



McWhirter Elementary Dual Language Program

Professional Development Laboratory School

In the fall of 2002, Clear Creek Independent School District and the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UHCL) opened the Professional Development Laboratory School (PDLs) at McWhirter Elementary School. The PDLs goals are to teach children based on sound educational practices, to provide professional development to both UHCL students and the McWhirter faculty as part of their school day, and to encourage participation of the community in a variety of learning opportunities.

As a part of this effort, methods courses are taught on the campus of McWhirter, which allows UHCL students a chance to work in the classrooms to gain experience. Professional learning classes are conducted during the school day and after school. UHCL professors often participate in professional learning sessions, giving the faculty of McWhirter the most current techniques and teaching strategies.

Dual Language Defined

Dual Language, also referred to as two-way immersion, is an educational model in which both native English speakers and native speakers of another language receive instruction together in both languages to promote second language acquisition, high academic achievement, and cross-cultural understanding for all students. Language learning takes place primarily through content instruction. Linguistic proficiency in both languages is developed as students develop their knowledge of subject matter through performing academic tasks.

Benefits of Dual Programs

The benefits of Dual Language are numerous. Research conducted concerning Dual Language has reflected positive results for the participating students. Some of the benefits of Dual Language include:

- ☆ Bilingualism
- ☆ Intellectual growth
- ☆ Increase in self-esteem
- ☆ Listening skills increase
- ☆ Future marketability increased
- ☆ Appreciation for other languages and cultures
- ☆ Better performance on standardized tests (2002 Collier-Thomas study)
- ☆ Development of language and cognitive skills
- ☆ Interpersonal communication enhanced
- ☆ Enhances empathy and social relations
- ☆ Flexible thinking develops

PATTERNS OF K-12 ENGLISH LEARNERS' LONG-TERM ACHIEVEMENT IN NCEs ON STANDARDIZED TESTS IN ENGLISH READING COMPARED ACROSS SIX PROGRAM MODELS

(Results aggregated from a series of 4–8-year longitudinal studies from well-implemented, mature programs in five school districts)

Program 1: Two-way developmental bilingual education (BE)

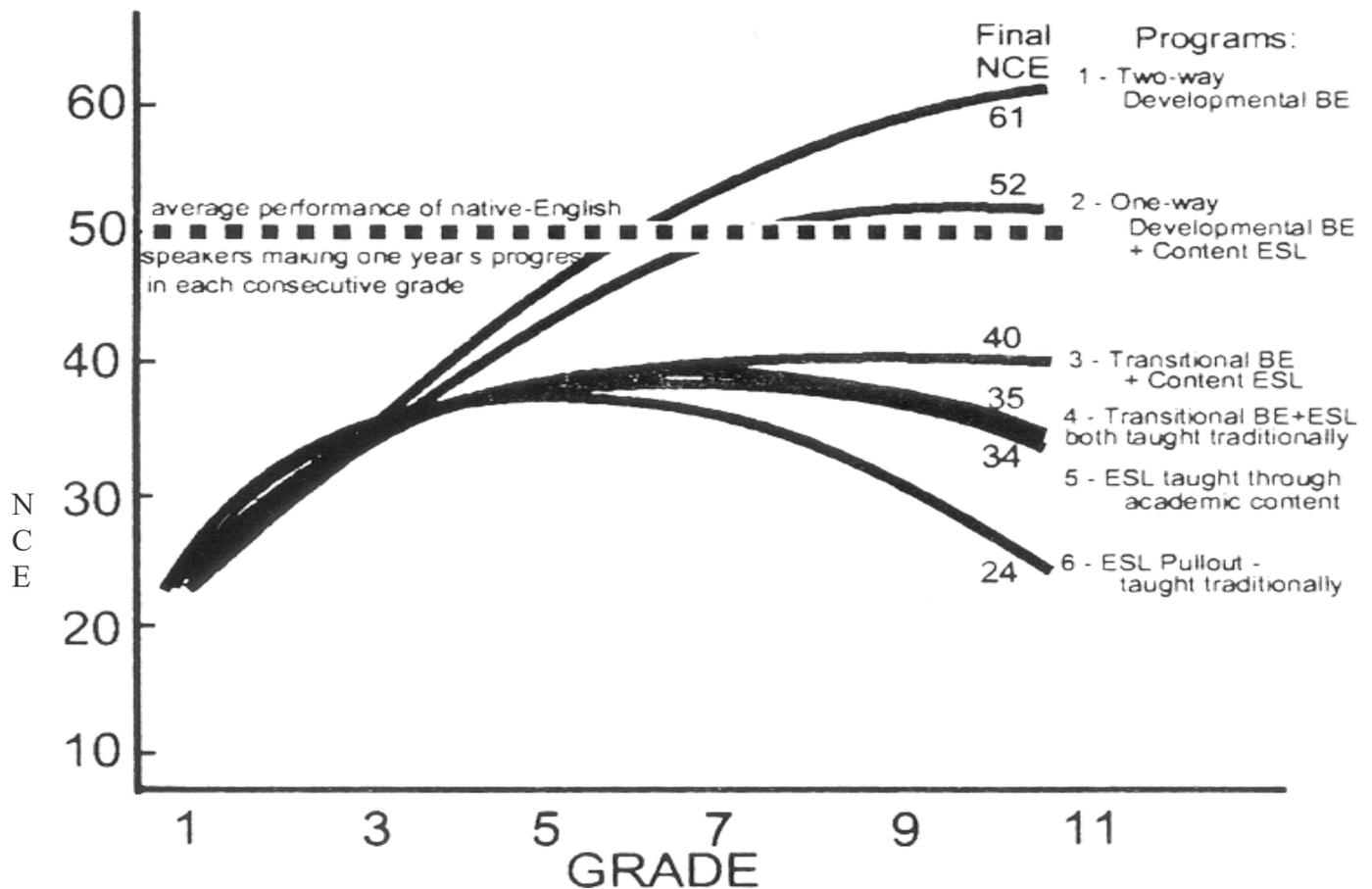
Program 2: One-way developmental BE, including ESL taught through academic content

