

Program Philosophy

The Spanish Immersion Pilot Program will promote....

Academic Achievement- Students will demonstrate high levels of academic achievement in English and Spanish (at or above grade level).

Language Proficiency – Students will demonstrate high levels of age-appropriate language proficiency in English and Spanish.

Cross-Cultural Competency- Students will demonstrate positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors (products, practices, and perspectives).

Program Goals

In the new Spanish Immersion Pilot Program students will...

Achieve the curricular expectations maintained for all FCASD elementary students

Demonstrate academic achievement at or above grade level as measured by formal and informal assessments

Demonstrate progress in the development of English and Spanish language acquisition skills

Demonstrate content specific knowledge and proficiency in Spanish reading, writing, listening, speaking, and mathematical skills

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ELEMENTARY SPANISH IMMERSION PILOT PROGRAM



Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Spanish Immersion Program?

Spanish Immersion is a method of instruction in which the regular school curriculum is taught through the medium of the Spanish language. Students learn subjects in the target language through a variety of techniques.

What are the benefits of immersion and bilingualism?

Studies have shown that immersion students do as well as, and may even surpass, non-immersion students on measures of verbal and mathematical skills. (Languages and Learners, 2016)

Studies have found that dual immersion students outperformed their peers in reading in English by seven months in grade five and by nine months in grade eight. (American Councils for International Education, 2017)

Dual language students have (1) higher test scores, (2) are more fulfilled with school, (3) have higher attendance rates, (4) have fewer behavioral problems, and (5) have higher parent involvement. (NPR ED, 2016)

During the last decade, multiple research studies have demonstrated that significant cognitive benefits associated with early language learning, in addition to the potential long-term educational and career benefits that bilingual students accrue. (American Councils for International Education, 2017)

How does Immersion work at FCASD?

Spanish Immersion will be a program in grades 1-5, located at Kerr, but with enrollment from all schools. Enrollment happens only during the Kindergarten year.

We do not attend Kerr Elementary. Is my child eligible for the program still? How will he/she get to school every day?

Yes, all students in our elementary schools are eligible, and students will be selected from each building. In order for Spanish Immersion students to arrive to and from school, buses will be provided for them.

If one of my children gets into the program and not another, won't it be difficult for me to have children in two schools?

You will have the option to send your other children to Kerr Elementary to reduce the complications of traveling to multiple buildings daily.

Does immersing children in a second language confuse them or negatively impact their native language skills?

Your child's ability to communicate in English will not be affected. They will continue to develop their English language skills by participating in the general community, at home with you, and through their special area classes, which will continue to be taught in English. Formal English reading instruction will also begin in 3rd grade.

Is there required parental involvement in the program?

Parents should do the following to support their child in the program:

- *Attend parent workshops throughout the course of the year*
- *Develop English reading, writing, speaking and listening skills*
- *Practice reading and writing skills at home (20-45 minutes daily)*

Do they have an opportunity to interact with other children in their grade level?

Yes, students will be able to interact with other students during their special area classes as well as during lunch and recess.

What happens if my child struggles? What if my child needs enrichment services?

FCASD is committed to providing every child The education he/she needs. Whether a child needs support or enrichment, they will have access to these resources.

How will my child maintain his/her Spanish language skills after 5th grade? Will there be immersion opportunities in middle or high school?

Additional programming at the middle school and high school levels will be implemented to allow for students to continue their Spanish language skills.

Why Spanish?

Spanish is the 2nd most spoken language in the world as well as in the United States. The United States has more Spanish speakers than Spain. The U.S. has now an estimated 52.6 million people who can speak Spanish, which is second only to Mexico's 121 million. (Instituto Cervantes, 2015)

