

**Alamo Heights ISD - Curriculum and Instruction Department**



**Alamo Heights ISD**  
**Spanish Immersion Program Guide**

## **AHISD Curriculum and Instruction Department**

We are dedicated to the goal of providing a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all AHISD students. We believe all students deserve rigorous curriculum and engaging instruction. Our goal is to provide the leadership, resources, support and professional development necessary to lead all students to high achievement.

### **AHISD Administration**

Dr. Dana Bashara, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Frank Alfaro, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services

Dr. Jimmie Walker, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Mike Hagar, Assistant Superintendent of Business & Finance

Mrs. Kris Holliday, Director of Special Education

Mrs. Venus Davis, High School Academic Dean

Dr. Yadira Palacios, Junior School Academic Dean

Mrs. Amy Lagueux, Elementary Academic Dean

Alamo Heights ISD

7101 Broadway

San Antonio, TX 78209

210-824-2483

[www.ahisd.net](http://www.ahisd.net)

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## Spanish Immersion Program at AHISD

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The AHISD Spanish Immersion Program is a one-way dual language educational model that is designed for English-speaking students. Foreign language immersion is an approach to teaching another language that involves immersing students in the target language throughout the school day. Teachers speak only the target language to teach academic subjects, using a wide variety of instructional strategies.

The goals of the one-way Spanish Immersion Program at AHISD are:

- To promote high academic achievement for all students
- To develop first and second language skills for bilingualism and biliteracy
- To promote cross-cultural understanding for all students

Language learning will take place primarily through content instruction in Spanish as well as initial literacy instruction. At the beginning of the program in first and second grades, students are fully immersed in the Spanish language for all instruction, and instruction in English in the area of ELA is introduced in grades three – five according to the chart found on pages 5 and 6. As students and teachers work to perform academic tasks, the students' language abilities are developed, along with their knowledge of content area subject matter.

### Features of the AHISD Spanish Immersion Program:

- **Teaching Strategies for Language & Content** – cooperative learning, thematic units, hands-on materials, visual and graphic displays, language-rich environments; language comprehension strategies (repetition and rephrasing); varied opportunities for reading, writing and speaking in both English and Spanish
- **Separation of Languages by Teachers & Students** – Teachers teach for extended periods of time in one designated language and require both native speakers and second-language learners to communicate in the language of instruction to the best of their ability
- **Duration of Program** – The commitment to the program is for 5 years (Grades 1-5), however the program will continue to AHJS and AHHS
- **Family & Community Involvement** – Parental and community support is important; a serious effort will be made to ensure that students are exposed to cultural aspects of the language; families are included in school decision-making processes
- **Availability of Resources** – Classroom materials, library resources and electronic resources in both languages will be available

Adapted from *Tools for Schools – One-Way Immersion Education*, The Center for Applied Linguistics.

## Research Based Spanish Immersion Program Features

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*Students develop high levels of proficiency in both their first language and a second language*

- Dual language programs develop *additive bilingualism*; every participating student has the opportunity to gain a second language with no home language loss. This enrichment approach promotes full bilingualism and biliteracy (Lindholm-Leary, 2005).

*Students' performance will be equal to or above that of their grade-level peers*

- The study of a second language leads to increased cognitive development in children (Haut, 1990).
- Students in dual language programs have been shown to outperform their monolingually-educated counterparts, including students from diverse backgrounds (Collier, 1992; Genesee, 1987).

