

FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

Date: April 22, 2021

Re: Admissions Policy for Two Way Immersion (TWI) Programs

The purpose of this memo is to provide an overview of Berkeley Unified School District's Admissions Policy for the Two Way Immersion (TWI) at both the elementary and middle school level. This memo is intended to provide guidance and better shape the practices of BUSD with the intention to enact into practice by the 2021-2022 academic year.

I. Description of Two Way Immersion (TWI) Program

As per the definition of the California Department of Education, "Dual-Language Immersion (Two-Way Immersion) is language learning and academic instruction for native speakers of English and native speakers of another language. The goals of dual-language immersion programs are language proficiency and academic achievement in students' first and second languages, and cross-cultural understanding," ([CDE, Multilingual Programs, 2020](#)).

In Berkeley, our Two-Way Immersion (TWI) Program is a 90:10 language acquisition model that provides language learning and academic instruction in Spanish and English, with the goals of high academic achievement, first and second language proficiency, and cross-cultural understanding. This program begins in Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten, whenever a student begins schooling first, and continues through eighth grade. Berkeley uses a 90:10 model; the amount of the target language decreases yearly as English increases until there is a 50:50 balance of the languages generally by grade four, in order to effectively achieve the goals of bilingualism and biliteracy, ([Center For Applied Linguistics, via CDE](#)).

II. PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSION

(A) DRAFT Proposed Language Enrollment Categories and Enrollment Proportions

In terms of student composition, Berkeley's model uses a 1/3 , 1/3 , 1/3 model comprised of "Native/Strong Spanish speaker," "Heritage Language Speaker," and "English Speaker," in order to maintain the goals of the TWI program.

The priority enrollment categories are as follows:

TWI model descriptor	Student profiles*	Students in this category display
Native/Strong Spanish	-Spanish speaking Newcomer who is a new immigrant to the U.S. who is English Language Learners/Emergent Bilingual	

Speaker	-Spanish speaker whose primary mode of communication is in Spanish -Bilingual Spanish/English speaker who is predominantly Spanish speaking	<i>Advanced or Early Advanced Spanish proficiency on the assessment.</i>
Heritage Language Speaker	-Bilingual English/Spanish speaker with some proficiency in or a cultural connection to the partner language through family, community, ancestors, or country of origin.	<i>Intermediate or Early Intermediate Spanish proficiency on the assessment.</i>
English Speaker	-English speaker with some exposure to Spanish or -English speaker aiming to learn Spanish	<i>Beginning Spanish proficiency on the assessment or not assessed.</i>

* Student profiles are developed based on terminology used by CDE, Multilingual Programs and the [Center for Applied Linguistics](#) (CAL).

**If there are enough applicants in the numbers of Native/Strong Spanish Speaker and Heritage Language Speaker categories, up to 2/3 (but not to fall below 50%) of the incoming class shall be admitted.

(B). DRAFT Proposed TWI Outreach Efforts

Prior to and during the enrollment process, the parents/caregivers are informed of the Two Way Immersion (TWI) Programs at Sylvia Mendez and Longfellow Middle School through the following actions:

- Admissions officer visits preschool parent/caregiver meetings
- Admissions office conducts annual Kindergarten fair
- Admissions staff explains options to parents/caregivers in the office
- Sylvia Mendez and Longfellow staff conduct school tours
- Longfellow hosts fifth grade parent and student field trip visits

(C.) Application Process

Parents/caregivers choosing this option must indicate TWI preference on the enrollment form at time of registration. Students from the Elementary TWI program have priority to acceptance in the middle school TWI program and are strongly encouraged to enroll.

(D). Program Placement

Should parent/caregiver choose this TWI option and indicate their student is Spanish speaking the student will be assessed for Spanish proficiency prior to school placement. Berkeley Unified uses the IDEA Proficiency Test (Pre IPT) to measure young children's (incoming Transitional Kindergarten and incoming Kindergarten) expressive and receptive abilities in Spanish.

1. Transitional Kindergarten/Kindergarten

Students whose parent/caregiver indicate Spanish fluency are assessed by Bilingual credentialed teachers with IDEA pre-IPT tool prior to school assignment. At this time, teachers will deliver [a survey](#) with the parent/caregiver regarding the student's use of primary language. Once assessments have been completed, results are shared with the Admissions Office. All students

that score Advanced or Early Advanced level Spanish proficiency are assigned to Mendez TWI, under 1/3 model student population as "Native/Strong Spanish Speaker." Students receiving Intermediate or Early Intermediate levels in Spanish, with recommendation of the Bilingual assessment proctors, will be considered for the 1/3 student population as "Heritage Language Speaker." Remaining applicants will join the BUSD lottery process, along with all other TWI applicants that were not assessed for Spanish proficiency.

2. Grades 1-5

Maintaining a 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 ratio class composition is a priority for late enrollment. In addition, the educational needs and language proficiency levels of the late enrollee must be evaluated by grade level appropriate version of IPT, in order to thoughtfully ensure that the student can actively participate and benefit from the program. For late enrollees in 1st grade or higher, strong Spanish proficiency must be displayed in all language domains--listening, speaking, reading and writing.

3. Middle school (Grades 6-8)

(a) Longfellow Two Way Immersion: The Longfellow TWI Program is primarily the continuation of the Sylvia Mendez TWI Program. It typically serves the following students:

- Longfellow students who participated in the Sylvia Mendez TWI Program
- Longfellow students who participated in the Thousand Oaks Bilingual Program*
- Other incoming middle school students who are able to demonstrate proficiency in Spanish literacy as demonstrated by a combination of school records, interview and/or results of the IDEA Proficiency Test.

**Thousand Oaks Bilingual Program is set to end with the 2022-23 Academic Year.*

(b) Longfellow Spanish Acceleration Electives: BUSD recognizes that some students and their families may wish to begin or resume learning in Spanish at Grade 6, but may not qualify for entry into TWI on the basis of the IPT test scores in Spanish. To support Spanish language acquisition, Longfellow offers a two year Spanish language elective program designed to grant 10 units of high school credit (for Grade 7 and 8) and, based on an entry test, facilitate students' entry into Spanish 2 at Berkeley High School.

(E) Waitlist

Parents/caregivers may request their children be placed on a TWI waiting list if they are Berkeley residents and their students are actively enrolled in a BUSD school. The waiting list(s) will conform to the student assignment policy. Students who are not on a waiting list may be assigned before we offer spots to students on a waiting list. This criteria includes our commitment to student diversity, ensuring sibling priority, maintaining class size and where in limited cases, the exercise of administrative discretion is required.

(F) Inter-District Permits

BUSD recognizes that the composition of the TWI program at SM is strengthened for all participants when the student composition is reflective of the ratios described above. BUSD welcomes applicants from other districts who qualify as "Native/Strong Spanish Speakers", so long as these applicants meet the language requirements set forth above, and the requirements for Inter-District Permit applicants.

BUSD will reserve seats in the "Native/Spanish Speaker" category until the IDP permit deadline and selection date (add date). In the event that there are empty seats in the "Native/Strong Spanish Speaker" category, these seats will be given to waitlist applicants in this order: (1) Students who qualify as Heritage speakers, and then (2) students who qualify as "English Only".