

# Helping Your Child Grow Using Two Languages



**Dual Language Program Handbook**  
New Braunfels Independent School District  
430 W. Mill Street New Braunfels, Texas 78130  
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## Introduction

Congratulations for choosing the dual language program for your child! It is the district's mission and responsibility to ensure that all students in the dual language program have a consistent program that results in bilingual and bi-literate students. NBISD has adopted the 50-50 models in grades K-2 and is continuing the 90/10 models in grades 3-5 for the 2016-17 academic school year. As a transitional approach, a grade level will be added every year, ex: 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade will be added to the model in 2016-17.

The district has carefully evaluated and considered the long-term academic achievement results of our English learner population and native English speaking population. In addition, researches on schools that match NBISD's student population were conducted. Using this information, the district has chosen to proceed with a model that provides literacy development in both languages that support the work they do in academic content areas beginning in the early primary grades. It is imperative that students proceed at a sufficient pace so that language skills are sufficient to meet the greater academic demands all students will have in upper grades in both languages.

Your child will learn to think, listen, speak, read, and write in two languages, and will develop positive multicultural relationships. The TEKS requirements are a guide for our program, and your child will learn exactly the same content as any other student from the same grade level in English and/or Spanish.

We know that a strong relationship between home and school is an essential component for our program, and it is the key to success for your child. Our goals for this program are long term, and the outcome will be reached while progressing from kindergarten to fifth grade and beyond. This handbook was designed to inform you about the general program goals and to give you an idea of the progress you should expect throughout your child's journey in our program.

### **Purpose of the Program**

The purpose of the New Braunfels ISD Dual Language Program is to develop the academics of all students in the program while accelerating language development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

### **Program Benefits for Dual Language Students**

| <b>Native English Speakers</b>           | <b>Native Spanish Speakers</b>           |
|--|--|
| Mastery of the TEKS in all content areas | Mastery of the TEKS in all content areas |
| Second language acquisition              | Second language acquisition              |
| Bicultural awareness                     | Bicultural awareness                     |
| Support for success on the STAAR exams   | Support for success on the STAAR exams   |

Students will learn with and from one another. Native Spanish speakers, or English Language Learners (ELLs) enroll in the state required dual language program in order to increase acquisition of the English language. Native English speakers enroll in the dual language program to enrich their language experience in learning Spanish.

## **Process for Admittance in the Dual Language Program**

### **Expectations for participation in the Dual Language program:**

- It is highly recommended that your child participate in the program from Kinder-5<sup>th</sup> grades.
- It is important that parents read with their children in English and have them practice Spanish every night in order to establish the foundation for language skills.
- Support and understanding of the program is needed by parents and students.
- Research indicates it may take up to 5-7 years to acquire a second language; therefore, there may be a lag in acquisition of the second language.
- Parents are to register their child at his/her home campus.

## **Guidelines for the Dual Language program:**

- If more applicants are received than positions available, there will be a lottery in each attendance zone to determine actual participants.
- Parents are required to attend an informational meeting in May and complete the dual language application at that time.
- The Dual Language Committee meets to review the number of seats that are available.
- The Director of Bilingual/ESL program will notify school administrators and provide them with a list of students who have been accepted.
- The receiving principal or designee will add the students' names to the master list that corresponds to their school.
- The principal or designee at the original home campus will ensure that the registration packet is sent to the receiving school.
- The director of the Dual Language program informs the Dual Language parent on the decision made.
- The receiving administrator or campus designee will contact the dual language student's parent and set up an appointment for the student to be tested using the Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey. Testing information that is obtained is not used as entry criteria, rather as a tool to assess proficiency.

## Guidelines for entering the Dual Language program in Grades 1-5

### Grade 1

First grade dominant English speaking students who did not attend a dual language program in kinder, must meet a criteria for entrance. The criteria is as follows:

- There is space available at their designated assigned dual language home campus and
- Student must have a DRA (English) level of 4 and an EDL (Spanish) level of 1.

