

## Special foreign language policy for newly arrived immigrant pupils

The new **decree on “School Support for Multilingualism”** allows newly immigrated pupils to choose their mother tongue instead of starting a new foreign language at school. This can be done through a **language proficiency test** or a **school certificate** from the country of origin. To be eligible, the pupil must have begun school in Germany between the 5th and 10th grade (Sekundarstufe I) when they first immigrated.

There is no legal entitlement to the recognition of the first language. Please contact the school for further information

### Important Information for parents:

- The decision regarding whether your child's **school certificate from the country of origin** is accepted is made by a teacher meeting (Klassenkonferenz) at the school. The school may require a **language proficiency test** if there are any doubts about the certificate's validity. It is at the teachers' discretion whether this test will be conducted.
- The **results from the certificate** issued in the country of origin or from the language proficiency test will replace the foreign language requirement and will be included in the end-of-year report/certificate and the intermediate school diploma.
- Additionally, the foreign language can still be replaced by the student's first language **in 11th grade**; after that, this option is no longer available.
- The school will apply for the language proficiency test through the regional Office for Schools and Education (RLSB).

### Regulations for Replacing the First or Second Foreign Language

- **Replacing the compulsory foreign language English with a language proficiency test in the first language:** this is possible if newly immigrated pupils have completed less than three full years of English classes by the end of 9th or 10th grade.
- **Replacing the compulsory foreign language English with a school report from the country of origin:** this is possible if pupils emigrated from their country of origin in 9th or 10th grade and possess their end-of-year school certificate.
- **Replacing the second compulsory foreign language with a language proficiency test in the first language:** this option is only available if learning the second compulsory foreign language is not feasible because the pupil missed too much of the classes.
- **Replacing the second compulsory foreign language with a school report from the country of origin:** this is possible if pupils emigrated from their country of origin in 9th or 10th grade and have their yearly school certificate.

## Additional Links

### General Information and Registration forms in different languages

<https://bildungsportal-niedersachsen.de/sib/mehrsprachigkeit-interkulturalitaet/erstsprachenunterricht>



### Decree on multilingualism

[https://men-nds.de/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/SVBl\\_12\\_24\\_RdErl.-Mehrsprachigkeit.pdf](https://men-nds.de/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/SVBl_12_24_RdErl.-Mehrsprachigkeit.pdf)



### Regional Offices for Schools and Education (RSLB) – language education centres

<https://bildungsportal-niedersachsen.de/beratung-unterstuetzung/onlineportal-bu/sprachbildungszentren>

