

VISTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION (DLI) FAMILY HANDBOOK



Introduction

- Message from the Director of Dual Language Immersion
 - Vision and mission of the DLI program
 - Overview of program goals: Bilingualism, Biliteracy, Sociocultural Competence
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction to Dual Language Immersion
2. Program Structure
3. Benefits of DLI
4. Family Support and Engagement
5. Language Development Milestones
6. Academic Expectations
7. Communication and Resources
8. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
9. Contact Information
10. Appendices



WELCOME LETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION



Welcome to the Dual Language Immersion Program!

Welcome to the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Vista Unified School District Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program! We are thrilled to partner with you on this transformative educational journey. Our program is designed to empower students with the skills, knowledge, and cultural understanding needed to thrive in an increasingly multilingual and interconnected world.

The DLI program provides students with the unique opportunity to become fluent in both English and Spanish, achieve biliteracy, and develop an appreciation for diverse cultures. Through rigorous academic instruction and meaningful community engagement, our program nurtures lifelong learners who are prepared to excel academically, socially, and emotionally.

What to Expect

This handbook serves as a guide to help you understand and navigate the DLI program. Inside, you will find detailed information about:

- The vision, mission, and goals of the program.
- Models of instruction, including the 90/10 and 50/50 frameworks.
- Family engagement opportunities, from workshops to cultural celebrations.
- Resources to support your child's bilingual and biliterate development at home.

We believe that a strong partnership between families and schools is essential to student success. This handbook also highlights ways for you to get involved, connect with other families, and access support when needed.

Our Commitment to Your Child

At Vista Unified, we are committed to providing every student with:

- A high-quality bilingual education that promotes academic excellence.
- Opportunities to develop cultural awareness and global citizenship.
- The tools and resources to achieve their fullest potential in two languages.

We understand that the journey to bilingualism and biliteracy requires dedication and collaboration. Rest assured, we are here to support your family every step of the way. Together, we can help your child unlock the lifelong benefits of a bilingual education.

Let's Get Started

Thank you for choosing the Dual Language Immersion program. We are excited to embark on this journey with you and your child. Let's work together to build a brighter, bilingual future!

Warm regards,

Rafael Olavide

Director of Dual Language Immersion

Vista Unified School District



VISION AND MISSION OF THE DLI PROGRAM

Vision:

To empower students to become confident, bilingual, and biliterate individuals who value diversity, engage with the global community, and excel academically in both English and Spanish.

Mission:

Our mission is to provide a rigorous and inclusive dual language education that promotes academic excellence, cultural competence, and equity. Through collaboration with families, educators, and the community, we foster an environment where students can achieve their full potential as lifelong learners and global citizens.

Overview of Program Goals

The Dual Language Immersion Program in Vista Unified School District is guided by three core goals:

1. **Bilingualism:**
 - Enable students to communicate fluently in both English and Spanish, equipping them with the language skills needed to thrive in diverse settings.
2. **Biliteracy:**
 - Ensure students develop the ability to read, write, and engage with academic content in both languages, preparing them for success in higher education and beyond.
3. **Sociocultural Competence:**
 - Cultivate an appreciation for cultural diversity, fostering empathy, respect, and an understanding of different perspectives. By learning through a multicultural lens, students gain the tools to become responsible, compassionate members of a global society.





1. INTRODUCTION TO DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION

Introduction to Dual Language Immersion (DLI)

What is Dual Language Immersion?

Dual Language Immersion (DLI) is an innovative and highly effective educational program that promotes academic excellence while fostering bilingualism and biliteracy. In DLI classrooms, students are taught core subjects like math, science, and social studies in both English and Spanish. The goal is for students to become proficient in both languages, while also gaining a deep understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures.

Why Dual Language Immersion?

The benefits of a DLI program are significant and far-reaching:

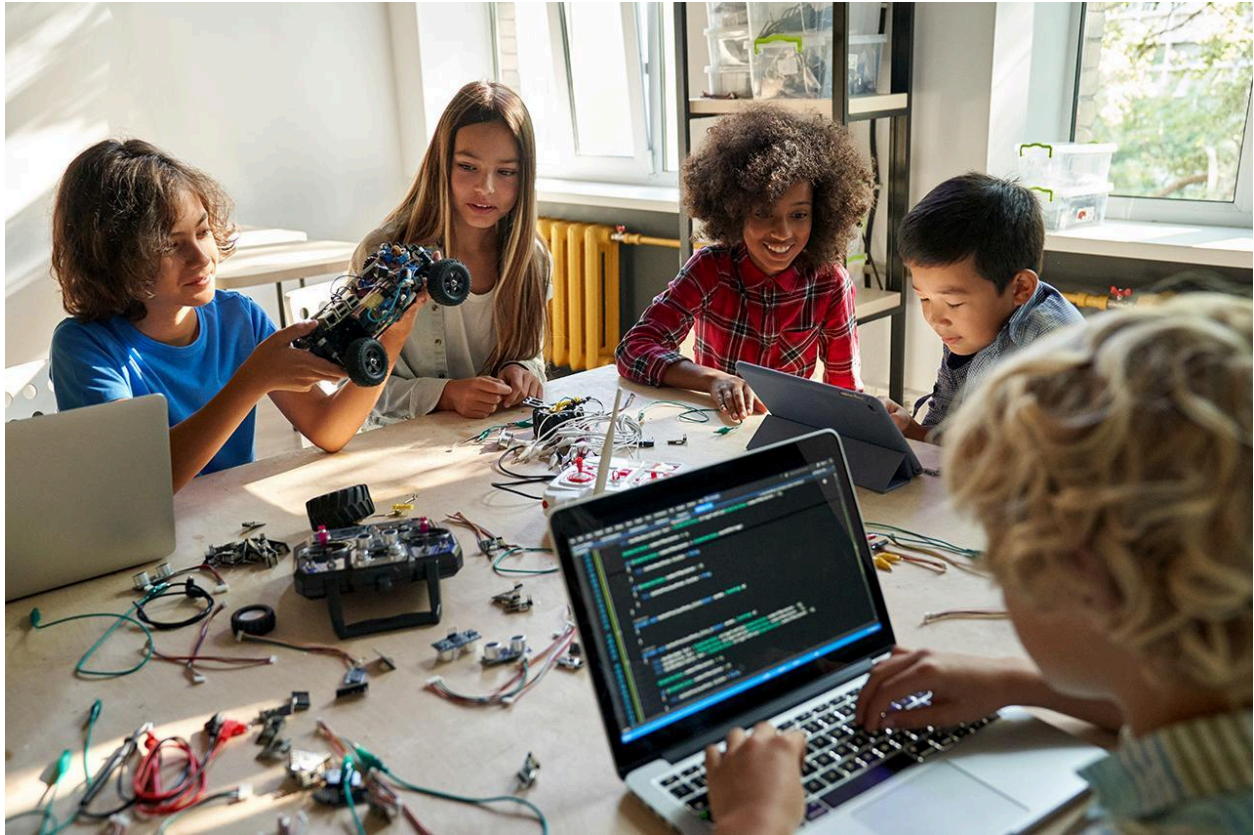
- **Bilingualism and Biliteracy:** Students develop strong language skills in English and Spanish, preparing them for success in a multilingual world.
- **Cognitive Benefits:** Research shows that bilingual students excel in problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity.
- **Academic Achievement:** DLI students often outperform their peers in traditional programs on standardized tests in reading and math.

- **Cultural Competence:** Students learn to appreciate and respect different cultures, fostering empathy and global citizenship.
- **Career Readiness:** Bilingual individuals have a competitive edge in the job market, with opportunities in fields such as healthcare, education, business, and more.

Who Participates in DLI?

DLI is for **all students!** The program is open to:

- **English Learners (ELs):** Students who speak Spanish at home can strengthen their native language while mastering English.
- **Native English Speakers:** Students have the opportunity to learn a second language in an immersive, interactive environment.
- **Heritage Language Learners:** Students with some Spanish language background can deepen their skills in reading, writing, and speaking Spanish.



2. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The structure of the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program in Vista Unified School District (VUSD) is designed to maximize students' ability to become bilingual and biliterate while achieving academic success. This section explains the models, language allocation, and progression from elementary to middle school, as well as the integration of language into specific content areas.

Explanation of the 90/10 and 50/50 Models

- **90/10 Model:**
 - In the 90/10 model, 90% of instruction in the early grades (TK, Kindergarten and 1st grade) is delivered in Spanish and 10% in English.
 - The goal is to immerse students in the minority language (Spanish) to develop a strong foundation in Spanish literacy and fluency.

- As students progress, the percentage of instruction in English increases annually until reaching a balanced 50/50 split in 5th grade.
- This model is ideal for younger students who benefit from greater exposure to Spanish in the critical early years of language acquisition.
- **50/50 Model:**
 - The 50/50 model provides instruction equally in English and Spanish starting from Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten.
 - Students receive balanced exposure to both languages across all grade levels, promoting simultaneous development of bilingualism and biliteracy.
 - This model ensures that both languages are given equal emphasis from the beginning of the program.

VUSD offers the 90/10 model at **Alamosa Park Elementary** and the 50/50 model at **Grapevine Elementary, Hannalei Elementary, and Madison Middle School.**

Language Allocation by Grade Level at Alamosa Park Elementary

- **90/10 Model Language Allocation:**
 - **TK-Kindergarten-1st Grade:** 90% Spanish, 10% English
 - **2nd Grade:** 80% Spanish, 20% English
 - **3rd Grade:** 70% Spanish, 30% English
 - **4th Grade:** 60% Spanish, 40% English
 - **5th Grade:** 50% Spanish, 50% English
- **50/50 Model Language Allocation at Grapevine and Hannalei Elementary**
 - From Transitional Kindergarten through 5th grade, instruction is consistently 50% in Spanish and 50% in English.

The specific allocation of languages ensures that students develop high levels of proficiency in both languages over time.

Transition from Elementary to Middle School in the DLI Program

The transition from elementary to middle school is a critical point in the DLI program. At **Madison Middle School**, DLI students:

- Continue to develop their bilingual and biliterate skills with advanced academic content delivered in both English and Spanish.
- Receive instruction in Spanish for specific content areas such as Social Studies and Math, while English instruction is provided for Language Arts and Science.