Native English speaking students transferring from a dual language program in the previous district, will be accepted into the NBISD Dual Language Program if there is a seat available at the dual language home campus.

### Grade 2-5

Native English speaking students in 2<sup>nd</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> grade will not be admitted into the dual language program unless they are transferring from another dual language program or score on the DRA AND EDL below:

| Entering:             | DRA | EDL |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade | 18  | 12  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade | 30  | 24  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 40  | 38  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 40  | 40  |

In addition, space must be available for the student at his/her dual language home campus.

Note: Each student is considered as an individual. A sibling in the dual language program does not guarantee entrance to the program.

## **Guidelines for transferring students**

- Transfers from one campus Dual language program to another will not be granted.
- Transfer students from another district's Dual Language program will be tested with an oral language proficiency test in both English and Spanish as criteria for acceptance.
- All Native English speaking students will be given an oral language proficiency test before letters of acceptance are sent. This test will not be the determining factor on acceptance or denial of program entrance for a student in kindergarten only.
- Kinder students will be assessed on his/her proficiency level using the Woodcock-Munoz.
- Any first through fifth grader who transfers in from another dual language program will be given both the DRA and the EDL. The teacher will administer the test once the placement decision is made.

## **General Background and Investigation**

Studies have shown that it takes a student from 5 to 7 years to acquire natural fluency in a second language. Students who develop ability in academic language (not only social) in a second language and continue to develop skills throughout the years, tend to have better success when they reach high school and higher education compared to students who did not maintain or develop a secondary academic language.

Bilingual programs have been successfully implemented in many countries around the world. Numerous sources (e.g., Baker & Pry's Jones, 1998; Cummins & Corson. 1997) have documented that students who study fractions of a school day in a second language, will not suffer negative consequences developing academic skills in his/her primary language. In other words, your child will not have a problem in developing academic English skills while learning in Spanish and vice versa.

Developing fluency in two languages offers linguistic advantages in the cognitive process for bilingual students. In the last 40 years, more than 150 research studies have reported significant advantages for bilingual students in a variety of knowledge and comprehension tests. Conversation and academic fluency aspects in a language are different, and require different development steps. Being intensively exposed to one language facilitates conversational fluency in two years; however, academic fluency requires 5 to 7 years. One can learn to speak in a basic manner within a short period of time, but developing academic language requires much more time.

The following charts are **sample** models for the NBISD dual language program:

### Sample NBISD Dual Language K-2

| <b>Time:</b>                                     | <b>Subject/Activity</b>                       | <b>Language</b>        | <b>Approx. Minutes</b> | <b>Spanish Minutes</b> | <b>English Minutes</b> |
|--|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>8:00-8:10</b>                                 | <b>Calendar</b>                               | <b>English/Spanish</b> | <b>10</b>              | <b>5</b>               | <b>5</b>               |
|  |   |                        |                        |                        |                        |
| <b>8:10-9:10</b>                                 | <b>Math (Whole Group and Guided Practice)</b> | <b>English/Spanish</b> | <b>60</b>              | <b>10</b>              | <b>50</b>              |
|  |   |                        |                        |                        |                        |
| <b>9:10-10:50</b>                                | <b>Literacy Block/Studies</b>                 | <b>English</b>         | <b>100</b>             |                        | <b>100</b>             |
| <i>(9:10-9:30)</i>                               | <i>Whole Group</i>                            | <i>English</i>         | <i>20</i>              |                        | <i>20</i>              |
| <i>(9:30-10:30)</i>                              | <i>Guided Reading/Literacy Stations</i>       | <i>English</i>         | <i>60</i>              |                        | <i>60</i>              |
| <i>(10:30-10:50)</i>                             | <i>Whole Group</i>                            | <i>English</i>         | <i>20</i>              |                        | <i>20</i>              |
|  |   |                        |                        |                        |                        |
| 10:50-11:00                                      | Transition/ Prepare for Lunch                 | <b>English/Spanish</b> | <b>10</b>              | <b>5</b>               | <b>5</b>               |
| 11:00-11:30                                      | Lunch   |                        | 30                     |                        |                        |
| 11:30-11:45                                      | Recess  |                        | 15                     |                        |                        |
| <b>11:45-1:25</b>                                | <b>Literacy Block /S. Studies</b>             | <b>Spanish</b>         | <b>100</b>             | <b>100</b>             |                        |
| <i>(11:45-12:05)</i>                             | <i>Whole Group</i>                            | <i>Spanish</i>         | <i>20</i>              | <i>20</i>              |                        |
| <i>(12:05-1:05)</i>                              | <i>Guided Reading/Literacy Stations</i>       | <i>Spanish</i>         | <i>60</i>              | <i>60</i>              |                        |
| <i>(1:05-1:25)</i>                               | <i>Whole Group</i>                            | <i>Spanish</i>         | <i>20</i>              | <i>20</i>              |                        |
| Specials: PE, Computer Lab, Music, Library, ETC. |   |                        | 45                     |                        |                        |
| <b>2:00-2:50</b>                                 | <b>Science</b>                                | <b>Spanish/English</b> | <b>50</b>              | <b>25</b>              | <b>25</b>              |
| <b>2: 50-3:00</b>                                | <b>Prepare for Dismissal</b>                  | <b>Spanish/English</b> | <b>10</b>              | <b>5</b>               | <b>5</b>               |