Program 3: Transitional BE, including ESL taught through academic content

Program 4: Transitional BE, including ESL, both taught traditionally

Program 5: ESL taught through academic content using current approaches

Program 6: ESL pullout--taught traditionally



Purpose Statement

By the end of fifth grade all students in the Dual Language Program will be bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural.

Dual Language Program – The 80/20 Model

There are various models of dual language education. The Dual Language Program at McWhirter utilizes the 80/20 model. These numbers represent the percent of time each language is used in the classroom by the teacher. Students may respond in either language in the early grade levels. As students' proficiency in the second language increases, the students are encouraged to respond in the new language. The 80/20 model is as follows:

Grade	Percent Spanish	Percent English
Kinder	80	20
1 st	80	20
2 nd	80	20
3 rd	70	30
4 th	60	40
5 th	50	50

Grade Levels Included in the Program

During the 2004-2005 school year, two kindergarten classes implemented the Dual Language Program. Each subsequent school year, two classes were added to the program. The program continues at Clear Creek Intermediate School and Bayside Intermediate. A draft of a high school plan has been created.

School Year	Grade Level Added to Program	School Year	Grade Level Added to Program
2004-2005	Kindergarten	2009-2010	Kindergarten First Second Third Fourth Fifth
2005-2006	Kindergarten First	2009-2010	Kindergarten First Second Third Fourth Fifth Sixth
2006-2007	Kindergarten First Second	2011-2012	Kindergarten First Second Third Fourth Fifth Sixth Seventh
2007-2008	Kindergarten First Second Third	2012-2013	Kindergarten First Second Third Fourth Fifth Sixth Seventh Eighth
2008-2009	Kindergarten First Second Third Fourth	2013-2017	K-12

Curriculum and Standards

Students participating in the Dual Language Program are instructed using the Clear Creek ISD (CCISD) curriculum following state guidelines (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) and are held to the same standards as all other CCISD students. High expectations are held for every student, and teachers in the Estrellas Program strive to ensure that each child reaches his or her potential as a learner.

Assessment

Students in the Dual Language Program will be assessed using the same assessment measures as all CCISD students, including standardized tests. State assessment decisions (3rd-5th grade) will be made by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee based on student performance. Parents will receive progress reports and report cards indicating the student's academic progress in both languages. Communication on the student's progress will also be shared through parent-teacher conferences, newsletters, letters, and phone calls. In addition, students' linguistic progress will be assessed annually.

