



SAN MATEO-FOSTER CITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT



MANDARIN DISTRICT PLAN

SAN MATEO-FOSTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



JANUARY 2025

A LIVING DOCUMENT

PREPARED BY

THE MANDARIN
DISTRICT PLAN TASKFORCE

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Background

Dual language education offers powerful opportunities for students who may be furthest from educational equity. In fact, research has shown that dual language education is the only English language development program model that fully closes the academic and opportunity gaps for multilingual/English learners and other historically underserved student groups (Collier & Thomas, 2004, 2017; Lindholm-Leary, 2017).

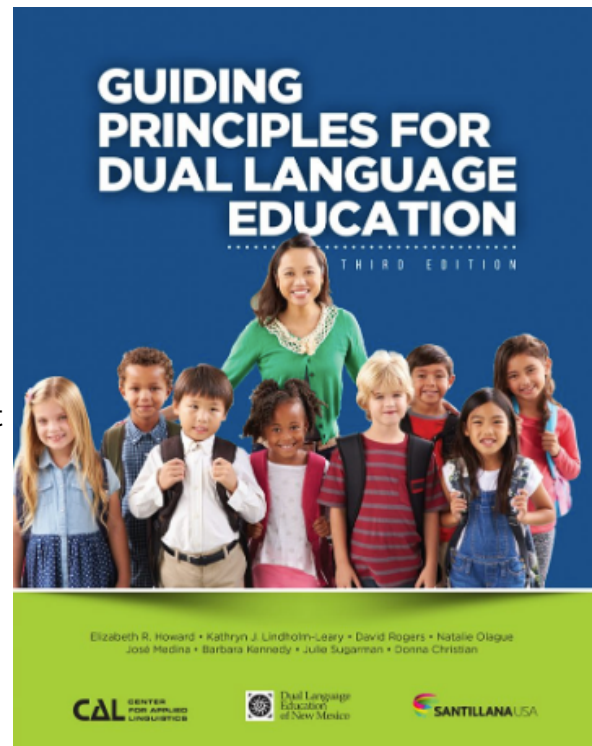
The San Mateo-Foster City School District SMFCSD PK-8 Dual Language Mandarin Master Plan will guide the development of Mandarin Dual Language Program Pathway and lay the groundwork for the continued development of a PK - 8th pathway that affords students the opportunity to develop their bilingualism and literacy in two languages. SMFCSD's strategic goals promote the preparation of students for full participation and success in a global society that is multilingual and multicultural. Students from diverse backgrounds speak, read and write in Mandarin Chinese and participate in multicultural studies and experiences as part of their education.

Grounded in the CAL Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education, the program's goals for students are:

- Bilingualism and Biliteracy
- Academic Excellence
- Sociocultural Competence/Cross-Cultural Understanding

The master plan is a living document intended to guide the development and implementation of the Mandarin immersion program centered on achieving the program goals and the student families served. Periodic review would ensure the relevance of the plan.

The Mandarin programs across three schools in SMFCSD have been highly successful. To build on this success, a comprehensive review of the programs is now desired to guide the development of a more cohesive and aligned Mandarin program within the district.



Background

Hence, the objectives of the Mandarin Language Master Plan are to:

- Assess the current state of the Mandarin language programs
- Recommend an aligned PK-8 Mandarin program pathway
- Provide evidence-based guidelines for implementing a rigorous Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program
- Ensure equitable and accessible Mandarin programs for all multilingual learners and implement an accountability model that supports success, consistent with the district's strategic plan for achievement, equity, and wellness so that we can develop students' bilingual (the ability to speak fluently in two languages), biliterate (the ability to read and write proficiently in two languages), and sociocultural competencies (the ability to appreciate and understand other cultures) while meeting grade-level academic standards.



Acknowledgements



San Mateo-Foster City School District, in collaboration with the Stanford World Language Project, gratefully acknowledges the support and input of the Dual Language Mandarin Master Plan Task Force composed of administrators, educators, families, and community members. We greatly appreciate the support from the Superintendent and the leadership team who worked in collaboration to complete this document.

The following individuals contributed to this effort (in alphabetical order by last name):

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The Dual Language Mandarin Master Plan Task Force met over the course of 6 months to complete the analysis of the program elements, the writing and to create a PK–8 program pathway for full implementation of the dual language program in San Mateo-FosterCity School District.

Special thanks to all the teachers, staff, students and parents at Turnbull Mandarin Preschool, College Park Elementary, Bayside Academy Mandarin strand, and the student and parent alumni for their participation in the various surveys, community meetings and focus groups during the data gathering phase.



VISION

The San Mateo-Foster City School District educates, inspires, and empowers every student in every school every day to live, lead, and learn with integrity and joy.

MISSION

The San Mateo-Foster City School District provides rigorous, high-quality, and equitable education while partnering with our families and community to support all students to achieve their full academic, social, and emotional potential.

STRATEGIC GOALS

ACHIEVEMENT: Create learning opportunities for ALL PK through 8th students resulting in closing the achievement gap and culminating in personal and academic success in high school and beyond.

EQUITY: Reduce inequitable outcomes for ALL students and staff by prioritizing equity, access, & inclusion.

WELLNESS: Provide a safe, caring, nurturing, and culturally responsive environment for ALL students to meet the needs of the whole child.

Chapter 1: Program History and Rationale

The San Mateo Foster City School District (SMFCSD) currently offers three Mandarin Chinese Language Programs at Turnbull Preschool, College Park Elementary School and Bayside Academy (Middle School) for preschool to eighth grade students: 100% Mandarin immersion in PK, one-way 50/50 DLI in the K-5 elementary level and world language in grades 6-8 in middle school.

Table 1.1: SMFCSD PreK-8 Mandarin Programs, 2024-2025

SMFCSD PK-8 Mandarin Programs 2024-2025				
School	Grade(s)	Program Type	Program Model	
			% in Mandarin	% in English
Turnbull	Preschool	Immersion	100	0
College Park Elementary	K-5	One-Way Dual Language Immersion	50	50
Bayside Academy	6-7	World Language	38	62
Bayside Academy	8	World Language	19	81

To achieve high levels of the three core goals of DLI: bilingualism and biliteracy, academic achievement and sociocultural competence in both languages, it is important to develop an integrated and aligned PK-8 Mandarin immersion pathway to ensure an uninterrupted, extended sequence of learning with rigor and quality instruction as students progress throughout the grades.



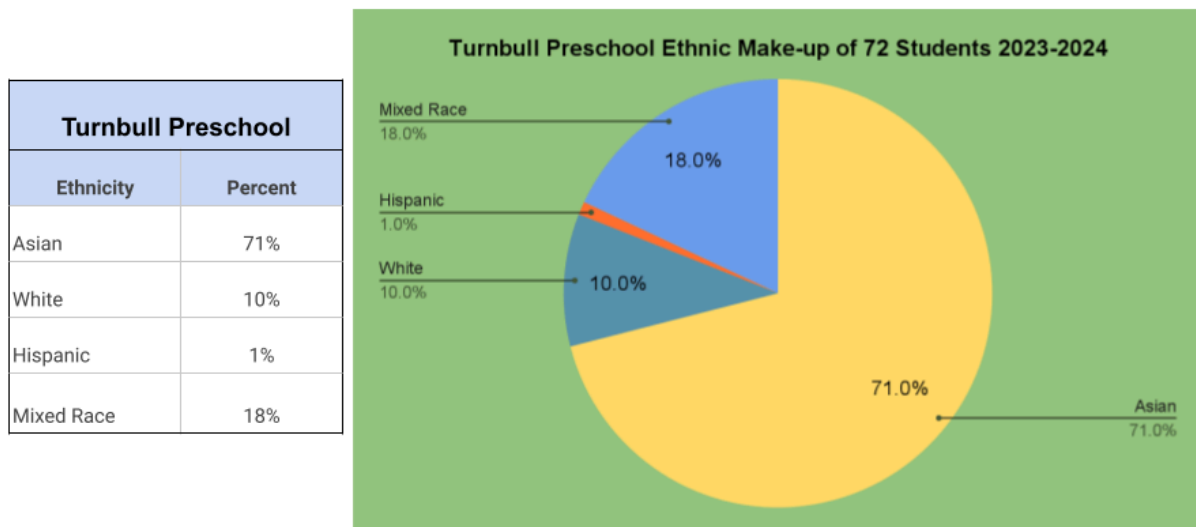
Program History

Turnbull

Turnbull Mandarin Preschool began in the 2006-2007 school year as a parent initiated effort to provide Mandarin language learning for their children in the SMFCSD. It is a 10 month, fee based, Mandarin only “immersion” program for 3 to 5 year old children. Students were immersed in the Mandarin learning environment and no English was taught. The program began with 1 founding Mandarin teacher and 1 Mandarin aide with the teacher developing the curriculum, teaching and coordinating the program. Over the next few years, the program expanded to 2 full day and 2 half day classes for 3 to 5 year olds, with 88 enrolled and many more on the waiting list. In the 2023-2024 school year, there were 3 classes serving a total of 72 students taught by classified teachers and aides.



Figure 1.1: Turnbull Preschool Ethnic Make-up of Mandarin Students 2023-24



College Park Elementary School

Turnbull Learning Academy was the original name of the school until it was renamed College Park Elementary School, approved by the San Mateo Foster City School Board of Education in July 2005. College Park has grown its Mandarin offerings for students from an elective course to a distinguished Mandarin Dual Language Immersion School recognized in the region for its stellar academic achievement, strong bilingual and cultural development, and school community.



Mandarin instruction began in the 2004-2005 school year as part of the Magnet School Assistance Program (MSAP). The Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), a program designed for students who are identified as gifted and talented, was created for 4th and 5th grades and offered Mandarin instruction as a Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) elective course. Students in the FLAP received 75 minutes of Mandarin instruction per week.

In the following years, all 4th and 5th grade students in the general education program were offered Mandarin as an elective as well. In the fall of 2008, the Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program was launched as a natural extension of the Mandarin Foreign Language Program. The program began at the kindergarten level and added a grade level each year with a complete K-5 program in 2013. Initially, the program was a 35/65 model, where 35% of the instruction was dedicated to students learning Mandarin and the remaining 65% of the instruction was instructed in English and included English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education.

In 2014, the program evolved into a One-Way World Language Immersion Program. The majority of the students are English speakers in a 50/50 model where students receive 50% of the instruction in Mandarin and the other 50% in English. The 50/50 Mandarin dual language immersion model has continued to its present day with 364 students. In addition, students in the GATE program have been receiving Mandarin as a world language beginning the 2023-2024 school year.

