

What is a language immersion program?

A language immersion program is a proven method of educating children by immersing them in a second or "target" language so they become bilingual. In a language immersion program, the classroom environment becomes the setting for language acquisition through subject content instruction, educational discourse, and social interactions.

Why is language immersion most effective beginning at a young age?

Babies are born as "world citizens," able to distinguish any sound in spoken language. Toddlers learn through interaction with their families and their immediate surroundings. School-age children make sense of new concepts by relating those new concepts to what they already know. Students before the age of puberty more easily attain native-like proficiency.

Why is the Spanish language a good choice for an immersion program?

In the United States, 13 percent of the population speaks Spanish at home, making it the most common non-English language spoken. The U.S. also has the 2nd largest population of Spanish speakers in the world. If data continues to trend as it has, by 2050, one in three people in the U.S. will speak Spanish. Spanish is a "gateway" language, thus making it easier to learn than other languages.

Why would families choose Spanish immersion as an educational option?

Research shows that children can learn one, two, or multiple languages early in life, and they do so with ease. Learning more than one language gives children cognitive advantages and increases cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Does learning to read and write in Spanish before English negatively impact a student's academic progress?

Research clearly shows that students in a language immersion program often score higher on standardized reading tests in English than those students who are only taught in one language. Throughout the language acquisition process, immersion students may be able to read better in one language than the other. However, this is a normal part of learning to read, and eventually immersion students read at or above grade level in both languages.

How will implementing a language immersion program in a school benefit a community?

A language immersion program equips students to become Americans who are linguistically and culturally aware, increasing global competitiveness and communication. It expands students' potential career opportunities in our increasingly shrinking and diverse world market. Immersion fosters an inherent understanding of the world that naturally prompts us to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries.



SPANISH IMMERSION AT BARKSDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A CMCSS School of Choice



Visit www.cmcss.net/immersion or email Helen.Nicholas@cmcss.net for more information.

DUAL-LANGUAGE IMMERSION

Dual-language immersion education is a method of educating students in an instructional setting that allows them to acquire a second language through subject content instruction, educational discourse, and social interaction in the second language for at least 50% of the academic day.

Current research demonstrates that fully proficient bilingual individuals outperform monolinguals in the areas of divergent thinking, pattern recognition, and problem solving. CMCSS believes that students will be well served by a quality Spanish immersion education that ensures high proficiency in more than one language at no cost to English language academic performance.

A student who begins early literacy instruction in a more consistent phonetic system will more easily transfer those skills to English later on. In fact, one study found that it takes an average of 2.5 years longer to become literate in English than in Spanish. Think about the opportunity Spanish immersion students have to access information in texts that much earlier than their English only peers.



HOW TO ENROLL

Each year, the Spanish Immersion program enrolls a limited number of kindergarten students. Students who enter the program need to be committed to continuing Spanish dual language learning through 5th grade at Barksdale. The program is a School of Choice for parents. Families who elect to apply for this option for their child will do so through the CMCSS Application Period for Schools and Programs of Choice. Transportation is not provided unless students are zoned for Barksdale.

Application information is available during the application period for schools and programs of choice on cmcss.net.