Your child is a good candidate for the program if he or she:

- Is highly verbal and developmentally on target in his or her native language.
- Expresses an interest in different people, places, and things.
- Is interested in learning a second language.

The program is a good fit for families that:

- Support learning a second language.
- Value other cultures.
- Participate in their children's educational process.

Applying to the Dual Language Program

Kindergarten students and parents interested in enrolling in the Dual Language Program will need to complete an application. Once the school has received the application, students will be contacted to complete the process by being administered an oral language assessment. Also, parents will be invited to attend an orientation session.

Students whose parents sign the Dual Language Compact Commitment and whose oral language proficiency test results are FES (Fluent English Speaker) will be identified as "Dual Language Program Ready." A lottery system will then be used to determine which students will enroll in the program and which students will be placed on a waiting list.

Commitment to the Dual Language Program

Just as young children learning their first language often become frustrated with their inability to communicate, it is important to remember that children learning a second language may feel frustration. Support and encouragement are the keys to overcoming this frustration. It is important to make the decision to commit to your child remaining in the Dual Language Program throughout the elementary grades before enrolling.

Steps to Enrolling Your Child

Children who are eligible to begin kindergarten as defined by Education Code 29.151 (5 years old prior to September 1 may apply to the Dual Language Program).

1. Complete an application and return it via fax, email (lhollowa@ccisd.net) or mail to:

McWhirter PDLs
Attn: Lori Holloway Fax: 281-284-4805
300 Pennsylvania
Webster, TX 77598

The application deadline is April 29, 2022 at 3:45 p.m.

2. You will be contacted to schedule a date and time for your child to receive an oral language assessment, and for you and your child to participate in an orientation.
3. Parents must sign an Estrellas Compact Commitment for their child to be eligible for the Dual Language Program
4. Students whose oral language test results are FES (Fluent English Speaker) and whose parents have signed the Dual Language Compact Commitment will be identified as “Dual Language Program Ready.” A lottery system will then be used to determine which students enroll in the program. **The lottery will take place on May 6, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.**
5. All applicants will be contacted and informed of their child’s status in the program.
6. If your child is accepted in the Dual Language Program, and **your attendance school zone is not** McWhirter Elementary, an intra-district transfer form will need to be completed.

*Please note that, in accordance with CCISD policy, a student transfer may be revoked whenever the principal establishes that a student:

1. Has been truant;
2. Fails to maintain satisfactory conduct;
3. Fails to maintain passing grades; or
4. Fails to be punctual.

***I understand that if my child does not have satisfactory attendance, receives failing grades, or chooses not to follow CCISD’s code of student conduct, she/he will be reassigned to a general class (English speakers) or a Bilingual class (Spanish speakers). If your child is on a transfer, the transfer will not be renewed for the following school year.**

7. All necessary registration procedures must be followed to enroll the student in kindergarten (see district registration procedures).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a dual language program?

Dual language is a form of bilingual education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages.

Dual language programs foster bilingualism, biliteracy, enhanced awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity, and high levels of academic achievement through instruction in two languages.

Dual language is an educational model that integrates native English speakers and native speakers of another language for all or most of the day, with the goals of promoting high academic achievement, first-and second-language development and cross-cultural understanding for all students. In dual language programs, language learning takes place primarily through content instruction. Academic subjects are taught to all students through both English and the non-English language. As students and teachers work together to perform academic tasks, the students' language abilities are developed, along with their knowledge of content area subject matter.

2. Will a second language interfere with my child's English ability?

In most cases, learning another language enhances a child's English ability. Children can learn much about English by learning the structure of another language. Common vocabulary also helps children learn the meaning of new words in English. Experimental studies have shown that no long-term delay in native English language development occurs in children participating in second language classes, even in full immersion programs.

In fact, children enrolled in foreign language programs score statistically higher on standardized tests conducted in English. Many reports have demonstrated that children who have learned a second language earn higher SAT scores, particularly on the verbal section of the test. One study showed that, by the fifth grade of an immersion program, students outperformed all comparison groups and remained high academic achievers throughout their schooling.

3. Will my child fall behind if he/she learns two languages?

Concepts learned in either language become a part of the child's general knowledge. On some tests, such as English vocabulary, immersion students score higher than students in regular English programs.

4. If my child is enrolled in a language program at school, what can I do to help?

Most importantly, encourage your child's interest in the language and in other cultures. Show him/her that you value the ability to speak a second language. Attend cultural events that feature music, dance, or food from other countries where the language is spoken. If possible, provide some books, videos, or other materials in the second language.

