



Defining Excellence: A Spanish Dual Language Program Assessment

2025–2026



This strategic assessment evaluates three years of Spanish Dual Language Program implementation to identify data-driven enhancements that will strengthen academic outcomes and ensure sustainable program excellence for all students.

Building on foundational work and current program implementation, this comprehensive assessment will evaluate program effectiveness, identify areas for enhancement, and ensure equitable access and high-quality outcomes for all participating students.

Through systematic evaluation of seven critical areas—leadership development, academic performance assessment, program fidelity, professional development, family engagement, equitable access, and intervention support—this comprehensive review will deliver actionable recommendations to strengthen program delivery and enhance student outcomes.

Purpose and Vision

The Spanish Dual Language Program is committed to developing bilingual, biliterate, and multicultural students who achieve academic excellence in both English and Spanish while maintaining strong cultural connections. Our program encompasses not only academic achievement but also cultural competency, global citizenship, and equitable educational opportunities for all learners.

Building on extensive research and community engagement that began in 2015, the district has made significant investments in dual language education, including the expansion to CS Elementary, the hiring of specialized teachers, and the purchase of Spanish-specific curriculum materials. The program emerged from the 2015 Birth to Grade-5 Thought Exchange and was reinforced by the 2018 Morris Leatherman Community Phone Survey, which identified significant community interest in language options at the elementary level. Following board approval in November 2021, the program launched in 2022-2023 with two kindergarten sections. The program has since added one grade level each year and currently serves students through third grade, with plans to continue expanding through fifth grade at Countryside.

The Two-Way Dual Language model was selected based on research demonstrating accelerated English language acquisition for multilingual

learners, higher academic achievement in reading and math, deeper learning through concept acquisition in multiple languages, and mutual language support between native English and Spanish speakers. This comprehensive assessment builds upon existing program structures and seeks to identify opportunities for enhancement, ensure consistent implementation across all classrooms, and address any gaps in service delivery.

As educational research, best practices, and community needs evolve, it is essential that we remain proactive and data-driven in our approach. This priority area assessment will evaluate current systems, gather stakeholder input, analyze student outcomes, and identify strategic improvements to strengthen program effectiveness and accessibility.

Assessment Timeline

Phase 1 – Current Program Foundation (2022-2025)

2022-2023: Program launched with two kindergarten sections (44-48 students) at Edina Community Center as an incubator site

2023-2024: Program relocated to Countryside Elementary with expansion to first grade

2024-2025: Program expanded to second grade; implemented comprehensive organizational support structure

- Established leadership development team structure with monthly coordination meetings
- Implemented STAR assessment system for Spanish language acquisition tracking alongside FastBridge assessments
- Developed consistent program model expectations using 80:20 language allocation model (K-1)
- Initiated systematic family engagement through monthly parent meetings and communication strategies
- Created SDL Coordinator/Spanish Intervention Specialist position (March 2025)
- Reviewed heritage speaker policies and enrollment processes

Current Demographics (end of 24-25 SY): 13.3% Heritage Speakers, 86.7% English speakers across K-2 (target: 30-50% heritage speakers).

Phase 2 – Strategic Planning and Stakeholder Engagement (Summer–Fall 2025)

- Convene cross-functional leadership team to oversee assessment process
- Engage students, families, staff, and community partners to gather feedback on program effectiveness
- Administer family engagement survey (September 2025) to all Countryside families
- Finalize assessment tools, data collection methods, and evaluation schedule

Phase 3 – Comprehensive Program Assessment (Fall 2025–Spring 2026)

- Conduct classroom walkthroughs to evaluate program model fidelity and language allocation implementation
- Analyze Language proficiency progress using STAR (Spanish) assessment systems
- Review Spanish language acquisition progress
- Assess professional development impact including Science of Reading training.
- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of current staffing effectiveness within the SDL program.

Focus Areas of the Assessment

1. Leadership Development and Program Coordination

The leadership development team (Frannie, Lisa, Erin, Alex) functions as the strategic hub within the countryside collaborative linked teams. This team will establish regular monthly coordination meetings to distinguish between program development and day-to-day implementation responsibilities while

fostering seamless information flow with leadership site teams, building leadership teams, and grade level PLCs.

The linked teams architecture creates bidirectional communication channels where the leadership development team partners with the building leadership teams to translate strategic vision into actionable plans, ensure classroom-level implementation and gather real-time feedback that informs strategic decision-making.

Assessment focuses include:

- Effectiveness of monthly leadership team meetings and role clarity within the linked teams structure
- Distinction between program development and implementation responsibilities across all collaborative partners
- Communication and coordination quality across all program stakeholders, measuring both vertical and lateral information flow
- Innovation transfer mechanisms between teams and successful practice amplification
- Collaborative decision-making evidence and shared ownership indicators
- System responsiveness and adaptive capacity when addressing challenges and opportunities

2. Academic Performance and Language Acquisition

Spanish language acquisition progress will be systematically tracked and evaluated using standardized assessment tools and reporting processes.

