

NORTH SHORE SCHOOL DISTRICT 112

Evaluation of the K–5 Dual Language Program

Findings and recommendations from the final report

Paridad Education Consulting

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Introduction & Context

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- District RFP (December 2025): assess program effectiveness with regard to *The Three Pillars of Dual Language Education*, identify strengths and areas for growth, and recommend actions
- Board approved Paridad February 18, 2026; work began March 2, 2026
- Scope: the K–5 program at Oak Terrace and Red Oak schools
- Four deliverables: Recommendations for class size, curriculum and pacing, a biliteracy assessment framework, a program model



THE PROGRAM

25+

years of Spanish–English two-way immersion

492

students in 26 K–5 sections, 2025–26

50/50

language allocation, as the district describes its model

38%

of K–5 students identified as English Learners

DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM GOALS

*High levels of language proficiency in both languages,
High academic achievement through both languages,
Positive attitudes toward diverse languages and cultures.*

Research Foundations

1

Dual language and academic achievement

Dual language students gained seven to nine months in reading by grades 5 and 8 (Steele et al., 2017). Two-way programs show the strongest long-term outcomes (Thomas & Collier, 2002).

2

English proficiency growth

50/50 and 90/10 programs reach similar English proficiency by grade 8 (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Reclassification typically takes five to seven years in any model (NASEM, 2017).

3

Spanish proficiency growth

English learners can lose ground in the partner language when English exposure intensifies, even in dual language programs (NASEM, 2017).

4

Biliteracy assessment evidence

Partner-language assessment research is thin; growth in one language can signal growth in the other, so assess across both (Butvilofsky, Escamilla, Gumina, Diaz, 2022)

5

Class size impact

Even large reductions yield small, often short-lived gains (Slavin, 1989). Composition protects the two-way balance.

6

Bilingualism capacity

Students with disabilities can become bilingual with the same portrait as their monolingual peers; dual language is not a burden (Sánchez López, Young, Genesee & Hilliard, 2022).

Board Questions: Research on Dual Language (1 of 2)

BOARD QUESTION

When dual language is implemented with fidelity, do English learners do better academically than English learners in ESL programs?

OUR ANSWER

- Yes, that is the weight of the evidence. Long-term national studies across many districts find English learners in well-implemented two-way programs close the achievement gap in five to six years; short-term ESL and transitional models close about half of it (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Collier & Thomas, 2017).
- Studies based on dual language programs that use lottery admissions find dual language students seven to nine months ahead in reading by grades 5 and 8 (Steele et al., 2017).

Source: Report Section II, Research Foundations

BOARD QUESTION

Paint a portrait: what does dual language, and using a Spanish speaker's home language in class, do for an English learner socially, emotionally, and for engagement and status?

OUR ANSWER

- Academics: literacy developed through Spanish has the potential to transfer to English (and vice versa); students learn to read once, in two languages (NASEM, 2017).
- Identity: the home language is treated as an asset. Students told us they are proud to be bilingual and see it in their future careers (V.2-F8).
- Status and engagement: during Spanish instructional time, Spanish speakers are the language experts and models for classmates, which raises their standing and participation.
- Family: children keep the language of home, which keeps families connected to one another and to school.

Source: Report II; V.2-F8; Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard et al., 2018)

Board Questions: Research on Dual Language (2 of 2)

BOARD QUESTION

How does Spanish development nurture English for English learners? Is English the same by grade 8 under 90/10 and 50/50? Why does research favor more Spanish in the early grades? Is more English better?

OUR ANSWER

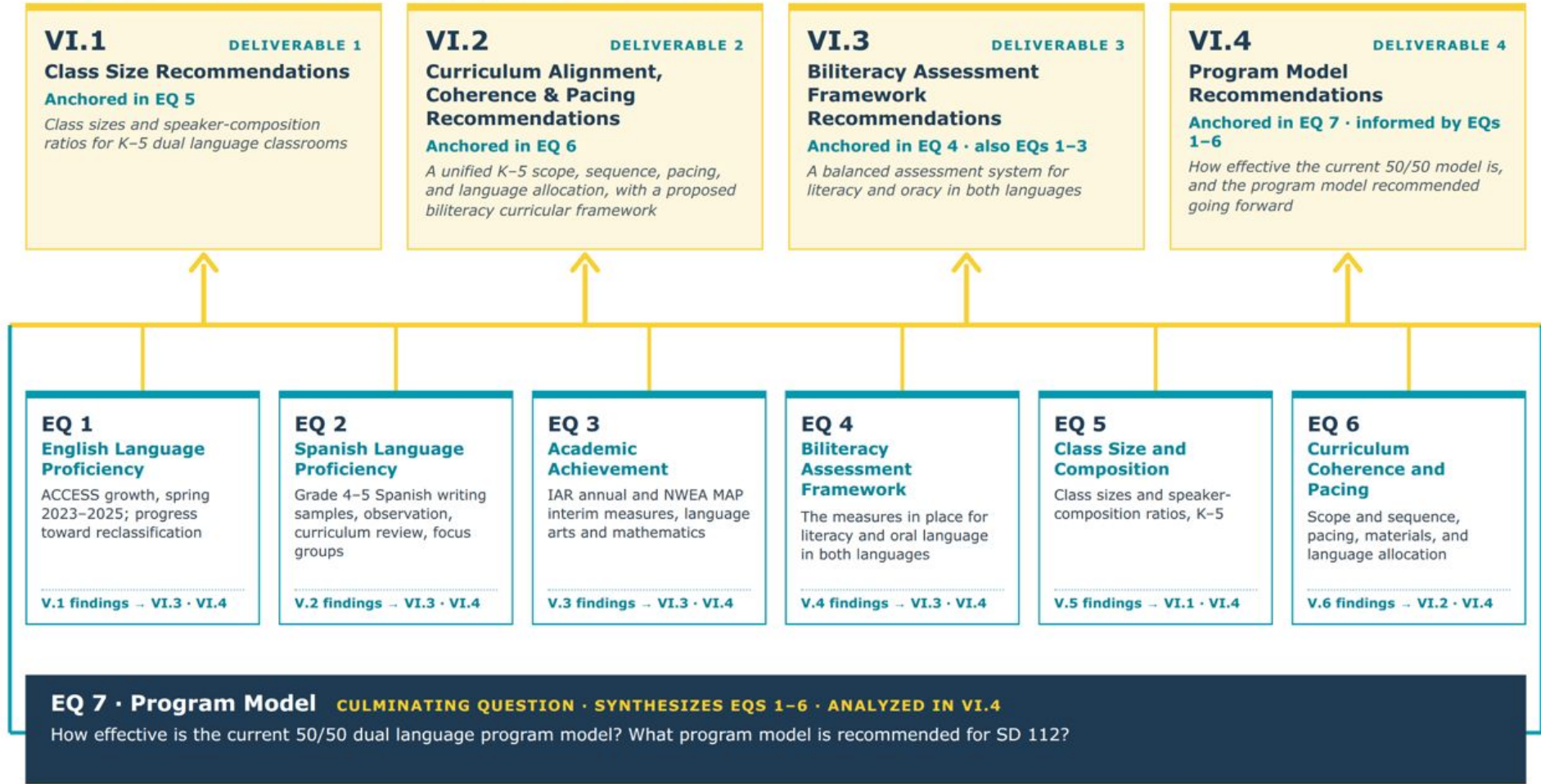
- Spanish strengthens English. Skills learned in one language, especially reading skills, have the potential to transfer to the other (NASEM, 2017). Students who enter with stronger Spanish language proficiency reach English proficiency at higher rates (Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Thompson, 2015).
- By grade 8, 50/50 and 90/10 programs reach similar English proficiency (87% vs. 89% of Latino English learners; Lindholm-Leary).
- More Spanish early, because English surrounds children outside school and Spanish does not. Early Spanish time builds a strong literacy base and protects Spanish from fading as English grows (NASEM, 2017).
- Is more English better? No. More English time does not produce more English by middle school, and it can cost students their Spanish and their cultural identity.

