



DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION HANDBOOK



Conejo Valley Unified School District Board of Education

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Acknowledgments

The Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Handbook was created to ensure that there is a living document that can be utilized not just as a reference but as a guide for all the critical work that is and will be taking place in the program year after year. The DLI program at Conejo Academy of Leadership and Language Immersion (Conejo Academy) currently includes students and staff from Transitional Kindergarten to Third Grade.

In order to create this handbook, a writing committee was formed with five members. These five members met to engage, brainstorm and ultimately write the handbook. The Dual Language Immersion Stakeholder Committee and Conejo staff were tasked to provide feedback.

The Conejo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) DLI Handbook is the first handbook for the DLI program. This work could not have taken place without the support of all of those involved throughout this process.

Dual Language Immersion Program Handbook Committee and Other Collaborators

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Superintendent's Message

We are excited to introduce the Dual Language Immersion Program Handbook, a resource designed to support students, families, and educators in our school district's unique and dynamic dual language learning environment. This handbook provides detailed information on the program's goals, structure, and expectations, as well as important resources to guide you through your child's immersion journey.

The Dual Language Immersion Program offers an incredible opportunity for students to develop fluency and literacy in two languages, gain a broader cultural perspective, and foster an inclusive, global mindset. Through this program, students will acquire essential language skills while strengthening their cognitive abilities, enhancing their academic performance, and preparing for a future that values bilingualism and multicultural understanding.

In this handbook, you will find:

- Program Overview: A summary of the program's structure, objectives, and benefits.
- Academic Framework: An outline of the curriculum and subjects taught in both languages.
- Expectations and Supports: Guidance on the roles of students, parents, and school staff, as well as available support resources.

We encourage you to review the handbook thoroughly and to keep it as a reference throughout the school year. Should you have any questions or require additional support, our dedicated team of teachers and staff are here to assist you every step of the way.

Thank you for your commitment to this enriching program. Together, we can ensure a successful and rewarding experience for every child enrolled.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark McLaughlin', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. Mark McLaughlin
Superintendent

Executive Summary

The Dual Language Immersion Program Handbook serves as a comprehensive guide for educators, administrators and stakeholders involved in the implementation and management of the dual language immersion program. This executive summary provides a brief summary of the key components.

Program Overview

The overview begins with an introduction to the principles and objectives of dual language immersion education. It outlines the program's goals, emphasizing bilingualism, biliteracy, academic achievement, and cross-cultural competency.

Curriculum and Instruction

Detailed within the handbook are guidelines for designing and delivering a rigorous and balanced curriculum that integrates language development with content learning. It includes strategies for language allocation, instructional approaches, and differentiation to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Language Development

Insights into fostering language development in both target languages, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Information is included on the different types of language assessments, progress monitoring, and interventions to support students' linguistic proficiency.

Cultural Competency

Recognizing the importance of cultural awareness and appreciation, there is an emphasis on the integration of cultural content and perspectives into the curriculum. It encourages the celebration of diversity and the creation of inclusive learning environments.

Family and Community Engagement

Effective partnerships with families and communities are essential for the success of dual language immersion programs. The handbook offers strategies for involving parents, guardians, and community members in supporting students' language development and academic achievement.

Professional Development

To ensure the effectiveness of DLI educators, professional development opportunities are tailored to meet the unique program needs of teachers and staff involved in dual language instruction. It emphasizes ongoing training, collaboration, and reflective practice.

Assessment and Accountability

This section provides guidance on assessment practices to evaluate students' language proficiency, academic progress, and program effectiveness. It addresses the selection and adaptation of assessment tools aligned with program goals and standards.

Program Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Continuous evaluation and improvement are central to the success of dual language immersion programs. The handbook offers frameworks and strategies for collecting data, analyzing outcomes, and making informed decisions to enhance program quality and sustainability.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Dual Language Immersion Program Handbook serves as a valuable resource for stakeholders committed to promoting linguistic and cultural diversity in the DLI program. By adhering to the DLI principles and guidelines, educators can create enriching learning experiences that empower students to become proficient bilingual and bicultural learners prepared for success in a global society.

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Chapter 1

Program Overview

Background and Program History

The Conejo Valley Unified School District believes in the importance of providing an asset-based education where students' life experiences and languages are viewed as assets and not as deficiencies. The DLI program was started to spotlight the high use of Spanish in the community and to provide an additional option for families who would like to have their child(ren) learn an additional language. Before the DLI program started and to gauge the interest of the community, several presentations were made, and a community survey was also sent districtwide. Based on the presentations and survey feedback, there was a high community interest to bring a DLI program to CVUSD.

The program started in the 2022-2023 school year with one Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and three Kindergarten sections. Even though the initial expectation was to start with two Kindergarten sections with 20 students each, the need to expand and include TK as well as an additional Kindergarten section demonstrated the high interest from families and the community. There were a total of 77 students enrolled in the program the first year. As of the 2025-2026 school year, the program includes two Transitional Kindergarten sections, two Kindergartens, two first grades, two second grades and three third grade sections. Each year, the program will expand to an additional grade level. The DLI program is located at the Conejo Academy of Leadership and Language Immersion.



Incoming DLI students, teachers and staff participate in the DLI ribbon cutting ceremony in August 2022.

DLI consists of a primary-language balance between and among the students because they organically learn from one another. Approximately half of the students are primarily English speakers, and the other half are primarily Spanish speakers.

Immersion means the student acquires the second language and literacy throughout the school day via three primary strategies:

- Engagement with peer language models,
- Direct instruction from an English-speaking teacher and a Spanish-speaking teacher; and
- Access to materials and curriculum in English and Spanish.

This program supports the 50/50 model, where 50% of the instructional day is taught in English and the other 50% in Spanish. Teachers collaborate to plan daily instruction that supports the 50/50 model. This could include a team of two teachers sharing students throughout the day. It could also include a self-contained model where one teacher uses both languages during the school day, according to the subject matter and language allocation.

Guiding Principles of the Dual Language Immersion Program

The guiding principles of a DLI program revolve around fostering bilingualism, biliteracy, academic excellence, and cross-cultural competence. These principles are essential for designing and implementing effective DLI programs, including:

- **Bilingualism:** DLI programs prioritize the development of proficiency in two languages, typically the students' native language and a target language. The goal is for students to become fluent speakers, readers, and writers in both languages.
- **Biliteracy:** In addition to language proficiency, DLI programs aim to develop students' literacy skills in both languages. This includes reading comprehension, writing proficiency, and critical thinking in academic contexts.
- **Academic Excellence:** DLI programs maintain high academic standards while delivering content instruction in both languages. Students are expected to achieve at or above grade level in all subject areas, mastering academic content in both languages.
- **Cross-Cultural Competence:** DLI programs promote cultural awareness, appreciation, and understanding. Students learn about the cultures associated with the languages they are studying, fostering respect for diverse perspectives and identities.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** DLI programs strive to provide equitable access to high-quality education for all students, regardless of linguistic or cultural

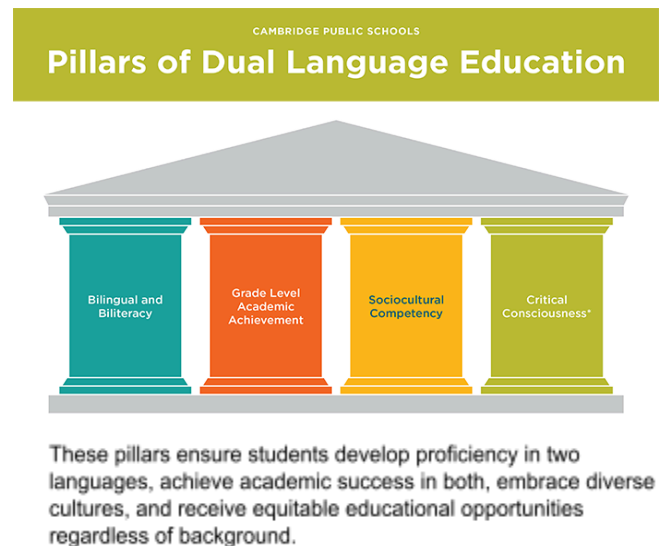
background. Inclusive practices ensure that all learners have the support they need to succeed in the program.

- **Family and Community Engagement:** DLI programs recognize the importance of family and community involvement in supporting students' language development and academic success. Partnerships with families and communities are cultivated to create a supportive learning environment.
- **Professional Development:** Teachers in DLI programs receive ongoing professional development to enhance their instructional practices and cultural competence. Training opportunities address language pedagogy, curriculum development, assessment, and collaboration with colleagues.
- **Continuous Improvement:** DLI programs engage in continuous evaluation and reflection to improve program quality and effectiveness. Data-driven decision-making guides adjustments to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and program structure.

