
Dual Language Immersion in Wyoming

Panel Discussion by Wyoming Leaders:

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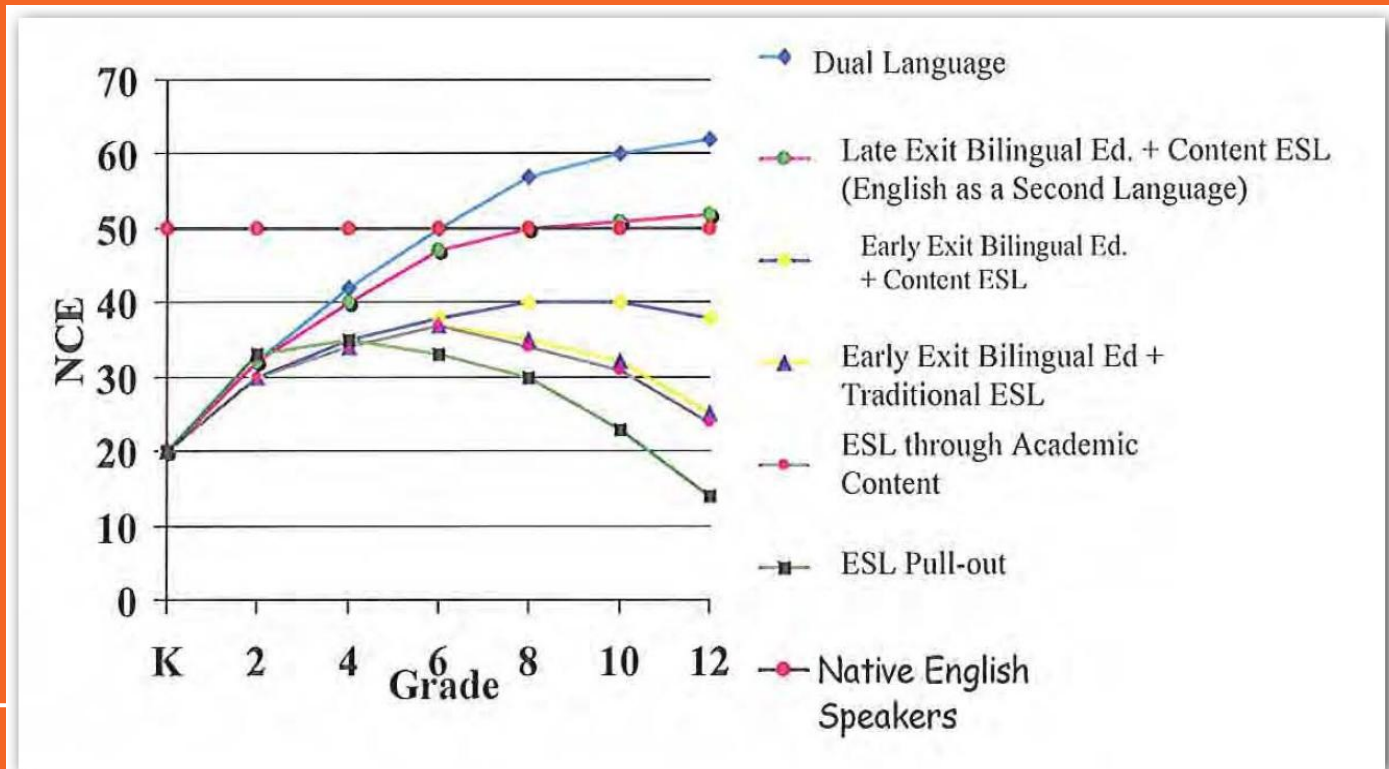
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History of Dual Language Immersion

The first Dual Language Immersion program was begun in Miami, Florida in 1963 by Cuban dissidents who had fled the Castro regime. Most of these were professionals who had the economic and educational means to provide opportunities for their children and wanted them to maintain their native language in the US. DLI programs expanded slowly from that time under the Bilingual Education Act (originally passed in 1968 and amended several times). The Bilingual Education Act provided federal assistance to school districts to implement innovative programs that served limited English proficient students. A majority of these programs focused on subtractive language policies that worked towards building English proficiency at the expense of losing strong native language abilities. There were only 260 Dual language immersion bilingual programs under the Bilingual Education Act. In 2002, the Bilingual Education Act was reauthorized to become the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act. The new act encouraged more additive programs in language enhancement so DLI programs expanded exponentially. There are more than 2000 nationwide, but accurate counts cannot be obtained due to the constant increase in schools offering DLI programs. Notice these programs were originally started as a way to improve education for English learners. DLI programs fall under the umbrella of Title III.

English Language Learners

What is the impact of Dual Language Programs on English Language Learners?



Teton County

Started in 2009 with two 1st grade classrooms (40 students); this first cohort is currently in 10th grade. TCSD #1 offers a two-way 50/50 program in Spanish and English. This program started as a way to improve the outcomes of the very large EL population and to help close the achievement gap between that population and the native English speaking students. The TCSD#1 DLI program is currently offered in grades K-10, with courses currently being added for 11th and 12th grade students. In K-5th grade, all DLI students attend Munger Mountain Elementary, a dual immersion magnet school that opened in August of 2018. With 470 students, it is the largest elementary school in Teton County. Our program model underwent a significant change prior to the 2018-19 school year, and students now receive instruction in all core content areas equally in both languages K-5. In grades 6-9, students receive two out of seven courses in Spanish (history and Spanish language arts), and can then take AP history as sophomores and AP Spanish Lit as juniors. We are also adding a two-year Spanish interpretation and translation course for 11th and 12th graders as a dual immersion or heritage speaker elective. Students can graduate from high school with the Teton County Seal of Biliteracy, and we have recently implemented a series of biliteracy pathway awards, beginning at 5th grade.

