

"We've been very pleased at our child's academic progress at Kirkman Park, not only in Spanish, but also in English. We are given tools to help our child with homework so that even though we do not speak Spanish, we can still be a part of the learning process. Our child has even taught us how to pronounce the words so we can read with him in Spanish!"

*Jay and Terese Christian, Parents*

## ■ Opening Up a New World ■



Kirkman Park Elementary School  
Spanish Language Immersion program  
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# Kirkman Park

Elementary School Spanish Language Immersion Program



STRIVING. ACHIEVING. EXCELLING.

Kirkman Park Elementary implemented the Spanish Immersion program for kindergarten and first-grade students in 2005. In 2009-10, Kirkman Park begins a school within a school model. Building on the success of Jones Spanish Immersion, Kirkman Park offers a chance for students to benefit from learning a second language.

# Kirkman Park Spanish Immersion Program

## Q. What is a Spanish Language Immersion program?

A. Students develop fluency in reading, writing, speaking and listening in Spanish. They also learn to think in a second language, which is a high-level skill. All classes are taught in Spanish except for English instruction, which will begin in second grade. In grades two through five, students will speak only Spanish both in and out of the classroom throughout the school day.

## Q. Who may apply for acceptance?

A. English-speaking families in Guilford County who want their child to become bilingual and want an exciting and rigorous academic challenge may apply. Five-year-olds who know their numbers, the English alphabet and who may be reading or trying to read thrive in the immersion program climate. Only kindergarten and first-graders are accepted in the program.

## Q. Will I be able to help my child with homework?

A. Definitely! Teachers make sure students understand every assignment. A weekly newsletter detailing objectives to be taught, upcoming events, latest classroom news and their homework is sent home with students. Students in the upper grades write information in their weekly planner. Part of the homework expectation for all immersion parents involves reading EVERY night with their children. It is crucial to their language literacy development, particularly in kindergarten and first grade.

## Q. What about the teachers?

A. The teachers, by nature of their cultures, are loving and nurturing, while their classrooms will reflect the structure, focus and high expectations necessary for the rigorous academic challenge of the immersion program.

## Q. How quickly do students become fluent?

A. By the end of the first semester in kindergarten, students understand everything their teachers are saying. By the end of their kindergarten year, they respond to their teachers, answer questions and read in Spanish. By fifth grade, they are fully fluent.

## Q. Will my children learn English, too?

A. Beginning in second grade, students will receive daily instruction by a certified English teacher. All second-graders are screened for English proficiency at the beginning of the year. Spanish is a phonetic language, and typically, students learn to read both languages simultaneously, even though they will be taught only in Spanish in kindergarten and first grade.

## Q. How do the students perform on state tests that are given in English?

A. Beginning in second grade, students will receive daily English instruction for 45 minutes. By fifth grade, that time will expand to 70 minutes. Immersion students typically score as much as two years above grade level on the state's end-of-grade tests.

## Q. What about math, science and other subjects?

A. Immersion students follow the same curriculum that is taught in all Guilford County Schools. Spanish is the medium through which they are taught, not the object of instruction. Students also have full access to art, music, physical education, classroom computers and a state-of-the-art technology lab, as well as a media center stocked with Spanish language books at every reading level.

## SEEING IS BELIEVING

Kirkman Park is ready to answer your questions. Parents of upcoming kindergarten and first-grade students are invited to call the school to schedule a tour or request additional information.