



# Hawthorn School of Dual Language

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The mission of Hawthorn School District 73 is to *Inspire all students to embrace learning in an ever-changing world*. District 73 is committed to creating an educational learning environment that will:

- Support and sustain high expectations for growth and achievement
- Foster creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking
- Develop the social, emotional, and intellectual growth of the whole child
- Create an environment that supports joyful learning
- Promote global awareness in each child
- Recognize and celebrate success

We embrace the diversity of our school community and understand the challenges students face as they prepare for a future that demands skills necessary to compete in this global society. Among these skills, is the ability to have linguistic and academic proficiency in two languages.

The Hawthorn School of Dual Language has been has served as a dual language leader in the state of Illinois for over 15 years. The goals of our program remain the same as they have for the last 15 years. Our 5<sup>th</sup> graders leave the School of Dual Language as biliterate, bilingual and bicultural.

In the 2014-2015 school year, District 73 contracted with the Center for Applied Linguistics to complete a Dual Language program evaluation. This was the first audit of our program since its inception. The purpose of the evaluation was to address four main questions:

1. What are the strengths of the program's design and implementation?
2. What are potential areas of improvement for the program's design and implementation?
3. What are the academic, language and literacy outcomes for the district?
4. What additional professional development, administrative support, resources or assessments would be useful for the district/school to increase alignment of program with best practices in curriculum, instruction, assessment and program design?

The results of the audit were presented to the Hawthorn Board of Education and community in August of 2015. Throughout the 2015-16 school year, we have worked directly with the Illinois Resource Center (IRC) to address recommendations within the audit. Since 1972, the Illinois Resource Center (IRC) has provided assistance to teachers and administrators across the state serving linguistically and culturally diverse students.

The HSDL leadership team met with the IRC and members of the Hawthorn Central Administrative team throughout the school year on a regular basis in order to study the audit and the impact that we can make on our program and achievement data through analyzing current research on language acquisition with bilingual students and two-way immersion (dual language) programs around the nation. The entire faculty at the HSDL was able to receive professional development opportunities through the IRC and has worked to integrate the current research into our practices and curriculum at Hawthorn.

The 2016-2017 school year is our first year of implementing the recommendations made by the IRC. Our program goals will remain the same. However, there will be a few changes that students, parents and families will notice and they are outlined below:

### **Language Allocation**

The HSDL has traditionally been a 50/50 model in which, after kindergarten, students receive half of their instruction in English and half in Spanish. Beginning in the 2016 school year, our model is a more gradual transition from Spanish to English instruction.

Kinder	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Spanish/English	Spanish/English	Spanish/English	Spanish/English	Spanish/English	Spanish/English
80/20	70/30	60/40	50/50	50/50	50/50

Most notably, in 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades, some units of instruction in mathematics are being taught in English.

### **Instructional Strategies**

While this was a strength in the audit, we are looking to enhance our classroom practices by integrating the current research on bilingual students and supporting the connections between their two primary languages. In the classroom, this will result in teachers being more strategic and integrating more often, the similarities and differences between Spanish and English. We are focused on encouraging our students to utilize all of their language resources as they are learning content every day.

Finally, as recommended by the CAL and IRC, we must ensure that all instructional decisions that our teachers and teams make about students should support the program's goals of biliteracy, bilingualism and biculturalism. For this reason, consistent grouping of students by ability (across classrooms) will no longer be a supported instructional practice at the HSDL. We will continue to work with our teachers and teams in order to offer enrichment opportunities to as many of our students as possible, as we have been working to do since last year. The goal of this work is to ensure that every student who has demonstrated mastery of content, the opportunity to receive enrichment AND to have our enrichment opportunities reflect the diversity within our school.

### **Assessments**

We are instituting one new assessment in order to support our decision-making around Spanish language acquisition (Logramos) and replacing an existing assessment. Our students are now being assessed at all grades in Spanish reading through the evaluacion de nivel

independiente de lectura (ENIL). More information on these assessments will be coming home throughout the school year.

### **Middle School Programming**

The district conducted a survey in May 2016 to determine the interest level for dual language programming in the middle school. There was overwhelming support from our DL parent community to explore this option. Presently, we are reviewing our staffing to determine if we currently have professionals who have the appropriate endorsements and language skills to teach in the middle school.

In closing, the staff at the HSDL continues to be so grateful for the support of the Hawthorn Board of Education and community for the investments they have made in our program, students and families. We will continue to work diligently to improve our program as the district investigates the expansion of Dual Language to the middle school level. If you did not have a chance to complete the survey on expansion that was sent home this spring, please contact the HSDL to receive your copy. At this time, the results of the survey indicate that overwhelmingly, our parents wish to have our program expanded to the middle school level. We will keep our community posted on any developments regarding this issue as they arise.

Thank you,

Dr. James Tohme

Principal of the Hawthorn School of Dual Language