



# LANGUAGE POLICY

## Mirabeau B. Lamar Senior High School

Lamar High School is an International Baccalaureate World School whose goal is to provide the best opportunity for a diverse group of students to receive a rigorous, internationally accredited education, with a broad range of extracurricular activities, in a safe and nurturing environment. The goal of the IB is for students to be challenged academically, while also finding creative and physical fitness outlets, getting involved in the community around them, and developing a global view that takes the student beyond their immediate environment.

## Philosophy

Lamar High School serves a very diverse student population from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures. Language is a major means of communicating, fundamental to learning, and is developed across the curriculum; therefore, all teachers are teachers of language.

The acquisition of language is a dynamic, life-long process that permeates all learning. It is a key factor in intellectual growth and promotes the development of personal and intercultural understanding.

The development of mother tongue proficiency is crucial for maintaining cultural identity. A healthy respect for the students' own culture and the culture of others is of paramount importance to Lamar High School.

## Policy

At Lamar High School, all teachers are language teachers. Teachers are to provide opportunities for reading, writing, speaking, and listening in all units of work. Teachers model language through everyday use and teach vocabulary and procedural terms within and across disciplines. Teachers will plan effective, relevant, and engaging learning experiences to improve proficiency in all forms of language.

The mother tongue language of Lamar High School is English (A).

Language acquisition (B) offerings are Chinese, French, Arabic, and Spanish.

English instruction for non-English speaking and limited-English speaking students is provided through our ELL program. All English teachers are certified as English as Second Language (ESL) teachers in addition to their English certification. Newly hired teachers are provided with training and support to pursue ESL certification in their first year of employment at Lamar. We encourage the continued study of the mother tongue language of the non-English speaking or limited-English speaking student through our language acquisition courses.

## Aims

The Lamar High School community works together to

- Empower students to learn and use language for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts.
- Increase students' range of competency in written, visual, and oral communication through multimodal learning and assessment.
- Promote both instructional and extracurricular opportunities that contribute to our school culture of linguistic diversity and global citizenship.
- Provide all students with access to one-to-one writing and communication support services through the school writing center.
- Recognize translanguage as a valued mode of multilingual expression, communication, and language learning.
- Celebrate multilingualism as a means to cultivate a global perspective.

## Support of Mother Tongue Languages

District bulletins and other publications are available in English and Spanish. The school has access via telephone to translators to the languages mentioned above. The Resource Library includes materials that support continued use of the mother tongue. Multilingual writing center consultants offer services to students in both English and their mother tongues.

## Support of the Language of Instruction

### **Identifying Emergent Bilingual (EB) English language learners**

Lamar High School follows the process outlined below to identify Emergent Bilingual (EB) English language learners and collaborate with families to determine qualification for placement in the English as a Second Language (ESL) education program, language services and supports.

Parent(s) or guardian(s) indicate the student's mother tongue upon entry into the Texas education system. If the student's mother tongue is a language other than English, the school administers the Iowa Assessments diagnostic to determine if the student qualifies for English language acquisition services and supports. At Lamar High School, this test is administered by a Highly Qualified English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher.

When (1) a student enters Lamar as an identified Emergent Bilingual learner, or (2) Lamar-administered diagnostic results indicate that the student qualifies for language services and supports, the school's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) meets with student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and the student to review the student's Emergent Bilingual (EB) qualification, determine placement in the ESL education program, and specify language services and supports.

All Emergent Bilingual (EB) learners receive yearly assessment each spring using the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) to monitor language development progress, and update placement designations and qualified language services and supports. TELPAS assesses for writing, reading, listening, and speaking proficiency and stratifies scoring into Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced-High placement levels.

### **Supporting Emergent Bilingual (EB) English language learners**

Lamar High School supports Emergent Bilingual (EB) English language learners in the following ways:

- Small-group sheltered instruction for Beginner and Intermediate English language learners with a Highly Qualified English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher.
- Pull-out inclusion of Advanced, Advanced-High English language learners with Highly Qualified English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in all English Language Arts classes.

