

Académie Lafayette

MYP and DP Language Policy



Académie Lafayette

Language Learning Philosophy

Language does much more than promote cognitive growth; it is crucial in maintaining cultural identity and emotional ability. The acquisition of more than one language and the maintenance of the mother tongue enrich personal growth and help facilitate international understanding. Language, by its very nature, is integrated into all areas of the curriculum; therefore, every teacher is considered a language teacher. Through our commitment to language learning:

- We aim to nurture an appreciation of the richness and diversity of language.
- We promote International-Mindedness and encourage multilingualism.
- We provide pathways to language acquisition for students in addition to supporting mother tongue languages.
- We provide support for students to be successful in language acquisition.
- We encourage students to take action and extend their language learning in ways that help their community.
- We ensure that every discipline includes support mechanisms for language learning, both written and spoken.
- We promote awareness of one's own language and culture.
- We believe that language learning is vital for social, emotional, and cognitive development.

Académie Lafayette has a strong and cohesive language policy that is made up of ten components:

1. An English language arts program grades K-12
2. A full, French language immersion program K-8
3. A third language acquisition program for students in grades 6-8 in either Spanish or Mandarin
4. A third language acquisition option for high school students continuing Spanish or Mandarin
5. A heritage Spanish option for students in grades 9-12 whose first language is Spanish
6. French acquisition program for students in grades 9-12 who were not a part of our K-8 immersion program
7. French Language and Literature for students continuing from the immersion program
8. Dual credit enrollment opportunities at UMKC for grades 10-12 so students can earn college credit for French Language and Literature courses.
9. Opportunity to graduate from high school with the Seal of Biliteracy from the state of Missouri
10. Opportunity to graduate from high school with a the Bilingual IB Diploma

Purpose of the Language Policy

This language policy is a working document developed by select staff, faculty, and administration for the Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme. The policy is consistent with the stipulated

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principles and practices of the IB. This document outlines our school's linguistic and academic goals and defines the program designed to help our students attain these goals.

This policy is intended to provide an overview of the guiding principles for language learning at Académie Lafayette which permeates the entire school curriculum through authentic contexts in a culturally rich and diverse environment. Our policy is a statement of agreement -- one to which the staff and the AL community are asked to commit so our school can achieve its mission.

French Immersion K-8

At Académie Lafayette's elementary and middle schools, the primary language for teaching, learning, and expressing is French. To this end, we strive for multilingualism for all students K-8. We operate under the belief that through language instruction, we are encouraging intercultural awareness, new perspectives, curiosity, and an appreciation for our world's diversity. Through our unique approach to language, students become communicators in a multilingual world.

Language and Literature and Mother Tongue Programs

All MYP students are required to take Language and Literature in English for 50 minutes per day, totaling 145 hours per year. These classes are very similar to the Language and Literature classes taught in French for students who are part of our immersion program. All students who are a part of our MYP and DP programs study at least two languages at a time, and at times study up to three.

English Language Learner Program

Académie Lafayette students whose mother tongue is not English, are administered the ACCESS for ELL's state mandated test annually. In addition to using this assessment data, the ELL team assesses student placement based upon the student's educational history from their home country and credits received in their home country.

- ELL students are annually tested as mandated by federal legislation with the ACCESS test. Results are analyzed yearly with regard to language development and growth.
- ELL students are placed into mainstream courses and language development courses throughout their progression in learning the English language.

Benefits of Bilingual Education

The use of an additional language for the learning and teaching of both content and language is assumed to bring considerable benefits, ranging from the development of intercultural knowledge, understanding, and communication skills, through diversified methods and forms of classroom practice to increased learners' motivation and confidence in both the language and the subject being taught. It is also believed to create a window of opportunity to study content through different perspectives, and to increase exposure to the language without requiring extra time in the curriculum. At Académie Lafayette, students are provided with ample opportunity to use their native language and French alternately. The ongoing interaction between the two linguistic systems lays the foundations for their mutually reciprocating relationship. As a result of this unique interrelationship between the two languages, students are expected

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to demonstrate a more sophisticated use of their first language: better text-developing skills, more complex and well-constructed sentences, and a more selective use of vocabulary.

Third Language Study Grades 6-8

The primary language of study will be in French. Students will also enroll in Language and Literature in French, as well as in English. When students enter 6th grade, they select a program of study for an additional language beyond French and English. They have two choices: Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. In addition to their Language and Literature courses, students engage in three hours of study for their chosen Language Acquisition course. Students who have an Individualized Learning Plan (IEP) that advises against the study of a third language are excused from the class and use this time meeting with special educational staff to meet IEP requirements.

Language Instruction at the High School 9-12

The primary language of study at the high school will be English. Académie Lafayette students who enroll at our International High School will continue the study of French Language and Literature in grades 9 and 10. As they continue their study of French as Language A or Language B, they will have an opportunity to pursue the Seal of Biliteracy from the state of Missouri, as well as pursue the Bilingual IB Diploma. These students will also continue to study either Spanish or Mandarin in grades 9 and 10. Students may choose to study Spanish and Mandarin in grades 11 and 12.

Students who join Académie Lafayette International High School in the 9th grade will begin their study of Language Acquisition French and continue all four years, meeting the Language B requirement of the Diploma Programme. These students also have an opportunity to pursue the Seal of Biliteracy from the state of Missouri. If students join us in grade 9 with prior experience in Spanish or Mandarin, they have the opportunity to continue their Language Acquisition study in that language starting in grade 9.

MYP and DP Languages Courses Offered

English Language and Literature (MYP and Group 1 DP HL/SL)

French Language and Literature (MYP and Group 1 DP SL)

French Language Acquisition (MYP grade 9-10 and Group 2 DP HL/SL)

Spanish Language Acquisition (MYP and Group 2 DP SL)

Mandarin Language Acquisition (MYP and Group 2 DP SL)

Environmental Science and Society in French (Group 4 DP SL)

Admissions Policy

Approximately 90% of our student body speak English at home. Académie Lafayette has a diverse population and over 10 languages are represented in our student body. We have students whose original

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mother tongues are Spanish, Mandarin, French, English, etc. Applicants enter Académie Lafayette one of two ways:

1. In kindergarten or first grade - This is to ensure that, from an early age, students have a solid foundation in the French language upon which they can build as they navigate higher grades and more sophisticated, academic language requirements.
2. Students who wish to enter Académie Lafayette in second through eighth grade, must take an exam to demonstrate French language proficiency at the corresponding grade level to which they are applying.
3. Students who wish to attend Académie Lafayette International High School starting in ninth grade, but have not been enrolled in K-8 are admitted based upon a lottery system.

AL has applied both the “pull-out” and the “push-in” methods when incorporating the new student to the AL community. When a child is pulled out of the class, he/she works one-on-one with a tutor who can speak the child’s first language and who is proficient in the second language. Being an immersion school, AL prefers the “push-in” method to incorporate the visiting child both linguistically and socially and have found the greatest rate of success when the child is immersed in the classroom environment.

As an IB World School, we are committed to the following Practices:

- Coherent curriculum 1.6: The school demonstrates that the curriculum is influenced by an understanding of students’ prior knowledge, identities, backgrounds, needs and contexts. (0401-01-0600)
- Lifelong learners 7.1: The school provides opportunities for students to explore and develop their personal and cultural identities. (0402-07-0100)
- Lifelong learners 7.2: The school community affirms individual student identity through learning and teaching. (0402-07-0200)
- Lifelong learners 7.3: Students take opportunities to develop their language profiles. (0402-07-0300)
- Approaches to teaching 5.4: Teachers support language development with consideration for the language profiles of students. (0403-05-0400)

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