Natrona County

Dual Language Immersion was very much a grassroots movement in Natrona County led by a group of parents. In early 2012, parents approached the NCSD Board of Trustees about the possibility of implementing a program in NCSD to begin in the 2012-13 school year. The Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and Human Resources began working with the parent group and interested schools to scope the possibility of beginning a program in the District. Over the course of the next 4 months, the group researched and presented findings to various stakeholder groups. Ultimately the Board of Trustees voted to begin with a Mandarin DLI Program at Paradise Valley Elementary School with 2 sections of Kindergarten (44 kids). NCSD's DLI program has grown to include a Spanish Program at Park Elementary School with another Spanish Program to begin in the 2019-20 school year at Verda James Elementary school. The DLI Students will continue with their immersion experience in 6th grade in 2019-20. There are currently over 300 students in both programs, K-5 and interest continues to grow each year.

NCSD uses an open enrollment process and the DLI Programs are seen as a program within the school. Parents can choose any school for children to attend. The enrollment for DLI follows all placement processes for any child enrolling in the district. The entry point for DLI is Kindergarten only, although consideration is made when students come to our district who are native speaker or have been in an immersion program elsewhere.

Campbell County

Started with the building of a new school so as not to displace students; opened in 2016-2017 school year. Public meetings were held to inform the community, as the idea for opening a DLI program originated with the school board and central administration. Community input voted for Spanish over Mandarin (the two options) by $\frac{4}{5}$ to $\frac{1}{5}$ margin. That year started with a 1st grade and kindergarten cohort; the first grade cohort is currently finishing the 3rd grade. The first year it was on a registration basis (everyone that registered was accepted). The subsequent years has been on a lottery system with any siblings of existing DLI students grandfathered into the program. The lottery list was so long after the first year it was expanded to the second elementary school. There are now 100 kindergarteners starting the program each year. Both programs service some ELs, but it is truly a one-way model, with about 95% of the demographics being native English speakers. Of the 5% of students who speak a language other than English in the homes, there are several languages represented including Slavic languages, German, Spanish, and Mandarin.

Albany County

Started as a pilot program in 2016-2017 at two schools (Indian Paintbrush and Spring Creek) with a kindergarten class; the target language is Spanish. The cohort of students has progressed to the 2nd grade. This spring, the school board will vote to switch from a pilot program to a full DLI program. They have a coordinator of ESL and DLI services.

Purpose of Dual Language Programs

An inclusive program for all
students

According to the Center of Applied Linguistics, the main purpose of any dual language immersion program is for students to become bilingual/biliterate in English and the target language, to have high academic achievement, and to become culturally literate and aware. The districts in Wyoming focus on each of these main purposes.

Program Types

Two-Way Programs:

Two-Way programs is when half of the student population speaks the target language as their native language and the other half speak English as their native language.

Although there are many model types, the two-way program benefits from peer use of language in the academic and social contexts. In order for a two-way program to be implemented, there must be enough native speakers of the target language interested in being in the program so that a district has an even amount of native/non-native speakers.

One-Way Programs:

There are three main one-way programs:

- Heritage Language, where students are members of a tribal nation trying to learn/maintain their heritage language and English
 - Maintenance Language, where students speak a language other than English and are learning English while maintaining their native language
 - World Language Immersion, where students speak English as their native language but are learning the target language as well.
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Wyoming District Programs

Many models have different times of language instruction: 80/20; 60/40; 50/50. In Wyoming, we follow the Utah 50/50 model style, which guides which subjects in which language.

Natrona: World Language Immersion 50/50 One-Way: K-3 Math, science, SS in target language with language arts embedded. Beginning in 4th grade, SS comes out of the target language. NCSd follows the Utah model for DLI Implementation in elementary school as well as the middle level (beginning in 2019-20 school year). Middle level is based on courses, not time or core content. This is to prepare students for the potential of advanced placement/IB Language courses in high school. Two courses are available for students: DLI Language and Literacy (world language course) and Culture/Media. Both are part of the Foreign Language Department and counted as electives. Students must take minimum of 1 year-long course to remain in the DLI Program.

Albany: World Language Immersion One-Way: Utah model K-2. 50/50 day. Math, Spanish language arts, SS, science in Spanish. Intervention time provided in English. One way program.

Teton: Two-way program. Students receive half of all content instruction in both languages. 50/50 day.

Campbell: World Language Immersion One-Way: Utah model but pulled SS out of target language. Math, science in target language with a Spanish literacy block. SS is integrated into English language arts.

Economic Outlooks

Benefits of Biliteracy and Culturally Competency

The increased economic viability of a population that could speak other languages would provide for better economic diversity in the future, helping to expand the current economic outlook for our community and state. For this reason, Mandarin was one of the top choices in the selection of the target language. Additionally, large portions of our population would be able to have a second language upon graduation in order to fulfill mission work with ease. Recent publications, such as in *The Economist*, have stated that by 2030, a top hiring skill will be focused on a candidate's ability to speak more than one language.
