

TRADITIONAL VS. BILINGUAL EDUCATION?



The French American Academy

Prior to comparison, understanding bilingual international schools is crucial.

International schools offer globally-oriented education to students from diverse nationalities and cultural backgrounds. Schools often follow international curricula or a mixed curriculum, such as a mix of national and American curricula.

Bilingual schools teach students in two languages, aiming for proficiency in both. Unlike traditional schools, bilingual schools prioritize integrating both languages into all areas of education, rather than treating the second language as a separate subject.

DIFFERENCES INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL SCHOOL VS TRADITIONAL SCHOOL

Language Instruction	Instruction in multiple languages	Primarily one language
Language Proficiency	Promotes proficiency in two or more languages	Emphasizes proficiency in the primary language
Cultural Diversity	<u>Provides exposure to different cultures and perspectives</u>	Limited exposure to diverse cultures based on the local neighborhood
Soft Skills	Studies have shown that bilinguals have improved cognitive skills and global perspectives	Standard cognitive benefits, localized perspective
Academic Performance	Tend to outperform monolinguals in standardized tests, with an average score difference of 5-10% (1)	Academic performance depends on various factors beyond language instruction
Curriculum	May follow an international curriculum or a mixed curriculum	Follows a single national curriculum
Job Market Competitiveness	Studies have shown that bilingual employees may earn up to 5-20% higher salaries than monolinguals (2)	May have career opportunities limited to language proficiency and local job market demands.



BENEFITS OF A BILINGUAL SCHOOL

Research shows that, compared to non-bilingual peers, bilingual students have an easier time:



Cognitive Development

- Understanding math concepts and solving word problems³
- Developing strong thinking skills⁴
- Using logic⁵
- Focusing, remembering, and making decisions⁶
- Thinking about language and learning other languages⁷



Social-Emotional Development

- Bilingual students are usually more adaptable to new environments, meeting new people, stepping out of their comfort zone and have better interpersonal skills⁸



Fostering Flexible Thinking and Abstract Thought

- Because bilinguals can switch between languages, they develop more flexible approaches to thinking through problems. The ability to read and think in two or more languages promotes higher levels of abstract thought, which is important in learning.⁹



INSIDE OUR BILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

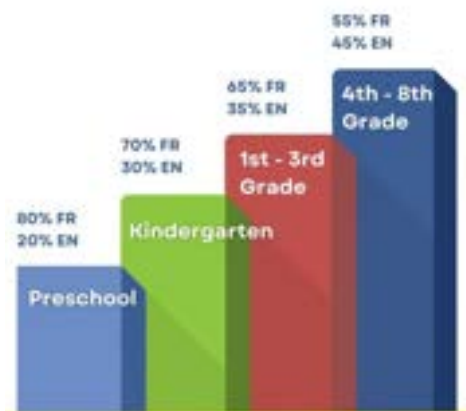


Starting preschool with French immersion

In preschool, 80% of the day is dedicated to immersive French learning with native French teachers. Through fun, project, inquiry-based and hands-on activities in math, language, and science, our students develop essential skills while having fun. Unbeknownst to them, they are laying the groundwork for a successful future, both academically and in life.

As students advance through the grades, more English is incorporated

Bilingual schools may utilize various approaches in their dual language programs, such as partial immersion, full immersion, and progressive immersion. In our classrooms, Gradually, more English is added until it reaches a ratio of 45% English and 55% French in fifth grade.



Co-Teaching: Delivering a lesson in both languages

In addition to conducting classes in French and English, the FAA also implements co-teaching classes, which begin in preschool and continue through middle school. In the co-teaching class, a native French and a native English teacher co-teach together in the classroom.



Step inside our classrooms and see how we offer personalized instruction and support for students to thrive bilingually. [Schedule a visit today.](#)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q: What is the primary goal of bilingual schools?

A: One of the main objectives of a bilingual school is to foster students' proficiency in two languages, ensuring they become fully bilingual. Through a high-quality education, bilingual schools prepare students for lifelong success and cultivate cultural awareness. Another significant goal of bilingual schools is to harness the cognitive advantages of bilingual education.

Q: What cultural aspects are integrated into the curriculum of bilingual schools?

A: Bilingual schools often integrate various cultural aspects into their curriculum to provide students with a rich and multicultural learning experience. At The French American Academy, students gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of different cultures through engaging lessons, projects, activities, trips, and events. They learn about traditions, customs, history, literature, and arts from around the world, fostering a sense of cultural awareness and respect. Our school's commitment to incorporating multiculturalism enriches students' educational journey, promoting a global perspective and preparing students to be culturally aware in our interconnected world.

Q: What is the best age to enroll at a bilingual school?

A: Early childhood is the best age to enroll at a bilingual school. Children's brains possess remarkable plasticity during their early years, making them highly receptive to language acquisition. Their ability to absorb and process languages is often likened to that of sponges, enabling them to learn languages more effortlessly than adults and develop native-like pronunciation.



REFERENCES

1. For a better brain, learn another language: The cognitive benefits of multilingualism. Department of French and Italian. (2018, October 30). <https://frandit.dartmouth.edu/news/2014/10/better-brain-learn-another-language-cognitive-benefits-multilingualism>
2. "Multilingual Workers in High Demand." Community and Professional Education, 22 July 2019, cpe.kennesaw.edu/blog/2016/08/16/multilingual-workers-in-high-demand/.
3. Zelasko, N., & Antunez, B. (2000). If your child learns in two languages. National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. Retrieved from http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/uploads/9/IfYourChildLearnsInTwoLangs_English.pdf
4. Pandey, A. (2013) What is the role of home language learning and maintenance in supporting successful outcomes in English language learning and literacy? In Young Dual Language Learners: A Guide for PreK – 3 Leaders (2014). Editor Karen N. Nemeth. Philadelphia, PA: Caslon Publishing.
5. Castro, D. C., Ayankoya, B., & Kasprzak, C. (2011). The new voices/Nuevas voces: Guide to cultural and linguistic diversity in early childhood. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
6. 4. Bialystok, E. (2001). Bilingualism in development: Language, literacy, and cognition. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
7. Castro, D. C., Ayankoya, B., & Kasprzak, C. (2011). The new voices/Nuevas voces: Guide to cultural and linguistic diversity in early childhood. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
8. Grosjean, F. (2010). Bilingual: Life and Reality. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
9. Xia T, An Y, Guo J. Bilingualism and creativity: Benefits from cognitive inhibition and cognitive flexibility. Front Psychol. 2022 Nov 3;13:1016777. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1016777. PMID: 36405189; PMCID: PMC9670109.

