

FCS Dual Language Immersion

At Brandywine, Cumming and Kelly Mill Elementary Schools

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I register my rising kindergartener for DLI?

Parents can indicate their interest by filling out the interest form by January 31, 2018. Students will have to go through regular registration at the Hill Center and will complete a final commitment form by May 15, 2018. If there are more applicants than slots available, there will be a lottery. Parents will be informed of their acceptance in the DLI program by the end of July 2018.

2. What sort of involvement is expected from parents?

Parents are encouraged to volunteer and get involved like in any regular school program. In order to honor the sanctity of the language environment we encourage English-speaking parents to volunteer during the English part of the day and Spanish-speaking parents to volunteer during the Spanish part of the day. There will be regular meetings at each school for DLI parents. Parents are asked to commit long-term to the DLI program to maximize the benefits for their children.

3. How can parents support their children at home if they do not speak one of the languages?

Parents are encouraged to support their students at home the same way they would in a regular class. Read as much as possible to and with your child in the language you speak at home. Skills will transfer to the other language. Teachers will be in touch through email and newsletters with tips and suggestions for homework and extra support. Some parents decide to learn the other language with their students.

4. Will the DLI program serve gifted and special education students?

Yes, DLI students will receive the same services as non-DLI students.

5. What language will specials be in?

For the most part, schools will offer specials in English only. Depending on staff capacity, each school might decide to offer certain Specials in Spanish.

6. How would the immersion program work out for families who speak a different language at home?

DLI can still be a good fit for students that do not speak one of the DLI languages at home. Parents should be cognizant of the fact that their children are processing three or more languages and that progress might be slightly delayed from their DLI peers. Parents are encouraged to continue the language at home to ensure continuous development of the first language.

7. Will students stay together in the same classes through elementary school?

The two DLI classrooms will be mixed at each grade level.

8. What middle schools will the DLI students feed into?

DLI students are subject to the same feeder pattern as the non-DLI students at the school.

9. DLI is a K-12 commitment. What will DLI look like at the middle and high school level?

We are anticipating that middle school DLI students will take a Spanish language course and a Science, Math or Social Studies course in Spanish.

10. What is the curriculum like in DLI?

The curriculum follows the same guidelines as a non-DLI class. The Georgia Standards of Excellence guide the curriculum in all public schools and all their program models. The DLI curriculum reinforces content taught in Spanish on the English side to prepare students for standardized testing starting in 3rd grade. All district and state testing is conducted in English.

11. How are students assessed in DLI?

Content taught in the immersion language will be assessed in the immersion language. Content areas in Spanish will be assessed the same way and on the same content as students in a non-DLI classroom. All district and state testing will be conducted in English.

12. What happens if it turns out that DLI is not a good fit for my child?

The immersion teacher and the English partner teacher constantly monitor and discuss progress of each child in both languages. Progress in academic content and progress in both languages is shared regularly with parents. The individual student support team (consistent of parents, teachers and school administrators) decide the best placement of each child and will make a decision based on the individual needs of the child.

13. What are the qualifications for immersion teachers?

Immersion teachers are either certified elementary school teachers or Spanish teachers with a Dual Language Immersion endorsement. The district ensures that the Spanish teachers are proficient in their language in order to be able to teach academic content in the target language.

14. Where will you find the Spanish teachers?

Forsyth County Schools is committed to hiring highly qualified teachers for each of their programs at each of the schools. We are partnering with universities and teacher education preparation programs across the region, the Georgia Department of Education and potentially some international partners. We advertise our DLI openings state- and nationwide.

15. How does DLI work with STEM initiatives?

DLI and STEM complement each other very well. STEM curricula are very hands-on and all about verbalizing what can be observed, interpreting data and hypothesizing what might happen. These components are a natural fit for the DLI classroom.

16. Is entering the program in kindergarten the only option?

In general, students have to start DLI in kindergarten unless they have an appropriate level of proficiency in Spanish and/or were part of a DLI program elsewhere. Late entry admissions are subject to approval by the school.

17. How will parents be notified of acceptance into the DLI program?

Commitment letters are due to the school by May 15. Parents of accepted students for the DLI program will be notified by May 31.

18. Will elementary DLI students still have art, PE, etc.?

Yes, all DLI students will participate in specials.

19. Does the same DLI teacher stay with the group through 5th grade?

No, teachers will change each grade level.

20. Is there a cost associated for DLI for parents?

No, DLI is part of the public school system and there are no costs associated for parents.