

Curriculum and Assessment Summary

Denver Montclair International School is an independent, non-profit school offering full-immersion, bilingual education in French, Mandarin Chinese and Spanish to students ages 3-years-old through 5th grade and the IB Middle Years Programme to students in grades 6 - 8.



Denver Montclair International School (DMIS) is more than a language school. Offering a rigorous and well-rounded curriculum that emphasizes art, English, history, math, music, physical education, science and social studies, the DMIS curriculum is divided into four **LEARNING CYCLES** to correspond with student development. The students begin with full-immersion in the target language - French, Mandarin or Spanish - and the amount of English instruction steadily increases as they progress through the cycles.

CYCLE 1 - IMMERSION

The first cycle includes the 3-years-old, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes and forms the base of the bilingual education model. Children acquire bilingual skills through play that sets the foundation for future learning processes. Because the best time to acquire a second language is between the ages of three and six, language acquisition is very natural at this stage. All subjects - art, English, history, math, music, physical education, science and social studies - are studied at age-appropriate levels in the target language, starting as early as 3-years-old in this first cycle. Students are not simply learning French, Mandarin or Spanish, but rather, they are learning ALL traditional school subjects IN French, Mandarin or Spanish.

CYCLE 2 - SOLIDIFYING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE

In Grades 1 and 2, the emphasis shifts to the relationship between the oral and written language. English language instruction becomes more formalized

and focuses on early literacy skills, while all subjects - including math and science - continue to be studied in the target language of French, Mandarin or Spanish.

CYCLE 3 - EXPANDING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE AND INTRODUCTION OF A THIRD LANGUAGE

In Grades 3, 4 and 5, students expand their study of the target language. Students become bilingual at this stage, and are introduced to a third language which can be studied through Grade 8. Instruction in English accounts for approximately half of the time spent in class, moving beyond basic grammar and vocabulary, and delving into literature, science and math. English instruction of science and math complements the instruction already given up to this point in the target language.

CYCLE 4 - BECOMING RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

DMIS is the only middle school - public or private - in the Denver region offering the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme with this type of foreign language instruction. It is not taught as a “second” language only a few periods a week, but rather as a “first” language through immersion, accounting for 20% of the school week. During this cycle, students in Grades 6 - 8 build the academic, technological, social, emotional and ethical skills that will allow them to succeed in high school, college and beyond. A strong set of values is consistently weaved throughout the middle school academics, building critical thinkers and responsible global citizens.

Curriculum and Assessment at a Glance

French Curriculum

As the oldest language program, DMIS has delivered French-language instruction since 1977. Part of the international network of French schools, the French Program at DMIS follows the National Curriculum set by Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'étranger (AEFE), a branch of the French Ministry of Education. Instruction is provided exclusively by native French speakers. The French educational system is composed of three "cycles" that are designed to honor students' different developmental rhythms and to ensure educational continuity.

Spanish Curriculum

DMIS has delivered Spanish-language instruction since 2001. DMIS has an agreement with the Spanish Ministry of Education, and follows the official Spanish curriculum, fulfilling the highest educational standards of Spain. Instruction is provided exclusively by native Spanish speakers.

Mandarin Chinese Curriculum

In 2003, DMIS started offering Mandarin Chinese language instruction to equip students to navigate a global economy that is increasingly shaped by the world's most populous country, China. Instruction is provided exclusively by native Mandarin Chinese speakers. In 2011, the Confucius Classroom at Denver established a Chinese Art and Literacy Laboratory (CALL) in the Mandarin 4th and 5th grade classrooms, the first to be housed at a school in the Denver area.

English Curriculum

The English Program adheres to the Colorado Model Content Standards, as determined by the Colorado Department of Education. Correct and thoughtfully reasoned writing is strongly emphasized at all levels and across all subjects. In math, DMIS utilizes Math in Focus, the Singapore method designed for international schools.

Middle Years Programme (MYP)

DMIS opened the middle school with an inaugural sixth grade class of 19 students in the fall of 2011. DMIS is pursuing authorization to become an International Baccalaureate® (IB) World School to offer the MYP to all

students in Grades 6 - 8, and has already achieved Candidate Status. The MYP emphasizes interaction between the seven subject areas - language A (English), language B (French, Mandarin or Spanish), art, humanities, mathematics, physical education, sciences and technology. Middle school students utilize iPads and interactive white board technology in all subjects.

Evaluation and Assessment

Quarterly Assessments and Report Cards

Students are evaluated three times during the academic year in their target language, English, art, music, physical education and all other subjects. These results are recorded on the student's report card and discussed at two parent-teacher conferences per year. Additional conferences are available upon request. The report card measures various academic and age-appropriate benchmarks on a scale of 1 to 4 - a rating of 1 indicates "Needs Improvement" and a rating of 4 indicates "Exceeds Expectations."

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

The DIBELS assessment measures students' level of oral reading fluency and reading assessment in Grades 1 - 3. This test is administered in English in the fall and the spring. This working assessment provides immediate feedback for teachers and gives them tools to implement in the classroom right away. English teachers review these results in parent-teacher conferences.

Educational Records Bureau (ERB)

Students in Grades 4 and 5 are assessed using the ERB Comprehensive Testing Program, also known as the ERB CTP-4. This test is administered twice a year in English. It evaluates students' progress in seven subject areas: verbal reasoning, vocabulary, reading comprehension, writing mechanics, writing concepts and skills, quantitative reasoning, math levels 1 and 2.

ERB Online Version for Middle School

In the IB MYP, assessment is criterion-related, so students are measured against pre-specified criteria for each subject group. DMIS will assess the middle school students with the online version of the CTP-4, in addition to quarterly evaluations.

Copies of the Curriculum and Assessment Guide are housed with the Academic Director and other DMIS administrators and can be reviewed at the school upon request.

Giving Children the World

The mission of Denver Montclair International School is to develop conscientious, self-confident, multilingual and multicultural thinkers and learners prepared to thrive in a competitive world.

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