*Dual language students will develop positive cross-cultural attitudes and gain an increased global awareness*

- Dual language programs promote bilingualism, biliteracy, academic achievement, and multicultural awareness for all students (National Dual Language Consortium, 2010).
- It is in [dual language immersion] programs that there is the most potential for truly preparing citizens who can make highly significant contributions to their own and our global societies (Cummins, 2010)

## Spanish Immersion Program Resources

- Frequently Asked Questions: [www.ahisd.net/spanimm/faq.html](http://www.ahisd.net/spanimm/faq.html)
- AHISD Website: [www.ahisd.net](http://www.ahisd.net)
- Spanish Immersion and Dual Language Admittance Criteria
- Timeline for Dual Language and Spanish Immersion Program Recruitment
- Information Session Flyers
- Powerpoint of parent presentation at Howard ECC
- Center for Applied Linguistics Website: [www.cal.org/](http://www.cal.org/)

## Placing Students in the Spanish Immersion Program

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### **INITIAL PLACEMENT in Spanish Immersion Classrooms:**

In the spring of the Kindergarten year, students will be offered the opportunity to enroll in Spanish Immersion Program for their first-grade year. Students will continue through the elementary grades (1-5) in this same grouping. Where there are two Spanish Immersion classrooms, students may be moved within those two classrooms for “next-year” classroom placement.

### **Lottery System**

1. In the Spring of the Kindergarten year, information is distributed about Dual Language and Spanish Immersion informational meetings. Parents of native English-speaking students who desire that their child be in the lottery must attend a publicized parent information meeting.
2. The number of lottery openings will be determined after placing Spanish Immersion class siblings of children already in the program from previous years.
3. Native English speakers must have attended Howard ECC.
4. Parents of all Spanish Immersion students must sign a commitment form stating they will attend informational meetings and commit to their child’s participation through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Parent Commitment forms** will be explained at the parent information meeting and signed by parents.

## Core Content Instruction---Language of Instruction

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Grade	Time	Spanish Instruction Subject Areas	English Instruction Subject Area
		Content addressed through Spanish instruction	
<b>First</b>	100%	Language Arts Math Social Studies Science	
<b>Second</b>	100%	Language Arts Math Social Studies Science	
<b>Third</b>	90%  (30-45 minutes of English Instruction)	Language Arts Math Social Studies Science	Language Arts
<b>Fourth</b>	80%  (45-60 minutes of English Instruction)	Language Arts Math Social Studies Science	Language Arts
<b>Fifth</b>	80%  (45-60 minutes of English Instruction)	Language Arts Math Social Studies Science	Language Arts

## Alamo Heights Junior School Program Offerings

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<b>AHJS</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Spanish Instruction Subject Areas</b>
<b>Sixth</b>	Three academic periods	Reading World Cultures Science
<b>Seventh</b>	Three academic periods	Spanish Language Arts Texas History Science
<b>Eighth</b>	Two academic periods	Spanish II PAP or Spanish III PAP American History

## Alamo Heights High School Program Offerings

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<b>AHHS</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Spanish Instruction Subject Areas</b>
<b>Ninth</b>	One academic period	Spanish III PAP or Spanish IV PAP
<b>Tenth</b>	One academic period	Spanish IV PAP or Spanish V AP
<b>Eleventh</b>	One academic period	Spanish V AP or Spanish VI
<b>Twelfth</b>	One academic period	Spanish VI



## Assessment Guidelines for Spanish Immersion Students

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ASSESSMENT TOOL		NOTE:
IStation (grades 1-2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ (BOY/EOY) Spanish</li> <li>◇ (EOY) both languages</li> <li>◇ Ongoing throughout year in Spanish</li> </ul>
IStation (grades 3-5)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ BOY/EOY both languages</li> <li>◇ Ongoing throughout year in Spanish</li> </ul>
<b>STAAR</b>		
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	English: Reading & Math	
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	English: Reading & Writing Math	
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	English: Reading Math & Science	
6 <sup>th</sup> ... 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	English: all subjects	

## Placement for Students Entering MIDYEAR:

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	<p>See EHBK Regulation (Other Instructional Initiatives: Dual Language and Spanish Immersion Program (s))</p> <p>If the class size in the Spanish Immersion classroom decreases to a number below the state minimum class size of 22:1 in grades 1-4, then students may be assessed for Spanish proficiency to determine appropriateness of admittance to the class.</p> <p>Assessment instruments include/ but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigby PM Benchmark</li> <li>• Writing Samples</li> <li>• Woodcock Munoz Language Survey</li> <li>• Math grade level assessment</li> </ul>
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**Alamo Heights Independent School District  
Parent Commitment Form**

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Campus \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Names and ages of younger brothers and sisters: \_\_\_\_\_

An important key to the success of children in an immersion/dual language program is a positive working relationship between the school and the home. The District will devote the time, energy and resources needed to ensure the success of the program for which he/she was selected.

