

Kalamazoo Public Schools

Welcome!
El Sol
Kindergarten
Orientation

March 5, 2025



Hello and welcome to El Sol kindergarten and PEEP orientation. Thank you for joining us today!

Hello!



I am the
principal,
Dr. Wilson



My name is Dr. Wilson and I'm the principal of El Sol. I graduated from Kalamazoo Public Schools, and was a teacher in KPS for 16 years before becoming the principal of El Sol in 2017. I have worked in immersion and ESL settings for most of my career, and I myself am a second language learner of Spanish, so I understand and fully support the unique nature of teaching and learning in an immersion setting.

Office Staff / Miembros del personal de la oficina



Sra. Sanchez (Ms. Luci)
Lead Secretary
Secretaria principal



Sra. Flores (Ms. Maria)
Assistant Secretary
Secretaria Adjunta

Now I would like to introduce our office staff. Ms. Luci is our Lead secretary and Ms. Maria is our assistant secretary. Our secretaries will be the primary contact people you will work with when enrolling your child for Kindergarten at El Sol. They are fluent in English and Spanish and will assist you with all your needs.

Agenda

- Information about Kindergarten Enrollment
- General Kindergarten information
- The El Sol Dual Language Immersion program
- How to enroll your child
- Q and A



Today's agenda will include information about kindergarten at KPS. I will also discuss information about our immersion program here at El Sol, and the process for enrolling your child for the 2025-2026 school year.

Kindergarten eligibility



- Students who will be five years old by Sept. 1 may enroll in kindergarten
- All schools offer full-day kindergarten
- Students are initially assigned to schools based on their home address. You must request a specific school (ie. El Sol)
- School assignment [look-up](#) (verify assignment with Student Services) *
- *El Sol is not a boundary school, so is not shown on the map

Who is eligible for kindergarten? Any child who will be five years old by September 1 may enroll in kindergarten for next year. All schools in KPS offer full-day kindergarten and follow the same district calendar. Students are assigned to schools based on where they live. We also have several magnet schools in KPS that accept students from anywhere in the district. El Sol is one of these programs. Transportation is provided to all KPS schools. El Sol accepts students who live outside the KPS district, however, students living out of district are not eligible for the Kalamazoo Promise scholarship.

Meet the

Sra. Greenman



Sra. Homan



Sra. Aguirre



Teachers!

Now, I would like to introduce you to our kindergarten teachers. Today, Ms. Greenman, Ms. Homan, and Ms. Aguirre will be in the gym and the classroom assisting with registration and doing a fun learning activity with your child in English and Spanish. All three teachers plan together regularly to ensure all students are receiving a similar Kindergarten experience in our program. Our kindergarten teachers communicate through Class Dojo, Email, Phone, and Newsletters to support families.

What will my child be doing in kindergarten?

- Sharing and reading books
- Letter recognition, A-B-C's
- Counting
- Identifying sounds and words
- Drawing and writing
- Writing sentences
- Gross and fine motor
- Speech/language
- Cooperation in working with peers



During a regular day in the kindergarten classroom, students will have many opportunities to do reading activities in Spanish in English, math and science activities mostly in Spanish but with bridging in English, reading and writing opportunities in both Spanish and English, and opportunities to work on gross and fine motor skills, speech and language, and citizenship. Attending kindergarten at El Sol is unique because students are expected to function both English and Spanish. For students of either language minority they may struggle more than a typical kindergartener to get used to the setting where they must participate for half a day using a language that they may not be comfortable using at first. It is possible that for the first couple months of school, your kindergarten student may experience an increase in emotional behavior including frustration or avoidance of the other language. Eventually they become comfortable with the program and usually by November are very excited to learn in both languages. It is because of this that I recommend students who are not five years old by September 1st should wait until the next school year to start kindergarten at El Sol.

Dual Language Immersion

Overview

The Three Pillars of Bilingual Education



What is Dual Language Immersion?

- Students learn content in two languages
- El Sol follows a 50/50 model
- Three pillars of Dual Language instruction
 - Language
 - Content
 - Culture
- It is a K-12 progression

El Sol is Dual Language Immersion School.

Dual Language immersion happens when students learn content in two different languages during their instructional day.

El Sol follows a 50/50 model which means half of all instruction takes place in English and half of instruction takes place in Spanish.

There are three pillars of Bilingual Education.

The first pillar is Language acquisition, where students become bilingual and biliterate in both languages.

The second pillar is Content, where students learn reading, writing, math, science, and social studies concepts in both languages.

The third pillar of bilingual education education is culture. Students who learn a second language learn about different cultures through exposure to language nuances, traditions & practices, storytelling, and celebrations. When these three pillars are combined, students emerge at the end of their school career competent in two languages.