NBISD Dual Language Percentages in 90/10 Model—Math is 90% English-10% Spanish

**Dual Language Model for Grades 3-5 for 2016-17**

|            | <b>Reading/LA</b>   | <b>Math</b>   | <b>Social Studies</b>   | <b>Science</b>   |
|------------|---|---|---|--|
| <b>3rd</b> | English/Spanish<br>40/60<br>English: 50<br>minutes<br>Spanish: 70 | English/Spanish<br>90/10<br>English: 80<br>minutes Spanish:<br>10 minutes | English/Spanish<br>40/60<br>English: 20<br>minutes<br>Spanish: 25 | English/Spanish<br>90/10<br>English: 40<br>minutes<br>Spanish: 5 minutes |
| <b>4th</b> | <i>English/Spanish<br/>50/50<br/>English: 65<br/>minutes</i>      | <i>English/Spanish<br/>90/10<br/>English: 80<br/>minutes Spanish:</i>     | <i>English/Spanish<br/>50/50<br/>English: 22<br/>minutes</i>      | <i>English/Spanish<br/>90/10<br/>English: 55<br/>minutes</i>             |
| <b>5th</b> | English/Spanish<br>60/40<br>English: 70<br>minutes<br>Spanish: 50 | English/Spanish<br>90/10<br>English: 80<br>minutes Spanish:<br>10 minutes | English/Spanish<br>60/40<br>English: 20<br>minutes<br>Spanish: 10 | English/Spanish<br>90/10<br>English: 55<br>minutes<br>Spanish: 5         |



## Language Acquisition

The Dual Language curriculum is based on a rich academic content, which focuses on strong academic success in both languages. In the Dual Language program, a second language is taught using abundant communication and deep meaning. Learning a language takes time. The more students are exposed to learning experiences that support language acquisition, the more that they will learn in a second language.

Depending on the theme, English and Spanish speaking children will be learning in their primary and secondary language. Since students learn content through a non-native language, it is necessary to implement techniques that make instruction more effective. The need to use these techniques decreases as students acquire a higher literacy level. The frequency and variety of these strategies change depending on student need.

## Teaching Strategies for Learning a Language

- **Direct activities**
- **Drawing to illustrate concepts**
- **Making use of student interactions to later discuss as a group**
- **Speaking slowly, illustrating objects**
- **Reading facial expressions**
- **Pantomiming by the teacher or students**
- **Studying thematic units and deeply develop concepts through several weeks**
- **Interacting with classmates and learning using cooperative groups**
- **Using multiple clues to offer students opportunities to learn concepts such as graphical presentations**



## Kindergarten

### Objectives for Language

Babies and small children learn languages through a living relation with family and the world that stimulates them as they explore. At first they don't understand words that their parents tell them, but throughout time, experiences, and interactions they learn a new language. By immersing a student in a new language (instead of teaching them in a foreign language model), he/she will be able to acquire a second language in a similar way the first language was acquired. This is called "Natural Language Acquisition." This language learning method requires a significant and natural interaction in the new language to focus on understanding the message rather than its form.