Source: Report Section II, English and Spanish Proficiency Development; Program Structure

Dual Language Program Evaluation Blueprint

Seven Evaluation Questions (EQs) Leading to the Four RFP Deliverables

FOUR DELIVERABLES — RFP SEC. D · RECOMMENDATIONS IN SECTION VI



SAMPLE EQ Map: Program Model

EQ 7 *How effective is the current 50/50 dual language program model? What program model is recommended for SD 112?*

STRANDS OF PRACTICE → PILLARS	Bilingualism & Biliteracy	Academic Achievement	Sociocultural Competence
1 Program Structure	Language allocation protects partner-language time	Articulated PreK–12 grade-level pathway	Equal status for both languages by design
2 Curriculum	Biliteracy trajectory; cross-linguistic bridge	Biliteracy trajectory; cross-linguistic connections	Culturally sustaining, multicultural content
3 Instruction	Strategies for transfer & target-language output	Scaffolded, cognitively rigorous content	Affirms students’ languages & identities
4 Assessment & Accountability	Assessment of proficiency & literacy in both languages	Documentation of grade-level progress; guides instruction	Indicators of cross-cultural growth; equitable measures
5 Staff Quality & Professional Development	Biliterate, dual-language teachers	Two-language content & pedagogy expertise	Culturally responsive, diverse educators
6 Family & Community	Home-language use & literacy partnership	Engagement that supports achievement	Honors community knowledge; bridges cultures
7 Support & Resources	Time & materials for the partner language	Adequate resources for dual instruction	Resources reflecting both cultures equitably

HOW TO READ THE MAP

Each map crosses the seven strands of practice with the three pillars: 21 cells that define dual language education. Shading shows how much each cell supports the deliverable.

Primary contributor
 Contributing

DELIVERABLE

VI.4 Program Model Recommendations

DATA SOURCES

Quantitative: language-allocation analysis; proficiency and achievement trends; reclassification

Qualitative: classroom visits; administrator interviews; teacher focus groups; allocation documents

How We Did the Evaluation

We studied the whole K–5 dual language program, March through August 2026



1

We looked at test results

Three years of state and district tests in English and Spanish, including 119 English learners followed over time



2

We visited classrooms

Visits to all 26 dual language classrooms were scheduled during one week in April 2026



3

We listened

Conversations with administrators, teachers, students, and families, in English and in Spanish



4

We reviewed documents

Schedules, curriculum materials, and an inventory of 91 tests and assessments

HOW WE REACHED CONCLUSIONS

- **Whole program, not a sample**
- **Convergence of evidence**
- **Privacy protected**

The Evidence: Numbers and Voices

QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCE for 2022-2025		QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE	
●	English learners whose English language proficiency test (WIDA ACCESS) results we followed across three years	70	Classroom visits April 21–30, 2026
●	Reading and math growth tests in English (NWEA MAP), plus reading in Spanish	6	Administrator interviews (13 administrators)
●	Illinois state test (IAR) results, grades 3–5: for students in dual language program	13	Teacher focus-groups
●	K-2 Early reading screening results	5	Family focus groups, in English and in Spanish
●	ECRA Reports	6	Student focus groups, grades 3-5
●	inventory of all tests and assessments	13	Curriculum programs and materials reviewed, plus schedules and pacing calendars

Data Analyses, Reporting, & Findings

English Language Proficiency

 4 bright spots

Spanish Language Proficiency

 2 bright spots

Academic Achievement

 3 bright spots

Biliteracy Assessment Framework

Inventory of measures

Class Size and Composition

 2 bright spots

Curriculum Coherence and Pacing

 3 bright spots



Bright spot: the evidence supports a strength (Heath & Heath, 2010)

EQ.1 English Language Proficiency

EVALUATION QUESTION *To what extent are students developing English language proficiency, and are English learners progressing toward reclassification?*



3 of 4

grade cohorts met or exceeded the WIDA consortium gain



19.3%

of English Learners reached the Illinois 4.8 reclassification criterion

WHAT WE FOUND

English learners made sustained gains in English language proficiency according to WIDA ACCESS.



Composite growth across three consecutive administrations



Growth balanced across oral language and literacy

Board Question: Reclassification and Benchmarks

BOARD QUESTION

English growth was compared to a national benchmark. What about the state benchmark? One cohort fell short. Isn't reclassification only one indicator, and isn't high academic achievement much more?

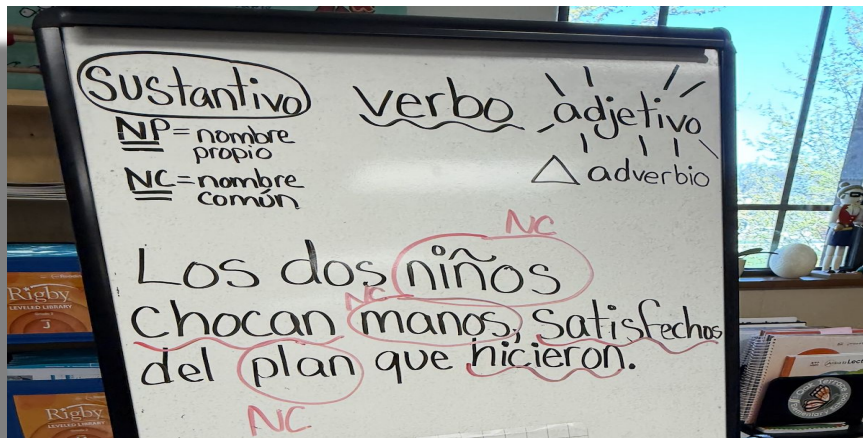
OUR ANSWER

- Our benchmark was the WIDA Consortium: the many states, Illinois among them, that use the ACCESS test. Illinois sets the reclassification bar (ACCESS 4.8). We did not add a separate Illinois comparison; one could be added from the state's English learner progress data in the English Learners in Illinois SY 2024-25 Statistical Report (Multilingual/ Language Development Department) and the Illinois Report Card English Learner progress indicator.
- The cohort that fell short was the oldest (Grade 5). English growth naturally slows at higher levels in every program model (NASEM, 2017).
- Yes, reclassification is one indicator. In dual language it changes a label, not a classroom: the student stays in the program (V.5-F8).
- Yes, high academic achievement is broader: reading and math growth, state test results, and achievement in English and Spanish.

Source: V.1-F3, V.1-F5, V.5-F8; Section II

EQ.2 Spanish Language Proficiency

EVALUATION QUESTION *To what extent are all students developing Spanish language proficiency?*



