



Stamford American
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



STAMFORD AMERICAN BILINGUAL PROGRAM

Building Bilingual, Bicultural, Biliterate Global Citizens

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Parents,

As superintendent of Stamford American International School and the father of three Stamford Lions, I'm a big fan of our bilingual program. In fact, I'm so much of a fan that our two elementary boys enrolled in the program as soon as we arrived at Stamford.

We all know the arguments for gaining facility in a second language - greater exposure to the world; an ability to think creatively about culture; and an ability to communicate and learn in new ways.

My deep language exposure didn't happen until college when I majored in Japanese. I lived in a homestay situation in Japan for two years - and my whole world expanded. From there, I went to Korea for an intensive language program in Korean. The connections in my brain deepened as I compared Japanese and Korean and gained high levels of proficiency in both. Learning these languages enriched my life.

My only regret is that it didn't happen at a younger age! If I had learned a second language at 5 or 7 or 9, I could only imagine the natural fluency and comfort I would have in the languages I learned. That's the beauty of our bilingual program - capturing students' linguistic abilities while they're young.

My boys are thriving in Stamford's program. They chatter between themselves at home, get excited for a class presentation in Mandarin, memorize lines for a skit, sing songs and sit at the kitchen table practicing their characters. They're living the language.

At the same time, their development in English is right on target. Assignments in class are closely calibrated with the same-grade level classes so they don't miss a beat in their other studies. In fact, research and experience show that learning a second language enhances development of one's first language. The brain has an amazing ability to transfer skills and understanding across domains.

Our bilingual teachers are highly skilled, and the students in the class are motivated to be there. In short, it's a great environment for learning. It was definitely the right choice for our family - and I encourage you to consider it closely for yours.

The future awaits our children - and equipping them with deep knowledge in a second language only makes them that much more agile and open to possibility. It's an exciting time to be a young foreign language learner.

Best regards,

Dr. Mark Wenzel
Superintendent



BENEFITS OF JOINING A BILINGUAL PROGRAM

Many studies have proven the benefits of a bilingual education. Fluency in multiple languages is not only a valuable asset but can help with a greater appreciation of different cultures. With the rising popularity of the Mandarin language both socially and in business, Stamford American has developed its innovative, research-based approach for our bilingual classes.

Students interested in dedicating more time and effort into learning Mandarin as a second language can join the Bilingual Program at no extra cost. This program gives learners equal exposure to the English and Mandarin languages in the subjects and concepts taught within their grade. Classes are taught by bilingual teachers who are masters of both languages, with extensive experience in teaching in a bilingual environment.

BENEFITS OF JOINING A BILINGUAL PROGRAM:



Advanced
adaptive
mechanisms



Improved
cognitive
function



Better problem
solving skills



Enhanced
ability to focus
and multi-task



Increased
awareness of
other cultures



Globalization
Ready!

"Being in the bilingual class allows me to learn more languages and be more creative when it comes to learning. Whenever I go somewhere with my mom or dad, they encourage me to speak to Mandarin speakers in Chinese and it always makes their day."

- **Cristina**, G5





WHY CHOOSE OUR BILINGUAL PROGRAM

Our unique one-bilingual-teacher model offers an approach where our bilingual teachers and teaching assistants are fluent in both languages and demonstrate bilingualism as role models to the students. At the same time, a single bilingual teacher model ensures the seamless transition during learning and provides the opportunity to explore content more deeply in both languages. This allows for learning experiences to be more adaptive and supports student-led inquiry. Bilingual learners need to feel a deep sense of belonging to take risks and make mistakes. Our one-bilingual-teacher approach builds trusting relationships between students and teachers.

Our program is offered from Pre-K to Grade 5 and in our bilingual program, students learn the same content as students in mainstream classes. The main difference is that 50% of the content in Math and Units of Inquiry (UOI) is delivered in Mandarin.

Our model provides a more immersive exposure to Mandarin to help students learn. To ensure continuity of curriculum programming, teachers regularly collaborate with their grade level colleagues to design lessons and share in best instructional and assessment practices.

The Bilingual Program teachers also consistently meet with the Mandarin teacher to ensure consistent language development in Mandarin, both within homeroom and the language block.

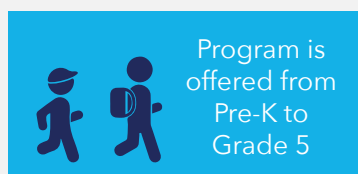
Students from USA, Australia, France, Japan, Korea, Singapore, India, China, Canada, UK, New Zealand and all over the world make up the nationality mix in a bilingual class.



One-bilingual-
teacher
approach



Experienced
teaching
faculty



Program is
offered from
Pre-K to
Grade 5



Immersive
exposure to
Mandarin to help
students learn



OUR CURRICULUM

Our program is offered from Pre-K to Grade 5. The Bilingual Program teacher plans together with the other class teachers of the grade level to cover the same concepts and achieve the same student learning objectives as the regular classes.

Both divisions follow the guidelines of the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Lessons in Grades 1-5 are delivered using the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) framework, while Pre-K and Kindergarten follow the research-based GOLD standards.