These guiding principles provide a framework for creating and sustaining successful dual language immersion programs that prepare students to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.

Four Pillars of Dual Language

Resources are used to ensure that all students, families, staff, and administrators in the DLI program are effective practitioners of the Four Pillars of Dual Language Education. Professional development, in addition to effective program implementation, continues to be front and center for all DLI staff. These pillars are essential to the successful implementation and program development of DLI programs. The four pillars are as follows:



- **Bilingualism and Biliteracy:** These are the first goals in dual language. Because students are learning content via two languages, they must be able to speak, write, read, listen, and use each of the two program languages as a support for the other. This goes beyond what a student might achieve in a traditional foreign language course. Students in dual language programs have a loftier goal – bilingualism AND biliteracy!
- **High Academic Achievement:** The second goal of dual language programs is to ensure high academic achievement for each student, in both program

languages. This is extremely important because students in dual language programs should excel in mathematics, science, social studies, language arts, physical education, music, and art, in both languages of instruction.

- **Cross-cultural competence:** Sociocultural competence is often the forgotten pillar of dual language, but it is the one that the other two pillars rest on. Students in dual language programs should be able to see the similarities and differences in each other, but rather than identifying the differences as obstacles to overcome, they should be viewed as opportunities to connect. Sociocultural competence is about equity and social justice.
- **Critical Consciousness:** This pillar encourages students to critically analyze societal structures, understand diverse perspectives, and develop the skills needed to advocate for equity and inclusivity. Through discussions, culturally relevant curriculum, and community engagement, students learn to question biases and stereotypes and appreciate the value of multilingualism. Critical consciousness enriches the dual language immersion experience by aligning linguistic proficiency with a commitment to justice and societal transformation.

Research

The field of Two-Way Bilingual and Dual Language (TWBI/DL) education has been significantly influenced by leading researchers such as Dr. Kathryn Lindholm-Leary, Dr. Virginia Collier, and Dr. Wayne Thomas. Through extensive longitudinal studies, they have provided invaluable insights into the effectiveness of TWBI/DL programs. Their research has not only shed light on the development of target languages including Spanish, Chinese, and Korean but also on English proficiency. Furthermore, they have explored the cultivation of intercultural proficiencies and the enrichment of understanding of language education in diverse contexts. At present, English Learners (ELs) is the term used in federal policy, legislation, and court cases. However, we uphold the potential for multilingualism and use the term multilingual learners (MLs) throughout this handbook as well to acknowledge the assets that MLs bring and to leverage their multilingualism as a resource.

The most relevant research in TWBI/DL education centers on three primary areas: oral language proficiency levels among both non-English speaking students and native English speakers, academic achievement levels across student groups, and the performance disparities between 50/50 and 90/10 program models. This research provides critical insights into the effectiveness of different program structures and their impact on student outcomes, informing educators and policymakers alike.

The definition of two-way immersion programs, as outlined by Sugarman and Howard (2001) and further elaborated by Sugarman, Howard, and Christian (2003), encompasses four essential features. First, instruction occurs in two languages, with the non-English language utilized significantly (ranging from 50% to 90%) during the instructional day. Secondly, there are designated periods of instruction where only one

language is employed, without translation or language mixing. Additionally, these programs aim for a balanced enrollment of English-only and native Spanish-speaking students. Students are integrated for most, if not all, instructional activities, fostering a collaborative and inclusive learning environment that supports language development.

National research trends suggest that English-dominant students entering a dual language immersion program with fluency in English maintain their English proficiency without experiencing language delays or interference. According to Thomas and Collier (2002), participation in such programs actually leads to the acquisition of a second language, indicating positive outcomes for language development. Moreover, studies have demonstrated that students, both English and Spanish speakers, who engage in two-way programs from kindergarten or first grade onwards achieve proficiency in both languages by 5th and 6th grade, as highlighted by Lindholm-Leary (2004).

The strength of Spanish language development varies depending on the program model implemented by districts. Lindholm-Leary (2001) notes that in 90/10 programs, English speakers tend to attain higher levels of Spanish proficiency compared to those in 50/50 programs. However, Spanish speakers in both program models achieve equivalent proficiency in English, suggesting the effectiveness of dual language immersion programs in fostering bilingualism and biliteracy among diverse student populations.

DLI Student Achievement

Thomas and Collier conducted extensive analysis of 700,000 student records from five school districts, spanning from kindergarten through 12th grade, to evaluate the long-term educational impact of ELs within K-12 academic settings. Their findings, spanning across research in 1997 and 2002, reveal that well-implemented dual language programs exhibit a significant positive effect on students' academic outcomes, which becomes particularly evident by late high school. Crucially, their research underscores the importance of the duration of program participation, highlighting that 4-7 years of immersion is necessary for students to bridge the gap between their academic performance and that of their English speaking peers.

Moreover, Lindholm-Leary's research review in 2004 corroborates these findings, demonstrating that by 5th grade, both English-dominant students and ELs in dual language immersion programs exhibit academic achievement comparable to or surpassing that of peers who share the same native language but have not undergone bilingual immersion. Additionally, Thomas and Collier's work indicates that dual language immersion programs yield lower dropout rates in high school, further illustrating the long-term benefits of such educational approaches.

Remarkably, low-socioeconomic status ELs participating in DLI programs tend to outperform their counterparts in other educational settings, as evidenced by their scores on English reading achievement tests. Similarly, English-dominant students in these programs often achieve higher scores on English achievement tests compared to their

peers enrolled in regular monolingual programs, as highlighted by Thomas and Collier's research in 2002.

Chapter 2

Program Structure

Mission Statement

Conejo Academy's mission is to provide an innovative and inclusive instructional model through a multilingual, multicultural and leadership lens that is built on respect, high expectations, continual reflection and synergy between students, staff, families, and the community. Through this model, we will empower scholars to develop self-efficacy, empathy, and excitement about learning, growing, and impacting the global community.

Vision Statement

All students deserve an equitable, high-quality, and safe education that honors and represents their linguistic, cultural, and personal assets, in order to discover and develop their personal voice and realize their full potential.

Benefits of Dual Language Immersion

The Dual Language Immersion Program was designed to optimize the advantages of learning a second language for participating students. It operates on the premise that the earlier a child is exposed to a new language, the greater the likelihood of achieving genuine proficiency. This design is grounded in robust evidence, drawing from extensive research that highlights numerous cognitive, academic, economic, and social benefits associated with bilingualism.

- The DLI program employs an "additive bilingual" immersion model, wherein students concurrently learn two languages instead of sacrificing one to acquire another (Howard, Sugarman, Perdomo, & Adger, 2005).
- Second-language acquisition enriches comprehension in one's native tongue as learners apply reading and language analysis skills across languages (Thomas & Collier, 2002).
- The cognitive discipline inherent in learning a second language fosters intellectual flexibility, leading to enhanced academic performance across all subjects. Prolonged exposure to the second language accentuates these cognitive advantages (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2010).
- Proficiency in multiple languages facilitates communication across diverse cultures and contexts, nurturing a heightened sense of multicultural awareness and interpersonal skills (Soltero, 2004).

- DLI integrates second-language content into various subjects such as social studies, mathematics, science, and the arts, fostering interdisciplinary perspectives and cross-cultural understanding (ACTFL, 2006).
- Mastery of additional languages provides direct access to a wider array of knowledge sources and deepens understanding of linguistic structures' similarities and differences (ACTFL, 2006).
- For English Learners, immersion education in a DLI program significantly narrows the achievement gap. Research indicates higher success rates for English Learners in immersion settings compared to mainstream English classes, as they gain comprehensive access to the curriculum and develop literacy and academic skills in both their native language and English within a culturally affirming environment (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2010).
- English Learners in DLI exhibit a more positive self-concept and are more likely to persist in education, including college attendance, compared to those in mainstream English classes (Thomas & Collier, 2002)

DLI Program Non-Negotiables

To ensure consistency, collaboration, and ongoing success of the DLI program, DLI staff adheres to a protocol based on six essential principles of program implementation and classroom instruction. The following principles were developed from current DLI research, discussions with consultants, and collaboration with other established DLI programs:

1. **Adherence to Assigned Instructional Minutes for Each Language:** The 50/50 Dual Language Immersion program specifies percentages for English and Spanish instruction by grade. It is crucial to adhere to these percentages for program success.
2. **High Expectations and Rigor for Both Language Groups:** We hold identical high expectations for English speakers learning Spanish and Spanish speakers (as well as other foreign language speakers) learning English, aiming for all students to become biliterate and achieve high academic levels.
3. **Grade-Level Materials Fidelity:** Specific materials, in addition to district-adopted textbooks, have been identified for use at each grade level.
4. **Frequent Opportunities for Authentic Language Use:** Language learning is active, engaging, and purposeful. Therefore, students have multiple daily opportunities to collaborate, use language meaningfully, and engage in authentic language development.

