

Things to Know About Charter Schools

Charter schools are:

- publicly funded
- open to **all** students.
- another choice in public education.
- meeting the needs of parents and students.
- FREE, there is no tuition charged to attend.
- committed to improving public education.
- playing an important part in school reform.
- demonstrating a record of student achievement.

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Core Knowledge

The premise behind the *Core Knowledge Sequence* is the more you know the more you are able to learn. Explicit identification of what children should learn at each grade level ensures a coherent approach to building knowledge across all grade levels. Every child should learn the fundamentals of science, basic principles of government, important events in world history, essential elements of mathematics, widely acknowledged masterpieces of art and music from around the world, and stories and poems passed down from generation to generation.

Core Knowledge provides a clear outline of content to be learned grade by grade so that knowledge, language, and skills build cumulatively from year to year. This sequential building of knowledge not only helps ensure that children enter each new grade ready to learn, it also helps prevent the repetitions and gaps that so often characterize current education. No more repeated units in multiple years on the rain forest, with little or no attention to the Bill of Rights, world geography, or exposure to other cultures. Core Knowledge sets high expectations for all children that are achievable thanks to the cumulative, sequential way that knowledge and skills builds. Teachers in Core Knowledge schools have assurance that children will emerge well prepared with a shared body of knowledge and skills.

The [Core Knowledge Sequence](#) is distinguished by its specificity. By clearly specifying important knowledge in language arts, history, geography, math, science, and the fine arts, the *Core Knowledge Sequence* presents a practical answer to the question, “What do our children need to know?” Teachers are free to devote their energies and efforts to creatively planning how to teach the content to the children in their classrooms.

Dual Language Immersion

Q: What is the objective of a dual immersion language program?

A: To provide a learning pathway which will enable students to gain grade level academic proficiencies in both English and Spanish and develop fluent language skills in both English and Spanish.

Q: What are the key features of a dual immersion program classroom?

A: There is a fairly equal balance of native English speaking students and native Spanish-speaking students. The students will typically receive lessons from two teachers; one providing academic instruction in English, and the other providing academic instruction in Spanish. All students in the program will receive language arts instruction in English with other subject matter such as science and math taught in Spanish.

Q: How can a Spanish dual immersion program best be described?

A: Dual Immersion education is an exciting and innovative program in which children develop the ability to speak, read, and write in English **and** in Spanish. Dual language programs use two languages for literacy and content instruction for **all** students. The program provides the same academic content and standards as other educational programs while providing instruction in two languages over an extended period of time. In this program, children will learn in stimulating and creative ways leading to language proficiency in both English and Spanish. Knowledge of more than one language and culture is becoming increasingly important for our children’s full participation in a culturally and linguistically diverse world.

Why Dual Language Immersion

There are a number of reasons for a dual language immersion program. First, there is a growing need in this country for individuals to speak and understand Spanish. Children in schools in Europe often learn multiple languages in order to communicate with the people of the various countries who surround them. Second, research shows that it is much easier to learn a second language when you are young. Incorporating an immersion program in both Spanish and English creates an environment where students can practice the language they are learning with students and teachers who know the language. Finally, research in dual language immersion programs across the country show “students who participate in a dual language immersion program outperform their counterparts in all-English programs on tests of academic achievement in English. Or, at worst, they do just as well.” (Krashen, S. and G. McField, 2005) The same statement can also be made about mathematic performance of these students. With all of the evidence to support the success of dual language immersion program’s it only makes sense to offer this kind of innovative program to our students.

What is my role as a parent?

The most successful Dual Language programs have parent and community support. Encourage bi-literacy and cultural awareness. Ensure your child’s daily attendance and punctuality. Encourage appropriate classroom behavior. Be involved!
