

School District U-46
Middle School Dual Language Implementation
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Target Group: School District U-46 Parents

Q: Why is School District U-46 implementing the Dual Language Program at the middle school level?

The implementation of the Dual Language Program at the middle school level is part of the 80:20 Dual Language Project Charter in our district. This strategically developed plan was initiated during the 2009-2010 school year in collaboration with different members of our educational community. It includes a progressive implementation timeline of the program per grade level each year, leading to the roll up or phasing in of the middle school grades in the next two years. As such, 7th grade will be implemented in the 2016-2017 school year and 8th grade in the 2017-2018 school year. In addition to this strategic plan, School District U-46's Board of Education adopted the 80:20 Dual Language Policy in July 2014, which includes dual language programming from PreK through 12th grade.

Furthermore, as a dual language district, School District U-46 is committed to building upon our current elementary DL program, which begins in preschool and will continue through middle school in the next two years. This will provide our students with the opportunity to become bilingual and biliterate citizens, with positive multi-cultural attitudes for success in our society.

Q: What are the benefits of bilingualism?

The benefits of bilingualism are overwhelmingly convincing. See the following chart by Thomas and Collier, which depicts the benefits of bilingualism across different contexts:

Who benefits when students achieve proficient bilingualism/multilingualism?		
Students	Families/Communities	The World
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy identity formation • Enhanced cognitive flexibility • Enhanced communication skills • Enhanced metalinguistic awareness • Expanded capacity to think divergently • Greater creativity • Healthier minds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased family cohesion • Enhanced communication • Smarter citizens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong identity and confidence in their abilities • More flexible and creative thinkers • Better problem-solvers and communicators • More skilled at working across differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater economic opportunities • Increased scientific/cultural creativity and knowledge development • More effective international collaboration and understanding • Enhanced communication among diverse populations

Creating Dual Language Schools For A Transformed World: Administrators Speak by Virginia P. Collier and Wayne P. Thomas

- Because continued academic literacy development stops once the language stops, the longer students learn in both languages, the stronger the biliteracy development and the higher the academic outcomes for both groups (www.dlti.us).
- Bilingual proficiency is a long term commitment and as noted above, the longer a child remains in the program, the stronger his/her biliteracy development and the rewards that come with it, including the opportunity to earn the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy on his/her diploma upon graduation. Upon completing the necessary requirements for the seal, this recognition provides students with a multitude of post-secondary opportunities in the workforce and with the pursuit of additional studies in college (Please click [here](#) for more information on the Seal of Biliteracy from the state).

Q: Why maintain or learn Spanish instead of another language?

The Dual Language Program in School District U-46 was established to serve the ELL population of the district, which is predominantly composed of Spanish speakers. The U-46 student body is 50% Latino/Hispanic (IL School Report Card 2014 Data), and consequently approximately 50 percent of the students in U-46 have identified Spanish as their native language (IC data 2015).

According to a recent study by the prestigious *Instituto Cervantes (2015)*, the US is now the second largest Spanish speaking country in the world after Mexico, with approximately 53 million native Spanish speakers and their children. Additionally, Spanish is not only the most spoken non-English language in the United States (US Census 2010 and PEW Research Center, 2013), but it is also the second most spoken language in the world with estimates of 470 million native speakers worldwide or 559 million speakers, if one includes those with some command of the language (*Instituto Cervantes, 2015*).

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that 50% of the world's population is bilingual, and a Spanish/English bilingual person can communicate with 80% of the world's population (Literacy Squared Training, Kathy Escamilla, 10.29.15).

In other words, the question shouldn't be why Spanish, but rather, why not?

Q: Once the dual language program is implemented, what will happen with the Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program for eligible Spanish-speaking students?

The school district is engaging in a systematic and strategic transition from the TBE program to the 80:20 Dual Language Program. The Dual Language Program is not only a bilingual education model where both languages are developed academically, but it is also the only program model that closes the achievement gap for ELL students, according to the research by Dr. Thomas and Dr. Collier.

Q: Will there be programmatic changes for students whose native language is not Spanish?

No. ELL eligible students who speak a language other than Spanish, such as Polish, Urdu, Tagalog, etc. will continue to receive language educational services for which they are eligible, in accordance to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) regulations.

Q: What are the school sites for the Dual Language Program at the Middle School Level?

The following four middle schools will be welcoming the incoming dual language students for the 2016-2017 school year:

1. **Abbott** Dual Language Middle School
2. **Ellis** Dual Language Middle School
3. **Kimball** Dual Language Middle School
4. **Larsen** Dual Language Middle School
5. **Tefft** Dual Language Middle School

Q: Does that mean Canton Middle School will no longer house the bilingual program at its site?

