



# Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School

Expect Excellence ♦ Provide Excellence ♦ Produce Excellence  
Montgomery County Public Schools



## Language Policy

### Philosophy

Our philosophy is that all teachers are language teachers. Language is the driving force that connects all of the IB disciplines. Effective language learning is a natural precursor to global understanding and awareness. Our goal is for students to achieve proficiency in English, the language of instruction, as well as in a second language, French or Spanish.

### Mother Tongue Support

We support and respect the mother tongue and culture of all students. Culture is celebrated through many avenues: International Night, lessons, Hispanic Heritage Month, etc. Our Media Center subscribes to foreign language publications and continues to expand its collection by adding foreign language reading materials.

When parents/guardians are invited to the school for parent conferences and other meetings with staff, a translator is provided if one is needed. Also, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) provides staff with access to a language line to use when calling parents/guardians who do not speak English and the staff member does not speak the language of the parent/guardian. Additionally, MCPS makes parent communications and promotional materials available in many languages.

### Language A Instruction

English is the primary language of instruction (LOI). Reading and writing are supported across the content areas, as the responsibility of all teachers is to improve students' ability to communicate both orally and in writing.

### Second Language Acquisition

The goal of the Montgomery County Public Schools' world language program is to educate students in a language and culture in order to make them knowledgeable and active members of a global society. Students learn to use foreign languages for meaningful communication in both spoken and written form. The foreign language program emphasizes language as it is used in real-life situations that students are most likely to encounter. Through foreign language study, students develop sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic heritage of other groups, understand their influence on U.S. culture, and become prepared to participate in a society characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity.

Students often complete one or more years of a second language, Spanish or French, before entering Grade 9. We offer French and Spanish classes for all grade levels.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is offered for students whose second language is English. Potential ESOL students are evaluated both orally and in writing to determine if they need to be placed in ESOL classes or can be placed in mainstream classes. Students placed in ESOL classes move fluidly through the classes based on their rate of progress, not the number of years in the program. Regardless of

the level of ESOL or the class, ESOL students are IB students. They have access to all of the content, concepts and contexts of the MYP framework.

Additionally, many of our students list a language other than English as their first language, often speaking a heritage language at home. Because of our location adjacent to Washington, DC, many of these students maintain studies in their home language and culture outside of the normal school day.

*Last reviewed 11/30/2021*