### Kindergarten

Experiences are rich in activities with themes that can be studied with visuals that transmit the message in a variety of ways. Teachers speak about what is happening at that moment, and students participate in an active way instead of dealing with abstractions. Teachers speak in short and simple sentences, repeat the same phrases, or use them in a similar way. Teachers also speak slower, but using simple words and natural tone of voice. They serve as a model for students, expressing themselves so that students understand what he/she is trying to say. Language mistakes are corrected to better understand the message, and not necessarily to correct structure.

## Kindergarten Objectives for Academics

### Preliminary Literacy Skills and Concepts

#### English and Spanish

- Recognize and reproduce letter sounds - distinguish a letter or a word
- Substitute preliminary sounds to decipher common word patterns or families
- Develop letter formation with the correct technique
- Write independently using phonetic sounds
- Enjoy and understand stories
- Summarize a favorite story (in any language)
- Name and talk about two story characters
- Awareness of phonetics, rhymes, and songs
- Vocabulary development
- All students develop both languages

#### What you will observe:

Literacy will be taught in both languages. Even though it takes approximately three weeks to become acclimated, students feel comfortable and successful when teachers confirm their understanding and are motivated to participate. After four to five weeks, students will feel even more confident and very comfortable with classroom routines. They will successfully participate in all activities designed to develop their concept understanding. They will also learn basic vocabulary used in every day classroom situations. Learning theme units will also help them develop understanding while they acquire the language.

Four months after the school year begins, children are already learning in their second language and will understand almost everything they are told in the classroom. Before the school year ends, students will probably be reading and singing short phrases and songs in their second language. It is also possible that children will be writing simple words and short sentences, depending on the development of each child.

## **Homework**

Homework is a wonderful way to establish routines and is designed to practice skills and concepts taught in the classroom. It is intended that parents help in either language. Homework will probably include writing practice, simple activities, and other themes to be worked as a family. In addition to reading aloud daily for 15 minutes, homework should not take more than 15 minutes to complete each day.

## **Reading**

The “rule” on reading is to be consistent in order to develop the joy of reading. Reading is the most important way in which you can influence your children to be successful in school. You can go to the library and check out books to read at home. You can also check out books from your teacher, use the current RAZ Kids program available from the district and even exchange books with neighbors, but read, read, read!

## **What should I read?**

Read aloud-simple books in Spanish to your children. If you cannot read in Spanish, a suggestion would be to partner with another family that can read to your child in Spanish while you read to their child in English. Read aloud books with plenty of drawings, and short chapter books that are appropriate and interesting to children of this age. They will develop vocabulary and comprehension in this manner.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why is it that my child does not want to speak Spanish when I ask him/her to do so?**

This is still a phase of development of receptive language. More than likely your child will not want to speak when you say “Show your grandma you can speak Spanish.” However, you will notice he/she is developing a sense of understanding when you observe his/her relationship with teachers, classmates, or any other Spanish-speaking community members. We develop a language because “it is necessary for survival,” and the power to communicate in Spanish with teachers and others in school allows students to develop receptive comprehension; therefore, they will not feel anxious to speak Spanish.

## **First Grade**

### **Academic Objectives**

Students will learn to read Spanish with a solid foundation in phonetics and an emphasis in reading to understand language while utilizing knowledge and clues based on pictures. Students will independently write short sentences in Spanish until they can retell a story or write independently about his/her personal experiences.

### **Objectives for language**

The second year of language acquisition will continue to develop starting in first grade. Students start to gain vocabulary and conversational fluency in Spanish. Toward the end of the year, they will understand what they are learning according to the activity and theme context. In Spanish, they understand direct conversations and Spanish teachers still use situations, gestures, and a certain tone of voice that supports comprehension. In language terms, this is called “Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills.” This initial proficiency is generally reached at the beginning of the second grade when students start to develop more complex language skills.

