Spanish Immersion Pathway

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Agenda

- Overview of Spanish Immersion Program
- Program Evaluation
- Moving Forward



What is the Spanish Immersion Program?

- An educational model where core academic instruction is delivered primarily in Spanish at elementary with continued offerings in Language Arts and Social Studies at secondary.

- Follows the district curriculum and learning outcomes.

- Spanish Immersion is offered at
  - Nuevas Fronteras Spanish Immersion (Elementary)
  - Woodbury Middle School (Grades 6-8)
  - Woodbury High School (9-12)



The Dual Language Immersion umbrella...

- Developmental Bilingual
- Two-Way Immersion
- Heritage Language Immersion
- Foreign Language Immersion

SoWashCo is currently a Foreign Language Immersion Program.



Background on Bilingual Programs

Newcomer Programs

- Goal is to support initial adjustment of English Learners (ELs) to language, culture and schooling of new country
- Integration of academic and personal-social support

Transitional Programs (Early or Late Exit)

- Goal of English Language Development
- Transition from first language literacy to English
- Shorter program
- Sheltered instructional and bridging strategies used

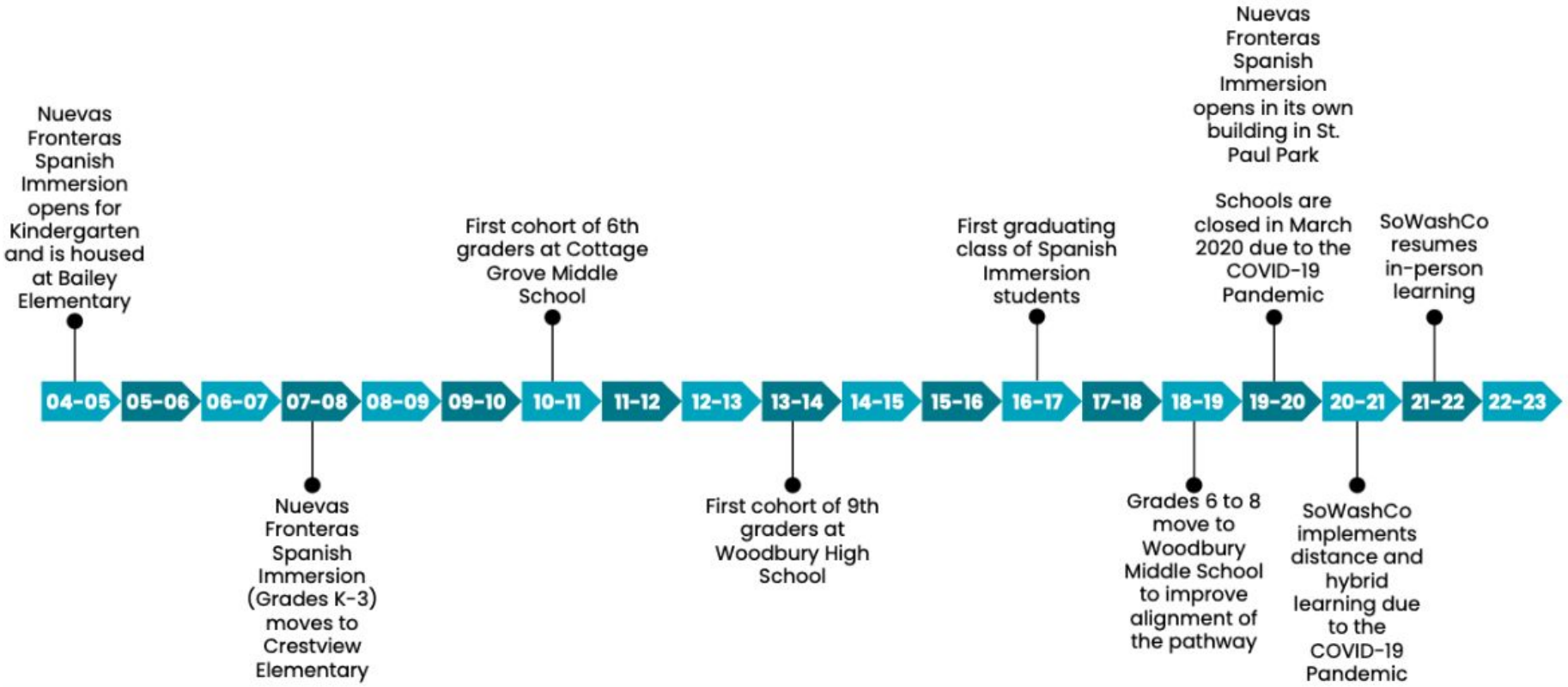
Foreign Language Immersion (One-way Immersion)

