

Archdiocese Announces Location of First Catholic Dual Language School in Baltimore

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien, Archbishop of Baltimore, announced today that Archbishop Borders School, a pre-k through 8th grade Catholic elementary school in Highlandtown, will host the first Catholic dual language program in the Archdiocese this fall.

The dual language program, also known as a dual immersion program, will focus on English and Spanish and initially be taught in kindergarten and first grade before expanding in future years to the entire school. Its goal is to produce graduates who have fluency in both English and Spanish.

"We are so excited to be chosen to implement a dual language program at Archbishop Borders School," Ms. Cathy Marshall, Principal of Archbishop Borders School said. "Beginning this program in kindergarten and first grade will allow our students a longer sequence of instruction and gives them the best path for emerging from 8th grade fluent in both languages. Younger children have the ability to develop language skills because they have better mental flexibility and improved listening and memory and listening skills."

Archbishop Borders School currently offers Spanish classes once a week in grades pre-K to four and twice per week for fifth-eighth graders. The naming of the dual language school marks the first designation of an enhanced academic program announced by the Archbishop on March 4. The program is as one of a number of academic enhancements the Archdiocese is making to ensure that Catholic schools in the Archdiocese remain competitive.

Archbishop Borders School is located at 201 S. Conkling St. in Baltimore. Fifty-five percent of the school's students are of Hispanic descent. Tuition at Archbishop Borders School is \$4,600/year.

Future announcements regarding the designation of schools to host Harvard University's New American Academy educational model, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), Montessori and PRIDE (for students with special learning needs) are expected soon.

According to the National Dual Language Consortium, dual language education is "a form of bilingual education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages. Dual language programs foster bilingualism, biliteracy, enhanced awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity, and high levels of academic achievement through instruction in two languages."

Last year, a state Task Force on Preservation of Heritage Language Skills found that there are only two dual language programs in the State of Maryland and recommended the creation of at least 10 new dual language programs for Maryland public schools by 2012.

Archbishop Borders School day runs from 8:00 -2:30; an afterschool program from 2:30 - 5:30, with a separate fee, is also available.

Media Note: *Members of the media wishing to interview Ms. Cathy Marshall, Principal, parents or teachers, or to visit Archbishop Borders School, please call Sean Caine at (410) 547-5378.*