As parents of immersion/ dual language students, it is important for you to make commitments also. These include:

- *Understanding that there could be a lag in the acquisition of English reading and writing skills.*
- *This becomes particularly evident in second grade when students take national achievement tests. Research validates that this lag usually disappears by fifth grade.*
- *Agreeing to read in English every night at home to establish the foundation for English reading and writing skills*
- *Remaining in the Spanish Immersion or Dual Language class throughout the elementary years—grades 1-5*
- *Being supportive and understanding of both your child and the program*
- *Understanding that there will be 24-26 students in the Spanish Immersion classes. Dual language class size will be determined based upon the number of English Language Learner enrollment (class size not to exceed 22).*

I understand the commitments necessary for a successful program and request that my child be enrolled in the program.

Mother's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*(Both signatures are required)*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN:** *No later than:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Attention: Dr. Jimmie Walker, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction**

## **OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL INITIATIVES DUAL LANGUAGE AND SPANISH IMMERSION PROGRAM(S)**

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### **GRADE LEVEL(S)**

The Alamo Heights Dual Language and Spanish Immersion Program(s) begins in first grade and continues through fifth grade. Program opportunities will also be available as the students progress to grades 6---12.

### **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY: RESIDENCY**

Participation in the AHISD Dual Language and Spanish Immersion Lottery and program(s) is only available to students who meet the AHISD residency requirements or who were in Howard Early childhood Kindergarten as tuition students.

### **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY: PRIORITY TO HOWARD EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS**

A student candidate for admission must have attended Howard Early Childhood Center for their full kindergarten year, or for the full time that they have been eligible residents of the district.

### **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY: ATTENDANCE AT A DUAL LANGUAGE/IMMERSION ORIENTATION SESSION**

For a student to be eligible to register for the lottery, a student’s parent or guardian must attend one of the Dual Language/Immersion orientation sessions held during the spring of the student’s kindergarten year.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Parents of kindergarten students may apply for their children to be admitted into the Dual Language or Spanish Immersion Program. Program admission will be determined according to the procedures defined below in the enrollment and application section.

### **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

- Keeping their child(ren) in the program class throughout the elementary grades—grades 1---5.
- Recognizing that the student will have unique opportunities and challenges and pledge to be supportive and understanding of their child and of the program goals.
- Understanding that there may be a lag in the acquisition of English reading and writing skills.
- Agreeing to read in English every night at home to establish the foundation for English reading and writing skills.
- Knowing that the class size will exceed the 22 to 1 ratio in the Spanish Immersion classes.

## **OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL INITIATIVES: DUAL LANGUAGE AND SPANISH IMMERSION PROGRAM(S)**

The AHISD language program lottery closes officially for wait---list students after the conclusion of the Second week of school. If the class size in the Spanish Immersion classroom decreases to a number below the state maximum class size of 22:1, then students may be assessed for Spanish proficiency to determine the appropriateness of admittance into the class. Parents will need to submit a formal request for testing and students will be admitted on a first---come, first---served basis.

**ADMITTANCE TO SPANISH IMMERSION PROGRAM AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE LOTTERY:**

Upon placement in the class, parents will complete a program commitment form (EHBK REGULATION).

**ADMITTANCE TO DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE LOTTERY:**

The AHISD language program lottery closes officially for wait---list students after the conclusion of the second week of school. If the class size in the Dual Language classroom decreases below the recommended 50% dominant English speaker ratio, then students may be assessed for Spanish proficiency to determine the appropriateness of admittance into the class. Parents will need to submit a formal request for testing and students will be admitted on a first--- come, first---served basis. Upon placement in the class, parents will complete a program commitment form (EHBK REGULATION).