



FAQ: English Language Learners/ Dual Language

Back to School in U-46

School and Community Relations, ELL Department

August 18, 2020

General Questions

Q.- What does effective communication look like between teachers and parents?

Communication with parents during Distance Learning will continue to be essential for success. We recognize that as a parent you will be directly supporting your child's instruction and learning, and therefore, communication between teachers and parents will need to be more explicit around learning expectations and access to the resources available to support learning at home.

We encourage parents to reach out to their child's teacher about how to use the District-approved platforms/tools, like Canvas, as well as participate in district-offered trainings geared towards supporting parents during Distance Learning. Parents should also learn about the teacher's preferred method of communication, and ensure they have downloaded the necessary apps, if applicable, to maintain consistent and effective communication (e.g., Bloomz or Remind).

We encourage parents to inquire about extra support, provided by the classroom teacher for ensuring the understanding of expectations and instructions for at-home learning (e.g., video/audio with directions to complete the tasks, regular check-ins with parents, etc).

For native English/monolingual two-way parents, teachers are encouraged to direct parents to resources in English, as needed/requested, and offer individualized support for Spanish instruction (this also applies to Spanish-dominant parents who may require additional assistance/resources for English instruction/assignments). In general, dual language educators are encouraged to provide guidance in both languages for classroom assignments, as well as send all communication in English and the target language. ESL resource teachers at Liberty Elementary can also support home communication in Polish, Urdu, Gujarati, and Tagalog.

Q.- How can I maximize my child's engagement during Distance Learning while supporting his/her learning in two languages?

We know that students thrive and learn best when there is consistency, routines, and structure, and therefore, you can support your child at home by establishing consistent routines and structures for remote learning. Follow the school/District's schedule for daily instruction and engage with your child's teacher during regular check-ins to clarify expectations for learning. Ensure that your child completes the assignments in the language of instruction to support him/her in developing bilingualism and biliteracy.

Converse with your child about the importance of developing bilingualism and biliteracy and completing all the assignments regardless of the language. In the event of needed support, reach out to your child's teacher(s).

Q.- Where can my child find the different learning materials in Spanish and/or English?

Most of the learning materials specific to the Dual Language Program, both in Spanish and English, can be accessed through Clever, using your child's U-46 account. Teachers may assign activities/materials from these resources directly to their students, such as excerpts of readings, writing prompts, videos, etc.

Q.- How will the instruction be differentiated for EL/DL students during Distance Learning?

Similarly to the teaching and learning process that occurs in-person, teachers will provide scaffolds and supports to differentiate instruction during Distance Learning. Some possible ways to differentiate Distance Learning instruction include the following:

- Sentence frames/starters and/or illustrated word banks
- Specific feedback on completing assignments
- Audio books for better comprehension of texts
- Visual supports alongside text
- A variety of tools to make texts more accessible
- Small group instruction/support during virtual meetings

Q.- How can I support my child with technology during Distance Learning?

Engage your child in activities of interest in order to practice using his/her device and/or new technology tools. Maintain a positive attitude about technology use, especially as your child is learning how to use new online platforms or websites. In general, however, help your child maintain a healthy balance of technology and non-technology-dependent activities.

Q.- Can dual language parents access resources to support their child in understanding assignments in the other (target) language? (e.g., request the math textbook in English)

Yes, for instance, parents can access the math website ([HERE](#)) for specific resources per grade level. Families can use these math resources to understand and follow the scope and sequence of the Eureka math modules. If a textbook is needed, consult with your child's teacher to make arrangements for potential access during Distance Learning.

Although it is understood and appreciated that parents will support home learning, it is recommended that your child follow the language of instruction in order to maintain fidelity to the program and the established language allocation. The recommendation is for parents to contact their child's teacher(s) and follow their guidelines/recommendations on how to use the resources as they support the language of instruction.

Q.- Should parents read to their children in their home language?

YES! Your child will benefit from listening to stories in their family's native/home language. Not only will this support a strong literacy foundation in the home language, but your child will be developing his/her listening skills and comprehension if you read to him/her with a purpose (to acquire new knowledge or for pleasure).

However, in order to support the language allocation for Dual Language students, children also should be encouraged to listen to stories online or through a video from his/her teacher in Spanish/English.

Teachers may recommend virtual resources/activities available to parents at their local libraries (e.g., Gail Borden Public Library, click [HERE](#), and Poplar Creek Library, click [HERE](#)).

Q.- Is cooperative learning encouraged during Distance Learning?

Yes, with parents' permission, it is a good idea for children to meet virtually with their classmates in order to complete assignments/school work. Cooperative Learning is highly encouraged in the classroom and during Distance Learning, as it builds oral skills.

Q.- How can parents use their home environment to create meaningful learning opportunities?

Among many learning opportunities at home, you may support your child with the following:

- Use the home refrigerator as a board to post students' work, such as drawings or writing responses after listening to a story.
- Create word/picture walls from readings or new learning by listing or drawing new/important words.
- Encourage your child to sort clothes, kitchen utensils, toys, etc.
- Structure your child's day with daily chores/activities such as doing the laundry, preparing a meal, etc. These activities will allow your child to engage in meaningful conversations as he/she builds a close parent/child relationship.
- Engage your child in playing Scavenger Hunts.
- Encourage your child in outdoor activities during the Fall season and incorporate academic learning.
- Review other resources available to them.

Q.- Where can I find information online about Dual Language?

You can visit the U-46 Dual Language ([HERE](#)) and/or the English Language Learners ([HERE](#)) websites for up-to-date information about our ELL/DL Programs. Further, visit the U-46 Distance Learning website ([HERE](#)) for support and updated information.

Also, visit the following websites to learn more about ELL/dual language:

- Center for Applied Linguistics www.cal.org/
- Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition www.carla.umn.edu
- Dual Language of New Mexico (DLeNM) www.dlenm.org
- Center for Teaching for Biliteracy: Bilingual Parents Blog <http://www.teachingforbiliteracy.com/category/bilingual-parenting/>
- *Colorín Colorado* <http://www.colorincolorado.org/>
- Multilingual Living <http://www.multilingualliving.com/>