

Dual Language Program Frequently Asked Questions



1. What is a Dual Language Program?

Dual Language education programs integrate native English speaking students with native Spanish speaking students for content and language instruction. Dual Language classrooms develop bilingual and bi-literate students who are able to achieve high academic achievement, language acquisition and proficiency in both English and Spanish. The Dual Language Program provides an environment that embraces diversity and strives for excellence.

2. What are the goals of a Dual Language Program?

- To produce bilingual, bi-literate and culturally aware students.
- To develop and use higher-level cognitive skills in Spanish and English.
- To develop academic content and linguistic competence in English and Spanish.
- To create a classroom environment that promotes linguistic and ethnic equality that fosters positive cross-cultural attitudes.

3. What is the content and language allocation for the program?

Classrooms are composed of 50 percent native English speakers (language majority students) and 50 percent native Spanish speakers (English Language Learners). The language used for instruction is also a 50/50 ratio. Fifty percent of classroom instruction will be provided in English and fifty percent of classroom instruction will be in Spanish. The curriculum is the same as the general education program and students have the ability to learn the content of science, math, reading, language arts, and social studies in Spanish and English. This provides students the opportunity to learn how to read, write, listen, and speak in two languages.

4. What does the research say about Dual Language Education?

Research has shown that multiple benefits exist for students that acquire a second language during their primary years in school. Some of the benefits for learning a second language during elementary school include:

- Children have the ability to learn and excel in the acquisition of a foreign language (Krashen, 1982)
- Participation in early foreign language instruction shows positive results in areas of standardized testing (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997). Children who had studied a foreign language show greater cognitive development (Hakuta, 1990)
- Children develop a sense of cultural pluralism, openness, and appreciation of other cultures (Met, 1995).

5. Where will the program be located and how can students participate?

The Dual Language Program will be housed at Seth Whitman Elementary School and Lincoln Elementary School. Students entering kindergarten will be screened to determine early literacy development for potential entry and acceptance to the program. Students whose home school is Seth Whitman or Lincoln will get first precedence to participate in the program. If additional spots remain, the screening and application process will open to other kindergarten students throughout the district. If students at other elementary buildings are interested in participation in the program, parents will have to provide their own transportation to Seth Whitman or Lincoln for the program each day.

6. Will there be sibling priority for students participating in the Dual Language Program?

Yes, there will be sibling priority for students participating in the Dual Language Program. However, these students must go through the screening process and show a good grasp of both early literacy and numeracy skills in English prior to acceptance.

7. How to learn more information about the program?

Visit our website at www.district100.com and click on About Us, Curriculum and Instruction, Dual Language Education.