



IB Middle Years Programme Language Policy

Our language policy reflects the diversified language needs of our students as they work through a carefully planned and articulated curriculum that focuses on global competencies outlined as part of the IB Middle Years Programme. In addition, Hidden River Middle School's language policy considers the home languages of our student body, the development of English, and the acquisition of additional languages that enhance the educational experience of the student.

Language philosophy

The language policy of Hidden River Middle School is founded on the same philosophical principles as the Language Policy of our school district, Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS). It is based on the belief that multilingual students bring a wealth of knowledge of languages, cultures, views of the world, and ways of learning to our schools.

It is our belief that all teachers contribute to language learning at our school. Language is the primary means of reaching understanding in all subject areas. English is the primary language of instruction at Hidden River Middle School. Our teachers focus on both the productive (writing and speaking) and receptive (reading and listening) modalities.

World languages

We offer both French and Spanish world language classes as options for students to choose from. Classes focus on linguistic and cultural proficiency. Students have the opportunity to continue taking French or Spanish when they move on to high school, and they may eventually earn college credit through IB or AP tests.

World Language programs in Saint Paul Public Schools reflect the following beliefs:

- A K-12 articulated world language program should be available to all students.
- All students can learn and experience success in world languages.
- Learning to become proficient in world languages beyond English provides students with real-life skills and a broader worldview which are of critical importance if students are to become global citizens.
- World language education develops critical thinking skills and strengthen students' learning in other disciplines
- The primary goal of world language education should be real-life communication.
- Assessment of students' language learning must reflect language proficiency and communication.

World language teachers use the 5 “C” goal areas set forth by ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages): communication, cultures, connections, communities, and comparisons in their curriculum design. More information about ACTFL can be found at:

<https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/publications/standards/World-ReadinessStandardsforLearningLanguages.pdf>

Multilingual Learning (MLL)

All licensed staff have been provided with professional development opportunities to expand their knowledge of best practices to support multilingual learners in our district:

Global Mindset Goal: SPPS teachers will be empowered to become reflective and self-directed leaders who recognize and respect the assets of our ELs and their families.

Global Action Goal: SPPS teachers will integrate EL language strategies and objectives across all content areas to foster student-centered learning environments for ELs.

Area of focus: **Planning for Academic Language Instruction** (Knowledge, Skills, & Disposition)

— From SPPS professional development

Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) offers content based English language instructional programs and services to meet the varied needs of English learners. English learners acquire academic English through participation in age appropriate, content-based instruction that is aligned to WIDA English Language Development Standards as well as the Minnesota K-12 Academic Content Standards. The Office of Multilingual Learning strives to provide English learners with the supports they need to acquire English language proficiency in grade-level academic content.

Services that Support MLL Students in Saint Paul Public Schools

- Access to grade-level standards and curriculum
- Support in the language development process, including students in special education
- Bilingual Educational Assistant (EAs)
- Full inclusion at elementary
- Co-teaching instructional model at all levels
- Opportunities to earn a bilingual SEALS (which gives students college credit at MNSCU schools)

Initial Screening: W-APT stands for the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test. It is an English language proficiency "screener" test given to incoming students who may be designated as English language learners. It assists educators with programmatic placement decisions such as identification and placement of ELLs. The W-APT is one component of WIDA's (World Class Instructional Design and assessment) comprehensive assessment system.

http://mll.spps.org/eligibility_and_assessment

ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) testing is done annually to measure students' growth in all four modalities in the language of instruction. Teacher Reports are available for discussion during PLCs to inform instruction.

Hidden River Middle School has averaged 8-11% EL students over the past several years. Hidden River EL students are generally at level 3 or higher, so they benefit from a co-teaching model in content areas, including English language arts (Language & Literature,) and science:

Students at level 3 or higher may be served through a co-teaching model in content areas. Collaboration allows for planning, teaching and assessment of content and language objectives for ELs in the mainstream classroom. These EL students have an English language development (ELD) class associated with the co-taught content class. The ELD classes are aligned to both the state standards and the WIDA English Language Development Standards.

Immersion

Study of other languages and cultures is important in today's world. Each language sequence prepares all learners to communicate effectively and to better function culturally in our diverse society. A variety of materials and technologies provides learners with experiences that take them beyond textbook learning and into real life situations.

Hidden River Middle School is the French immersion articulation school for the district. It is the middle phase of a three-part program that begins at L'Étoile du Nord French Immersion elementary school, continues to Hidden River Middle School, and finishes at Central High School.

The French immersion program is designed to develop the students' linguistic and cultural capacities in the language. This is accomplished through higher-level language intensive instruction.

The goal of the Dual Language/Immersion Programs is for students to become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. These programs take advantage of the natural talent of young children to learn languages, benefitting the student in ways beyond the gift of acquiring a second or third language. Any student may enroll in these programs. However, in one-way programs students must have grade level language proficiency to enter after 2nd grade.

Students at Hidden River receive the opportunity to continue learning as a cohort in French during their language acquisition course as well as their social studies courses (Individuals and Societies).

Family Engagement & Communication:

Teachers are able to identify the home language of students easily on our student information system, Infinite Campus. St. Paul Public Schools regularly translates important documents and communication into home languages for the most common languages in our district: Hmong, Somali, Karen, and Spanish. Our weekly parent newsletter is written in English, but there is an option for parents to translate the webpage into other languages.

At Hidden River, we include in-person interpreters, whenever possible, for parent-teacher conferences (when held in person). During the pandemic, we have also used a language line interpretation service that allows staff to access an interpreter at any time to make parent contact or during virtual conferences (<https://www.spps.org/Domain/13048>).

Chart of the home language demographics (mother tongues of students) at Hidden River

Year	%English	%Hmong	%Spanish	%Karen	%Somali	%Other
16-17	70	10	6	2	5	7
17-18	71	8	5	4	5	7
18-19	72	7	4	5	5	7
19-20	74	5	4	3	4	9
20-21	74	6	5	2	4	10
21-22	75	5	5	1	5	9

Data from SPPS Data Center: <https://www.spps.org/Page/27991>

Policy Revision:

Please see our [policy revision plan](#) for details on the process we will use to revise our policies.

This policy is published on our school website, [spps.org/hiddenriver](https://www.spps.org/hiddenriver).