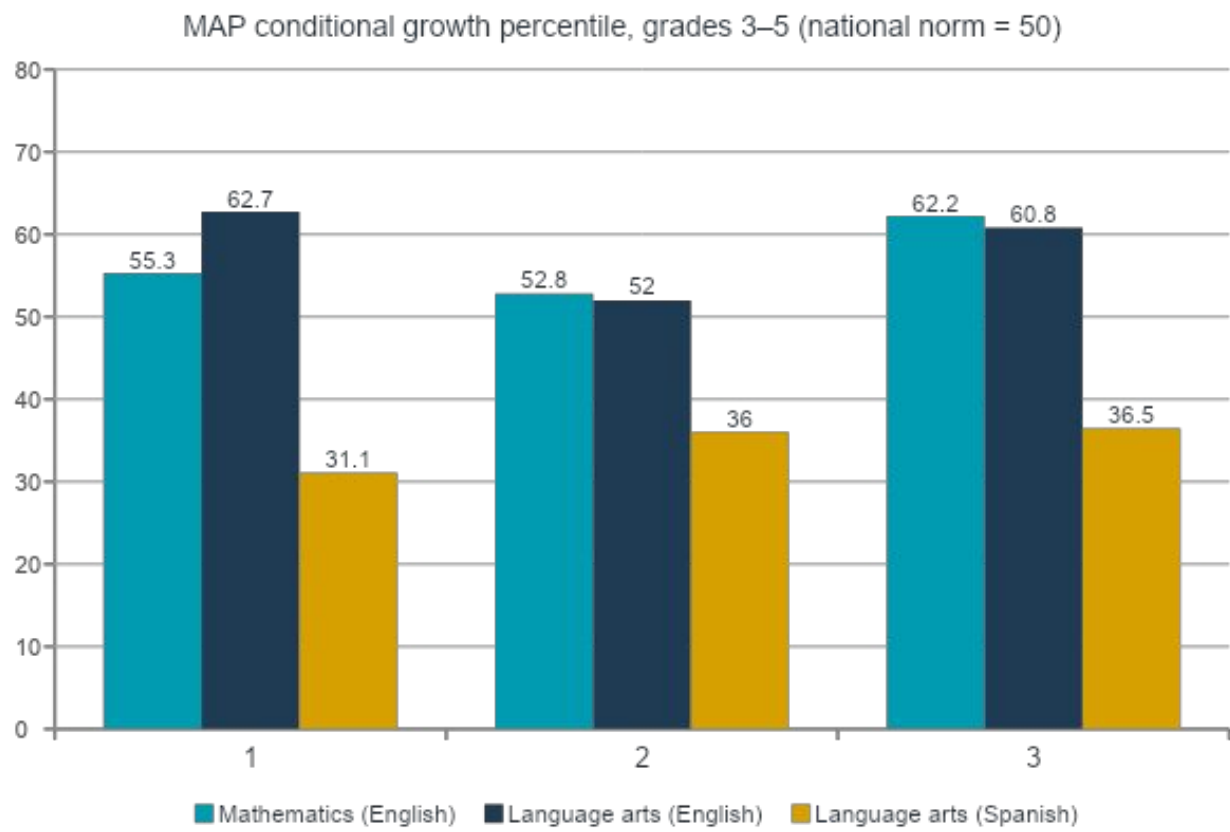
WHAT WE FOUND

The small set of writing samples places students' Spanish in the intermediate range, with organization a consistent strength. Spanish time runs well below the 50/50 design, and Spanish materials are strong.

- V.2-F1** Sampled Spanish writing rates at the intermediate level of proficiency
- V.2-F2** Seven independent sources agree daily allocation leans English-heavy, near 70/30 in practice
- V.2-F3** Sustained academic Spanish observed in Spanish-designated blocks
-  **V.2-F5** Spanish materials rated strong with an abundance of content in the curriculum
-  **V.2-F8** Students take pride in bilingualism as identity and career aspiration

EQ.3 Academic Achievement

EVALUATION QUESTION *What is the achievement of EL students in the dual language program for language arts and mathematics?*



WHAT WE FOUND

Dual language students outgrew national peers in English language arts and mathematics in all **three** years, and beat the state average on every Spring 2025 IAR test. In contrast, Spanish reading growth trailed national peers each year.

-  **V.3-F1** Faster-than-national growth in English, all three years, both subjects
-  **V.3-F6** Spring 2025 IAR above the state average in every grade and subject
-  **V.3-F14** Spanish curriculum materials are of high quality across content areas
- V.3-F3** Slower-than-national growth in Spanish reading, all three years
- V.3-F9** Math is taught in both languages but tested only in English

Board Questions: Comparing Our Results

BOARD QUESTION

How do our English learner outcomes compare with high-performing districts with similar resources and demographics, comparable dual language programs, and D112 students not in the program? Will following the recommendations make results stronger?

OUR ANSWER

- The report compares results with state averages and national norms. It did not compare specific districts or D112 students outside the program.
- Those comparisons are possible but need care: about 20% of D112 students are low-income, versus about 50% statewide, and families choose dual language, so simple comparisons can mislead.
- A possible next step: compare growth, not just scores, with Illinois districts of similar size, income and English learner share that run two-way programs, and with D112 peers who started at the same level.
- Will results improve? Research links faithful implementation (which is multi-faceted - *See the Dual Language Guiding Principles*) to stronger outcomes.
- *Source: Sections I, IV, VIII*

Board Questions: Spanish and English Growth

BOARD QUESTION

Spanish results have declined over three years and English learners' ELA growth is modest. To be the best dual language program in Illinois, do we need more progress in ELA and SLA? Yes or no.

OUR ANSWER

- Yes. English growth is already above national peers (MAP growth percentiles of 52 to 63), and state test results beat the state average in every grade and subject.
- Spanish is the area of concern both for achievement and proficiency: growth on MAP Lectura (V.3-F3) is the only standardized indicator of growth in Spanish Language Arts achievement.
- High quality programs show strong growth in both languages across the curriculum, measured in both languages.

Source: V.3-F1, V.3-F3, V.3-F6

BOARD QUESTION

MAP's Spanish norms come largely from other dual language programs. Does that mean our students are trailing peers in comparable programs?

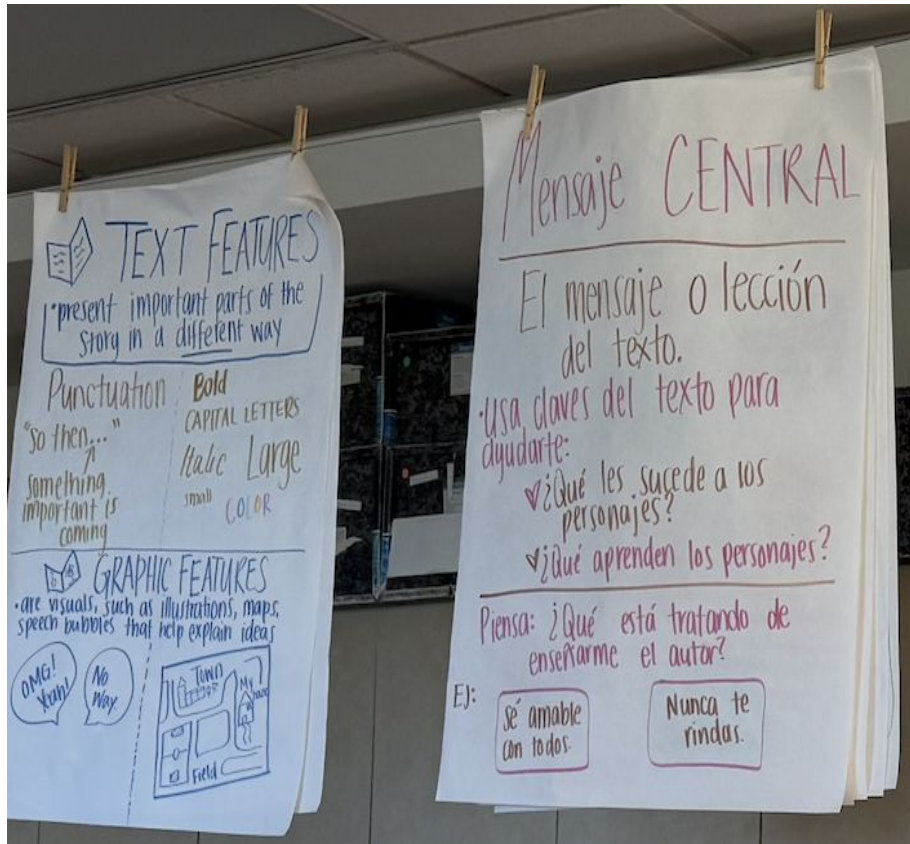
OUR ANSWER

- Growth below 50 means our students grew less than students who started at the same RIT score in the districts that give this test, many of them dual language or bilingual programs.
- Cautions: the normed group is not a national sample, it includes many native Spanish speakers and Spanish-heavier models, and the test is not normed for non-native Spanish speakers (VI.4-R6).

