

The Dual Language Immersion Model

In today's world, where increased conversations about globalization permeate discussions across all industry sectors, dual language immersion education is taking center stage as the most effective and efficient program for preparing linguistically and culturally competent students who can successfully compete in a complex global economy.

In the Utah Spanish Dual Immersion Programs, instruction is divided between two high quality, creative classrooms: one English and one Spanish. Students enjoy the advantage of two caring, qualified teachers. The English-speaking teacher uses half of the instructional day to teach English language arts and other elements of the curriculum; the Spanish-speaking teacher uses the other half of the day to teach Spanish language arts and portions of the math, social studies, science, and other topics from the grade-appropriate level of the Utah State Core Curriculum. The Spanish Two-Way program is offered at Parley's Park Elementary School and at McPolin Elementary School starting in 1st grade. You will be amazed at how quickly your child becomes a comfortable and competent Spanish speaker.

In the French One-Way Program, the majority of students are English speakers who are learning French as a foreign language although native French speakers also benefit from the program; it is not a two-way program because the percentage of native speakers of French falls below 30% of the student population. Students receive 50% of their instruction in English and 50% in French each day. This program is offered at Jeremy Ranch Elementary School and at Trailside Elementary School.

In all programs, from 1st to 3rd grade students learn Math, French or Spanish Literacy, Science and Social Studies in French or Spanish while Math reinforcement and English Literacy are taught in English. In 4th grade, Students study Science, Literacy/Language Arts and Math reinforcement in French or Spanish while they study Social Studies, Math and Literacy in English.

Why Immersion?

More than forty years of research consistently documents the power of immersion programs to help students attain high levels of second language proficiency. No other type of instruction, short of living in a second-language environment, is as successful. Young children especially thrive in this type of instructional environment. Happily, language immersion is also the least expensive way to deliver second language instruction.

What is the Difference Between a One-Way and Two-Way Dual Immersion Program?

The Spanish programs in the Park City School District are both 50/50 two-way programs. In a two-way dual immersion (or bilingual immersion) program half of the instruction for the day is in English and the other half is in Spanish. Language is taught through the content areas, with support given to the new language learners. The population of the class includes native English speakers and native Spanish speakers.

For instance, class A would be taught Math and Science in the morning in Spanish, while next door, class B, would be taught Reading and Language Arts in English. At mid-day, A and B would switch classes, and class A would now learn in English while class B learns in Spanish.

The French programs are one-way programs. In a one-way program, the class is populated with native speaking English students who are all learning the second language. Although it is a beneficial program for students with French language experience as means to develop literacy skills.

What is the History of the Program?

The dual immersion program is sponsored by the State of Utah and at this time, the languages for the state include Spanish, French, Chinese, Portuguese and German. The research is significant enough that the State of Utah, through Senate Bill 41(2008), has undertaken the goal of 100 programs by the 2014 school year. This bill provides funding solely for the purpose of these dual immersion programs. Money has been allocated to Parley's Park and Trailside and cannot be used for any other program except for the dual immersion program. The monetary amount is \$10,000 per school and will be used to purchase curriculum, resources and supplies.

The Park City School District started the Parley's Park Elementary Dual Immersion Program in 2009. 50 students were enrolled in the Two-Way Program. This program has grown to include grades 1-5, with 300 students enrolled. At Trailside Elementary, the French One-Way Program was implemented in the Fall of 2011, 150 students are currently enrolled in grades 1-3. Jeremy Ranch Elementary is also a French One-Way Program, implemented in the Fall of 2012 and now has 100 students enrolled. McPolin is a Whole School Dual Language Immersion School starting in the Fall of 2013. 130 Students in 1st and 2nd grade are enrolled in this program for the Fall of 2013.

Program Objectives

- Maximize students' second language proficiency
- Provide a rich academic environment in both first and second languages
- Develop students' abilities to work successfully in multiple cultural settings
- Offer a rich, culturally diverse experience for the entire school community

Proven Benefits

Second Language Skills

Students achieve high proficiency levels in reading, writing, speaking and comprehension in the both languages. They are able to compare or analyze languages and capitalize on learned skills in both languages. Immersion students perform as well as or better than non-immersion students on standardized tests of English and math administered in English.

Enhanced Cognitive Skills

Immersion students typically develop greater cognitive flexibility, demonstrating increased attention control, better memory, and superior problem solving skills as well as an enhanced understanding of their primary language.

Increased Cultural Sensitivity

Immersion students are more aware of and show more positive attitudes towards other cultures and an appreciation of other people.

Long Term Benefits

Immersion students are better prepared for the global community and job markets where a second language is an asset. There is a greater graduation rate for students in Dual Immersion.

What to Expect In a Dual Immersion Program

Dual Immersion offers a rich bilingual experience for young learners when their minds are developmentally best able to acquire a second language. Instruction is divided between two high quality, creative classrooms: one English and one Spanish/French.

In class, the Spanish teacher speaks only in Spanish and communicates using a range of engaging strategies including pictures, songs, games, body language, expressions, pantomime, drama, etc. Children at this age are adept at picking up language in meaningful contexts. After a brief period at the beginning of the year, students too will speak only in Spanish during Spanish class. You'll be delighted how quickly your child becomes a comfortable and competent Spanish speaker. Children have this capacity, as their brains are ripe to learn language.

Who Can Participate?

The Park City Dual Language Immersion Program seeks to enroll students of varying backgrounds and all abilities. Applications are open to all students entering first grade at Parley's Park, Trailside, Jeremy Ranch or McPolin Elementary Schools. However, it may not be a wise choice for children experiencing significant communication delays in their primary language. It is important for parents to make the best decision for their individual child.