Two-Way Immersion Program

What is Two-Way Immersion?

The students who participate in the two-way immersion program come from one of two language backgrounds. Half of the students in the class come from families whose native language is English, and the other half from families whose native language is Korean. The program focuses on literacy skills in both English and Korean while teaching the content. The students are taught half of the school day in English and the other half in Korean.

The goals of the Two-Way Immersion program are:

- To acquire first language literacy while learning literacy skills in the second language, strengthening both languages
- To develop student’s academic proficiency in Korean and in English while connecting skills learned across both
- To develop student’s cross-cultural understanding and to serve as language role models during their learning,
- To develop multicultural awareness and a more global perspective

Why Two-Way Immersion?

FCPS Two-Way Immersion (TWI) programs have proven results that show the academic achievement of participating kindergarten students to ‘perform at or above the level of traditional kindergarten students on end-of-year English assessments’, in addition, ‘TWI students outperform the non TWI peers in reaching reading benchmarks in the primary grades and 3rd grade SOL benchmarks.’ (FCPS, May 2008) In addition to academic achievement, developing bilingual students adds a multitude of other benefits. Research findings suggest the ‘bilinguals have advantages on certain thinking dimensions, particularly in divergent thinking, creativity, early metalinguistic awareness, and communicative sensitivity.’ (Baker, 2011)

How Does the Program Model Work?

The content instruction of math, science, and language arts will be taught in Korean for half of the instructional day and social studies and language arts are taught in English for the other half of the day. Students receive instruction in Korean for half a day from a native speaker of Korean who holds a Virginia teaching certificate in elementary education. The teacher that teaches the other half the day is a native English speaker and also holds a Virginia teaching certificate in elementary education. Both teachers are members of the grade level team and participate equally in all staff development programs. The classroom instruction in Korean and in English follows the Fairfax County Program of Studies for K-6. The two-way immersion program is implemented one grade level at a time beginning with Kindergarten.