5. **Targeted English Language Development:** With instruction in both languages occurring every day, it's critical to ensure that English Language Development (ELD) also happens daily for all students, especially ELs.
6. **Collaboration Among DLI Teachers and Peers:** Teacher collaboration is vital to the success of the DLI program. DLI teachers have multiple opportunities throughout the year to collaborate with program peers. DLI teachers actively participate in weekly grade-level planning meetings.

Program Rollout

The DLI program at Conejo Academy started in the 22-23 school year. By the end of the 27-28 school year, Conejo Academy will promote the first cohort of students who started five years ago to middle school. This program will continue expanding up to Grade 12. More information will be added to this handbook in future years that will include the middle and high school rollout.

School Year	Dual Language Immersion Program Grade Level Rollout					
2022-2023	TK/Kindergarten					
2023-2024	TK/Kindergarten	First Grade				
2024-2025	TK/Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade			
2025-2026	TK/Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade		
2026-2027	TK/Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	
2027-2028	TK/Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade

This chart illustrates how the program will be expanding to a new grade level each year.

Chapter 3

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Accountability

Curriculum

Conejo Academy's curriculum is designed to provide students with a rich and immersive learning experience that fosters bilingualism, biliteracy, and cultural proficiency. This program is structured to promote academic excellence with nurturing leadership skills, both personally and within the community. The Dual Language Immersion curriculum, through its alignment to content, California Standards and World Language standards and to the program design, is interdisciplinary and adaptable to student, program, and community needs.

Conejo Academy administrators and teachers implement a systematic multi-year plan for curriculum development, program review and textbook adoption consistent with *the [Guiding Principles of Dual Language Education](#)* and goals. The standards-based curriculum promotes attainment of the four core goals of dual language education; one that is consistently culturally responsive and representative of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of all students. Teams of teachers regularly work in grade-level and content area teams to review Common Core Standards, district expectations and performance-based assessments as they develop new and innovative curriculum for Dual Language Immersion students. This unique teacher collaboration creates a uniform expectation for teachers to skillfully deliver specific instruction at a rate that will maximize the potential for learning. For this, there is an equal distribution of instructional time between the two languages, with the goal of promoting academic achievement and cultural proficiency in both languages.

The program will continue to address high academic standards with articulated measurable learning outcomes. These standards and best practices extend and expand student learning, using interesting and relevant textbooks, instructional materials and technology, consistent with program goals and with second language acquisition research. Additionally, student needs, interests, and prior knowledge are taken into careful consideration within instructional implementation.

Instruction

The instructional time in Conejo Academy's Dual Language Immersion Program is carefully structured to optimize language acquisition and academic growth in both languages. Our program supports the 50/50 model, where 50% of the instructional day is taught in English and the other 50% in Spanish. Instruction is evenly divided, ensuring students receive equal exposure to both languages to maximize their language development and proficiency. This model requires a closely aligned curricular program where skills taught in key content areas such as language arts and math are not

retaught in both languages, but are rather built upon in each language. Teachers collaborate to plan daily instruction and different subjects are taught in the language established at the beginning of the school year in order to meet the required minutes to support the 50/50 model. For instance, math and social studies may be taught in Spanish, whereas science and physical education may be taught in English.

Our inquiry-based literacy model includes the use of multiple high-leverage strategies, including small group instruction, interactive lessons, and group discussion based on a foundation of strong oracy and background knowledge. Reading and writing skills are developed through instruction that consistently scaffolds for language using language supports in multiple environments that are strategically selected by the teacher based on student needs. This balanced approach ensures equitable time is dedicated to instruction in English and Spanish, allowing students to garner equal exposure to both languages while maximizing student language development and proficiency.

Instructional Framework

The instructional framework of DLI education at Conejo Academy serves as the blueprint for delivering high-quality instruction that promotes bilingualism, biliteracy, and academic achievement for all students. Grounded in research-based practices and informed by the program's goals and philosophy, this framework provides guidance for teachers in designing and implementing effective instruction in Spanish and English. These are the key components of the instructional framework:

- **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy:** Culturally relevant content and instructional materials are incorporated to reflect the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students. Diversity is celebrated and promotes cross-cultural understanding to create an inclusive learning environment where all students feel valued and respected.
- **Differentiation and Scaffolding:** Instruction is differentiated to meet the diverse needs of learners, providing appropriate support and challenges in both languages. The use of scaffolding techniques are used to gradually release responsibility to students, empowering them to independently engage with academic content in both languages.
- **Reading Instruction:** Research-based, best practices are used for language acquisition and instruction in Spanish and English. This develops literacy skills in both languages, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Opportunities for guided, shared, and independent reading, as well as writing in both languages are provided to foster biliteracy development.
- **Content-Based Instruction:** Language instruction is embedded within content-based instruction, using authentic, meaningful tasks to engage students in learning academic content in both languages. Instructional activities are

aligned with curriculum standards and objectives in both languages to ensure academic rigor and coherence.

- **Collaborative Learning:** Collaborative learning experiences are at the core of instruction, encouraging students to interact and communicate with peers in both languages. This provides opportunities for cooperative learning, group projects, and peer tutoring to enhance language development and social-emotional skills.
- **Assessment for Learning:** A variety of tools are used for formative and summative assessment strategies to monitor student progress and inform instructional decisions. Language proficiency, content knowledge, and academic skills are assessed in both languages to guide instruction and provide feedback to students and families.
- **Technology Integration:** Technology tools and resources are integrated to support language learning and academic achievement in both languages. Multimedia resources, educational software, and digital platforms are used to enhance instruction, provide personalized learning experiences, and promote digital literacy skills.
- **Professional Collaboration and Development:** A collaborative professional learning community is fostered where teachers collaborate, share best practices, and engage in ongoing professional development to enhance their knowledge and skills in DLI instruction. Opportunities for reflection, coaching, and peer observation are provided to support continuous improvement.

By implementing an instructional framework that incorporates these key components, Conejo Academy creates a dynamic learning environment where students thrive academically, linguistically, and culturally.

Grading Systems

The grading system for the Dual Language Immersion program reflects the program's goals of fostering bilingualism, biliteracy, and academic achievement in both languages of instruction, along with California State Standards and CVUSD requirements. Examples of these systems include:

- **Language Proficiency Assessment:** These are used to evaluate students' proficiency levels in both languages. These assessments measure students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Spanish and English.
- **Bilingual Content Area Assessment:** Students' understanding of academic content is assessed in both languages through content area assessments aligned with curriculum standards and objectives.

- **Performance-Based Assessments:** Various assessment strategies including quizzes, tests, projects, presentations, and performance tasks, are used to measure students' mastery of content knowledge and skills in both languages. Performance-based assessments require students to apply their language and content knowledge in authentic tasks and real-world contexts.
- **Progress Monitoring:** Students' progress in both languages are regularly monitored through ongoing formative assessment and feedback.
- **Self Assessment:** Students are provided opportunities to self-assess their language proficiency and academic performance, set goals, and track their progress towards achieving those goals.
- **Progress Reports:** Clear and transparent reporting of students' progress and achievement is provided in both languages to parents/guardians.
- **Assessment Results:** Assessment results are communicated in a way that highlights students' strengths, areas for growth, and next steps for improvement in both languages.
- **Assessment Flexibility:** Flexibility in the grading system is maintained to accommodate the unique characteristics and needs of DLI students, including language background, proficiency level, and cultural diversity.

By implementing a comprehensive grading system that incorporates language proficiency assessment, content and performance-based assessment, progress monitoring, and transparent reporting, the DLI program effectively measures and communicates students' achievement and growth in both languages. This grading system is aligned with the program's objectives and supports students' development as bilingual, biliterate, and culturally competent learners.