- Are supported with interventions and enrichment activities to maintain high levels of language proficiency.

Additionally, VUSD is planning to expand the DLI program to **Roosevelt Middle School** by the 2025-26 academic year, offering students more options to continue their bilingual education.

3. Benefits of Dual Language Immersion (DLI)

Participating in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program offers students a wealth of cognitive, academic, cultural, and long-term professional benefits. These advantages are supported by extensive research, highlighting the profound impact of bilingual education on students' development and future success.

Cognitive and Academic Benefits of Bilingualism

Bilingualism enhances cognitive flexibility and executive functioning, leading to improved problem-solving skills, creativity, and adaptability. Research shows that DLI students often outperform their monolingual peers academically.

- **Cognitive Benefits:**
 - **Enhanced Brain Development:** Bilingual individuals demonstrate greater density in areas of the brain associated with language, memory, and attention.
 - **Improved Executive Function:** Skills such as planning, task-switching, and attention control are stronger in bilingual individuals. (Bialystok, 2011)
 - **Delayed Onset of Cognitive Decline:** Lifelong bilingualism has been linked to delayed onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. (Craik, Bialystok, & Freedman, 2010)
- **Academic Benefits:**
 - **Higher Test Scores:** DLI students frequently outperform peers on standardized tests in reading, writing, and mathematics in both languages. (Thomas & Collier, 2012)
 - **Advanced Literacy Skills:** Bilingual students develop metalinguistic awareness, leading to a deeper understanding of language structure and vocabulary.
 - **Improved Focus and Multitasking:** Managing two languages sharpens students' ability to focus and handle multiple tasks effectively.

Enhanced Cultural Awareness and Empathy

Through the DLI program, students gain a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and learn to navigate multiple perspectives, which fosters empathy and understanding.

- **Cultural Competence:**
 - Students engage with diverse cultural traditions, histories, and values through curriculum and interactions with peers.

- Learning in a multicultural environment builds the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly globalized world.
 - **Empathy and Perspective-Taking:**
 - Bilingual individuals are more adept at understanding others' points of view, an essential skill in collaborative and professional settings.
 - Exposure to multiple languages and cultures promotes tolerance and reduces cultural bias.
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Long-Term Opportunities

Participating in a DLI program lays the foundation for future academic and professional success.

- **Seal of Biliteracy:**
 - The Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to high school graduates who demonstrate proficiency in two or more languages.
 - It is recognized by colleges and employers, showcasing a student's dedication to bilingualism.
 - Research shows that earning the Seal increases students' college and career readiness.
 - **College Readiness:**
 - Bilingual students often demonstrate stronger academic profiles, enhancing college admissions opportunities.
 - Language skills make students more competitive for scholarships and international study programs.
 - **Career Advantages:**
 - Bilingual professionals earn, on average, 5-20% more than their monolingual counterparts. (Callahan & Gándara, 2014)
 - Language skills are in high demand in fields such as healthcare, education, business, law enforcement, and diplomacy.
 - Employers value bilingual employees for their ability to communicate with diverse populations and operate in global markets.
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Supporting Research and References

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4. Family Support and Engagement

Families play a vital role in the success of students in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program. Active participation and encouragement at home and within the school community foster a rich, supportive environment for bilingual and biliterate development. This section highlights ways families can support their child's language learning, opportunities for involvement, and workshops to deepen understanding of bilingual education.

How Families Can Support Language Learning

Families are a child's first and most influential teachers. Here are some practical ways to support language development at home:

1. Reading with Your Child in Both Languages:

- Set aside time daily to read books in English and Spanish.
- Explore bilingual books or pair English and Spanish versions of the same story to discuss vocabulary and ideas in both languages.

- Visit local libraries or use VUSD’s recommended book lists for bilingual families.
2. **Encouraging Conversations in the Target Language at Home:**
- If Spanish is the home language, use it regularly in everyday activities, such as cooking, shopping, or discussing daily routines.
 - For non-Spanish-speaking families, create a "Spanish Hour" where everyone practices using new words and phrases together.
 - Encourage your child to teach you what they’ve learned in school—it reinforces their learning while fostering a collaborative family dynamic.
3. **Using Online Language Resources Provided by VUSD:**
- Access online platforms and apps recommended by the district, such as **Raz-Kids**, **Duolingo**, or **Epic Books** for Spanish and English.
 - Utilize digital libraries, videos, and games shared by your child’s teacher to make language practice engaging and fun.
 - Explore district-provided resources for parents, such as guides for supporting literacy in two languages.

Opportunities for Involvement

Families have numerous opportunities to actively engage with the DLI program and the school community:

1. **Parent Committees:**
- **ELAC (English Learner Advisory Committee):** Focuses on addressing the needs of English learners and provides input on school programs.
 - **DELAC (District English Learner Advisory Committee):** Offers families a voice in district-wide decision-making for programs serving multilingual learners.
 - **DPAC (District Parent Advisory Committee):** The DPAC provides a platform for parents to advocate for and support initiatives that enhance bilingual and biliteracy opportunities for students within the district.
 - **SSC (School Site Council):** The SSC supports the development and monitoring of the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) to ensure resources and strategies align with the goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competence.
 - **PTA (Parent Teachers Association):** The PTA supports the program by fostering family engagement, organizing events that celebrate bilingualism and cultural diversity, and advocating for resources that enhance the success of DLI students.

