



Socorro ISD Dual Language Academy Program Handbook



Department of Bilingual/ESL Education

Socorro Independent School District

Overview

The Socorro Independent School District is a rapidly growing school district serving more than 47,000 students in grades PreK – 12th with 49 innovative instruction in state-of-the-art facilities. Team SISD is an outstanding educational institution having been recognized at the local, state, and national level with numerous achievements. Notably, SISD is the first and only large district in the El Paso region to earn an “A” grade in the Texas Education Agency latest accountability ratings. For two consecutive years, SISD is also the only district in the region and one of only three districts in a pool of the largest 50 in the state to earn the distinction for postsecondary readiness at the district level.

Strategic Plan

SISD’s Strategic Plan guides the day-to-day work of Team SISD in order to meet the district’s overarching goal of ensuring 100 percent of students graduate from high school prepared for the college and career of their choice. The plan was developed to move the district forward while meeting the needs of SISD’s students, parents and broader community, and serves as the pathways to success while focusing on improving academic achievement of all students. SISD’s Strategic Plan includes five directions:

Direction One

Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

Direction Two

College and Career Readiness

Direction Three

Highly Qualified, Effective Faculty and Staff

Direction Four

Home, School, Community Partnerships

Direction Five

Accountability For ALL

Department of Bilingual/ESL Education

Mission & Vision

The Dual Language Academy vision and mission were developed by a team of teachers, staff and administrators. The mission and vision serve as the foundation for the decisions and actions taken by Socorro Independent School District.

Mission

Students will become bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish through rigorous instruction and multicultural experiences.

Vision

Academies will provide dual language students the resources necessary to be academically, socially and linguistically successful in both English and Spanish to become globally competitive citizens.

Program Goals



Dual Language Program Model

The dual language bilingual program in the Socorro Independent School District was established in 2019. The Dual Language program at Socorro ISD is designed to ensure that all students become bilingual, biliterate and multicultural with the ability to meaningfully engage with their learning in an increasingly global society. The program promotes biliteracy, bilingualism, and biculturalism for students. The goal is to prepare students for the future with abilities to listen, speak, read, and write in two languages, as well as develop an appreciation for different cultures.

The dual language program is aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and English Language Proficiency Standards. The program began with two kindergarten and two 1st grade classrooms in the 2019-2020 school year. Each consecutive year the program has expanded to the next grade level. Instruction provides students literacy and content instruction to in both English and Spanish at a 50-50 ratio two teacher model. Socorro ISD incorporated Pre-Kindergarten as part of the dual language academies for the 2020-2021 school year. The Prekindergarten follows a 90/10 one teacher program model. Instruction in the 90/10 program models provides 90% of the instruction in Spanish and 10% in English.

The Dual Language program provides kids the opportunity to learn English and Spanish, while maintaining high academic standards. The program is a two-way model. In a classroom, approximately half of the students are Spanish speaking English Learners who qualify for full-time bilingual services. Approximately half are English-speaking students. Parents must apply for this program and students are chosen through an electronic random lottery. Students begin in kindergarten and continue in this program until 5th grade even if they are no longer considered English Learners.

Non-Negotiable Expectations

In order to ensure the expected academic achievement and success, it is necessary to adhere to the following program non-negotiable expectations:

- Daily instruction must reflect the time and content allocation for each language (50% Spanish / 50% English)
- Strategic separation of languages on the part of the instructor – no simultaneous translation
- Key vocabulary terms and concepts will be bridged into the other language at the end of each unit
- Team Teaching
- Sociocultural competence

Benefits

For English proficient students, more than twenty years of research has shown:

- English proficient students develop proficiency in two languages
- English proficient students score as well or better than their English proficient, non-dual language peers on standardized tests of math and English language arts
- English proficient students develop a positive sense of self and demonstrate positive crosscultural attitudes and behaviors

For English learners, more than forty years of research has shown:

- English learners who receive native language instruction were able to catch up to or surpass the achievement levels of EL peers and English proficient peers who were educated in English-only mainstream classrooms. These results were found regardless of the students' socioeconomic background.
- English learners who participated in programs that provided extended instruction in the native language (dual language programs) outperformed students who received shortterm instruction through their native language (transitional bilingual education).