Source: V.3-F3; VI.4-R6; Section VIII

EQ.4 Biliteracy Assessment Framework

EVALUATION QUESTION *How might a comprehensive biliteracy assessment framework be conceptualized for the dual language program in SD 112?*



WHAT WE FOUND

The district measures reading and foundational literacy in both languages and English proficiency in all four domains, but does not measure Spanish language proficiency. English language arts results are acted on more readily than Spanish language arts results.

IN PLACE

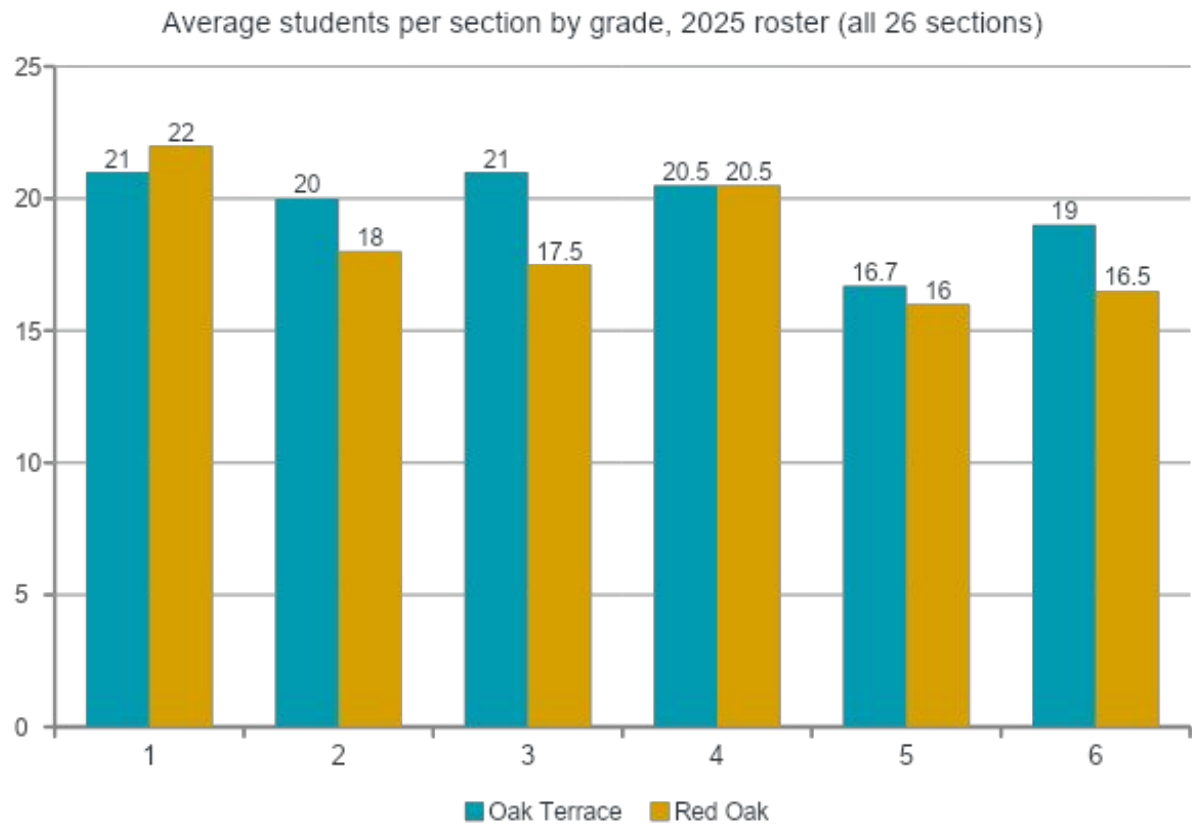
- English proficiency, all four domains: WIDA ACCESS and Screener (V.4-F1)
- Spanish and English reading and foundational literacy, K–5 (V.4-F2)
- Writing in both languages four times a year, grades 4–5 (V.4-F3)

NOT YET IN PLACE

- A measure of Spanish language proficiency (V.4-F1, F6)
- Measures of what students do across both languages (V.4-F4)
- Documentation of sociocultural competence
- Spanish results used in instructional decisions (V.4-F7)

EQ.5 Class Size and Composition

EVALUATION QUESTION *What are the optimal class sizes and student composition ratios for K–5 dual language classrooms in SD 112?*



18.9

average class size across 26 sections and 492 students

16–23

range of section sizes; none exceeds any regulatory or research limit

-  **V.5-F1** 26 sections, 492 students, averaging 18.9 per class
-  **V.5-F9** Parents ask for a 25–26 cap; every class already runs below it
- V.5-F3** Red Oak kindergarten is the only single-section grade
- V.5-F6** Illinois caps bilingual ratios at 90% of the building's general education ratio
- V.5-F8** Reclassification changes a label, not the room: the EL count falls while classes stay the same

EQ.6 Curriculum Coherence and Pacing

EVALUATION QUESTION *How coherent, vertically aligned, and consistently paced is the dual language curriculum across grade levels in SD 112?*

Instructional Materials Ratings

Overall quality and dual language-specific components, by material

MATERIAL	OVERALL QUALITY	CROSS-LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS	BILITERACY	CROSS-CULTURAL CONNECTIONS
LITERACY				
Into Reading HMH · ELA · English · Gr 3	3 Strong	3 Strong	3 Strong	2 Partial
¡Arriba la Lectura! HMH · ELA · Spanish · Gr 4	3 Strong	3 Strong	2 Partial	2 Partial
CKLA Skills Amplify · Foundational · English · Gr 1	2 Partial	1 Limited	1 Limited	1 Limited
Caminos Lectoescritura Amplify · Foundational · Spanish · Gr 1	2 Adequate w/ support	2 Partial	2 Partial	2 Partial
MATH & CONTENT AREAS				
Bridges in Mathematics Math · English · Gr 2	3 Strong	1 Limited	N/A	1 Limited
Number Corner Math · Spanish · Gr 2	3 Strong	2 Partial	3 Strong	1 Limited
Social Studies Alive! TCI · Social Studies · Spanish · Gr 3	3 Strong	2 Partial	1 Limited	1 Limited
FOSS Science Delta · Science · Spanish · Gr 2	3 Strong	2 Partial	2 Partial	2 Partial

Takeaway: Overall quality is Partial-to-Strong for every material, but dual language-specific features lag — no material was rated Strong for cross-cultural connections.

3 = Strong · 2 = Partial · 1 = Limited/absent
Source: Tables V.6.2–V.6.3

WHAT WE FOUND

The literacy calendar is well coordinated across grades 1–5. The program in practice at times runs as two monolingual curricula side by side, with few planned cross-language connections. Spanish science and social studies instructional time is often reduced in practice.



V.6-F3

Grades 1–5 open and close all nine literacy modules within days



V.6-F4

District crosswalks and pacing calendars already connect the curricula



V.6-F5

Grades 4–5 writing is coordinated in both languages

V.6-F1

Delivered percentage of language use leans toward English away from the 50/50 model

V.6-F6

Science and social studies (major Spanish instructional blocks) are often reduced in practice

Deliverables and Recommendations

Deliverable 1

VI.1

Class Size

Target 20 students,
ceiling 24, at least two
sections per grade

Deliverable 2

VI.2

Curriculum Alignment & Pacing

Increase Spanish time
and build cohesion
between the two
languages K-5

Deliverable 3

VI.3

Biliteracy Assessment Framework

Craft a balanced
assessment system
across both languages
and both constructs
(language arts &
language development)

Deliverable 4

VI.4 (EQ.7)

Program Model

Adapt instruction and
assessment to deliver a
full 50/50 model

VI.1 Class Size Recommendations

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION Plan every K–5 section at 20 students with a ceiling of 24 and at least two sections per grade. Set language composition through documented grouping at each grade rather than a single program-wide ratio.

