

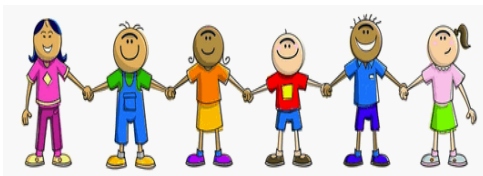
Frequently Asked Questions

? Does dual language work?

Yes! The first dual language programs began in Canada and Florida over 30 yrs. ago. Since then, this dynamic model has spread around the world; parents want their children to become both academically successful and thoroughly bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural.

The average student who enters dual language in kindergarten speaking only Spanish will graduate achieving at or above national averages on English-language standardized tests.

Families often worry that the child is falling behind in their native language and not picking up the second language. Just like a toddler learning to speak, though, this silent period is natural and necessary for the student. Once the child is ready they will interact with their peers and teachers in both languages.



? How does it work?

Dual Language education takes advantage of children's natural language learning abilities. Instead of 'teaching a language,' we 'teach through a language.' Teachers use special techniques called *Sheltered Instruction* to help those children who are working in their second language.

? How long does it take?

It takes most people 5-7 years to become 'fully fluent' in a second language, and children are not different. The fact that children often pick up social language quickly has led to the false belief that it only takes about a year to become fluent in another language. What we want and expect of our students is the ability to not just speak informally, but read, write and study at high levels in both languages. *This* is what takes 5-7 years.

? Is the dual language curriculum different from the other classes?

No. Every teacher must follow the curriculum guidelines for every subject as set forth by the state of Texas. The only difference is that the teacher and students are doing all of this in two languages.

? What does all of this mean for families?

In San Elizario ISD, we expect all students, families, and teachers to work together to make the student successful at school. It may be hard for parents when their child brings homework to do in a second language that the parents might not know.

We ask that you be patient as the full benefits of a dual language education blossoms after 4-5 years, and keeps growing.

We ask that you support your child in this great challenge. As you know, you are your child's greatest teacher and role model. As they work their hardest to learn in two languages, they need to know that their bilingualism and school achievement are important to you.

