

A Parent's Guide to Multilingual Education

California Education for a Global Economy (CA Ed.G.E.) Initiative



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CDE)

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Multilingualism

The Bilingual/Multilingual Mind:

- Is more flexible
- Can multitask more effectively
- Is able to concentrate on important tasks and block out distractions
- Is more resistant to dementia or Alzheimer's
- Has improved capacity to resolve problems and overcome obstacles
- Has stronger interpersonal and self-regulation skills

People Who Are Bilingual/Multilingual:

- Have expanded job opportunities with higher pay
- Can be “citizens of the world” with a more comprehensive and tolerant perspective
- Maintain stronger family and community connections
- Have a stronger sense of self



Multilingual Program Descriptions

Dual-Language Immersion (Kindergarten through 8th Grade)

Integrated language learning and academic instruction for native speakers of English and native speakers of another language. The goals are to attain language proficiency and academic achievement in students' first and second language, and cross-cultural understanding.

Developmental Bilingual (Kindergarten through 8th Grade)

Instruction for English learners utilizing English and students' native language for literacy and academic instruction. The goals are to attain language proficiency and academic achievement in students' first and second language.

Transitional Bilingual (Kindergarten through 3rd Grade)

Instruction for English learners utilizing English and students' native language for literacy and academic instruction, with the goals of language proficiency and academic achievement in English. Students typically transition to "English only" instruction by third grade.

One-Way Immersion (Kindergarten through 8th Grade)

Instruction in English and another language for non-speakers of the other language, with the goals of language proficiency and academic achievement in English and the other language, and cross-cultural understanding

Heritage Language or Indigenous Language

Instruction in English and another language for non-English speakers or students with limited literacy skills in their first language. Indigenous language programs support endangered minority languages in which students may have limited receptive and no productive skills. Both programs often serve American Indian students.

FLEX: Foreign Language Elementary Experience

Provides instruction for non-native speakers of the target language, with the goals of exposure, enrichment, and language experience. Typically during a designated period of the school day or after-school program (usually a few times a week) providing basic exposure to a language.

FLES: Foreign Language in Elementary Schools

Provides instruction for non-native speakers of the target language during a designated period of the school day or after-school program dedicated to language study.

Native Speakers Courses

A course of language study designed for native speakers of the target language. High school curriculum is aligned with University of California/California State University A–G requirements and courses are articulated with Advanced Placement Language classes.

Please Note: The list of programs is not all-inclusive. Other multilingual programs may also be implemented, based on student need.

Questions to Ask About Current Multilingual Programs at a School

- What kinds of multilingual programs do you offer at this school?
- How would you describe each program?
- What are the goals of each program?

Parent and Community Engagement

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)

The LCAP is a three-year, district-level plan that is updated each year. The plan describes the school district's overall vision for students, annual goals, and specific actions the district will take to achieve the vision and goals.

During the development of the LCAP, school districts ask parents and community members for input regarding multilingual programs in which they are interested.

How parents can get involved:

- Share information with your District English Learner Advisory Committee representative (DELAC)
- Attend and share information in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) development meetings

Parental Notice

School districts inform all parents about the kinds of language and language acquisition programs offered in the district. This information is published in the annual parent handbook. Students who enroll in the district after the start of the school year receive this information during enrollment.

Parent notification includes:

- Description and goals for each program
- Language(s) to be taught
- Description of the process to choose a program from those offered
- Description of the process to request establishment of a new program at a school

Parent Choice

Parents enrolled in a school may follow the district process to choose a program that best suits their child. Schools can help parents to choose the desired program.

What if a parent wants a program that is not offered at a school?

Parents should follow the district process to request that a new program be established at a school. It takes time and thoughtful planning to implement a multilingual program that is effective in reaching its goals for students. More information about requesting a new program is described on the next page.

Requesting a New Program at a School

Parents may request a program which is not currently offered at a school.

Suggestions for submitting a request to establish a new program:

- Submit your dated request in writing. Keep a copy for yourself.
- Ask school personnel for help in submitting a request, if needed.

School districts respond to requests to establish a new multilingual program when:

- Parents or guardians of 30 or more students in a school make a request; or
- Parents or guardians of 20 or more students at a grade level in a school make a request.

The district provides the requested program if determined to be possible.

The district will respond by:

- Providing written notification to parents and school personnel that a new program has been requested within 10 days of reaching the threshold above,
- Conducting a needs analysis to determine if it is possible to implement the requested program, and
- Within 60 days of reaching the threshold, providing notice, in writing, of the district's determination of whether it can implement the requested program.



Opportunities for Parent Involvement

Become informed about multilingual programs offered in your district and school:

- Ask for the district parent handbook
- Read other district notifications
- Visit the CA Ed.G.E. Initiative web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ml/caedge.asp>

At your school:

- Attend and share information at your school's English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) meetings
- Request a multilingual program that best meets the needs of your child





Questions to Ask

When the district determines it can implement the program:

- When will instruction begin?
- What materials will be used?
- What are the goals of the program?
- How can parents support the program?

When the district determines it cannot implement the program:

- What are the reasons for the determination that the requested program cannot be implemented?
- Which resources are the school/district missing?
- Is it possible to implement the program in the future? How long before it can be implemented?
- _____

What can I do if I do not agree with the district's determination?

- Write or call members of the local school board
- Speak at a local school board meeting

State Seal of Biliteracy

What is the State Seal of Biliteracy?

- Recognition by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for graduating high school students who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English
- A gold seal affixed to diploma or transcript of the graduate
- A free program for high school students, schools, and districts. Available to public schools, direct-funded charter schools, and county offices of education

The purpose of the State Seal of Biliteracy is to:

- Recognize high school graduates who are biliterate or multiliterate
- Encourage pupils to study languages
- Provide employers and colleges with a method to identify people with language and biliteracy skills
- Strengthen intergroup relationships
- Affirm the value of diversity and honor the multiple cultures and languages of a community



CA Department of Education

For more information, contact:

English Learner Support Division
Language Policy and Leadership Office
1430 N Street, Suite 2204
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-319-0845

CDE Resources

CDE CA Ed.G.E. Initiative web page
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ml/caedge.asp>

CDE Multilingual Education web page
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ml/multilingual.asp/>

CDE State Seal of Biliteracy web page
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ml/sealofbiliteracy.asp>

Other Resources

California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)
<https://www.gocabe.org/>

Colorín Colorado
<http://www.colorincolorado.org/families>