Assessment components include:

- Spanish language development progress using STAR assessment system (implementation 2025-26)
- Review of K-2 report card process effectiveness, transitioning to include grades 3-5 as program expands
- Program retention analysis (currently limited departures only due to family relocations)
- Fidelity to the 80:20 model (K-1) and 70:30 model (2-3)

3. Program Model Fidelity and Instructional Quality

Consistent implementation of program and academic standards will be maintained across all classrooms to ensure program integrity and effectiveness.

Assessment areas include:

- Consistent implementation of Benchmark guaranteed and viable curriculum for literacy
- Effectiveness of grade-level team collaboration and data analysis with counterparts
- Classroom observation protocols for bridging and English instruction components
- Implementation consistency across all classrooms

4. Professional Development and Coaching Support

Comprehensive training initiatives will build teacher capacity and ensure consistent instructional practices throughout the program.

Assessment components include:

- STAR assessment training effectiveness
- BE GLAD training review and effectiveness for dual language instruction, including consideration for school-wide implementation
- SDL Coordinator/Spanish Intervention Specialist coaching model and classroom support systems
- Development of classroom observation protocols to support program fidelity and inform professional development needs
- Curriculum-specific training effectiveness for Benchmark Adelante implementation and ongoing support
- Collaboration effectiveness with Park Spanish Immersion teachers for implementation of Benchmark Adelante in K-3
- Multi-year professional development planning for continued support

5. Family and Community Engagement

Strategic outreach efforts will strengthen connections between families and the program while documenting participation in school events. The Spanish

Dual Language advisory team will continue with regular meetings, serving as a vital bridge for bidirectional communication between Countryside and the community. This advisory team brings together diverse stakeholder voices to provide valuable family input and guidance while ensuring program information and decisions are effectively communicated back to families. The advisory team will have representation from all grade levels to ensure multiple family perspectives inform program decisions.

Assessment focuses include:

- Family participation tracking in program events and school activities
- Effectiveness of community messaging and communication strategies
- Results from family engagement survey administered to all Countryside families (September 2025)
- Spanish Dual Language advisory team insights and family recommendations

Spanish Dual Language Advisory Team Structure:

- Regular scheduled meetings throughout the academic year
- Diverse stakeholder representation from all grade levels ensuring multiple family voices inform program decisions
- Agendas and minutes from advisory team meetings will be shared by the principal with all SDL families to maintain transparency and communication
- Family feedback on program growth and development

6. Equity, Access, and Inclusion

Program policies and communication strategies will be reviewed to ensure equitable opportunities for all students, particularly heritage speakers.

Assessment areas include:

- Heritage speaker enrollment strategies and effectiveness in reaching 30-50% target ratio
- 25-26 SY demographic analysis (24-25 SY: 13.3% heritage speakers vs. 86.7% English speakers)
- Priority enrollment system implementation for heritage speakers while maintaining resident priority

- Program accessibility and communication outreach to diverse families
- Cultural responsiveness and authentic Spanish language instruction across all classrooms
- Collaboration with cultural liaison to improve program messaging and value communication for heritage speaking families

7. Intervention Support

Targeted support systems will be implemented to address individual student needs through coordinated intervention programming.

Assessment components include:

- Effectiveness of targeted intervention programming delivered by SDL Coordinator (.6 FTE allocation)
- Weekly coordination meetings between Lisa and Alex for intervention programming
- Integration of SDL Coordinator participation in PLC meetings for data analysis
- Individual student support outcomes and intervention effectiveness

Assessment Methods

- **Classroom observations and instructional walkthroughs** with SDL Coordinator, program coordinators, and instructional coaches focusing on 80:20 language allocation fidelity
- **Student achievement data analysis** using STAR (Spanish) assessments
- **Stakeholder surveys** including comprehensive family engagement survey (September 2025) to all Countryside families
- **Policy and procedure reviews** examining heritage speaker enrollment, equity, access, and program implementation guidelines
- **Professional development impact evaluation** assessing coordinator effectiveness and fidelity to Benchmark Adelante implementation
- **Family engagement analysis** reviewing monthly meeting participation and event attendance tracking

Expected Outcomes

Following the comprehensive assessment phase, this priority area review will deliver:

- Clear understanding of current program strengths and areas for improvement based on three years of implementation data
- Evidence-based recommendations for enhancing program effectiveness, student outcomes, and heritage speaker enrollment
- Improved systems for ongoing program monitoring, intervention support, and continuous improvement
- Professional development framework that builds on Science of Reading and biliteracy instruction expertise
- Equity enhancement measures to achieve target heritage speaker demographics and inclusive programming
- Comprehensive intervention support model for addressing individual student needs.

Closing Statement

This assessment serves as a strategic framework for evaluating and enhancing our Spanish Dual Language Program. It prioritizes systematic analysis, stakeholder engagement, and data-driven decision making. With input from our diverse school community and guidance from the School Board, we are committed to developing comprehensive strategies that ensure program excellence, equity, and accessibility for all students and families.