Student Achievement across Six Program Models

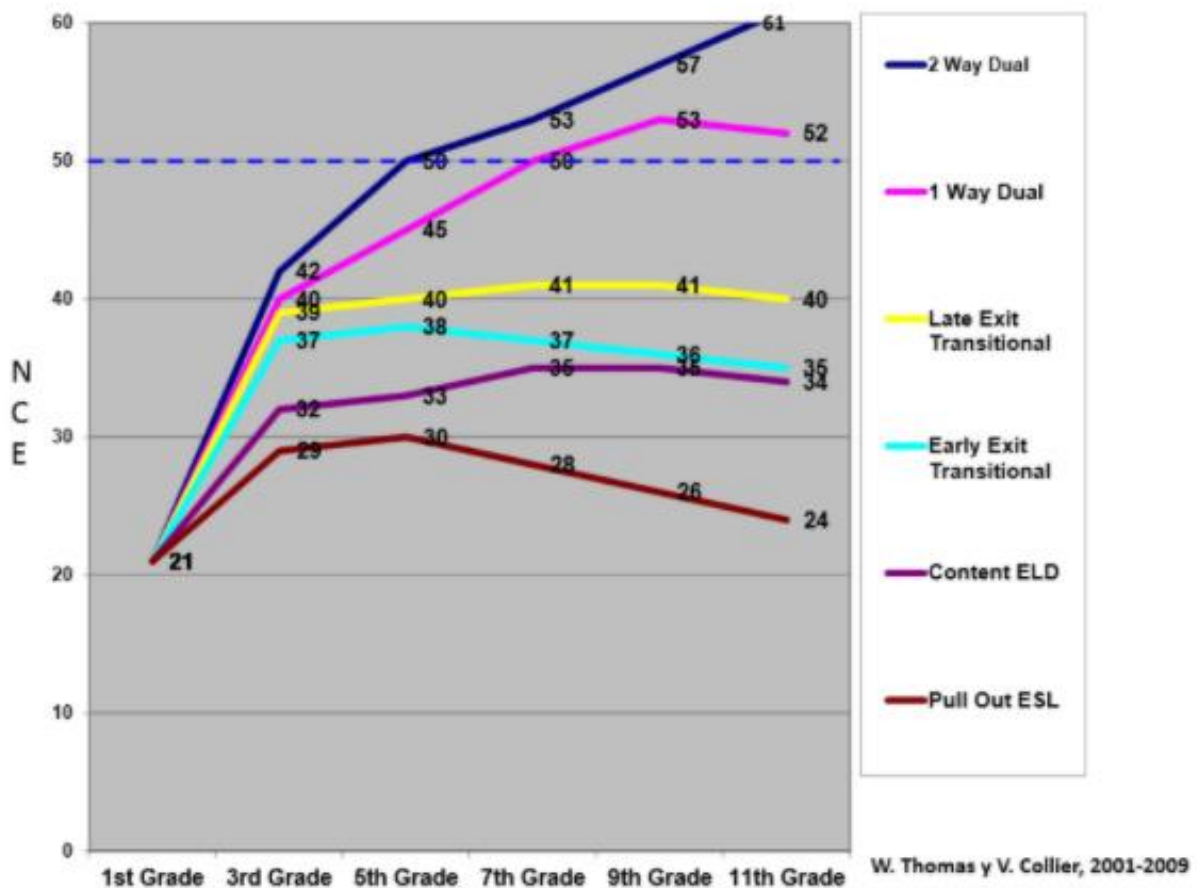
The graph below shows results from a study comparing six of the most common types of English Language Learner programs. It shows how ELLs achieve academically over time in the various program models. In Program 1- Dual Language, ELL students consistently surpassed average academic achievement of native English speakers, and native English speakers in this

program also showed higher academic gains than their non-Dual Language counterparts. In most of the other programs, students do not retain their gains into secondary!

The most prevalent educational program models for ELLs across the US are:

- Dual Language, also known as two-way developmental bilingual education
- Late-exit bilingual education (thru 5th or 6th) with ESL taught through content
- Early-exit bilingual education with ESL taught through academic content
- Early-exit bilingual education (not after 3rd grade) with ESL through language
- ESL Content Based taught through academic content
- ESL Pullout taught through discreet skills (language/grammar/phonics)