### **Language Development**

Language development methods include reviewing basic concepts such as the calendar, counting, enjoying literature, developing concepts and story sequences, retelling stories, and performing activities to strengthen phonetic conscience including poems and songs. Art and drama courses are essential components of this program.

### **What you will Observe**

Some students start first grade already knowing how to read, and some have not yet started. This is normal, and teachers guide children to develop literacy by a series of activities in small and large groups designed to challenge a great variety of reader levels. Students listen to many stories read by the teacher. In guided reading groups, they read “short books” and texts containing anthologies of authentic Spanish literature. Students read poems, songs, and practice “sustained silent reading” independently. During first grade, independent readers generally read aloud to them, so the environment is not necessarily quiet, but alive and leads to readers who are learning to decipher new words. In addition, they are reading with more fluency. Each student will develop a different level of independent reading by the end of the year.

Beginning writers work every day with a great variety of writing activities. These could be practiced, shared, or independent to develop the thinking and expression process while students learn basic spelling and punctuation.

Teachers will be adding more vocabulary and will extend children's comprehension by structuring instruction and integrating science and social studies as the base themes. They will also facilitate language comprehension by using the same techniques from the previous year, but more advanced and faster. Students will have learned to ask for clarification when they don't understand a concept or a word, and they will even ask other students, which is a very important phase of learning. Cooperative learning and independent work offer students the opportunity to work together. Language skill and leadership are taken into consideration when students work in groups.

It is possible that some children will be observed using more English, and he/she will be shy using Spanish outside of the classroom. In fact, most first grade children learning Spanish still answer and participate in classroom discussion in English. That's what we expect. As they continue developing language skills, they will become more comfortable using their Spanish.

### **Homework**

Practicing skills and activities independently reinforces what your child is learning in the classroom. Your child should read in Spanish for 20 minutes every day. Homework should not take more than 15 minutes in addition to the independent reading time.

If your child is still not able to follow a homework routine, this is the right year to establish it. An effective routine is for many families to get home, have dinner, and immediately finish writing and reading homework. Playtime comes only after finishing homework responsibilities. Before going to bed, parents can read aloud to their child. An established routine helps develop good habits.

## **Second Grade**

### **Academic Objectives**

Reading comprehension and Spanish fluency are essential components that will add success to English writing and reading during second grade. Students develop reading fluency when reading aloud and start adding tone and expression. The focus is on good strategies that transfer between both languages. Written assignments focus on structure, including punctuation, verb usage, paragraphs and stories with a beginning, middle, and e n d .

### **Objectives for Language**

As your child starts second grade, he/she can hold a conversation in Spanish; he/she easily comprehends almost everything teachers and other students say. This language phase is the base to academic Spanish, which will continue to be acquired within the next few years. Vocabulary development is essential. Teachers will encourage students to speak more, and will use a great variety of incentives to inspire conversations in Spanish.

### **English Language Development**

Please know that second grade students will study in English. During this time, children work in groups according to their English level. In general, students will study English in small groups with the teacher that will teach one of several programs. These groups study poetry, theme units, songs, drama, and art. It is possible that a group of students will already be reading in English, and these children will study group literature in English toward the end of the school year. A second group of students will need to study Basic English phonetics at the end of the school year in order to prepare them for third grade. A third group will intensively focus on English language development for those students learning English as a second language.

### **What you will Observe**

Second grade students will focus on developing reading comprehension and fluency in English and Spanish. The program includes several guided reading groups directed toward individual reading development phases. There will also be class activities focused on literature and social studies. Other classroom structures that support reading and writing development are dictating where students will write and correct typical Spanish sentences; grammar exercises to improve vocabulary skills; spelling and use of the dictionary.

It is possible that your child translates for you if he/she has the opportunity to help. In the classroom, the student will use both languages during informal conversations and group discussions.

