



Conroe Independent School District
Dual Language Immersion/Two-Way Program
Parent Handbook

2018-2019

"The time has come to consider biliteracy, the new threshold for literacy achievement in the new millennium."

-Maria de la Luz Reyes

Eligibility

In order for students to participate in the Dual Language Immersion/Two-Way (DLTW) program in Conroe ISD, they must meet the following eligibility criteria —

For Spanish speaking students, they must be:

- Identified as *Limited English Proficient (LEP)* by the *Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC)*
- Enrolled in Kindergarten for the 2018-2019 school year in the Anderson Elementary attendance zone
- Show a high level of oral language skills on the Spanish Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised (CALP 3 or 4)

For English speaking students, they must be:

- Enrolled in Kindergarten for the 2018-2019 school year in the Anderson Elementary attendance zone
- Show a high level of oral language skills on the English Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised (CALP 3 or 4)

Additionally, for all students the following criteria must be met:

- A parent/guardian must attend one of the parent meetings in both the fall and spring semesters
- Applications must be completed and submitted within the designated time
- Students will not be admitted into the DLTW program after their Kindergarten year unless they are coming from another DLTW program and space is available
- Students transferring from another district's DLTW program may be accepted based on space and recommendation from the selection committee

- Intra-district transfers will be considered for the DLTW program if space allows with priority being granted to those students in the Conroe feeder attendance zone.
- Students outside of the Anderson Elementary attendance zone must provide their own transportation

Selection Process

A selection committee, established by the campus, will review all applications, oral language testing, parent contracts and questionnaires to determine if the child is recommended to participate in the CISD DLTW program. Students are selected for the DLTW program based on the following process:

- Parents/guardians must sign and adhere to a five year (K - 4) program commitment contract
- Parents/guardians must complete the parent/guardian questionnaire
- All applications will be submitted to the home campus
- Students will be placed on a testing list based on a first come first serve basis
- Parents/guardians will be notified if their child receives a recommendation to participate in the DLTW program by the 2nd week in August of 2018

Note: No new English speakers will be added to the program after the first semester of Kindergarten unless they are transferring from another DLTW program.

Program Model and Design

The DLTW program will begin in Kindergarten of the 2015-2016 school year and then advance to 4th Grade in subsequent years. Teachers will follow a 50/50 program model starting in Kindergarten. A key aspect of a DLTW program is the separation of languages. Students are not simply learning a new language; they are learning the academic curriculum through the two languages separately (Calderón & Thomas,

2003). “Separation of languages for instruction helps promote language development” (Izquierdo, 2010). Teachers are expected to use Total Physical Response (TPR) and visuals as a means to increase comprehensible input rather than translating in the students’ native language. The use of color coding key vocabulary as students are learning each language is highly encouraged. CISD’s DLTW classes will have two teachers, one serving as the English model and the other serving as the Spanish model. Reading and Writing instruction will occur in both languages. Math will be taught in English while Science and Social Studies are taught in Spanish. The model requires teachers to integrate language instruction in the core content areas so that students become more deliberate about using academic language throughout the curriculum. Additionally, DLTW teachers are required to attend professional development throughout the year to enhance their skills and to have the opportunity to build a collaborative network of peers that will aid them as they seek to better serve their students. Finally, a Bilingual/ESL District Instructional Coach will be assigned to work side by side with teachers in the DLTW program for a half day after each grading period in order to support quality classroom instruction.

Program Fidelity

To maintain the fidelity of a program means to implement it in the way that research shows it to be effective. As a result, the DLTW program model will require:

- A five year commitment (K - 4), as indicated by signing the parent contract
- Regular, on time student attendance
- Quality language instruction in English and Spanish through the use of CISD’s Tier I best practices
- 50/50 instruction in both languages
- Separation of languages
- Implementation of state grade level standards, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

- Support of the program from the district and campus administration, teachers, parents and community
- Highly qualified instructional staff
- Parental involvement and communication

Program Evaluation

As with all programs in CISD, the district uses a cycle of continuous improvement to evaluate its practices. The DLTW program will be evaluated using the following standards:

- Bilingual students enrolled in the program will complete an oral language proficiency assessment in both languages upon initial enrollment and at the end of the school year.
- English speakers enrolled in the program will complete an oral language proficiency assessment in English upon initial enrollment and at the end of the school year.
- English speakers enrolled in the program will complete an oral language proficiency assessment in Spanish at the end of their 1st Grade year in May and continue in subsequent years to 4th Grade.
- Benchmark assessments will be administered in the appropriate language so that the students can best demonstrate competency of grade level expectations throughout the course of the year.
- Beginning of year, middle of year and end of year district literacy assessments for the students' enrolled grade level will be administered.
- Parent commitment as described in the terms of the contract will be sustained throughout the duration of the contract terms.
- The Professional Learning Community process by which teachers plan collaboratively and craft their skills through classroom observations and discussions will be employed.

- Teacher observation and feedback from the Department of Bilingual/ESL Programs will be given.

Research

The goals of the DLTW program in Conroe ISD are as follows:

- Develop high levels of language proficiency and literacy in both program languages
- Develop an appreciation for and an understanding of diverse cultures
- Provide a standards-based education while promoting proficiency in two languages
- Retain the L1 (native language) of Spanish-speaking students

Bilingual education program models incorporate instruction in the native language and English, and also beginning literacy instruction in the native language for language minority students. According to a growing body of research, knowledge that one acquires through one language will pave the way for knowledge acquisition in the second language (Cummins, 1981, 1989, & 1994; Thomas & Collier, 1997).

Furthermore, the sociocultural benefits of knowing more than one language include a greater understanding and tolerance, as well as an appreciation and respect, for cultural differences (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000). Research has also found that two-way dual language programs are more effective in developing first and second language academic achievement. The findings of the *Ramirez Report* (Cummins, 1992) indicate Latino students who receive sustained primary language instruction throughout elementary school have better academic prospects than those who receive most or all of their instruction in English. Ramirez (1992) emphasizes three key principles, which frame many dual language programs:

- The continued development of two languages enhances children's educational and cognitive development.

- Literacy-related knowledge and skills acquired in one language are transferred to the second language.
- While second language conversational skills are acquired rather quickly, it usually takes five or more years for second language learners to achieve grade level norms in academically related aspects of the second language.

Consequently, these principles suggest that reinforcing children's first language throughout elementary and beyond provides a foundation for long-term success in English academic skills (Cummins 1992).

References

- Carrera-Carrillo, L. & Smith, A.R. 2006. *7 Steps to Success in Dual Language Immersion A Brief Guide for Teachers and Administrators*. Portsmouth, NJ: Heinemann.
- Montgomery Independent School District Dual Language Guidelines 2014-2015.
<http://www.misd.org/users/0005/20132014Web/Docs/DualLanguage/MontDualLanguageGuidelines.pdf>
- Reyes de la Luz, M. and J.J. Halcón. 2001. *The Best for Our Children: Critical Perspectives on Literacy for Latino Students*. New York, New York: Teachers College Press.
- Weise, A. 2004. "Bilingualism and Biliteracy for All? Unpacking Two-Way Immersion at Second Grade." *Multilingual Matters Channel View Publications* 18: 69-92.