Abbotsford Middle School
Middle Years Programme

ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Language Policy 2026-2027



Our language policy and practices support and reflect those of the Province of British Columbia Ministry of Education and the Abbotsford School District.

Our School's Language Profile

Our student body is comprised of approximately 750 students representing over 40 nationalities and over 35 different languages. The home language of many of our students is English (49%). Some other languages spoken at home include Punjabi (23%), Arabic (5%), Spanish (3%), Dari (2%), Hindi (2%), Tagalog (2%), Vietnamese (2%), Pashto (1%), Swahili (1%), and others (10%).

English is the language of instruction. French is the language of Language Acquisition.

Our School's Language Philosophy

Language is central to learning, identity and intercultural understanding; therefore, ***all teachers are language teachers***. Language study helps students grow and understand their own culture as well as others and promotes effective global communication. We value and support multilingualism and provide authentic opportunities to develop listening, speaking, reading, writing, presenting, and viewing skills.

Staff model language skills and use differentiated instruction, co-teaching, and targeted supports to meet diverse learner needs. Students are supported by classroom teachers, ELL specialists, LSS staff, educational assistants and the library learning commons teacher to develop a wide range of strategies to become competent readers, writers, and communicators. Ongoing professional learning with language acquisition ensures staff use current, research-based practices.

Students access tools and technology to support class learning including Immersive Reader, read-aloud features, voice-to-text, translation tools, adaptations via Toddle Classroom, and home language books. Students have access to a range of printed and digital resources in English and multiple languages (ex. French, Vietnamese, Arabic, Spanish, Punjabi, Korean, Tagalog, and Japanese), including a library with dual-language texts.

Assessment data (Vernon, ACT, Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), classroom and ELL assessments) informs instruction and support. Students demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways, both oral and written.

Language Acquisition: French

All students are expected to participate in Core French (BC curriculum), developing communication skills and intercultural understanding. Learning French supports cognitive development, global awareness, and engagement with Canada's bilingual identity.

Students are assessed using MYP Language Acquisition Criteria (A–D) and reported three times per year.

While our policy is geared toward inclusion in that all students enroll in Language Acquisition, there are occasional exceptions to the rule. Exceptions:

- Students who meet certain Special Education Needs (SEN) criteria might participate without formal evaluation. This is decided on a case-by-case basis with the school and the family.
- ELL students (level 1-2) participate but may not receive MYP criteria levels; report cards include appropriate comments reflecting language proficiency.

English Language Learners (ELL)

ELL students are assessed using the IPT (Idea Proficiency Test) for reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills and the British Columbia ELL Standards. Support is determined through assessment data, teacher judgement, and conversations.

ELL students receive an Annual Instructional Plan (AIP) outlining supports. ELL students participate in Language Acquisition; however, ELL students (level 1-2) may not receive MYP criteria levels; report cards include appropriate comments reflecting language proficiency.

Additional supports include ELL teachers, educational assistants, and community services such as Archway Community Service and Settlement Workers In Schools (SWIS) for refugees and immigrants to transition to school and life in Canada. Translation support (Arabic and Punjabi) bridge communication between home and school.

Support For Indigenous Students

Indigenous students are supported in their language development through access to Indigenous languages and cultures. They participate in weekly Indigenous cultural teachings led by an Indigenous Success Teacher and Cultural Support Worker. Some students also receive literacy instruction from an Indigenous Success Teacher.

The school is developing opportunities for students to learn Halq'eméylem, the traditional language of the Sto:lo territory. Students learn new Halq'eméylem vocabulary through our weekly morning announcements.

Support For International Students

In order to support international students attending Abbotsford Middle School in the MYP programme, ELL services, classroom and educational assistant support, and district international program staff are implemented.

Students and families are supported by the District Coordinator and the Itinerant International Assistants to assist with learning, cultural adjustment, and facilitating cultural activities to support integration into Canadian life. Additional language services are offered through community partnerships (Private ELL tutoring from the University of the Fraser Valley and the Abbotsford's Teachers' Union.)

Support For Staff as Teachers of Language

ELL specialist teachers assess, monitor, and support ELL students while providing resources, strategies, and individual learning support for staff. ELL specialist teachers are responsible for completing Annual Instruction Plans (AIPs). Collaboration time between ELL specialists and classroom teachers may be used to address ELL student needs.

Professional development in language learning is prioritized through in-house training, IB workshops and other relevant training opportunities.

Concluding Comments

The Abbotsford Middle School language policy is a working document that is reviewed annually and revised as needed to reflect the evolving needs of the school community.