

IDEA College Preparatory Donna International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Language Policy

Philosophy

At IDEA College Preparatory (ICP) Donna, we believe that being able to communicate in more than one language will open many doors to our students and fosters international mindedness. Therefore, we embrace our students' mother tongue as well as proficiency and literacy in more than one language.

Our Mission Statement

IDEA College Preparatory Donna is rewriting the story of underprivileged communities by creating a positive learning environment that equips students with the academic, social and leadership skills and international mindedness that are required to succeed in college and our global society.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

School Language Profile

Although we do not have a diversity of languages spoken at our school, we do have a great population of Spanish speakers. Most of these students have immigrated from Mexico, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. Some of these students struggle with the usage of the English language. We also have a number of students who are English dominant and may or may not speak a second language other than Spanish.

Specifications of our Language Program

Language of Instruction

- The official language of instruction at ICP Donna is English.
- Language A: English Literature HL

Language Acquisition

- All ICP Donna students are expected to be proficient in a 2nd language by the time they graduate from High School.
- Language B: Spanish HL and SL and AB Initio SL.

Enrichment

- Students whose mother tongue is Spanish are offered the opportunity to take a second Language A class in Spanish.
- This also gives them the opportunity to be eligible for the Bilingual IB Diploma.
- Language A: Spanish Language and Literature HL



AB Initio

- Diploma Candidates who struggle with second language acquisition are offered the option of taking Spanish AB Initio under Group 2.

Enrollment Policy for English Language Learners

Students are given a home language survey which helps guide what type of support students need upon entering our school. Students whose mother tongue is Spanish, are evaluated with a language proficiency test to assess their English level.

Our language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) meets before the 17th day of school to determine if students are ELL. The LPAC will distribute the proficiency levels of all students identified as ELL to teachers and ongoing evaluations are done throughout the year to check student progress and to determine if student needs are being met through the program.

Evaluation Policy for English Language Learners

The LPAC monitors students' progress by examining quarterly grades, writing samples and state mandated assessments. At the end of the academic year, students are evaluated to determine if they will exit the program or continue the program for the following year.

Once students transition out of the ESL program, support is given to them through the LPAC by monitoring quarterly grades and assessments. If the LPAC determines that students are not meeting academic expectations, students may be re-evaluated for the ESL program.

General Language Acquisition Practices

All teachers at ICP Donna are language teachers. They take personal responsibility to teach and help students develop language proficiency. The following are practices consistently implemented at our school.

Our goal, in working with English Language Learners (ELL), is to promote language acquisition, and master all content skills in the least restrictive environment through a supportive, school-wide climate that utilizes the following strategies & modifications below:

Classroom Strategies

- Involve students as active participants by offering hands on teaching aids.
- Make classroom activities structured and predictable.
- Focus on communication, not on errors.
- Give students responsibility for their own learning.





- Make Learning relevant to the students' experiences.
- Let the students work with peers.

Teacher Strategies

- Use facial expressions, gestures and body language.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Use pauses between phrases frequently.
- Use shorter sentences with simple syntax.
- Avoid an excess of idiomatic expressions, uncommon two-word verbs and passive voice.
- Stress high frequency vocabulary, repeat and review.
- Watch for comprehension and be ready to repeat or restate.
- Monitor and adapt language to ELL students.
- Learn a few words in the student native language.
- Let them know what you are doing for them.
- Teach most important unit concepts.
- Reduce non-essential details.
- Use visuals, graphic organizers and simple vocabulary.
- Include cooperative learning activities.
- Incorporate assistance for students when reading extensive texts.

In addition, our school academic strategist meets consistently with teachers to check on our English Language Learners' progress and needs. We also offer Rosetta Stone (a language acquisition software) to all Language Learners and have hired academic tutors to offer the necessary support so they can acquire the necessary language skills to master state and IB exams.

Mother-Tongue Support

In addition to offering English (language of instruction) support to our students, we make every effort to offer open communication in our students' mother tongue (Spanish). For example, all communication that goes home or that is required to be completed by the parents of our students is available in both, English and Spanish. School presentations and parent meetings are also offered in both languages. If these presentations are conducted solely in either Language A or B, our non-English speaking parents are provided with a translation mechanism that allows them to have a live translation of what is presented to the entire audience.

At ICP Donna, we embrace the mother tongue and culture of our students. Examples of these initiatives are our Global Festival, World Cup Soccer Game, and Weekly Trivia, among others.

Rosetta Stone is also available for students who do not speak English and need support in learning Spanish.



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