2. Volunteering in Classrooms or Events:

- Assist teachers with reading groups, language activities, or special projects in class.
- Help organize and participate in school events, such as family literacy nights or language fairs.

3. Participating in Cultural Celebrations:

- Join school-wide events that celebrate diverse cultures, such as Hispanic Heritage Month, Día de los Muertos, or International Day.
- Share your family's cultural traditions by participating in classroom presentations or providing resources like recipes, artifacts, or stories.

Engaging families in Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs is crucial for student success. In California, various workshops, conferences, and school events are designed to support and involve families in DLI education. Here are some notable opportunities:

Statewide Conferences and Workshops:

- **California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE):** CABE organizes annual conferences and regional events focusing on bilingual education. These gatherings offer sessions for educators and parents, providing insights into supporting bilingual learners. The upcoming CABE 2025 Conference is scheduled for March 26-29, 2025, at the Long Beach Convention Center. [GoCabe](#)
- **Association of Two-Way & Dual Language Education (ATDLE):** ATDLE hosts the Annual Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Conference, featuring workshops and sessions that often include family engagement strategies. The 33rd Annual Conference is set for June 18-20, 2025, at the Sacramento Convention Center. [Atdle](#)

Regional Events:

- **San Diego Dual Language Conference:** This conference brings together educators and families to discuss best practices in dual language education. The event includes sessions aimed at family engagement and support. Details about the next conference will be available on the San Diego County Office of Education's website. [San Diego County Office of Education](#)

School and District-Level Events:

Many schools and districts with DLI programs host events to involve families:

- **Parent Workshops:** Schools often conduct workshops to help parents support their children's bilingual development at home. These sessions may cover topics like literacy strategies, cultural activities, and language development tips.
- **Cultural Celebrations:** Events such as multicultural nights or language fairs celebrate the diverse cultures represented in DLI programs, fostering community and family involvement.
- **Classroom Involvement:** Teachers may invite parents to participate in classroom activities, share cultural traditions, or read stories in their native language, enhancing the learning experience for all students.

Resources for Families:

- **Quality Start Los Angeles (QSLA):** QSLA offers resources and workshops for families of dual language learners, including guides and tips to support bilingualism at home. [Quality Start LA](#)
- **Early Edge California:** This organization provides resources for supporting dual language learners, including family engagement materials and strategies to promote bilingual development. [Early Edge California](#)

Finding Local Opportunities:

To discover workshops and events in your area:

- **Contact Local Schools:** Reach out to schools with DLI programs to inquire about upcoming family events and workshops.
- **District Websites:** Many school districts post information about DLI programs and related family events on their official websites.
- **Community Organizations:** Local community centers and organizations often collaborate with schools to offer workshops and resources for families in DLI programs.

Tips for Families New to the DLI Program

1. **Be Patient:** Language learning is a gradual process. Celebrate small victories, such as your child learning new words or phrases.
2. **Ask Questions:** Stay in touch with your child's teacher and ask for strategies to support learning at home.
3. **Build a Support Network:** Connect with other DLI families through school events or parent committees to share experiences and resources.



5. Language Development

Understanding the Timeline for Bilingual Fluency

Achieving full bilingualism and biliteracy is a gradual process that typically spans several years. Understanding the timeline helps families set realistic expectations and appreciate the progress at each stage:

1. Early Years (TK-2):

- Focus on building a foundation in the target language (Spanish) while maintaining development in the first language (English or Spanish).
- Students may initially appear stronger in one language as they acclimate to the DLI environment.

2. Elementary Years (3-5):

- Significant growth in both languages as students develop academic vocabulary and literacy skills.
- By the end of 5th grade, students are expected to achieve balanced proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in both languages.

3. **Middle School and Beyond (6-8 and 9-12):**

- Refinement of advanced language skills, including content-specific vocabulary and critical thinking in both languages.
- Students become increasingly proficient in expressing complex ideas and concepts bilingually.

Research suggests that students in well-implemented DLI programs reach grade-level proficiency or higher in both languages by 6th grade. (Thomas & Collier, 2012)

Recognizing and Celebrating Progress in Language Learning

Celebrating progress, no matter how small, motivates students and builds their confidence. Families and educators can acknowledge milestones through the following ways:

1. **At Home:**

- Celebrate when your child learns new vocabulary, reads a book independently, or completes a writing assignment in their second language.
- Display bilingual projects, artwork, or assignments at home to show pride in their accomplishments.

2. **At School:**

- Participate in events such as bilingual showcases or cultural fairs where students present projects or performances in both languages.
- Recognize achievements through certificates, classroom awards, or progress reports highlighting bilingual milestones.

3. **Through the Program:**

- Awarding the **Seal of Biliteracy Pathway Awards** for milestones in bilingual proficiency at elementary and middle school levels.
- Hosting family nights or assemblies to celebrate students' bilingual and biliterate development.

