

Sam Houston High School's Language Policy

Arlington Independent School District

Sam Houston's Language Committee:

Sharon Deering – Language Specialist

Rebecca Tumbry – IB Coordinator

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Sam Houston's Mission:

The mission of Sam Houston High School is to create a safe community of empowered learners through an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. The Sam Houston community ensures our students are prepared to become contributing citizens by providing challenging academic opportunities in preparation for post secondary studies and careers. Success is verified by improved attendance, increased performance on state, national and international assessments, increased graduation rates, decreased dropout rate and increased parental involvement. To ensure this success, we utilize collaborative efforts among teachers, students, counselors, administrators, parents and the community.

Sam Houston's Language Goals:

As language is the key to all learning, all teachers at Sam Houston are essentially language teachers. Language learning at Sam Houston refers not only to the acquisition of a specific language but also the understanding of cultures. Second language proficiency is fundamental to building bridges with other cultures, helping today's students as they become tomorrow's diplomats, businesspeople, doctors, teachers, communicators and humanitarians. The teacher's role in this course is not only to facilitate student proficiency in another language, but also to open students' minds to the connectedness of other cultures, culturally and historically. With the goal of developing international mindedness, Francophone and Spanish culture is integrated throughout the language courses. Students will better understand the mindset of other cultures and develop a respect for people of other cultures. The courses will encourage students to find the value of lifelong learning of French and Spanish by making connections to other disciplines as well as to the local and global communities.

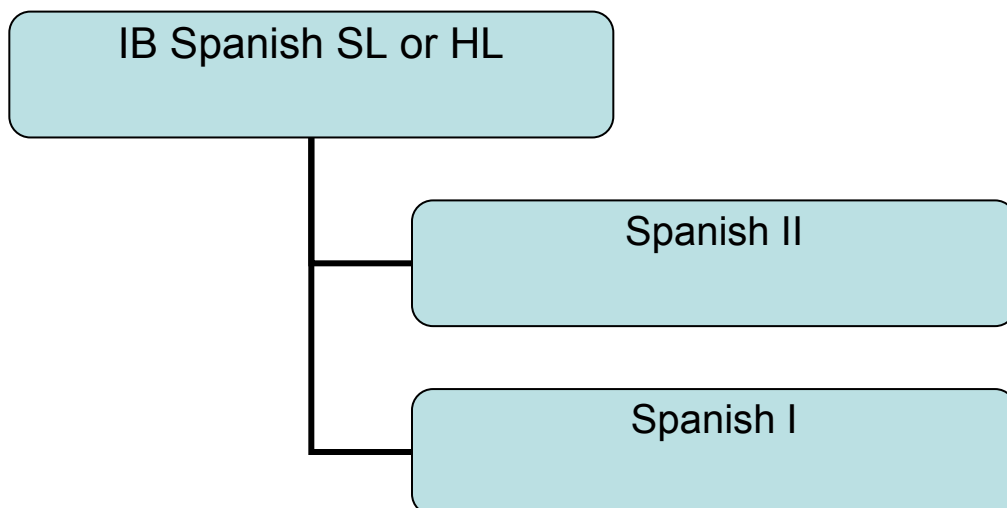
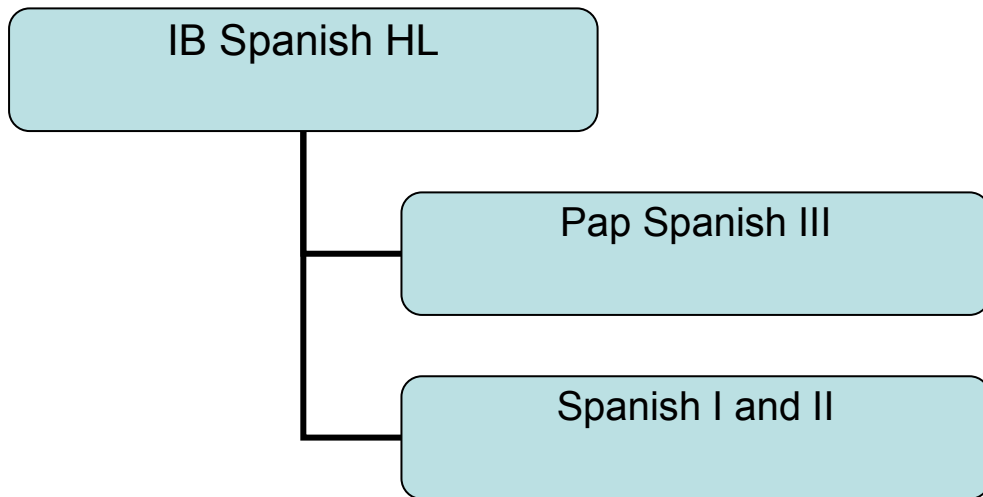
The language policy at Sam Houston shall be reviewed yearly to ensure that student learning and acquisition of another language is being met. As the IB diploma programme develops at Sam Houston, so will the language policy. The language committee will assess which courses to offer based upon the language needs of our students. Sam Houston's language staff will make decisions by reviewing data from formative and summative assessments such as TAKS, six weeks grades and feedback from instructors.

