

Preparing students for the global community

The Spanish Immersion Program (SI) of the Moorhead Area Public Schools offers students the opportunity to learn a second language and be exposed to a variety of cultural experiences while developing academic excellence.

The K-6 Spanish Immersion Program offers children an opportunity to learn to read, write and speak Spanish.

At Ellen Hopkins Elementary (grades K-4) and Horizon

Middle School West (grades 5-6), students are immersed or completely engaged in a second language while learning all subject areas, including reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. While using the identical elementary curriculum used by the other Moorhead elementary schools, sometimes within a multiage setting, SI teachers instruct in Spanish rather than English.

Give your child a world of advantage.

Expanding students' opportunities

Children in foreign language immersion programs across the United States are being given a world of advantage as they enjoy the benefits of learning the regular school curriculum, communicating in another language and appreciating other world cultures.

All children in the Moorhead Area Public Schools entering kindergarten through second grade in the fall of 2018 are eligible to register for the Spanish Immersion Program. The only criteria for enrollment is that parents want their children to learn a second language. Students who enter the program will receive instruction in Spanish through the elementary grades.

About the Spanish Immersion Program

In the Spanish Immersion Program, classroom instruction occurs in Spanish. Spanish is the method of instruction,

not the topic of instruction. Students read, write and speak Spanish as they go through their daily lessons.

The curriculum goals of the immersion

program are the same as the goals for all elementary schools in the Moorhead School District. The students learn the same subject content that other students learn in the elementary school setting.

Besides learning the regular school curriculum, the children learn to think and communicate in Spanish. Students are exposed to the cultures of Spanish-speaking communities in the United States and around the world.

Using the immersion approach

The immersion approach produces results that have not previously been achieved in traditional foreign language programs. The success of the immersion approach has been demonstrated in the United States and Canada for the past 30 years.

Studies indicate students in foreign language immersion programs have significantly richer educational backgrounds and more positive attitudes toward other cultures. Many schools report improved standardized test scores and improved English language skills for immersion students by the time they are in grades 5 and 6.

Learning to read and write in English

English is a part of the K-6 curriculum in Spanish Immersion. It is essential to build a strong English language base in order to fully develop literacy skills in Spanish. Students receive

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informal instruction in English starting in kindergarten. Formal English instruction begins in grade 3.

Test results are very encouraging and demonstrate that students in immersion programs do as well as, or better than, monolingual students at the same grade level. While second language students begin instruction in the English language at a later stage, they quickly catch up to, and often surpass, monolingual students.

Outstanding teachers in a quality educational environment

All teachers in our program have native or near-native proficiency in Spanish, a proficiency enhanced by extensive knowledge of how children learn a second language. Most importantly, our teachers are committed to each student's success in the program.

The Spanish Immersion Program, with grades K-4 located at Ellen Hopkins Elementary School and grades 5-6 at Horizon Middle School West, provides students with instruction in child-centered schools that are rich in providing opportunities and learning support for children.

The Spanish Immersion Program provides parents with opportunities to become personally and actively involved in their children's learning. Parent involvement is very important to students' success. Parent volunteers are always welcome.

Registration information

Parents who wish to enroll their 2018-19 kindergarten-age child in the Spanish Immersion Program should complete

kindergarten registration from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Feb. 6 or from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Feb. 7, 2018, at Probstfield Center for Education, 2410 14th St. S., Moorhead.

During registration, 75 students may enroll. If there are more than 75 requests for registration a waiting list is created.

"We liked the idea of allowing our son to have the opportunity to learn about another culture. We also feel it will be a wonderful benefit for the rest of his life."

— Spanish Immersion Parent

Parents may choose to enroll their child as a first- or second-grader if there are openings due to attrition. Parents who are interested in enrolling their first- or second-grade child in the Spanish Immersion Program should contact Lynnelle Dirksen, Ellen Hopkins Elementary principal.

Meetings, classroom visits and video

Parents who are considering enrolling their children in the Spanish Immersion Program are invited to learn more. Meetings with Lynnelle Dirksen, Hopkins principal, will provide information about immersion education and the district's immersion program. Parents also will have the opportunity to talk about their child's specific interests and needs, as well as discuss their questions or concerns.

Parents also may talk to a current immersion parent or visit Hopkins Elementary to observe the immersion classes. Parents must call the Hopkins office at 218-284-4300 to schedule their meeting or classroom visit.

A video about the program is available by request through the Hopkins office at 218-284-4300.

BILINGUAL BENEFITS

Beyond the benefit of knowledge for its own sake, learning a second language at an early age:

- Has a positive effect on intellectual growth;
- Enriches and enhances your child's mental development;
- Leaves students with more flexibility in thinking, greater sensitivity to language, and a better ear for listening;
- Improves your child's understanding of his or her native language;
- Gives your child the ability to communicate with people he or she would otherwise not have had the chance to know;
- Opens the door to other cultures and helps your child understand and appreciate people from other cultures;
- Gives your child a head start in language requirements for college;
- Increases job opportunities in many careers in which knowing another language is a real asset.

For more information

Contact Lynnelle Dirksen, principal of Ellen Hopkins Elementary School, at 218-284-4300 or ldirksen@moorheadschoools.org

Learn how you can give your child a world of advantage.