Table 1.2: History of the Mandarin Program at College Park Elementary School

College Park Elementary School Mandarin Program at at Glance 2005-2014			
School Year(s)	Students	Program Type	Program Model
2004-2005	MSAP*, GATE** 4th & 5th grades	Foreign (World) Language	75 minutes per week
2005-2007	MSAP*, GATE** General Education 4th & 5th grades	Foreign (World) Language	75 minutes per week
2007-2008	K	ONe-Way Dual Language Immersion***	35/65 35% Mandarin 65% English
2013-2014	K-5	ONe-Way Dual Language Immersion	50/50 50% Mandarin 50% English

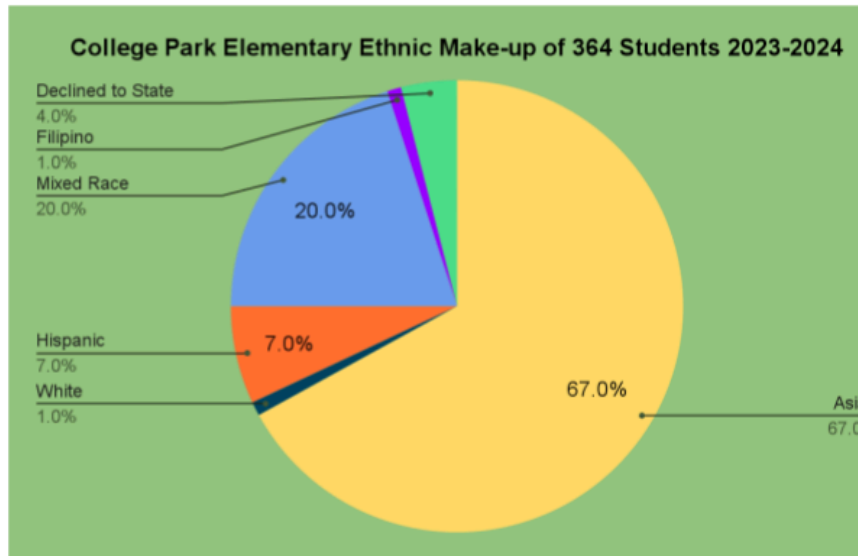
*MSAP: Magnet School Assistance Program

**GATE: Gifted and Talented Education

***One-Way Dual Language Immersion: enrolls mostly English-speaking students with some students of the target language

Figure 1.2: College Park Elementary School Ethnic Make-up of Immersion Students 2023-24

College Park Elementary K-5	
Ethnicity	Percent
Asian	67%
White	1%
Hispanic	7%
Mixed Race	20%
Filipino	1%
Declined to State	4%



Over the past 19 years, College Park's school leadership and the teaching staff have dedicated countless hours to collaborate on designing, developing, and building the Mandarin Immersion Program. College Park Elementary School has received the California Distinguished School for their exceptional work in student achievement three times. In addition, the school has won first place multiple times in the annual San Francisco Chinese New Year Parade.



Bayside Academy

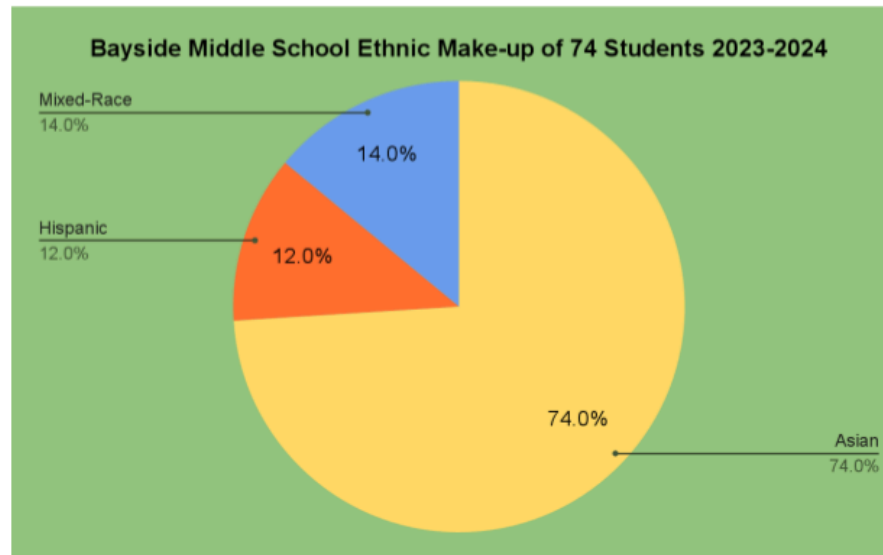
Bayside started offering Mandarin elective courses to sixth grade students in the 2014-2015 school year. Many College Park Elementary students attend Bayside, and these courses offer the opportunity to continue studying Mandarin in middle school. Students take the Mandarin I course when they enter 6th grade and matriculate to the Mandarin III course in 8th grade. The Bayside Mandarin program is a world language program taught as a standalone language course.



The first Mandarin class began with 5 students and has grown to a program with 74 students in 2023-2024. The course is an elective to fit into a 6 period instructional day. In the 6th and 7th grades, students receive an average of 90 minutes of instruction daily. In 8th grade, students receive an average of a 45 minute instruction, 3 days a week. Approximately 90% of the graduating 8th graders from the Mandarin program continue to study Mandarin in high school. To provide access to other students from other schools the opportunity to study Mandarin, Bayside offered an Introduction to Mandarin course, a world language course to 8th graders as an elective in the 2020-2021 school year and with 11 students enrolled in 2023-2024.

Figure 1.3: Bayside Academy Ethnic Make-up of Mandarin students 2023-2024

Bayside Middle School 6-8	
Ethnicity	Percentage
Asian	74%
White	0%
Hispanic	12%
Mixed-Race	14%



Out of the total student body of 552 students in the PK-8 Mandarin programs in 2023-2024, the number of English Learner/Multilingual Learner (EL/ML) stands at 45 students or 9%, with the majority of the students being predominantly English speaking students.

Table 1.3: English Learner/Multilingual Learner (EL/ML) in the Mandarin Programs

English/Multilingual Learners (EL/ML) PK-8 2023-2024			
Grade	Student Total	Number of EL/ML	Percentage % of EL/ML
PK	72	N/A	N/A
K-5	406	45	11%
6-8	74	0	0
Total	552	45	9%

Rationale for the Mandarin Master Plan

The Mandarin programs across three schools in SMFCSD have been highly successful. To build on this success, a comprehensive review of the programs is now desired to guide the development of a more cohesive and aligned Mandarin program within the district.

Hence, the objectives of the Mandarin Language Master Plan are to:

- Assess the current state of the Mandarin language programs
- Recommend an aligned PreK-8 Mandarin program pathway
- Provide evidence-based guidelines for implementing a rigorous Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program
- Ensure equitable and accessible Mandarin programs for all multilingual learners and implement an accountability model that supports success, consistent with the district's strategic plan for achievement, equity, and wellness

We aim for students to be bilingual (the ability to speak fluently in two languages), biliterate (the ability to read and write proficiently in two languages), and socioculturally competent (the ability to appreciate and understand other cultures) while meeting grade-level academic standards.

Chapter 1 Program History and Rationale Recommendations

- No recommendations

Chapter 2: Benefits of Dual Language Education & Research Findings

Benefits of Dual Language Programs

The Dual Language Program has been designed to maximize the benefits of second and multiple language learning for student participants based on the premise that the earlier a child is introduced to a language, the greater the likelihood that the child will become truly proficient. The program design is evidence-based. A significant body of research has established many benefits for learning an additional language. These benefits are cognitive, academic, economic and social in nature. Additionally, learning other languages encourages students to actively participate in an increasingly interdependent world in the 21st century.

There are four different Dual Language Immersion program designs that are additive bilingual programs: 1. Two-Way Immersion, 2. One-Way Immersion, 3. Heritage Language and 4. Developmental.

Studies on multilingual learning provide the following evidence:

- The “additive bilingual” immersion setting allows all students to learn two languages simultaneously without losing one language to learn another and can be a precondition for enhanced cognitive, linguistic and academic growth (Cummins, 2001; Howard, Sugarman, Perdomo, & Adger, 2005).
- Second-language learning enhances comprehension in the native language. Multilingual learners apply these reading and language analysis skills to their native languages (Thomas & Collier, 2002).
- The mental discipline of learning an additional language system increases intellectual flexibility and translates into higher achievement in all subject areas. The longer the exposure to additional languages, the more significant the cognitive advantages to the student (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2010).
- Knowledge of more than one language enables people to communicate in a variety of cultures and settings. A heightened level of multicultural awareness and communication skills foster intergroup contact and appreciation (Cummins, 1986; Howard et al., 2005).
- Learners develop and expand their knowledge of different curricular areas and cultural practices and perspectives while using the language to develop critical thinking and to solve problems creatively (ACTFL, 2015).
- Emergent bilinguals (students who are developing bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism through the development of two or more languages) and multilingual students use multiple language resources as they take part in a variety of cognitive, social and linguistic activities during their school day (WIDA, 2013).
- Proficiency in other languages enables learners to gain direct access to additional sources of knowledge, as well as understanding about the similarities and differences between the structures of the languages they know (ACTFL, 2015).

- Dual Language Education helps close the achievement gap between multilingual learners and their English-only counterparts. Research shows that multilingual learners have a higher rate of success in Dual Language Education versus English-only instruction. This is because students have maximum access to the curriculum and the opportunity to develop literacy and academic skills in both their native language and English in an instructional setting that values both languages and cultures (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2010).
- Students studying two languages have a more positive self-concept and are more likely to remain in school and attend college than multilingual learners in English-only instruction (Thomas & Collier, 2002, 2017).

Benefits for English Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELs/MLs)

The research on Dual Language Programs in the United States demonstrates that native speakers of other languages can indeed attain grade level proficiencies in both languages of instruction and in turn, close the performance gap between themselves and their English-only speaking peers. Research also indicates that multilingual learners have a higher rate of success in Dual Language Education versus English-only instructional programs because students have maximum access to the curriculum. The following research studies indicate:

- High quality, long-term bilingual education (dual language) is the only model that fully closes the achievement gap for multilingual/English learners. This finding is based on research in 36 school districts across 16 states, analyzing more than 7.5 million student records of multilingual learners (Collier & Thomas, 2017).
- Students in two-way dual language programs also have an unique opportunity to develop literacy and academic skills in both their native language and English in a culturally validating setting (Lindholm-Leary, 2017).
- English and multilingual learners educated in dual language education programs outperform English and multilingual learners educated in English-only instruction and short-term native language programs (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2010).
- Multilingual learners who enter high school reclassified to English proficient status are able to fully participate in college-bound schedules and courses and develop a college-going mindset (Lindholm-Leary, 2010).
- Multilingual learners continue to stay connected with their families by developing their mother tongue as well as learning English and the partner language in school (Cummins, 2001).



Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Review

The first dual language programs, also known as Dual Language Education, in the U.S. began in the 1960s and were based on well-researched French/English immersion models in Canada and successful Bilingual Maintenance Programs in the Southwest. Since the 1980s, the number of dual language programs has grown and according to a survey from the American Councils Research Center in 2021 there are more than 3,600 dual-language programs in the United States. As of 2024, there are approximately 394 Mandarin immersion programs in the United States with approximately 93 of them in California based on the data from the Mandarin Immersion Parent Council (MIPC), 2024.

In order for a program to be a dual language program, the program must possess the following critical features:

- The program involves instruction through two languages where the target language is used for a significant portion of the students' instructional day (from a minimum of 50% to 90%).
- The program involves periods of instruction during which only one language is used, i.e., no translation or language mixing by educators.
- Balanced numbers of multilingual/English learners and native English speaking students are enrolled in each class (two-way immersion).
- The students are fully integrated for most or all instruction so students are cross-learning the language from each other and engaged in highly academic work.
- English language development (ELD) instruction is provided for all eligible multilingual/English learners.



Key Findings

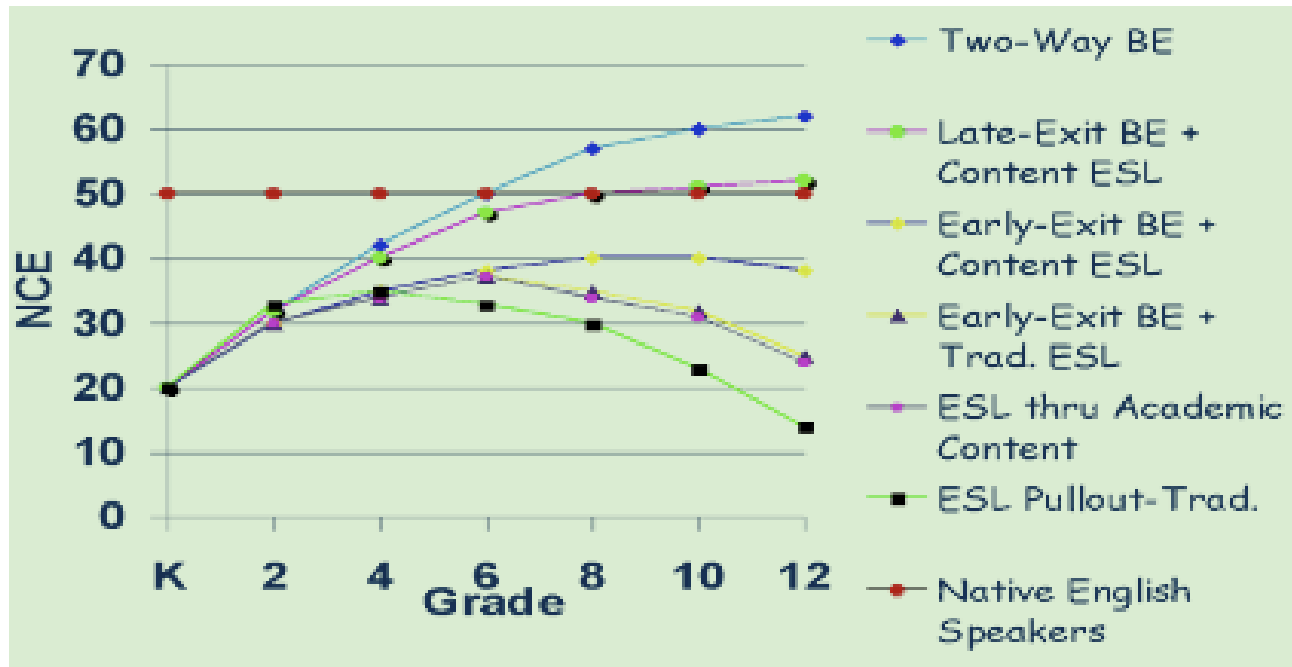
Recent research on TWBI (Two-Way Bilingual Immersion) programs across over 200 public schools shows that both English learners/Multilingual learners (ELs/MLs) and native English speakers (NES) achieve at levels comparable to or higher than their peers in English mainstream programs. Strong literacy skills in students' native language (L1) predict similar literacy skills in English (Lindholm-Leary, 2020). These findings support the goals of dual language immersion: language proficiency and bilingualism, academic achievement, and socio-cultural competencies.

- **Language Proficiency and Bilingualism:** Students typically become orally proficient in English and achieve grade-level norms in English reading and writing by grades 5-7, with an initial lag of 3-5 years. *EL students generally require 5-7 years to achieve full academic proficiency in a second language.* Target language and bilingual proficiency has received little research attention. Some studies of 50/50 programs indicate that students from different target language programs (e.g., Spanish, French, Mandarin) attain intermediate levels of proficiency on foreign language tests.
- **Academic Achievement:** Research over the 30-40 years consistently shows that TWBI students perform at or above the level of their non-TWBI peers after a 3-5 year lag. In the 90/10 model, students develop higher literacy skills in the target language than those in the 50/50 model. The results show that more English does not equate to higher proficiency in English.

Research by Thomas and Collier (2002, 2017) analyzed 7.5 million student records across 36 school districts to track the long-term educational benefit of Spanish speaking students and multilingual learners during their K-12 academic experience. They reported that students who had the crucial minimum of 4-7 years studying in both languages in well implemented programs, out-perform their peers in English language development programs (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: English Learners' Long-Term Achievement on Standardized Tests in English Reading Compared Across Seven [English Language Development - ELD] Program Models (Thomas & Collier, 2002, 2017)



- **Social-Emotional and Cultural Competencies:** TWBI students are more likely to be bilingual and maintain communication with their families. They also demonstrate positive attitudes towards cultural and linguistic diversity, bilingualism, and their TWBI programs, perceiving cognitive, social, and cultural benefits of bilingualism.

Program Model Comparisons: 90/10 vs. 50/50

The primary distinction between a 50/50 model and a 90/10 model is the amount of time allocated to each language at each grade level. The first number refers to the percentage of instructional time spent in the partner language and the second number refers to the percentage of instructional time spent in English. In the 90/10 model, the amount of English language instruction increases as students progress through the grades with the ratio reaching 50/50 generally by 5th grade. In the United States more than 70% of TWDL programs implement a 90/10 model.

Studies comparing 90/10 and 50/50 models found that both result in students becoming bilingual, biliterate, and achieving at or above grade level while developing positive attitudes. There is no long-term program effect on English language development, with both NES and ELs/MLs demonstrating high levels of English proficiency in both models. However, the 90/10 model leads to higher levels of target language and bilingual proficiency compared to the 50/50 model (Lindholm-Leary, 2020).

The Mandarin Language

Unique Challenges in Learning Mandarin for English Speakers

Research on DLI often focuses on Spanish and French, which, like English, are Indo-European languages sharing similarities in grammar, lexicon, and phonology. Mandarin, however, is a Sino-Tibetan language with minimal linguistic overlap with English. This disparity presents unique challenges in a DLI program for target language learners, particularly regarding the time required to attain language proficiency. Furthermore, Mandarin Chinese is the spoken language and there are two writing systems, Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese, creating additional challenges to learning it.

According to the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, CA, languages are categorized by difficulty and the number of instructional weeks needed to reach intermediate proficiency. English, a Category I language, generally requires 26 weeks, whereas Mandarin, a Category IV language, may require 88 weeks. It would be expected that the number of weeks to reach an intermediate level of proficiency could be much greater for diverse groups of young learners in two-way immersion programs (Odlin, 1999).

Additionally, while both Mandarin and Cantonese are Chinese languages, they differ significantly. Mandarin uses four tones, whereas Cantonese has six to nine tones, depending on the region where Cantonese is spoken. These tonal differences and variations in writing mean that Cantonese speakers cannot be assumed to be heritage speakers of Mandarin.

Linguistic Differences Between Mandarin and English

Mandarin is a tonal language where word meanings change with tone and this poses a significant challenge. Mandarin has four tones: high bā (八/eight), rising bá (拔/pull), falling-rising bǎ (靶/target), and falling bà (爸/father). English speakers must learn to recognize and produce these tones accurately while learning a new language. In grammar, Mandarin uses the same verb form for all persons, with verb tense indicated by time adverbs (e.g., today, yesterday, tomorrow). Its writing system requires mastering complex, non-phonetic characters, involving at least 8 general types of strokes and the correct order to apply them in writing characters, also known as stroke order. This orthographic complexity makes learning to write Chinese characters particularly challenging, especially for children (Xu & Padilla, 2013). In addition, students must learn pinyin, a Roman alphabet system adopted in 1958 to aid in learning Chinese characters. Finally, there are two writing versions, Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese. Traditional characters are typically more complicated and have more strokes, while simplified characters are simpler and have fewer strokes. About 2,000 of the Chinese characters have been simplified and approximately 1,000 come from the 3,000 commonly used characters.

Research Findings on Mandarin Immersion Programs

The research findings in Mandarin immersion are consistent and support the results on Spanish and other languages in TWIB. Available studies indicate that students in both one-way and two-way models achieve the three main goals of dual language immersion (DLI): bilingualism/biliteracy, academic achievement, and socio-cultural competencies. Over the past 30 years, evidence consistently shows that immersion students perform at or above the level of their peers in English-only programs in English Language Arts and other subjects, despite an initial lag in the lower grades (Lindholm-Leary, 2020).

A longitudinal study of students in a 2-way Mandarin/English dual immersion program (Padilla, Fan, Xu and Duarte, 2013) followed the first cohort of students in a public school from kindergarten when they entered the immersion program through 5th grade, when they exited the program. They gathered data for 2nd-5th grades on STAR, the mandated CA standards test for English language arts, writing (4th grade), math, and science (5th grade). Data showed that Mandarin immersion students in the upper grades scored higher on these tests than the non-immersion peers.

A subsequent study on comparing learner performance in Mandarin immersion at the elementary school and high school world language programs (Padilla, Fan, Xu and Duarte, 2015) found that immersion students slightly out-performed the comparison high school group in reading but lagged slightly behind in writing and speaking skills, probably due to the higher cognitive demands of the assessments. Notably, most non-heritage speakers remained in the immersion program and performed as well, or nearly as well, as the heritage speakers when exiting the program, while only a few non-heritage speakers in the high school world language program continued to Level 5 (AP). The research findings support Mandarin immersion programs in the elementary schools for achieving higher language proficiency in the middle and high schools.