Dual Language Immersion Pathway TK-12: A Journey to Bilingual Excellence

The **Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Pathway** in Vista Unified School District is designed to help your child achieve high academic success, become fluent and literate in two languages, and gain the skills needed to thrive in a diverse, global society. This program is a step-by-step journey, celebrating key milestones along the way, and culminating in the prestigious **California Seal of Biliteracy** at high school graduation.

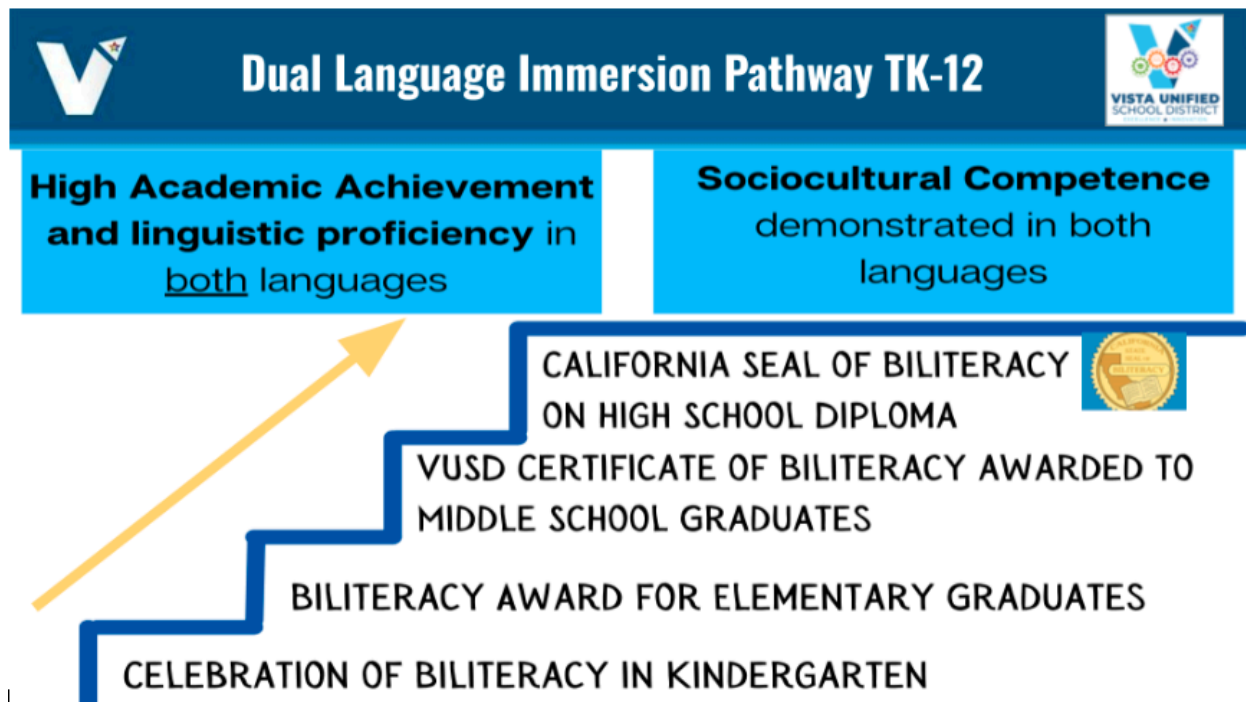
Our Goals for Your Child:

- 1. High Academic Achievement and Language Proficiency in Two Languages:**
 - From kindergarten through high school, your child will learn, grow, and excel in both English and Spanish (or another partner language). The program ensures your child meets or exceeds academic expectations in all subjects while becoming bilingual and biliterate.
 - 2. Sociocultural Competence:**
 - Your child will develop an understanding and appreciation for different cultures, gaining the ability to engage respectfully and meaningfully in a multicultural world. This skill is essential for future leadership and success in today's interconnected global community.
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Milestones to Celebrate Your Child's Success

We believe it is important to recognize and celebrate your child's progress at every stage. Here is what to look forward to:

- 1. Celebration of Biliteracy in Kindergarten:**



- Starting as early as kindergarten, we honor your child’s efforts to develop language skills in both English and Spanish. Through fun and meaningful activities, we celebrate their growth as emerging bilingual learners.
 - 2. **Biliteracy Award for Elementary Graduates:**
 - By the time your child finishes elementary school, they will have built foundational skills in reading, writing, and speaking in both languages. This award recognizes their hard work and growing proficiency as bilingual students.
 - 3. **VUSD Certificate of Biliteracy for Middle School Graduates:**
 - In middle school, your child will continue to strengthen their bilingual skills. This certificate is awarded at the end of 8th grade to honor their progress and commitment to academic excellence in two languages. It also prepares them for advanced coursework in high school.
 - 4. **California Seal of Biliteracy on High School Diploma:**
 - The Seal of Biliteracy is the highest recognition of bilingualism and biliteracy in California. Your child can earn this distinction upon high school graduation by demonstrating advanced proficiency in English and Spanish. This prestigious seal will be displayed on their diploma, showcasing their readiness for college, careers, and opportunities in a global society.
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How the Pathway Benefits Your Child:

