

Dual Language Program in Austin ISD 2011-2012



What are the advantages of a Dual Language Program?

- Students in dual language programs do as well or better than students learning only in English on standardized tests given in English.
- Learning a language positively impacts the structure and cognitive functions of the brain.
- Respect of multiple cultural heritages and languages leads to friendships that cross class language boundaries.
- Increases the marketable skills in a global society.
- Dual language is the only program for ELLs that definitively closes the achievement gap.

What is "One-Way" Dual Language?

The One-Way Dual Language Program supports "one language" groups of students to become bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate. For example, students whose primary language is Spanish would learn in English and Spanish.

What is "Two-Way" Dual Language?

Two-Way Dual Language Program supports two language groups in becoming bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural in both languages. For example, an equal number of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students would learn in both languages.

What schools/grades offer Dual Language?

In 2011-2012, One-Way Dual Language will be implemented in Pre-Kindergarten through first grade in all schools with bilingual services. One grade per year will be added through full implementation in fifth grade in 2015.

Two-Way Dual Language was piloted in 2010-2011 at Becker, Perez, Ridgetop, and Wooten elementary schools. These programs will continue.

Will Dual Language expand to middle and high schools?

The Dual Language Advisory Committee will explore the possibility of expanding Dual Language into the secondary level, and make recommendations, when appropriate.

Will other languages be added beyond Spanish?

The Dual Language Advisory Committee will explore adding Two-Way Dual Language schools that offer other languages, such as Vietnamese, Chinese, French, and Arabic to the existing portfolio of Dual Language options. Logistical and budgetary analyses will be conducted to determine feasibility of expansion.

How can I apply to AISD's Dual Language Program?

Applications are available at the Two-Way Dual Language elementary schools and on the AISD website, www.austinisd.org. Parents are asked to attend an orientation session with the school principal if an application is submitted.

How will students be selected for the Two-Way Dual Language program?

Students will be selected by a lottery system at each school site, after all Dual Language applications are received during the Spring of each year. Students not selected will be placed on a waiting list, and parents will be notified.

Can I visit one of the Dual Language schools?

Yes, the schools that will offer the Two-Way Dual Language program in 2011-2012 are Becker, Ridgetop, Perez, Wooten, Sunset Valley, and Travis Heights. One-Way Dual Language is in Pre-Kindergarten through first grade in all schools with bilingual services. You may contact schools individually to set an appointment.

Will school bus transportation be available to the Dual Language schools?

No, at this time, AISD cannot provide bus transportation. Parents will be responsible for transporting their children to their Dual Language campus.

What is the difference between Dual Language and a transitional Bilingual Education program?

Bilingual Education teaches students in both their native (heritage) language and in English (a second language). After the child has met the criteria to exit the Bilingual Program, they no longer receive instruction in the first language.

To encourage bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural children from kindergarten through high school, Dual Language programs develop both ELL (English Language Learners) and non-ELLs to be proficient in both Academic English and in a second language.

Where can I learn more about AISD's Dual Language Program?

Contact Celia Glick, Director of Dual Language at celia.glick@austinisd.org or call 512-414-3705.

