

Dos Caminos Program: FAQ



Where is the program housed?

The Dos Caminos program is housed at the Mamaroneck Avenue School building.

Do you have to be zoned to MAS to attend the Dos Caminos program?

No. You can be zoned to any of the district's elementary schools (Chatsworth, Murray, Central) and still attend the Dos Caminos program.

When can you enter the Dos Caminos program?

Typically, students enter the program through our lottery process the Spring before Kindergarten begins. We do allow students to enter the program in 1-10 if there is space in the grade they are coming into and they are coming from another dual-language program or from a Spanish speaking country.

Do you follow the same curriculum as other classes?

Yes. We follow the district curriculum and meet all end of the year *Common Core Standards* set for each grade level with the *Culturally Responsive Teaching* framework at the forefront. We also use the Spanish State *Common Core Standards* to ensure we are developing the Spanish language accordingly.

Are the Dos Caminos students separated from the other students on their grade level/in the school?

No. Students attend field trips with the other classes, they eat lunch as a grade and attend recess together. Classes are mixed for any school-wide events and assemblies, and our Dos Caminos classrooms are spread throughout the building according to their grade level.

Do I need to be able to speak, read or write in the opposite language in order for my child to experience success in the program?

No, but it is important for parents to utilize the support made available to them either through the classroom or school and community to support the second language acquisition and maintenance outside of school. We encourage play dates, conversation groups and attendance at Library or community events in the opposite language to support this family commitment. It is also important for parents to serve as models in

learning a second language by taking chances and having a positive attitude about it.

Can I take my child out of the program at any time?

Although upon entry into the program you are making a commitment through 5th Grade, we do understand that circumstances may change. Please note that any changes in the programming of your child's schooling would happen only after extensive conversations with teachers, parents and administration. It is our goal to ensure that children are in the right learning environment for them.

Is this a gifted and talented program?

No. Dos Caminos is a Dual-Language Program that follows an 80/20 language allocation model in the younger grades and 50/50 language allocation in the upper grades. Research findings in 80/20 programs show that both English- and Spanish dominant students have higher Spanish proficiency outcomes at the end of the program than 50/50 students, with no detriment to English development in the long run. This model allows Native language support and development for language minority (Spanish) students and close to full immersion in a second language for language majority (English) students. The Dos Caminos program provides both a challenging and enriching experience for all learners.

What if my child has special needs or requires speech, language, OT or PT services? Does he/she still qualify for the program?

Having an IEP does not disqualify you from entry into the program. If there are concerns as to whether or not Dos Caminos is the right place for your child, you will have an opportunity to meet with teachers to further discuss your child. Each case is different.

What is the process for the selection of children for entry into the program?

Your child will be evaluated to find out which language he or she expresses most confidence in during their Kindergarten assessment. Once we have an idea, they will be entered into a lottery. There are separate lotteries for both languages. If your child is chosen in the lottery you will be contacted. Anyone not chosen will be put on a waiting list.

How are Parent-Teacher Conferences run?

Parent Teacher Conferences take place the same as they would across the district. For grades 3-5, where students have two classrooms, parents would meet with both the English and Spanish Zone teachers at the same time.

How is children's progress monitored in both languages and communicated on the Report Card?

You will receive the standard district Achievement Report for your child. We have integrated content and language standards for both languages within the report card, so that you may see your child's biliteracy development side by side.

What is simultaneous teaching?

For grades 3-5, both English and Spanish Zone teachers on each grade level plan lessons together, and are in constant communication each day to ensure consistency in teaching practices and content delivery. This type of planning is essential in order to support students in making cross-linguistic connections.

What supports are in place for families?

We have several resources available for parents. The program website offers several options for instructional resources that parents can use at home. Every year we have a Spanish book fair. We send various materials and magazines home in both languages. It is important for parents to use these supports at home to support their children. Parents will be provided with resources throughout the year that they can use to help their child's second language acquisition.

How can I support my child with non-dominant language Homework?

We encourage parents to use the supports that the classroom teachers provide to help their child at home with assignments. It is important to note that a family's main focus at home should generally be in the child's dominant language. Parents should not be attempting to teach the language at home if they are not proficient in it. Strength in the dominant language is the only way the second language is acquired. With that being said, regardless of the language it is in, work that is being sent home is only assigned when it has been taught in the classroom. This work is intended to be completed independently by your child. If your child finds the task challenging, please allow your child to do what they can and communicate the difficulty with your child's teachers.

Does the district provide transportation to Dos Caminos students?

As per the Board of Education, the district does not provide transportation to any student zoned to Chatsworth, Murray, or Central Schools that is accepted into the Dos Caminos program.

