



**Gwinnett County Public Schools**  
**Dual Language Immersion Program**  
**2017-18 Program Guidelines and Parent Understandings**

This fall, Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) is excited to once again offer Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs at six elementary schools; **Annistown (Spanish), Baldwin (Spanish), Bethesda (Spanish), Camp Creek (Spanish), Ivy Creek (Spanish) and Trip (French)**. Please read carefully the information below before registering your child for this program. The DLI program is intended for entering kindergarten students who plan to continue with the program through at least 5th grade. If you decide to register your student for this program, please complete the registration form found on the school's webpage. You must sign the registration form, indicating your understanding of, and agreement to, the following guidelines.

**IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

- Dual Language Immersion registration does not register your child for kindergarten. Kindergarten registration is a separate process.
- You must register your student for kindergarten at the school for which your child is zoned. (To confirm your student's attendance zone, please contact the GCPS Planning Department at 678-301-7085.) Kindergarten Registration is scheduled for **Thursday, May 4, 2017**. Watch the GCPS website for details about registering for kindergarten and the documents (immunization and health forms, proof of age & residence, etc.) required for registration.
- Gwinnett's Dual Language Immersion program requires a long-term commitment on the part of both parents and students to ensure that students get the most benefit from the program. If you expect that your family will be unable to fulfill this commitment, due to a planned move or some other foreseeable reason, please consider whether this program is appropriate for your student.

**PROGRAM REGISTRATION**

1. Please complete all sections of the DLI registration form (available on the school's webpage) and return it to the school offering the immersion program (Annistown, Baldwin, Bethesda, Camp Creek, Ivy Creek, or Trip) no later than **Thursday, May 11, 2017, at 4 p.m.** Registration forms must be received (not postmarked) by this date and time. Late forms will not be accepted.
2. The school will confirm receipt of the registration form via the e-mail address you provide on the registration form. You will receive this confirmation e-mail within one week of the school's receipt of your child's registration form. If you do not have an e-mail address, please contact the school to learn your student's registration number by **4 p.m. on Friday, May 12, 2017**.
3. It is possible that every student registering for this program will not be accepted due to limited space. If more registrations are received than space is available, a lottery will be held of all students whose registration forms were received by the registration deadline.
4. If there are an insufficient number of registrants, the program may be cancelled for the upcoming school year.
5. If a lottery is necessary, it will take place on **Monday, May 22, 2017** beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the Instructional Support Center (ISC) located at 437 Old Peachtree Road in Suwanee in the 200 Building, **Collins Hill/Dacula** room. Although there is no requirement to attend this lottery, the lottery is open to the general public.
6. Students living in the school's attendance zone will receive registration priority. **If a student is accepted to the program from outside of the attendance zone, transportation will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian.** All rules of permissive transfer must be observed (*see guidelines #7 & 8 below for exceptions*).
7. At principal and parent discretion, GCPS DLI teacher children and siblings of students enrolled in the program receive priority enrollment.



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8. At principal and parent discretion, In the case of multiples (e.g. twins, triplets), if one student by lottery is enrolled in the program, the multiple sibling receives priority enrollment as well.
9. A waiting list will be maintained for both in-zone and out-of-zone students. Waiting lists expire at the end of the kindergarten year.

**INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL**

- GCPS’ 50/50 Model calls for at least 50% of the school day to be spent learning GCPS’ Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) curriculum in the new language.
- A team of two teachers will work together. Students will have mathematics, science, and literacy (specific to the foreign language) with one teacher, using the new language. They will have language arts and social studies with the other teacher, using English. Through this collaboration, students will develop proficiency in both English and the new language.
- At a determined point during the school day, the teachers will switch groups of students so that all students receive instruction in both English and the target language daily.
- There is no additional cost to parents for this program.
- This program is wholly voluntary. Dual Language Immersion is only one of many quality educational opportunities available to your student.
- Students enter the program in the kindergarten year. On rare occasions, students may enter the program during 1st grade or later. Opportunities for late entry to the program in 1st grade will be based on available space and additional factors determined by the classroom teacher and the school principal. Program entry after 1st grade will be reserved for students transferring from another Dual Language Immersion school and/or students with a high level of native or heritage language proficiency in the targeted language. Determinations for enrollment will be solely at the discretion of the school administration.
- Each year, the program will expand to the next grade level as students move through elementary school— kindergarten through 5th grade. GCPS currently is collaborating with middle and high school principals to plan for opportunities at the middle and high school levels.

**WHAT TO EXPECT**

While most of the daily successes and challenges in Dual Language Immersion are very similar to those in traditional classrooms, there are a few instances when they may differ.

- Research shows that children who have learned to speak their native language are capable of learning another language.
- Dual Language Immersion is a very challenging program. A child who is a good listener, flexible, and able to handle transitions is a good candidate for the Dual Language Immersion program. A child who is easily frustrated or has a hard time staying focused may have difficulty with the demands of DLI. Positive support and encouragement from home are important to a child’s success in this program.
- Most students with disabilities thrive in Dual Language Immersion programs. However, research indicates that those students with poor listening comprehension may not be good candidates for this program. Many of these students have significant difficulty processing sounds into language (including their native language).
- Even with the challenging nature of the program, most DLI students are performing at or above grade level in all areas by 5th grade.