Students in Dual Language programs can continue with immersion and advanced language courses all the way through 12th grade.

Benefits of Bilingualism

- Bilingual Brains have more gray and white matter
- Aids focus and attention
- Fosters Enhanced cognition and Executive Function
- Stimulates creative and critical thinking skills
- Greater social and emotional intelligence
- Fosters a greater capacity for empathy



Video en español

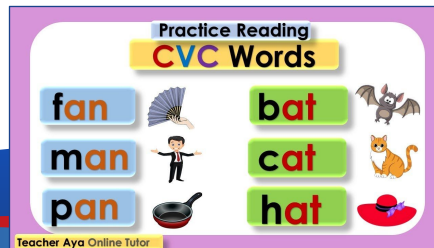
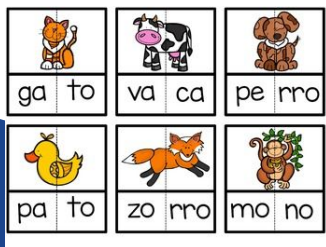
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCsCq1LRTIE>

Children who are bilingual experience a number of lifelong benefits. This video describes 6 benefits of bilingualism.

El Sol's Dual Language Immersion

Instructional Breakdown for Kindergarten:

- **Full Reading block in Spanish** - Maravillas Reading series
- **English Language Development literacy block** emphasizes NON-transferable Skills (skills that only exist in English and cannot be taught in Spanish)
- **Math is taught in Spanish** (with vocabulary bridging in English)
- **Science and Social studies are taught in English** (with vocabulary bridging in Spanish)
- **Content instruction follows Common Core State Standards for all subjects**



El Sol's immersion program uses a 50/50 dual language immersion model. This means that half of the academic instruction takes place in English, and half in Spanish. In Kindergarten, students will receive a 90-minute Spanish Literacy Block. Students will receive a targeted 60-minute reading block in English that emphasizes non transferable skills, which are aspects of language that only exist in English, like short vowels and CVC words. Math instruction will take place in Spanish, with bridging of English vocabulary. Science and Social Studies instruction will take place in English, which vocabulary bridging in Spanish. Content instruction in English and Spanish follows the Michigan Common Core State Standards for all subjects.

El Sol's Dual Language Immersion Program

- El Sol teachers receive specialized professional development and coaching for Dual Language instruction
- More than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the teachers at El Sol have, or are obtaining a TESOL Masters Degree
- Instruction at El Sol incorporates Dual Language Best Practices
- Parents will have opportunities to attend workshops throughout the year for Dual Language information and strategies for supporting your child at home



El Sol teachers receive specialized professional development and coaching for Dual Language instruction. Teachers at El Sol learn how to incorporate language instruction into every subject, and more than $\frac{2}{3}$ of teachers at El Sol have, or are obtaining a TESOL Masters Degree. Teachers incorporate Dual Language Best Practices into every lesson. These practices include using two forms of input, like combining writing with a visual, real life objects, sentence starters, reference charts, common phrases used in English and Spanish, music, movement, videos, chants, choral responses, and many more. These instructional strategies make it easier for students to understand content while learning in a second language

Pathway to Biliteracy

K - 12 Progression

Kindergarten	Receive PTB Certificate
2nd Grade	Proficiency Checkpoint #1
5th Grade	Proficiency Checkpoint #2
Middle School	*2 Immersion Classes / Year
9th & 10th Grade	Dual Enrollment on HS campus
11th & 12th Grade	Spanish Courses at WMU
HS Graduation	Minor in Spanish + Seal of Biliteracy



* The middle school track is under development as of 2025

El Sol will be implementing the Pathway to Biliteracy beginning in the fall of 2025. The Pathway to biliteracy is a kindergarten through twelfth grade progression toward becoming fully bilingual and biliterate that contains milestones and checkpoints along the way. It begins in kindergarten with a certificate that students receive confirming that by participating in a Dual Language Immersion program, they are on the Pathway to biliteracy. There are proficiency checkpoints in 2nd and 5th grade that measure students' progress. Students who continue the immersion program through middle and high school will have the opportunity to begin taking University level Spanish courses starting in 9th grade and will graduate with a Minor from WMU by 12th grade and obtain the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy.