Learning Standards

In Conejo Academy's Dual Language Immersion program, learning standards encompass academic expectations and linguistic proficiency goals for students in both languages of instruction. These standards align with state or national educational standards while also addressing the unique goals of bilingualism and biliteracy. Below are examples of learning standards for a DLI program:

Learning Standard	Link
English Language Arts Development	https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/eldstndpublication14.pdf

Spanish Language Arts Development	https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/sldstandards.asp
California Common Core State Math Standards	https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/ccssmathstandardsaug2013.pdf
Next Generation Science Standards for California	https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/pl/ngssstandards.asp
History-Social Studies Content Standards for California	https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/histsocscistnd.pdf
Cultural Competence Standards	https://www2.cde.ca.gov/cacs/wl?c1=4%2C3
Social and Emotional Learning Standards for California	https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/se/index.asp
California Arts Standards	https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/caartsstandards.pdf

Leader In Me

The operating system of Conejo Academy is [*Leader In Me*](#). This is a TK–12th grade evidence-based model focused on leadership, culture, and academics that equips students, educators, and families with the leadership and life skills needed to thrive in a dynamic world. As a *Leader in Me* school, there are five Core Paradigms that drive decisions, behaviors, and results. A paradigm is simply the way Conejo students “see” things. These 5 Core Paradigms include:

- Everyone can be a leader
- Everyone has genius
- Change starts with me
- Empower students to lead their own learning
- Educators and families partner to develop the whole person

These paradigms or “the way we see things” at Conejo Academy drive the everyday interactions with not only students, but all individuals, too. A partnership with families supports the ability for students to lead their own educational journey—empowering them to be responsible, reflective, and active in their learning experiences.

In addition to helping students learn and apply leadership skills, the [*7 Habits of Highly Effective People*](#) provides a common language for building a supportive school environment. *The 7 Habits* center on principles of personal, interpersonal, managerial, and organizational effectiveness:

- **Habit 1:** Be Proactive®: Responsibility, choice, accountability, initiative, resourcefulness
- **Habit 2:** Begin With the End in Mind®: Vision, commitment, purpose
- **Habit 3:** Put First Things First®: Focus, integrity, discipline, prioritization
- **Habit 4:** Think Win-Win®: Mutual benefit, fairness, abundance
- **Habit 5:** Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood®: Respect, mutual understanding, empathy, courage
- **Habit 6:** Synergize®: Creativity, cooperation, diversity, humility
- **Habit 7:** Sharpen the Saw®: Renewal, continuous improvement, balance

These paradigms and principles are woven into the school leadership, culture, and academics, with personal leadership skills taught implicitly and explicitly throughout each day. There is a schoolwide Habit of Focus for each month and students are recognized publicly for their growth and achievement in these areas at schoolwide assemblies.



Students pose in front of a colorful school mural that displays the 7 Habits.

Language Allocation Plan

The DLI program is designed to provide students with the opportunity to develop proficiency in two languages, Spanish and English. The Language Allocation Plan (LAP) is a fundamental component of the DLI program, outlining the distribution of instructional time of both languages. This plan ensures equitable exposure to both languages while supporting students' academic and linguistic development. These are the key components of the LAP:

- **Percentage Allocation:** 50% of language is English and 50% of language is Spanish.
- **Subject-Specific Allocation:** Instructional time is distributed across various subjects. While some subjects will always be in a specific language (e.g. English language arts and Spanish language arts), others may be given in one language (e.g. math in Spanish), then instructor-facilitated transfer of language in the other. Adjustments may be made to ensure appropriate language support in all subjects, for all students.
- **Language Domains:** Language domains (listening, speaking, reading, writing) have balanced development across both languages. Opportunities are provided for authentic language use in real-life contexts to promote communicative competence.
- **Language of Assessment:** Language(s) of assessments include formative and summative evaluations. Assessments align with instructional goals and reflect students' proficiency in both languages.
- **Professional Development:** Ongoing professional development is provided for teachers to support effective implementation of the LAP. Training addresses strategies for language integration, differentiation, and assessment in a dual language context.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The LAP is regularly monitored and evaluated to assess its effectiveness in meeting program goals. Feedback is collected from stakeholders and adjustments are made as needed to optimize student outcomes.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Conejo Academy recognizes that the LAP may need to be adjusted based on the unique needs of students, changes in

demographics, or shifts in program priorities. Flexibility is maintained to ensure the plan remains responsive to evolving circumstances.

By carefully designing and implementing a LAP, Conejo Academy creates a supportive learning environment where students can develop bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural competence. This plan serves as a roadmap for achieving program objectives and maximizing the benefits of dual language education for all students.

Chapter 4

Multilingual Learners with Diverse Learning Needs

CVUSD recognizes the fact that Multilingual Learners, like all students, come with a range of abilities. As such, some students have unique needs that may require additional support to fully benefit from their educational experience. These services and supports include intervention, Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) services, Special Education services, and/or 504 Plan supports. This section will highlight these services along with additional considerations for MLs with diverse learning needs.

Intervention

Academic intervention at Conejo Academy involves targeted support and strategies to address the diverse learning needs of students in both languages of instruction. These interventions aim to ensure all students have equitable access to the curriculum and opportunities to succeed academically in both languages. Here are some key components and strategies for academic intervention in a DLI program:

- **Data-Informed Decision Making:**
 - Formative and summative assessments are used to identify students who may need academic intervention.
 - Student data is analyzed to pinpoint specific areas of academic need in both languages.
 - Student progress is regularly monitored to assess the effectiveness of interventions and make adjustments as needed.
- **Differentiated Instruction:**
 - Differentiate instruction is utilized to meet the individual needs of students in both languages.
 - Targeted instruction and support are based on students' language proficiency levels, academic strengths, and areas for growth.
 - Flexible grouping arrangements and instructional strategies are implemented to accommodate diverse learning styles and preferences.
- **Small Group Instruction:**
 - Small group instruction is implemented to provide targeted support in areas such as literacy, numeracy, and language development.
 - Additional practice and reinforcement activities are tailored to students' specific learning needs in both languages.
 - Instructional materials and resources are offered that are culturally and linguistically responsive to students' backgrounds and experiences.
- **Language Development Support:**

- Explicit language instruction and support are provided to develop students' proficiency in both languages.
 - Vocabulary instruction, language modeling, and language scaffolding techniques are used to help students build language skills across listening, speaking, reading, and writing domains.
 - Language development activities are incorporated into content-area instruction to reinforce academic vocabulary and language structures.
- **Family Engagement and Support:**
 - Collaborative strategies with families are utilized to support students' academic progress and language development in both languages.
 - Families are provided with resources, workshops, and information sessions to reinforce learning at home and support language development.
 - **Community Outreach:**
 - Conejo Academy fosters partnerships with community organizations and language-rich environments to extend learning beyond the classroom.

By implementing a comprehensive academic intervention framework that addresses the diverse needs of students in both languages, Conejo Academy's DLI program supports all learners in achieving academic success and linguistic proficiency. These interventions are responsive, evidence-based, and aligned with the goals and philosophy of the DLI program.

Gifted and Talented Education



In the districtwide efforts to provide an age-appropriate and inclusive method of identification of GATE students in CVUSD, the Student Support Services (SSS) Department offers universal screening measures to include all students in the identification process. Original identification systems required a parent or teacher referral for students to be considered and evaluated for giftedness. When SSS moved to universal screening measures a few years ago, it was operated on an active consent basis, where parents/guardians were required to provide written permission for students to participate. However, SSS found that a disproportionately high number of ELs did not return their consent documents and were unable to participate. As a result, SSS moved to an opt-out system for GATE screening where site administrators provide parents/guardians with information for

Students learn to build and code robots during GATE enrichment offerings at Conejo Academy.

participation and allow parents/guardians the opportunity to return opt-out paperwork to exclude their student from GATE screening. In addition to these steps toward inclusive identification, SSS recently moved to the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Level 8, Form 8 for rising third-grade students. This GATE identification measure is completely pictorial and does not contain words for students to manipulate or manage to share their unique thinking, thereby removing the language barrier in access and completion.

Along with adopting new identification measures and practices, CVUSD also offers monthly enrichment activities for students, whether they are GATE identified or not, at each of the Title I school sites, including Conejo Academy, to provide equity in access. To ensure that high-level instructional strategies reach all teachers and students in CVUSD, every school site (TK-12) has a GATE Facilitator who attends monthly training sessions with the GATE Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA), providing new pedagogical strategies and practices that GATE Facilitators bring back to campus and share with faculty which benefits all teachers and students. The GATE TOSA also attends faculty meetings at school sites across the district to present best practices for differentiated instruction directly with TK – 12th grade staff.

