



Public Education Department

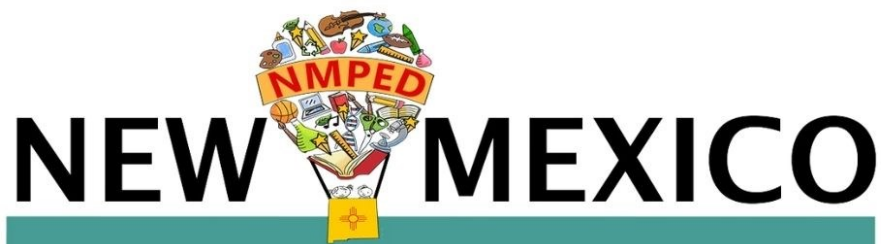
Language and Culture

Bilingual Multicultural Education Program (BMEP) Awards

Bilingual Day

March 7, 2025





NEW MEXICO
Public Education Department
Language and Culture

**Bilingual Multicultural
Education Program (BMEP)
Recognition Awards
2025**

Awarded to schools that exemplify state-funded BMEP goals and have not been recognized within the past three years



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Alvarado Elementary School

Principal: Desiree Springer

Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Dr. Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Linda Varela



Alvarado Elementary is a nurturing, community-oriented school that has been empowering families through education since 1952. We provide a diverse, multicultural learning experience with our Dual Language program, available for kindergarten through fifth grade. Our campus fosters creativity and innovation, and we are proud to be in our second year as a Structured Literacy school.

In addition to our strong academic foundation, we offer exciting opportunities for enrichment, including a state-of-the-art STEAM lab, a library with over 12,000 books, a thriving school garden, and weekly music, art, and physical education classes. Our active PTA and deeply engaged community provide constant support to our students and staff.

At Alvarado, we firmly believe that students' academic success and life outcomes are shaped by their access to safe, welcoming learning environments and rich, diverse experiences both in and out of school. We have created an inclusive environment that fosters a love for learning, ensuring that students look forward to coming to school each day.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Dolores Gonzales Elementary
Principal: Parisa Asgharzadeh

Albuquerque Public Schools
Superintendent: Dr. Gabriella Blakey
Bilingual Multicultural Education
Director: Linda Varela



Founded in 1975, Dolores Gonzales Elementary made history as the first APS school to implement a dual language program. Named after Dolores Gonzales, “La Doctora”, a bilingual education pioneer, our school continues her legacy by providing an enriched educational experience that fosters bilingualism, biliteracy, and a deep appreciation for cultural diversity. With 300 students from preschool to 5th grade, we are a historic, diverse, multicultural, and multilingual community of learners and educators who are dedicated to guiding and supporting every student. In grades K-5, instruction is split 50/50 between Spanish and English, with daily literacy blocks and integrated science/social studies instruction.

As an Elevated Arts School, we integrate movement, theater, dance, music, and visual arts into our students' daily experience. Students also collaborate with artists in residence and participate in community field trips that enrich their learning experience. We prioritize student leadership and community building through programs like Den Leaders (Monthly mixed-age “families” focusing on social-emotional learning and belonging), and Play Brigade, Morning Greeters, Cafeteria Champions, and Campus Beautification – leadership roles for 3rd-5th graders who apply, train, and serve throughout the year. At Dolores Gonzales Elementary, we believe in nurturing well-rounded students who are academically strong, culturally aware, and creatively inspired to thrive in a diverse world.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Kit Carson Elementary

Principal: Cindy Rael

Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Linda Varela

Kit Carson Elementary is located in the heart of the South Valley in the city of Albuquerque. Our school has over 400 students all of them with different abilities, backgrounds, cultures, and knowledge. The Dual Language program was created with a strong foundation of teachers, students, and parents to support our students' diversity. Our program offers multiple opportunities, not only for academics, but for social and emotional skills and communication skills. We are proud to say that our program has been growing every year having the largest classes in each grade level; Dual Language students make up over 30% of the whole student population in the school. Every year we have a waitlist for our Kindergarten DL classroom, and for the past 3 years, we have had a waitlist in our 1st grade classroom as well. We have continued to have a consistent teaching group as our teachers have been with our school for the past 12-plus years. We continue celebrating the diversity at Kit Carson with Bilingual Day and International Day. We continue to grow our Bilingual Seal participants each year, and the amount of support we receive from our parents and our community is outstanding.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Loma Linda Elementary School