Chapter 2 Benefits of Dual Language Education & Research Findings Recommendations

- No recommendations

Chapter 3: Program Design

Components of Successful Dual Language Programs

The Dual Language Immersion Program is a program of choice that serves both English and Mandarin learners where Multilingual/English learner families can choose for their children. It is open to students of different backgrounds and abilities from the school community. San Mateo-Foster City School District adheres to the following program principles as it works to develop a program of excellence that ensures bilingualism, biliteracy, high academic achievement and the development of multicultural understanding between students:

- Early Immersion: Students begin dual language learning in preschool or kindergarten.
- Continued Sequence: The K-8 DLI Program sequence continues through middle school.
- Advanced Coursework: Students pursue advanced coursework at the high school level as they progress from middle school.
- Bilingual Instruction: Bilingual and biliterate teachers provide instruction based on additive bilingualism/language enrichment, with each language taught separately in designated language blocks.
- Strong Leadership: Each school has knowledgeable and strong leadership to collaborate with the school community and implement the DLI program effectively.
- Positive Learning Environment: Staff work to create a positive and respectful climate for dual language learning, promoting the partner language and multilingualism.
- Home-School Collaboration: Each school is committed to fostering strong home-school collaboration with all families.
- High-Quality Personnel: The district has a plan to attract and retain high-quality program personnel capable of delivering a rigorous academic and linguistic program.



Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (DLE)

The Center for Applied Linguistics' *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education*, also known as the *CAL Guiding Principles*, is the foundation that guides the implementation of successful Dual Immersion programs in the United States. The development of the Mandarin DLI will be based on the careful development and implementation of each of the following areas outlined in the *CAL Guiding Principles*.

Strand 1

Program Structure

The program plan includes a written statement of philosophy, goals and standards appropriate to the needs and abilities of multilingual learners and is consistent with federal, state and district requirements. Clear structures, policies and processes are aligned with program vision, mission and goals. These are based upon a solid philosophical and empirical foundation.

Strand 2

Curriculum

The program has a process for developing and revising a high-quality standards-based curriculum that is based on general education research, bilingual education and research on multilingual learners. It is student-centered, adaptable to program and community needs, and is coordinated with support services such as English language development.

Strand 3

Instruction

Instructional methods are derived from research-based principles of dual language education and ensure fidelity to the model and support the three core goals of dual language education: bilingualism, biliteracy and sociocultural competence for all students.

Strand 4

Assessment & Accountability

Assessment is aligned with program goals, state content and language standards and results are used to guide and inform instruction. The program systematically collects and analyzes data to ensure compliance, assess program outcomes and measure students' academic achievement, additional language proficiency, and multicultural understanding. These data are communicated to all stakeholders and used for program planning and improvement.

<p>Strand 5</p>	<p>Staff Quality & Professional Development</p> <p>The program recruits and retains highly qualified, certificated staff to ensure the successful implementation of the program. High quality professional development that is tailored to the needs for the bilingual teachers and support staff are provided so they are competent to instruct both the content and the language in their respective grade level.</p>
<p>Strand 6</p>	<p>Family & Community</p> <p>The program has a responsive infrastructure for positive, active and ongoing relations with students' families and the community. The program promotes family and community engagement and advocacy through outreach activities and support services that are aligned with the three goals of dual language education.</p>
<p>Strand 7</p>	<p>Support & Services</p> <p>The program is supported by all key partners to maintain and advocate for the program with a process for decision-making and communication. Human, technological, and financial resources are allocated equitably and adequately funded to meet program goals.</p>

PK-8 Program Implementation

Integrating the California Common Core State Standards CCSS, English Language Development ELD Standards , ACTFL Foreign Language Standards, the Mandarin DLI program focuses on five areas of language learning known as the 5Cs:

- **Communication:** effectively communicate in more than one language across various situations and for multiple purposes.
- **Cultures:** engage with and understand different cultures.
- **Connections/Content:** connect with other disciplines and gather information in academic and career-related settings.
- **Comparisons/Structures:** develop insight into the nature of language and culture in PreK that can lead to intermediate or pre-advanced levels of proficiency by the end of high school.
- **Communities and Settings:** communicate and participate in multilingual communities locally and globally as life-long learners.

The primary goal of the PK–8 Dual Language (DL) Program is effective communication. As students advance through this communication-focused model, they develop literacy and communication skills that make them bilingual and biliterate, reaching proficiency levels that could allow them to thrive in a Mandarin-speaking country. By the time DL program students enter high school, they possess strong vocabulary (listening and speaking) and literacy (reading and writing) skills, which enable them to continue their language pathway. Their placement in World Language classes allows them to refine these skills further, preparing them to excel in Advanced Placement (AP) tests and potentially earn college credit for their language studies.

CAL Guiding Principle Strand 1: Program Structure

Principle 2-D: High-quality instruction in both program languages is provided to all students in all grades in a way that is consistent with the program model.

Program Type

There are two main types of dual language programs with the primary difference in the groups of students they serve.

Two-Way Dual Language Programs	One-Way Dual Language Programs
Enroll a balance of at least one-third native multilingual learners of the target language and English-speaking students	Enroll either mostly English speakers and/or multilingual learners of the target language

Careful consideration of the program type and the students served in the program is important for determining the program model and language allocation plan to build and address students' needs effectively in each language.

Program Models: 90/10, 80/20, 50/50

In 90/10 and 80/20 programs, students begin in kindergarten with 90% or 80% of the instruction in the target language and 10% or 20% in English. English instruction is increased each year by about 10% until students are learning 50% of their time in both the target language and English. In 50/50 programs, students receive 50% of instruction in both the target language and in English beginning in kindergarten throughout middle and/or high school.

SMFCSD MANDARIN DISTRICT PLAN

90/10	K	1	2	3	4-5	6-12
Target Language	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	50%
English	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	50%
50/50						
Target Language	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
English	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%

Research indicates that all program models are effective in language learning with some advantages and disadvantages.

Program Model	Advantages	Disadvantages
90/10 & 80/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best research outcomes for students • More home language support for multilingual learners • More target language development/support for English speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a bilingual teacher in every K-3 classroom • Can be more difficult for parents to buy-in
50/50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer bilingual teachers required and less displacement • Allows for teacher collaboration between the target language and English teachers • Can be easier for families to accept initially 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team teaching can require more planning time • Will not have as strong of outcomes as 90/10 or 80/20 for students

It is possible to convert to a different model to achieve best outcomes for students when student composition, staffing needs and readiness of families change.

PK-8 Program Sequence in San Mateo-Foster City School District

Transitioning the current PK-8 Mandarin program to a more integrated and aligned pathway is essential to achieving the three core goals of dual language immersion: bilingualism and biliteracy, academic achievement, and sociocultural competence. Ensuring a dual language immersion model at every level, the program provides a seamless, rigorous, and high-quality sequence of learning that supports students' language and cultural development as they progress through the grades.

Table 3.1: Recommended SMFCSD PK-8 Mandarin Immersion Pathway

Recommended SMFCSD PK-8 Mandarin Immersion Pathway		
Grade Level(s)	Current Program Type & Model 2024-2025	Recommended Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Pathway 2025-2026
Preschool	Immersion 100% Mandarin	One-Way DLI 15% (30 minutes) English 85% (190 minutes) Mandarin
K-5	One-Way 50/50	One-Way 50/50
6-8	World Language	One-Way DLI (To be developed) Mandarin & 1 content area (Social Studies or Science)

The goal is to transition from a one-way 50/50 to a two-way 80/20 immersion program by attracting more native/heritage Mandarin speaking students to achieve the highest language proficiency.



CAL Guiding Principles Strand 1: Program Structure

Principle 1-F: There is deliberate planning and coordination of curriculum, instruction, and assessment across the two languages of instruction.

Intentional planning of subject matter and language allocation across school days and program years is essential for developing academic language in all subjects.

Daily Schedule

At College Park Elementary School's 50/50 dual language program, subject matter instruction is divided between the two languages with the target language and English teacher responsible for teaching the content. In addition to a clear plan on which content areas will be taught primarily in each language, the 50/50 program model also needs to consider how teachers will bridge the learning into the other language for optimal student learning. Per state requirement, English Learners (ELs) will receive English Language Development (ELD) instruction in addition to English Language Arts.

A sample 50/50 model at College Park Elementary School is shown below.

Schedule	Minutes	Subject
8:15-9:15	60	Mandarin Language Arts (MLA)
9:15-10:15	60	Science (in Mandarin)
10:15-10:35	20	Recess
10:35-11:20	45	Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Social Studies Culture (Mandarin)
11:20-12:35	80	English Language Arts (ELA) English Language Development (ELD) Social Studies
12:35-1:25	55	Lunch
1:25-2:45	80	Math (in English)

Language Allocation Across the Years

The language allocation plan also needs to address the content that will be taught across the years in the program. In the 50/50 program model, considerations need to address how to balance content areas such as math, science and social studies so that students develop academic content language in both Mandarin and English, as well as building their language and literacy skills in both languages throughout the program.

Table 3.3: SMFCSD 50/50 Language Allocation Plan Across K-5.

Grades	Program Model	Shared or Alternating	English	Mandarin
K-2	50/50	60 min PE/Music/Art	120 min ELA, Math Social Studies	120 min MLA, Science Social Studies
3-5	50/50	60 min PE/Music/Art	120 min ELA, Math Social Studies	120 min MLA, Science Social Studies



The objective is to develop a clear plan that will develop students' language and literacy skills in both languages and across all content areas over the course of the program.

Secondary Course Planning

Research on dual language education recommends that language arts instruction be maintained in both languages from PK through 12th grades. Additionally, it suggests that at least one content course should be taught in the target language at each grade level in secondary education, with the ideal scenario being that students take half of their classes in each language. Pathway plans should be designed to ensure that students develop the academic language skills necessary for success in higher-level content courses taught in the target language.

Table 3.4: Recommended SMFCSD 50/50 Program Model Plan for PK-8

Grades	English	Mandarin
Preschool	SEL: Second Step ELA: Writing Without Tears	MLA, Science Social Studies Music/Art/PE
K-2	ELA, Math Social Studies	MLA, Science Social Studies
3-5	ELA, Math Social Studies	MLA, Science Social Studies
6-8	ELA, Math Science	MLA Social Studies*

*To support the implementation for content instruction in Mandarin in the secondary setting and mitigate the challenges in 1) finding and retaining highly qualified teachers with the necessary expertise and appropriate certification, 2) supporting the teachers to deliver the academic content while simultaneously developing students' Mandarin language skills and 3) identifying high-quality instructional materials in Mandarin that aligns with academic standards, a timeline for the secondary Mandarin immersion implementation is provided.

