



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GERMAN DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS

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- 1. WHY ENROLL MY CHILD IN AN IMMERSION / DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM?**
- 2. WHAT EFFECT WILL LEARNING GERMAN HAVE ON MY CHILD'S ENGLISH SKILLS?**
- 3. HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD LEARN?**
- 4. WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO BEGIN LEARNING ANOTHER LANGUAGE?**
- 5. WHAT DOES A DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM CLASSROOM LOOK LIKE?**

# WHAT IS A DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM?

- The German Immersion/Dual Language Program provides students with the opportunity to acquire the skills for communicating in both English and German at a young age.
- The term **Dual Language Program** is used to describe an immersion program where both English Language Arts and German Language Arts are taught. Also, other core and additional subjects are taught in German. In other words, German bilingual programs go beyond learning about German to learning in and through German.

# WHY ENROLL MY CHILD IN AN IMMERSION / DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM?

## POSITIVE IMPACT ON YOUR CHILD'S PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Adding another language will increase your child's ability to be prepared for a complex, culturally diverse world.
- Through exposure to other cultures your child will be better equipped for the working world and the ability to apply 21st century learning skills.
- Second-language learners demonstrate enhanced empathy, awareness of diversity, tolerance of difference and greater sense of social justice.
- Second language learners demonstrate enhanced development of self-awareness as well as more positive attitudes and openness to other languages and their speakers and culture.

# WHY ENROLL MY CHILD IN AN IMMERSION / DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM?

## POSITIVE EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

- Enhanced English language development
- Unique educational opportunities, e.g., exchanges, cultural events, interaction with fluent speakers, international exam accreditation, opportunities to study abroad
- Better career opportunities in a globalized world and international workforce
- Higher achievement in a range of subject areas, including mathematics, science and language arts
- Increased graduation rates

# WHAT EFFECT WILL LEARNING ANOTHER LANGUAGE HAVE ON MY CHILD'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS?

- A child's English will not be adversely affected by learning another language. It will be improved!
- Immersion/Dual Language program students often outperform students in an English-only program in English skills.

# I DON'T SPEAK GERMAN. HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD LEARN?

- The majority of parents with children enrolled in a Dual Language Program are **not** proficient in the language their child is learning.
- Ask teachers for online resources to help your children practice German outside of school.
- Read to your child every day in home language (English or other): that helps children build a strong background of knowledge and make connections to the new language.
- Encourage reading, writing, word games and family discussions and debates to help enhance your child's communication skills in your home language.

# I DON'T SPEAK GERMAN. HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD LEARN?

- Encourage your child to use and experiment with both English and German: Children readily transfer skills from one language to the other.
- Model positive attitude for your child towards German language, culture, and members of the German-speaking community.
- Model positive attitude towards the school: when children like the teacher and the school, they acquire new language more quickly.
- Involve your child in extra curricular activities in your community that involve exposure to the German language or culture.



# WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO BEGIN LEARNING ANOTHER LANGUAGE?

- The earlier a child is exposed to another language, the greater their chance of learning to use the language like a native speaker.
- The more time children spend learning the language, the more proficient they will become.
- Most dual language programs start at the Kindergarten level.

# WHAT DOES A GERMAN DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM CLASSROOM LOOK LIKE?

- During German language instructional time, German dominates the classroom interaction, whether the teacher or students are speaking.
- Even in lower level classes, very little English is used during German time.
- German is the operating language of the classroom. It is a language of instruction and a means of communication.

# WHAT DOES A GERMAN DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM CLASSROOM LOOK LIKE?

- Children have fun as they learn. They learn to understand, speak, read, write and interact in German naturally and without stress. "Fun" activities are planned in German.
- The classroom climate is warm and accepting (in teacher-student interactions as well as among peers).
- The teacher is appreciative of and praises the children's efforts to communicate in German.

# WHAT DOES A GERMAN DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM CLASSROOM LOOK LIKE?

- All students learn! No child needs to be afraid of making mistakes.
- Risk-taking is encouraged.
- Error correction is performed gently and tactfully.
- The children who are less fluent learn from the others. Those who are more fluent concentrate on improving their oral and written language.

# WHAT DOES A GERMAN DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM CLASSROOM LOOK LIKE?

- The teacher does not translate.
- Instead, he/she facilitates understanding through the use of techniques such as gestures, mime and appropriate intonation.
- He/she is expressive and animated and uses concrete materials and audio-visual aids.
- Students develop language very quickly!

# WHAT DOES A GERMAN DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM CLASSROOM LOOK LIKE?

- Languages are not mixed.
- German is taught in longer blocks of time without exposure to other languages.
- This better allows students to "think" in German and allows for more natural language production.

**THANK YOU.**