For next year, 2016-2017, Canton Middle School will keep their 8th grade students to allow them the opportunity to complete their middle school education where they began their studies before the full transition to the new site. During school year 2017-2018, Canton Middle School will no longer house the bilingual program in School District U-46.

As a result, *Canton Middle School* will have ELL programming for only 8th grade students next school year (TBE/TPI).

Q: What will the middle school Dual Language implementation look like across the selected sites in the next two years?

See the table below for a visual representation of the middle school implementation during the next two years:

Middle School Dual Language Implementation SY 2016-2017			Middle School Dual Language Implementation SY 2017-2018		
School	DL 7 th Grade	TBE & TPI 8 ^{vo} Grade	School	DL 7 th Grade	DL & TPI 8 ^{vo} Grade
Abbott MS	✓		Abbott MS	✓	✓
Canton MS		✓	Canton MS		
Ellis MS	✓	✓	Ellis MS	✓	✓
Kimball MS	✓	✓	Kimball MS	✓	✓
Larsen MS	✓	✓	Larsen MS	✓	✓
Tefft MS	✓		Tefft MS	✓	✓

Q: Will the bilingual Special Education classrooms be housed at the same sites as the Dual Language schools?

Please contact the Special Education Department at 847-888-5000 for information or updates regarding Special Education classrooms.

Q: Will non-ELL students who have not been part of the 80:20 Dual Language program in elementary school be allowed to enroll in the middle school program?

No. This program is designed for students who are moving up from the 6th grade in the elementary 80:20 Dual Language program. The Dual Language middle school program in School District U-46 develops academic and language skills of high rigor in both languages. It should not be confused with the study of Spanish as a foreign language. These students have already been developing bilingual and biliteracy skills for several years since enrollment at the elementary level. However, a student whose home/native language is Spanish and who is eligible to receive ELL services will be allowed to enroll at any time in the program according to ISBE regulations.

Q: What will happen to Spanish-speaking ELL students who are newcomers after 6th grade?

Students will be assigned to the Dual Language Program, which is strategically designed to address and develop the academic and language skills of ALL students based on their needs and strengths; this includes differentiated instruction for our newcomer students with a Spanish background. The teaching and learning process in a dual language classroom is facilitated by bilingual/ESL licensed teachers, who are highly effective and in compliance with the licensing regulations of the state of Illinois.

Q: What is the instructional program model for the Dual Language Program at the middle school level?

The following instructional program model is comprised of rigorous standards-based instruction where Spanish and English are the languages of instruction. Instruction is differentiated based on students' academic and language profile using strategies and methodologies designed to develop academic and language skills in two languages.

SUBJECTS	LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION	DESCRIPTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language Arts• Social Studies / History	Spanish	In compliance with ISBE's licensing regulations, the teaching and learning process is provided by licensed teachers with the bilingual endorsement. The language of instruction is Spanish aligned to the standards, using support and differentiation strategies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language Arts• Science• Math	English	In compliance with ISBE's licensing regulations, the teaching and learning process is provided by licensed teachers, including those with the ESL endorsement depending on student's language profile. The language of instruction is English aligned to the standards, using support and differentiation strategies.

Students will spend two consecutive class periods immersed in the rigor of academic Spanish, where they will study Spanish Language Arts and Social Studies/History. Dual language students will participate in all classes required by ISBE for 7th and 8th grade students (e.g., physical education, health, etc.).

Q: Will my child be able to take electives similar to students enrolled in the general education program?

Yes, students enrolled in the program will have the opportunity to participate in an elective. For additional information, please contact the school principal.

Q: What if I decide to withdraw my child from the DL program after 6th grade?

It is important to remember that learning in two languages is a highly complex process with a long-term commitment and requires continuity and consistency in the program of instruction. Consequently, as part of the DL Parent Compact, parents make a commitment to have their child remain in the program through middle school. However, there are circumstances that may lead a parent to withdraw their child from the program.

Q: How can I learn more about Dual Language education and the implementation of the Dual Language program in U-46?

Current and updated Dual Language information can be found on the district's website (click [HERE](#)), which includes the following: research, updated events and information, links to dual language websites, resources, and communication to educators and parents.

Q: Who can I contact for additional information at the district level?

For additional information, please contact Annette Acevedo, U-46 ELL Director, at 847-888-5000 ext. 4282 (annetteacevedo@u-46.org) or Mario Pestaña, U-46 ELL Coordinator, at 847-888-5000 ext. 5078 (mariopestana@u-46.org).