



K-12 Program

Background Information

Institution: International School of Tucson

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Contact person:

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Heritage languages/dialects taught: German

Grades taught: Currently pre-K-2 (opening another grade each year until we are Pre-K-5)

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: We encourage students to develop social understanding and values for a global society by educating them under full-language immersion.

Type of program: Full-immersion Pre-K-K; Dual-immersion Grade 1-5; and we also host weekend-immersion workshops and "Mommy & Me" immersion Play Groups. This school offers an international-grounded bilingual program of instruction in Spanish/English, French/English, and German/English. Pre-School is taught entirely in the languages other than English, and focuses more in oral skills. Once students go to Junior School, they go into a two-way immersion, moving the emphasis to written communication and having the opportunity of using their two languages.

Program origin: This program was founded by individuals in 2004, and opened as a school in August 2005. It is currently funded only by fees.

Parents

Parents' expectations for the program: International parents want either the program or the academic standards (education for an international community and values for a global society).

Staff

Instructors' and administration's expectations for the program: Professional satisfaction.

Students

Students:

- First-generation immigrants, 20%
- Second-generation immigrants, 25%
- Third-generation immigrants, 50%
- Children of interethnic marriages, 25%
- Children of interethnic adoptions, 5%
- Pacific Islanders, 2%
- Expatriates, 5%

Countries of origin: Austria, Canada, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, England, France, Germany, Haiti, Iceland, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Switzerland, Taiwan, and USA. German students are heritage German speakers.

Total student enrollment:

2006/2007 = 66 total students (a portion of these are German speakers)

2007/2008 = 90 (projected)

How the program identifies heritage speakers: Parents choose the language section for their child. All of the German students are heritage speakers, and all have at least one German-speaking parent.

How the program determines the language background and language proficiency of students: We do not currently have any placement test, or oral interview, letting the parents choose the language section for their child. However, we are planning on having both forms of assessment, as we grow and the numbers of horizontal entrants increase.

Percentage of students who complete the program: Although it is too early to know, we expect a drop-off as free public education becomes available.

Percentage of students who continue to study the heritage language after completing the program: It is too early to know.

Possible reasons for student withdrawal: Financial, because we are an independent school.

Students' attitudes toward the language varieties they speak: Pride, enthusiasm, and interest

Students' expectations of the program: They are too young to have or express any.

Instructors

Number of instructors in the program: 10; one teaches German.

Languages in which instructors are proficient: English, French, Mandingo, German, and Spanish

Proficiency level: All of them are university qualified, except the Mandingo speaker, who is fluent.

Credentials: All possess a B.A. in Education or Psychology, while many have also a Master's in Education, Psychology, and even Engineering. All of them also are certificated teachers, and have Education Administration credentials.

Professional development opportunities instructors have: In-house school-specific; external state-provided, University of Arizona, Pima Community College

Professional development opportunities instructors need: Methodology, communicative approaches, inquiry-based teaching and learning, and activity centers

Instruction

Total contact hours per week:

Pre-K-K = 35 hours

Grade 1-2 (projected 1-5) = 40 hours

Times per week:

Pre-K-K = 35 hours (full-immersion)

Grade 1-2 (projected 1-5) = 17 to 20 hours (dual-immersion)

Student grouping: Students are usually grouped by age and then by level.

Hours devoted to language teaching: Language and culture learning are integrated.

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Language skills

Heritage language skills: The four main language skills, plus viewing and presenting

English skills: The four main language skills, plus viewing and presenting

Levels of language proficiency reached by the end of the program:

Listening → K is fluent for age

Speaking → K is fluent for age

Reading → Projected grade 5 is proficient for age

Writing → Projected grade 5 is proficient for age

Viewing / Presenting → Projected grade 5 is proficient for age

Culture

Aspects of culture taught:

- Geography
- History
- Festivals
- Customs
- Traditions/Beliefs
- Religion
- Folktales
- Arts and crafts
- Dances
- Songs
- Rhymes
- Social and cultural norms
- Cultural appropriateness

Methodologies

Methodologies and instructional strategies used in the program: Inquiry, communicative, and some direct instruction especially with older students

Materials

Other materials used for instruction: Teacher-created

Technology used for instruction: There is currently limited use. However, projected grade 3-5 students will be expected to produce work using ICT (in class technology).

Assessment

Assessments used to evaluate students' progress: Students are evaluated with weekly quizzes, unit tests, teacher's observations, portfolios that they need to produce at the end of each instructional unit, pair-work, group-work, oral activities, and practical tasks such as science or math experiments.

Articulation

Credit or recognition students receive: Students in the future ideally will receive language proficiency assessments such as the "London tests for children"

How the program develops home/school connections or promotes parent involvement: The school has a very active parent association.

Opportunities for using the heritage language and developing cultural knowledge outside the program: The opportunities vary family by family. German students can all speak German at home (most do). In the future, we will also provide more such opportunities outside the school day.

What the program has in place

Financial support the program receives: Financial support comes primarily from tuition and parents. In the future, we will try to be supported by ethnic/cultural organizations and foundations.

Solicitation of funding: The head of the school and a Capital Campaign Committee that is being created solicit funding.

Assistance or funding the program would like to receive: Funding without strings attached

How students graduate and/or how they receive credit: Our students are too young to graduate.

Monitoring of overall achievement in school: Students make excellent progress.

Continuing heritage language development: We do not track them, because we are too new.

Program research or evaluation: Not yet, but we would be delighted to be a part of a study.

Special challenges

HL Profile/Projected K-5 (currently K-2)/German
Cristina Maíllo-Belda/07.13.2007

Challenges the program has experienced: Our main challenge is funding, because we are tuition dependent and too new for major fundraising.

Additional comments: We need strings funding