



SPANISH IMMERSION

Handbook 2026-2027



Table of Contents

<u>History of Program</u>	3
<u>Mission</u>	4
<u>Overview of Program</u>	4
<u>A Typical Day</u>	6
<u>Middle School</u>	7
<u>Curriculum</u>	8
<u>Multi-Tiered System of Supports</u>	11
<u>Spanish Language Proficiency</u>	11
<u>Enrollment</u>	14
<u>Program Participation and Placement Review</u>	15
<u>Family Partnership and Support</u>	16

Clicking on the topic name will direct you to the relevant page.

Saucon Valley School District Spanish Immersion Program



History

In 2021, the Saucon Valley School district began their first year of immersion with a first-grade class. Since then, a new classroom has been created for our inaugural class each year.

In 2024, during our fourth year of Spanish immersion, the district requested the Center for Applied Linguistics complete an audit of our programming to provide recommendations to improve and enhance our immersion education. From those recommendations, the district began our immersion Kindergarten classroom which opened its doors in 2025 and transitioned our inaugural class to our middle school. The District continues to improve our program and enhance the curriculum and assessments to ensure all of our students are receiving the best immersion education.

YEAR	Saucon Valley Elementary
2021	1st grade Immersion Classroom
2022	2nd grade Immersion Classroom
2023	3rd grade Immersion Classroom
2024	4th grade Immersion Classroom
2025	K and 5th grade Immersion Classrooms
2026	6th grade Immersion Classroom

Spanish Immersion Program Mission

The mission of the Saucon Valley School District Spanish Immersion Program is to provide an academically rigorous Saucon Valley education while simultaneously cultivating and fostering bilingualism, biliteracy and biculturalism.

Bilingualism- speaking and understanding two languages

Biliteracy- Reading and Writing in two languages

Biculturalism- relating to and appreciating two distinct cultures



Spanish Immersion Overview

Spanish immersion helps students become proficient in the target language while mastering subject content across all disciplines at the same time. In our immersion programs, the target language is the vehicle we use to teach the content. It is not taught as a separate subject but is the medium in which core instruction is delivered. Research shows that the most effective way for students to acquire a second language is to integrate the language into their everyday instruction and curriculum. Research also shows that students who participate in immersion programs may outperform their peers in traditional classrooms, may do as well or better than their peers in traditional classrooms on standardized tests, and may have a greater appreciation of culture and diversity.

Spanish Immersion Overview (Cont.)

Current and future generations of students who are multilingual will be prepared to thrive in an increasingly globalized world. Early childhood is the best time to develop a lasting understanding of diverse cultures, people, and perspectives as well as optimize the ability to acquire a second language.

Students participating in immersion programs may display increased abilities in native language skills, may have an overall improved academic development, may develop advanced creative problem-solving skills, may display enhanced global awareness, as well as gain a competitive edge in the workforce as adults.

At Saucon Valley School District, we typically serve students coming from monolingual, English-speaking homes in an environment where the dominant language is used exclusively. In our program, content is delivered primarily in the target language (Spanish) with English instruction gradually increasing in 3rd grade. The focus of this model is to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism, with students ideally reaching a high level of proficiency in both their native and the target language.

A majority of students enter kindergarten with little to no Spanish background. In the formative years (K-2) students receive up to 80% of academic classroom instruction in Spanish. As students enter third grade and become increasingly bilingual, instruction in Spanish decreases and instruction in English increases. Starting in kindergarten and continuing through second grade, English literacy instruction is included in the Spanish Immersion curriculum. This additional instruction will focus on English phonics using an explicit and systematic phonics program.



A Typical Day



Students in the Spanish Immersion (K-2) learn in a typical class with one teacher instructing all core academic areas. Spanish immersion students in grades 3-6, have two teachers; one focusing on Spanish instruction in the targeted subjects and one teacher for instruction in English.

Spanish immersion students receive English instruction while attending daily related arts classes (Physical Education, Art, STEM, Music, Library) and attend lunch and recess with their peers from English classrooms.

