



Joseph C. Wilson Commencement Academy
Providing a World Class Education



Language Policy

Vision:

Excellence for all students in all aspects of their development.

Mission:

Our mission is to use the International Baccalaureate (IB) philosophy to guide individual student success. This means:

- Individualized high standards for all
- Multiple pathways towards graduation including career development, Regents, dual-credit, Advanced Placement (AP), and IB Diploma Program (DP) courses
- Infusing the IB philosophy into all of our courses
- Backward mapping DP courses to ensure future success
- An international mindset that will be at the forefront of our environment and pedagogy
- Utilizing the IB approaches to learning and learner profile in all courses to develop the whole child

Language Policy Statement

Our Wilson community recognizes the importance of preparing our students for the global economy and interdependent world and therefore offers a second language continuum beginning in the ninth grade, even with no prior formal instruction. Our diploma candidates build on their language instruction as they enter grades 11 and 12. We encourage our students to gain competence in a modern language other than their mother tongue with a long term goal of bilingualism. Our language A (mother tongue) at Wilson is English and we offer language B courses in Spanish.

Language A

Language A is generally defined as the student's mother tongue or the language in which he/she has achieved the level of proficiency near the native speaker. Students have five lessons a week in language A: Literature over a two year period in their junior and senior years. In addition to this, following New York state guidelines, all core teachers are expected to provide language A instruction and development within the content area to ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy. Students must learn to read, write, speak, listen, and use language A effectively in a variety of content areas to facilitate communication.



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Language B

Wilson acknowledges that learning additional languages greatly contributes to the holistic development of students. Proficiency in a second language gives students access to a broader range of input, experiences, and perspectives, and is believed to raise achievement in other subject areas, as well as giving the student the enjoyment of being able to communicate in a language other than his or her mother tongue. Students have the option of deciding to following Spanish instruction into Spanish ab initio at the standard level, or pursue the exam at standard or higher level with instruction for language B in Spanish.

ELL Program

Following the RCSD guidelines, Wilson's mission is to support and enhance the education of students who are English language learners toward becoming life-long learners and productive citizens capable of succeeding in an increasingly interdependent world. We aim to educate all students to meet or exceed NYS academic language A standard with language B as their mother tongue. All content teachers recognize that learning in a second language is a challenge, so they also focus on building key vocabulary necessary for successful completion of each course. Students are encouraged to use the language of instruction whenever possible. If they find it difficult, accommodations are provided such as extended time, use of translating dictionary and assistance from the ELL teacher. In an effort to maintain mother tongue development, Wilson will investigate the need for school-supported self-taught Language A on a need-only individualized basis.

Special Educational Needs Program

Wilson will follow all mandated NYS Special Education Needs policies in regards to a student's ability to acquire a new language as outlined on his/her IEP.

Professional Development

Wilson teachers are expected to stay current with the latest IB DP curriculum development, the national common core standards, as well as the latest trends in language instruction. Teachers will be provided with regular opportunities to participate in IB sponsored training.

Sources

Contents based on IB Guidelines for "Learning in a language other than a mother tongue in IB programmes" and "Developing a school language policy" in *Towards a continuum of international education*, pp. 25-7 (2008), "Language and Learning in IB Programmes" (2011), and IB learner profile booklet (2013).



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Policy reviewed and updated November 2022 by school leadership, head of school, DP instructors, students, and school community.