Special Education

MLs who qualify for Special Education services have access to Special Education programming. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams will ensure that each ML with an IEP receives appropriate Integrated and Designated ELD services to develop English proficiency and have equal access to the full curriculum. Each ML's IEP shall include linguistically appropriate goals and objectives based on the student's level of English proficiency and the ELD standards. Such goals and objectives will fully address ELD and core content instruction. Each IEP shall also clearly delineate the person(s) and/or programs responsible for providing each instructional service. It is important that all programmatic pieces work together to address student learning and language needs.

When making programmatic, instructional, and assessment decisions for MLs, it is important for educators and school teams to be familiar with several factors that impact learning and language acquisition, such as language, school history, culture, literacy in a first language, home language, and more. For additional information and resources on supporting MLs with diverse learning needs, please reference the California Practitioners' Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities from the California Department of Education (CDE). In addition, specialized training for supporting MLs is provided to both special education and general education staff to ensure that everyone is trained to strategically support MLs. Bilingual staff provide support to MLs with IEPs.

Chapter 5

DLI Program Evaluation

Program Evaluation Tools and Measurements

Regular evaluations help to ensure Conejo Academy meets educational standards, supports student achievement, and continuously improves based on data-driven insights. The following tools are utilized to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the DLI program:

- **Student Achievement Data Analysis:** This includes standardized tests and formative assessments such as district tests, proficiency levels, language acquisition benchmarks, classroom performance or literacy skills.
- **Classroom Observations for Educators:** Tools used to assess the DLI program include instructional quality reviews and peer observations.
- **Surveys and Feedback Mechanisms:** These tools gather data and can include Parent and Student Surveys and Teacher Surveys and Feedback.
- **Professional Development Assessments:** These assessments include Training Evaluation Forms and Professional Growth Plans.
- **Program Review and Reporting:** Some available tools include Annual Program Review, such as LCAP surveys and the Leader In Me's Measurable Results Survey. External evaluations can also be used, such as comparative program analysis.

The success and effectiveness of Conejo's Dual Language Immersion program is established upon quality evaluation and reporting cycles. Regular evaluation and reporting ensure Conejo Academy maintains high standards and continuously improves practices to meet the needs of students. Using multiple measures in both languages of instruction, the program collects and analyzes a variety of data that are used for program accountability, program evaluation, and program improvement. This evaluation process encompasses both quantitative and qualitative measures, providing a comprehensive understanding of students' needs and levels of mastery.

Chapter 6

Assessments and Accountability

Student Assessments

Student proficiency and content knowledge in both languages is assessed through CVUSD assessments, teacher-developed assessments and performance tasks. This assessment infrastructure utilizes a comprehensive data management system for tracking student data over time and is used to guide and inform instruction. All assessments are aligned with state curriculum standards and CVUSD academic expectations.

There are three student evaluation cycles per school year, resulting in progress reports sent home in the middle of each trimester and a standards-based report card at the culmination of each trimester. These report cards communicate accurate information about students' performance in meeting the state and local standards.

Program Monitoring

The Program Monitoring process involves continuous tracking and assessment of various program components to ensure alignment with the educational goals, adherence to established guidelines, and overall effectiveness. The following outlines the key elements and procedures for monitoring the DLI program.

- **Student Performance Tracking:**
 - Academic Progress: To monitor student achievement in both languages, which is ongoing throughout the academic year, communicated through progress reports and report cards from classroom teachers.
 - Language Proficiency: To ensure students are developing bilingual and biliterate skills, which is ongoing throughout the academic year, communicated through progress reports and report cards and is the responsibility of the classroom teachers, academic specialists and coordinators.
- **Classroom Observations and Teacher Evaluations:**
 - Classroom Observations: To ensure high-quality instruction and adherence to the DLI model, which is conducted formally and informally throughout the school year, through the school administrator.
 - Teacher Evaluations: Evaluations are performed annually to support teacher development and ensure effective teaching practices, through the school administrator.
- **Curriculum and Instructional Materials Review:**

- Curriculum Alignment: To ensure the curriculum aligns with state standards and DLI program goals, with annual checks, from the teachers, administrators and curriculum coordinator.
- Instructional Materials: To ensure materials support dual language learning and cultural competence. This is checked annually, with updates as needed and can include an inventory and review of textbooks, digital resources and supplementary materials, with feedback from teachers on material effectiveness, in collaboration with administrators and curriculum coordinators.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:**
 - Parent/Guardian and Community Input: To gather insights and support from families and the community, through surveys, focus groups, meetings and feedback sessions. This is conducted annually, as well as throughout the school year, from school administrators, outreach coordinators and teachers.
 - Student Feedback: To incorporate student perspectives in program improvement, which is collected annually through the Measurable Results Survey (4th/5th grade), organized through the school administration and the *Leader In Me* coordinator.
- **Professional Development Monitoring:**
 - Professional Development Plans: To ensure ongoing teacher development is aligned with DLI goals, which are evaluated annually, with mid-year reviews. This Professional Development Plan is arranged through the school administration and professional development coordinators.
 - Impact Evaluation: To assess the effectiveness of professional development on teaching practices, with data collected after each session and is collaborated through professional development coordinators and instructional coaches.

Student Monitoring

Monitoring student progress is a critical component of the DLI program in order to ensure students are developing the necessary bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural competencies for a comprehensive education. The following are the procedures and tools used to monitor student progress, identify areas for improvement and support student success:

- **Academic Performance Monitoring:**
 - Formative assessments to provide ongoing insights into student learning and inform instructional adjustments.
 - Summative assessments to evaluate student learning at the end of instructional units and report on academic achievement.
 - Standardized testing (3rd-5th grade only) to measure student performance against state benchmarks.

- ELPAC (English Language Proficiency Assessments for California) to determine and monitor English language acquisition and proficiency of each EL.
- **Language Proficiency Monitoring:**
 - Bilingual proficiency assessments to assess students' proficiency in both English and Spanish.
 - Language use observations to monitor the use of both languages in various contexts.
- **Social and Emotional Monitoring:**
 - Social integration and interaction to ensure students are integrating well and forming positive relationships.
 - Emotional wellbeing to support the emotional health and well-being of students.
- **Individualized Support and Intervention:**
 - Academic intervention to provide targeted support for students who need additional resources to meet academic goals.
 - IEP and 504 Plans to support students with identified special needs or specific needs.
- **Parent and Student Involvement:**
 - Parent-teacher conferences to discuss student progress and strategies for support at home.
 - Student-led conferences to empower students to take ownership of their learning and reflect on their progress.
 - Progress reports and report cards to provide detailed information on student performance and progress toward goals.

Showcasing Student Accomplishments



First grade students accept a Habit Award from their DLI teachers during Weekly Welcome.

Personal growth is promoted and celebrated every day. As such, a variety of presentations and awards are implemented throughout the school year to acknowledge the progress students make toward achieving their goals. Examples include:

- **Habit Awards:** Every month, students are recognized for exemplifying the principles of The 7 Habits of Happy Kids within the Leader in Me framework. The award celebrates students who demonstrate leadership qualities such as proactive behavior, goal-setting, and inspiring others.
- **Wildly Important Goals:** With the support of family and school personnel, students set personal and academic goals that reflect their strengths, interests and areas for improvement. Students learn to identify the actions needed to track

their progress and achieve their goals. Of these goals, students identify one that matters most which becomes the student's "Wildly Important Goal (WIG)" Students and classrooms select unique ways to celebrate those who meet their WIGs weekly, such as classroom dance parties, visits from exciting community partners, and field trips. Setting, tracking, and celebrating their goals fosters a growth mindset and enhances the students overall educational experience.

