



# Elementary Dual Language Teachers

## Employee Survey Responses, Spring 2016

### Opinions About Dual Language Models and Instruction

#### Background

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) Department of Research and Evaluation staff administers an employee coordinated survey annually to samples of staff at the district offices and campuses for the purpose of gaining opinions and perceptions about district- and campus-based programs. This report summarizes survey responses from elementary bilingual dual language (DL) program teachers in prekindergarten (pre-K) through grade 5 about different aspects of the district's DL models and instructional practices. A total of 229 DL teachers' responses are included in this report summary.

#### DL Model Options

Survey respondents were asked to select one of three DL instructional models for language arts that they preferred to use in their classroom (Table 1):

- 50/50 sequential language learning (i.e., students learn in the native language first from pre-K through grade 1, followed by a gradual increase in the amount of time learning in their second language from grade 2 through 5). A higher percentage of grade-2 teachers (60%) than of other teachers preferred this option.
- 70/30 simultaneous language learning (i.e., students learn in both native and second languages simultaneously, beginning with 90% native language in pre-K, gradually increasing second language learning up to 50% by grade 3). A higher percentage of teachers in grades 3 through 5 (42%) than of other teachers preferred this option.
- 80/20 simultaneous language learning (i.e., students learn in both native and second languages simultaneously, beginning with 90% native language in pre-K, gradually increasing second language learning up to 50% by grade 5). A higher percentage of pre-K teachers (40%) than of other teachers preferred this option.

Table 1. Bilingual Dual Language (DL) Teachers' Model Preferences by Grade Range

Model preferred	Prekindergarten (n = 35)	K-1 (n = 70)	2 (n = 38)	3-5 (n = 82)
50/50	23%	39%	60%	35%
70/30	37%	30%	24%	42%
80/20	40%	31%	16%	23%

Source. AISD Employee Coordinated Survey 2016

## Language Separation

Table 2 summarizes teachers' preferences for the separation of languages in different subject areas for each grade span. The majority of teachers preferred the separation of languages to be different across grade spans. They preferred that instruction be given in the native language for language arts, science, and social studies, and in English for math in pre-K through grade 1. They preferred that instruction be given 50% in the native language and 50% in English for all subjects in grades 2 through 5.

**Table 2. Bilingual Dual Language (DL) Teachers' Language Separation Preferences by Grade Range**

Language separation	Prekindergarten ( <i>n</i> = 37)	K-1 ( <i>n</i> = 71)	2 ( <i>n</i> = 38)	3-5 ( <i>n</i> = 80)
pre-K—grade 1; grades 2 —5	65%	54%	61%	56%
pre-K—grade 5	35%	46%	39%	44%

Source. AISD Employee Coordinated Survey 2016

## Language Switching

Table 3 shows teachers' schedule preferences for when to switch the language of instruction. The majority of teachers in pre-K through grade 2 preferred daily switching, while the teachers in grades 3 through 5 were almost evenly split between schedule options (a slightly higher percentage chose daily, 38%).

**Table 3. Bilingual Dual Language (DL) Teachers' Language Switching Schedule Preferences by Grade Range**

Language switching	Prekindergarten ( <i>n</i> = 36)	K-2 ( <i>n</i> = 68)	2 ( <i>n</i> = 38)	3-5 ( <i>n</i> = 81)
Daily	42%	66%	47%	38%
Weekly (1-week cycle)	39%	19%	32%	30%
Biweekly (2-week cycle)	19%	15%	21%	32%

Source. AISD Employee Coordinated Survey 2016

## Preparation for Instruction

Table 4 shows responses for DL teachers from each grade span when they were asked to indicate the instructional approach they felt best prepared to deliver in the classroom. The majority of teachers responding selected one-way DL.

AISD's DL program is a bilingual education program offered in the following format: one-way DL (serving only English language learners [ELLs]) and two-way DL (serving both ELLs and non-ELLs).

For more information on the DL program, see the following AISD web page:

<http://www.austinisd.org/academics/ell/duallanguage>

For more information on state education laws and guidance about bilingual education, see the following Texas Education Agency web page:

<http://tea.texas.gov/bilingual/esl/education/>

**Table 4. Bilingual Dual Language (DL) Teachers' Instructional Classroom Approach Preferences by Grade Range**

Instructional approach	Prekindergarten ( <i>n</i> = 35)	K-1 ( <i>n</i> = 70)	2 ( <i>n</i> = 38)	3-5 ( <i>n</i> = 83)
One-way DL	83%	66%	71%	40%
Two-way DL	9%	26%	21%	37%
Transitional late exit	3%	1%	3%	15%
English as a second language	6%	7%	5%	8%

Source. AISD Employee Coordinated Survey 2016

## Professional Development Needs

Teachers indicated areas or topics in which they would like to have more professional development learning opportunities. The most frequently requested professional development topics were teaching for transfer (academic vocabulary instruction from native language to second language) and vocabulary and content enrichment (Table 5).