- R1** Planning target of 20 per section; allocate sections to need — smallest where EL or special-education density is highest
- R2** At least two sections at every grade, whatever the enrollment
- R3** Revisit the Illinois Part 228 ceiling in light of forthcoming ISBE dual language guidance (December 2026)
- R4** Apply the one-third partner-language floor grade by grade
- R5** Continue to develop a language profile that follows each student
- R6** Make proficiency-balanced grouping a documented expectation
- R7** Ceiling of 24, with an agreed response when a section reaches it

WHY THESE NUMBERS

- No research identifies an optimal dual language class size
- Today: 18.9 average, 16–23 range — already within both limits (V.5-F1)
- Plan on enrollment projections, not the 2025 roster (V.5-F7)

Board Questions: Kindergarten and Early Grades

BOARD QUESTION

Does the target of 20 especially apply in kindergarten? Our kindergarten sections are at 21 and 22. Should kindergarten be below 20?

OUR ANSWER

- Yes, 20 applies in kindergarten, and that is where it matters most. Students begin both literacies there, and daily small-group work (groups of three to six, at least 30 minutes) is hardest to schedule in a large class.
- We set one target for all grades, with the smallest sections where needs are highest (VI.1-R1). Kindergarten often has the most English learners, so it is a strong candidate for sections at 20.
- Kindergarten also sets the program's size and language balance for years to come, and it is the grade where composition counts are most reliable (V.5-F4).

Source: VI.1-R1, VI.1-R7; V.5-F4

BOARD QUESTION

Finding V.5-F2 says classes are largest in K-3, where English learner and special education needs peak. Should we read the report as recommending smaller classes in the early grades?

OUR ANSWER

- Yes. Read V.5-F2 together with VI.1-R1: allocate sections to need, so the smallest sections go where English learner and special education density is highest. Today that is K-3.

Source: V.5-F2; VI.1-R1

Board Questions: The Illinois 90% Rule

BOARD QUESTION

You validated Illinois's 90% rule and noted possible new direction from the state. Will the consolidated program meet that rule?

OUR ANSWER

- Illinois caps bilingual class ratios at 90% of the building's general education average for the same grades, counted on September 30 (23 Ill. Adm. Code 228.30). Example: if the general education average is 22, the bilingual ceiling is 19.8.
- The current program meets it. Whether the consolidated program will, depends on Oak Terrace's general education averages and final section sizes; the district should check this against fall 2027 enrollment.
- The rule does not say how to apply it to two-way classes where about half the students are not English learners. ISBE guidance expected in December 2026 may settle this; we recommend revisiting the ceiling then (VI.1-R3).

Source: V.5-F6; VI.1-R3

Board Questions: ESL Support and Co-Teaching

BOARD QUESTION

For K–3, what about more ESL support (currently one ESL specialist per school) and a special education co-teaching model where necessary?

OUR ANSWER

- The report did not analyze staffing levels, so it makes no recommendation on the number of ESL specialists.
- The direction fits our findings: additional supports are needed in K–3 (V.5-F2), and support works best when ESL, special education, and dual language teachers plan together rather than in separate pull-out services (Section II). Building time into the schedule for co-planning would be beneficial.

Source: V.5-F2; Section II, Inclusive Dual Language Education

BOARD QUESTION

What role should co-teaching play, and what does research say about its impact for English learners and bilingual students with disabilities?

OUR ANSWER

- Bilingual students with disabilities can and do become bilingual; dual language does not hold them back (Sánchez López, Young, Genesee & Hilliard, 2022).
- Co-teaching can keep these students learning in both languages alongside their peers. Research on co-teaching specifically for bilingual students is limited; the stronger evidence supports services that are coordinated and delivered in both languages.
- Where IEP needs cluster, co-teaching (between Dual language educators and special educators is a reasonable option (V.5-F9).

Source: Section II; V.5-F9; VI.1-R8

Board Question: Class Composition and Language Diversity

BOARD QUESTION

How does more language diversity, including heritage speakers and simultaneous bilinguals, benefit all students? Given attrition, should the lottery become more nuanced, and should each student's language profile follow them through the program?

OUR ANSWER

- Diversity helps everyone: each language group is a model for the other, heritage speakers and simultaneous bilinguals bridge both languages, and students learn to work across cultures.
- Yes, the lottery should be more nuanced. We recommend a one-third partner-language minimum at each grade (VI.1-R4) and a decision rule that states in advance what the district does when the applicant pool skews (VI.1-R9).
- Yes, the language portrait should follow each student. Intake surveys are a start; a continuing bilingual portrait is the goal (VI.1-R5, VI.4-R9).
- Composition targets are for building classes, not for deciding who is admitted.

Source: VI.1-R4, R5, R9; VI.4-R9; VI.1 Cautions on use

VI.2 Curriculum Alignment & Pacing

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION Increase instructional time in Spanish, especially science and social studies, and plan use of the partner language throughout the content areas to move closer to the 50/50 language allocation.

R1 Align pacing and instruction

Protect a daily Spanish science or social studies block

R2 Build in cross-linguistic connections

In every content area plan for use of the partner language whatever the week's lead language

R3 Incorporate sociocultural contexts

Engage students' and families' funds of knowledge across the curriculum

R4 Cap foundational skills to 60 minute block daily

Follow the program's scope and sequence; thus protecting time for content area instruction, especially Science and Social Studies

R5 Complete the English-Spanish crosswalk

Highlight complementary content to support transfer across languages

R6 Add opportunities for oral language development every day

Plan for peer interaction in both languages every day using a variety of strategies and use of open-ended questions in instruction

SUPPORTING

- R7 Adopt a dual language biliteracy curriculum framework
- R8 Extend the strong grade 4–5 writing work to K–3
- R9 Build on model practices through peer coaching
- R10 Refresh translanguageing professional learning
- R11 Track designed vs. delivered allocation each year
- R12 Professional learning to support implementation

A Proposed Dual Language Biliteracy Curricular Framework

North Shore School District 112 Dual Language Program Evaluation · Paridad Education Consulting