Principal: Crescencio Cardona

Gadsden Independent School District

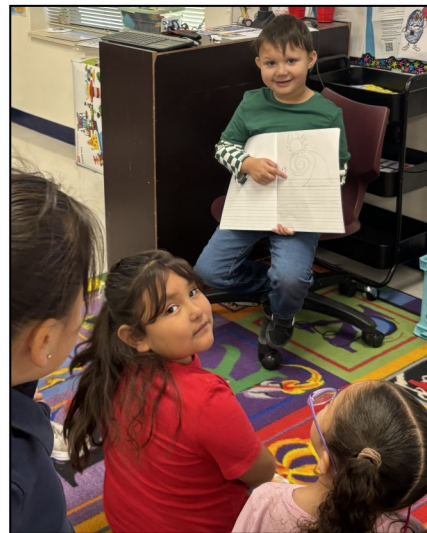
Superintendent: Travis Dempsey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director:
Nubia Tarazona



At Loma Linda, we believe every student can achieve extraordinary success, regardless of background. Our Bilingual Multicultural Education Program (BMEP) empowers students to excel in both English and Spanish while nurturing the whole child.

Through innovative instruction, dedicated educators, and culturally responsive practices, our students defy expectations. Last year, all 3rd–6th graders outperformed the state average in English and Spanish Language Arts. Our Reteach and Enrich model, recognized as a 2023 Innovative School initiative, along with phonics screeners and targeted professional development, ensures all students thrive.



At Loma Linda, bilingualism is a bridge to excellence. Many of our students come from low-income backgrounds, yet they flourish with the right tools and support. We are honored to be considered for the BMEP Award as we continue proving that all students can succeed at the highest levels.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Los Padillas Elementary School

Principal : Ludyvina Gomez

Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Linda Varela



At Los Padillas Elementary, we take great pride in the success of our dual language program and its lasting impact on our students, families, and community. Our mission is to cultivate creative, bilingual learners who graduate fluent and literate in both Spanish and English, equipped with strong academic skills and a deep appreciation for cultural diversity. Guided by our motto, *¡Éxito para todos! Sin límites! Sin excusas!*, we are committed to excellence, ensuring that every student receives the support and opportunities needed to thrive. One of our most significant accomplishments is the APS Bilingual Seal Portfolio, which every 5th grader works toward completing. Over the past five years, 47% of our students have earned the APS Bilingual Seal, a testament to their dedication and the effectiveness of our program. From Pre-K onward, students collect artifacts that showcase their journey toward bilingualism and biliteracy, highlighting both their academic growth and their connection to their cultural heritage.

Building on this foundation, Los Padillas has taken a bold step forward with our transition to a magnet school, expanding opportunities for student learning while staying true to our dual language mission. Our *Sustaining the Future* program blends inquiry-based learning, environmental STEM education, and real-world applications to inspire critical thinking and leadership. Through outdoor learning at our 5-acre Los Padillas Wildlife Sanctuary and student-driven projects during Genius Hour, students engage in meaningful, hands-on experiences that promote environmental stewardship. By combining bilingual education with innovative learning opportunities, we are shaping an enriching academic environment that prepares students for success in a diverse and interconnected world.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

McCormick Elementary School

Principal: Tatia Fernandez

Farmington Municipal Schools

Superintendent: Cody Diehl

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Diane Arrington



McCormick Elementary was Farmington's first Spanish Bilingual Elementary school and has been participating in Spanish Bilingual Education since 1975. McCormick Elementary celebrates their diverse learning community and promotes an environment where all students can be successful and achieve their goals. As part of their plan to help students meet academic and language goals, McCormick Elementary increased professional development opportunities for their Spanish dual language teachers during the 2024-2025 school year.

McCormick Elementary demonstrates their appreciation for Bilingual Multicultural Education Programs by connecting parents and families to the school. All social media posts, recorded announcements, and home communications are in Spanish and English. McCormick also hosts several bilingual parent and family events each year.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Polk Middle School

Principal: Ben Bustos

Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Linda Varela



Polk Middle School, recently rebranded as Polk Academy of Agricultural Science, takes pride in offering a STEAM, dual-language framework focusing on agriculture and sustainability. Students learn about Green Architecture and Energy and the Environment while also incorporating their dual-language pathway.

