

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAMS

Additional and more specific information about each program will be provided at the Middle School Choice meetings.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The Direct Instruction Program emphasizes basic academic skills and the acquisition of knowledge, where teachers:

- *Provide the majority of instruction in the core academic subjects* in the discrete, single-subject areas of English, mathematics, social studies and science (as distinguished from an “interdisciplinary” approach, where multiple subjects may be taught in combination).
- *Give systematic, sequential instruction in the core academic subjects.* Teachers have a commitment to spend the majority of class time on direct-instruction and explicit teaching in which the teacher guides the lesson and responds directly to questions (as distinguished from “coaching” or “facilitating”).
- *Emphasize the accountability of individual students* (as distinguished from “groups of students”) for scholastic achievement.

SPANISH IMMERSION PROGRAM

The Spanish Immersion Program is based on a two-way bilingual model in which English speaking students and native Spanish speakers are taught together using Spanish and English instruction to develop bilingual academic fluency. The goals of the District’s Middle School Spanish Immersion Program are:

- *To enhance development toward bilingual proficiency and literacy in Spanish and English.*
- *Academic achievement at or above grade level in both languages.*
- *To enhance positive cross-cultural attitudes.*

Students are eligible to enroll in the Spanish Immersion Middle School program if they have successfully completed the elementary Spanish Immersion program at Escondido or if they can demonstrate grade level bilingual fluency in Spanish and English.

CONNECTIONS (INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING) PROGRAM

The Connections Program focuses on project-based learning and mirrors the models developed for the GATE community stressing choice and responsibility. Through challenging, innovative and relevant teaching practices students become well prepared life-long learners.

- *Teaching for Thinking: Connecting Hearts and Minds.* Through project-based learning, students gain and practice the higher order and critical thinking skills necessary for analyzing, creating and problem-solving.
- *Teachers as Coaches/Mentors: Connecting Students and Teachers.* Experienced teachers act as coaches or facilitators and provide personalized feedback and written evaluations. Students take responsibility for their own work and progress.
- *Meaningful, Challenging Curriculum: Connecting the Curriculum.* Using differentiated curriculum following state standards and District guidelines, students solve problems using real world applications. Topics of study are enhanced with relevant field trips, guest speakers and current events.
- *Collaboration and Cooperation: Connecting the Learning Community.* Students work in self-directed groups fostering collaborative learning and positive social interactions. Students develop their skills as leaders, facilitators and collaborators.
- *Parent/Teacher/Child Community: Connecting Home and School.* Parents are encouraged to participate in the classroom. Teachers are open and accessible to parents. The parents, teacher and child are all involved as active educators.

In the Connections Program homework will be given relevant to class assignments. Long-term projects will frequently need to be worked on at home. For more information, please visit www.jlsconnections.org.