



# WEST CHICAGO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

*Together for Excellence ★ ¡Juntos por la Excelencia!*

312 East Forest Avenue  
West Chicago, IL 60185  
630.293.6000  
[www.wego33.org](http://www.wego33.org)

## Board of Education

---

**TO:** Board of Education  
**FROM:** Director of Multilingual Learners, Janet Ayala  
**DATE:** August 19, 2025  
**RE:** Gary Elementary Camp Ole

**This memo is:**

- ☒ Information only  
☐ Information with a recommendation and a request for Board approval by vote.

Date by which a Board decision is needed:

Previous memos on this topic can be found:

- ☐ in previous Board packet(s) dated.  
☐ or attached to this memo

### Basic Information:

Camp Olé was held from August 4th through August 8th at Gary Elementary School, providing families with a meaningful opportunity to reinforce Spanish language development in an academic setting while exploring the theme of space. This highly requested program, developed in response to parent interest, offered a unique and enriching experience for students this summer..

Throughout the week, 106 students participated in the program, supported by 14 student volunteers from the LMS National Junior Honor Society. Students engaged in reading, writing, and interactive activities conducted in Spanish, and they completed daily reading logs to continue developing their literacy skills at home. The program promoted family involvement and created a safe, supportive environment that encouraged the practical use of Spanish.

A highlight of the week was a field trip to the Adler Planetarium, where District 33 students and their families experienced space-related exhibits firsthand. This enriching experience served as an engaging extension of classroom learning, reinforcing both Spanish and English in a fun, educational setting.

### Background/Historical Context:

Spanish immersion summer camps offer critical benefits for students preparing to enter two-way dual language programs. Research shows that early exposure to the partner language—prior to the start of the academic year—helps students build confidence, develop foundational vocabulary, and ease the transition into bilingual classroom environments. These experiences support stronger academic outcomes and language proficiency in both Spanish and English over time. Immersion programs also enhance cognitive flexibility, cultural awareness, and student engagement, especially when instruction is tied to high-interest themes such as space exploration.

### Previous decisions, actions, or parameters that relate to this topic or issue:

Camp Olé was a wonderful success, reflecting the strong collaboration between families, students, and staff—and highlighting the value of language learning in an engaging environment.  
Click on the following links for the week’s newsletter with amazing photos.  
[NEWSLETTER - MONDAY](#)  
[NEWSLETTER-FRIDAY](#)

<b>Recommendations:</b>