

First 5 San Joaquin Preschool Program

Lincoln Unified School District

Supporting Dual Language Learners



The Lincoln Unified School District (LUSD) receives funding from First 5 San Joaquin to support preschools that serve vulnerable children and families. This includes children who are learning English as a second language (i.e., dual language learners).

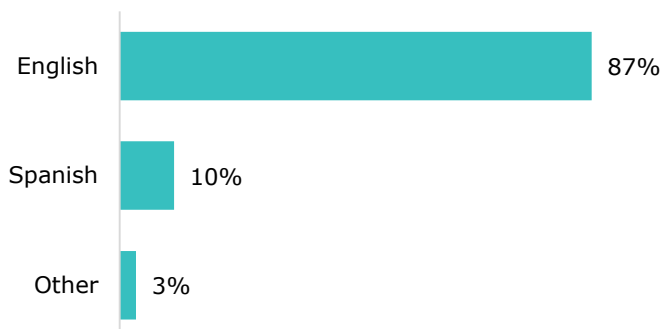
The purpose of this brief is to highlight the key strategies used across First 5 San Joaquin funded preschool programs to support and engage dual language learners and their families. It also presents data specific to LUSD First 5 Preschools. This includes the diversity of languages spoken by children in their care as well as the impact of their engagement efforts on participating dual language learners, their families, and classroom quality.

Strategies to Engage Dual Language Learners and their Families

First 5 San Joaquin preschools implement a number of strategies to welcome, support, and engage dual language learners and their families. They include:

- **Materials in multiple languages** to support children's early literacy and language development in English and their primary language.
- **Parent Advisory Meetings** with translation services to keep families informed and engaged.
- **Staff** that represent the different cultures and languages of children and families in their care.
- **Professional development** to help teachers increase their capacity to support dual language learners and their families.
- **Asset-based approaches** to recognize all home languages as contributing to the learning environment.

Languages Spoken by Preschool Children



In Fiscal Year 2018-2019, LUSD First 5 Preschools served 120 children ages 3-5 across six sites: Claudia Landeen, Colonial Heights, John R. Williams, Lincoln Elementary, Mable Barron, and Tully C. Knoles. Of the children who participated, the majority (87%) spoke English as their primary language, 10 percent spoke Spanish, and three percent spoke another language including Cantonese, Japanese, and Russian.

Supporting Dual Language Learner's Early Literacy Development

LUSD First 5 Preschools include several strategies to help dual language learners develop their early literacy skills. These strategies include:

Focusing on early literacy at parent meetings -

Parent meetings use the First 5 concept of "Talk, Read, Sing, Draw, Play" to emphasize the importance of early literacy when talking to parents. These meetings are led by the district's literacy coach.

Providing books in Spanish - LUSD's program provides books in Spanish through their Raising a Reader book bag exchange program. Raising a Reader aims to help establish literacy habits by providing families with high quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate books.

Providing resources for teachers to support dual language learners - Preschool teachers received and were trained on the Preschool English Learners guide. This guide contains principles and practices to promote language literacy and has helped teachers better understand the needs of dual language learners.



“ Raising a Reader is helping us to promote literacy and get good research-based literature in the hands and the homes of our preschoolers.

- LUSD Administrator

Engaging Parents of Dual Language Learners

Of the parents of dual language learners who completed a parent satisfaction survey...



100%

reported their LUSD preschool respects all cultures and diversity



100%

reported they have a positive relationship with their child's LUSD teacher



99%

reported their LUSD preschool communicates with them in a language they feel comfortable



93%

reported their child gets exposed to their home language(s) at their LUSD preschool

LUSD First 5 Preschools highlight their strong engagement with parents as key to the effectiveness of their program. Staff offered the following strategies and opportunities to support parents of dual language learners:

Using multilingual center resources - Staff at the multilingual center are available to support preschool families who speak a language other than English. The Center also provides interpreters and utilizes real-time translation during parent meetings.

Hiring bilingual staff - LUSD aims to have at least once bilingual teacher or staff person at each preschool where there are families whose primary language is not English.

Developing trusting relationships with parents - LUSD has a culture that appreciates the importance of home languages and encourages parents to share their traditions in the classroom.