

Dual Language Program Principals Meeting

“PLANNING FOR PARENT ENGAGEMENT IN A TWDI SCHOOL”

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A working group from the Two-Way Dual Immersion (TWDI) Program Task Force members identified outreach, recruitment and marketing opportunities/needs to educate district residents about the District’s TWDI Program at McKinley as a key need for the future of the success of the program. The task force also identified best practices for ensuring that the TWDI Program enrollment and placement meets the Program’s enrollment goals. The following efforts reflect our two years of planning to ensure that all parents were fully engaged in promoting first and second language programs in our community.

Sharing News and Information:

It is the desire of the District that information about the Two-Way Dual Immersion Program, a program designed to serve the entire Burlingame community, be distributed widely. The TWDI Program participants and their families regularly receive information, ideas and perspectives from program leaders at the school site and District level.

Throughout the District, but particularly at the Site school, there are a number of events to keep families informed of classroom activities and students’ progress, including Back-to-School Night, parent-teacher conferences, Info Nights and Site Tours. There are also orientation meetings (conducted by administrators and parent leaders several times a year) offering families information and advice about immersion program challenges and opportunities. Regular communications include school newsletters, postings on District Website pages, Site Website pages, and email announcements. Key channels of communications include:

- Burlingame School District Two Way Dual Language Immersion Informational Brochure
- Parent Handbook for TWDI families;
- News and notices from the school district in both languages.
- School newsletters: The [*Bulldog & PTA Bulletin*](#) is a weekly newsletter sponsored by McKinley PTA, which includes news about McKinley school as a whole as well as the TWDI Program. It is written in English and Spanish and is available to families electronically (*eDog*);
- Online subscription list-serves (sponsored by each site Parents Groups and each classroom Room Parents) will be developed;
- Variety of information forums, including Back to School Night, Open House, Parent Info Nights, and Site Tours;
- Four Parent education Presentations, targeted to the general TWDI parent community or specific grade levels;
- Spanish-speakers info nights and social gatherings including Dad’s Club and Spanish Mother’s Club.

Encouraging Hands-on Involvement

The active engagement of participants' families is especially critical to the success of the our Two-Way Dual Immersion Program. The Program encourages parents, guardians and/or other family members to help their children be successful in school. Families can directly and indirectly contribute their time and talents to the Program in many ways including (1) assisting with homework, (2) volunteering at school, (3) accepting leadership positions, such as PTA and Site Council, and (4) fund-raising activities. Parents can also support the Program by serving on committees, serving as Room Parents, planning special cultural events, working on fund-raising events, translating materials, chaperoning field trips and volunteering for specific classroom activities.

There are many opportunities for families from both linguistic and cultural backgrounds to participate in the ongoing administration and development of the Program. It is the hope of the District that hands-on involvement by families will facilitate communication and provide a better understanding of the Program's development. In addition, families can benefit from involvement in the Program, as they learn how they can better assist in their child's own linguistic skills and gain new multicultural perspectives.

Inviting Input and Ideas

There are structures and processes for stakeholders to become involved in development and implementation of Program initiatives, in collaboration with other parents, teachers and staff. Students and families are encouraged and invited to share their questions, concerns and successes about the Program by contacting the principal or district administrators.

Program leaders may use surveys to collect input from students, parents and staff. This data may be used for decision-making concerning continued improvements to the DLI Program.

Showcasing Accomplishments

In TWDI classrooms, teachers frequently organize events celebrating the Spanish speaking world and cultures. Various program-wide events also demonstrate the ways students are acquiring the language and developing cultural understanding. When parents attend these events, they better understand and appreciate the benefits of the program and become stronger supporters and advocates.

The District should continue to showcase and document (in writing or videos) the successes of the Program and its students.

Informing the Community

The TWDI Program will strive to keep the general Burlingame community informed of progress and potential of the program. Parents, staff site leaders, students and alumni will share information with families of prospective students, share instructional ideas with staff at other elementary and secondary school sites, and inform the general Burlingame populace about this exciting and unique Program in our community. These community-wide activities include:

- Kindergarten information nights
- Burlingame Mothers' Club information night
- Multi-cultural night
- Brochures about the Program
- Newspaper and other media articles about the Program
- Updated Website pages at District and all schools
- Student Performances in both languages – Musical and Academic Nights

A growing awareness and understanding of the TWDLI Program attracts new students, generates both tangible support and goodwill, and lays the groundwork for development of other TWDLI programs in the Burlingame School District.