

Road Map to World Languages

Dear Parents of the Class of 2013 of St. John's Prep,
Congratulations on your son's acceptance to the Prep! His journey into a life-long connection with St. John's has just begun!

We hope one of the reasons you were attracted to St. John's was the increasing diversity of our educational programs. In an age when other schools are constricting their programs, St. John's is expanding. From an athletic program which offers fencing, rugby, and sailing teams, to a computer science program offering robotics, to a campus ministry program which offers service trips to Ecuador and Jamaica, St. John's Prep students are provided with opportunities far beyond the average student. It is this type of diversity which will make your son **stand out** to college admissions directors among other less-interesting applicants. This diversity certainly extends to our World Languages Department.

As is the case at most high schools in the area, Spanish at St. John's is by far the most enrolled language. And while our Spanish program is thriving, **we as a department would like you to strongly consider your son's language options.** Our French, German, and Latin programs are equally strong, and this year we have added a new language, Mandarin Chinese. Its participants are making amazing progress in their first year. All of these languages are available for freshmen with no previous experience.

There is a two-year language requirement at St. John's Prep, but most students continue all four years. If your son has had no prior language study or you would like to hear more about our offerings, we will be available on **Saturday, March 28** during the Language Placement Exams. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Additional information on this date will follow.

The World Languages Department is proud of the commitment the Prep has made to all of our languages. This diversity in our program is one of the things that makes St. John's great!

We invite you to continue reading on the reverse side for more information about our various languages.

Once again, congratulations and welcome to St. John's!

The Mission Statement of the SJP World Languages Department

In support of the Mission Statement of St. John's Prep, the World Languages Department seeks to "educate the whole person" and inspires students to "honor the diversity that enriches both our school community and the world beyond St. John's." A large part of this holistic education is the ability to effectively communicate, especially in our increasingly interdependent, multicultural world. The department opens a window to what we are as humans, since the awareness of the "otherness" of language is a real construct of the human mind and spirit.

We seek to enable our students to express themselves effectively and proficiently in the target language and develop an appreciation for its culture and people. We follow the national Standards for Language Learning, referred to as the 5 C's: Communication, Culture, Connection, Comparison, and Community.

Students are challenged according to their ability in differing levels of instruction and will learn to apply the four basic linguistic skills of speaking, reading, listening, and writing.

The SJP World Languages Department
Annmarie Quezada, Chair

A World Languages Q & A

French

Q: Why study French?

A: French is the only language besides English that is spoken widely on all five continents. It is the official language of the United Nations, NATO, UNESCO, and the International Red Cross. French is also a major language of high tech and business in the world.

Q: Why should my son study French at the Prep?

A: Here it is not just the study of the language, it's the celebration of the culture. It is the active French clubs that bring it alive through film, music, food, sports, and games. In addition, your son can pack his bags for a French exchange program to Paris and Normandy.

German

Q: Is German more difficult to learn than others?

A: NO!!! Unlike the other European languages at the Prep, English is a Germanic language, and as such there are hundreds of cognates, and basic sentence structure is quite similar.

Q: Is a knowledge of German useful?

A: YES!!! German is the language most spoken in Europe, by over 100 million people in five countries, and as such is the engine which drives the thriving European economy. Combining German with a college major in economics, science, philosophy, or political science is a absolute boon!

Latin

Q: Latin lives! Where do we see it in our daily lives?

A: 90% of English words over two syllables come from Latin. Our government has Roman roots. The twelve months were named by the Romans. Numerous medical, legal, and scientific terms are derived from Latin. The Vatican recently revived the Latin Mass. Even the motto of St. John's is in Latin!

Q: Is a knowledge of Latin useful?

A: The study of Latin can give your son a leg-up on his SATs and is a great foundation for learning other languages. Latin provides the student with one of the most important ingredients for success in today's world, the ability to understand language and communicate effectively.

Mandarin Chinese

Q: Why study Mandarin Chinese?

A: With China emerging as an economic superpower, a knowledge of Chinese will give your son an advantage in the modern world. His studies will connect him one of the most widely spoken languages and fascinating cultures in the entire world.

Q: Will my son be able to continue his study of Chinese after he leaves St. John's?

A: Yes! The College Board has recently approved an AP Chinese program and exam, and more and more colleges are offering Chinese as both a major and minor course of study.

Spanish

Q: How can my son use his communication skills in Spanish outside of the classroom at the Prep?

A: SJP offers many opportunities for your son to immerse himself in the Spanish language through cultural clubs and service projects. Students also can travel to Spanish speaking countries for volunteer work or take advantage of our two week exchange program in Costa Rica.

Q: How will the study of Spanish help my son in the future?

A: The ability to communicate in Spanish will open many doors for study and employment in our local and global economies. Spanish is used in the business, medical, and industrial fields.