

Pine Island Elementary Spanish Immersion Kindergarten

Meet Senorita Bjick



Senorita Bjick graduated from St. Mary's University with licenses in elementary education and Spanish education.

We are fortunate to live near the U of M, which provides extensive support for Language Immersion programs through CARLA (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition). In addition to her college training, Senorita Bjick spent time at the U of M for specialized Immersion training.

Senorita Bjick will also oversee a bilingual paraprofessional who will provide academic support during part of the day.

¡Bienvenidos!
Welcome to Spanish Immersion!

It is a privilege to have your child at our school, and we are excited to be able to offer a Spanish Immersion opportunity to our families.

The benefits of language immersion education are numerous. By the time your child leaves elementary school, he or she will be fluent in both Spanish and English. This will open doors for future opportunities in education, career, and connections around the world.

Other benefits include:

- Academic success at or above grade-level peers
- Increased problem-solving abilities
- Increased listening abilities
- Increased global awareness and cultural competency

We are looking forward to an amazing journey together!

Fortune, T. W. *What the research says about immersion.*

Retrieved from

http://carla.umn.edu/immersion/documents/ImmersionResearch_TaraFortune.html

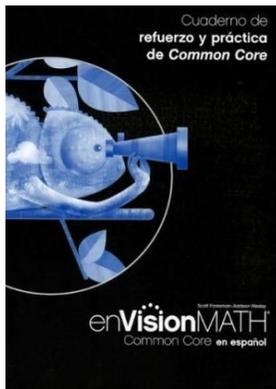


Pine Island Elementary Spanish Immersion Program

High-Quality Curriculum

Our Spanish-speaking and English-speaking classrooms follow the same standards and utilize the same instructional units.

Math is Pearson enVision. Pearson provides a Spanish version of its curriculum.



Reading and Language Arts is 100 Book. Students will bring home Spanish or English books every night to read.



Science and Social Studies are taught through interdisciplinary units with reading and language arts. They are based on an exemplar text related to the week's theme.

Successful Program Design

In line with research about one-way immersion programs, we seek to provide a 90-10 model for our kindergartners. Approximately 90% of their day is in Spanish.

Approximately 10% of their day is in English. This occurs during specialist times (PE, music, art, technology, library, guidance, and SMART). Students will join peers from English-speaking classrooms during lunch/recess.

As students grow older, more of their day will be in English. By the end of fourth grade, the day will be approximately 50-50.

Outstanding Instruction

Immersion teachers use pictures, visuals, songs, games, gestures, and hands-on and sensory-rich experiences to help children learn through a new language. Like any kindergarten classroom, the classroom environment is full of interesting words.

Teachers know that students cannot respond in Spanish at first. Responses in English are accepted through Winter Break of their first grade year. All attempts at Spanish are celebrated.

The Best Ways to Support Your Child in an Immersion Program

Parents are not expected to know Spanish. Good language development in any language is transferable, so do the things you would normally do with your child:

- Read stories, sing nursery rhymes, and play word games in English
- Encourage writing in English



You can do this!

The most important thing you can do to help your child is to be supportive and enthusiastic. Learning a language is hard work! Your child will be tired and might want to quit. Encourage your child and express confidence in your child's ability to learn! The benefits of immersion programs are not seen until the later years.

Please do:

- Tell your child how proud you are that he or she is learning Spanish.
- Tell your child how pleased you are with his or her progress.
- Remind your child that he or she will have a very special skill of speaking 2 languages, and not many people in our school or community have that skill.
- Encourage any opportunities for your child to engage with Spanish language or culture outside of the classroom.
- Be an advocate for immersion education.
- Be an advocate for your child, the teacher, and the program.



I'm so proud of you!

Please do not:

- Feel discouraged if your child cries or is nervous during the first few weeks of school. This is a new experience and will take some adjustment. Please contact your child's teacher if your child is still anxious by October.
- Feel discouraged if your child initially learns reading or math skills more slowly than neighborhood or family peers. This is normal and expected. Students in immersion programs catch up to and often surpass their grade-level peers within approximately 3 years (and they will be almost bilingual at that point, wow!). Some children do not experience this "implementation dip", but others do.
- Require your child to speak Spanish at home.
- Ask your child to translate.
- Correct your child's Spanish pronunciation.

Adams Spanish Immersion School. *Supporting your child in immersion*. St. Paul, MN. Retrieved from <http://adams.spps.org/domain/5167>

Canadian Parents for French. *Top ten answers for parents about immersion education*. University of Minnesota. Retrieved from <http://carlaumn.edu/immersion/acie/vol10/may2007-parentsten.html>