	% Target Language	Spanish	English
K	77%	Morning Meeting, ELA, Math, SLA, Social Studies, Science	Phonics,Encore
1st	77%	Morning Meeting, ELA, Math, SLA, Social Studies, Science	Phonics, Encore
2nd	77%	Morning Meeting, ELA, Math, SLA, Social Studies, Science	Phonics ,Encore
3rd	47%	Morning Meeting, ELA, Social Studies, Science	Phonics, ELA, Math, Encore
4th	47%	Morning Meeting, ELA, Social Studies, Science	Phonics, ELA, Math, Encore
5th	47%	Morning Meeting, ELA, Science	Phonics, ELA, Math, Science,Encore
6th	47%	Morning Meeting, ELA, Science	Phonics, ELA, Math, Science, Encore

Post-Spanish Immersion Program Language Development Opportunities



The intent of the Spanish language development offerings after 6th grade are to prepare students to take higher level courses when they reach Saucon Valley High School, with the ultimate goal that students will take AP Spanish during their time in high school or before. The middle school experience aims to build Spanish language speaking fluency, but also proficiency with reading and writing, which are critical for success in upper level high school Spanish courses. Furthermore, the middle school options were crafted within the strictures of the daily schedule and to ensure all students have equitable access to support resources (intervention, etc.).

Depending on student results from the language proficiency assessment in 6th grade, students will take a Spanish course at the level they are prepared for:



Seventh Grade

For world language instruction, students will have the following options:

- Take French I
- Take Spanish III/IV
- Participate in an onsite custom Advanced Spanish language course that provides an emphasis on conversational speaking, listening, writing and reading.

Eighth Grade

For world language instruction, students will have the following options:

- Continue with French I
- Take Spanish III/IV
- Participate in an onsite custom Advanced Spanish language course that provides an emphasis on conversational speaking, listening, writing and reading.
- *Spring of 8th grade year students will take a language proficiency assessment.*

Ninth through Twelfth Grade

Depending on student results from the language proficiency assessment in Spring of 8th grade year students will take a Spanish course at the level they are prepared for at SVSD, e.g.:

- Take Spanish II, III, IV and/or AP.
- Continue with a new language offered at SVSD.

Curriculum

Spanish Immersion classes will follow Pennsylvania state standards for each grade level. Of course, the pacing in Kindergarten will vary as students are hearing a new language for the first time. Similarly, in the beginning of each school year, pacing will vary from the traditional classroom as students get reacquainted to the immersion setting after a summer away from the language.

Spanish immersion teachers will teach the PA Common Core standards in core subject areas. The board approved Courses of Study for each core subject area will be followed.

The following resources are utilized for Spanish Immersion classes:

- ***Maravillas***: *Maravillas* is the core Spanish Language Arts instructional resource that will be utilized in Kindergarten through Grade 4 to support the development of students' literacy skills in Spanish.

Curriculum (Cont.)

- Through engaging literature, foundational reading skills, vocabulary development, language conventions, writing, speaking, and listening activities, *Maravillas* provides students with a comprehensive Spanish literacy experience. The program is designed to build strong language proficiency while fostering critical thinking, communication, and a love of reading and writing in Spanish. Through the use of authentic texts and standards-aligned instruction, students will develop the skills necessary to become confident bilingual readers, writers, and communicators.
- ***Math in Focus:*** *Math in Focus* serves as the core mathematics instructional resource for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 4. In Kindergarten through Grade 2, mathematics instruction is delivered in Spanish to support students' bilingual language development while building a strong foundation in mathematical concepts and problem-solving skills. Beginning in Grade 3, instruction transitions to English, allowing students to apply their established mathematical understanding while developing the academic language necessary for success in upper elementary mathematics. Through a conceptual, problem-solving approach, *Math in Focus* promotes deep mathematical understanding, critical thinking, and the application of skills to real-world situations.
- ***FOSS Science Kits and Digital Toolkits:*** *FOSS Science Kits and Digital Toolkits* serve as the primary instructional resources for science instruction in Kindergarten through Grade 4. Throughout these grade levels, science is taught in Spanish, providing students with opportunities to develop scientific knowledge, inquiry skills, and academic vocabulary within the target language. Through hands-on investigations, collaborative learning experiences, and interactive digital resources, students engage in authentic scientific exploration aligned to Pennsylvania standards. Beginning in Grade 5, students transition to science instruction in English while continuing to utilize FOSS resources, allowing them to build upon their strong scientific foundation as they develop English academic language and content-specific vocabulary.

