

Marshall Dual Language Immersion Frequently Asked Questions

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1. What is a Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program?

A Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program is a program that teaches academic content in two languages to facilitate high academic achievement, intercultural competence, and bilingualism. There are two types of Dual Language Immersion programs: one-way immersion and two-way immersion. One-way immersion is when the majority of the students in the classroom speak the same language (for example, the majority of students in the classroom speak Spanish). A two-way immersion program is when at least a third of the demographics of the classroom are made up of one language group (for example, half of the students are native Spanish-speaking students and half of the students are native English-speaking students). Finally, the DLI program will help ensure that our students' languages and cultures are seen as assets in school and in society.

2. Why is Marshall implementing a DLI program? What are the benefits of the DLI program for Marshall students? What research supports this type of program?

DLI programs help students develop a strong identity, bilingualism, intercultural competence, and high academic achievement (de Jong & Bearse, 2011; Lindholm-Leary, 2011; Thomas & Collier, 2004). Marshall is implementing a DLI program to better support our multilingual students and the Marshall community. Research has shown that when students have literacy skills in their native language, it is easier to learn to read and write in an additional language (Lucas et al., 2008). Additionally, Marshall is considered a critical need location based on our student demographics (see more here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/1ce2e098993e41c084e289116bb8466d>). We have heard from numerous students and families who want their students to achieve high academic achievement and become bilingual; this program is a way to equitably serve all students while meeting the needs of the community.

3. Why did Marshall select a 50:50 Model?

A 50:50 model is a DLI program model that teaches half of the academic content in English and half of the academic content in Spanish. With the 50:50 model, we have the flexibility of implementing both one-way and two-way immersion programs. Overall, we chose a 50:50 model because this model promotes high academic achievement and bilingualism.

4. Will the whole school be a DLI program?

The DLI program started in 4K during the 2023-2024 school year. Each year, we will add a new grade level to the program. The program will be implemented in one to two classrooms for each grade, depending on enrollment. Every classroom will not be a DLI classroom. Next year, we will only have the DLI program in 4K and kindergarten, not in all grades.

5. When will we start this program?

This program began in the fall of 2023 in 4K. Each year we will add the next grade level to ensure students have the opportunity to develop their bilingualism while continuing their education. Next year, we will only have the DLI program in 4K and kindergarten, not in all grades.

6. What grades will be offered in the DLI program?

Next year, we will offer the DLI program in 4K and kindergarten. Each year we will add classes to the next grade level. Ideally, this program will be implemented 4K-12 once we reach those grade levels.

7. Can students enter the DLI program at any time/grade?

Students will be able to enter the DLI program in 4K and kindergarten. Students entering the district later in their education who wish to enter the DLI program will be considered on a case-by-case basis (Spanish language proficiency, language spoken at home, having previously attended a DLI program, etc.). Monolingual English-speaking students entering the program later in their education would not have the Spanish proficiency necessary to access Spanish-language content. Spanish-speaking students will have the option of enrolling in the DLI program in any grade, as they will have the necessary Spanish proficiency to be successful in the program.

8. Will student progress look the same in the DLI program as in monolingual settings?

In short, no. It is important that educators and families know that the development of literacy in two languages is different from the development of monolingual literacy; therefore, the standardized test results of students in the DLI program may not be able to reflect those of their monolingual peers as they progress in the DLI program. However, as time passes and bilingual students develop in both languages, they often outperform their monolingual peers on standardized tests. (Taken from Middleton-Cross Plains)

9. Is the DLI program appropriate for students with special needs (including speech/language), and for students who speak languages other than English or Spanish?

Yes. The DLI program is inclusive for all students. We encourage applications from all families in the Marshall School District and those who want to enroll through open enrollment.

Since all students in the DLI program are assumed to be language learners, the curriculum and instructional practices are intentionally designed to be understandable to all students. This type of instruction can be beneficial for students who already speak a language other than English or Spanish, and also for students who have special needs. (Taken from Middleton-Cross Plains)