Thompson School District Dual Language Immersion Program
Highlights 2018-2019

Yes, it is true!
Can you believe this? This past year was the fourth year of the Thompson School District’s Dual Language Spanish and English Immersion Program at both Truscott and Cottonwood Plains Elementary Schools. The DLI (Dual Language Immersion) program continues to grow as students build their literacy, math, science and social skills in both Spanish and English, as well as their understanding and appreciation of the many cultures in the world. There are currently 380 students in the two schools. Here is a short message from our superintendent, Dr. Marc Schaffer: https://www.thompsonschools.org/Page/19531?fbclid=IwAR2rj_8leByr-dFjOXcvSNo49QQDJNUDEKHXXz3eZPsZosdpibaqCDP_7nw

Which skills in which language at what grade?
As you know, the students in kindergarten through second grade work with literacy and math skills in Spanish and literacy science and social studies skills in English. In grades 3-5, the content is switched. Literacy, math, and some social studies skills move to the English side and literacy, science, and some social studies skills move to the Spanish side. As always, the two-teacher team works very closely to create engaging lessons for both English and Spanish. TSD DLI is so proud of the great work students are doing in both languages.

Third graders take the AAPPL speaking test in Spanish
Students’ content skills are assessed frequently in both languages, but teachers wanted to know about students’ proficiency or what they can do spontaneously in Spanish. So this year, third graders at both Cottonwood and Truscott took the AAPPL assessment. The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) assessments examine listening, speaking, writing and reading skills. This year students took the speaking assessments (one of the most challenging skills). The students performed speaking tasks while participating in a virtual video chat with an avatar. So how did our TSD DLI third graders do? Seventy-five percent scored at the target range and above with many of them at the Intermediate level and above. Wow! These are outstanding results. Next year 3rd graders will do the speaking test and 4th graders will do the reading test. DLI teachers will test a different skill each year. Want to know more about the AAPPL test and the proficiency levels? Check out information here: https://aapplcentral.com

What is happening in our TSD DLI Spanish and English Classes?

Truscott Highlights

- K-4 Spanish and English teachers, along with the principal and the Instructional Coach, attended the National Association of Bilingual Educators Conference (NABE) in Orlando, Florida. Learn more about NABE: http://www.nabe.org/
- First graders worked diligently on their literacy skills in both English and Spanish. In English they showed significant growth on iReady assessments. In Spanish they worked on developing fluency with initial sounds and syllables. They started assessing reading progress with the Spanish version of the DRA reading assessment. Students also learned basic greetings and requests in Spanish.
- In math, students mastered first grade computation skills and tackled word problems in Spanish.
- In Grade 2 students have focused all year long developing reading skills in Spanish. They enjoyed the company of two Spanish proficient volunteers who helped with reading and conversational skills. Many of the students made significant growth in reading this year.
- In Grade 2, math students focused on developing their math talk and comprehension skills. The students are able to walk us through the steps of solving subtraction and addition in Spanish, explaining how to solve a word problem and why.
- In Grade 2, in order to embed cultural competence into instruction, the teacher designed tasks for students to learn about the practices, products and perspectives of Día de los Muertos, Navidad en Mexico, and Chinese New Year. The Chinese students in class shared information about their holiday traditions and also taught everyone some Mandarin.
- Most importantly, the English and Spanish language skills the students are acquiring day after day continue to solidify the multicultural classroom community.
- In Grade 2, students are finalizing the unit on autobiographies in Spanish.
- In Grade 3, students in Spanish have been acquiring their communication skills in writing and speaking. In the writing part they learned how to create a paragraph following the CER methodology both in English and Spanish showing a positive transfer between two
languages. In the speaking part, they created their own movies about recycling with the app Puppet Pals, and they shared their speaking skills with their partners.

- In Grade 3 science class, students did investigations in Spanish about water on different surfaces and they researched Colorado weather and other climates in the United States. They also learned about the human body and the skeletal system. Students did an investigation about the seeds in fruits.
- In the Grade 3 Spanish class, students also did a shared project with another school in Spain. Both students in Spain and in Loveland each made a video presentation about their schools to show each other the differences and similarities between the two schools. This activity is a powerful example of interculturalism, as well as cultural competence, skills needed for an ever-expanding global community.
- **Truscott nominated by CDE (Colorado Department of Education) as the Dual Language School, as the Dual Language School of the month. (duallanguageschools.org)** There will be a story on the Dual Language Schools Facebook page later this month. Congratulations Truscott team!

