CAMARENA

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2026-2027

Camarena Elementary School 1650

Exploration Falls Dr.

Chula Vista, CA 91915

619-591-5500

Camarena Contact Information

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Associate Principal:

CAMARENA'S DUAL IMMERSION TEACHERS

Grade Level	**Email**
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4th- Elizabeth Trinidad	elizabeth.trinidad@cvesd.org
5th - Graciela Flores	graciela.flores@cvesd.org
5th- Kirsten Mena (DI English Component)	kirsten.mena@cvesd.org

6th- Cristina Tsutsumi	cristina.tsutsumi@cvesd.org
5th6th - Gerardo Morales	gerardo.morales@cvesd.org

CAMARENA'S PROGRAM MISSION

Our mission is to prepare our students
academically,
linguistically and socially to meet
the needs of our global community.

WHAT IS DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM?

"No child needs to lose a language to learn a language."

-Dr. Kathryn Lindholm-Leary

The Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program differs significantly from earlier bilingual programs in many California districts. Unlike those programs, DLI provides both native English speakers and Spanish-speaking academic English Learners the opportunity to learn to read, write, and communicate effectively in English and Spanish while achieving high academic achievement. This is an "additive bilingual" program, meaning that a child's first language continues to be strengthened and augmented while he/she gains a second language. In addition, students can develop an understanding of and an appreciation for other cultures, develop high self-esteem, and experience positive interactions with people from other cultures and countries.

Participation in this program begins in kindergarten, and students remain in the program through sixth grade and middle school education to reach and maintain high proficiency levels in two languages. Both Spanish-dominant and English-dominant speakers are placed in the same classroom. Ideally, 50% of the students should be dominant speakers of Spanish, and the other 50%, dominant speakers of English. Bilingual students may also be included in the program.

However, in an alternative classroom, dominant Spanish speakers should make up no less than 35% of the class, as they serve as strong models for the target language.

CVESD GOALS

PURPOSE

- ❑ To develop and prepare students with linguistic and academic competencies in two languages to be highly engaged and contributing global citizens.

MISSION

- ❑ To develop and empower multilingual, multiliterate, and multiculturally competent students.

CAMARENA PROGRAM GOALS

BILINGUALISM/BILITERACY

- ❑ Develop fluency in communication and literacy in Spanish and English without compromising either language.

HIGH ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN BOTHPROGRAM LANGUAGES

- ❑ Achieve in all academic subjects according to district and state standards in both languages.

SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE

- ❑ Cultivate an understanding and an appreciation of other cultures, inspire self-esteem, and strengthen positive attitudes among students, their families, and the community.

-Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (3rdedition)

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

- ❑ Core content instruction in the classroom is conducted in Spanish or English per our 90/10 model.
- ❑ The delivery of the lessons is taught by using one language at a time. The homeroom teacher provides instruction in Spanish, and the DI partner teacher instructs that same class in English.
- ❑ The program follows the District's core curriculum and uses state-adopted materials.

- ❏ Grade-level California Common Core State Standards and Common Core Standards in Spanish are taught.
- ❏ Teachers receive continuous professional development to ensure the best instructional practices.

PROGRAM MODEL

Grades K-1:

- ❏ 90% of instruction is taught in Spanish
- ❏ 10% of instruction is taught in English

Grade 2:

- ❏ 80% of instruction is taught in Spanish
- ❏ 20% of instruction is taught in English.

Grade 3:

- ❏ 70% of instruction is taught in Spanish
- ❏ 30% of instruction is taught in English

Grade 4:

- ❏ 60% of instruction is taught in Spanish
- ❏ 40% of instruction is taught in English

Grades 5-6:

- ❏ 50% of instruction is taught in Spanish
- ❏ 50% of instruction is taught in English

SEAL OF BILITERACY/CAMARENA LITERACY AWARD

The school established a "Biliteracy Award" as a pathway to honor 6th grade students in the Dual Language Immersion Program for participation in two or more languages. Students will be required to meet specific criteria to be eligible for the award. This path will motivate students to pursue the Seal of Biliteracy by meeting language specific criteria outlined by high schools.

The State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB) is a recognition conferred by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for graduating high school students who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English.

WHY CHOOSE DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION?

Deciding to enroll your child in our Dual Language Immersion program is a personal one and may not be suitable for all families. The program encourages interested parents to take some time and learn more about how Dual Language Immersion works, its level of success across the nation and in our district, and the **commitment** involved for both students and parents. We suggest parents peruse the internet, for example, and read about other programs and recent research by visiting the sites listed in the Appendix of this handbook. We invite you to talk to other parents already participating in a program, or to visit our DLI classrooms and see our program in action.