WHAT A TYPICAL DAY LOOKS LIKE IN THE PREK - KG2 BILINGUAL CLASS

- Using Mandarin during morning circle, transitions, and meal times
- Learning numbers and math concepts in both English and Mandarin to focus on problem solving and reasoning
- Learning Chinese character writing
- In KG1, we build our phonological awareness and learn the concept of print. In KG2, we develop reading and writing skills through the Readers and Writers Workshop model
- We celebrate and appreciate Chinese culture through reading stories, songs, dance and arts and crafts

CLICK TO VIEW A VIDEO OF A STANDARD DAY!



WHAT A TYPICAL DAY LOOKS LIKE IN THE G1 - G5 BILINGUAL CLASS

- Focusing on listening, speaking, reading, writing and presentation skills through the Readers and Writers Workshop model
- Following the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) guidelines
- 50% of Math and 50% of Units of Inquiry are delivered in Mandarin
- Mandarin classroom instruction includes: Morning Meetings, calendars, lunch time, read aloud and transitions



"As a bilingual learner, I find myself able to concentrate on my work more and I find working and solving problems easier. There are language tricks we learn in mandarin which I can use in math to help me better understand. For example, the Chinese name of rounding gives us a clue on how to do it."

- **Mudra**, G5

"Being in the bilingual class makes me special. I feel that I have an advantage in the bilingual class because it lets you talk to people in a way that some Americans can't. When I go back to America, I will be able to teach my friends Mandarin."

- **Lauren**, G5

“Being bilingual equips students with language and social skills that are needed to work with others from different cultures and backgrounds. Fully aligned to the IB PYP, we aim to build a strong foundation in mandarin learning and provide authentic experiences for students to use the language in their inquiry. Through the one-bilingual-teacher approach, students in the bilingual program are taught the same curriculum as the monolingual classes, with the only difference being the language of instruction. As the bilingual teacher, we ensure a seamless transition and translanguaging in learning. Seeing students gain more confidence expressing themselves and show more appreciation in the language and culture gives me great fulfilment. I believe children raised as bilingual will become global citizens of the world.”



Elaine Ho, G2 Bilingual teacher

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS, ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

For Pre-K to Grade 1, entry requirements are based on parent/student interest and a successful completion of the application process. No previous Mandarin knowledge is required. Students joining in Pre-K and KG1 are generally native (or near native) speakers of English.

From Grade 2 onwards, students must complete a Mandarin placement test to ensure they meet the linguistic expectations of the program.

For the purpose of consistency, all students in the Bilingual Program take Mandarin during their foreign language block. In the Bilingual Program, the foreign language Mandarin class includes an additional component of supporting students through the acquisition of the Mandarin vocabulary needed to successfully meet all expectations in the UOI class.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Teachers use many strategies to make the content understandable, such as visuals, props, manipulatives, facial expressions, gestures, physical movements and many other instructional techniques. Teachers also repeat vocabulary and concepts and always check for understanding.

Our teachers do not expect your child to speak the second language right away. Students are not forced to speak the second language; they are initially allowed to speak English. The teacher will restate what your child says to reinforce connection between Mandarin and English vocabulary or vice versa.

Our bilingual classes are assessed through placement tests, internal assessments, and STAMP language proficiency test developed by the University of Oregon (starting in Grade 3). All these assessments focus on evaluating proficiency in the four language domains of reading, listening, speaking and writing.



HEAR FROM OUR TEACHERS

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Bilingual students are given opportunities to apply their language learning in authentic and practical ways. The PYP Exhibition is a culminating experience for Grade 5 students, giving them a chance to showcase their understanding of an issue using both Mandarin and English. Being bilingual allows students to connect with different groups of people in Singapore as they follow their inquiry or just converse in more casual situations.

At school, students also work on different inquiries, research and write informational and opinion essays as well as express themselves in English. As we nurture internationally minded individuals, it is important that we equip our students with the ease to use different languages.”

Neltje Fu, G5 Bilingual teacher

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I have a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from Indiana University and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from the University of Hong Kong. I've been teaching kindergarten classes since 1995 and I've taught in different international schools in Hong Kong and Singapore. I'm also effectively trilingual in English, Mandarin and Cantonese!

”



Cara Patil, KG2 Bilingual teacher

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I have a Masters in Human Development and Psychology from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. This is my third year at Stamford; I previously taught in a Reggio Emilia independent preschool in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I've lived in Taipei, Guangzhou, San Francisco, Boston and Washington, D.C and outside of school, I enjoy singing, reading, traveling and practising yoga!

”



Frances Chang, KG1 Bilingual teacher

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I hold a Master's degree from Rutgers University in New Jersey, USA. I lived in New York for four years where I taught Mandarin for early year students in a Mandarin-immersion school. I then joined Stamford where it's now my 6th year in the bilingual program. I'm from Taiwan and I'm fluent in both Mandarin (my native language) and English.

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Joanna Chen, PreK Bilingual teacher



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Teaching in the SAIS bilingual program has been a vibrant and fruitful journey. I have been witnessing students developing into confident bilingual learners and open-minded risk-takers. I believe the one-bilingual-teacher model of the SAIS program offers students opportunities to develop two sets of linguistic codes simultaneously while learning; providing students with additional tools to process information around them. The structured delivery and translanguaging of concepts in both languages, improves the students' ability of multi-tasking and problem-solving.

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Christy Huntington, G1 Bilingual teacher



Stamford American INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

1 Woodleigh Lane
(Off Upper Serangoon Road),
Singapore 357684

T: + 65 6653 2949
E: admissions@saais.edu.sg
W: www.saais.edu.sg



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