

Now accepting kindergartners for the coming school year...

Dual Language Immersion in Elementary School

Where once the United States was responsible for half of the world's produced goods, the U.S. is now one of many producers in the global marketplace. As our students enter this international business climate in the years ahead, the ability to communicate and collaborate with global partners will become an increasingly valuable skill. In Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS), the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program promises to prepare students for this 21st century reality. Several Gwinnett elementary schools—**Annistown, Baldwin, Bethesda, Camp Creek, Ivy Creek, Level Creek, Meadowcreek, Parsons, and Trip**— offer the program.

The goals of an immersion program are to support students in developing proficiency in both English and the new language, while ensuring both academic achievement and intercultural competence.

With GCPS' 50/50 Model, based on a successful model used in Utah and South Carolina, at least 50% of the school day is spent learning the AKS in the new language. A team of two teachers— one fluent in the target language— works together, with class time for mathematics, science, and target language literacy in the new language; and language arts and social studies in English. Enrollment is voluntary, starting with incoming kindergartners and building by one grade-level every year. (Information sessions are offered to parents before registration.) More certified bilingual teachers will be hired as the program adds each additional grade.

District leaders expect that students will see achievement benefits as well as cognitive and linguistic perks. Ultimately, they could benefit economically, graduating from high school with solid bilingual credentials. While students served in traditional language programs benefit from exposure to another language, the current model supports the development of language proficiency on a mid-level novice (in reading) to intermediate (in speaking, listening, and writing) range. By shifting language study to start in kindergarten, students would develop this same level of proficiency by the end of 5th grade. Continued study through middle and high school at an increasing level of language proficiency could

open doors to bilingual careers in sales, education, healthcare, and social and applied sciences.

“Our partners in the business community tell us that Georgia is becoming a destination for international companies, and they need a globally competitive workforce that possesses the world language skills and cultural understanding to be successful in this changing environment,” says **Dr. Jon Valentine**,

GCPS' director for Foreign Language. “We believe that Gwinnett can be a center for the development of advanced-level language proficiency through dual-language immersion, providing a competitive advantage for our students, our schools, and the communities they serve.”

According to a 2014 *US News and World Reports* article by Lisa Chau, “Those who speak more than one language have a greater chance of succeeding in business.”



What are the Benefits of a Dual Language Immersion Program?

Cognitive

- Bilingual brains are more efficient and nimble.
- Bilingual brains demonstrate a greater capacity for spatial reasoning (ability to visualize spatial patterns and how to manipulate them) and motor control.
- Bilingualism postpones the onset of cognitive decline in older age.

Achievement

- Students perform at or above the levels of monolingual peers on all standardized tests given in English.
- Bilinguals are patient and efficient problem-solvers.
- Students perform well on standardized assessments such as Advanced Placement (AP) exams, as well as internationally recognized career-language credentials.

Linguistic

- 5th graders may be expected to perform at the level of many traditional high school language students.
- By 9th grade, these students will have the linguistic skills to pass the AP language test (targeted language).

- By graduation, students will approach the advanced level in speaking, listening, reading, and writing of the target language.

Economic

- Students will possess a skill that creates a professional competitive advantage in their chosen field, making them more attractive to colleges, career and technical programs, and employers.
- The school community may leverage this innovative new program to draw businesses (and parents) relocating to the area.
- Our region, already a hub for international business, will benefit by continuing to link our excellent programs of study with their increasing need for a globally competent workforce.



GCPS' Dual Language Immersion Program is Your Passport to Success!



Snap to learn more or go to the link on the Parent Tab at www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us.

How Does It Work?

Here's an example...

	Mrs. Smith's homeroom students	Mrs. Jones' homeroom students
Target Language Instruction Mrs. Smith	Using the target language, Mrs. Smith teaches mathematics, science, and literacy in the new language to the students in her "homeroom."	Using the target language, Mrs. Smith teaches mathematics, science, and literacy in the new language to the students in Mrs. Jones' "homeroom."
English Instruction Mrs. Jones	Mrs. Jones teaches language arts and social studies in English to the students in Mrs. Smith's "homeroom."	Mrs. Jones teaches language arts and social studies in English to the students in her "homeroom."



For more information about the Dual Language Immersion program, contact the Director of Foreign Language Education at 678-301-7308.

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Students will use digital resources and technology in the target language.

The schools will develop relationships with "sister schools," giving students experience interacting with native speakers in their target language and collaborating on projects with a global "team."

Cultural aspects of the target language will enhance "specials," such as art and music, for all students at the school.

Cultural experiences and opportunities will be extended to all students at the DLI schools.

Support services— such as special education, Reading Recovery, speech, and gifted education— will be available in English for DLI students identified for participation in these services.

Teachers will communicate with families in English, but also will provide materials to help families support their child in the target language.