TWO LANGUAGES
one connected
curriculum

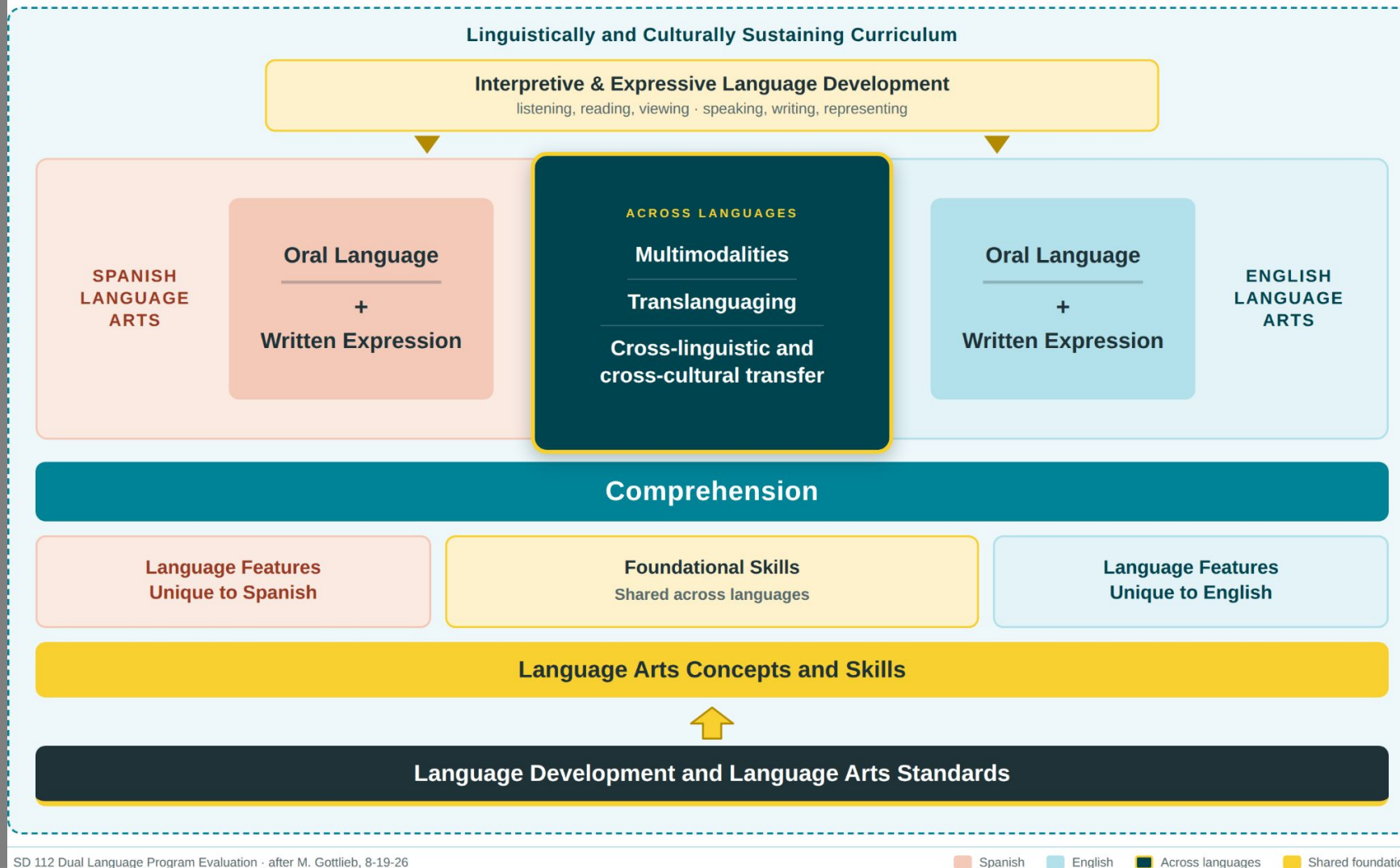


Figure VI.2.1. A Proposed Dual Language Biliteracy Curricular Framework: Example from language arts that illustrates components of a coordinated dual language curriculum framework.

Board Questions: Curriculum Design and Pacing

BOARD QUESTION

Cross-cultural competence and translanguaging scored lowest in the curriculum review. You propose fixing this with more cross-linguistic instruction, correct?

OUR ANSWER

- Correct. We recommend cross-language connections in every subject, whatever the week's lead language (VI.2-R2); integrating students' and families' cultures and knowledge across the curriculum (VI.2-R3); implementing a translanguaging refresher for staff (VI.2-R10); and delivering a coordinated biliteracy curriculum and assessment frameworks (VI.2-R7).

Source: V.6-F2; VI.2-R2, R3, R7, R10

BOARD QUESTION

Should dual language curriculum pacing match the pacing in monolingual classrooms?

OUR ANSWER

- Not in lockstep. Students should meet grade-level standards in English and Spanish (Academic achievement and language proficiency) by year's end, but a dual language program needs its own pacing plan across two languages.
- Matching two monolingual paces means teaching everything twice in half the time, which squeezes out science and social studies. Teaching complementary content in each language, with planned transfer, is more efficient and cohesive (VI.2-R5).
- The bi-literacy calendar is already well coordinated across grades 1–5 (V.6-F3).

Source: V.6-F3, V.6-F4; VI.2-R5

Board Questions: Spanish Time, Content Areas, Materials

BOARD QUESTION

What is the impact of de-emphasized Spanish in instruction, and of science and social studies (taught in Spanish) being taught infrequently because of pacing demands?

OUR ANSWER

- Less Spanish lowers its status and offer fewer opportunities for students to access and use their home language: students answer in English and adults translate (V.1-F15). Spanish growth slows (V.3-F3), and English learners risk losing their home language as English grows (NASEM, 2017).
- Beyond their SLA class, science and social studies are where students learn academic Spanish across all dimensions of academic language. When these content areas are cut, students lose content knowledge and vocabulary and these are essential for academic reading and writing in both languages.
- Recommendation: protect a daily Spanish science **or** social studies instructional block (VI.2-R1, R4). Coordinate ELA and SLA with Science and Social Studies to optimize academic language development.

Source: V.1-F15, V.3-F3, V.6-F6; VI.2-R1, R4

BOARD QUESTION

CKLA and Caminos rated limited or partial on cross-language connections and biliteracy, and cross-cultural connections were partial or absent. Does math have similar challenges?

OUR ANSWER

- Yes. Bridges (English) rated limited on cross-language and cross-cultural connections; Number Corner (Spanish) rated partial on cross-language and limited on cross-cultural. These are two different fixed-language blocks and are not meant to be a paired sequence, and math is tested only in English (V.6-F8, V.3-F9). Overall quality of the math materials is strong.

Source: Tables V.6.2–V.6.3; V.6-F8; V.3-F9

VI.3 Biliteracy Assessment Framework

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION Build and maintain a comprehensive biliteracy assessment framework balanced across Spanish and English language development and across Spanish and English language arts for all dual language students.

English WIDA Screener and WIDA ACCESS; NWEA MAP Reading or another interim measure; IAR; common oral and writing tasks	Across both languages Common oral and writing samples capturing translanguageing and cross-linguistic transfer	Spanish Common oral and writing samples for all students; NWEA MAP lectura or a Spanish language arts test normed on both groups; measures for Spanish language proficiency
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Phase in student portraits that are archived with common Spanish and English oral and written samples with criteria for success across grades.

A Proposed Dual Language Biliteracy Assessment Framework

North Shore School District 112 Dual Language Program Evaluation · Paridad Education Consulting

◆ **NOT IN PLACE**
Components flagged in red
with dashed outlines are
not yet in place