- **Biliteracy Awards:** In an effort to celebrate the dedication and commitment required to learn a second language, all Kindergarten students who have participated in the DLI program for at least one school year are presented with a biliteracy award. Furthermore, Biliteracy Attainment Recognition is given to students who meet specific proficiency criteria in English and Spanish at the completion of elementary school. These criteria include:
 - Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments: English Language Arts at the "Proficient" level or above in fourth grade
 - Proficiency in a language other than English: e.g., California Spanish Assessment (CSA) in Spanish at the proficient level taken in 4th grade, attainment of Spanish IPT Test at a level of Early Advanced or higher

Chapter 7

Professional Development, Certification, and Hiring

Professional Development

The Multilingual Learner Department works in conjunction with the Instructional Services Department to ensure that there is consistency, clear communication and follow-up on all training provided throughout the school year and at every school site. CVUSD strives to provide sufficient professional staff development on specific Multilingual Learner topics. The focus of these topics is to provide new and relevant information that is research-based to teachers, administrators, and instructional staff to effectively support the current needs of Multilingual Learners. The following are a list of former and ongoing trainings:

- Ongoing DLI training for all DLI teachers. Some training that has been provided includes: La Cosecha Conference, California Association of Bilingual Education (CABE) Annual and Summer Conferences, Ventura County Office of Education Dual Language Network Trainings and Meetings, Be GLAD training, etc.
- Ongoing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) for all TK-12 teachers and administrators
- Ongoing ELD training for all TK-5 teachers and administrators on Wonders Designated/Integrated
- Ongoing monthly virtual meetings for EL Coordinators on English Learner strategies and content knowledge with representatives (credentialed teachers) from each school site
- Ongoing training for TK-12 administrators and teachers on how to utilize ELPAC results to improve classroom instruction
- Ongoing training for all TK-12 teachers and administrators on integrated and Designated ELD.
- Ongoing site administration training including the 2012 California English Language Development Standards and the English Learner Roadmap to identify



Conejo Academy teachers attend a CABE conference as ongoing professional development.

schoolwide goals that focus on Integrated and Designated ELD. These trainings are planned concurrently with districtwide trainings that include core adoption implementation and benchmark assessments

- Ongoing training sessions for educators, administrators, and community members interested in dual language immersion programs and language acquisition
- Ongoing discussion regarding best practices, research findings, and resources to support the implementation of effective dual language instruction

Staff Certification and Hiring

Staff certification continues to evolve along with student needs. All credentialed staff are required to meet applicable state certification and licensure requirements to work with students in schools.

In order to continue recruiting, hiring and building a strong pool of teachers who have a Bilingual, Cross-Cultural, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) credential, CVUSD entered into an agreement with the local teachers union to provide a stipend to current DLI teachers who are teaching Spanish in the DLI program. This stipend agreement reiterates CVUSD's commitment to DLI bilingual teachers who are qualified and hold a BCLAD credential. The agreement ended on June 28, 2024 as federal funds that were being utilized for this purpose were no longer available as they were provided during and for the COVID pandemic.

Title I

Title I is a federal program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that provides financial assistance to schools with high percentages of students from low-income families. Its primary goal is to ensure that all children have access to a high-quality education and can achieve proficiency on state academic standards and assessments. In elementary schools, Title I funding is often used to support supplemental programs, such as reading and math interventions, after-school tutoring, and additional instructional staff. These resources help to address learning gaps, improve student performance, and foster equitable educational opportunities for disadvantaged students.

Chapter 8

Recruitment and Enrollment

Recruitment

The DLI Program recognizes the need for continued recruitment in order to grow the program, increase knowledge of the program in the greater community and maintain ideal ratios of English speaking, Spanish speaking, and bilingual students in each classroom. As such, continued outreach to various stakeholders, including parents, community members, local organizations and education partners will be made to promote the benefits of bilingual education and foster community knowledge and involvement. These outreach opportunities may include:

- On campus tours and information sessions
- Virtual information sessions and parenting workshops
- Targeted social media campaigns
- Printed ads and mailers
- Campus tours
- Participation in community events
- Collaboration with local organizations
- Parent ambassadors program
- Information sessions held at local preschool and early childhood centers
- Newspaper articles and press releases regarding school achievements

As a growing awareness of the DLI program at Conejo Academy will attract new students and generate support and goodwill to lay the groundwork to continue the program well into the future, continuous efforts will be made in order to continue expanding the network of the DLI program. By implementing this outreach plan, the DLI program can effectively engage with parents, community members, and stakeholders to promote bilingualism, celebrate diversity, and create a supportive learning environment for all students.

Program Capacity

The current maximum enrollment for each classroom in CVUSD and Conejo Academy of Leadership and Language Immersion are as follows:

- TK to 3rd grade: 24 students
- 4th and 5th grade: 32 students

The overall enrollment capacity of the program will be estimated by March 1 of the preceding school year based on facility size, enrollment projections, transfer requests, and staffing ratios.

Priority for Enrollment Consideration

The following criteria will be given priority during enrollment:

- Students living within the neighborhood boundaries
- Students with siblings enrolled in the program or school
- Timeliness of School Choice applications*
- Students whose parent/guardian is a CVUSD employee

Enrollment Process

Neighborhood Families

Neighborhood families have priority in enrollment, which begins in January. Families may enroll online or pick up an enrollment packet from the school office.

School Choice*

Students living outside the Conejo Academy neighborhood boundaries may apply to enroll via the School Choice Application process. The number of approved school choice applications will be based on the projected enrollment capacity and the projected available spots for non-neighborhood boundaries families.

Language Balance

In order to promote linguistic equity and ample interactions between native and non-native English and Spanish speakers, the most desirable ratio in a Spanish-English Dual Language Immersion class is 50% English speakers and 50% Spanish speakers. The language proficiency for both the home language and targeted language may vary for various reasons. In addition, students who learned both English and Spanish from birth onward may be considered simultaneously bilingual upon initial enrollment. In order to ensure that there is a balance of student language models in each classroom, the student ratio should not exceed more than two thirds speakers of one language and one third speakers of the other language

When a student enrolls, the level of proficiency of the home language and targeted language will be assessed prior to initial enrollment. The results will be used to balance the linguistic models in each classroom.

Waitlist

If enrollment capacity is reached in a grade level, additional families wanting to enroll in the program will be placed on a waitlist. The family will be invited to enroll once a spot in the program becomes available. This could occur at any point during the school year. If a family opts not to enroll at that time, that spot will be offered to the next family on the waitlist.

Criteria for Enrollment for Grades 2 and Beyond

Students entering Grades 2 and beyond may be considered for the enrollment if they meet one of the following criteria:

- Prior participation in a Spanish-English Dual Language Immersion Program
- Classify as a newcomer from a Spanish speaking country

The student needs to demonstrate oral and written proficiency in both languages. Families will be required to demonstrate commitment to support the transition to the dual immersion program at Conejo Academy.

Family Commitment

After families are notified that their child is admitted to the DLI program at Conejo Academy, families will be invited to attend the Spring DLI Family Event. During the event, families will receive additional information regarding the program and will be required to sign a commitment letter prior to starting school. To develop the skills to become bilingual, biliterate, and multicultural, one school year is insufficient. Therefore, CVUSD is seeking full commitment from parents/guardians to enroll in the DLI program at Conejo Academy. By signing the agreement, families confirm their commitment to participate in the program until the student finishes 5th grade, thereby ensuring the maximum academic benefit. Families are also highly encouraged to collaborate with the school staff to address concerns prior to exiting the program. A sample of this commitment letter is included below.

DLI - Family Commitment: SAMPLE

CONEJO ACADEMY DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

COMMITMENT TO REMAIN IN PROGRAM

I have attended an informational meeting about the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program and understand the goals and design of the program.

Dual Language Immersion has three goals:

- academic success in Spanish and English
- speaking, reading and writing in Spanish and English
- an appreciation of other cultures and an increase in self-esteem

I agree to:

- keep my student enrolled in this program through the end of fifth grade to ensure the maximum academic benefit and support the idea of continuing into junior high & high school
- ensure my student attends school with a minimum of absences, excluding illness
- help my student with homework
- participate in meetings and other classroom/school events
- meet with the school principal and an administrator from the District Office if I have questions or wish to change schools or programs

The school agrees to provide:

- qualified teachers for the Dual Language Immersion Program
- family involvement and educational opportunities
- a safe and positive learning environment
- a variety of opportunities to develop academic success and linguistic competence in Spanish and English

My signature below represents that I have read this Commitment to Participate document, understand its contents and agree to have my student enrolled in the CVUSD Dual Language Immersion Program:

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Signature

Date

Student's Name

Phone Number

Principal' s Signature

Date

DLI - Family Commitment : SAMPLE

ACADEMIA CONEJO PROGRAMA DE DOBLE INMERSIÓN

COMPROMISO DE PERMANECER EN EL PROGRAMA

He asistido a una junta informativa sobre el programa de doble inmersión (DI) y entiendo las metas y el diseño del programa.

El programa tiene tres metas:

- éxito académico en español e inglés
- hablar, leer y escribir en español e inglés
- fomentar el aprecio de culturas y aumentar el autoestima

Yo prometo:

- mantener a mi estudiante en este programa hasta el final del quinto grado para que reciba el máximo beneficio académico y apoyar la idea de continuar con el programa en la secundaria y preparatoria
- asegurar que mi estudiante asista a la escuela con un mínimo de ausencias, excluyendo enfermedades
- ayudar a mi estudiante con su tarea
- participar en las juntas, en el salón de clase y en otros eventos de la escuela
- reunirme con la directora y un representante del distrito escolar, si tengo preguntas o quiero cambiar a mi estudiante a otra escuela o programa

La escuela promete:

- Proveer maestros/as calificados para el programa de doble inmersión
- oportunidades para que las familias se involucren en el programa
- un ambiente seguro y positivo para aprender
- una variedad de oportunidades para desarrollar el éxito académico y la competencia lingüística en español e inglés

Mi firma representa que he leído este compromiso de participación, que entienda su contenido y por lo tanto, doy permiso para la participación de mi estudiante en este programa de doble inmersión de CVUSD.

