



**OAKRIDGE SECONDARY SCHOOL**  
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## **IB Language Policy**

### **Language Philosophy**

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Being literate and having the command of language informs both the integrity of thoughts and the capacity for understanding. At Oakridge S.S., strong literacy and language skills are the foundation for learning. Every teacher takes on the responsibility to be a literacy/language teacher so IB students learn language acquisition matters. In all subject areas, teachers are dedicated to fostering an environment that promotes engaging and authentic learning to develop students' reading, writing, listening and oral communication skills.

In order to develop open-minded citizens of local, national and global awareness, it is also expected that IB students acquire skills in more than one language. To support this view, language development at Oakridge is a shared, interconnected responsibility of students, their families, school support staff, and teachers in all subject areas.

We support the teaching of Canada's second language, French, throughout all OSSD grade levels as well as in the Diploma Programme. Our school's District School Board also values mother-tongue development and provides various language programs to support the maintenance and continued development of our students' mother tongue.

### **School Language Profile**

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Oakridge Secondary School has become a much more diverse student body since opening in 1958. Currently, 1000+ students are enrolled in course at Oakridge. Of this group, families have shared that the following languages are spoken at home (mother-tongue): Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Bosnian, Cantonese, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, French, Greek, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Macedonian, Mandarin, Nepali, Pashto, Persian (Farsi), Filipino, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Serbian, Serbo-Croatian, Sindhi, Singhalese, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Tigrinya, Turkish, and Ukrainian. In addition, it is common practice in the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) to ask students and families to self-identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. Indeed, there are several students at Oakridge of First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit heritage.

The Thames Valley District School Board offers three ELL programs in designated schools (Westminster S.S., H.B. Beal S.S., and Montcalm S.S.) that support multi-language learners to build their English language skills and knowledge as they work towards an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and/or entrance into the Diploma Programme at Oakridge S.S. The TVDSB also offers English Language Learner (ELL) programmes for new citizens, permanent residents, and refugees. Students from these aforementioned groups may be considered for entry to IB in grade 11.

## **Language of Instruction**

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The language of instruction at Oakridge and in the Diploma Programme is English. Students in Ontario public schools must successfully complete a grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) or the Ontario Literacy Course. Students must also complete four English courses and one French course as compulsory requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

### Group 1: Language A

In Language A1 (the language of instruction), students will study a variety of texts (print, audio and media) which emphasize the importance of cross curricular language and distinction in use. The IB syllabus for each course will reinforce the importance of trans-global awareness through exposure to international authors, different historical eras, and a range of genres. To promote global-mindedness and sensitivity to the themes which thread through the international fabric of culture, students are further encouraged to learn language – not as a means to an end, but rather, a means to a beginning – where they will aim toward attaining enriched cultural awareness, enlightened historical perspective, and informed experiential practice.

Students will also be encouraged, through the introduction of various texts in translation, to explore their own literary heritage. Through independent and collaborative sharing, they will be enabled to learn about, and draw connections between, themselves and the texts as they relate to specific first language themes and cultural concepts. Through the Theory of Knowledge component (TOK) students will become increasingly self-aware of their inherent biases and assumptions, and able to consider and review whether these biases should be retained, revised, or rejected, all in a bid to develop a greater appreciation for the diversity and richness of cultural perspectives.

### Group 2: Language B

#### French(SL)

Canada's official languages are English and French. French is the chosen language of acquisition at Oakridge S.S. In Group 2 studies, students pursue learning in French, and are exposed to the richness of cultural study through this discipline. SL French is offered in grade 11 (year 1 of DP programme, semester one and two).

French language instruction in Ontario is action-oriented and is based on the Common European Framework. Ontario students enter Grade 9 with a minimum of 600 hours of French language instruction at the elementary level. Students in the grades 9 and 10 anticipated Diploma Programme route receive an additional 220 hours of French language instruction prior to entering the Diploma Programme in Grade 11. Attaining a high level of fluency in French is a priority at Oakridge.

Students who study French for four semesters at Oakridge are strongly encouraged to complete the DELF (Diplôme d'études en langue française) test in the month of May in their final year of French language instruction. The DELF diploma is awarded by the French Ministry for National Education to certify the French-language skills of non-French candidates (DELF DALF CIEP). As our Diploma Programme grows, we intend to add French ab initio to support language acquisition for those students who have not received French instruction prior to enrolling at our school. This approach will be beneficial to some of our English Language Learners who are exempt from French at the elementary level but may be able to develop their knowledge of the English language sufficiently to be capable of completing the Diploma Programme. As a school, we plan to continue to explore opportunities to offer instruction of additional languages in school or online with school support. This will be dependent on student interest, teacher training, and enrollment.

#### Additional Language Instruction (Ab-Initio)

This course of study, for students with little to no learning in a language area (one year or less) could be considered going forward, but a third language option is not currently offered at Oakridge. Allocation of this subject would need to be made on the basis of enrolment of students interested in learning three or more languages. As an aside, Oakridge also offers courses in Spanish.