Using project-based learning, students at Polk are responsible for planting, maintaining, and harvesting the crops grown on our 10-acre farm space, equipped with aquaponics systems, hoop houses, and garden boxes. This year, Polk has incorporated a composting system and will be adding a variety of trees native to New Mexico. Our local community is of great importance at Polk, and multiple times a year, we hold and attend community events where students share their learning and advocate for themselves bilingually.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Riverside Elementary School

Principal: Adriana Cuen

Gadsden Independent School District

Superintendent: Travis Dempsey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Nubia Tarazona

Riverside Elementary is proud to be the largest elementary school in the district, serving a dynamic and diverse K-6 student population with an enrollment of 560 students, 98% of whom are Hispanic. As a dual-language school situated at the crossroads of three cultures—bordering El Paso, Texas, and Juárez, Chihuahua—we embrace our rich cultural heritage. With the highest enrollment of English Language Learners in the district, we are dedicated to cultivating bilingualism, biliteracy, and a strong sense of cultural pride.



For us, both language heritage and language acquisition are paramount. We believe that preserving students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds is just as important as equipping them with the skills to navigate an increasingly globalized world. Despite the challenges of serving a community with predominantly low socioeconomic status, our dedicated and highly qualified bilingual or TESOL-endorsed teachers go above and beyond to ensure that every child receives a high-quality dual-language education. We take great pride in being culturally and linguistically responsive educators, intentionally designing instruction that not only aligns with our students' cultures and languages but also honors and sustains their heritage.

Whether through literacy, math, or science, our teachers integrate students' linguistic backgrounds into daily lessons, empowering them to thrive academically while maintaining their cultural identities. Our commitment to bilingual education is reflected in our students' success. This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our teachers and the resilience of our students, as we continue to create an environment where language, culture, and education go hand in hand.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Ruidoso Middle School

Principal: Cecily Hooker

Ruidoso Schools

Superintendent: Becca Ferguson

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Melvina Edmister

Ruidoso Middle School serves just under 400 students in the Sacramento Mountains. RMS has achieved success by focusing on data-driven instruction and fostering student growth, particularly among ELs. Significant gains were made in ELA and math across grades 6 through 8, with increases of up to 39% in math and 30% in ELA. As students returned after a challenging summer of wildfires and flooding, RMS created a welcoming environment with decorated halls, spirit lines, and community support through donations. Student Council initiatives, such as Operation Backpack and new student-led clubs, including Hispanic Club, enhance student voice and engagement, contributing to a positive school culture with few discipline referrals. RMS hosts Bilingual family engagement nights that include bilingual celebrations and teaching parents and students about WIDA and Avant scores, thereby strengthening family involvement. These efforts reflect the school's commitment to academic growth, student well-being, and building a positive, inclusive environment.

The RMS bilingual team strives to make cultural connections which start in the primary grades and continue at Ruidoso Middle School, where we further bridge the gap that our students face when starting high school. The high school Latino Club regularly participates in our bilingual family nights, ensuring that our mission is vertically aligned and will stay with our middle schoolers into high school. As truly bilingual individuals, our high schoolers can graduate with their New Mexico State Seal of Bilingualism-Biliteracy, which they start actively working toward at Ruidoso Middle School as part of our vision and mission.

Community and family buy-in is directly promoted by our middle bilingual students. They take on the responsibility for communicating with peers, families, and the greater community about the workings of our bilingual program. Students have presented knowledge of their own ACCESS/AVANT data in various forums including bilingual family nights, School Board meetings, and to the administration of Ruidoso Middle School.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Recognition Award Schools

Wherry Elementary School

Principal: Cicely Ryan

Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Linda Varela



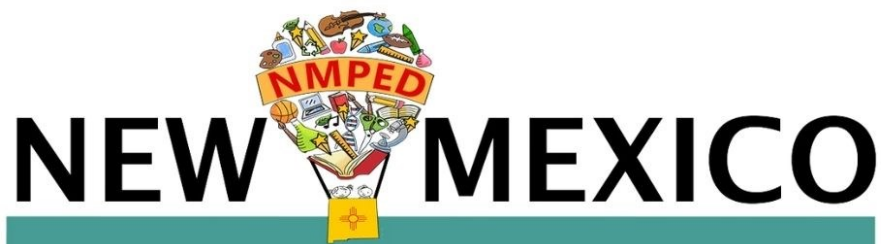
Wherry Elementary School, located in the Albuquerque International District, has proudly served families from the Kirtland Air Force Base and the broader community for over 70 years. In the early 2000s, as military student enrollment gradually declined, the school recognized an opportunity to celebrate cultural and linguistic diversity through its growing population of emergent bilingual learners. This transition prompted the establishment of a dual language program that, at its height, served nearly 200 students.

Over the years, Wherry Elementary School has demonstrated resilience and innovation. When the bilingual program faced a critical turning point, strong leadership and steadfast advocacy helped rebuild and strengthen it, underscoring the school's unwavering commitment to bilingual education. This dedication has enriched students' language skills, cultural awareness, and sense of heritage.

