

K-12 Heritage Language Program Profile International School of Tucson

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Dialects/Languages taught: French, German (starting Jan '07), Spanish ,
Mandarin Chinese (tentatively Aug 06; otherwise Jan 07)

Grades:

- PreK-K
- 1-5/6

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: Initially bilingual (English and another language); ultimately bi-literate; moving towards bicultural

Type of program

- Immersion
- Bilingual program
- Content-based

The format of the immersion program depends on the age level of the students. For students that are ages 3 – 5, the class is 100% immersion in non-English. Furthermore, students who are ages 6 – 11 are immersed half of the time in English and half of the time in another language.

Program mission statement:

- Education for an International Community
- Full Language Immersion
- Values for a Global Society

Program Origins: The program was founded in 2005.

Parents' expectations for the program: Since the program is rather new, the parents' expectations are not entirely clear. However, they do want their children to develop confidence and pride in their language skills.

Staff's expectations for the program: The staff share the same mindset as the parents.

Students

Native Americans: 2.5 %
First-generation immigrants: 10 - 25%
Second-generation immigrants: 10 - 25%
Third-generation immigrants: 10 - 25%
Children of interethnic marriages: 50 – 67%
Non-immigrant residents: 10% and growing

Countries of origin: Austria, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Mali, Mexico, New Zealand, Panama, Peru, UK, and USA

Total student enrollment: 40

Identification of a heritage speaker:

- Self-identification by parents
- Home language survey: A student's language background is determined by a set of questions on a "profile" form that a student takes when the student first enrolls.
- Language proficiency: This is evaluated by a teacher's observations.
- Oral interview description: This is not yet a part of the assessment process, but we are working to incorporate it soon.

Percentage of students who complete the program: The program is too new to establish this figure.

Possible reasons for not completing the program: So far one student left to go to a public school immersion program, and one left for financial reasons.

Students' attitudes toward the language varieties they speak: Students are incredibly positive and have shown a great deal of pride for their heritage skills.

Instructors

Number of staff in program: 7

Languages in which staff members are proficient: English, French, German, and Spanish. Additionally, the instructors are native speakers in their own language, but have varying levels of English proficiency.

Credentials

- Teacher certification (from their home country): primary and secondary education, mathematics, secondary science, and English (language and literature)

International School of Tucson, RC Young_ French and other lang.

- BA – in primary education, mathematics, physics, chemistry, fine arts, and English (language and literature)

Professional development opportunities teachers have: In-service training and continuing education at a local community college or university

Professional development opportunities teachers need: Further teaching programs and second language methodologies

Hours per week students receive instruction: 30

Student grouping: Students are grouped by language level according to grade level:

- PreK- levels 4 and 5
- K- level 6
- Grade 1- level 7

Heritage Skills

English skills

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing:
- Other: Observing and conducting presentations

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Skills and levels of language proficiency students reach by the end of the program:

- By the age of six the students are expected to reach a level of oral competency appropriate for their grade level.
- By the age of eleven the students are expected to reach a level of written competency appropriate for their grade level.

Culture

- Festivals
- Customs
- Traditions/beliefs

- Folktales
- Arts and crafts
- Dances
- Songs
- Rhymes:
- Social and cultural norms
- Cultural appropriateness

Student qualities the program fosters:

- Appreciation - Empathy
- Commitment - Enthusiasm
- Confidence - Independence
- Co-operation - Integrity
- Creativity - Respect
- Curiosity - Tolerance

Methodologies

- Skills-based
- Activity-based
- Student-centered

Materials

Textbook: The program does not use a formal textbook; all materials are teacher-created.

Assessment

- PK / K - none
- G1 - 5 - tests, assignments, class work (oral and written)
- Teacher's observations
- Performance-based tasks or assessments

Articulation

Home-school connections or parent involvement: active Parent Association; and many activities with parents.

What the program has in place

- Financial support
- Tuition
 - Parents

- Currently the Head of School solicits funds; later the Board of Trustees will.

Special Challenges and Comments

Challenges: Start-up issues

Comments: The program is very new to answer questions related to research and evaluation of the program.