



# CAMPANELLI

## Frequently asked questions about the Chinese Immersion Program in School District 54

**Q What are District 54's goals in relation to the Chinese Immersion Program?**

**A** The goals are as follows.

- District 54 will ensure the success of the whole child by providing comprehensive approaches and programming, grounded in the belief that each child deserves to be Healthy, Safe, Engaged, Supported and Challenged.
- District 54 will perform in the top 10% of all schools in reading and math growth and proficiency as measured by state and local assessments.
- District 54 will close the achievement gap for all students in reading and math as measured by state and local assessments.

**District 54 Equity and Inclusion Vision Statement**

In District 54, we will promote a culture of unconditional belonging in which all students, staff and community members will be treated with dignity. We will ensure high levels of access to resources, experiences and success.

In District 54, we strive to ensure that all students, staff, and community members are

- Safe, welcome and cared for;
- Heard, validated and supported; and
- Represented in curriculum and staffing.

**Q What are the expectations of the Chinese Immersion Program?**

**A** Students will be able to

- Perform academically at grade level in two languages commensurate with their monolingual English-speaking peers;
- Use two languages comfortably and effectively in social situations appropriate for their age level;
- Communicate effectively through reading and writing in two languages at a level appropriate for their age; and
- Demonstrate an appreciation of cultural diversity and cross-cultural competence across a variety of social situations.

**Q What if I change my mind after my child is in the program and want to pull them out?**

**A** Since acquiring bilingual proficiency is a long-term process and available space for families is limited, parents are asked to commit to program participation for at least a full year. When a child is pulled from the program that space is immediately made available for the next student in the application pool. Consequently, there is no guarantee of re-admittance.

**Q What are the benefits for my child in the Chinese Immersion Program?**

**A** Your child will develop Chinese as a second language at an early age while continuing to grow in English. Your child will learn appropriate academic skills while developing bilingual proficiency. Moreover, your child will develop social skills that allow them to develop cross-cultural friendships. Brain research has shown that bilingual speakers have the opportunity to develop more cognitive flexibility through their bilingualism.

**Q What are the criteria for admission into the program?**

**A** The Chinese Immersion Program is open to all families in School District 54, with priority in admission given to the children who live within the Campanelli boundaries and to siblings of students in the Chinese Immersion program. If there is more interest than available space, students will be placed in an application pool and invited into the program as openings become available. New residents with children at any grade level may request that their children receive a language assessment to determine if the child's Chinese language proficiency is at an appropriate level for entry into the program. The child's name will be added to the application pool if appropriate. Due to the immersion nature of Chinese language instruction, monolingual students will only be admitted at the kindergarten and first-grade levels.

**Q Will my child progress through the general education curriculum at a slower rate than children in traditional classes because they are learning in Chinese too?**

**A** No. The Chinese Immersion classes implement School District 54's curriculum at the same rate as other classes. Through careful scaffolding and interactive approaches, children learn the academic content while developing their respective languages. National studies have shown that children in Chinese Immersion programs, as a group, perform as well or better than their respective peers on achievement tests in math, reading and writing. Assessment results of Chinese Immersion students in School District 54 show the same outcome.

**Q What is the difference between Chinese Immersion and Dual Language?**

**A** Dual Language classes at the elementary level are composed of approximately 50% English or other language proficient students and 50% Spanish or Japanese-proficient students. Chinese Immersion is a one-way immersion experience where the vast majority of students have no prior experience or proficiency in the Chinese language. Dual Language and Chinese Immersion teachers and the English partner teachers foster high academic achievement by teaching the two target languages through content. These programs seek to develop academic and cultural competence and bilingualism for students from kindergarten through eighth grade.

**Q Who are the teachers for these classes? What qualifications do they have?**

**A** Chinese Immersion teachers have the appropriate Illinois certification to be considered highly qualified. Target language teachers have native or near-native proficiency in both English and Chinese. Chinese Immersion partner teachers work as a team to implement the most effective teaching strategies in their classrooms.

**Q Will my child learn to read and write in English or Chinese first?**

**A** Children are taught to read, write, listen and speak simultaneously in both English and Chinese using a balanced literacy approach. The District 54 goal for dual-language and immersion programs is for all children to be reading at grade level or higher by third grade in English and the target language. Students will continue to increase their proficiency in Chinese and English as they progress through the grade levels.

**Q Will my child have the same classmates every year? Will that lead to social isolation?**

**A** Your child will be with essentially the same group of classmates from kindergarten through sixth grade. However, grade-level teams collaborate to include all students in academic projects, field trips, daily recess and extracurricular activities. Chinese Immersion students have opportunities to interact with all students at their grade level. Chinese Immersion classes will continue at Addams Junior High School.

**Q Can I observe one of the classes in the Chinese Immersion Program before making my decision?**

**A** We welcome you to visit Campanelli on Monday February 6 at 9:00 a.m. or on Tuesday, February 7 at 12:30 p.m. For additional questions, you may call the school and speak to Principal Amy Houlihan at (847) 357-5333.