The Secondary Mandarin Immersion Program will follow the following timeline:

2025-2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit highly qualified teacher(s) with appropriate credentials for teaching the content (social studies) in Mandarin Identify professional learning needs to develop the teacher(s) capacity for content and language instruction Begin to identify potential instructional materials in Mandarin for instruction Begin to develop course content
2026-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue recruiting efforts for identifying highly qualified teacher(s) Develop ongoing PD plan to support the teacher(s) Gather and develop units for content instruction

Continued

2027-2028

- Pilot and implement the program
- Provide ongoing professional learning to support teacher(s)
- Review and revise instructional materials post delivery
- Monitor, evaluate and identify improvement needs
- Develop improvement plan for year 2 implementation

Recommended High School Placement into the World Language Pathway

The San Mateo-Foster City School District serves students from PK through 8th grade and does not have authority over high school placements. However, the district will make every effort to provide test results to assist high school counselors in determining appropriate World Language course placements. Some students may qualify for the Mandarin Advanced Placement (AP) course upon entering high school, while others may need to begin with the final year of Mandarin study. The chart below outlines the different pathways California Dual Language Immersion (DLI) students can follow to complete their language studies and earn the California State Seal of Biliteracy on their high school diplomas.

Table 3.5: Recommended High School World Language Pathway

9th Grade Option 1	10th Grade Option 1	11th Grade Option 1	12th Grade Option 1
Mandarin 4	AP Mandarin	AP Mandarin Literature	3rd Foreign Language
9th Grade Option 2	10th Grade Option 2	11th Grade Option 2	12th Grade Option 2
AP Mandarin	AP Mandarin Literature	3rd Foreign Language 1	3rd Foreign Language 2

Chapter 3 Program Design Recommendations

- Adopt the recommended SMFCSD PreK-8 Mandarin Immersion Pathway for alignment
- Adopt the recommended SMFCSD PreK-8 50/50 Program Model Plan for PreK-8
- Transition from a 50/50 one-way to a 80/20 two-way immersion program by attracting more native/heritage Mandarin speaking students to achieve the highest language proficiency
- Establish a PK-8 Mandarin dual language immersion site for optimal integration and alignment in curriculum development, instructional practices, professional development, monitoring and evaluation, and teacher collaborations

Chapter 4 Curriculum & Instruction

In a dual language immersion program, the interconnectedness of curriculum, instruction, and assessment is essential for achieving programming success, fostering student academic achievement, promoting equity, and ensuring student wellness. The curriculum provides a balanced, standards-aligned framework of content and skills that integrates both languages and cultural contexts. Effective bilingual teaching strategies engage students and support their language development and content mastery.

Curriculum

CAL Guiding Principle Strand 2: Curriculum

Principle 2 C & E: The curriculum is standards-based and promotes attainment of the three core goals of dual language education. The curriculum promotes and maintains equal status of both languages and is culturally responsive and representative of all students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

To ensure that students achieve the three goals of dual language instruction, it is critical to develop an aligned and well-structured curriculum in both languages, with a clearly defined scope and sequence that meets grade-level Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and relevant standards such as SEL and social justice, ACTFL language proficiency benchmarks, and specific criteria for core instructional components and context-specific priorities. This curriculum goes beyond a mere textbook adoption. It is rigorous, inclusive, culturally relevant and responsive, socially emotionally focused, and student-centered, promoting conceptual understanding of language, content, and skills while integrating the diverse cultures and identities of learners. With a well integrated, interdisciplinary curriculum and instruction, students are empowered to build critical awareness of themselves, their communities, and the broader world, equipped with 21st century skills.

The table below shows the 2024-2025 core curriculum adoptions in the PK-8 Mandarin programs. It primarily relies on a textbook approach with two separate curricula—one for subject matter and the other for Chinese language and literacy. This fragmented approach makes it highly challenging to meet the integration criteria for language, content, culture, and SEL that is unique to dual language immersion programs. Currently, Mandarin immersion also faces a significant shortage of engaging and high-quality materials, including the absence of teaching guides, teaching assistant resources, and systematic content-based learning materials (Chen et al., 2017; Met & Livaccari, 2012; Zhou & Li, 2015b). Research recommends adopting an integrated, interdisciplinary dual language curriculum with aligned curricula and resources in both languages that are culturally and linguistically relevant for DLI instruction to address these gaps. The need for a cohesive curricular alignment within and across grade levels was also highlighted by feedback from the PK-8 teacher survey and the CAL DLI program evaluation at College Park Elementary in 2023-2024. Supporting this effort, SMFCSD convened a Core Curriculum Committee at College Park Elementary School to begin developing and transitioning to a [thematic, transdisciplinary curriculum](#) for K-5.

Table 4.1: SMFCSD Adopted PreK-8 Core Curriculum

SMFCSD Adopted PK-8 Core Curriculum & Language of Instruction by Subject Matter 2024-2025					
Grade	ELA/ELD	MLA	English	Mandarin	English Mandarin (Shared)
Preschool		Mandarin			
K-2	PAF Reading Program	Mandarin Matrix Level Learning	ZEARN Math Second Step (SEL)	TWIG Science	Reflections 2007 Social Studies
3-5	Benchmark Advance	Mandarin Matrix Level Learning	ZEARN Math Second Step (SEL)	TWIG Science	Reflections 2007 Social Studies
	ELA	MLA	English	English	English
6-8	My Perspective	Huan Ying	Open Source Illustrative	Open Sci Ed	TCl: History Alive



Instruction

Research demonstrates that instruction that is effective for ELs/MLS looks similar to instruction that is effective for native English speakers. (August, McCardle, & Shanahan, 2014; August & Shanahan, 2006; de Jong & Harper, 2005); Faulkner-Bond et al., 2012; O'Day 2009). Furthermore, to address the dual language program's goals: bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competence, as well as meeting the needs of diverse student groups, the needs of second language learners, it is important to use a variety of effective strategies that respond to different language proficiency levels (Cisco & Padron, 2014; Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2011) and various learning styles, which may differ among the ethnic groups represented in a particular dual language program (Park, 2002).

CAL Guiding Principle Strand 3: Instruction

Principles 1B, 1C & 1D: Instructional methods are derived from research-based principles of dual language education with appropriate separation of language, standards-based academic content based instruction and explicit language arts instruction are provided in both languages to ensure biliteracy development.

2B, 2C & 2G: Instructional strategies such as sheltered instruction, building transferable skills and concepts between the two languages, and using a variety of strategies to ensure equitable participation, will support the attainment of the three core goals.

Effective Instructional Strategies (Best Practices)

- **Language Separation** - Teachers stay in the language of instruction at least 95% of the time. Lessons should have both content and language objectives, focusing on building knowledge and skills of the content, language proficiency, and meta-linguistic awareness.
- **Academic/Constructive Conversations** - The strategy fosters students' explorations, understandings and connections to develop academic language via constructive dialogue. It emphasizes on developing students' thinking and language skills such as paraphrasing, clarifying, questioning, elaborating and synthesizing.
- **Content-based Language Instruction** - Content-based language instruction enriches the learning experience by seamlessly integrating language and content areas such as Math, Social Studies, and Science. Immersion instruction is thoughtfully designed to meet the needs of second-language learners, facilitating the transfer of skills, strategies, and knowledge across languages. This integrated curriculum aligns with the Common Core State Standards and the five domains of the ACTFL World Readiness Standards: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities. Example: interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary thematic units.
- **Differentiated Instruction** - It is an essential strategy to teach in ways that meet the different needs and interests of students by varying the content, process, product, the learning environment and still meet the grade level expectations.

- **Frontloading** - It is when a teacher proactively introduces key vocabulary, concepts or background information to students before they engage in the learning experience. This sets up the context and provides the tools students need to better understand and retain the knowledge and skills during instruction.
- **Modeling** - Modeling involves demonstrating a task or behavior clearly and explicitly so that students can observe and learn by example. Examples might be how to solve a science problem, construct a sentence, or engage in a conversation in the target language.
- **“Sheltered” Instruction** - It is an approach designed to make academic content understandable for language learners while they are developing language proficiency. These strategies can include the use of visuals, gestures, modeling, scaffolding, and adapted language. Some examples are Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD), Cooperative Learning (COOP), Project-Based Learning (PBL), Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) and Thinking Maps.
- **Transfer** - Students can apply concepts and skills learned in their native language (L1) to learning the target language (L2).
- **Translanguaging** - Translanguaging empowers students to use their home language to access the academic content in the classroom, including learning the target language, thus making full use of the students’ linguistic abilities.

Additional best practices to engage students, increase language production, develop cross-cultural competency, and respond to diverse needs include authentic materials, goal setting, and cultural and technology integration.

Specifics on Mandarin Curriculum & Instruction

Due to the particular features of the Mandarin language that are different from the English language, educators of Mandarin need to pay special attention to the following elements.

- Develop curriculum and scope for ELA and MLA to strategically utilize skill transfer opportunities such as reading comprehension, cultural sensitivity, and grammar and syntax awareness.
- Emphasize the four tones in oral proficiency, as meaning is conveyed through tones rather than pronunciation, which can vary by region.
- Teach proper stroke order in the early elementary grades to cement the different patterns and elements of the Chinese characters for easier reading and writing of the characters
- Provide explicit instruction to build oral proficiency in K-2 such as teaching the 4 tones, vocabulary, sentence structure, and guided conversation practice.
- Teach Chinese characters using teacher-cued for meaning and chunking methods to enhance immediate learning and retention (Xu & Padilla, 2013).

Traditional vs Simplified Chinese

There are two Chinese writing systems, Traditional and Simplified Chinese. See the table below for a comparison.