**Chart 1: Oakridge S.S. IB Language Pathways**

	<b>Grade 9 Anticipated - IBDP</b>	<b>Grade 10 Anticipated - IBDP</b>	<b>Year 1 and/or 2 IBDP (Grades 11 and 12)</b>
Proficiency in English	De-Streamed English (ENL1W1)	Academic English (ENG2D1)	Language A: English Language and Literature (HL)
Proficiency in French	Single Pathway French (FSF1D1)	Academic French (FSF2D1)	Language B: French (SL) – Exams at end of Year 1

## **Language Learning at Oakridge S.S.**

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Since literacy and language acquisition are central to learning, all educators (teachers, educational assistants, guidance counsellors, teacher-librarians, administrators, and support staff) are language teachers with equitable responsibility to facilitate, and contribute to, language development.

Staff members accomplish this goal when:

- understand that all staff are language teachers, and that language skills are developed across the curriculum.
- work collaboratively to ensure that resources, including professional development, are made available to implement the language/literacy learning.
- have access to cross-curricular support training for language oriented professional learning, where expertise in writing skills and approaches may not be inherent to some disciplines.
- view parents as essential contributors to language learning.
- provide consistent and effective classroom strategies for the development of listening, speaking, reading, writing and media interpretation skills in all subject areas.
- use appropriate assessment strategies that provide meaningful feedback to enable language development and promote mastery.
- model language appropriate to context and expect the same of students.
- teach and confer in the language of instruction (English in English, French in French, etc.).
- require exacting compliance with spelling, grammar, syntax and paragraphing rules consistently across all subject areas.
- reinforce the importance of format specific to assignment / assessment type.
- emphasize the required use of MLA and APA Style Guides, according to subject area.
- require compliance with the entire, iterative writing process (brainstorming, sketch and then detailed outlines, multiple drafts for editing and revision, consistent citation of sources, and acknowledgement of outline consultants, editors and proofreaders) to assure authenticity of work.
- support student language development through school library's website and links to learning resources.
- foster academically sound library research skills.
- emphasize appropriate use of terminology, within and across disciplines.
- model and encourage appropriate, applied use of technology as a tool, not a replacement or compensation for thinking and problem-solving.
- encourage inter-cultural understanding, cultural responsiveness and relevance through various forums, curricular and co-curricular activities.
- encourage community outreach through volunteer work utilizing first and second language skills.

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## **Community Language (Mother-Tongue) Supports**

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The Thames Valley District School Board offers an International Languages program on a weekly basis throughout the year, where students may qualify in their first, or a second, language. Mother-tongue language classes are offered on weekends.  
<https://www.tvdsb.ca/en/programs/international-languages.aspx>

Community language support can be accessed through the Cross-Cultural Learner Centre (CCLC), a community agency which offers translation services, employment counselling, language assessment, and youth/family programs. In addition to this, Erindale has a designated settlement worker (SWIS) who is on-call and on-site, to support the transition for newly enrolled students.

Thames Valley District School Board provides free, accessible interpretation services for all employees, students, and families. Interpretation services is available for phone and in-person meetings to improve communication between school staff and families.

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## **Support for Oakridge English Language Learners**

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Newcomers to Oakridge's community, whose mother tongue is a language other than English, are referred to the TVDSB's One World - Welcoming Centre. Students complete Math and English language assessments to determine their level of proficiency which support their enrolment into schools. Families are also connected with resources and supports to assist with settlement in their new community.

Students who are developing proficiency in English are considered English Language Learners (ELLs). If it is determined that the best placement for the student is in an English Language Learning (ELL) program, the level of instruction (A through E) is also determined. Advancement through levels A to E is fluid and ESL teachers provide a variety of supports to allow their students to move into regular classes as soon as they are capable. In the process of developing proficiency in English, students are encouraged to use their first language to scaffold learning. ELL students are provided with additional supports including peer tutoring, dual language dictionaries, translation technology, and leveled literacy supports to develop English language proficiency.

Teachers of ELLs assist with making the determination as to whether students have the necessary language skills and knowledge to be successful in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.

In addition, Oakridge S.S. consistently reviews its library circulation and looks to purchase books and resources linked to the commonly spoken mother-tongues of enrolled students.

## Works Cited

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Documents that informed Oakridge's IB Language Policy include:

1. [IB Guideline for developing school language policy](#).
2. [English Language Curriculum](#)
4. Ministry of Ontario "[Learning for All. A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12](#)"
5. Ministry of Ontario "[Many Roots. Many Voices. Supporting English language learners in every classroom. A practical guide for Ontario educators](#)"
6. DELF DALF CIEP, [www.ciep.fr/en/delf-dalf](http://www.ciep.fr/en/delf-dalf).

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