

# Language Policy

## Cornerstone Learning Community

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### **I. Background**

Cornerstone Learning Community (CLC) is a communicative place. As such, language development, understanding, and support are key components of our program. Language learning happens within and outside every classroom. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening enable each student to access and engage with the curriculum and other community members in meaningful ways.

In working to value the social, emotional, and academic learning of the whole child, CLC respects and supports diversity in our students and community members. The school's commitment to language is also reflected in our preschool through eighth grade Spanish curriculum.

### **II. Language of Instruction in All Classes**

The language of instruction at CLC is English. The faculty and staff at CLC recognize that language is a vital instrument for learning, communication, and expression, and that all teachers are language teachers. To promote inquiry-based language learning within the context of the MYP, it is understood that language instruction takes place all day and in all subjects. The MYP faculty and staff agree that the language learning in all subjects at the school will:

- be consistent and age-appropriate;
- support the development of skills and understanding in the language of instruction (English) as well as additional languages offered at the school (e.g., Spanish);
- be differentiated to meet the learning needs of all students, including but not limited to those needing support services;
- be reflected in the program of inquiry, interdisciplinary (MYP) planners and individual lesson plans;
- work with all students so that they may achieve mastery of the essential language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking;
- utilize a variety of materials to enhance the development of language skills.

### **III. English Language and Literature Classes**

Language and Literature classes at CLC provide differentiated instruction that concentrates on reading, writing, speaking, and listening using a variety of texts in the English language.

#### **IV. Second Language Classes**

All students should have the opportunity to learn an additional language. As students gain an appreciation for different languages and cultures, they are then part of a more diverse community, which will assist them in interacting and communicating with the culturally diverse local community and world they live in today. This is an essential international experience that enables students to understand the thinking, norms, and traditions of another culture.

Language acquisition classes at CLC are in Spanish. Year 1 MYP students build upon their Spanish language learning from the primary years and are enrolled in high school Spanish 1. In MYP year 2, students begin mastering the requirements for high school Spanish 2. By the end of MYP year 3, students have completed their high school Spanish 2 credit and have had exposure to concepts that provide a strong foundation for Spanish 3. Students who have no prior Spanish exposure when they reach the MYP (students transferring from another school) are placed in a classroom with students in their grade, but enrolled in middle school Spanish. In some cases, students may not receive a second language class due to their individual need for language intervention.

#### **V. Support for Mother Tongue\***

CLC welcomes the enrichment that comes with students and families from diverse cultures. The school recognizes the importance of mother tongue support for learning other languages. In this case, the term mother tongue broadly encompasses the language learned first, the language identified with as a 'native' speaker, the language known best, the language used most. Students with a mother tongue other than English will be provided opportunities to share their language and culture at school. Digital and print reading materials will be provided for students in their mother tongue as part of the middle school library.

#### **VI. Support for English Language Learners**

CLC does not have classes for English Language Learners (ESOL program). The school closely monitors and evaluates the individual needs of any students whose first language is not English with ongoing formative assessments by the teaching team and support services specialist as well as communication with the families.

### **\*Learning other languages in the IB MYP at CLC**

Cornerstone Learning Community offers an IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) with the subject of Language Acquisition in Spanish only. There are no other languages offered. Occasionally, families are interested in having students enroll in a language other than Spanish. This can only be done with a compelling reason, such as a familial language spoken in the home other than English or Spanish.

The MYP has specific courses that must be taught within the programme by IB-trained teachers. Most families looking to keep their mother tongue do so with parents or get a tutor after hours to ensure the student 'keeps' their mother tongue going. Any in-person or virtual learning taught by a non-MYP teacher is not permitted towards the MYP. The student could take another virtual course, but would still need to meet the MYP requirements (Two Languages : Language and Literature in English and Language Acquisition in Spanish) within the school schedule.

Families are responsible for enrolling students in virtual classes for the other language. Florida Virtual School (FLVS) will prompt CLC for approval on registration for our students once course requests come in from the family. If the language is not offered by FLVS, families will need to find a virtual course offered by another approved provider. Those credits may or may not be accepted by area high schools.

If a student does not complete three years of Spanish at CLC, then they are not considered to have fully completed the IB MYP program. All other classes will still show on the transcript as IB MYP classes. This does not impact the successful entry of a student into the IB Diploma Program in high school.