Table 4.3: Comparison between Traditional and Simplified Chinese

Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese Comparison		
	Traditional Chinese 繁體字	Simplified Chinese 简体字
Adoption & Reform	Original writing system	Adopted to promote literacy in China (1956)
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Strokes • Harder to write • Seen as more beautiful aesthetically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer strokes • Easier to write • Seen as modern and practical
Preservation of Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserves historical and cultural elements • Seen as more authentic 	Some feel that it loses historical and cultural depth
Usage	Commonly used in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and in overseas Chinese communities	Mainly used in China, Singapore, and Malaysia
Cross-generational Communication	Better understood by older generations familiar with Traditional Chinese	Preferred by people taught in Simplified
Assessments	STAMP Advanced Placement (AP)	STAMP Advanced Placement (AP)

Learning both traditional and simplified Chinese writing systems offers numerous benefits supported by research and practical considerations. Traditional characters provide a deep connection to Chinese history and classical literature, enhancing cultural appreciation. Proficiency in both systems allows access to a broader range of literature and scholarly works. Studies indicate that learning complex characters can improve cognitive functions like memory and spatial reasoning. Being bilingual in both systems is advantageous, as simplified characters are used in mainland China, Singapore, Malaysia while traditional characters are prevalent in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau and other overseas communities. Technology integration such as Google Translate can help students switch seamlessly between systems, improving adaptability and technological literacy. Incorporating both writing systems enables students to appreciate the depth and beauty of the Chinese language, access a wider array of resources, navigate a diverse linguistic landscape, develop perspective and cross-cultural understanding, and demonstrates an inclusive approach to learning.

Table 4.4: Recommended PK-8 Literacy Development

Recommended PK-8 Literacy Development	
Grade(s)	Writing System
Preschool	Traditional Chinese
K-3	Traditional Chinese
4-5	Continue Traditional Chinese Introduce Pinyin & Simplified Chinese for a smooth transition to middle school
6-8	Simplified Chinese

Chapter 4 Curriculum and Instruction Recommendations

- Develop and transition to a thematic, interdisciplinary core curriculum and instruction for PK-8
- Identify key instructional strategies to implement throughout the grade levels with fidelity for optimal students language proficiency
- Adopt the recommended PreK-8 literacy development model

Chapter 5 Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective schools use assessment measures that are aligned with the school's vision and goals and with appropriate curriculum and related standards (Lindholm-Leary et al., 2007; Montecel & Cortez, 2002). In terms of the ability to use assessment data for program evaluation, research shows that it is important to disaggregate the data to identify and solve issues of curriculum, assessment, and instructional alignment and for accountability purposes (Lindholm-Leary et al., 2007).

CAL Guiding Principle Strand 4: Assessment and Accountability

Principle 2 & 2A: Student assessment is aligned with program goals and with state content and language standards for both languages of instruction and the results are used to guide and inform instruction.

To ensure a comprehensive approach in assessing both EL/MLs, heritage and native English speakers (NES) while considering the diverse cultural backgrounds of the students, dual language programs require multiple measures in both languages, especially in oral proficiency and literacy skills in the target language, to assess student progress toward meeting bilingualism and biliteracy goals, as well as curricular and content-related goals. Each assessment measure must have a clear purpose. Additionally, both formative and summative assessments should be used to determine students' language skills (knowledge) and their ability to apply these skills effectively (what students can do).

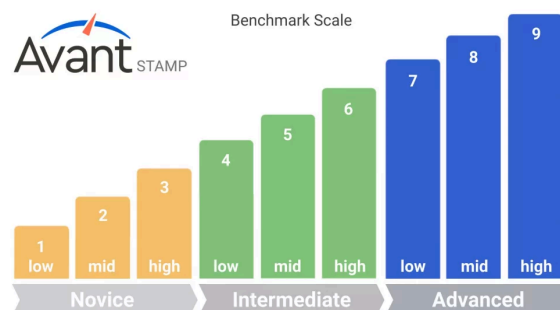
Creating a thorough dual language assessment system includes:

- Content area knowledge, literacy, and language assessment in both languages of instruction
- Culturally and linguistically assessments that offer alternative and inclusive assessment methods
- Multiple measures and modes of assessments are utilized for a more holistic view of the student
- Results indicate additional support and/or enrichment opportunities
- Communication to stakeholders on information about assessment and student results are shared in an asset-based approach

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The SMFCSD PreK-8 Mandarin DLI assessments focus on standardized or proficiency based testing to determine student learning progress. Based on the standards based assessment results, students as a whole are meeting benchmarks in both Mandarin and English. See below for the main assessments that students take annually.

Assessment	Grade(s)	Language
CAASPP (CA Assessment of Student Performance & Progress): ELA, Math, Science (CAST)	3-8 5 (CAST)	English
ELPAC (English Language Proficiency Assessment for CA) for English Learners (ELs)	TK-8	English
STAMP (Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency)	2-8	Mandarin Chinese



SMFCSD MANDARIN DISTRICT PLAN

Based on the 50/50 model, below are the proficiency benchmarks for Mandarin Chinese.

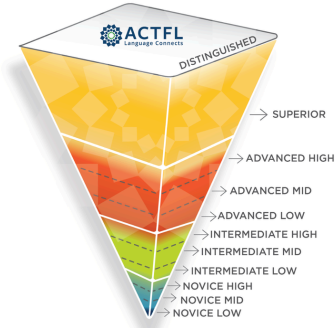
SMFCSD K-8 Mandarin Program Language Proficiency Level Benchmarks

Grade	ACTFL Proficiency Level	Level	Range (scaled scores) Traditional Chinese	
			Reading	Listening
K	Novice Low	1	In Development	343-453
1	Novice Low	1		343-453
2	Novice Mid	2		454-464
3	Novice High	3		465-496
4	Intermediate Low	4		497-507
5	Intermediate Low	4		497-507
			Range (scaled scores) Simplified Chinese	
6	Intermediate Low	4	499-519	496-519
7	Intermediate Low/Mid	4/5	499-533	496-532
8	Intermediate Mid (functional proficiency)	5	520-533	520-532

Note:

- All proficiency levels designate end of the year (EOY) targets
- Grade 6 is a transitional year when students switch from traditional to simplified in reading and writing
- At grade 8, Intermediate Mid is the desired proficiency level
- AP classes are usually set at an Intermediate Mid level or the equivalent to 3-4 semester college units

In addition to the standards-based assessment, multiple measures to assess and allow for inclusive and equitable testing methods such as performance based (what students can do) will create a more holistic view of student's learning progress.



Below is a table that describes the PK-8 DLI assessment plan with recommended assessments (**bolded in black**) to address all three goals.

Table 5.1: Recommended Mandarin Program Assessment Plan, PK-8

Recommended PK-8 Mandarin Program Assessment Plan				
Program Goals	Standards	Grade	Assessments	
			English	Mandarin
Academic Achievement (Content)	Common Core State Standards	PK	N/A	N/A
		K-5	Smarter Balanced (SBAC) ELA, Math (3-5) Science (CAST, 5th, 8th)	Teacher translated or created social studies or science tests (K-5)
		6-8	PAF K-2	

Continued

Program Goals	Standards	Grade	Assessments	
			English	Mandarin
Language Proficiency (Bilingualism & Biliteracy)	ELD Standards ACTFL World Readiness Standards	PK	Teacher created tests	ELLOPA* Teacher created tests Report cards
		K-5	ELPAC	SOPA** STAMP (2-5) Level Learning Mandarin Matrix
		6-8	ELPAC	SOPA STAMP (6-8)
			Shared PK-8 (English & Mandarin)	
			Teacher created tests Report cards Linguafolio Student portfolios Performance based assessments	
Sociocultural Competence	CA & ACTFL World Readiness Standards	PK	To Be Developed Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Surveys• Portfolios• Self-reflections• Cultural knowledge tests• Integrated Performance Based Assessments (IPAs)	
		K-5		
		6-8		

***ELLOPA** (Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment)

****SOPA** (Student Oral Proficiency Assessment)

CAL Guiding Principle Strand 4: Assessment and Accountability

Principle 3 A & C: The program systematically collects and analyzes data to determine whether academic, linguistic, and sociocultural goals have been met and to develop ongoing program improvement plans.

Principle 5 & 5 B: The program communicates with appropriate stakeholders about the data and program outcomes.

Program Monitoring and Evaluation

In addition to student assessments, developing an infrastructure for ongoing program evaluation is crucial. Continuous evaluation ensures that the program adapts to the evolving needs of students and maintains high standards of bilingualism and biliteracy.

Results from the school improvement plan will be shared with families and stakeholders for accountability and as part of the continuous improvement efforts for the Mandarin pathway program.

Chapter 5 Recommendations

- District and the school sites collaborate to
 - Establish a Mandarin DLIP program evaluation process aligned with the district's mission, goals, and the CAL Guiding Principles for DLE.
 - Develop a schedule and methods to communicate assessment, program monitoring and evaluation results to all stakeholders
 - Revise the Mandarin section on the report card by adopting “Can Do” statements to indicate what students can do with the language
 - Develop standardized and alternative assessment methods in both languages to ensure alignment with dual language education goals. Additionally, enhance assessment strategies to effectively measure sociocultural competence, which is currently underrepresented in the existing assessment plan

Chapter 6: State Seal of Biliteracy

The State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB), established by Assembly Bill 815 (Brownley, Chapter 618, Statutes of 2011), took effect on January 1, 2012. This program recognizes high school students who have achieved high proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. Each school district that awards the SSB must maintain appropriate records to identify students who meet the criteria for the award and attach the SSB insignia to the diploma or transcript of each qualifying student. University and college credit in foreign languages will be awarded once students pass their Advanced Placement (AP) exams.

California school districts offering Dual Language Immersion or Two-Way Immersion programs are encouraged to adopt a Seal of Biliteracy Board Resolution. This resolution demonstrates the district's commitment to multilingual education for students who pursue multi-year efforts to develop academic proficiency in two or more languages throughout their K-12 education. Dual Language Immersion programs, which involve 8-9 years of formal study in two languages, prepare students to participate in advanced placement or honors coursework in high school. Dual Language Immersion students may receive “Biliteracy Pathway Awards” per the California State Seal of Biliteracy guidelines to motivate continued study in their first and second languages. These awards are presented after both 5th and 8th grades when students meet the criteria, before applying for the official California State Seal of Biliteracy on their high school diplomas.

Biliteracy Attainment Recognition

SMFCSD has established the Biliteracy Recognition Award to assess students' attainment of age-appropriate biliteracy in the Dual Language Immersion Program. The award is granted at the end of 5th and 8th grade to students who meet the language proficiency criteria in both English and Mandarin, as outlined in Table 6.1.