1. **Bilingualism and Biliteracy:**
 - Your child will gain advanced skills in two languages, giving them a competitive edge in college applications and career opportunities.
 2. **Academic Success:**
 - The DLI program challenges your child academically, helping them excel in math, science, history, and other subjects while learning in two languages.
 3. **Cultural Awareness:**
 - By learning about and engaging with diverse cultures, your child will develop empathy, respect, and understanding—essential skills for thriving in a multicultural world.
 4. **Recognition of Achievement:**
 - Each milestone celebrates your child’s progress and provides motivation to continue on the path to bilingual excellence.
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How You Can Support Your Child:

- **Encourage Their Bilingual Learning:**

- Celebrate their progress in both languages at home. Read books, watch movies, and engage in activities that promote bilingualism.
 - **Stay Involved:**
 - Participate in school events and celebrations, such as the Kindergarten Biliteracy Celebration and the Elementary Biliteracy Award ceremony.
 - **Plan for Success:**
 - Talk to your child's teacher about their progress and how you can support their language learning journey.
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The Road Ahead:

The Dual Language Immersion Pathway is a partnership between families and schools, built to ensure your child's success in two languages. Together, we will support their journey to achieving the **California Seal of Biliteracy** and prepare them for a future filled with opportunity, pride, and success.

Your child's bilingual journey is not just about learning two languages; it is about opening doors to the world. Let us celebrate every step along the way!



6. Academic Expectations

The Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program holds high academic expectations for students, aligning with state and district standards while fostering bilingual and biliterate development. This section details homework expectations, assessments and grading in two languages, standardized testing, and strategies to support children in their academic journey.

Homework Guidelines for DLI Students

Homework in the DLI program is intentionally designed to reinforce learning in both English and Spanish, ensuring a balanced development of academic skills and language proficiency.

Key Objectives:

1. Support Language Development:

- Assignments in Spanish focus on building vocabulary, grammar, and literacy skills.
- English assignments complement these skills, promoting balanced growth in both languages.

2. Encourage Family Involvement:

- Many homework activities are designed for family engagement, such as reading bilingual books or practicing vocabulary together.

3. Promote Independent Practice:

- Students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning by practicing skills and reviewing content independently.

Tips for Families:

- Establish a consistent homework routine.
- Create a quiet, well-lit workspace for your child.
- Encourage your child to explain assignments in their own words to ensure comprehension.
- Use bilingual dictionaries or online resources to assist with unfamiliar terms.

Assessments and Grading in Two Languages

In the DLI program, assessments are conducted in both English and Spanish to evaluate students' understanding of academic content and language proficiency.

1. Formative Assessments:

- Daily activities, such as oral presentations, reading checks, and written assignments, are used to monitor student progress.
- Immediate feedback guides students' learning and supports bilingual growth.

2. Summative Assessments:

- End-of-unit tests, projects, and writing assignments measure mastery of content in both English and Spanish.
- Assessments align with grade-level standards, regardless of the language of instruction.

3. Grading Policies:

- Grades reflect academic performance, not language proficiency, to ensure fairness.
- Teachers consider language acquisition stages when evaluating student work.

Standardized Assessments

Students in the DLI program participate in state and district-wide standardized assessments, conducted in English and Spanish, to measure academic progress and language proficiency:

1. iReady and MAPS Assessments:

- **iReady:** Adaptive reading and math assessments in English and Spanish provide personalized learning paths to address gaps and accelerate growth.
- **MAPS (Measure of Academic Progress):** These assessments offer insights into students' academic performance across subjects, helping teachers plan targeted interventions.

2. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP):

- Students take CAASPP assessments in English in grades 3-8 to evaluate their understanding of state standards in reading, writing, and math.

3. English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC):

- For students identified as English Learners, ELPAC measures progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.

4. California Spanish Assessment (CSA):

- Administered to DLI students to measure literacy skills in Spanish.
- Results provide valuable data on students' proficiency in reading and writing in their second language.

5. Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM):

- Teachers use SOLOM to assess students' oral language development in Spanish and English.
- This tool evaluates listening and speaking skills, tracking progress over time.

How Families Can Support Assessment Success:

- Ensure your child gets enough rest and eats a healthy breakfast before testing days.
- Encourage them to approach tests confidently and take their time.
- Review test results with teachers to understand strengths and areas for improvement.

Strategies for Supporting Children with Assignments in Spanish

Supporting homework in Spanish may feel challenging for families who do not speak the language, but there are several strategies to help:

1. Use Technology:

- Encourage your child to use language apps like WordReference, Google Translate, or Duolingo for unfamiliar words or phrases.
- Access district-provided online resources for additional practice.

2. Leverage Bilingual Materials:

- Use bilingual dictionaries or glossaries to help with vocabulary.
- Provide access to bilingual books and videos to reinforce learning.

3. Ask for Clarification:

- Encourage your child to explain the assignment in their own words, even if they mix languages.
- Use prompts like, “What is this assignment asking you to do?” or “Can you show me an example?”

