

Frequently Asked Questions



How long is the program? Does it go all the way through high school?

Jurupa's goal is to have students participate from Kinder through high school. At this point the program is planned up to 6th grade.

Is this an experimental program?

No, it is not an experimental program. It has been around since the 1960's in Dade County, Florida. Dual Immersion Programs began in California between 1980-1986 in San Francisco, San Jose, Windsor, Santa Monica-Malibu, & Oakland.

Why don't we teach French, Chinese or any other foreign language?

We don't teach other languages because according to the district demographics we don't have enough students who speak them. Our largest population is Spanish speakers.

If my child is 3 years old, can I put him or her on the waiting list?

Of course, that way he/she can be on the top of the waiting list when he/she is ready to start Kinder.

My child is 10 years old and not bilingual, can he still participate?

No, your child cannot participate. The program is designed for students to start in Kinder. Starting in higher grades is not recommended.

Do I have to speak Spanish to have my child participate?

You do not need to be bilingual. However, you do need to be actively involved in your child's education using your home language.

What if I want to take my child out of the program by the 2nd or 3rd year?

Parents who enroll students in this program need to understand that the commitment is for a minimum of five years.

Are parents allowed to visit classrooms?

Yes, visits are welcomed and can be arranged with the teachers and principal.

If I didn't make it to the Dual Immersion information meeting can I still enroll my child?

Parents must attend a mandatory informational meeting in order for their child to be officially considered for the program.

Who can I contact if I have questions in regards to this program in the future?

You can contact Language Services and Student Programs or either of the two schools offering the program.

Is parent training offered?

Yes, parent training is offered throughout the year and all parents are expected to participate.

Will two languages confuse my child or "slow down" his/her academic progress?

There is no research to indicate that learning in two languages will confuse or slow down the rate of progress of students. There is, however, significant research to indicate that two languages can enhance academic growth. Remember that two and three languages are used for instruction in most developed nations of the world - with impressive results by American standards. Two languages will also not complicate any behavior problem or learning disability. Again there is no research to indicate that children in other parts of the world have more of these than do American children. One note of caution - all well-designed programs require consistent implementation. Moving children in and out of such programs reduces their effectiveness. In order to get the maximum benefits from a Dual Immersion Program, plan on staying with the program design for at least five years. Two languages require a larger vocabulary to be built, and the early years of the program will be critical. Our school will assist you in locating a similar program should a family move become unavoidable. Think of it as learning two names for an object, such as "person" and "man"; one of the names your child also knows is "hombre".

Why does one teacher only speak in Spanish?

The English-dominant child often comes from an environment where only one language is spoken. One of the few motivating factors for them to want to learn another language will be to understand the teacher. If the student knows that the teacher speaks English, this important motivating factor may be diminished. In immersion programs throughout the world, the teacher speaks only in the "target" language - in this case, Spanish. Spanish-dominant students in an English-dominant culture have many other motivating factors for wanting to learn English and the language spoken by the teacher is not as important a factor. If you need to speak with the teacher in English, you may write a note or wait for a time when you can be away from students.

What if my child seems frustrated by listening to Spanish?

Expect your child to feel a bit tired or frustrated during the first few months in the program. This is known as the "silent period," as they learn the way the new language

sounds. Try to be encouraging and ask for positive feedback about what they like most in school each day. Children are very perceptive. If you are having doubts about the program, they will know it and feel similarly, no matter what you say to them.

Am I expected to help my child with homework in Spanish?

Written instructions for all homework are given in both English and Spanish. There may be times, however, when an English/Spanish dictionary will be necessary.

Can I volunteer in the classroom?

The teachers will always encourage you to be in the classroom, especially for the first few days of school. In those first few days, your child will need to see that your reaction to the classroom is positive. You may probably feel somewhat uncomfortable about being "immersed" in Spanish, but keep in mind that your child is probably much more "tuned-in" to learning through non-verbal cues than we adults are. The teachers don't ask that you do anything more those first few days than follow your child around and "show them the ropes" of the school. The teacher may not talk with you if s/he feels that your child is adjusting well (this encourages your child to begin using his/her own senses). After you and your child arrive home, you will have plenty to discuss about your day together! After those initial few days, please plan to spend an hour or so each month assisting your child's classroom by volunteering at school sewing, gluing, cutting, sorting, drawing, and practicing your child's new language in your own home.