Today, Wherry Elementary School offers a comprehensive 90/10 dual language model from kindergarten through fifth grade, as well as an expanded range of services that include bilingual special education, bilingual intervention support, systemic bilingual program coordination, and enriching extracurricular activities such as *ballet folklórico*. Demonstrating the impact of these initiatives, the school's fifth-grade students have proudly earned the district's Bilingual Seal for four consecutive years—an achievement that reflects the program's positive impact on biliteracy and bilingualism.

As an advocate for equitable access and opportunities, Wherry Elementary School is committed to fostering bilingualism, biliteracy, and cultural understanding. By continually enhancing its bilingual program, the school cultivates an inclusive environment where students thrive and celebrate their diverse linguistic identities.





Public Education Department

Language and Culture

**Bilingual Multicultural
Education Program (BMEP)
Excellence Awards
2025**

Awarded to schools maintaining consistent
high performance over the course of multiple
years



Public Education Department



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Excellence Award Schools



Christine Duncan Heritage Academy

Principal: Dr. Jesus Moncada

Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Linda Varela

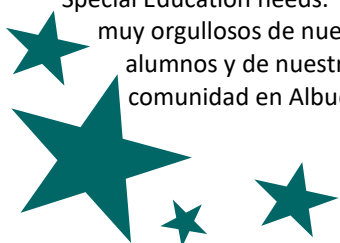
Christine Duncan Heritage Academy (CDHA) is a Pre-K through 8th grade Dual Language Charter School, serving 539 students and implementing the 90/10 DLI model. CDHA opened its doors in 2006 and has been accredited by COGNIA since 2010. It is located on the Westside of Albuquerque. CDHA's mission is to offer students the opportunity to become bilingual and biliterate in a DLI setting while using research-based practices and data-driven instruction to maintain a diverse school environment for all students to experience success. CDHA promotes academic excellence, bilingualism, and lifelong learning. It also values a diverse and inclusive environment that encourages family and community engagement.



We have 30 teachers with a bilingual endorsement and 23 with a TESOL certification, and four bilingual school administrators. Our school takes pride in promoting language and culture. We support the bilingual seal for our 8th graders, before and after school programs K-8, sports, student leadership opportunities through GEAR UP and AVID for Middle School Students, and social emotional support through site based counseling and support systems while striving daily to meet our school's vision and mission. We feel honored to be recognized by the NMPED for our BMEP.

All CDHA students made significant academic progress last school year, taking the school from a 21% to a 27% proficiency in reading and from a 12% to a 13% proficiency in math. In addition, 27.5% of our students are on track to English proficiency in the next five years according to NM Vistas, a percentage above the district and the state. We are meeting the charter school goals for language development and had 75% of our 8th graders achieving a bilingual seal. Our students have made language proficiency gains in English and in Spanish on state assessments. We have a strong 90/10 dual language immersion program in grades PreK through 8th that supports all students, including students with

Special Education needs. Estamos muy orgullosos de nuestros alumnos y de nuestra comunidad en Albuquerque!



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Excellence Award Schools

East San José Elementary

Principal: Eder Ortiz

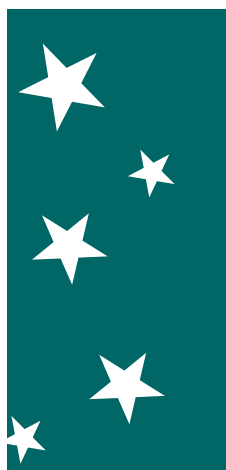
Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Linda Varela

East San Jose Elementary School offers a unique and enriching learning experience for our diverse students, focusing on fostering fluency in two languages while providing a strong foundation in academics. With a curriculum designed to support cognitive development in both languages, we prioritize not only language acquisition but also cultural awareness, creativity, and critical thinking. Our dedicated and skilled teachers ensure that each child receives personalized attention, helping them thrive both linguistically and academically.

At East San Jose Elementary, we believe in nurturing the whole child — intellectually, socially, and emotionally — so they are well-prepared for a globalized world. The combination of bilingual education and a supportive, inclusive community creates a vibrant learning atmosphere where every child's potential is recognized and celebrated.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Excellence Award Schools

New Mexico International School

Head of School: Todd Knouse

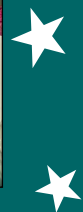
Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Cynthia Pedrotty

New Mexico International School (NMIS) is a K-8 charter multilingual school, established in 2011. Our academic program is one of rigor. Our drive is for children to push the educational process through inquiry-based education. Additionally, the school has an academic goal for all students to exit the program in eighth grade bilingual and bi-literate in Spanish and English and with a conversational level of Arabic. To this end our students are taught in an “immersion” environment. Students in K-8th are taught all their subjects in Spanish, even though our students are mostly native English speakers. Students are introduced to the Arabic language in 4th grade and will continue through middle school. Students progressing through our middle school have certain subjects taught in English, and some in Spanish, but all at a high level of academic language proficiency.



