

DLI and Equitable Access in PPS: Brief for PPS SE Guiding Coalition

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Overview: As the *SE Guiding Coalition* grapples with the incredibly complex task of developing recommendations for balancing enrollment and providing equitable programming with an RESJ lens, Dual Language Immersion (DLI) tends to take up much of the conversation in our work. Although the goal of Phase 1 has been narrowed to determining feeder schools for Kellogg Middle School, decisions made in Phase 1 potentially set the stage for Phase 2 when the Coalition will take a deeper dive into DLI programs and how they can best be situated to meet the equity goals of the district.

Purpose of Brief: This brief is intended to provide a more nuanced understanding of DLI as an educational program model whose primary objective is to serve as an equity lever in changing the academic outcomes for historically underserved Emergent Bilingual (EBs), students whose first language is a language other than English, while simultaneously serving a diverse set of learners as a program of choice.

Defining Two-Way Immersion (TWI): The primary model employed in PPS DLI programs is called Two-Way Immersion (TWI). TWI refers to an intentional DLI model to integrate approximately 50% native speakers of the Partner Language (i.e. Spanish, Chinese) and 50% native speakers of English. TWI not only works to level the playing field for EBs in the classroom and school but can help transform a district through reversing community and subsequently school trends of segregation (Arias and Markos, 2018). Through both policy and practices, PPS works to support equitable access to the TWI model, but work remains.

Why Dual Language: All students who participate in dual language immersion (DLI) receive instruction in two languages to become bilingual, bi-literate and develop the cultural competency to succeed in a global society. Studies show (*Thomas and Collier 2009*) and PPS data confirm that DLI is the one educational program model that closes the achievement gap for EBs when effectively implemented (Steele, et. al. 2017). Closing that gap typically happens in the 6-8th grades for our EBs and thus building robust DLI programming through middle school is critical to bringing equitable academic outcomes. DLI is not just an academic enrichment program, it is an academic necessity for our EBs.

Next Steps for Effective and Equitable Implementation of DLI:

- Determine middle school options within the **Phase 1** scenarios that facilitate robust DLI programming at middle school.
- Establish a PPS DLI Advisory Group to do the following as part of **Phase 2**:
 - Review research and data on DLI and Equity
 - Develop a DLI Long Term Plan that aligns with the district vision and strategic plan and provides clear guidance on equitable DLI programming placements in SE as well as the rest of the district

“Dual language programs remain a potent force for educational equity, but that isn't inevitable. Without targeted guidance and effective equity-driven policies, dual language programs often shift to serve primarily English-dominant, privileged families. To that end, it would be exciting to see dual language programs enter into broader education equity discourse—particularly around school integration. How can multilingual school models drive better debates and policies around diversity and equity in public education? Conor Williams, a fellow at [The Century Foundation](#) ([ELLEVATION 122/8/20](#))