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St. Cloud Area School District Expands Language Immersion Programming

St. Cloud Area School District is excited to announce expanded options in its language immersion programming to be piloted for incoming kindergartners in the 2023-2024 school year. Dual Immersion in Spanish will be offered at Clearview and Westwood Elementary Schools, and Dual Immersion in Somali will be offered at Discovery and Talahi Community Schools.

At Clearview, kindergartners in the fall of 2023 will transition to a dual immersion program in Spanish from full immersion. In a dual language immersion program, or two-way immersion, the goal is for students to receive instruction half the day in the target language and half the day in English. In a full immersion program, students are immersed in a second language while they learn, math, reading, writing, social studies, science, health and other subjects. (Specialty classes such as art may be taught in English.) Current Spanish Immersion students at Clearview will remain in full immersion programming. Fall 2023 will mark the first year for language immersion programming at Westwood and provide open enrollment opportunities for neighboring north and west school districts.

Dual Immersion in Somali will be piloted for kindergartners for the first time in Fall 2023 at Discovery Community School for the Discovery and Oak Hill attendance areas, and at Talahi Community School, serving the Talahi and Lincoln attendance areas. This pilot program will be the first Dual Immersion Somali program in the state of Minnesota.

The benefits of immersion education are far-reaching. It enhances academic and linguistic performance in both languages. It physically enhances cognitive brain development and increases social emotional development and self-confidence. It broadens student understanding of language and culture while preparing students to become global citizens.

English (only) sections will continue to be offered at all schools. Chinese Immersion at Madison Elementary will remain a full immersion program in 2023-2024. Spanish and Chinese Immersion in secondary schools will remain as scheduled for the 23-24 school year.

Families interested in learning more about language immersion programming for the 2023-2024 school year are invited to attend upcoming kindergarten open houses (dates to be determined and posted on the district website.) For questions and further information, contact Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education Mike Rivard at michael.rivard@isd742.org or 320.370.8006.

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About St. Cloud Area School District 742

The mission of the St. Cloud Area School District is to create a safe and caring climate and culture in which we prepare, engage, educate, empower and inspire all learners in partnership with their community to be successful in today's and tomorrow's society. Our caring and committed staff members deliver learning for a lifetime to a diverse population of students in nine St. Cloud area communities. District 742 is the largest school district in Central Minnesota, proudly sharing the gift of education with nearly 10,000 students each school day.

Located 70 miles northwest of Minneapolis-St. Paul, we bring the world's ideas into every schoolroom. Our licensed staff, nearly 70 percent of whom have advanced degrees, teach challenging classes that use the latest technology as well as tried-and-true instructional methods. District 742 has eight elementary schools, three middle level schools (6-8), two high schools (9-12), three alternative learning schools, an early childhood center and a community education center. The high schools offer an array of AP courses and other opportunities to prepare students for post-secondary education. Students are encouraged to participate in their choice of athletic, scholarly and fine arts activities.