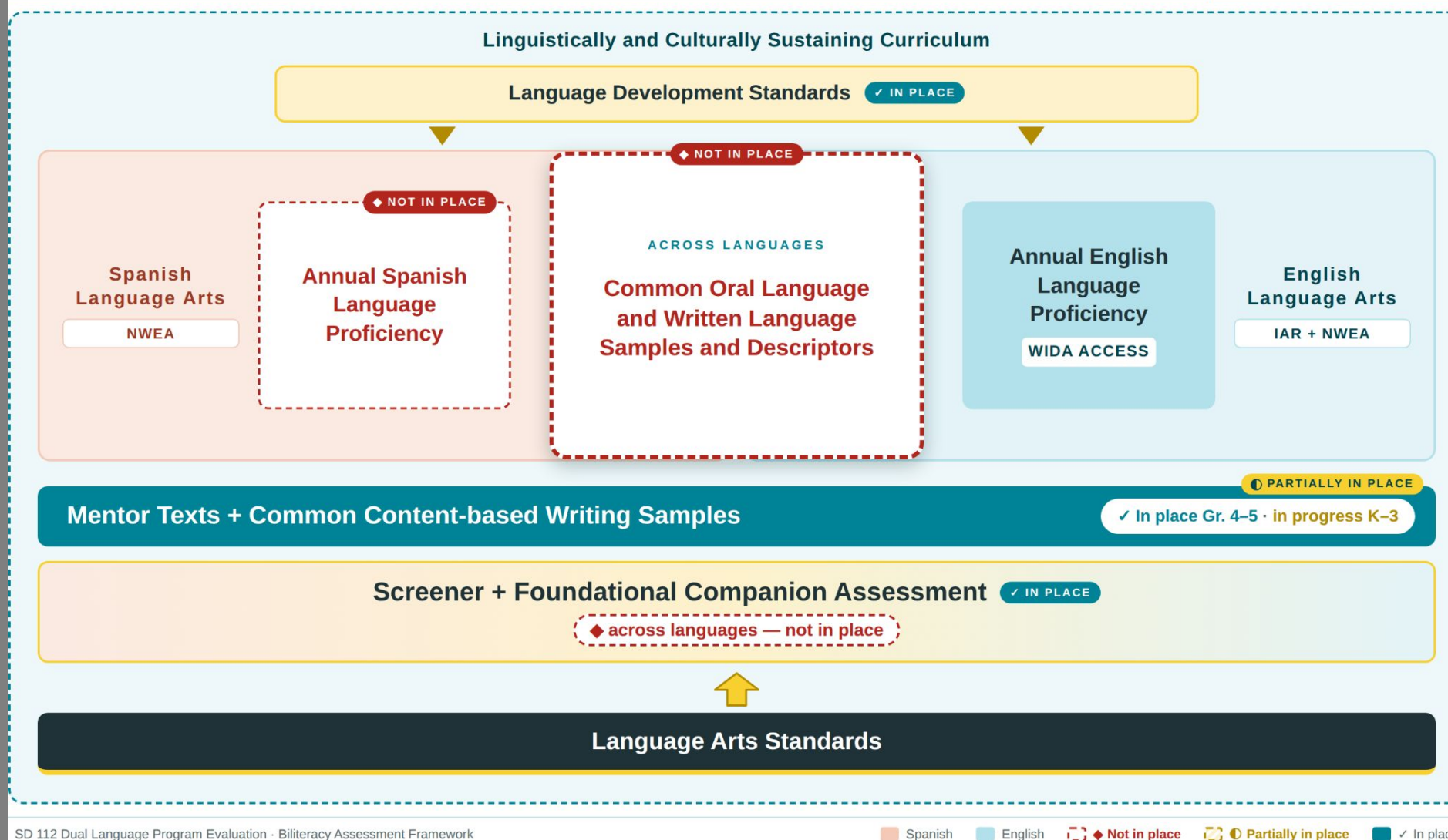


Figure VI.3.2. A Proposed Dual Language Biliteracy Assessment Framework. Red font indicates measures not currently in place.

Board Questions: Measuring Student Learning

BOARD QUESTION

You proposed several ways the district can better evaluate student performance; they address significant gaps and are good for students, parents and staff.

OUR ANSWER

- Thank you. We suggest phasing them in: pilot common Spanish speaking and writing samples in one grade band first, with protected time for teachers to score them together, then build the full system and calendar.
- These measures are for improving instruction, not for evaluating teachers.

Source: VI.3 Implementing the Recommendations; Cautions on use

BOARD QUESTION

For the skeptics: why establish baselines and measure growth in English for English learners and in Spanish for all students? Why measure oral language and Spanish skills?

OUR ANSWER

- What is not measured cannot be made visible. Today only the English half of the program's bilingual goal is measured (V.4-F1).
- An English baseline protects English learners as Spanish time grows (VI.4-R4). A Spanish baseline for every group shows whether English speakers are becoming bilingual and Spanish speakers are keeping and growing their home language.
- Oral language is the foundation of reading and writing, and growth in one language predicts growth in the other (NASEM, 2017). Testing only English undercounts what dual language students know (Lindholm-Leary, 2012).

Source: V.4-F1; VI.4-R4; VI.3-R2; Section II

Board Questions: Tracking Progress Over Time

BOARD QUESTION

How will we know the changes are working? Could the district repeat your methods each year, use this report as the baseline, and share progress using your three-pillar chart?

OUR ANSWER

- Yes. This report can serve as the baseline, and the three-pillar chart (Figure VI.4.1) works well as an annual public scorecard.
- Each year, report on: the delivered Spanish/English split by grade and block (VI.4-R3); English growth against this baseline (VI.4-R4); Spanish proficiency once new assessment measures are in place, with first results planned for 2028–29 (VI.4-R5); and a survey of staff, families and students (VI.3-R6).

Source: VI.4-R3, R4, R5; VI.3-R6; Section VIII

BOARD QUESTION

Looking further ahead, what long-term outcomes should the district track to know students, including Spanish-speaking and multilingual students, leave the program bilingual and biliterate?

OUR ANSWER

- Spanish and English proficiency at the end of grades 5 and 8, reported separately for Spanish speakers, heritage speakers and English speakers (VI.3-R3).
- Spanish and English achievement minimally in language arts & mathematics
- The Illinois Seal of Biliteracy and the Highland Park High School Dual Language Seal.
- Staying in the program through grade 8
- Reclassification rates.
- Access to advanced coursework across content areas.

Source: VI.3-R3; Section I; Section II (Heineke & Davin, 2025)

VI.4 Program Model Recommendations

OVERALL RECOMMENDATION Adapt the district's instructional and assessment frameworks to attain a full 50/50 model — a coordinated curriculum in both languages and a biliteracy assessment framework that reflects it.

What is delivered
A program that leans toward more time allocated to English than Spanish instruction and assessment.

English language proficiency and English language arts outcomes 
Strong by any national standard

Spanish outcomes
Growth below norm on the one Spanish test

What should be measured
Spanish language proficiency

- R1** Adopt "deliver 50/50 as specified" as the model position
- R2** Adjust schedule so that Spanish reaches its 50% language allocation
- R3** Publish an allocation figure each year, by grade and block
- R4** Protect English results; review them annually as the baseline
- R5** Collect K–5 Spanish language proficiency data in listening, speaking, reading & writing
- R6** If NWEA MAP Lectura continues, give it to native Spanish speakers only
- R7** Give NWEA Math in Spanish once a true 50/50 allocation is reached
- R8** Coordinate materials in all content areas, document transferability between languages, and increase translanguaging capacity
- R9** Build a bilingual language portrait with each student, and use this information to create classroom compositions
- R10** Review programmatic language allocation annually

Board Questions: 50/50 and 80/20

BOARD QUESTION

Students experience about 70/30. You recommend first reaching a true 50/50 and leave 80/20 for later, if 50/50 is reached first. Please explain why 80/20 is not recommended now.

OUR ANSWER

- Why not 80/20 now: (1) the current model has not been realized, so it cannot be judged; (2) most of the shift to Spanish could be in a few fixed English blocks that can be rebalanced at no instructional cost (3) Spanish is not yet adequately measured, so there is no baseline to judge any model.
- Once 50/50 is delivered and Spanish is measured, the district will have the evidence to decide whether more early Spanish is needed.

Source: V.6-F1; Figure VI.4.1; VI.4 Cautions on use (Evaluability)

BOARD QUESTION

Explain the 50/50 versus 80/20 recommendation. Was it based on what research says is best for students?

OUR ANSWER

- Research does not show 50/50 is better than 80/20 or 90/10 for English: both reach similar English results by grade 8. Programs with more early Spanish often show stronger Spanish language development.
- Our recommendation is based on research plus district evidence and practicality: deliver and measure the current design first. It is an important step toward the 50/50 versus 80/20 decision, not a final verdict on 80/20.

Source: Section II; Executive Summary; VI.4

Board Questions: The Current Course and Urgency

BOARD QUESTION

English results are strong. The program-model chart says the program 'keeps a 70/30 English day under a 50/50 name' and marks that path 'not recommended.' How is the program as delivered holding students back, and how urgent is it to change course?

OUR ANSWER

- Academically and linguistically: Spanish reading growth has trailed peers for three years and standing has slipped; Spanish science and social studies instructional blocks are often cut.
- Socially: Spanish has lower status in daily practice, and some families feel the program's social life tilts toward English-speaking families. Spanish speaking students who lose proficiency in their home language, may become disconnected from their families, and their cultural identities. Spanish speaking students English is not held back.
- Urgency is high to increase Spanish instructional time. Some steps can start now: protect the Spanish content block, and pilot Spanish oral language and writing samples within content area classes. The schedule fix can be approved in 2027–28 for 2028–29.