Firma del padre, madre, o tutor legal

Fecha

Nombre del estudiante

Número de telefono

Firma de la directora

Fecha

Chapter 9

Family and Community Involvement

The Critical Role of Family Involvement

Studies have consistently shown that family involvement in school is positively associated with a child's academic performance as well as children's social and emotional adjustment and reduced delinquency (Barger, Kim, Kuncel, Pomerantz 2019)*. This involvement can range from parent-teacher conferences, family participation in school activities, and other opportunities with little variation in outcomes due to age, ethnicity or socioeconomic status. When families are committed to their child's education, all parties benefit, from the student and their peers, to the staff and greater community. As such, Conejo Academy recognizes that families are critical partners in the development of bilingual learners. Beyond academics, Conejo Academy is a vibrant community where students develop social skills, confidence, and a sense of self. When families participate in school activities, they demonstrate to their children the importance of education and gain insight into their child's educational journey. By dedicating time and effort to their child's school community, parents play a vital role in shaping a positive and enriching educational experience for all.



Families participate in an international potluck to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.

Clear Channels of Communication

Conejo Academy distributes information regarding classroom activities, school events, volunteer opportunities, and communication regarding participation opportunities for students and their families. Communication is dispersed in a variety of channels that may include:

- Digital newsletters (currently the *Rabbit Report*)
- Trimester calendars
- Paper flyers sent home in students' folders
- Physical signage on campus (posters and marquee by both pick-up gates)
- Text message
- Social media platforms
- Phone calls and in-person meetings as needed

Teachers also have regular communication with family members regarding both classroom activities as well as schoolwide events. Teachers and staff will be in contact

regarding student's academic progress, with the distribution of progress reports midway through and at the completion of each trimester, as well as twice-annual family-teacher conferences.

Language Access

At Conejo Academy, bridging the communication barrier is a focused objective, therefore, language access is a top priority service offered to all families regardless of their primary language. Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I, Sec. 1112(e)(4) states that Local Education Agencies must provide information to parents/guardians in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parent can understand. Therefore, in addition to employing bilingual staff, Conejo Academy utilizes language services from contracted interpretation companies to support families with their language needs, reducing the language barrier for parents/guardians to communicate with school staff. Language services are also provided, when requested in a timely manner, during important parent meetings such as IEPs or parent conferences.

In the classroom, proficient bilingual paraeducators provide primary language support to students when needed and facilitate communication between teachers and families. In addition, on campus bilingual facilitators provide interpretation/translation services as needed.

All communication from the school, teachers, staff, and support organizations is provided in both English and Spanish. Translation to additional languages may be accommodated when needed.

Family Involvement

Given the DLI program's commitment to providing a collaborative learning environment, there are a multitude of opportunities for students' family members to get involved in their children's education. These opportunities include both classroom, schoolwide, and districtwide opportunities which are included below.

Classroom Opportunities for Family Involvement

Family members are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, attend field trips, and participate in classroom activities and celebrations throughout the year. Efforts will be made to accommodate the schedules and needs of family members who wish to be involved in their students' education. In addition, family members can reach out to the office or their students' teachers for opportunities to participate virtually, at home, or outside of school hours. Volunteer opportunities are provided in both English and Spanish, and translation to other languages can be provided for family members as needed.

Schoolwide Opportunities for Family Involvement

In addition to classroom volunteers, Conejo Academy offers a variety of opportunities to support the school as a whole. These committees include:

- **Parent Faculty Association:** Conejo Academy's Parent Faculty Association (PFA) is a non-profit booster club which holds the primary objective of supplementing the education and well-being of Conejo Academy students, staff, and family members and providing opportunities for enrichment at school, at home, and in the greater community. The PFA consists of dedicated family members and faculty that meet regularly to discuss the needs of the school, staff, and students as well as organize events and fundraisers to support those needs. Students and family members are encouraged to participate in these discussions by sharing ideas and asking questions, and are also given the opportunity to hold leadership positions within PFA. Meetings are held both on campus and virtually whenever possible at a time that allows the greatest participation.

- **English Learners Advisory Committee:**

The English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) advises the school site on issues pertaining to ELs. ELAC meetings also include parenting workshops, presentations regarding programs offered at Conejo Academy, resource fairs partnering with local community service organizations, as well as opportunities for fellowship for students and family members. ELAC will send one representative to the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) meetings to share information about

happenings at Conejo Academy as well as bring back discussion items regarding districtwide issues pertaining to ELs. Meetings are held on campus throughout the year; all meetings are held in Spanish with English translation offered to those requiring translation. According to state guidelines, ELAC is responsible for the following tasks:

- Advising the principal and staff in the development of the school's program for English learners and submitting the plan to the School Site Council (SSC) for consideration of inclusion in the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)
- Assisting in the development of the schoolwide needs assessment
- Making parents/guardians aware of the importance of regular school attendance
- Electing at least one member to DELAC



Families participate in a workshop on language transfer during an ELAC meeting.

- **School Site Council:** Conejo Academy's SSC is a committee of administrators, teachers, and parents who meet monthly to discuss issues concerning students and campus. Members also participate in developing and monitoring Conejo Academy's SPSA, which includes oversight of the School Improvement Budget, as well as in reviewing school policies and procedures. School Improvement Program (SIP) funds are allotted by the state which is the Site Council's responsibility to approve the allocation of SIP funds with the goal of meeting the needs of Conejo Academy's at-risk population as well as promoting the academic, physical, social, and emotional development of all Conejo Academy students. Meetings are held on campus at a time that is convenient for all SSC members.
- **DLI Stakeholder's Committee:** The DLI Stakeholder Committee consists of district and school staff, family members, and community leaders invested in the success and sustainability of the DLI program. The stakeholders committee discusses current opportunities and needs as well as future program goals as DLI students grow through the program. The responsibilities of the committee include program development, community engagement, discussion of current research and best practices, as well as advocacy and policy to remove barriers and ensure the needs of all DLI participants are being met. Furthermore, the committee also identifies best practices for ensuring that the DLI program meets enrollment and placement goals. Meetings are held virtually throughout the year.

Districtwide Opportunities for Family Involvement

In addition to volunteer opportunities at the school site, there are a variety of opportunities for families to get involved at the district level to impact educational opportunities for students throughout the district as well as represent Conejo Academy's interests in district-level decision-making. These include:

- **District Advisory Council:** The District Advisory Council (DAC) is comprised of parent representatives from each school in the district who advise the Board of Education on matters related to educational programs, policies, procedures, and consider actions as requested. The District Advisory Council will establish and maintain intra-district communications, encourage the sharing of needs, accomplishments and activities in order to support a high quality school system. DAC meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month. All meetings are open to the public, but only the assigned representative from each school and advisory council is allowed to vote on action items at DAC meetings.
- **District English Learner Advisory Council:** DELAC advises CVUSD Administration, School Board, and District Advisory Council on matters related to educational programs, policies, procedures, budget, program planning and specific actions being taken for English Language Learners in the District. DELAC will establish and maintain intra-district communication and encourage the sharing of needs, accomplishments and activities that support a high quality

program for English Language Learners at all levels of language learning and academic development. The District staff will report to parents and members of this committee regarding program services, identification of ELs (including testing procedures), placement of students for program services, annual reviews of student progress and the Annual Language Survey.

- **Support Advisory Councils:** CVUSD also has the following support advisory committees that meet regularly throughout the year to discuss educational programs relevant to each council. For more information on Advisory Councils, please visit <https://www.conejousd.org/parents-community/overview>. The committees include:
 - African American District Advisory Council (AADAC)
 - Gifted and Talented Education District Advisory Council (GATE-DAC)
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+ Advisory Council (LGBTQ+AC)
 - Special Education District Advisory Council (SEDAC)
 - Student District Advisory Council (SDAC)

Family members also have the opportunity to participate in the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and SPSA development processes which outline measurable goals, metrics, actions and services that promote family involvement.