Table 6.1: Criteria for Biliteracy Attainment Recognition

Criteria for Biliteracy Attainment Recognition			
English	Assessment	Grade 5	Grade 8
Method 1	CAASPP Prior year score	32 - Nearly Met or Higher	32 - Nearly Met or Higher
Method 2	NWEA (Grades 3-8) Current school score	2 - Nearly Met or Higher	2- Nearly Met or Higher
Method 3	ELPAC Prior year score	4 - Well Developed	4 - Well Developed
Mandarin	STAMP Prior year score	4 - Intermediate Low	5 - Intermediate Mid

Chapter 6 Seal of Biliteracy Recommendations

- Collect data on students earning the Seal of Biliteracy for program improvement opportunities

Chapter 7 Staffing & Professional Development

Staffing

CAL Guiding Principles Strand 5: Staff Quality and Professional Development

Principle 1A & 1B: There is a long-term plan aligned with program goals and needs to recruit and retain high-quality dual language staff with appropriate credentials, language proficiency, and commitment to program goals.

Staffing high-quality teachers are paramount to student achievement, particularly within Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs. In addition to teachers holding the appropriate teaching credentials, the unique challenge of teaching both language and content in these settings necessitates that DLI teachers possess a solid understanding of their subject matter.

Additionally, they must have understanding of bilingual theory, second language development theory, and strategies for creating a safe and positive learning environment (Ballantyne et al., 2008; Clark, Flores, Riojas-Cortez, & Smith, 2002).

Per state mandate for public schools, SMFCSD is required to hire certificated teachers that meet the CA state required Bilingual Crosscultural Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) certification with emphasis in Mandarin Chinese for grades TK-8. It is important that the teachers are supported through ongoing professional development to retain them for the success of program and student achievement. Teacher retention is critical to the success of the Mandarin Language Program.

Professional Development

CAL Guiding Principles Strand 5: Staff Quality and Professional Development

Principle 2A & 2C: There is a comprehensive, long term professional development plan that is tailored to the needs of dual language educators and support staff and is aligned with competencies to meet dual language program standards.

Effective dual language instruction requires ongoing professional development for teachers to fully understand the complexities of language acquisition and develop the necessary pedagogical strategies to support students in both languages, ensuring equitable access to grade-level content. By staying updated on best practices and new strategies, bilingual teachers can better address the unique needs of their diverse student population from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

To continue building teacher, administrator, and staff capacity, SMFCSD has developed a three year professional learning plan 2024-2027 in the Multilingual Learner District Plan (see chapter 6). The 3 tiered plan provides the foundational grounding that all teachers need to support the multilingual students.

To meet the specific needs and demands of the DLI teachers, the [National Dual Language Education Teacher Preparation Standards](#) can be used to develop professional learning for DLI teachers and a list of additional professional learning is recommended below.

Table 7.1: Recommended Professional Development for Dual Language Educators (DLE)

Recommended Professional Development for DLE

Developed by Stanford World Language Project (SWLP)

- Strand A: Lesson Design - Effective Strategies for the California Language Teacher
- Strand B: Thematic Unit Design for the World Language Class
- Strand C: Best Practices in Assessment for the World Language Class
- Strand I: Technology Skills for the 21st Century World Language Teacher

Compiled by the Association for Two-Way Dual Language Education (ATDLE)

Tier 1: one year prior to implementation and first two years in the program

- Dual Language Components: An Overview
- Teaching Reading and Writing in the Partner Language
- Using Grade Level California Common Core State Standards and Frameworks for Both Languages
- Teaching English Language Development (ELD) in a DL Classroom
- Classroom Management Strategies
- Leveraging Academic Conversations
- Curriculum Mapping
- Data Management Systems (connected to curriculum and assessment)
- Grade Level Collaboration Training (PLC)
- Curriculum Training: New Adoptions/Curricula
- Attending to SEL in the Dual Language for Bi/Multilingual Learners
- Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Pedagogy

Tier 2: next 3-4 years in the program

- Frontloading Strategies
- GLAD or SIOP Training
- Using Data to Inform Instruction
- Universal Design for Learning and Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
- Literacy Strategies
- Continued ELD Training
- Cooperative Learning and Grouping Strategies
- Visual Thinking Strategies

Tier 3: ongoing professional development

- College and Career Readiness Strategies
- Curriculum Writing and Thematic Development
- Standards-based Unit Planning
- Advanced Reading and Writing Strategies in Both Languages

Another venue for supporting administrators, teachers, and staff in DLE is to participate in highly regarded organizations to network, learn from experts in the field, access and share resources, and continue to grow as practitioner, learner, researcher, and collaborator.

Table 7.2 Recommended Language Organizations for Dual Language Education (DLE)

Recommended Organizations and Conferences for DLE

National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC)
 Chinese Teachers Language Association (CLTA-us.org)
 Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary School (CLASS)
 American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
 California World Language Project (CWLP-SWLP)
 California Association of Bilingual Education (CABE)
 Association for Two-Way Dual Language Education (ATDLE)
 Stanford World Language Project (SWLP)
 California Language Teacher Association (CLTA)
 CSU Asian Language Bilingual Teacher Education Program (BTEP) Consortium

Current Professional Development Offerings

To build teacher capacity as effective DLI educators, Mandarin teachers have participated in targeted professional development (PD) through the Stanford World Language Project over the past two years. They will continue attending DLI-specific PD to support sustained professional growth and better assist students in achieving the three core goals of DLI. Table 7.3 outlines the completed PD sessions and the recommended training needed to meet the goals of effective DLI instruction.



Table 7.3 Completed and Recommended DLI Professional Development Sequence

Completed and Recommended DLI Professional Development Sequence	
Year	PD Topic
2023-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strand A: Lesson Design - Effective Strategies for the California Language Teacher Leveraging Constructive Conversations and Structured Language Practice College Park Mandarin Language Instruction PD Series
2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strand B: Thematic Unit Design for the World Language Class College Park Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum Development Series
2025-2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strand C: Best Practices in Assessment for the World Language Class PK-5 Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum Development Best Practices and GLAD Strategies
2026-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strand I: Technology Skills for the 21st Century World Language Teacher Standard Based Unit Planning Teaching Literacy in Partner Language

Support Staff

In order to support the proper professional development of the Dual Language staff in the Mandarin Language program, additional support staff is needed, such as a coach or language specialist who can oversee and support the professional development and training for the educators and staff.

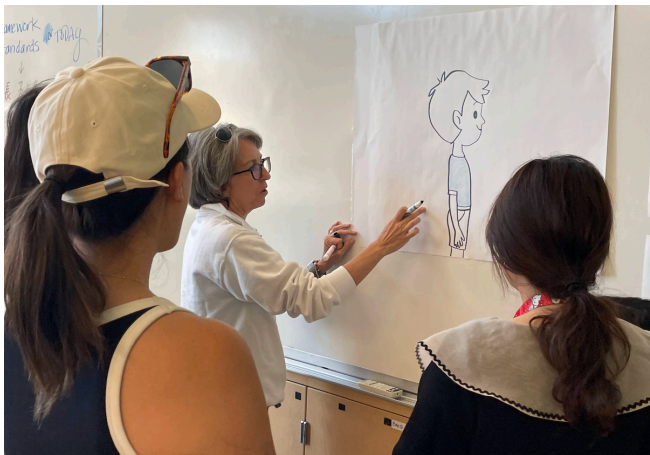


Table 7.4: Recommended PK-8 Mandarin Specialist Roles and Responsibilities

Potential Roles and Responsibilities for a Mandarin Specialist	
Instructional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach teachers to improve instruction, differentiation and intervention efforts for students
Curriculum Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support curriculum, instruction, and assessment development in alignment to district, state and national standards
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead professional development specific to Mandarin DLI instruction such as best practices and share relevant resources Provide ongoing coaching and feedback to teachers for continuous improvement
Assessment & Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze assessment data to identify trends and areas of improvement for both students and teachers Work with teachers to develop strategies for improving student outcomes based on data analysis
Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide resources to parents on ways to support the development of Mandarin and English Language at home

Chapter 7 Recommendations

- Consult the National Dual Language Education Teacher Preparation Standards and develop PDs specific for DLI teachers
- Adopt the recommended DLI professional development plan sequence tailored to dual language educators
- Provide funding for DLE educators to attend professional development, conferences, and join organizations for continuous improvement
- Hire a Teacher coach/Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) to support the professional development of DLI teachers/staff
- Increase collaboration with other dual language programs in the bay area

Chapter 8 Support and Resources

CAL Guiding Principles Strand 7: Support and Resources

Principle 1A & 1B: Program, district administrators and site leaders have adequate knowledge to support and lead the program.

Principle 2A & 2C: The dual language program has equitable access for funding at the school, district, and state levels to provide sufficient staff and materials in both program languages to meet program goals.

District and site leadership support have an impact on the success of the Mandarin Language Program. The support should be provided from state, county, district and site leaders.

SMFC actively supports the dual language immersion (DLI) programs through several initiatives aimed at strengthening its structure and outcomes. Some of these initiatives include collaborating with Stanford World Language Project (SWLP) and developing a comprehensive district plan to create a more integrated and cohesive DLI program. Funding has been allocated in 2023-2024 to enable teachers to attend professional development (PD) sessions focused on dual language immersion, enhancing their understanding on DLI and their capacity to deliver high-quality instruction. Also, SMFCSD has invested in purchasing instructional materials and funding the development of a Mandarin DLI-specific core curriculum in 2024-2025 to align with program goals.

To support students in continuing their Mandarin language learning, practicing applying their skills in real-world situations with diverse audiences beyond the instructional day, it is important to provide expanded opportunities for language use such as offering before and after school support programs. This also applies to students who are challenged with the learning in Mandarin and/or English.

Chapter 8 Recommendations

- Create various venues for language practice outside school hours, such as on-site after-school programs offering academic and enrichment support until 6:00 p.m., with expanded Annex options that include Mandarin. Ensure accessibility through financial assistance options, such as scholarships or sliding-scale fees to allow broader participation.
- Offer summer enrich program (1-2 weeks) for non-Mandarin speaking families and/or non-Turnbull students for smooth transition into College Park Elementary
- Offer Summer Mandarin Enrichment Camps focused on themes such as cooking, sports, and the arts will provide immersive, engaging experiences that reinforce language skills in authentic context
- Use ELOP funding to offer summer program for targeted incoming K students (2-3 weeks) and students in grades 1-5 (3-4 weeks) in both English and Mandarin who are not meeting end of year benchmarks for each grade

Chapter 9 Enrollment Guidelines

The dual language immersion program is designed to serve all students. All student families in SMFCSD, regardless of language background and varying abilities and needs, are welcome to apply for the Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program beginning at preschool through middle school and benefit from the success of achieving language proficiency, academic excellence and sociocultural competencies to prepare them for high school and beyond.

Preschool Mandarin Immersion at Turnbull

The Mandarin Language program at the preschool level is a fee based program for 3 and 4 year old children. Acceptance to the program is based on a randomized lottery system completed in January. Priority is given to families with siblings currently in the preschool program. Enrolled students have priority to College Park Mandarin Immersion Elementary School for Kindergarten. Priority registration for Kindergarten begins in early December and continues through the first week of January.

