



WEST COVINA

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1717 W. MERCED AVENUE WEST COVINA, CA 91790 626.939.4600 WCUSD.ORG

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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West Covina Unified Set to Launch Mandarin Dual Language Immersion Program

WEST COVINA, CA – Students throughout the San Gabriel Valley who wish to learn Mandarin will now have the opportunity to do so – free of charge, in a public-school setting – at Orangewood Elementary in the West Covina Unified School District, a state-certified district of choice.

West Covina Unified School District will launch its Mandarin Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program in August. The first class will be limited to kindergarten students. Enrollment will open March 4.

The program was approved by the WCUSD Board of Education during its Feb. 12 meeting. It builds upon the District's successful Spanish Dual Language Immersion Program, housed at Orangewood and Monte Vista elementary schools.

Mandarin DLI builds on the District's proven reputation for providing innovative, highly competitive programs that foster an academic culture of biliteracy and bilingualism, academic achievement and success in college and careers.

"Students who participate in DLI programs develop greater cognitive flexibility, increase academic growth and develop a more positive understanding of other cultures," WCUSD Board President Daniel C. Monarrez said. "We are proud to provide our students with another resource to ensure they are prepared to compete in a global economy and thrive in college and their careers."

Orangewood Elementary will roll out Mandarin DLI with a kindergarten class consisting of a mix of native English speakers and native Mandarin speakers.

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The program will follow a 50:50 instruction model, employing both English and Mandarin 50 percent of the time throughout the instructional day.

The Mandarin program will expand each year, eventually providing K-5 DLI instruction.

Students will then advance to the Edgewood Schools, which provide language extension in middle school, as well as an opportunity to learn a third or fourth language in high school. Ultimately, each DLI student is expected to qualify for California's Seal of Biliteracy upon graduation.

Students will be accepted to the Mandarin program on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information about West Covina Unified's Dual Language Immersion Program and to enroll, visit www.wcusd.org/programs/dual-language-immersion. Students from throughout the San Gabriel Valley are eligible to apply.

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