



SAN GABRIEL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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San Gabriel Unified Elementary Expands Spanish Dual-language Immersion Program

SAN GABRIEL, CA – San Gabriel Unified’s McKinley Elementary will expand its flagship Spanish dual-language program to offer third-grade instruction for the first time in 2017-18, providing both native English speakers and English learners the opportunity to develop biliteracy and bilingualism through standards-based curriculum.

The program, launched in 2014, will serve nearly 95 students in kindergarten through third grade, teaching them to read, write and communicate effectively in English and Spanish. It is slated for schoolwide implementation by 2019-20.

“Studies show dual-language students experience increased cognitive benefits and improved academic growth compared with their counterparts,” SGUSD Superintendent Dr. John Pappalardo said. “We are proud to provide dual-language instruction as part of our mission to provide an enriching educational experience that prepares students for college, careers and beyond.”

The program follows a 90:10 Spanish-to-English instruction model beginning in kindergarten, with the amount of Spanish instruction decreasing annually until achieving a 50:50 balance by the time students reach fifth grade.

Consisting of one class per grade level, McKinley’s program follows San Gabriel Unified’s core curriculum, uses state-adopted materials and supports the California Standards.

The key difference between McKinley’s traditional and dual-language immersion classes, McKinley Principal Jim Symonds said, is the language spoken in the classroom. Teachers work in tandem with Symonds to design lesson plans and determine which subjects will be taught in English or Spanish.

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Michele Crowe, who will instruct the third-grade dual immersion class, said her experience as a teacher and language consultant at Liceo Cristiano de Guayaquil in Ecuador will help her reinforce the value of intercultural understanding, a core component of McKinley's program.

"Being immersed in Ecuadorian culture helped me develop great empathy for students who are learning a second language," Crowe said. "The fear of saying something wrong when you're speaking a new language can be daunting, and I know how to help students overcome that. I am excited to bring this knowledge and intercultural empathy to the children of San Gabriel Unified."

Registration is now open for McKinley's kindergarten dual-language immersion classes. To enroll in first- through third-grade classes, students must be fluent in Spanish or have been previously enrolled in a dual-language immersion program.

For more information about McKinley's Spanish dual-language immersion program, visit www.mckinley.sgusd.k12.ca.us.

PHOTO CAPTION:

072517_SANGAB_DUALLANGUAGE: McKinley Elementary's Spanish dual-language immersion program will offer third-grade instruction for the first time in 2017-18. The program, which serves nearly 95 students in kindergarten through third grade, is led by teachers Consuelo Gomez, Gabriela Cova, Marisol Ortiz and Michele Crowe.

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