Elementary Mandarin Immersion School at College Park

College Park Elementary School is a district-wide magnet school and draws students and families from throughout SMFCSD. Students must register at the school assigned to their address and then request an intradistrict transfer to College Park. Students accepted to the Mandarin immersion program are on a randomized lottery system unless they meet the following criteria: sibling priority, neighborhood priority and enrollment in Turnbull Preschool's Mandarin Immersion program. Currently, students entering Kindergarten are not assessed. Students entering in grades 1-8 are assessed before a transfer can be offered (dependent upon space available). Parents are strongly encouraged to commit to the program from preschool through middle school to ensure that their children have the necessary timeframe to meet the goals set out by the program in both languages.

Enrollment Process for Incoming Kindergarten Students

1. Enroll at Your Neighborhood School
 - Visit the San Mateo-Foster City School District website and enter your address to find your assigned school.
 - Complete the registration with the required documents (proof of address, birth certificate, etc.).
2. Submit an Intradistrict Transfer Request
 - After registering at your assigned school, fill out the Intradistrict Transfer Request form if you want to apply for a magnet school.
3. Lottery System
 - All transfer requests are entered into a lottery system. The district office processes all applications.

For more details and instructions, visit the [San Mateo-Foster City School District website](#).

English Learners and Bilingual Students

English Learners and bilingual students are essential to the Dual Language program, enriching classroom diversity and promoting authentic Mandarin use. For Mandarin-speaking students, the program supports English learning while fostering Mandarin literacy, improving academic success compared to mainstream English classes (Lindholm-Leary 2009).

English Dominant Students

English-dominant students enter the program in kindergarten or early first grade as part of early immersion. Older students must demonstrate bilingual proficiency through school-approved assessments. Prior experience in dual language programs is also considered for placement, subject to availability.

Transfers - Late Enrollees

For students entering the DLI program after kindergarten, when space is available, a few students may meet the program and linguistic capabilities to move into the program. These students are often Mandarin-speaking students or are transfers from other dual language programs, who could have the literacy skills to fully participate in the program. Late enrollees must pass an assessment in reading, writing and speaking that is expected for students in the specific grade level. The assessment is administered by the school and the placement of late enrollees into the program will be decided by the principal and teaching team on a case-by-case basis.

Special Services

Students with IEPs (Individualized Educational Program) are welcome in the DLI program at College Park Elementary. The program provides appropriate differentiation, and many students with IEPs thrive as second-language learners.

Middle School Mandarin Immersion at Bayside Academy

Students requesting Bayside Academy Mandarin Immersion Program must have completed the elementary immersion program at College Park and students need to submit an intradistrict transfer request for the Bayside Academy Mandarin Immersion program.

Chapter 9 Recommendations

- Create a survey to find out how many families are requesting Mandarin and see if there is a demand to expand the Mandarin immersion program
- Provide training for AAs, Principals, and Elementary APs on the enrollment process, with a focus on effectively informing families about their options, particularly those with students who are native or heritage Mandarin speakers
- Collect data on the student enrollment in PK-8 pathway to monitor enrollment trends

Chapter 10 Family Engagement

CAL Guiding Principles Strand 6 : Family and Community

Principle 2A & 2E: The program incorporates ongoing learning activities to help families understand, support, and advocate for the program, and partners with families to promote home-school connections.

Research shows that most parents of ethnically and linguistically diverse students have high aspirations for their children and want to be involved in promoting their academic success (Glick & White, 2004; Ji & Koblinksy 2009; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Sibley & Dearing, 2014). Studies also indicate that students demonstrated more school success when their families are engaged and this is associated with higher student grades, higher achievement, higher language proficiency, better social skills, and higher graduation rates and enrollment in postsecondary education (Ferguson, 2008; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Lindholm-Leary, 2015).

The SMFCSD's Mandarin dual language programs place a high value on the inclusion and engagement of parents and families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. We recognize that parents are crucial partners in their children's education and that their involvement can significantly enhance students' learning outcomes. We actively welcome and encourage parents to share their skills and talents to broaden students' perspective and enrich their learning experiences. By leveraging the unique abilities and experiences of parents, schools can create a more dynamic, inclusive, and enriching educational environment that prepares students for a multicultural world.

The DLI program encourages parents, guardians, and other family members to support their children's success in school. Families can contribute their time, skills and talents in various ways, including: (1) assisting with homework, (2) volunteering at school, (3) taking on leadership positions such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA), English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC), and School Site Council (SSC), Friends of the Mandarin Scholars (FMS), and (4) participating in fundraising activities.

The SMFCSD Mandarin Master Plan Task Force has identified various outreach, recruitment, and marketing opportunities to inform district residents about the Mandarin Dual Language Program. These include: school tours, PTA and FMS sponsored events such as the Annual Lunar Year Parade, GALA, Asia Society sponsored DLI school visit, and local news media featuring the Mandarin DLI.

Chapter 10 Recommendations

- Provide informational sessions for families to explain the Dual Language 50/50 Program, including ACTFL-based requirements, and promote a unified message highlighting the district's commitment to a comprehensive PK-8 Mandarin pathway
- Engage the school community by recruiting all families to volunteer and support the program
- Reach out to local community organizations and companies to promote, foster and support the DLI program



Chapter 11: Summary of Recommendations

The recommendations outlined in this chapter were developed through a comprehensive process grounded in the guiding principles for dual language education and informed by research on effective language immersion models. Input was gathered through surveys of PK-8 teachers, administrators, parents, and students involved in the Mandarin immersion program. With a focus on enhancing the existing PK-8 Mandarin pathway, the task force prioritized strategies to help students achieve proficiency in both English and Mandarin, attain high academic performance, and develop sociocultural competency. These recommendations aim to address identified needs and build a robust program that supports all stakeholders.

Chapter 1 Program History and Rationale Recommendations

- No recommendation

Chapter 2 Benefits of Dual Language Education & Research Findings Recommendations

- No recommendation

Chapter 3 Program Design Recommendations

- Adopt the recommended SMFCSD PreK-8 Mandarin Immersion Pathway for alignment
- Adopt the recommended SMFCSD PreK-8 50/50 Program Model Plan for PreK-8
- Transition from a 50/50 one-way to a 80/20 two-way immersion program by attracting more native/heritage Mandarin speaking students to achieve the highest language proficiency
- Establish a PK-8 Mandarin dual language immersion site for optimal integration and alignment in curriculum development, instructional practices, professional development, monitoring and evaluation, and teacher collaborations

Chapter 4 Curriculum and Instruction Recommendations

- Develop and transition to a thematic, interdisciplinary core curriculum and instruction for PK-8
- Identify key instructional strategies to implement throughout the grade levels with fidelity for optimal students language proficiency
- Adopt the recommended PK-8 literacy development model

Chapter 5 Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation Recommendations

- District and the school sites collaborate to
 - Establish a Mandarin DLIP program evaluation process aligned with the district's mission, goals, and the CAL Guiding Principles for DLE.
 - Develop a schedule and methods to communicate assessment, program monitoring and evaluation results to all stakeholders
 - Revise the Mandarin section on the report card by adopting “Can Do” statements to indicate what students can do with the language
 - Develop standardized and alternative assessment methods in both languages to ensure alignment with dual language education goals. Additionally, enhance assessment strategies to effectively measure sociocultural competence, which is currently underrepresented in the existing assessment plan

Chapter 6 Seal of Biliteracy Recommendations

- Collect data on students earning the Seal of Biliteracy for program improvement opportunities

Chapter 7 Staffing and Professional Development Recommendations

- Consult the [National Dual Language Education Teacher Preparation Standards](#) and develop PDs specific for DLI teachers
- Adopt the recommended DLI professional development plan sequence tailored to dual language educators
- Provide funding for DLE educators to attend professional development, conferences, and join organizations for continuous improvement
- Hire a Teacher coach/Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) to support the professional development of DLI teachers/staff
- Increase collaboration with other dual language programs in the bay area

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- Engage the school community by recruiting native-speaking families to volunteer and support the program
- Reach out to local community organizations and companies to promote, foster and support the DLI program

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Achievement vs. Proficiency Assessments: Achievement tests measure mastery of content taught like vocabulary and grammar, while proficiency tests evaluate the ability to use language skills in real-world, unrehearsed situations.

ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K–12 Learners: These guidelines describe students' competencies in communication across Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational modes, categorized into Novice, Intermediate, and Pre-Advanced ranges.

Additive Bilingualism: Additive bilingualism is an approach where a student's first language and culture are maintained while learning a second language, fostering bilingualism and biliteracy.

Alignment: Alignment ensures curriculum coherence with standards, assessments, and instruction, improving student outcomes and enhancing teacher effectiveness.

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): A national organization focused on improving language teaching and learning through resources, standards, and professional development to support language teaching K-12.

Bilingual: It is the ability to speak fluently in two languages and one of the three goals of dual language education.

Biliterate: It is the ability to read and write in two languages and one of the three goals of dual language education.

Can-Do Statement: Describes what a learner can do with the language at various proficiency levels based on ACTFL benchmarks.

Content-Based Language Instruction: Integrates language learning with subject matter, aligning content and language objectives to build proficiency through experiential learning.

Curriculum Map: A curriculum map is a document for each grade level that outlines the curriculum, concepts, topics, and skills to be addressed over a defined period of time.

English Learner/Multilingual Learner (EL/ML): Students who are eligible for English language development instructional services based on state and federal state laws.

Language Learning Continuum: Performance-based model which identifies the performance characteristics of each stage of language learning. (Jackson 1999, Zaslow, 2005).

Language Separation Policy: Immersion programs follow the practice of delivering instruction in only one language during any given period of instruction for optimal language development and content mastery.

LinguaFolio: Student-centered formative portfolio assessment based on the European Language Portfolio, designed to support individuals in setting and achieving their goals for learning languages as they move along the continuum towards greater proficiency.

Professional Learning Community (PLC): Teams of educators collaboratively commit to ongoing processes of program articulation, collective inquiry, study and research to achieve ongoing improvement of student results.

Proficiency: The ability to communicate effectively in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as defined by ACTFL's detailed guidelines.

Proficiency Pathway: The progression through dual language programs along the language learning continuum towards advanced proficiency levels.

Sociocultural Competency: The ability to appreciate and understand other cultures. This is the third goal of dual language education.

Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP): An online assessment measuring speaking, reading, and writing skills aligned with ACTFL benchmarks.

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