultures are appreciated and valued.
- Assist students in maintaining and developing their home language whenever possible.
- Utilize instructional materials that integrate multicultural and diverse perspectives.
- Provide extra support to staff, students, and the school community through counseling services and community partnerships.
- Maintain safe campuses that are free from discrimination and hate.

### **Student Profile**

Students attending La Joya Community High School represent a diversity of language needs and experiences. Some of the populations we serve include:

- English-speaking students with limited or no exposure to a Language B.
- English-speaking students with some exposure to a Language B through primary or middle school experience.
- Bilingual Hispanic students who have acquired both English and Spanish since birth.
- Bilingual Hispanic students whose parents speak Spanish only but are English proficient because of attending school.
- Bilingual students of English and another language (Arabic, Farsi, French, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Spanish, Swahili, etc.).

### **Language A**

La Joya Community High School offers a developed, engaging Language A curriculum in the English language for all IB students.

## **Language B**

La Joya Community High School has implemented a Language B program that allows students the opportunity to achieve proficiency in one or more second languages.

### **IB for Freshmen and Sophomores (MYP)**

Students are required to pursue competency and literacy in a second language, guided by the fundamental IB concepts of holistic learning, intercultural awareness, and communication. Students receive daily Language B instruction and may choose from available language options including Spanish and French. Students with high proficiency levels in their Language B are evaluated using advanced criteria.

### **IB for Juniors and Seniors (DP)**

The IB program offers students a strong, engaging Language B curriculum that leads to communicative competency and prepares students for Standard Level Language B exams, Ab Initio Standard Level, or Higher-Level exams. Students may choose to study available languages including Spanish and French as Language B. Self-study has been encouraged in the student's home language, and Language B ab initio is offered, when appropriate.

### **English Language Learners (ELL)**

La Joya Community High School is required by Arizona State law to adhere to specific policy guidelines with students whose home language is not English. In Arizona, students whose home language is not English are classified as PHLOTE (Primary or Home Language Other Than English) students. By law, these students are required to demonstrate English proficiency on the AZELLA (Arizona English Language Learner Assessment) test, adopted by the State Board of Education. Students are administered the AZELLA test at least annually until they demonstrate proficiency, at which point they are reclassified as FEP (Fluent English Proficient) students.

While classified as PHLOTE, students are required to be enrolled in an ELD (English Language Development) program. School districts are legally required to offer ELD programs consisting of a four-hour daily block of English (Conversation, Reading, Writing, & Grammar). This requirement makes it increasingly difficult to provide the full IB curriculum for PHLOTE students. To meet the requirements of IB (students receive instruction in multiple content areas), parents of PHLOTE students may choose to opt out of the ELD program's required 4-hour language block so that they may experience the full IB curriculum.

All teachers are required by law to be Structured English Immersion (SEI) trained. SEI best practices and instructional strategies are employed by teachers in language instruction throughout the curriculum.

## **Support for English-Speaking Students with Language Development Needs**

La Joya Community High School recognizes that English proficiency extends beyond native language status. Some English-speaking students may require additional support to develop grade-level academic English proficiency due to various factors including learning differences, interrupted education, reading difficulties, or limited exposure to academic language. Our IB program provides comprehensive support for all students who need assistance developing English language proficiency, regardless of their home language background:

### **Identification and Assessment**

- Regular literacy screening and benchmark assessments to identify students reading below grade level.
- Diagnostic assessments to determine specific areas of language need (vocabulary, comprehension, written expression, academic discourse).
- Collaboration with special education teams to identify students with language-based learning disabilities.
- Progress monitoring to adjust support levels based on student growth.

### **Instructional Supports**

- Differentiated instruction with scaffolding strategies including graphic organizers, sentence frames, and vocabulary supports.
- Explicit instruction in academic vocabulary and discipline-specific terminology across all content areas.
- Strategic use of multimedia resources, audio texts, and assistive technology to support comprehension.
- Structured literacy interventions for students with reading difficulties, including phonics, fluency, and comprehension strategies.
- Writing support through writing workshops, peer review, and conferencing.
- Modified assignments and extended time when appropriate to allow students to demonstrate knowledge while building language skills.