**Cottonwood Plain highlights**

- In first grade Mrs. Yaussi’s students shared a special evening with their parents to demonstrate how they use Peacekeeper Circles in the classroom and how they can be used at home. They shared their ability to communicate effectively in both English and Spanish using the language of compassion, appreciation, conflict resolution and apology.
- First grade students in Spanish explored, discovered and made connections to world geography with a highlight of Spanish-speaking countries. They enjoyed tasting different foods from Sra. Boyd’s home in Uruguay and learning about other cultures’ practices and perspectives.
- The first grade team conducted home visits in order to create relationships and highlight students’ backgrounds to engage them in learning at a personal level. First grade will continue to perform home visits, open houses, and special evenings to celebrate students and families and their unique cultures and traditions.
- In the Grade 2 Spanish class, students are piloting Imagine Learning Español. This online program helps students increase their Spanish vocabulary. It is available to all our DLI students over the summer. The student’s Spanish reading fluency and writing skills keep getting better!
- In the Grade 2 English class, Mrs. Bylund has been co-teaching with Mrs. Martin, our English Language Development teacher. Two days a week, Mrs. Martin comes into Mrs. Bylund’s class and teaches simultaneously or each teacher takes a small group to teach specific skills to small groups. As a result, the instruction is more connected and all students have the benefit of two teachers in the room. Teachers are also happy that, on average, students showed 153% growth on their reading and 126% on their math i-Ready scores.
- In the Grade 3, Spanish class there were lots of new and interesting concepts in science and social studies where students explained in Spanish what the concepts are and their functions in Spanish.
- In Grade 3, students learned how to write narrative and Informational paragraphs in Spanish and English. Students’ fluency and comprehension scores are high in both classes.
- In Grade 3, Mrs. Perez commented that the students’ use of the Spanish language surpassed her expectations.
- In the kindergarten Spanish and English classes, students have been exploring Spain and Mexico through the process of inquiry. They have learned about food, clothes, geography, and housing in both countries. To explore, they took part in purposeful play activities. In Spanish, students took part in a Pen Pal project with students in Spain. They wrote letters, and sent videos to students who are learning English in Spain. Students are developing social and emotional skills in both classrooms, and expanding students’ awareness of culture and traditions in different places.

**Stay tuned for the new district literacy program—Ready-Gen—starting Fall 2019**
The new district wide Ready-Gen Literacy Program will start this fall. For dual language classes there is a biliteracy pathway with many materials, readings and books from authentic sources from Spanish-speaking countries. We are focusing on oracy with an inclusion of language structures, dialogue, and vocabulary development. The literacy Instruction will connect the content areas with science, social studies and math. There has already been one training for the DLI program teachers this spring and the phase two training will be in August. DLI teachers are excited for a program that works for both languages in a very equitable way.

**Our DLI English and Spanish teachers**
This year TSD DLI welcomed two teachers from Spain. As in many content areas, there is also a shortage of bilingual teachers. We have hired some very strong teachers throughout the years from around the United States. But in order to have another resource for qualified teachers, TSD decided to work with the Embassy of Spain and the College Board program. This powerful program is used throughout the country to hire quality teachers from Spain. Each teacher must have taught for at least three years, have a high proficiency in English and the credentials to teach elementary content. The teachers are screened and then interviewed by a Colorado team at a job fair in Spain. The interview team from Colorado selects and interviews teachers that match a school’s needs. TSD then receives a group of resumes
and the TSD DLI principals and teachers interview team choose which ones to interview. This past year Cottonwood Plains hired Ana Llorente, who teaches kindergarten, and Truscott hired Adrian Seijoso, who teaches third grade. For next year TSD will have three more teachers from Spain. The current TSD DLI teachers have cultural backgrounds from Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Mexico and the United States. Students have opportunities to learn many cultural aspects of the Spanish-speaking world, which also gives them an opportunity to reflect on their own culture. The TSD DLI program also has a group of very experienced and highly qualified, dedicated English teachers. The English and Spanish two-teacher DLI team at each grade provides for a strong and effective approach to learning content in both languages.

TSD DLI Teachers attend training
A team of both Spanish and English TSD DLI teachers and the principals, Eric Harting and Karen Hanford, attended the 2018 La Cosecha Dual Language Conference in New Mexico. The purpose of La Cosecha Dual Language Conference is to provide current research, theory, practice, and discussion in order to enhance and expand the knowledge base and experience of educators who are developing and implementing dual language enrichment programs. Teachers brought home many new strategies to use in class, as well as grounding research on high-quality dual language programs. To learn more about La Cosecha see https://www.lacosechaconference.org/

TSD DLI teachers are leaders
Seven TSD DLI teachers attended the Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers (CCFLT) Spring Conference in Feb. 2019. As well as attending and learning from the conference sessions, all seven also presented sessions on aspects of the TSD DLI Program. Those attending and presenting were: Yesenia Perez, Ida Weber, Kaitlyn Chambers, Andrea Boyd, Laura Yaussi, and Kathleen LaFond. Yesenia Perez received the CCFLT Kris Wells Memorial Creativity Award. Last year at this conference, Ida Weber received the Early Educator Career Award. Learn more about CCFLT: http://www.ccflt.org.

TSD Dual Language Immersion Grade Book changes for next year
As part of a district wide report card revision, Dual Language grades will now be reported for the areas of Listening/Speaking and Reading/Writing. The hope is to give families a clearer picture of their student’s progress of the content they are learning in Spanish.

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TSD Dual Language Immersion
Our TSD DLI program is now in the newly formed Language, Culture, and Equity TSD Department. Toni Theisen will remain as the DLI TOSA and coordinate many details of the program and its growth.

TSD Dual Language Moving Forward
Planning is moving forward to provide DLI programming at the middle school level in 2021-22 school year, and more information will be shared as it is ready.

TSD Dual Language Immersion Summer “Popsicles in the Park” Sat. July 20 from 10 am-11 am.
Please join students and teachers for our Popsicles in the Park event, Sat. July 20 from 10 am to 11 am. Each year this social event has gained steam and the family and student attendance continues to grow. If you haven’t had the opportunity to join us yet, please mark the selected date down on your calendar. Also, this is a great opportunity for the newest DLI teachers in our network to meet the rest of the DLI community.

Thank you for your support.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Theisen, Dual Language Immersion TOSA