Source: Figure VI.4.1; V.3-F3; V.6-F6; VI.1 Cautions on use; Section VII

BOARD QUESTION

Our students' Spanish is declining. Would a true 50/50 alone reverse the decline, or would it take more Spanish in the early grades (80/20 or 90/10 in K–2)? Would you recommend that? If not, why not?

OUR ANSWER

- A true 50/50 is the necessary first step, but alone it may not be enough. It must come with more time for Spanish instruction, cross-language teaching, daily oral language and Spanish measures. Creating a school-wide culture where Spanish language and cultures are experienced from bell to bell each day
- Research does support more Spanish in the early grades for increased Spanish outcomes. We do not recommend it yet because the district first needs to deliver and measure its current design.
- If two to three years of true 50/50, measured in Spanish, do not reverse the decline in Spanish, an early-grades model with more Spanish should be considered.

Source: Section II; VI.4; VI.4 Cautions on use

Prioritized Recommendations for Program Implementation

Building on strengths: strong English growth, high-quality Spanish materials, equal literacy time by design, experienced teachers, and data the district already collects.

1

SHORT TERM

2027–28

- Reaffirm the Program Model Position
- Adopt Assessments in Spanish
- Continue to build Bilingual Linguistic Portraits
- Form Curriculum Teams

2

MIDDLE TERM

Beginning 2028–29

- Implement and monitor revised schedule
- Build Classroom sections with adopted guidelines
- Coordinate English and Spanish Curricula
- Engage in Professional Learning
- Build the biliteracy assessment system

3

LONG TERM

2029–30 and beyond

- Conduct annual Review Cycles of language allocation
- Establish a Spanish language proficiency trend line
- Gather classroom-based assessment in both languages
- Create a plan to ensure instructional coherence

Board Questions: Consolidation at Oak Terrace

BOARD QUESTION

The report did not compare the two schools. Did major differences between Red Oak and Oak Terrace stand out? Which practices should the district carry forward?

OUR ANSWER

- We did not compare schools: some grade groups are a single classroom, so site results could identify students or teachers.
- Differences in the data: Oak Terrace is larger (15 sections, 44% English learners) than Red Oak (11 sections, 29%), and Red Oak kindergarten is a single section.
- Carry forward: opportunities for proficiency-balanced heterogeneous grouping, the coordinated literacy calendar, grade 4–5 bilingual writing, and teacher-built crosswalks.

Source: Section IV; Table V.5.1; V.5-F3; VI.1 Implementation

BOARD QUESTION

The program consolidates at Oak Terrace in 2027–28. What conditions should be in place before consolidation, and what risks should the district plan for?

OUR ANSWER

- Before: sections planned on projected enrollment (447 by 2026–27), two per grade, a 20-student target; room count confirmed; the 90% rule checked; a composition decision rule and student language profiles in place; a family explanation in English and Spanish.
- Risks: grades falling below the one-third Spanish-speaker floor (kindergarten, grade 5); very small groups; Spanish time eroding further during the transition.

Source: V.5-F7; VI.1-R1–R9; VI.1 Cautions on use; Section VIII

Board Questions: Sociocultural Competence and Staffing

BOARD QUESTION

The report says sociocultural competence was not evaluated so as not to interfere with the district's ongoing initiatives. Which initiatives? What steps now would strengthen identity and give both languages and cultures equal status?

OUR ANSWER

- We referred to the district's Dual Language Task Force (family and staff surveys in 2025–26) and the Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee.
- Steps: integrate students' and family cultural knowledge into units (VI.2-R3); use Spanish in specials, announcements and events, not only in class (VI.4-R2); communicate with families equally in both languages; include student reflection on identity in each biliteracy portrait (VI.3-R5).

Source: Section I, Evaluation Design; VI.2-R3; VI.4-R2; VI.3-R5

BOARD QUESTION

The report states it 'does not recommend staffing changes and should not be cited as support for them.' Does that cover individual staff members, or staffing levels and roles in general?

OUR ANSWER

- Both, in different ways. First, the findings are not a judgment on any individual
- Second, the evaluation team did not study staffing levels or roles, so it should not be cited for or against them. Questions such as ESL staffing or co-teaching remain open decisions for the district.

Source: VI.4 Cautions on use (Use and non-use); Section VIII

Board Question: Reviewing Recommendations Each Year

BOARD QUESTION

How does Paridad suggest the district review recommendations annually?

OUR ANSWER

- The district can develop a timeline for each recommendation, following the short-, middle- and long-term plan in Section VII.
- Hold one annual review, for example each spring, with administrators, teachers, coaches, students and family representatives such as the Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee.
- Use a simple scorecard: the status of each recommendation, the data sources, evidence, and next steps. Include the delivered language allocation, English and Spanish results, and survey feedback.
- Report to the Board each year using the three-pillar chart and the same criteria, and adjust priorities based on what the evidence shows.

Source: Section VII; VI.4-R3, R10; VI.3-R6

Limitations of the Evaluation Study

- Evidence in Spanish is based on one instrument, NWEA MAP Lectura, which measures achievement only
- The writing evidence is limited to seven, grades 4 and 5 student samples, four in Spanish and three in English
- Evaluators did not see how assessment of student learning from the Esquina Matemática time was collected

The nature of the evaluation design

2

The evaluation was descriptive, not based on randomization; recommendations are professional judgment informed by converging evidence and research

Time allocated for field work

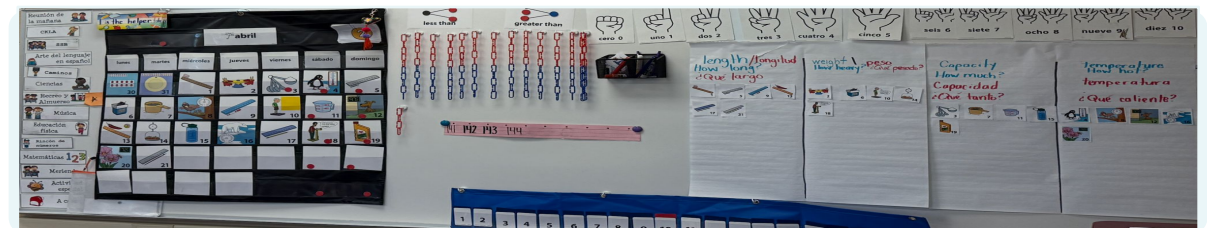
3

One week of classroom observations in April 2026

Areas outside the focus of the evaluation

4

Sociocultural competence and the family and community strand were not primary foci, to avoid duplicating district initiatives



Board Questions: About the Report

BOARD QUESTION

When will the full report be available in Spanish?

OUR ANSWER

- We have prepared a Spanish executive summary for families as specified in the RFP.

BOARD QUESTION

How much editorial control did the district have over the authorship of this report?

OUR ANSWER

- Paridad wrote the findings and recommendations independently. The district supplied data, verified facts such as the assessment inventory, and reviewed drafts for accuracy.

BOARD QUESTION

Is there anything from your work that didn't make it into the final report that the Board should know?

OUR ANSWER

- Paridad was not tasked with evaluating and reporting on teaching quality and effective practices even though we captured many examples throughout our observations.
- Paridad did not report on the high levels of bilingualism of both teaching and office staff that we observed.

Source: Section VIII

Continue building and refining a true 50/50 program on a strong foundation



Acknowledgements

Paridad would like to thank all those individuals who participated in this study. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the support of the SD 112 administrative team, the classroom teachers, the front office personnel, the community liaisons, the dual language parents and finally the dual language students themselves. Without their commitment and dedication to improving their program, this evaluation would not have been possible.