Our school is one of a small handful of World Schools, authorized International Baccalaureate (IB) . This means that our students are exposed to a global curriculum. Our staff members promote an awareness of various customs around the world and we encourage our students and families toward cultural and religious tolerance, as well as ecological responsibility. Regardless of the language abilities of our parents/guardians, it is expected that multiculturalism and multilingualism is promoted in the home.

NMIS has a high value on the arts. Our students receive violin lessons twice a week from a violin teacher, licensed in Suzuki-method violin instruction. Additionally, our students receive twice-weekly visual arts instruction from a licensed art teacher. Our school also places a strong emphasis on student action and student leadership. Our Student Council participates in the NMASC State and District level events and receives multiple district and state-level awards and recognitions.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Excellence Award Schools

Truman Middle School

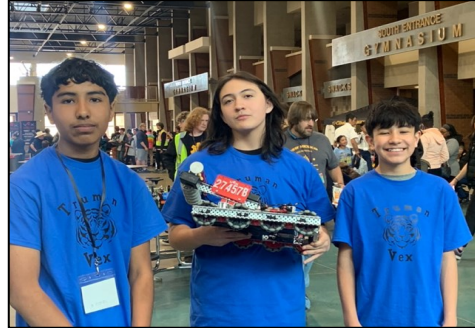
Principal: Michelle Armijo

Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director:

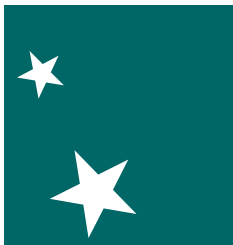
Linda Varela



Truman Middle School is the heart of Albuquerque's Westgate neighborhood, dedicated to diversity, differentiation, pure teaming, middle-level philosophy, and learning for all. Truman's 50/50 Dual Language program began in 1999 and has grown and evolved servicing hundreds of families. Truman Middle School has a dual language bilingual education model that has gained a reputation as one of the best developed and implemented middle school Spanish-English dual language programs in our state.

The students' and families' cultures are reflected in curriculum and in teacher-student interactions, which creates a healthy school environment that honors the various cultural identities of the students. By capitalizing on the students' and community's strengths, Truman's structured program sets a high bar for student performance. An example of this high standard is the implementation of the Bilingual Seal that recognizes students' language proficiencies and culture with pride. Truman's seal is the only middle school seal to compare with the expectations of the high school seal.

Year-round Truman welcomes visitors from the United States and from around the world who wish to learn more about the incredible program. Keeping with high student standards, the faculty also has high standards by presenting at bilingual education conferences throughout the year, which include our very own students. Truman's BMEP continues to strengthen and improve our practice through reflection and collaboration. Truman's Dual Language program is indeed one of the most outstanding and deserving programs in the state of New Mexico and beyond.



Bilingual Multicultural Education Program Excellence Award Schools

West Mesa High School

Principal: Michele Torres

Albuquerque Public Schools

Superintendent: Gabriella Blakey

Bilingual Multicultural Education Director: Linda Varela

Established in 1967, West Mesa High School serves nearly 1,760 students. We have a rich history of academic, extracurricular, co-curricular, and cultural excellence. Our motto is "Knowledge today, success tomorrow." We inspire academic achievement by building a community of lifelong learners and creating opportunities for success through learning achievement.



West Mesa's student body includes 430 English Language Learners. We serve 578 students in our Dual Language and Heritage BMEP. We offer home language support for Heritage Spanish speakers and Diné students. Our Bilingual Program strives to graduate students who are bilingual, biliterate and culturally competent so that they are college and career ready.

West Mesa works to make personal connections with students, which in turn, boosts graduation rates. One way we accomplish this is through Escuela de Padres. Escuela de Padres is a monthly meeting where parents and students explore various school- and family-related topics. The meetings are conducted bilingually. We believe this program supports our capacity to empower our bilingual families to be active in their children's education.





New Mexico Public Education Department

Mariana Padilla
Secretary Designate of Education

Language and Culture Division

Mayra Valtierrez, Director

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