Dual Language Program Information

- Letter from Principal
- Program history & overview
- Instructional allocations by grade
- Cultural focus by grade
- Pathway to biliteracy

Parent Contract

- Emphasis on learning both CONTENT and LANGUAGE
- Importance of regular attendance
- Importance of Pathway to Biliteracy

General Information

- Hours of operation
- Arrival / Pick Up procedures
- Absence procedures
- PTO & Volunteer Opportunities
- General information

El Sol Parent Handbook

We are currently developing a comprehensive Parent Handbook where you will learn about Dual Language Program information which includes a letter from the principal, program overview, content and cultural breakdown by grade level, and information on the Pathway to Biliteracy. Each September we will ask all families to sign a Parent Contract which acknowledges your understanding of the Dual Language Immersion Program and a commitment to support your child. The handbook will also include general information that is specific to El Sol. Information regarding district policies and procedures can be found on the KPS Website.



*Una escuela, dos idiomas,
oportunidades infinitas*

*One school, two languages,
infinite opportunities*

Attendance Matters

The Importance of Regular Attendance at El Sol

- Instruction at El Sol takes place in English and Spanish
 - Students learn both *content* and *language*
 - Students who miss school may not be exposed to their second language *at all* that day
 - Your student risks falling behind in the second language
- Students feel more frustrated as gaps in language skills accumulate due to chronic absenteeism
- El Sol has a waiting list - students with extended absences risk being unenrolled and losing their spot in the program

Regular attendance at El Sol is very important. Students are not only learning content, they are also learning language. Most El Sol students who speak primarily English in the home will not be exposed to any Spanish when they are out of school. This results in gaps in language skills, heightened frustration, and falling behind in the content that is being taught in Spanish. Students with extended absences run the risk of being unenrolled and losing their spot at El Sol.

How can I prepare my child for kindergarten?

- Read in English and Spanish. You can check out books in both languages at the public library.
- Watch videos with counting, letter naming, and songs in both languages



English Websites for Kindergarten Preparation

1. PBS Kids: <https://pbskids.org/>
2. Funbrain: <https://www.funbrain.com/>
3. Starfall: <https://www.starfall.com/h/>
4. Sesame Street: <https://www.sesamestreet.org/>
5. Alphabet recognition: http://www.littlegiraffes.com/abc_homepractice.html
6. Gracie's Corner Hip Hop Learning Songs: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nggz-1CEWfg&list=RDCMUQCQ2FzqlvWSE7ysvL1sLWQ5Q&index=6>
7. ABC song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36IBDpTRVNE>
8. Letter Sounds: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=neltURLvyIQ&t=37s>



You can start preparing your child for kindergarten now by exposing your child to books in both English and Spanish so that they can get used to seeing both languages. They can also watch videos with counting, letter naming, and songs in both languages. This slide also has several websites in English that you can access with songs, videos, and other fun activities to start learning kindergarten skills.

Spanish Kindergarten Resources

Páginas del red para prepararse para Kinder

1. 123 Con Andrés: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwaM0mJEcQU>
2. Basho & Friends:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/bashoandfriends/featured>
3. Super Simple Songs:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/SuperSimpleSongs/featured> - muchos en inglés y español
4. Rockalingua: <https://www.youtube.com/user/Rockalingua>
5. Calico Spanish: <https://www.youtube.com/user/kidsimmersion>
6. Luna Creciente featuring El mono sílabo:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsclA6WB0CrHlhmD-D7_bSA



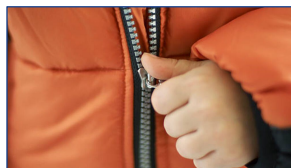
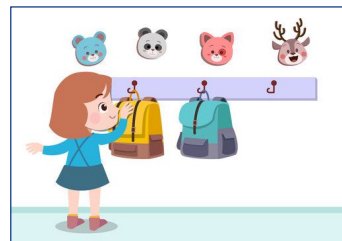
¿De qué color?

This slide contains a series of websites in Spanish that you can also start using with your child to get them comfortable singing, speaking, and listening in Spanish.



How can I prepare my child for daily kindergarten routines?

- Tying their shoes
- Zipping their coat
- Putting on snow pants
- Buttoning shirts / pants
- Washing hands after they use the bathroom
- Opening their lunch containers & storing them back in their lunchbox
- Cleaning up after themselves (toys, books, papers, food wrappers, etc.)
- Following 1-3 step directions
- Organizing papers in a folder
- Putting supplies in a backpack



One very important thing you can do to prepare your son or daughter for kindergarten is to practice doing things to be more independent. This includes things like (click through the bullets). I've al a couple TikTok videos with useful tips for preparing your child for the school setting.

PTO: Get involved!

- More than just fundraising; we build community
- When parents are involved, children benefit academically, behaviorally, and socially
- Promotes strong collaboration between parents and staff
- There is a place for everyone!

