



Academic Success Stories Two-Way Immersion (TWI) Programs in Massachusetts

Two-way immersion (TWI) programs are designed so that students enrolled in the program will master academic content while becoming bilingual, biliterate, and multiculturally competent. The five TWI programs described here closely monitor the implementation of the program model's essential, non-negotiable, components:

1. Maintaining a minimum of 50% of the daily instructional time in the partner language (at the secondary level, this may vary). In general, the two languages of instruction are kept separate by the teachers, although purposeful use of the two languages may be made for specific purposes, such as promoting metalinguistic awareness or an appreciation of language varieties;
2. Integrating students from both language groups throughout the day;
3. High academic expectations for all students; and
4. Initiating the program in the primary grades (PreK–K) and extending the program through at least the elementary grades (minimum of five to seven years of implementation).

Amigos K-8 School, Cambridge, MA

Barbieri K-5 School, Framingham, MA

Hernandez K-8 School, Boston, MA

Unidos TWI Program at the East Somerville Community School K-8

Margarita Muñiz Academy (High School), Boston, MA

Commonalities amongst these successful TWI programs:

1. The partner language for all these TWI programs is Spanish,
2. Entrance to the school or program is by lottery, and
3. There is a waiting list to enter each of these highly successful TWI program.

At the April 12, 2016 Dual Language Leadership Network meeting facilitated by leaders from MABE, leaders from the above TWI programs shared their program data highlighting academic success. The following abbreviated descriptions illustrate the high academic expectations for all students enrolled in the TWI program.

Amigos School, Cambridge, MA

The Amigos K-8 School, a TWI program founded in 1985 in Cambridge, MA is committed to a strong tradition of excellence of dual language education in English and Spanish. Staff at Amigos are highly qualified and dedicated to creating a culturally responsive learning environment that embraces multiculturalism, student engagement, and equity. Amigos holds each and every student accountable to high social, academic, and linguistic standards in both languages, provides a curriculum that is rigorous and differentiated, and offers a range of supports to enable all students to be successful learners.

By creating local “Amigos” norms accepted by the district, the school is more accurately and intentionally able to provide literacy support to meet student's needs in the two languages of instruction (English and Spanish). Intervention support is provided in both languages to students using the RTI model.

The outcome of this targeted instructional support results in the fact that the Hispanic/Latino students in this program are at the 96 percentile relative to the performance of the same subgroup in the same school type statewide. Additionally, the Amigos School is a Level 2 school in the state's accountability system (2015) and has met the target for student growth for the category of All Students.

Entrance to this highly successful dual language program is by lottery. There is currently up to a two-year waiting list to enter.

Barbieri School, Framingham, MA

The Barbieri School is home to a Spanish/English TWI program for grades K-5. The TWI program has been successful in helping a large percentage of students reach one year's growth in literacy in both languages. One reason for strong student achievement is targeted professional development, including coaching focused on academic language and bridging across English and Spanish literacy. Another important factor in the success of the school is the recruitment and retention of bilingual and bicultural educators who provide consistent high-quality instruction.

In assessment of Spanish literacy (Aprenda standardized assessment), Barbieri students have surpassed the national percentile in each of the past four years. Gains are also evident in Math. The number of students in the “Advanced” category has

increased from 8% to 15% and the number of students in the “Needs Improvement” category has decreased by 13% since 2011. Barbieri School is a Level 2 school in the state’s accountability system (2015) and has met or surpassed the target for student growth for the categories of Special Education students and High Needs students (ELLs and Former ELLs, Economically Disadvantaged and Students Whose First Language is Not English).

Barbieri is able to demonstrate long-term success in its graduates. Recently, one student was awarded a National Essay Award by the National Association for Bilingual Education. Other graduates of Barbieri are returning to the school as teachers of the program.

The Barbieri Two-Way program benefits from strong support from families and the community. Entrance to this school is by lottery. There is currently a waiting list to enter this highly successful TWI program. The student body enrolled in this program follow the recommended guidance for TWI programs.

Hernandez School, Boston, MA

At the Hernandez K-8 School, 92% of its students are Hispanic students with 84% in the High Needs category (ELLs and Former ELLs, Economically Disadvantaged and Students Whose First Language is Not English). All students at the Hernandez School, and particularly English language learners surpass students in other K-8 schools in the district and state in both English language arts and math. Specific school-wide structures (professional learning communities, instructional leadership teams, and professional development) support effective implementation of specific instructional strategies in the classrooms. Data from both formative and standardized assessments is carefully analyzed and classroom instruction is carefully examined to develop focused action plans of improvement. In addition to the academic success experienced by the Hernandez students, the outcome of these efforts is evident in the ELLs growth reaching an intermediate or higher level of English proficiency.

The Hernandez School is a Level 2 school in the state’s accountability system. Entrance to this school is by lottery. There is currently a waiting list to enter this highly successful TWI program.

Unidos TWI Program at the East Somerville Community School

The Unidos K – 8 TWI program, a strand at the East Somerville Community School has a balanced system of assessment for monitoring student progress in both English language arts and Spanish language arts. Students are monitored three times each year to help teachers identify areas of weakness. Assessment results show consistent upward progress at each trimester as a result of teachers

identifying more effective instructional practices to support individual students.

In addition to standardized assessments, teachers at Unidos use formative assessments such as writing samples, teacher observations and rubrics for monitoring English and Spanish language development benchmarks. Formative and standardized assessment results also monitor the program's effectiveness.

The Composite Performance Indicator (CPI) for Unidos students, an indicator in the state's accountability system has consistently improved in both English language arts and math from 2011 through 2015 thus meeting the states expectations. Entrance to this school is by lottery. There is currently a waiting list to enter this highly successful TWI program.

Margarita Muñiz Academy, Boston, MA

The Margarita Muñiz Academy, with 83% of ELLs is the only High School TWI program in the state. This "young" school, focused on creating a college readiness culture is graduating its first class in June 2016. Students at the Muñiz Academy successfully pass the ELA and Math MCAS. As a college prep dual language learning program, the school has a partnership with the Boston Higher Education Resource Center to develop a college readiness culture. The school embedded bilingual weekly college readiness courses to deepen the "college-going" culture and worked closely with families about the college application process. As a result, 100 % of its graduating seniors having college or career plans. 92% of seniors applied for colleges and 84% have been accepted to colleges as of early April 2016.

Entrance to this school is by lottery. There is currently a waiting list to enter this successful college prep dual language learning program.