- Goal of target language development and biliteracy
- Primarily made up of **English** speaking students wanting to become proficient in a second language
- 90/10 or 50/50 models (percentage of each language used)

Dual Language Immersion (Two-way Immersion)

- Goal is to develop biliteracy in two languages
- Composed of varying levels of proficiency in two languages
- Instruction in both languages beginning with 80% non-English and increasing to 50/50

Historical Look at the Spanish Immersion Program

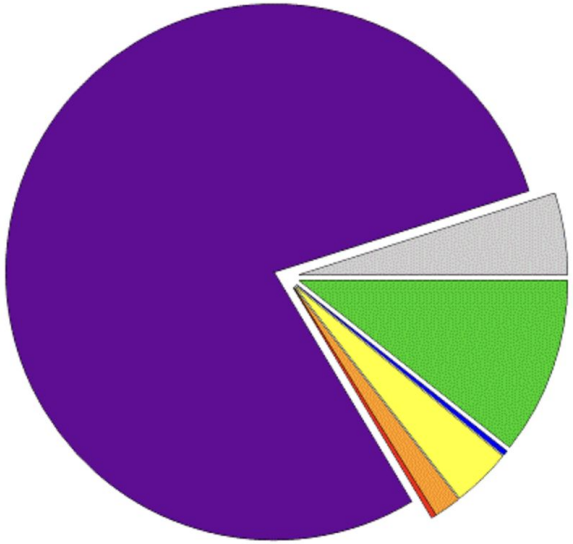


Demographic Breakdown for Nuevas Fronteras

Demographic Breakdown
Nuevas Fronteras, 2013 - 2014
Status: Active Students Only

Demographic: Federal Ethnicity

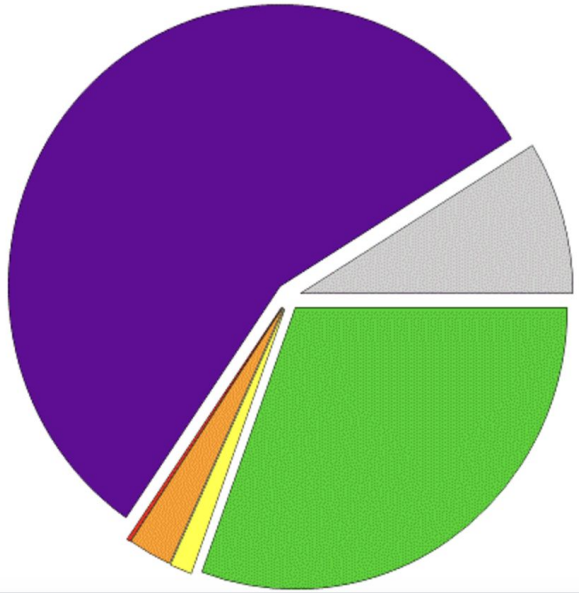
Demographic Breakdown		
Hispanic/Latino	39	10.7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.3%
Asian	13	3.6%
Black or African American	6	1.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0.3%
White	288	78.7%
Two or More Races	18	4.9%
Total	366	100.0%



Demographic Breakdown
Nuevas Fronteras, 2023 - 2024
Status: Active Students Only

Demographic: Federal Ethnicity

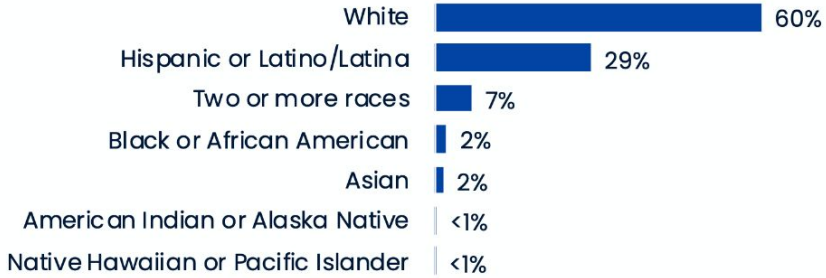
Demographic Breakdown		
Hispanic/Latino	167	30.6%
Asian	7	1.3%
Black or African American	14	2.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0.2%
White	309	56.6%
Two or More Races	48	8.8%
Total	546	100.0%



Spanish Immersion Student Demographics 2024-25 School Year

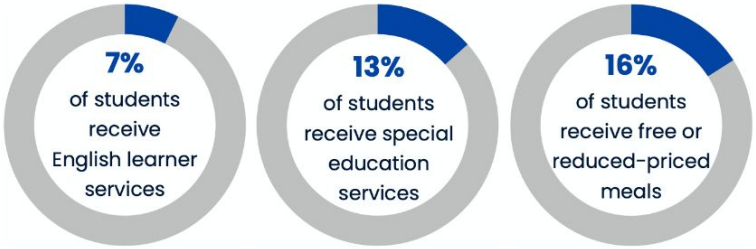
Enrollment of **902** students in grades Kindergarten to 12