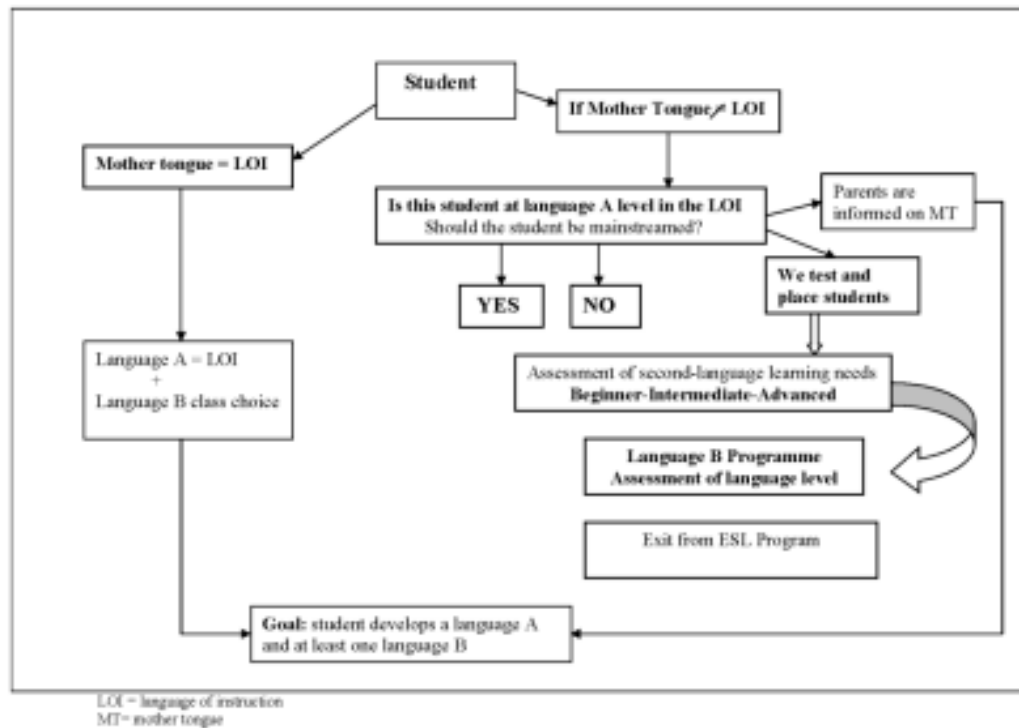
- Yearly assessment using the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) to monitor language development progress and continuing qualification for language services and supports.

### **Supporting all students**

Lamar High School supports all students in language acquisition in the following ways:

- Prioritizing reading, writing, and communication across the curriculum.
- Developing social language and communication skills by employing multiple collaborative learning strategies throughout class sessions.
- Including global literature from a variety of cultural backgrounds at all levels of English Language Arts curriculum.
- Engaging individual interest and student choice through open-ended reading and writing assignments in a variety of genres at all levels of instruction.
- Providing access to embedded classroom and writing center services and robust resources for academic writing and communication in the disciplines.
- Assessing students formally and informally in the classroom using diagnostic demonstrations of learning, reading responses, text annotation exercises, verbal presentations, scaffolded composition work, multimodal assignments, essays, and academic projects.
- Providing differentiated instruction for all students, including students with social, emotional, and/or academic learning differences and students who are academically gifted and talented.
- Ensuring all curricular instruction aligns with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards.
- Participating in the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) three times a year.
- Encouraging reading and writing for intellectual and creative enjoyment among all members of the Lamar community.

## Language Profile for Incoming Lamar Students



## Language Policy as a Working Document

Lamar High School commits to maintaining and updating the Language Policy as a working document through periodic formal review to ensure alignment with changing mother tongue demographics; available state, district, campus, and community mother-tongue and language-acquisition resources; IB programme policies; and research-based best practices.

Continual informal review is integrated with all new personnel onboarding and specifically during annual all-staff preparation days, in which personnel refamiliarize and ensure compliance with the school language policy and any personnel member may propose changes to the policy or call for a formal review.

The school language policy is available to the entire Lamar community, any of whom may propose changes or call for a formal review by contacting school administration.