



About the Castle Heights Spanish World Language Immersion Program

MISSION

At Castle Heights Elementary School, we are committed to the principle that all students can become bilingual and biliterate during the elementary school years, while participating in a balanced educational program that promotes academic, social, physical and psychological growth. The vision for the World Language Program at Castle Heights is to help students develop to their fullest potential as they become bilingual and biliterate to meet the demands of the global workforce. Students receive rigorous academic instruction in both English and Spanish to reach academic proficiency, while gaining an appreciation for the diverse cultures of the Spanish-speaking world in a nurturing and supportive learning environment.

Spanish WLI Program FAQ

What Is A World Language Immersion Program?

A World Language Immersion Program is an educational program that falls under the Dual Language Education umbrella offered by LAUSD. In Dual Language Education, students receive instruction in all content areas in both English and a second language (referred to as the target language) beginning in kindergarten. At the elementary level, students spend a minimum of 50% of each instructional day in the target language.

In contrast to “One-Way Immersion” programs (designed for English-learners) and “Two-Way Immersion” programs (designed for classrooms evenly split between English-learners and English-speakers), “World Language Immersion” programs are designed for classrooms comprised predominantly of native English speakers who are learning a new language.

The goals for all students in World Language Immersion programs are: bilingualism and biliteracy, grade-level academic achievement in English and in the target language, and positive cross-cultural competencies.

When Was The Castle Heights WLI Program Established And How Does It Work?

Castle Heights introduced a Spanish World Language Immersion Program in Fall 2018 with one kindergarten class and one 1st grade class. The program expanded to Grade 2 in August 2019. The program will continue to grow every year until each grade level (K-5) has one Spanish dual language classroom.

The dual language strand at CHES serves only **one** classroom of students per grade level. Thus, as the dual language strand moves from one grade to another, the same group of children will remain together from grades K-5.

Students in the WLI Program benefit from the many community and enrichment opportunities available at Castle Heights.

What Is The Academic Model?

The program starts in Kindergarten as a 90/10 model: 90% of the instructional minutes are in Spanish and 10% are in English. Every year the instructional minutes in Spanish will decrease and instructional time in English will increase. By 5th grade, 50% of instruction will be in Spanish, and 50% will be in English.

With input from parents, teachers, and district specialists, the Castle Heights school community chose to adopt the 90:10 instructional model for our nascent program, feeling it would be most beneficial for our predominantly English-speaking student population. Research shows that foreign language acquisition is most effective through full immersion; a 90/10 model sets a strong foundation for developing bilingualism and biliteracy.

What do we know about educational outcomes in dual language programs?

There are many published studies of dual language programs that have been implemented in elementary schools across the United States over the past several decades. The research overwhelmingly indicates that such programs are beneficial to students of all kinds. Extensive data has been collected and longitudinal studies of learning outcomes among students who have completed such programs have been conducted. These studies were recently validated through an analysis of millions of student records in 16 states in [this article](#), published by Thomas and Collier in 2017.

While dual language immersion programs have been studied most extensively among English-learners, a number of studies have also demonstrated the advantages foreign language immersion for native speakers of English as well.

Does it matter if nobody at home speaks Spanish?

No. The program is comprised of students with all levels of language exposure.

Is this program right for my child and my family?

There are a few things to consider when enrolling your child in any dual language education program:

- In order to see the benefits of the program, the child and family need to commit to continuing in the program from K-5th grade. This is important both for the child and for the program to continue to thrive.
- Homework will be assigned in Spanish and English; this may require a bit more effort for the family to support their child in completing those activities. There are resources to help support parents in this. Parents DO NOT need any background in Spanish in order for the child to be successful in the program.
- Your child will matriculate with the same cohort of ~25 students from K-5th.

How do I enroll my child?

Please visit <http://echoices.lausd.net>.

If you miss the application window, there is a late application period and students will be placed in the program in the order that the applications are received, and based on space availability. Please consider that each year there will be only 25 students accepted into the Kindergarten class. Students in higher grade levels may be accepted to fill slots that open up when enrolled children move from the program.

1. *Priority is given to students who have siblings at CHES and live within the attendance boundaries for CHES.*
2. *Then students who live within the school attendance boundaries.*
3. *Then, students applying for permits are considered for the program in order to fill the class.*
4. *In some cases, a new student who has grade-level proficiency in the target language, Spanish, may be enrolled into the WLIP program beyond grade 1, depending on space availability.*

What are the attendance boundaries for Castle Heights Elementary?

Visit the [LAUSD Resident School Identifier](#). Please enter your residential address to verify Castle Heights Elementary as your designated resident school.

Do WLI students access the same curricular experiences and enrichment opportunities as the rest of the student body (music, art, theatre, science, computer lab, SAS, IEP, etc.)?

Yes. The standards and curriculum for the WLI Program are the same as those for Castle Heights and all LAUSD English-only programs. The difference is the language of instruction. Additionally, most of the enrichment activities at Castle Heights are offered to WLI students.

The advanced studies program is accommodated within dual language classrooms with differentiated learning opportunities. IEPs are accommodated and children of all abilities are welcome in the World Language Immersion Program.

How is the World Language Immersion Program incorporated into the school as a whole?

The Program has dedicated Spanish-speaking, BCLAD-certified teachers at each grade level where the program has been implemented and students move between classes with the same cohort of classmates each year. However, WLI students will interact with the rest of the student body for recess, lunch, and school-wide activities.

Teachers also collaborate within and across grade levels.

The World Language Program hosts school-wide events including celebrations of Día de los Muertos and Día de los Niños.

How can World Language parents support their children's education and the Castle Heights community at large ?

At Castle Heights, we are proud of our remarkable levels of family engagement and volunteerism. We strongly encourage parents to give of their time and talents to enrich the educational, social, and cultural opportunities offered to all students at our school.

As a fledgling program, the World Language Program depends on even greater levels of family support. Thanks to the participation and contributions of every World Language family, our inaugural year was a great success and we were lauded as a robust, model program within LAUSD! Parents, teachers, and administrators are all active partners as we continue to build and grow an exemplary World Language Immersion Program at Castle Heights.

We invite you to invest in our program by volunteering your time and offering material support whenever possible. Here are some ways you can get involved:

- Volunteer to help organize or chair a school-wide or WLP-specific event.

- Help us with ideas or resources you may have for fundraising.
- Serve on the World Language Committee, Friends of Castle Heights, the Governance Council, the PTA, or ELAC!

Where Can I Find More Information?

- Extensive information about dual language education in general is available at [this website](#).
- [This LAUSD echoices webpage](#) provides an overview of the different immersion models offered by LAUSD, including the difference between dual two-way immersion programs vs. world language programs.
- [This “Multilingual FAQ” on the California Department of Education website](#) is also a good source for general information.
- Information about LAUSD Biliteracy Awards and the district’s “Seal of Biliteracy” for eligible students in dual language education programs is available [here](#).

Here are a couple other useful links:

- [LAUSD Multilingual and Multicultural Education Dual Language Education Programs Office](#)
- [LAUSD eChoices 2019-2020 Dual Language Education Programs Parents FAQ](#)