English Learners' Long-Term Achievement by Program Model



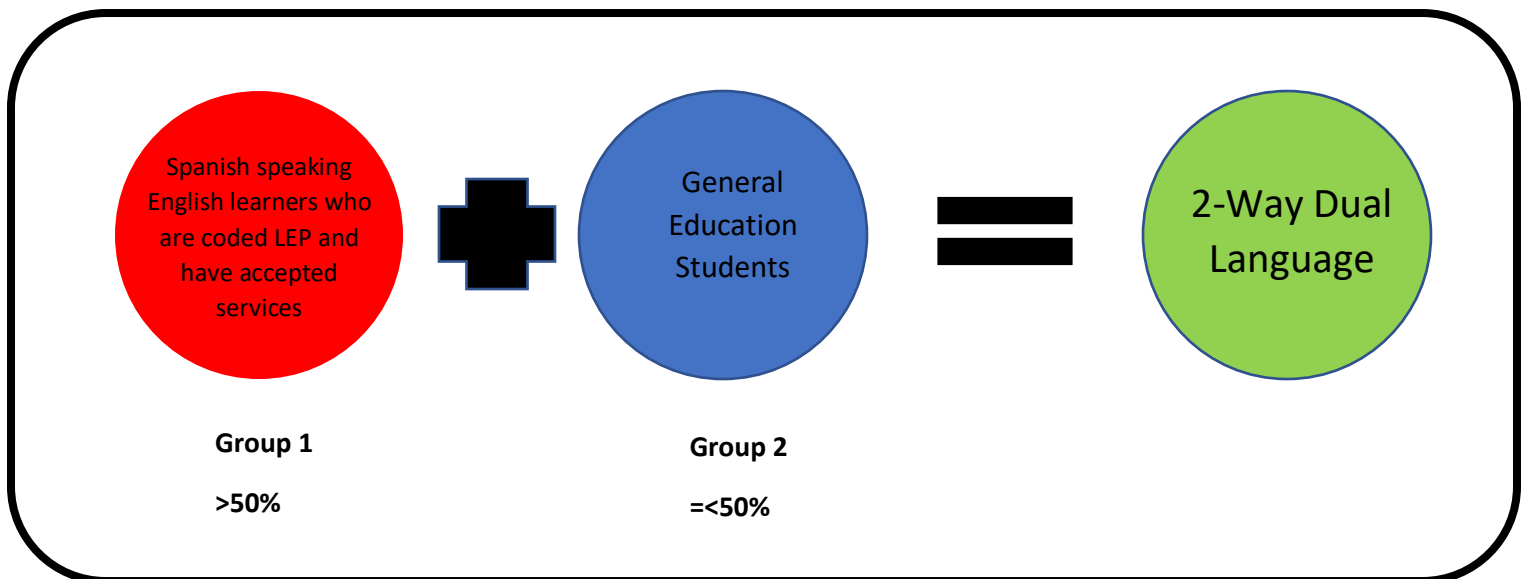
Student Selection

Families with incoming prekindergarten students from within the district can apply for entry into the Dual Language Academy. The application process opens during the spring semester and students are selected through an electronic random lottery system. If the student is selected into the academy they are expected to participate in the program until the end of 5th grade. Students who are not selected are placed on a waiting list. The waiting list is kept on file until the end of 1st grade.

Note: Students who are siblings to students that are selected are not automatically placed in the program.

Dual Language Classroom Composition

- Approximately fifty percent (50%) Spanish speaking English learners who are coded as Limited English Proficient and parent has accepted services
- Not more than fifty percent (50%) English proficient students who are part of the general education setting



Waiting List Procedures

Students who applied to the program but were not selected to the Dual Language Academy will be placed on the appropriate waiting list (LEP or Gen Ed.). Students that move out during PreK through 1st grade will be replaced by students on the appropriate waiting list. For example, if a 1st grade monolingual student withdraws from the program the student will be replaced by the next student on the 1st grade monolingual student waiting list.

After the end of first grade (Grade 2-5), students may only be admitted to the program if there is a space in the dual language academy at the student's grade level AND meets the following criteria:

- The student must have participated in a dual language classroom setting
- The student shows adequate Spanish fluency

If the waiting list has exhausted the space can be filled by a student who is transferring to Socorro ISD from a dual language program outside the district.

Note: Students who missed the application deadline will be added at the end of the appropriate waiting list at the parents' request.

English Learner Identification Process

State of Texas statute requires that all English learners be identified and placed in the appropriate educational setting within the first of weeks of enrollment. The language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) conducts identification of students who are new to Texas public schools and reviews previous documentation of students who are transferring from other Texas public schools.

Home Language Survey

Upon initial enrollment into Socorro ISD, a home language survey is completed by all parents during the enrollment process. The Home Language Surveys (HLS) are administered annually to students new to the district for whom a survey has never been completed in the state of Texas. The Home Language Survey contains two questions.

1. What language is spoken in the child's home **most of the time?**
2. What language does the child speak **most of the time?**

Parent can request to make changes to the HLS within the first two weeks of enrollment and only if the child has not been tested.

English Language Proficiency Assessment

If the responses on the HLS indicate a language other than English, the student shall be tested in accordance with Chapter 89.

- Prekindergarten -1st Grade , the listening and speaking components of the state-approved English language proficiency test for identification; and
- In Grades 2-12, the listening, speaking, reading and writing components of the state-approved English language proficiency test for identification.