4. Focus on Effort, Not Perfection:

- Celebrate progress and effort rather than perfection.
- Remind your child that making mistakes is a natural part of learning.

5. Integrate Spanish into Daily Life:

- Label household items with Spanish words or practice simple phrases during daily routines.
- Encourage your child to teach you new vocabulary or concepts, reinforcing their learning.



7. Communication and Resources

Effective communication and access to resources are essential for families to stay informed and support their child’s success in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program. VUSD provides a variety of tools to keep families engaged and equipped with what they need to navigate the DLI experience.

School Communication

Keeping families updated about school events, announcements, and classroom activities is a priority. Schools in the DLI program use the following communication methods:

1. **Weekly Newsletters:**

- Families receive newsletters from their child’s teacher or school, providing updates on:
 - Classroom activities and learning goals.

- Upcoming events and important dates.
 - Homework reminders and study tips.
 - Newsletters are available in English and Spanish to ensure accessibility for all families.
- 2. School Events Calendar:**
- Schools maintain a regularly updated calendar on their websites, listing events such as:
 - Parent-teacher conferences.
 - DLI showcases and cultural celebrations.
 - Workshops and informational meetings.
 - Families are encouraged to check the calendar frequently for new opportunities to get involved.
- 3. Messaging Platforms:**
- Many schools use apps such as **ClassDojo**, **Remind**, or **ParentSquare** to send real-time updates.
 - Teachers and administrators use these tools to communicate directly with families in their preferred language.

Online Resources

The district provides several online tools to support students' language development and academic progress:

- 1. VUSD Website's DLI Section:**
- A dedicated section of the district website offers resources such as:
 - Program details and updates.
 - FAQs about DLI.
 - Recommended reading lists and instructional materials for bilingual learners.
- 2. Language Learning Apps:**
- These apps make practicing language skills engaging and accessible for students:
 - **Duolingo:** Interactive language learning games tailored for all ages.
 - **Raz-Kids:** A digital library with books in both English and Spanish.
 - **Epic!** An extensive library of eBooks, audiobooks, and videos for bilingual readers.

3. **Assessment and Progress Monitoring Platforms:**

- Families can access assessment data and learning paths through platforms like **iReady** and **MAPS** to track their child's progress.
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Parent Liaisons

Parent liaisons play a crucial role in bridging communication between families and schools. They provide language-specific support and help families navigate the DLI program:

1. **What Parent Liaisons Do:**

- Assist with interpreting and translating during meetings and events.
- Provide guidance on academic and language-related concerns.
- Connect families to school and district resources.

2. **Contact Information for Parent Liaisons:**

- Each school has a designated parent liaison for English and Spanish-speaking families.
 - Contact information is shared at the beginning of the school year and is included in weekly newsletters and the school website.
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How Families Can Stay Informed

1. **Regular Check-ins:**

- Read newsletters and messages from the teacher or school.
- Review your child's homework folder for updates and resources.

2. **Attend School Events:**

- Participate in informational meetings, workshops, and cultural celebrations to stay connected.

3. **Utilize Digital Tools:**

- Bookmark the VUSD website and set reminders to check updates regularly.
- Encourage your child to use language learning apps as part of their homework routine.



8. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This section addresses common questions from families about the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program in Vista Unified School District (VUSD). These answers are designed to clarify expectations, provide guidance, and offer reassurance about the program’s structure and goals.

What is the time commitment for my child to become bilingual?

Bilingualism and biliteracy develop over time, with most students achieving fluency in both languages after several years in the program.

- **Early Elementary (TK-2):** Students focus on foundational skills in both languages. Progress may vary as they adjust to learning in two languages.
- **Upper Elementary (3-5):** Students develop greater fluency and begin applying their bilingual skills to more complex academic tasks.
- **Middle School (6-8):** Students refine their skills, mastering academic content and becoming confident bilingual communicators.

Typically, students in a well-implemented DLI program demonstrate grade-level proficiency in both languages by the end of elementary school, with advanced proficiency by middle school.

How can I help if I do not speak Spanish?

Non-Spanish-speaking families can still provide meaningful support for their child's bilingual education:

1. **Encourage Practice:**
 - Show enthusiasm for your child's learning and encourage them to use Spanish at home.
 - Create opportunities for them to teach you what they've learned, reinforcing their skills.
2. **Support Homework:**
 - Ask your child to explain assignments in English, even if the task is in Spanish.
 - Use tools like bilingual dictionaries, language apps (e.g., Google Translate, WordReference), or online resources provided by VUSD.
3. **Foster a Love for Learning:**
 - Expose your child to Spanish media, such as music, TV shows, or audiobooks.
 - Attend cultural events or DLI workshops offered by the school.

What happens if my child struggles in one language?

It is normal for students to progress at different rates in each language. Teachers and the program provide supports to address any challenges:

- **Language-Specific Interventions:**
 - Additional small-group instruction or targeted interventions may be provided to help students catch up.
- **Parent-Teacher Communication:**
 - Regular updates from teachers will help you understand your child's progress and provide tips for support at home.
- **Collaborative Approach:**
 - Families and teachers work together to ensure that students receive the assistance they need to thrive in both languages.

Can my child join the DLI program after Kindergarten?