5. Will my child learn the same things as students in regular classes?

Yes, the CCISD curriculum must follow the guidelines for the State of Texas. Materials in dual language classes cover the same basic program, as do regular English classes; students work toward the same academic goals regardless of the language of instruction.

6. How can we manage if no one in our family speaks Spanish?

That is not a difficulty. The school realizes that many parents are monolingual and will answer your questions/concerns in English.

7. If we move to another area, will my child fit into a regular English classroom?

If you move before first grade, or after second grade, there will be few, if any difficulties. Now that dual language programs exist in many school districts, you may be able to find one in your new neighborhood.

8. How will my child be assessed?

Students will be administered classroom and school-developed tests to determine academic progress. In addition, a language proficiency test will be administered at the end of each school year. A committee will review each child's academic performance and determine the language of the state assessment that would be most appropriate.

9. What type of accent will my child have?

Standard Spanish structures and vocabulary are taught. A variety of accents exist in all language; during a school career, a child will be exposed to teachers and students from various parts of the world that are models of well-spoken Spanish.

10. How can I evaluate my child's progress if no one speaks Spanish at home?

In addition to the report card, there is also communication with parents through newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, special notices, and phone calls. Parents are also welcomed to visit dual language classes.

What our Parents Say about The Dual Language Program

- Our child has been rapidly developing the Spanish language and has picked up pronunciation remarkably well.*
- He does not seem to feel any barriers to communication with the Spanish-speaking.*
- She loves classmates the most among all things in school.*
- She enjoys it and has new words to “teach” us every day.*
- When she hears Spanish on the radio or television, she often tells us what she thinks it meant.*
- My child uses words from his “new” language interspersed in his regular/old language. He also sings songs in his new language and likes to get Spanish books from the library (which Mom & Dad can’t read!).*
- I think my child is making exceptional progress and he is enjoying his classes/teachers more than I had anticipated. He’s more outgoing than before and not as reserved as I had anticipated he would be (at school).*
- I have not found that her skills in English have been affected in a negative way. I see her working hard to determine if what she sees is in Spanish or English and what rules, if you will, she needs to follow in order to understand what she is seeing.*
- I am amazed at how quickly she has picked Spanish up and how comfortable she is in using it. She’s very eager to teach myself and her sibling all that she is taught.*
- There has been no loss of English comprehension. Her ability to understand what she reads has continued to grow.*
- My child writes notes to family members (“I luf you”) in English and can sound out basic 3 and 4 letter words.*
- She’s writing a lot of words in Spanish. (Ella escribe muchas frases en español.)*
- I’ve noted that my son is talking more with his friends. (He notado que mi hijo se comunica más con sus amigos.)*
- He’s changed in that before he didn’t know how to work as a team and now he does know how to help and how to help himself. (El ha cambiado en forma de que antes no sabía cómo era estar en equipo y ahora sabe cómo ayudar y ayudarse a si mismo.)*
- My daughter knows a lot. Every day I’m surprised by everything she knows. Thanks for teaching my daughter so much. (Por supuesto mi hija sabe mucho. Me sorprende cada día con todo lo que sabe y gracias por enseñarle tanto a la niña).*
- Thank you for your efforts and the great influence in my child’s life.*

Resources

Please note that dual language is a term that is also used to refer to two-way immersion education.

www.alianza.pvUSD.net/what_immersion.html

www.ed.gov/pubs/ToolsforSchools/2way.html

www.languagemagazine.com

www.nethelp.no/cindy/res1.html

<http://www.cal.org/topics/fl/immersion.html>

http://crede.berkeley.edu/research/llaa/1.1_final.html

<http://njrp.tamu.edu/2004/PDFs/Collier.pdf>

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/rcd/BE021969/14.pdf>

<http://www.texastwoway.org/>

Designing and Implementing Two-Way Bilingual Programs; A Step-by-Step Guide for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents (2003),
Margarita Espino Calderón & Liliana Minaya-Rowe

Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education (2000), Nancy Cloud, Fred Genesee, & Else Hamayan

Dual Language: Teaching and Learning in Two Languages (2004), Sonia White Soltero

Raising Bilingual Children: A Parent's Guide (2003), Carey Myle