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**WHAT TO EXPECT (Continued)**

- Students vary in rate at which they learn and use a new language. It may take many months (and, in some cases, years) before a student will feel comfortable speaking his or her new language freely. Your student's teacher will be able to provide you with updates on your student's progress as well as guiding questions to help your child use the new language more at home.
- If a parent has concerns about his or her DLI student, the parent, teachers, and administrators will work to address concerns. However, a request to enter the formal process for withdrawal from the DLI program will be addressed only after the student has received the support and help that would be offered any child experiencing difficulties.

**REMOVING STUDENTS FROM THE PROGRAM**

- If parents decide not to participate in this program after enrolling, but before the start of the school year, it is their responsibility to contact the school offering the DLI program as soon as possible so that other students on the waiting list may be notified.
- The formal process for withdrawal from the program for enrolled students is handled on an individual, case-by-case basis.

**RESEARCH**

Research supporting Dual Language Immersion is vast. For further reading, we recommend the extensive work of Dr. Roy Lyster, Dr. Myriam Met, Dr. Wayne P. Thomas, and Dr. Virginia P. Collier. In addition, please see below for a description of other benefits of Dual Language Immersion with recommendations of supporting research articles.

- ENHANCED COGNITIVE SKILLS
  - *Immersion students, due to the demands, both conscious and unconscious, of processing two languages, typically develop greater cognitive flexibility and demonstrate increased attention control, better memory, and superior problem-solving skills while, at the same time, experiencing enhanced understanding of their primary language.*
  - Bamford, K., & Mizokawa, D. (1991). Additive-bilingual immersion education: Cognitive and language development. *Language Learning, 41*(3), 413-429.
  - Maillat, D., & Serra, C. (2009). Immersion education and cognitive strategies: Can the obstacle be the advantage in a multilingual society? *International Journal of Multilingualism, 6*(2), 186-206.
- IMPROVED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
  - *Immersion students perform as well as or better than non-immersion students on standardized tests of English and mathematics, even when these tests are administered in English.*
  - Robinson, D. W. (1998). The cognitive, academic, and attitudinal benefits of early language learning. In M. Met (Ed.), *Critical issues in early second language learning: Building for our children's future* (pp. 37-56). Scott Foresman – Addison Wesley.
  - Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1982). Academic outcomes of immersion education. In M. Swain & Lapkin, *Evaluating bilingual education: A Canadian case study* (pp. 56-69). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- NARROWING OF THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP
  - *Partially as a result of the cognitive demands placed on students who learn content in two different languages, no other intervention model holds greater promise to narrow the achievement gap more effectively between high- and low performing populations than dual language immersion.*



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- Collier, W. P., & Collier, V.P. (2012). *Dual language education for a transformed world* (pp. 44-46). Albuquerque: Fuente Press.
- Haj-Broussard, M.G. (2003). *Language, identity and achievement gap: Comparing experiences of African-American students in a French immersion and a regular education context (Doctoral Dissertation)*. Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College.
- **HIGHER SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**
  - *Immersion students achieve higher levels of second language proficiency than through any other language development model. By the end of their K-12 program, students possess bilingualism and bi-literacy.*
  - Padilla, A., et. al., (2013). A Mandarin/English two-way immersion program: language proficiency and academic achievement. *Foreign Language Annals* 46(4), pp. 661-679.
- **ENHANCED GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**
  - *Immersion students are better prepared to collaborate and communicate across linguistic and political boundaries to solve problems as a result of the demands of their learning environments, and they evidence more positive attitudes toward other peoples and other cultures.*
  - Howard, E. (2002). Two-way Immersion: A Key to Global Awareness. *Educational Leadership*, 60(2), 62-64.
  - Stewart, V. (2012). *A world-class education*. Alexandria: ASCD, pp. 136-141.

Thank you for considering the GCPS Dual Language Immersion program for your student. Communication and collaboration in the global marketplace will become increasingly valuable skills for our students as they prepare for college, careers, and citizenship after graduation. In Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS), we are proud to offer these innovative programs for students.

For further information, please contact the school directly:

**Annistown Elementary School (Spanish):**

770-979-2950 or <http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/AnnistownES/home.html>

**Baldwin Elementary School (Spanish):**

678-225-5500 or <https://baldwines.org/home/>

**Bethesda Elementary School (Spanish):**

770-921-2000 or <http://bethesdaelem.org/>

**Camp Creek Elementary School (Spanish):**

770-921-1626 or [www.campcreekschool.com](http://www.campcreekschool.com)

**Ivy Creek Elementary School (Spanish):**

678-714-3655 or [www.ivycreekes.org](http://www.ivycreekes.org)

**Trip Elementary School (French):**

678-639-3850 or [www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/TripES/home.html](http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/TripES/home.html)

No student shall be denied the opportunity to participate in any program or activity on the basis of gender, race, color, creed, religious belief, national origin, disability, or ethnic group

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