

# LANGUAGE IMMERSION IN



Act 361 of the 2013 Legislative Session creates a process whereby parents may petition their local school boards to create language immersion pathways if none are currently offered. Immersion simply means that the primary learning language in your child's classroom is French, Spanish, Chinese, or another language taught by a fluent speaker of the language. English Language Arts will be taught by an English teacher.

---

---

## WHY IS IMMERSION IMPORTANT?

- **HERITAGE:** Immersion pathways are an essential element in the restoration and development of Louisiana's French and Spanish heritage languages; they provide access to further educational, economic, international, cultural, and professional opportunities in Louisiana and across the globe.
- **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:** Immersion students consistently achieve higher results on standardized tests than their non-immersion peers, regardless of socio-economic status. Immersion students typically develop greater cognitive flexibility, demonstrating increased attention control, better memory, and superior problem-solving skills as well as an enhanced understanding of their primary language.
- **GLOBAL COMPETENCY:** Immersion students are more aware of and generally show more positive attitudes towards other cultures and an appreciation of other people.
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Immersion students are exposed to languages that are represented in today's global economy, better preparing them for life beyond the classroom.

It is your legal right to locally enroll your child in an immersion classroom. If the parents of at least 25 kindergarten-aged children petition a local school board, the school board is required to provide your child access to an elementary education in the specified language if there is not already a state-certified immersion school in your district.

Here's how to make this opportunity a reality for your child:

## GETTING STARTED

- 1) ORGANIZE an informal meeting of interested parents of pre-school aged children entering kindergarten the FOLLOWING school year
- 2) LEARN more about this opportunity by reading the petition at [louisianabelieves.com](http://louisianabelieves.com).
- 3) IDENTIFY parent leader(s) that can gather signatures for the parent petition

## AFTER THE MEETING

- 4) GATHER signatures of parents with pre-school aged children committed to immersion (\*\*Note that ONLY PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS of children can sign the petition).
- 5) SUBMIT the petition to the local school board by March 1<sup>st</sup> prior to the beginning of the new school year and notify the Department of Education of your request by calling 877-453-2721 or emailing [terri.hammatt@la.gov](mailto:terri.hammatt@la.gov).



The mission of the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is to ensure equal access to education and to promote equal excellence throughout the state. The LDOE is committed to providing Equal Employment Opportunities and is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. The LDOE does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, or genetic information. Inquiries concerning the LDOE's compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the Deputy Undersecretary, LDOE, Exec. Office of the Supt., P.O. Box 94064, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064; 877.453.2721 or [customerservice@la.gov](mailto:customerservice@la.gov). Information about the federal civil rights laws that apply to the LDOE and other educational institutions is available on the website for the Office of Civil Rights, USDOE, at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/>.