Family Resources

The Conejo Academy Dual Immersion Program recognizes the additional resources needed to support bilingual learners. As such, opportunities are provided for families to learn the second language, either English or Spanish, through family learning opportunities both on campus and throughout the district. These may include opportunities such as:

- The Latino Family Literacy Project
- CVUSD's annual conference for Spanish-speaking families
- The CVUSD Parent Outreach Program
- English classes for CVUSD families
- Spanish classes for CVUSD families

Family members with questions and concerns regarding how to best support their bilingual students are encouraged to reach out to their students' teachers and office staff to learn of current offerings and to get involved.

Community Partnerships

As the first elementary school in the greater Conejo Valley area, Conejo Academy, formerly known as Conejo Elementary School, is a longstanding pillar of the local community. As such, Conejo Academy has partnered with local businesses and community organizations in order to provide students with opportunities that would not otherwise be available to them. Community involvement provides valuable resources and support for the dual language immersion program, ranging from volunteers to donations as well as access to specialized programs or services that enhance the educational experience. In the past, these experiences have included donations of gift certificates to local businesses to recognize student achievements, as well as grants to fund field trips and activities that expand on classroom curriculum.

In addition to receiving support and enrichment from local organizations, Conejo Academy students are given many opportunities to give back to the community. Past examples include food and clothing drives, volunteering at the local food bank, and visiting with residents at an assisted-living facility. When students participate in community service projects, they develop a greater appreciation for the diversity and needs within their community, leading to increased tolerance and understanding, which will encourage them to make a positive impact in the world as bilingual leaders.



Students on the Lighthouse Team take food drive donations to the local food bank and volunteer sorting food for distribution.

Enrichment Opportunities

Conejo Academy teachers and staff frequently organize events celebrating Spanish language and culture. These classroom activities and celebrations, as well as schoolwide events demonstrate the ways students are acquiring language and developing cultural understanding. Former events include opportunities for students to learn about different countries around the world and keeping track of their “travels” in a passport, participating in Hispanic Heritage month classroom celebrations, and a communitywide Día de los Niños Carnival every spring. Not only do these opportunities allow students to integrate their academic learning with real-world experiences, when family and community members attend these events, they better understand and appreciate the benefits of the program and become stronger supporters and advocates.

Conejo Academy believes learning extends beyond the classroom and prides itself in providing a myriad of opportunities for students to participate in during and after school activities. To support students in becoming well-rounded individuals and proficient bilingual communicators, a variety of enrichment opportunities are offered to enhance their educational experience. These programs are crafted to foster creativity, critical thinking, and cultural awareness, and align with the commitment to bilingual and bicultural education. Examples of these programs include:

- **Visual and Performing Arts and Athletics:** Conejo Academy provides instruction in visual arts, performing arts, and physical activities. Past offerings have included baile folklórico, chorus, and martial arts.
- **Life Skills:** Conejo Academy provides practical life skills woven into each grade level's curriculum. Examples have included students learning how to ride a bike, financial literacy, and culinary skills.
- **Leadership:** As a *Leader In Me* school, Conejo Academy provides students with leadership opportunities both in and out of the classroom. There is also a Student Lighthouse Team for students with an exceptional desire to lead students and serve the school community. Students on the team participate in service learning projects, plan school events, and help their peers find their leadership potential.
- **After School Programs:** Conejo Academy offers an after school childcare program that includes their own enrichment opportunities and homework help.
- **Summer Opportunities:** Summer can be filled with learning through CVUSD programs, as well as Conejo's own classes that guide young students' transition to school.



Kindergarten students learn to ride two-wheel bikes in PE as part of their life skills curriculum.

These are just a few examples of how Conejo Academy is dedicated to providing a holistic educational experience that nurtures the intellectual, emotional, and social development of students. Through these enrichment opportunities, the aim is to cultivate lifelong learners who are not only proficient in two languages but also possess a deep appreciation for cultural diversity.

Conclusion

Commitment for the DLI Program

CVUSD believes in the importance of providing programs that benefit students and their future. The DLI program at the Conejo Academy is a living testament to this belief. Even though there are many programs and options available for CVUSD parents, the DLI program prides itself in not just teaching an additional language but also in creating students who embrace the values of the Leader in Me program. The staff at Conejo Academy wholeheartedly believes that language and leadership skills are necessary and essential for students to learn as they progress through their K-12 academic experience.



Students participate in discussions and activities to promise kindness and inclusion during Unity Week.

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Additional Resources and Information

Resource	Link
Center for Applied Linguistics, The Guiding Principles and the Critical Third Pillar	https://www.cal.org/news/the-guiding-principles-and-the-critical-third-pillar-sociocultural-competence/
The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition	http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/
Association of Two-Way and Dual Language Education	http://atdle.org/
Seal of Biliteracy	http://sealofbiliteracy.org/seal-details
Conejo Valley Unified School District's Dual Language Immersion Webpage	https://www.conejousd.org/conejo



Transitional Kindergarten students wear clothing that represents their culture to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.

Glossary

ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners: Performance standards that describe how well students demonstrate competencies addressing the national world language standards. They are organized according to the three modes of communication (Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational) as described in the ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning, for three learner performance ranges: Novice, Intermediate, and Pre-Advanced. A student's ability to communicate in the language is described in terms of Comprehensibility, Comprehension, Language Control, Vocabulary Use, Communication Strategies, and Cultural Awareness.

Additive Bilingualism: Additive bilingualism refers to the educational approach in which the first language continues to be developed and the first culture to be valued while the second language is added. This can be contrasted to subtractive bilingualism, in which the second language is added at the expense of the first language and culture, which diminish as a consequence (Cummins, 1994).

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): The only national organization dedicated to the improvement and expansion of the teaching and learning of all languages at all levels of instruction. ACTFL is an individual membership organization of more than 9,000 foreign language educators and administrators from elementary through graduate education, as well as government and industry. From the development of Proficiency Guidelines, to its leadership role in the creation of national standards, ACTFL focuses on issues that are critical to the growth of both the profession and the individual teacher.

California Seal of Biliteracy: Assembly Bill 815 (Brownley, Chapter 618, and Statutes of 2011) was passed, signed by Governor Jerry Brown, and became effective January 1, 2012. This statute allows students to be recognized for reaching academic standards and proficiency levels in both English and other languages. The Seal of Biliteracy is added to a student's High School Diploma after the student meets the proficiency standards laid out by each district and county. Colleges and universities recognize the Seal as exceeding the foreign language requirements for high school, in addition to, meeting the foreign language requisites for college and university level.

Content-Based Language Instruction: A goal of content-based instruction programs is the development of significant levels of language proficiency through experiential learning in subject-matter areas. Lessons reflect both content (subject-matter) and language objectives and are aligned to the standards. According to Swain and Lapkin (1989), there needs to be a carefully planned integration of language and content. Content-based instruction and assessments are aligned to standards and, therefore, also referred to as criterion-referenced.

English Learner (EL): also known as English Language Learners (ELL), Multilingual Learner (ML) and Limited English Proficient (LEP). Used to identify a student who is not

currently proficient in English and whose primary language is not English. This designation is determined by a state-approved assessment.

Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP): Students with a home language other than English, whose oral and written English skills approximate those of native English speakers.

Fluency: ACTFL defines fluency as: 1) quantity of speech or length of the learner's utterance per response, 2) "flow" of the learner's speech measured by pauses, and, 3) evidence of struggle with the language.

Proficiency: It is the ability to communicate successfully in a language, using all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), based on the five levels originally defined by the US Foreign Service Institute (FSI), provides a detailed description of the communicative modes, communication functions, range of vocabulary, degree of accuracy and flexibility that learners of a language are able to control at different levels.

Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP): A student who has a home language other than English and, upon meeting CVUSD reclassification criteria during the course of their instruction, is deemed to have oral and written English skills which approximate those of native English speakers.

Acronyms

BCLAD	Bilingual Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development
CABE	California Association for Bilingual Education
DAC	District Advisory Committee
DELAC	District English Learner Advisory Committee
DLI	Dual Language Immersion
EL	English Learner
ELAC	English Learner Advisory Committee
ELD	English Language Development
ELL	English Language Learner
ELPAC	English Language Proficiency Assessments for California
GATE	Gifted And Talented Education
IEP	Individual Education Plan
LAP	Language Allocation Plan
LCAP	Local Control Accountability Plan
ML	Multilingual Learners
PFA	Parent Faculty Association
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SPSA	School Plan for Student Assessment
SSC	School Site Council
SSS	Student Support Services
TK	Transitional Kindergarten
TOSA	Teacher on Special Assignment
TWBI/DL	Two-Way Bilingual/Dual Language
UDL	Universal Design for Learning



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