Curriculum (Cont.)

- **Maravillas:** Students will learn many aspects of the Social Studies curriculum through their *Maravillas* instructional resources. To ensure comprehensive alignment with all Pennsylvania Academic Standards, *Social Studies Weekly* will be used as a supplemental resource across all grade levels. This resource is fully available in Spanish, providing students with additional opportunities to build content knowledge and engage with Social Studies concepts while continuing to develop their Spanish language proficiency.
- **Epic:** *Epic* is an application that is utilized for supplementary, independent reading that is aligned to the standards in the core subject area.



Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

As part of the Saucon Valley School District's **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**, Spanish Immersion students participate in a comprehensive assessment process to monitor academic progress and identify students who may require additional support.

Students in the Spanish Immersion program are assessed at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year using a variety of English and Spanish language measures. These assessments provide valuable information regarding students' language development, literacy skills, and overall academic growth in both languages. Classroom teachers utilize this data, along with ongoing classroom performance and diagnostic assessments, to identify areas of strength and need and to inform instructional decision-making.

Because Spanish Immersion classrooms do not have a dedicated Intervention and Enrichment (I/E) period built into the daily schedule, supplemental supports are primarily provided within the classroom setting through targeted instruction delivered by the classroom teacher. When assessment data indicates a significant academic need, students may be considered for additional Tier II or Tier III support through the district's existing MTSS framework.

MTSS (Cont.)

These interventions may focus on English literacy, mathematics, or other identified areas of need, depending on the individual student profile.

Data teams regularly review student progress to determine appropriate supports while balancing the importance of maintaining students' access to core Spanish Immersion instruction. Throughout the process, parents and caregivers are kept informed of student progress, intervention plans, and any changes to support to ensure a collaborative partnership focused on student success.

Spanish Language Proficiency

In the spring of 2026 the K-12 World Language and Spanish Immersion team created a comprehensive system of integrated language assessments into the program to better understand how students are progressing in their language acquisition and to plan for how to accommodate language needs into learning. These assessments use the American Council on Teaching and Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Can-Do Statements.

The Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) is a paired oral interview assessment tool that measures speaking and listening performance using a rating scale based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) is a web-based proficiency and performance assessment of K-12 standards-based language learning. It assesses language ability across the three modes of communication as defined by the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages. Tasks on the AAPPL are often situated within the context of today's communication media. For example, test takers perform tasks such as answering questions posed by a video chat partner, reading social media posts, and e-mailing a pen pal to demonstrate language ability.

Spanish Language Proficiency (Cont.)

Spanish Immersion students participate in the Lectura assessment, a Spanish foundational literacy measure designed to monitor the development of early reading skills. Beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through Grade 2, students are assessed to track progress in critical literacy skills and identify areas of strength and need. Students participate in the assessment three times each school year at the beginning, middle, and end of the year, providing educators with valuable data to guide instruction, monitor growth, and inform decisions regarding student support.

Spanish Immersion students will also participate in Acadience Mathematics and DIBELS assessments in English three times each school year at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. These assessments provide valuable information regarding students' mathematical and literacy development and help educators monitor progress over time. Assessment results are shared with parents and reviewed by the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team to identify students who may benefit from additional support. When data indicates that a student is not making sufficient progress, the MTSS team collaborates with classroom teachers and families to determine whether Tier II interventions or other targeted supports may be appropriate to address the student's individual needs.



Spanish Language Proficiency (Cont.)

