



## **School Language Policy**

**Dr. John Hugh Gillis High School**

### **Introduction:**

Language plays a central role in the IB philosophy, shaping learning, identity, and communication. As an International Baccalaureate World School, Dr. John Hugh Gillis High School has established a language policy that addresses both second-language instruction and mother-tongue language support, ensuring it aligns with student needs and the core principles of the IB programme. This policy also articulates our philosophy and goals for language education and highlights our commitment to supporting students' mother-tongue learning.

Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School is a public high school (grades 9 – 12) that offers most of its core courses in English. A high percentage of the school population are native English speakers. There is support for IB and non-IB students to pursue French Immersion study, which is part of the Nova Scotia Department of Education Public School Program. There are also an increasing number of English as an Additional Language (EAL) students who have immigrated to our community. English as an additional language (EAL) support is available through the EAL classroom.

Our philosophy is to support the language learning of all students; we recognize that it is central to culture, identity, expression and international mindedness. We believe that all teachers are language teachers and that all students have a right to be supported in the language of instruction and in their mother tongue.

### **Strait Regional Centre for Education/Nova Scotia Department of Education Policies:**

Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School is part of the Strait Regional Centre for Education. The mission of the Strait Regional School Board states the following:

*“To empower our children and youth, within safe, equitable and inclusive environments, to embrace a changing world as responsible, contributing and successful lifelong learners.”*

In keeping with that Mission, in support of language acquisition in Canada (a bilingual French/English country), and recognizing that there are students in our schools who are non-native English or French Speakers, the policies listed below help provide guidance at a school Level.

- English as an Additional Language (EAL) & French as an Additional Language (FAL), Strategy Framework, Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- The French Languages Services Policy, Department of Education Province of Nova Scotia states that

***“The Department of Education is committed to providing access to government information, programs and services in French for Acadian and Francophone Nova Scotians. The services provided by the Department of Education will contribute to the preservation and growth of the Acadian and Francophone community.”***

1. All instruction in French programs is conducted in the French language and in an environment conducive to acquiring the language.
2. Teaching staff possess a high level of oral and written competency in French.
3. French second language learning and teaching emphasizes effective communication and interaction based on real experiences.
4. Schools are encouraged to support and provide co-curricular and extra-curricular activities in French language and culture.

Strait Regional Centre for Education Assessment, Evaluation, and Communication of Student Learning Policy (Section 6.2)

6.2.1.1 Ensuring that individual students who require EAL programming services are provided with the appropriate assessment and evaluation methods and strategies to support their needs.

## **Current Practices:**

The Language Policy at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School is evolving based on changing school populations and expectations.

The language of instruction at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School is English with a comprehensive French and Gaelic as a second language acquisition programs. There are two streams of French Language instruction available to all students.

### **A. CORE FRENCH/GAELIC STUDENTS**

All students enrolled in the Nova Scotia Public School Program in the Strait Regional Centre for Education begin learning French language skills when they are in Elementary (grade 4). At this stage, all Public-School Courses are taught in English, with the exception of core French or Gaelic which is instructed in the French or Gaelic Language. All students are required to take a second language from Grade 4 to grade 9.

In Grade 10 core French students can access either the Core French 10 or Dr. JH Gillis PIB French 10, in preparation for IB French HL/SL. As well students are encouraged to take part in any extra-curricular activities where French may be spoken.

### ***FRENCH IMMERSION STUDENTS***

French immersion is offered as a full program which begins in grade primary and concludes in grade 12. The curriculum as outlined by the Nova Scotia Department of Education requires the following language of instruction:

Grades P – 2    90-100%

Grades 3 – 6    80 - 85%

Grades 7 - 9    60 - 75%

Grades 10 - 12 Minimum of nine (9) credits.

Students entering Grade 10 with an interest in pursuing IB while maintaining French Immersion are guided to take the requisite Grade 10 courses that will allow them to meet the Provincial requirements for the Grade 12 French Immersion Certificate while also preparing them for IB Diploma in Grade 11. Based on a Nova Scotia Department of Education agreement, students

who meet these Grade 10 requirements and then go onto do the IB Bilingual Diploma (studying French B – Higher Level, and IB History HL or SL in French) are entitled to receive the Grade 12 French Immersion Certificate as well.

### ***Mother Tongue Support***

We have a growing population of students at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School have a mother tongue that is not English or French. Some of these students are able to pursue IB French B SL or ab initio French B. For students who have a mother tongue that is not English or French, and who want to maintain their first language, we offer the IB School Supported-Self Study option in lieu of French.

### ***Other Language Adaptations:***

Dr. John Hugh Gillis High School provides an English as an Additional Language (EAL) classroom, staffed by a dedicated teacher who is available three days a week. This support helps students adapt to the school environment and succeed in their coursework across various subjects.

### **Specific Program Details:**

**Group 1** – all students at Dr. JH Gillis Regional High School study English A Literature HL. Students operating in a second or third language are given additional support by classroom teachers, IB students (when relevant) and, when necessary, are given the works studied in their mother tongue to help support their understanding.

**Group 2** – the majority of students study French B as their group two language. French is offered at the Standard Level for students who have not been in French Immersion classes. We offer French B Higher Level for students who have been in French Immersion classes and who want to pursue their Nova Scotia French Immersion Leaving Certificate. Ab initio is also available, where applicable. Students whose mother tongue is not English or French are offered the opportunity to complete Language A School Supported Self Taught.

**Group 3** - Students who wish to qualify for the IB Bilingual Diploma and the Nova Scotia French Immersion Certificate are offered the opportunity to take History HL or SL in French.

### **Language Profile of the School Community**

<b>Grade 10</b>	<b>Grade 11</b>	<b>Grade 12</b>
<b>French 10</b>	<b>French 11</b>	<b>French 12</b>
<b>Gaelic 10</b>	<b>Gaelic 11</b>	<b>Gaelic 12</b>
<b>Francais 10</b>	<b>Francais 10</b>	<b>Francais 12</b>
<b>Dr. JHGillis PIB French 10</b>	<b>IB French HL, SL, Ab Initio</b>	<b>IB French HL, Ab Initio</b>
	<b>School Supported Self Taught Lang A</b>	<b>School Supported Self Taught Lang A</b>

There are no entrance requirements to enroll in the IB Diploma program at Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School. To that end, we work to support students with their language needs through a variety of supports listed below. Our teachers are very supportive of the language learners in the school and strive to provide the language support that is needed so that students can learn content. It is understood that language learning is the responsibility of all teachers.

### **Additional Support:**

Classroom teacher support – our teachers offer extra help to students to help foster language skills in French and in English.

School Supported Self Taught - the Language A teacher works alongside the IB coordinator, the student, and tutor in order to support mother tongue learning, and acquisition of appropriate resources.

### **Language Policy Review**

The IB Diploma Language Policy will be reviewed by IB staff and school administration at the beginning October of each academic year.

## **Resources**

Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy, International Baccalaureate Organization, 2008

English as an Additional Language (EAL) & French as an Additional Language (FAL) Strategy Framework, June 2021.

The French Languages Services Policy, Department of Education Province of Nova Scotia, 2009.