Parent permission for language proficiency testing is not required.

Determining Eligibility

For students in prekindergarten through 1st Grade: the student's score from the listening and speaking components of the state-approved English language proficiency test for identification is below the level designated for indicating English proficiency.

For students in 2nd through 12th Grade: the student's score from the listening, speaking, reading and writing components of the state-approved English language proficiency test for identification is below the level designated for indicating English proficiency.

At any grade level, a student shall be identified as an English learner if the student's ability in English is so limited that the English language proficiency assessment cannot be administered.

All students in a bilingual education program shall administer a language proficiency test in the primary language of the student who is eligible to be served in the bilingual education program.

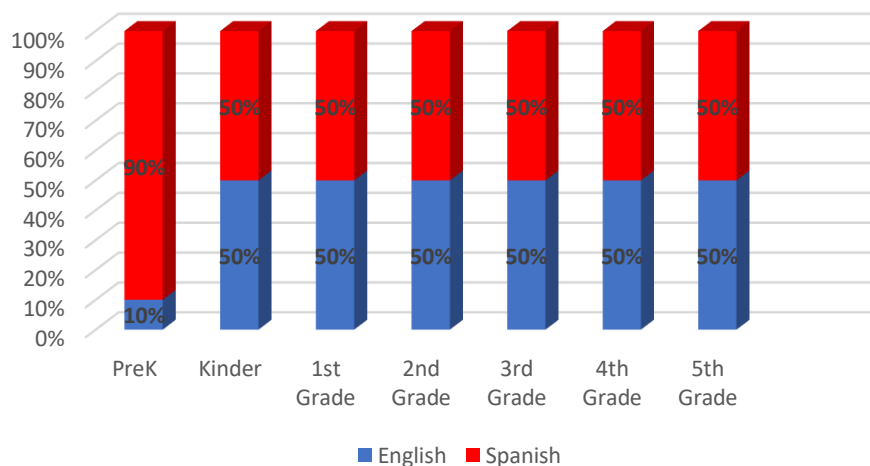
Program Placement

Once the student has been assessed the LPAC comes together to determine if the student qualifies for bilingual services. If it is determined that the student meets the criteria the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) then places the identified student in either the bilingual transitional early exit education program or the ESL program as follows:

- Elementary Spanish speaking LEP students are placed in a Bilingual Transitional Early Exit Program. (PreK/K through 5 campuses)
- Elementary LEP students of languages other than Spanish are placed in an ESL program.
- Secondary LEP students in grades 6-12 are placed in the ESL program.

Structure

Dual language programs vary with respect to the amount of Spanish instruction that is provided. At the PreK level students follow a one teacher 90/10 program model*. At this level 90% of instruction is received in Spanish while the 10% is received in English. Students receive simultaneous literacy in Spanish and English. In grades Kindergarten through 5th grade students follow a two teacher 50/50 program model. Students in a 50/50 model receive 50% of their academic instruction in Spanish* and 50% of the instruction in English**. Again, simultaneous literacy in Spanish and English.



*Teachers providing Spanish Instruction must be bilingual certified.

**Teachers providing English instruction must be either bilingual or ESL certified.

Targeted Instructional Language Per Grade Level

The language of instruction has been designated for the core content areas per school year. Students will receive instruction in the subject's targeted language for entire school year as opposed to simultaneous. Below you see the sample schedules for each grade level. Subjects highlighted in blue receive instruction in English and subjects highlighted in red receive instruction in Spanish. Allotted instructional minutes is equal between instructional time in Spanish and instructional time in English in grades Kinder through 5th grade.

PreKinder (One Teacher 90/10 Program Model)

Subject	Subject
English Language Arts	Spanish Language Arts
	Social Studies
	Science
	Mathematics

Kindergarten (Two Teacher 50/50 Program Model)

Subject	Subject
English Language Arts	Spanish Language Arts
Social Studies/Science	Mathematics

1st Grade (Two Teacher 50/50 Program Model)

Subject	Subject
English Language Arts	Spanish Language Arts
Social Studies/Science	Mathematics

2nd Grade (Two Teacher 50/50 Program Model)

Subject	Subject
English Language Arts	Spanish Language Arts
Mathematics	Social Studies/Science

3rd Grade (Two Teacher 50/50 Program Model)

Subject	Subject
English Language Arts	Spanish Language Arts
Mathematics	Social Studies/Science

4th Grade (Two Teacher 50/50 Program Model)

Subject	Subject
English Language Arts	Spanish Language Arts
Social Studies/Science	Mathematics

5th Grade (Two Teacher 50/50 Program Model)

Subject	Subject
English Language Arts	Spanish Language Arts
Mathematics	Social Studies/Science

Staff Role

In the Dual Language Program, teachers, administrators and other staff need to promote a positive, multilingual learning experience. Teachers will use a variety of effective instructional practices for the students to acquire academic skills and learn both languages.