We have provided some thoughts regarding the benefits of DLI to support parents as they make this important decision.

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION FOR ALLSTUDENTS

- ❏ Our children will live in a global community and function in a worldwide economy. The ability to recognize and accept diversity will be a necessity.
- ❏ The ability to speak English and Spanish is an unarguable advantage, particularly here in California but also in many other parts of the US and the world.
- ❏ Fluency in two languages may increase career opportunities.
- ❏ Research indicates that bilingualism leads to cognitive benefits, including planning, solving problems, and performing various other mentally demanding tasks. (Bhattacharjee, 2012)
- ❏ Bilingual students have enriched cognitive control, improved metalinguistic awareness, better memory, visual-spatial skills, and creativity.
- ❏ Research also indicates that bilingualism delays the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's. (Bhattacharjee, 2012)

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION FOR ENGLISH-DOMINANT CHILDREN

In addition to the benefits already noted above:

- ❏ DLI allows our English speakers to develop fluency in a second language early on.
- ❏ DLI provides English speakers authentic access to and interaction with another culture.

- ❏ Research indicates that reading in one's home language promotes literacy in a second language. (Eisenchlas et al., 2013)

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION FOR SPANISH-DOMINANT CHILDREN

- ❏ DLI ensures that students who enter with Spanish as their first language maintain that language.
- ❏ Students can continue to communicate with grandparents or other family members who may only speak Spanish.
- ❏ Spanish-dominant students who may only have Listening and Speaking skills in Spanish also learn to read and write in their first language at a high academic level.
- ❏ Research indicates that reading in one's home language promotes literacy in a second language. (Eisenchlas et al., 2013)

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

The demands of a dual language program require commitment from administrators, teachers, students, and parents. The commitments include:

- ❏ Staying in the program for the duration of all elementary school years (K-6th) at Camarena.
- ❏ Parent support and active participation in their child's education and multicultural events.
- ❏ Daily attendance is crucial.
- ❏ Assisting DI parent meetings and events throughout the year.

INSTRUCTION IN THE DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

Teaching students to listen, speak, read, and write fluently in two languages while maintaining high levels of academic achievement, is a rewarding challenge. For this reason, instruction in the Dual Language Immersion classroom must be both rigorous and strategic, as well as motivating, engaging, interactive, and intellectually stimulating. Students have multiple opportunities to experience meaningful interaction with others, to engage in a variety of literary and informational texts, and to collaborate with peers on authentic academic tasks. Teachers utilize a wide variety

of instructional strategies to ensure that both groups of language learners are acquiring a second language and also understanding the content instruction in both languages. These strategies include:

- ❏ Engagement with grade-level text and intellectually rich tasks
- ❏ Collaborative discussions about content
- ❏ A focus on meaning-making
- ❏ Whole and small group interaction
- ❏ Consistent use of specific instructional and management routines
- ❏ Use of scaffolded sentence frames and word banks
- ❏ Extensive teacher modeling and use of examples to make learning more comprehensible for all students
- ❏ Use of repetition, visuals, models, gestures, etc.
- ❏ Use of chants, rhymes, songs, and drama
- ❏ Use of online resources and technology

Teachers also work diligently to maintain the language of instruction. This means that, although all DLI teachers are bilingual and bi-literate, teachers use only the language of instruction designated for a particular subject area when teaching that subject area. Teachers do not translate or move from one language to another. This is particularly critical in early grades. In Kindergarten, for example, the classroom teacher will speak only Spanish whenever students are present, whether in the classroom, on the playground, or in the neighborhood grocery store. Parents wishing to speak to the teacher in English may communicate through email, with Yes/No questions, or arrange a time when students are not present.

All DLI teachers attend professional development each year to strengthen their instruction. In addition, all teachers have opportunities throughout the year to meet with grade-level peers and colleagues across grade levels, collaborate, share instructional ideas and strategies, analyze data, work in various committees, and engage in continually improving this program for all students.

INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

Dual Language Immersion is an inclusive program that aims to ensure that all students will be academically successful. If parents request a placement change, a meeting with the previous and current teacher, along with the administration, will be set up to address concerns. Students who begin to struggle academically will receive appropriate strategic—or intensive-level support, as would any student in the regular all-English program. This support and/or intervention may be delivered during school hours by the classroom teacher.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

According to both state and federal regulations, any student identified as an English Learner (a student who has a home language other than English and is not yet fluent in the English language as determined by state assessments) must receive a program of English Language Development as part of his or her core instruction. In traditional English-only classrooms, English Learners are separated in small group instruction from already-fluent and native-English speakers for 20-30 minutes daily. During this Designated ELD time, English Learners receive strategic instruction that is specific to their language development and language acquisition. They then return to a whole-class setting for the remainder of the day, during which the teacher provides Integrated ELD through content instruction.