### **Academic Support Services**

- Access to reading intervention programs and literacy support classes.
- Tutoring services before school, after school, and during advisory periods.
- Small group instruction focused on specific language skills.
- Access to the writing center for support with academic writing tasks.
- Summer bridge programs to build academic language skills.

### **Specialized Support**

- Collaboration between general education teachers, special education staff, and intervention specialists.
- 504 plans and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students with documented disabilities affecting language development.

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- Speech and language services for students with communication disorders.
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to provide increasingly intensive interventions based on student response.

Through these comprehensive supports, we ensure that all students, regardless of their language background or proficiency level, have access to the rigorous IB curriculum and the opportunity to develop the academic language skills necessary for success.

### **Home Language Support and Multilingual Achievement**

La Joya Community High School is committed to the continued support and development of students' first languages. We have made significant strides in recognizing and celebrating multilingual achievement, as evidenced by our outstanding Seal of Biliteracy program that reached new heights last year.

### **Seal of Biliteracy Program**

Our Seal of Biliteracy program represents one of our most important accomplishments in supporting and serving students. This program recognizes students who have attained high levels of proficiency in English and one or more additional languages. Last year, our program achieved unprecedented success, demonstrating our commitment to multilingual excellence and preparing students for success in our global society.

### **Language-Specific Support**

When appropriate and practical, students have access to heritage language courses designed specifically to enhance student literacy and fluency in their home language across multiple languages, including but not limited to:

- Spanish for Spanish Speakers courses.
- Heritage language support for speakers of other languages (Arabic, Farsi, French, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Spanish, Swahili, and others represented in our community).
- Preparation opportunities for students to take advanced language examinations as part of the IB program.

Our continued efforts to expand language opportunities include developing pathways for heritage speakers of various languages to demonstrate their proficiency and earn recognition through both our Seal of Biliteracy program and IB assessments. All IB students and their families are encouraged to maintain and enrich their home language by continuing to speak, read, and write the language in their home. Translation services are available in multiple languages through our English Language Acquisition support.

## **Intercultural Awareness**

La Joya Community High School is dedicated to developing intercultural awareness and international mindedness amongst our students.

Our school promotes cultural awareness through various activities and opportunities:

- Students in language courses and language clubs celebrate cultural awareness with opportunities to showcase histories, cultures, foods, folklore, dress, music, and traditions.
- Literature classes provide students with access to multicultural readings and studies.
- Students in theatre, music, and art experience, study, and perform works from a variety of cultures.
- Cultural clubs supporting diversity include language-specific organizations and multicultural groups, such as French or Spanish Honor Society.
- Annual cultural celebrations and assemblies showcase the diversity of our student body.
- International exchange programs, international travel and partnerships.

The media center ensures diverse books and resources in multiple languages are available for student checkout and reference, including rotating displays that highlight cultures from around the world.

## **Support Services**

Our administration, support services team (counselors, social workers, etc.), and community liaisons are prepared to provide comprehensive support by:

- Being a place of love and support for students.
- Continuing to provide high-quality education to all who enter our campus.
- Providing opportunities for counseling services for students and staff.
- Working with community organizations to coordinate information, services, and support for students, staff, and parents.
- Remaining committed to maintaining safe campuses.

## **Policy Implementation and Review**

It is the role of the IB Coordinator to ensure the effective implementation of this policy on campus. Teachers are responsible for being familiar with this policy and ensuring that their course instruction aligns with its principles. All new teachers receive an overview of our IB policies from the IB Coordinator during orientation.

This policy reflects our commitment to multilingual education and international mindedness for all students in our IB program.

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*This policy will be reviewed annually by IB faculty and coordinators to ensure it remains current and effective in meeting the needs of our diverse student population.*

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