Some instructional practices used by the teachers are:

- Positive teacher-student, and student-student interactions
- Culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and assessment
- Cooperative learning and social interaction
- Strategies instruction to promote comprehension; such as visuals, TPR, realia, music, etc.
- Implementation of bridging activities
- Understanding and support of students and families by being aware of their cultural differences

School Environment

For the Dual Language program to be successful, school's environment must reflect the richness of both cultures.

Schools should adhere to the following expectations:

- School signs in both languages throughout the school. This includes all bulletin board headings, hallways, and student work in both languages when appropriate
- Morning announcements in both languages
- All communications to be sent home in both languages. This includes, but is not limited to: call-outs and newsletters.
- Honoring cultural diversity to promote positive cross-cultural attitudes. School programs and activities bring cultures together.
- Resources in campus library and classroom libraries in both languages.
- Orientation for all teachers and school staff to educate them about the program
- Resources/Materials in both languages (ex: classroom libraries, stations)
- Campus events in both languages (ex: Math Night, Literacy Night, Parent Meetings)
- Parent/ Family Events (monthly informational meetings, ESL classes, Multicultural Night)

Parent Commitment

The benefits of a dual language program are only evident over the long term of the student's education. Due to this and to ensure that students are successful, families need to commit to the program until the end of 5th grade. Parent involvement and support is crucial for the long-term success of their child's academic achievement. Parents are required to sign an agreement upon student's selection to the program.

Dual Language Academy Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the purpose of the dual language program?

The goal of our dual language program is for students to be able to speak fluently in two languages (bilingualism) as well as to have the ability to read and write in two languages (biliteracy).

2. Is the program only available to non-native English speakers?

No. The dual language program is available to both non-native English speakers as well as native English speakers.

3. What is the partnering language?

SISD's Dual Language Program focus on English and Spanish Instruction.

4. Will my child receive instruction in Spanish only?

No. SISD's program model is a dual language two-way 50/50. This means that 50% of the instruction your child will receive will be in Spanish and the other 50% of his or her instruction will be in English.

5. How will my child's day look like?

Students will visit two teachers during their school day. Their schedule can look as follows.

<u>Schedule A</u>	or	<u>Schedule B</u>
Morning: Spanish Instruction		Morning: English Instruction
Afternoon: English Instruction		Afternoon: Spanish Instruction

6. Is the dual language program available at all SISD campuses?

SISD is currently piloting the dual language program at two campuses, Myrtle Cooper Elementary and Dr. Sue A. Shook. However, all SISD students can submit an application.

7. In what grade levels will the dual language program be available?

The dual language program is available for students in Pre-K to 3rd grade starting the 2021-2022 school year.

8. What is the selection process for students admitted to the program?

Students will be selected through a lottery system. However, students selected must score at least a 3 on LAS.

9. Is transportation provided if my child's home campus is not one of the participating dual language campuses?

No. The parent is responsible for the student's transportation.

10. Can I remove my child from the program at anytime?

Research shows that students benefit from the dual language program when they are committed for at least 6 years. Therefore, we do ask that you make that commitment prior to enrolling your child.

11. Can I enroll my child in the program later in his elementary years?

No. Enrollment will only be available during pre-K. However, students can be added to the waiting list in kinder and first grade.

12. Can I enroll my child if our family recently moved into Socorro ISD?

SISD will consider each case in an individual basis. One requirement is that students must have been enrolled in a dual language program at their previous campus.

13. What language will be child be assessed in?

Assessments will be administered in both English and Spanish. State assessments decisions will be made by a committee to determine the appropriate testing language.

14. Will the content be “watered down” for students enrolled in the dual language program?

No. The dual language students will receive the same rigorous instruction. The only difference is that he or she will be learning through two different languages.

15. Can my child enroll in the program if he or she is receiving special education services?

Yes. Students participating in any other program are accepted into the dual language program if selected.

Academic Services Division

Lucia Borrego

Chief Academic Officer

Office: 915-937-0331

Email: lborre@sisd.net

Carlos Berumen

Dual Language Instructional Officer

Office: 915-

Email: jberum@sisd.net

Adalberto Garcia

School Improvement Officer

Office: 915-937-0277

Email: agarci10@sisd.net

Veronica E. Reyes

Director of Bilingual/ESL Education

Office: 915-937-1620

Email: vreyes14@sisd.net