Grade	Spanish	English
K	SOPA, Lectura	DIBELS, Acadiance, Map Math, Map ELA
1	SOPA, Lectura	DIBELS, Acadiance, Map Math, Map ELA
2	SOPA, Lectura	DIBELS, Acadiance, Map Math, Map ELA
3	AAPPL	DIBELS, Acadiance, Map Math, Map ELA
4	AAPPL	DIBELS, Acadiance, Map Math, Map ELA
5	AAPPL	Map Math, Map ELA
6	AAPPL	Map Math, Map ELA
7	AAPPL	Map Math, Map ELA
8	AAPPL	Map Math, Map ELA
9-12	Advanced Placement Language Test (AP)	

Enrollment

Any resident student entering Kindergarten and enrolled in Saucon Valley School District is eligible for the program. Kindergarten enrollment is based on a lottery process. We experience and expect a wide range of skills and abilities in our immersion classrooms. However, immersion is designed and recommended for students performing at or above grade level.

Students interested in enrolling in the Spanish Immersion Program must complete the district registration process and participate in all required enrollment procedures. Prior to their kindergarten year, families are required to attend a Spanish Immersion Family Information Session to learn about the program's instructional model, expectations, and long-term commitment. Following the information session, families will complete a Family Commitment Form and a Spanish Immersion Registration Form.

As part of the enrollment process, students must also participate in the district's Kindergarten Screening. The screening provides valuable information regarding each child's developmental and academic readiness for kindergarten. Should the screening indicate significant concerns related to kindergarten readiness, school staff will meet with the child's parents or caregivers to review the results and discuss whether participation in the Spanish Immersion Program is the most appropriate placement at that time. Decisions will be made collaboratively with the family and will be based on the individual needs of the student and the supports available to ensure future success.

Lottery

If more students register for the Spanish Immersion Program than there are seats available, a random lottery will be conducted. In accordance with School Board policy, 14 seats in each incoming kindergarten Spanish Immersion class are reserved for siblings of students currently enrolled in the Spanish Immersion Program.

Lottery (Cont.)

If more than 14 eligible siblings apply and the total number of applicants exceeds the available class capacity of 26 students, a lottery will first be conducted among the sibling applicants to determine which students will fill the reserved sibling seats. Any sibling applicants not selected through the sibling lottery will then be entered into the general lottery with all other applicants.

Following the sibling selection process, a random lottery will be held for the remaining available seats. Students selected through the lottery will be required to formally commit to participation in the program. Students who are not selected will be placed on a numbered waiting list in a randomly determined order. Should a seat become available, it will be offered to the next student on the waiting list.

Program Participation and Placement Review

The Spanish Immersion Program is designed as a long-term educational commitment that allows students to progressively develop bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism over time. Families are encouraged to carefully consider this commitment when enrolling their child in the program.

While the district recognizes that students' needs may change over time, decisions regarding continued participation in the Spanish Immersion Program should be made thoughtfully and in collaboration with school staff. If concerns arise regarding a student's academic progress, language development, or overall success within the program, families are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher and school administration. Together, the school team and family will review available data, discuss concerns, and determine the most appropriate support or educational placement based on the individual needs of the student.



Family Partnership and Support

Families are essential partners in the success of our Spanish Immersion students. One of the most important ways families can support language development is by fostering a love of reading and learning at home. Families are encouraged to read with their child in English for at least 20 minutes each day and to provide opportunities for their child to write, communicate, and share ideas in English. By celebrating bilingualism and demonstrating enthusiasm for language learning, families help children develop confidence, perseverance, and pride in their accomplishments.

Learning in an immersion environment requires students to take risks, solve problems, and persevere through challenges. Families can support this growth by encouraging students to do their best, ask questions, and embrace mistakes as part of the learning process. While it may be tempting to translate assignments or provide answers, allowing students to grapple with the language independently promotes deeper understanding and stronger language acquisition skills. Teachers work to ensure that students understand homework expectations before leaving school and provide resources to support successful completion. When questions arise, families are encouraged to utilize teacher-provided resources and communicate with school staff for guidance. Through a strong partnership between home and school, students are empowered to become confident, independent, and successful bilingual learners.

