



Language Policy

Sutton Middle School & North Atlanta High School

Sutton Middle School and North Atlanta High School recognize that language proficiency is essential to effective relationships in the modern world. Thorough practices in receptive and productive skills allow students to understand and communicate in spoken and written formats. Study of literature, social discourse, exposition, persuasive writing, information dissemination of data, and information literacy empower students to appreciate their world. The ability to present thought in written and digital compositions permits students to move confidently into an ever changing world.

The home language of the school (Language A), world languages (Language B), and mother tongues (Language A) are all addressed at Sutton Middle School and North Atlanta High School in language learning environments. All teachers acknowledge that they are language teachers who support effective communication skills. Content is delivered in the language of the school (Language A) and assists English Language Learners (ELL) in acquiring that language. They use language as a medium of instruction, an instrument of assessment, a means of all levels of conversation, and a tool for reflection.

Sutton Middle School and North Atlanta High School have systemized their delivery of instruction in English language and literature, in English as an acquired language, in heritage language classes and in instruction of four world languages. Language classes are customized to meet the needs of learners. Teachers differentiate classroom practice and assessment to meet the needs of all learners. Students have access to bilingual media materials in the library as well as online platforms.

Language A instruction at all levels is rigorous, meaningful, and sequential. Teachers seek to help students develop skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing and presenting information and ideas. Writing skills are stressed as part of communication and reflection essentials. Students learn to respond to literature at successive degrees of complexity. Essays, journals, reflection activities, media projects, and presentations all demonstrate the concentration on language essentials. Students in all five grades of the MYP create written and spoken work and presentations in English or a world language. Vertical planning allows for a learning continuum.



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Language Acquisition classes are essential to the educational vision of both schools. At Sutton Middle School, most students study at least two languages, English and French or Spanish, to support them in understanding their own cultures and those of others. Communicating in more than one language provides the opportunity for students to obtain insights into the features, processes, and the craft of languages, as well as, help the students to develop intercultural understanding and respect.

Sutton Middle School and North Atlanta High School provide a progression of language learning for the students in the North Atlanta IB cluster that builds on the students' experiences that they gained from the PYP feeder schools. There are some students who are new to the North Atlanta cluster or school district who may have no prior knowledge or experience of the language to be studied in the MYP. Ten teachers at Sutton Middle School are prepared to deliver a comprehensive program of daily French and Spanish instruction and differentiate to address the varied language proficiency of each student, following the Language Acquisition objectives for emergent, capable and proficient levels. All students who are on grade level in instruction in English (Language A) take sequential classes in French or Spanish (Language B). Below grade level students participate in intensive skills classes in Language A. These students proceed to Language B when they catch up to grade level in Language A. All other students begin Language B instruction in Year 1 (grade six) with French or Spanish and continue throughout Year 2 and 3 (grade 7 and 8) in the same language. They then proceed into the same language in Years 4 and 5 at North Atlanta High School or they have the option to begin a new language.

North Atlanta High School enjoys a proud history and a clear focus on language learning. The school provides the delivery of language instruction in Spanish, French, Chinese, or Arabic in the final years of the MYP. At North Atlanta High School, some students elect to add another language to their program. For example, they may continue toward proficiency with Spanish or French and also add Arabic, Chinese, French or Spanish. They can continue with both languages through the DP. The DP at North Atlanta High School prepares students to sit for the DP exams in Spanish, French, Arabic, and Chinese. Both schools display signages in the languages taught at the school.



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At both schools, Language Acquisition teachers are highly qualified in world language teaching. The high school offers exchange programs, where students can host international students, or travel to international destinations. World language instruction offers depth to authentic teaching and learning at both of the partner schools.

North Atlanta offers heritage classes for Spanish speakers who are new to the educational system of the USA. These students may have experienced an interruption in their formal education. Heritage classes allow Spanish-speaking students to become proficient in their home language, where speaking and listening may be stronger than reading and writing skills. An informal approach allows native speakers of French, Arabic, and Chinese to also maintain these skills.

ESOL

All students in the North Atlanta cluster gain proficiency in an additional language while supporting the maintenance of their mother tongue and cultural heritage. The district's ESOL program is a distinct program designed to provide ESOL language instruction to eligible students from certified ESOL teachers and outreach and engagement activities to all limited English proficient and immigrant families. ESOL language instruction is based upon the WIDA Consortium English Language Development (ELD) Standards aligned with state standards. ESOL provides English Learners with support and instruction in the English language, American culture, and academic and cognitive areas to ensure success in the classroom, school, as well as, the wider community. ESOL instructors acknowledge different cultural norms and values of all students in the program. In addition to instructional support services to eligible students, the ESOL program provides ESOL parent and community engagement and outreach and language translation/interpretation services.

Both schools support bilingualism by also providing documents and resources in Spanish to meet the needs of our school community. NAHS and SMS utilize the district's translation services to communicate with the school community in both English and Spanish. Both schools have a bilingual parent liaison to communicate with the school community.



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DLI

The Dual Language Immersion program began at Sutton Middle school in the 2021-2022 school year. Its ultimate purpose is to provide educational experiences, that support the academic and linguistic development in two languages (English and Spanish) and develop students' appreciation and understanding of their own and other cultures. Students develop linguistic competence in both languages at the same time. Studying in two languages allows the students to transfer knowledge and skills acquired in one language to the other. They are able to feel comfortable and successful in one language while gradually building the second language. ESOL and DLI teachers collaborate with Language & Literature teachers and/or Language Acquisition teachers through planning time and/or an online platform, such as ManageBac.