**Table 5. Bilingual Dual Language (DL) Teachers' Professional Development Opportunities Needed by Grade Range**

Professional development opportunity needed	Prekindergarten ( <i>n</i> = 35)	K-1 ( <i>n</i> = 73)	2 ( <i>n</i> = 38)	3-5 ( <i>n</i> = 83)
Teaching for transfer	46%	55%	63%	61%
Vocabulary and content enrichment	51%	48%	45%	59%
Sheltered instruction	22%	37%	37%	46%
Sequential learning	30%	37%	39%	36%
Heterogeneous learning in groups or pairs	30%	38%	37%	40%

Source. AISD Employee Coordinated Survey 2016

## Levels of Support

Teachers rated the adequacy of support for different resources from their school or the district, including materials, staff collaboration and support, parental support, and district department support. Table 6 shows that English materials and resources had the highest adequacy ratings (92% pre-K, 83% kindergarten through grade 1, 79% grade 2, and 89% grades 3 through 5). Spanish or Vietnamese materials and resources were perceived as the least adequate. Most teachers rated support in other areas as either very adequate or adequate. pre-K teachers gave the highest ratings for support and resources. However, responses indicated several areas of support that should be improved. For example, 30% to 32% of grade-2 teachers perceived support from parents and Central Office Departments was not adequate.

**Table 6. Bilingual Dual Language (DL) Teachers' Support Adequacy Ratings by Grade Range**

Support area and teachers' grade range	Very adequate or adequate	Somewhat adequate	Not adequate
English resources and materials			
pre-K	92%	8%	0%
K–1	83%	16%	1%
2	79%	16%	5%
3–5	89%	6%	5%
Spanish or Vietnamese resources and materials			
pre-K	72%	17%	11%
K–1	42%	43%	15%
2	49%	24%	27%
3–5	36%	29%	35%
Parents'/guardians' support and understanding of DL			
pre-K	64%	19%	17%
K–1	48%	39%	13%
2	48%	22%	30%
3–5	49%	30%	21%
Collaboration with other teachers about instructional strategies and resources			
pre-K	72%	22%	6%
K–1	59%	28%	13%
2	61%	18%	21%
3–5	68%	16%	16%
Principal's support for DL			
pre-K	77%	17%	6%
K–1	74%	13%	13%
2	58%	21%	21%
3–5	69%	15%	16%
Assistant principal's support for DL			
pre-K	83%	9%	8%
K–1	73%	14%	13%
2	57%	24%	19%
3–5	73%	17%	10%

**Table 6 (cont.). Bilingual Dual Language (DL) Teachers' Support Adequacy Ratings by Grade Range**

Support area and teachers' grade range	Very adequate or adequate	Somewhat adequate	Not adequate
Instructional coach or specialist support for DL			
pre-K	71%	13%	16%
K–1	70%	20%	10%
2	54%	14%	31%
3–5	58%	20%	22%
Central office support from Department of English Language Learners			
pre-K	74%	19%	6%
K–1	61%	25%	14%
2	48%	19%	32%
3–5	64%	18%	18%
Central office support from curriculum areas (e.g., language arts)			
pre-K	86%	10%	4%
K–1	57%	28%	15%
2	63%	6%	31%
3–5	59%	22%	19%
Professional development opportunities offered by the school			
pre-K	70%	18%	12%
K–1	58%	29%	13%
2	54%	27%	19%
3–5	53%	24%	23%
Professional development opportunities offered by the district			
pre-K	76%	18%	6%
K–1	57%	27%	16%
2	67%	25%	8%
3–5	61%	26%	13%

Source. AISD Employee Coordinated Survey 2016

## Summary

A sample of AISD elementary DL teachers were surveyed in Spring 2016 about different aspects of the district's DL models and instructional practices as well as support they received. DL teachers differed by grade level in the DL model they preferred, depending on the amount of native and non-native language instruction the model prescribed. For example, 40% of pre-K teachers preferred the 80/20 model, while grade-2 teachers preferred the 50/50 model. Most agreed that they preferred daily switching of language instruction schedules (as compared with one- or two-week cycles). Most teachers felt best prepared to teach one-way DL. However, the highest professional development need areas selected by the teachers included teaching for transfer and vocabulary and content enrichment. When asked to rate the adequacy of resources and support, the highest ratings were given to English resources, while the lowest ratings were given to Spanish or Vietnamese resources and parents' support and understanding of DL.



Martha Doolittle, Ph.D.

### Department of Research and Evaluation



1111 West 6th Street, Suite D-350 | Austin, TX 78703-5338  
512.414.1724 | fax: 512.414.1707  
[www.austinisd.org/dre](http://www.austinisd.org/dre) | Twitter: @AISD\_DRE

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