El Sol is known for its very strong parent-teacher organization. We work together throughout the year to not only raise funds but to provide a series of social opportunities. Some of our biggest fundraisers include our Taste of El Sol in October where families can make and sell their favorite foods, our walkathon, and our Fiesta de El Sol, which takes place in the spring. We hold monthly PTO meetings, and this year they can be both virtual and in-person. There are several ways and opportunities you can get involved whether it's volunteering for individual events or becoming a PTO officer!

Documents needed to be brought to the school to finalize enrollment:

- ❖ Your child's birth certificate
- ❖ Immunization record
- ❖ Proof of hearing and vision screen (if available)
- ❖ Two proofs of address (examples: utility bill, lease agreement, mortgage statement)
- ❖ Oral health assessment or proof of upcoming appointment
- ❖ For PEEP registration, proof of yearly family income needed

Once you fill out the online registration forms, you will need to bring the following materials to El Sol to finalize the process: Your child's birth certificate, immunization record, and an oral health assessment and hearing & vision screening, if available. You will need to provide two proofs of address, such as a utility bill, lease agreement, or mortgage statement. A phone bill or driver's license do NOT count as a proof of address. For PEEP registration, you will need to provide proof of yearly family income. All of these documents must be uploaded to the online registration platform before registration is complete. All families will receive a tote bag with a Kindergarten t-shirt for your child and some El Sol memorabilia to enjoy.

Enroll your child in KPS!

Click on the image below to be directed to the online enrollment platform.

NEW STUDENT ONLINE ENROLLMENT LINKS FOR NEXT SCHOOL YEAR (2025-26)

[ENGLISH](#)

[ESPAÑOL](#)

If you have questions about the enrollment process, please don't hesitate to call El Sol at 269-337-0230.



First day of school August 25, 2025

El Sol accepts students from all over the Kalamazoo Public School district. Because of this, we sometimes have more applicants than available spots. When this happens, we do an enrollment lottery, where families who requested our program will be chosen at random to be placed at El Sol. We normally do this lottery within 2 weeks of kindergarten orientation. Once the student list is finalized, it gets approved by Student Services, and parents are notified by late April or early May. We look forward to welcoming your child to El Sol for the first day of the 2024-2025 school year on August 26th.



CLASS OF 2038

We look forward to welcoming our kindergarten students next school year. We at KPS will be here to support you and your Kindergartner until they graduate in 2035!

Kalamazoo Public Schools

El Sol Elementary School

Grades K-5

604 W. Vine St.

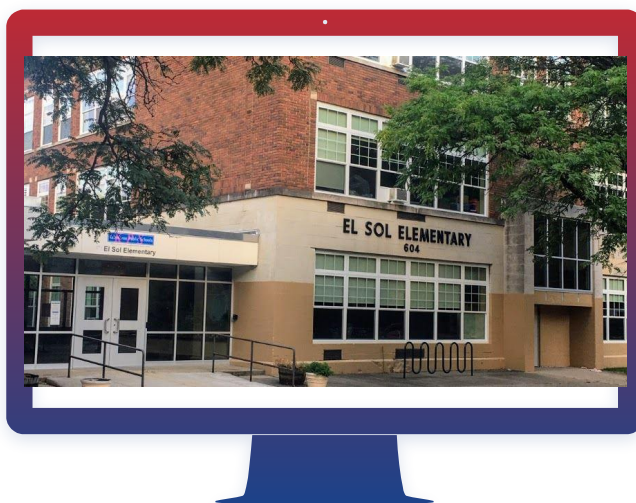
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

(269) 337-0230

Principal Name: Dr. Natalie Wilson

Secretary Name: Luciana Trida

Sanchez



www.kalamazoopublicschools.com

To learn more about KPS and our school, you can visit the district's webpage at KalamazooPublicSchools.com. At the upper right hand side you'll see a drop down list of schools. Please look at our webpage for additional information or feel free to contact us by phone or email.

Q & A

If you are watching this presentation outside of our scheduled live Kindergarten Orientation, you may call El Sol at 269-337-0230 between 8:00 and 4:00pm with any questions. If you are tuning in live, I will now happily answer any questions you have. You may unmute your microphone to ask a question, or type a question into the chat.

El Sol New Building Site



El Sol New Building Site



Parcel: 2023: SCHOOL DISTRICT OF KALAMAZOO	
ACRES	12.10
GNLUNIT	6
GOVUNIT	KALAMAZOO TWP
OCRCAREOF	
ONERNAME1	SCHOOL DISTRICT OF KALAMAZOO
ONERNAME2	
ONERSTATE	MI
ORZPCODE	49007
OTADDRESS	1220 HOWARD
OWNERCITY	KALAMAZOO
P_PERCENT	0.00
PCOMBINED	BAKER DR VAC
Zoom:30	***

El Sol New Building Site

Ground View
1428 Baker Dr.