### **Homework**

Homework is similar for all students, but the level varies in order to meet individual needs. As a general rule, students should be able to work independently. Homework will consist of spelling, vocabulary, sentence and paragraph writing, math, comprehension exercises, and practice of reading components. Students must read in Spanish for 20 minutes every day with 20 minutes of other homework.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **My child wants to read books in English. Should I allow it?**

We encourage you to maintain a Spanish reading time of 20 minutes. Most families discover that they will need to organize homework and reading time in order to meet this requirement.

Allow your child to explore reading in English and Spanish. Maintaining focus on Spanish during the first years has many advantages that will come in handy when children get to fourth and fifth grade. By that time, they will have developed enough vocabulary to choose and enjoy chapter books in both languages.



## Third Grade

### Academic Objectives

Reading comprehension and fluency in Spanish are key factors that lead to success in English reading and writing during third grade as well. In Spanish, students develop fluency while reading aloud in English, including tone and expression. They review English phonetics and focus on developing spelling skills on words they already know in writing class, students continue developing structures and rules they learned in Spanish while they continue to improve their English writing skills.

Math is focused on multiplication, reorganization of large numbers, geometry, and problem solving. Word problems are essential thinking processes that will continue to develop.

### Objectives for Language

During third grade, children study the main four academic subjects in English and Spanish as well; these include: reading, math, science, and social studies. Students have developed fluency, and this allows both groups to use what they know, feeling more challenged during this period of structured language. Children continue to develop vocabulary and academic language in both English and Spanish. They will review science and math concepts in both languages.

## **English Language Development**

Students will receive instruction in English and Spanish. Activities are integrated in the academic content, and vocabulary development is part of all content and language activities.

## **What you will Observe**

A typical third grade day includes guided reading groups focused on the different reading levels that each group of students has reached. It also includes literature related activities, and social studies activities with the whole group. Students learn core subjects in English and Spanish. Work produced is performed in either language while maintaining an emphasis in strategies that can be transferred between both languages.

## **Homework**

Homework for all students is very similar, with several levels to meet everybody's needs. We include instructions in English, but as a general rule, students will need to work independently. Homework will consist of spelling, vocabulary, sentence and paragraph writing, math, comprehension exercises, and reading components. Students will read every day 10 minutes in Spanish, and 10 minutes in English in addition to 20 minutes of other homework. This secures the necessary vocabulary and comprehension development to face the more challenging levels of academic work in the secondary language.



## Fourth & Fifth Grade

### Academic Objectives

By now, your child is comfortable in both languages and using both to learn the grade level content. Languages are the means by which they learn the things that the State of Texas has set forth in the TEKS and while they continue to develop both languages, the focus in the upper grades is mastery of the standards.

### Objectives for language

Continuing to develop both English and Spanish are important program goals. It is the objective for all students to be bi-literate as well as bilingual. While English is the language of our country, being competent and proficient in Spanish is the goal for all students in this program. While content area studies are in both languages, English becomes more emphasized in these grades due to high stakes testing.

### English Language Development

English Language Proficiency Standards, or ELPS, guide the English language development of all students through integration with content standards. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing objectives are written for every lesson and serve to formally direct the English development of each student. There are performance indicators for all levels of speakers and teachers are adept at targeting what each level of English speaker needs to further their proficiency.

**What you will Observe**

Fourth and fifth grade academics are challenging. Students will be doing work and projects in both languages. Teachers design independent work for students to be just that, independent. Students will be quite confident in their language but will need to use resources such as Spanish/English dictionaries, verb conjugation reference books, etc. .

**Homework**

Homework is typically practice of concepts and skills learned in the classroom and should be completed independently. Homework will likely be in both languages and vary depending on language of instruction. Students should continue to read daily and at this level, should be reading chapter books in each language. There should be at least twenty minutes of reading per night not to exceed 60 total minutes of homework. Readers become more fluent and comprehension becomes more profound at this age. Your child's teacher will guide their reading selection and language depending on each student's individual needs.