Primary Home Language

- **79%** English
- **18%** Spanish
- **2%** Other



The Spanish Immersion Pathway

Nuevas Fronteras Spanish Immersion

90/10 in Grades K/1
75/25 in Grade 2
70/30 in Grade 3
60/40 in Grade 4
50/50 in Grade 5

Woodbury Middle School

Social Studies
Spanish Language Arts
2/6 Daily Courses

Woodbury High School

Social Studies
(Gr 9-11)
Spanish Language Arts
2/6 Daily Courses

Immersion in Action



Program Evaluation

What is it?

- Evaluation is a systematic process to determine merit, worth, value, or significance (American Evaluation Association).
- Program evaluation assesses the extent services are meeting intended outcomes.

Why it is used?

- To assess implementation and/or impact
- To support decision-making

Where it has been used in SoWashCo?

- English Learner Program
- Young Scholars
- Spanish Immersion
- AVID (focus on elective course)

About the Evaluation

- Started in winter of 2022
- Worked with school and district leaders, and partnered with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)
- Reviewed best practices in dual language education
- Gathered student and family perspectives





Evaluation Questions

Student and Family Voice

- **What are the experiences of students and families in the Spanish Immersion pathway?**
- What's working well?
- What needs improvement?

May - June 2022
Student Survey: Gr 4 to 12
Family Survey

Perceptions of programming, climate & culture, family engagement opportunities and supports

Best Practices

To what extent does the Spanish Immersion Program align with best practices for dual language programming?

September - October 2022
Program Self-Assessment completed by district and school staff members

Howard et al. (2008). Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education, 3rd ed.
7 strands: program structure, curriculum, instruction, assessment & accountability, staff quality and professional development, family & community, and support & resources.

Evaluation Results Summary

CELEBRATIONS

- Students and families **value the bilingual and bicultural benefits**.
- Students feeling a strong **sense of community.**
- Students report pride in bilingualism and **sociocultural competence.**
- Students being awarded **Biliteracy Seals** and holding on to the **language** through high school

OPPORTUNITIES

- Staff **turnover**
- Continuous **language exposure** and support for English and Spanish - all levels
- **Alignment** of dual language best practices
- Family **engagement**
- **Data** tracking

Student Comments

"I love how the teachers support people who are from different cultures. I am so glad that I had a chance to learn the Spanish language, for it will be very helpful in the future."

"It's very fun learning new stuff about Spanish and learning interesting stuff about different Spanish cultures."

"I like being immersed in other cultures and learning from different people."

"I really like being able to learn about the many cultures that surround the language of Spanish and learning about my own cultural background."

"I like the opportunities I find knowing more than one language, and I like the environment I am immersed in at school."

Parent Comments

“Learn a second language and have cultural experiences that she would not otherwise get in a traditional elementary school.”

“The cultural awareness that my daughter is gaining is very rewarding. The added confidence that being bilingual gives her is huge.”

“Bi-lingual is amazing! Their understanding of other cultures. The small community.”

“The teachers - we have been so lucky and grateful for all the teachers our child has had. It was the inclusion of [language ambassadors] in the learning experience. Their presence always had the students abuzz and helped them understand and appreciate other cultures due to having a reference point.”

Program Evaluation Lessons Learned

- SoWashCo needs to establish a dedicated leadership team to ensure program consistency and set clear program priorities.
- Increase family engagement via transparent communication to address concerns, fostering a more inclusive and effective Spanish Immersion Pathway
- Provide staff with regular professional development
- Enhance bilingual instruction
- Improve data collection

Next Steps

Year 1 2024-25	Year 2 2025-26	Year 3 2026-27
○ **Established dedicated leadership team** ○ **Develop and share five parent Informational Webinars** for Spanish Immersion programming ○ Identify K-12 **bilingual literacy assessment tool**	○ Ongoing, targeted **professional development** ○ Implement **K-12 bilingual literacy assessment** tool ○ **Cross-metro analysis** of High School Immersion Programming	○ **Enhanced bilingual instruction** across levels ○ Ongoing use of **program vision card** to monitor and adjust for continuous improvement

Program Vision

- The Spanish Immersion Pathway will provide an equitable learning environment for students to meet high academic expectations.
- Programming supports will be established for students to be academically successful, biliterate and competent global citizens.
- Teachers will continue to develop their skills in dual language immersion education to support students and families.
- Families will be supported throughout students' learning journey and learning experience to promote a high level of family engagement and a positive school climate.

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Questions?