

# DUAL LANGUAGE/IMMERSION EDUCATION

## EDUCATING GLOBALLY COMPETENT LEADERS

### WHAT IS DUAL LANGUAGE/IMMERSION EDUCATION?

- Dual language/immersion programs **teach children subject matter in a non-English language** for at least half of the preK-5 school day and continue in grades 6-12 with a minimum of two yearlong courses in that language. These programs aim for high levels of academic achievement, bilingualism and biliteracy, and cultural competence.
- Dual language/immersion programs **serve a wide range of children and families**. Three main program variations target English-speaking children (one-way world language immersion), children who speak a home language other English and English speakers (two-way bilingual immersion) and Native American children whose languages and cultures are being lost (indigenous immersion).
- The first language immersion program in Minnesota began in 1976 in Minneapolis Public Schools. Today, **Minnesota has 84 dual language/immersion programs educating more than 13,000 preK-12 children** towards bilingualism and biliteracy in **Dakota, English, French, German, Hmong, Mandarin Chinese, Ojibwe and Spanish**.
- Minnesota is home to **more early total Mandarin immersion programs**, in which K-2 children learn all day in Mandarin (and even learn to read in Mandarin first!), **than any other state in the U.S.**

### ARE THESE PROGRAMS SUCCESSFUL?

- Dual language/immersion students of various academic abilities **achieve high levels of functional proficiency in the immersion language while at the same time achieving academically at or above their non-immersion peers on standardized tests administered in English**. Moreover, students from a range of socioeconomic, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds are successful in these programs.

### HOW CAN THESE PROGRAMS ASSIST IN CLOSING MINNESOTA'S ACHIEVEMENT GAP?

- **African American children and children from third language backgrounds** who participate in dual language/immersion programs achieve as well as or greater than non-immersion peers while at the same time acquiring proficiency in English and an additional language.
- Two-way bilingual immersion programs develop higher levels of proficiency in English and the non-English language for **English learners (ELs)** as compared to ELs in English-only or transitional bilingual programs. These higher bilingual proficiency levels are linked to higher achievement scores, grade point averages, and continuation with post-secondary schooling.
- **Native American children** in indigenous immersion programs outperform peers in English-medium schools on achievement tests given in English. Native children also display a greater sense of ethnic identity and higher self-esteem.

To learn more about *Language Immersion Education in Minnesota*, check out the video at <http://carla.umn.edu/immersion/immersionMNvideo.html>

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