

## **Parkland Language Policy**

### **Preamble**

The student body of Parkland Secondary School is comprised of a diverse group of learners. Most students are native speakers of English and have been educated in English. In addition we have students who speak other languages at home—including Filipino, Mandarin, Cantonese, and French, to name a few. Parkland has a sizable Filipino-Canadian population—some who are recent immigrants and some who were born in Canada. Parkland also has a number of Aboriginal W̱SÁNEĆ students whose ancestral land is the Saanich peninsula. There is a strong initiative to revive the SENĆOŦEN language in their communities. Parkland has a thriving International program that sees a number of students enrol at our school every year from around the world. Students come predominantly from China, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Brazil and have varying levels of English language proficiency.

### **Language is central to all learning**

Language is the predominant medium through which students learn and therefore is central to all learning. As such, all teachers are not only teachers of their particular subject area but they are also language teachers as well. Students are not only learning content material and concepts but they are learning the language necessary to manipulate these concepts, to critically analyze information and to create new meaning. Language and meaning are strongly linked so particular attention to the attainment of language is very important. All teachers therefore ensure that they are also explicitly teaching language—it is embedded in their work with students.

### **SENĆOŦEN language**

Parkland is committed to supporting the learning of SENĆOŦEN—the language of the W̱SÁNEĆ people who have lived on the Saanich Peninsula long before Europeans settled here. Pride and identity are connected to culture, and language is inextricably bound to culture. Language is one of the vehicles through which culture is transmitted and therefore something to be supported.

### **Second Language Learning**

It is particularly important in our multicultural society for students to experience learning through a different linguistic lens. The benefits of learning a second language are many. Research has shown that it boosts overall intelligence. It forces the brain to learn and assimilate a whole new system with different rules and etymology that is related to, but differs from, one's own mother tongue. Essentially it is good exercise for the brain. The learning of a second language also improves one's first language. Students become more conscious of

the construction of language—vocabulary, grammar, conjugation, idioms, and sentence structure. Second Language learning makes a person more flexible and open to other cultures as they learn to appreciate alternate forms of expression. And second language learning opens up more career and travel opportunities. The knowledge of more than one language speaks to a person's intelligence, curiosity, openness and experience in viewing the world through a different lens.

Parkland supports and encourages the learning of a second language for all students. All students that arrive at Parkland via North Saanich Middle School have had instruction in French as a Second Language and are encouraged to continue learning French as it is one of Canada's two official languages. French is offered at Parkland in grades 9-12. In addition, Parkland offers introductory Spanish at the grade 9 level. Students can then progress in Spanish through to grade 12.

All students at Parkland enrolled in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (grades 11 and 12) are required to take French as a second Language.

### **Students learning in a language other than their mother tongue**

In British Columbia Canadian students who are English Language Learners (ELL) are eligible for support for their first five years of school. An ELL teacher will track their language development and ensure that the student is receiving the support that they require and have been placed into the appropriate courses. Parkland offers English Preparation classes for students that require additional support with the acquisition of the English language. These classes are typically smaller in number and are intended to give students who are learning English more practice with reading, writing, and speaking English.

ELL students wishing to apply for the IB Diploma or Certificate Program in their grade 11 and 12 years will need to complete a written and oral language assessment conducted by our English department. Prospective IB students need to have a strong enough command of the English language in order to be successful in the IB program.