In the DLI classroom, however, English Learners and English-dominant students must remain together for the entire day, as this configuration allows maximum opportunities for cross-learning of language. In this design, both Integrated and Designated English Language development are provided during and through the English period of the day**.**

ENGLISH LEARNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ELAC)

Parents of identified English Language Learners (ELL) are encouraged to attend monthly meetings. The role of the ELAC is to advise the principal and School Site Council on programs and services for English learners. The ELAC acts in an advisory capacity. It is not a decision-making body, but it is the voice of the English learner community.

Chula Vista Elementary School District representatives:

- ❏ Veronica Delgado, Director, Ext. 1521
- ❏ Patricia Pimentel, Coordinator, Ext. 1523
- ❏ Nancy Rojas, Coordinator, Ext. 1525

ASSESSMENTS IN A DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION CLASSROOM

Students are assessed regularly. For Language Arts and Mathematics, assessments are given in the language or languages of instruction and match assessments from the regular English program. Acquisition of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in both languages is also measured using specific language assessments.

The Immersion Program uses multiple forms of assessment to determine student's language fluency and academic abilities across all grade levels.

- ❏ We conduct reading, writing, and math assessments to measure students' academic progress throughout the year.
- ❏ State norm-referenced assessments for academics in English and Spanish beginning in third grade to assess proficiency in state educational standards
- ❏ Assessment information for all academic areas is communicated with parents during conferences and progress report periods.
- ❏ Students considered to be learning English as a second language will also take the state test, English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC), to measure their progress in the English language.

EVALUATION OF THE DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

Camarena will use several methods to evaluate the dual immersion program, such as the Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education and district evaluations.

This will provide a solid basis for informed decision-making about program development and instructional issues that support successful student outcomes.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND COMMITMENT

Parent involvement is critical in the Dual Language Immersion program. For this reason, we strongly encourage and expect parents to become active participants in their child's education. Research shows that children whose parents are involved in their education experience more academic success in school, have better attendance, and are more interested in learning (NEA, 2008). Therefore, the program provides a variety of ways in which parents can become involved and serve as strong educational models for their child/children. Parents may:

- ❏ Parents can volunteer in their own child's classroom at all grade levels. If interested, they should contact the site or their classroom teacher directly.
- ❏ Attend site Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) meetings.
- ❏ Volunteer to chaperone site DLI events.
- ❏ Volunteer to chaperone site-level field trips and other site-based activities.
- ❏ Attend DLI trainings on the role of the parent, use of the first and second language in the home, learning expectations by grade level, etc. (CABE, ATDLE).

The opportunity for a child to become bilingual and biliterate is priceless, but it requires commitment and investment from his/her parents. Research shows that acquiring proficiency in a second language may take five to seven years (Cummins, 1981). Therefore, parents are expected to commit to this program through at least sixth grade to ensure that their child has the time necessary to fully develop linguistically and succeed academically.

To underline the importance of this commitment, parents are asked to sign the Dual Language Immersion Parent Longevity Commitment form upon entry into the program. A sample of this document is included in the Appendix.

K-1ST GRADE

- ❏ All Kindergarten students are eligible for this program.
- ❏ Applications for1st Grade may be submitted until the end of the first quarter. However, space is minimal, and students from the previous year's kindergarten waitlist will be placed first.
- ❏ Due to the highly structured plan of learning in two languages, parents must be prepared to commit to the program through 6th grade, middle school, and preferably through high school.

PRIORITY FOR ACCEPTANCE INTO THE PROGRAM

❏ **1st Priority**: Students whose School of Residence is Camarena Elementary School will be granted 1st priority.

NOTE: Within this category, Camarena students who already have an older sibling in the program will be placed first. This does not apply to students with a younger sibling in the program.

❏ **2nd Priority**: Transfer students with siblings already in a Chula Vista Elementary School District DLI program at a specific site will be granted 2nd priority at Camarena Elementary.

NOTE: To be considered for the program, all students in the Priority 1 and Priority 2 categories MUST submit an application form during the Registration Window (see below).

PLACEMENT PROCESS FOR 1ST GRADE FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR

The waitlist described above and generated each year during the Kinder lottery will be used to place remaining students in 1st grade classrooms for the next school year if space becomes available within the 1st quarter. Additional parents interested in 1st grade DLI and whose child is not on the waitlist may apply to 1st grade DLI during the registration window. These parents may be:

- ❏ School of Residence parents OR sibling parents interested in placing their current non-DLI Kinder student in a 1st grade DLI classroom.

- ❑ Parents of students from non-DLI sites who want their child to enter the DLI program in 1st grade.