Yes, late entry into the DLI program is possible, but it depends on several factors:

- **Language Proficiency:**
 - Students entering the program after Kindergarten may need to demonstrate proficiency in Spanish or receive additional support to transition smoothly.
 - VUSD offers assessments to determine readiness for late-entry students.

- **Grade-Level Openings:**
 - Availability may vary by grade level and school. Families should contact the DLI coordinator for guidance on late enrollment.
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What are the criteria for middle and high school DLI enrollment?

1. **Middle School (Madison Middle School):**
 - Students transitioning from a VUSD elementary DLI program automatically qualify for the middle school strand.
 - Students new to the district or without prior DLI experience may be evaluated for placement based on their Spanish proficiency.
 2. **High School (Future Pathways):**
 - As the DLI program expands, high school students will have the opportunity to continue developing their bilingual skills and work toward earning the **Seal of Biliteracy**.
 - Criteria for high school enrollment will include prior participation in a DLI program and proficiency in both English and Spanish.
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9. Contact Information

For additional support, questions, or information about the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program, please contact the appropriate school-specific coordinator, the VUSD DLI Office, or visit us online.

School-Specific DLI Coordinators

School	Principal Name	Contact Information
Alamosa Park Elementary	Kyle Ruggles	Phone: (760) 940-0700
		Email: kylerruggles@vusd.org
Grapevine Elementary	Myrna Hernandez	Phone: (760) 724-8329
		Email: myrnahernandez@vusd.org
Hannalei Elementary	Erik Korporaal	Phone: (760) 631-6248
		Email: erikkorporaal@vusd.org
Madison Middle School	Andrew Walanski	Phone: (760) 940-0176
		Email: andrewwalanski@vusd.org

VUSD Dual Language Immersion Office

- **Director of DLI:** Rafael Olavide
 - **Phone:** (760) 940-0176
 - **Email:** rafael.olavide@vusd.org
 - **Office Hours:** Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–4:30 PM
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Visit Our Website

Stay informed about the DLI Program by visiting the Vista Unified School District website:

- **Website:** <https://www.vistausd.org/departments/educationalexcellence/dli>
 - Find program updates, resources, and event information.
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Appendices

The Appendices section provides additional resources for families to deepen their understanding of the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program and enhance their engagement. This section includes a calendar of events, a glossary of key terms, and a curated list of books and websites.

Calendar of Cultural Events and DLI Showcases

VUSD celebrates the diverse cultural heritage of our community through events and showcases that highlight the importance of bilingualism and biliteracy.

Calendar:

Date	Event	Description	Location
All Year	DLI Family Night	An evening of games, music, and storytelling in English and Spanish.	DLI Schools
November 1, 2024	Día de los Muertos Celebration	Traditional altars and, music and cultural presentations.	Vista Innovation Center
March 2, 2025	Read Across America: Bilingual Edition	Students and families read stories in both English and Spanish.	DLI Schools
May 2025	DLI Showcase	Students perform skits, songs, and presentations in Spanish, showcasing their bilingual skills.	DLI Schools
June 2025	End-of-Year Celebration	Recognition of DLI student achievements, including awards for biliteracy milestones.	DLI Schools

Glossary of DLI Terms

This glossary explains key terminology families may encounter in the DLI program.

- **90/10 Model:** A program model where 90% of instruction is in Spanish and 10% in English in early grades, gradually transitioning to a 50/50 balance.
- **50/50 Model:** A program model where instruction is evenly split between English and Spanish across all grade levels.
- **Biliteracy:** The ability to read, write, and communicate effectively in two languages.

- **Translanguaging:** The practice of using multiple languages fluidly to enhance understanding and communication.
- **Seal of Biliteracy:** A recognition awarded to students who demonstrate proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation.
- **Language Allocation Plan:** A structured plan detailing how and when each language is used for instruction.
- **Code-Switching:** Alternating between two languages during a conversation, often used by bilingual speakers.

List of Recommended Books and Websites for Bilingual Families

1. Books:

- *“Abuela”* by Arthur Dorros (English/Spanish bilingual picture book)
- *“Esperanza Rising”* by Pam Muñoz Ryan (Spanish and English editions available)
- *“La Oruga Muy Hambrienta / The Very Hungry Caterpillar”* by Eric Carle
- *“My Name is María Isabel”* by Alma Flor Ada
- *“¡Pío Peep! Traditional Spanish Nursery Rhymes”* by Alma Flor Ada and Isabel Campoy

2. Websites:

- **Colorín Colorado:** www.colorincolorado.org – Resources for bilingual families and educators.
- **Unite for Literacy:** www.uniteforliteracy.com – Free online bilingual books.
- **Raz-Kids:** www.raz-kids.com – A platform for leveled reading in English and Spanish.
- **StoryPlace:** www.storyplace.org – Bilingual digital stories and activities for young children.
- **PBS Kids en Español:** pbskids.org/espanol – Educational games and videos in Spanish.

3. Apps:

- **Duolingo:** Fun and engaging language practice for all ages.
- **Epic!** Access to thousands of eBooks, including Spanish and bilingual options.
- **Google Translate:** Quick translation for words and phrases.