

What the Evaluation Found: A Summary for Families

A plain-language synopsis of the final report by Paridad Education Consulting

Why the district asked for this evaluation

The dual language program in North Shore SD 112 has taught children in Spanish and English for more than twenty-five years. In December 2025, the district asked for an independent review of how well the kindergarten through grade 5 dual language program at Oak Terrace and Red Oak is working, and what could make it stronger. Paridad Education Consulting carried out the evaluation from March through August 2026.

Paridad measured the program against the three goals of dual language education: 1.) **bilingualism and biliteracy** (speaking, reading and writing well in two languages), 2.) **high academic achievement**, and 3.) **sociocultural competence** (understanding and valuing other cultures).

How we gathered the information

- Three years of test results in English and Spanish
- Visits to every dual language classroom in April 2026
- Conversations with administrators, teachers, students, front office staff, community liaisons and parents in English and in Spanish
- A review of the program's schedules, curriculum materials, and tests

Thank you to every family who joined a focus group. Your voices are part of this report.

What is going well

Throughout the report, a  marks a **bright spot**: a place where the evidence shows the program is doing well.

-  **English Learners (ELs) students are learning English.** Over two years, English learners gained an average of 76 points on the state English proficiency test (ACCESS). Three of the four grade groups matched or beat the average growth of English learners in the same grades across the many states that use this test, and nearly one in five reached the level Illinois uses to move a student out of English learner status.
-  **Students are doing well in English reading comprehension and math.** In each of the last three years, dual language students grew faster than students nationwide who started at the same level. On the 2025 Illinois state test (IAR), students scored above the state average in every grade and subject.

- **☀ Teachers are dedicated and bilingual.** Teachers created classroom environments that are positive, respectful, and safe.
- **☀ Families and students value the program.** Students reported during focus group sessions that they are proud to be bilingual and see it as part of their future.
- **☀ The Spanish curricular materials are of high quality.** Spanish reading, science, social studies, and math materials were rated well.
- **☀ Classes are a comfortable size.** Class size average about 19 students, below the limit of 25–26 that families asked the district to guarantee.

Where the program can grow

The main area for growth is the percentage of time dedicated to instruction in **Spanish and increasing students' use of Spanish during the school day.**

- The program is designed to teach half the day in each language. In practice, the school day leans toward English, and closer to 60–70 percent English depending on how it is measured.
- Science and social studies are taught in Spanish, and they are often the first lessons shortened when time runs short.
- On the one Spanish reading comprehension test the district uses, students grew more slowly than similar students nationwide.
- The district does not yet have a test that shows how well each child speaks and writes Spanish. Families, teachers, and students told us that English results get the most attention.

Recommendations

The district asked for recommendations in four areas. The Board and district leaders will decide which ones to adopt and when.

AREA	OUR RECOMMENDATION, IN BRIEF
Class size	Plan classes at about 20 students, with an upper limit of 24, with at least two classes in every grade. Build classes so each one has a healthy mix of Spanish and English speakers.
Curriculum and schedule	Give Spanish its full share of the day, protect daily time for reading and writing, oral language development, science and social studies in Spanish, and connect what children learn in one language to the other.
Measuring biliteracy	Track children's growth in Spanish as carefully as in English, using common speaking and writing samples, and build a bilingual portrait of each student over time.
The program model	Deliver the 50/50 dual language model as it was originally designed: an equal share of instruction in English and in Spanish.

What this means for your child

- **Your child's place in the program does not change.** Nothing in this report recommends moving any child out of the program.
- **Leaving English learner status does not mean leaving the classroom.** When a child reaches the state's English proficiency level, only the label changes. The child stays in the same class with the same teacher and keeps learning in both languages.
- **Class-mix targets are for building classes, never for admissions.** They do not decide whether a child gets a seat in the program.
- **English progress will be protected.** The report asks the district to keep watching English results every year as Spanish time grows.

What happens next

Planning and pilots could begin in **2027–28**, and in **2028–29**, the first results from a new Spanish test could follow. After that, the district would review progress every year. The Illinois State Board of Education also plans to release new dual language guidance in December 2026, which may add direction to the recommendations in this report.

Ways to stay involved

- Join the Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee and watch for district updates on the dual language program.
- Ask your child's teacher how your child is growing in **both** languages.
- If it is your first language, keep using Spanish at home and in the community. If Spanish is not your first language, expose your student to opportunities to use their growing Spanish skills outside of the school setting. Research shows that regular use of Spanish outside school helps children keep and grow it.

A NOTE ON WHAT THIS REPORT CAN AND CANNOT SAY This evaluation describes the program as it is. It was not set up as an experiment, and it does not judge individual teachers or staff. Classroom visits took place during one week in April, and the evidence about Spanish is limited because the district does not yet measure it fully. That is one reason we recommend adding Spanish measures.