MOVING WITHIN THE DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

Parents interested in moving their child from one DLI school to another DLI school within the Chula Vista Elementary School District must complete an application during the regular application window in the spring. All efforts will be made to accommodate the request, but parents should be aware that attrition in the program is low, very few spots open each year, and placement at grades above Kindergarten still recognizes the priority levels of school of residence and siblings.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How early can I sign up for the DLI program?

There is no early sign-up for the DLI program. Parents can only apply during the registration window (in the spring of the year prior to their child entering Kindergarten). The Chula Vista Elementary School District's registration period starts in February/March. Parents will have the option to request the Camarena DLI program at the time of registering the child.

2. My child is already in the DLI program, but I need to transfer him/her to a different DLI site. How do I do that?

Parents currently in the program who are requesting a transfer need to speak directly to the office staff. If you are trying to transfer to your home school, you will have priority over other DLI transfers. However, if space is not available for the specific grade level, they will be placed on the waitlist. Current DLI students applying for spots in 2nd-6th grades will be given priority. DLI siblings who might also be applying to the same school will also have to wait for available space in the program.

3. Are there priorities for acceptance into the program?

Yes. School of Residence students have 1st priority. Within this category, however, students who are younger siblings of students already in the program are placed first, excluding TK. Transfer siblings of students already in the DLI program have 2nd priority (students will be assessed to determine Spanish proficiency levels).

4. I will be moving in February and a DLI school will then be my School of Residence. Does that give me School of Residence priority, since the DLI school will be my School of Residence in the spring?

Unfortunately, there is no priority in this regard. If interested, you will be added to the waiting list if entering Kindergarten or 1st quarter of 1st grade. In grades 2nd – 6th, applications for English Dominant students are no longer considered. In grades 2nd – 6th Spanish dominant students will have to be tested to verify level Spanish proficiency.

5. Will my child fall behind if he or she learns two languages?

Concepts learned in either language become part of the child's general knowledge and many language concepts transfer from one language to another.

APPENDIX

Bhattacharjee, Yudhijit. "Why Bilinguals Are Smarter." TheNewYorkTimes, The New York Times, 17 Mar. 2012, www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/opinion/sunday/the-benefits-of-bilingualism.html.

Cummins, Jim. (1981). The Role of Primary Language Development in Promoting Educational Success for Language Minority Students. 10.13140/2.1.1334.9449.

Eisenchlas, S. A., Schalley, A. C., & Guillemin, D. (2013). The Importance of Literacy in the Home Language: The View From Australia. SAGEOpen. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013507270

"Frequently Asked Questions about Dual Language." ChampaignSchools, 2015, www.champaignschools.org/sites/default/files/DL%20FAQs%20English.pdf? v=2017.

Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, D., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). GuidingPrinciplesforDual LanguageEducation(3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

National Education Association, (2008). Parent,Family,Community InvolvementinEducation.NEA Education Policy and Practice Department | Center for Great Public Schools https://duallanguageschools.org/parents-corner/

https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/schools/lsoe_sites/cce/pdf/2%20Way%20Immersion%20Toolkit.pdf

Camarena Elementary School

Dual Language Immersion Program
Parent Longevity Commitment

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Home Language: _____ Does your **child** speak any other language? _____

Is your child currently receiving any special services? (speech, adaptive PE, reading, etc.)
No ____ Yes ____ If yes, please explain: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Phone Number(s): _____ (hm)
Home address: _____ _____(wk)
_____ _____ (cell)
Email address: _____

The benefits of this enriched education program are cumulative and require long-term commitment.

While the rate at which specific levels of language proficiency are attained will vary among students, parents should expect delays in the initial stages of reading & writing in English as students will be immersed in the learning of academic Spanish for the first 3 years of the program.

However, studies have shown that by the upper grades (5th and 6th grade) students in immersion programs acquire the same proficiency in English and achieve the same levels of competency in their academic subjects as monolingual students, ***with the added bonus of a second language and meta-linguistic awareness*** (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan 2000).

It is important that parents fully understand the model and structure of the program. Please contact Camarena with any questions you may have.

Please read and initial the following:

____ Yes, I have read Camarena's Dual Language Immersion Handbook.

____ Yes, I am aware of, and I understand, the long-term commitment necessary in order to realize the full benefits of the program.

____ Yes, I am aware that the target language is Spanish and that a progression of foundational skills will be taught for reading and writing in English.

____ Yes, I understand that I can continue to read to my child at home in English.

____ Yes, I am aware that continuous parental support is necessary for my child's success.

____ Yes, I understand that daily attendance in school is of the utmost importance for my child to become bilingual and academically successful.

Parent signature : _____ Date: _____