I. Sequence of language B courses for the IB Diploma Programme

Students who plan on enrolling in the IB Diploma Programme must take two years of a foreign language before commencement of the programme. Sam Houston's language goal is to have students fluent or highly knowledgeable in another language. In Spanish and French, there are no advanced classes in I and II. However, we do offer a Native Spanish course, this course is for students who already have acquisition of the spoken language. These students will take Native Spanish for the first year. Upon completion of Native Spanish, students will then take advanced Spanish III. These students will have the option to take Spanish HL.

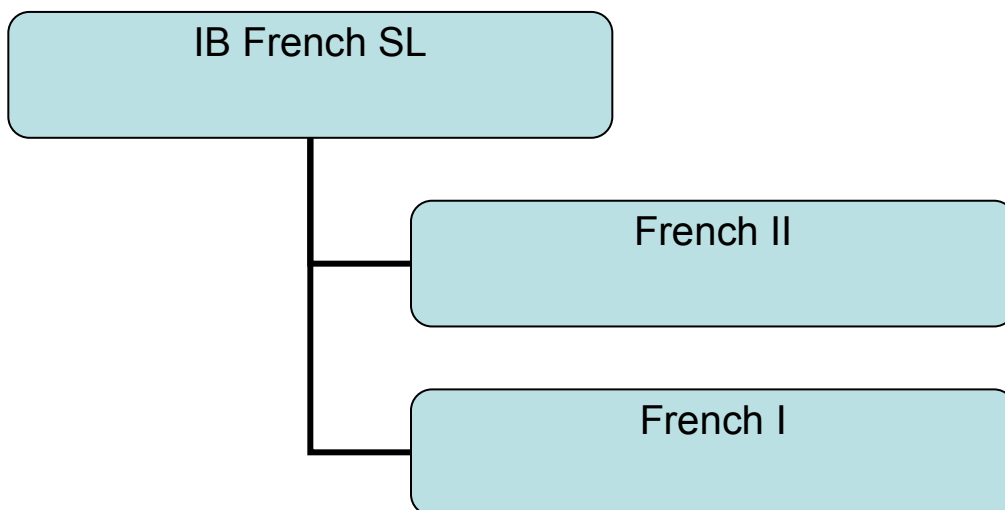
Students, who are not native speakers of Spanish, have the opportunity to take Spanish I beginning their eighth grade year. After Spanish I, students then take Spanish II and Spanish III or advanced Spanish III (if Spanish I taken in 8th grade). Upon completion of at least two years of a Spanish course, students then have the opportunity to take Spanish SL or HL.

The following graphs depict the progression of Spanish courses in the Sam Houston cluster:



In addition to Spanish, Sam Houston will also be offering IB French SL. Students who enroll in French must take French I and French II before entering the IB Diploma Programme.

The following graphs depict the progression of French courses in the Sam Houston cluster:



The IB French and Spanish students are engaged frequently in interactive oral activities with other students. A range of materials will be used to stimulate oral activities. Materials may be spoken, such as a radio or television program, a video recording, a conference, a play or a lecture. Students are encouraged to speak spontaneously as in “real” communication. They are to communicate effectively by using appropriate language and contributing actively to the exchange.

All students who are enrolled in foreign languages at Sam Houston have access to an after-school language lab in order to sharpen listening, speaking, and reading skills.

Students who do not take a second language course their freshmen year have the opportunity to take the course during the summer. Prospective IB students will not be charged summer school fees.

II. Students as English Language Learners

In the Arlington School District, 19.4% of the student population is limited English Proficiency. At Sam Houston High School, 25% of the student population is limited English proficiency. Students with limited English proficiency who have expressed an interest in the IB diploma programme will be placed in courses where the instructors are trained in sheltered instruction for English language learners. This validated model of sheltered instruction is designed to make grade level academic content understandable for English learners while at the same time developing the English language. In sheltered instruction, English language learners participate in specific content courses with grade-level objectives that are delivered through modified instruction to make the content more comprehensible to the students. The rigor of the courses is kept, even though modification is occurring. By the time the diploma programme commences, these students' English skills should be at level for the IB curriculum.

With our diverse population, Sam Houston highly respects a student's culture and customs, including a student's native language. As the diploma programme develops, Sam Houston intends to have support for students who plan on pursuing a bilingual diploma or offer courses to help develop and maintain the mother tongue.