



## **Irvine Unified School District**

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Dear Parents:

The purpose of this letter is to explain the Irvine Unified School District's ELD Newcomers' Learner classroom program for beginning English Learner students. We want you to understand how this special help can benefit your children and why it is important for you to consider enrolling your student in the class.

All people who learn a new language need to begin with a period of lessons which develop their ability to listen, comprehend, and produce the sounds of the new language. This period of time should be in an environment which is non-stressful and extremely supportive to the learner. The length of time for this stage of language learning varies with the individual; however, it is critical that sufficient time be devoted to the acquisition of a good oral command of the language. This oral fluency is the foundation for the future literacy in the new language and the better the foundation, the more successful the student will be when he is confronted with the tasks of reading and writing in the new language.

It is precisely in order to develop these essential oral English language skills that the ELD Newcomer classes have been created. Students are screened to determine English oral fluency and only students who have little or no English are enrolled. The teacher has been specially trained to develop these early language skills. She has special lessons and materials. The main objective is to develop English comprehension, speaking, and survival skills in these children and then return them to their regular neighborhood school to continue their academic development. When students leave the Magnet classroom they should be able to enter an ELD or SDAIE program where content instruction is delivered in English only. Elementary students leaving the ELD Newcomers' Program should be able to successfully participate in regular classroom activities.

During the time spent in the ELD Newcomers' classroom, the students will receive lessons in other curricular areas such as math, physical education and social science. Whenever possible, they participate in these activities with native English speaking students. They are not isolated or segregated by participation in this special program.

Although the students in the ELD Newcomers' classroom may speak one of many languages at home, only English is used for instruction. There is a precise and orderly way of introducing vocabulary and building skills which has produced good results with currently enrolled students. The lessons are enjoyable and all the children are highly motivated.

We welcome your interest in this special program. We urge you to seriously consider this important special help for your children. The opportunity to develop these basic English skills in a supportive and organized program is available. This basic foundation will provide necessary foundation for a successful academic career in English for your children.

If you choose to forego this opportunity for your child, you may enroll in the neighborhood school. However, the neighborhood school has few resources available to meet the needs of the limited or non-English speaking student. Experience has shown that this is not sufficient assistance to prepare the newcomer for a successful year to the vigorous curriculum in our secondary schools. The program is voluntary; however, if your student is recommended for participation we hope you will seriously consider the child's enrollment in the program.

For more information, please call (949) 936-8500 and ask for Lisa Mennes.

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