



EMBAJADA  
DE ESPAÑA  
EN AUSTRALIA

CONSEJERÍA DE EDUCACIÓN



ACCIÓN  
EDUCATIVA  
EXTERIOR

## ISA Program

**Towards excellence in bilingualism and biliteracy**

## LEADING THE PATH TO EXCELLENCE IN BILINGUALISM AND BILITERACISM

After several decades of existence, International Spanish Academies (ISA) are part of a consolidated program in the United States, Canada and Australia. The pilot phase dates back to the early years of this century, when this pioneering initiative was launched in Alberta (Canada), Illinois, Indiana and Florida. Now, the years of history and accumulated experience allow us to better visualize what the free program consists of, now fully developed, with a presence in Australia, the United States and Canada, and what characteristics it should have to achieve excellence in bilingualism, biliteracy and multiculturalism.

### 1.- What are ISA schools?

ISA schools are high-performing schools that teach a Spanish-English dual language immersion curriculum (in any of its modalities: dual, one-way, two-way, etc.), with the support and recognition of the Ministry of Education of Spain. They offer K-12 educational programs fostered within a framework of collaboration between the Education Office of the Embassy of Spain, schools and their central offices. Content areas like Spanish Language and Culture and History of Spain, as well as History of Spanish-speaking countries, are very present in ISA schools through a content and language integrated learning curriculum in different subjects.

An *ISA program* can be offered throughout an entire school or it can be established as a strand within the school. Likewise, several schools of different educational stages can be linked together into an *ISA group*, guaranteeing students the possibility of a continued participation in the dual language immersion program, from *Kindergarten* to Grade 12.

The set of all the schools that belong to the ISA program, including their educational community, administrators and authorities, constitute the *ISA network*, a free collaborative educational network.

### 2.- What are their goals?

The goal of the ISA program is to prepare bilingual and multicultural students so that they can achieve proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking in Spanish according to their age and level of education.

ISA schools offer students a high-quality dual language immersion instruction with the following characteristics:

- Comprehensive education that enhances and develops the skills and abilities of students, through total immersion in the Spanish language and culture and through an instructional model that integrates content, communication, knowledge and culture.
- Dual language immersion instruction that prepares them to be responsible citizens in a globalized world, who value multiculturalism and respect their differences, being capable of communicating effectively in English and Spanish and of pursuing higher education in either of the two languages.

### 3.- What does the ISA network bring to a school?

Membership in the ISA network provides schools with a gold standard seal and brings a heightened value to their dual language immersion program, along with the prestige granted by the Ministry of Education of Spain.

In addition, the Spanish Ministry of Education collaborates with ISA schools by providing them with advice and educational resources. It also offers specific opportunities and specialized activities to ISA schools who excel in their effort and hard work to continually succeed with the aim of highlighting continued education growth.

### ISA identity

- Identification material: plaque, diplomas, trademark logo and flag of Spain.
- ISA diplomas for students who complete an educational level

### Educational consultancy and resources

- Advice on educational, linguistic and cultural aspects.
- Curricular models applied successfully in ISA schools with a consolidated trajectory.
- Support in carrying out educational projects and sister school partnerships with Spanish schools.
- Access to educational materials, Veo en Español short film platform and ELEO Digital Library.

### Professional Development and Language Proficiency

- Professional development activities.
- Priority access to summer courses offered at Spanish universities.

### Language and culture competence levels of the students

- Priority hiring of visiting teachers and priority allocation of language assistants from Spain.
- Targeted cultural activities.

## 4.- What criteria must a school meet to become an ISA school?

For admission to the ISA membership, or to continue this membership, all schools must meet and document some criteria or requirements which guarantee the high quality of the program.

## 5 - What happens if an ISA school fails to meet any of the requirements?

If an ISA member school fails to meet any of the requirements, it will receive an invitation from the Education Office of Spain to design a *joint accompanying plan*, which will include the actions proposed by the school to remedy the situation and the accompanying measures with which the Education Office of Spain can help.

However, if the school does not show interest in continuing being part of the ISA network or in participating in the joint accompanying plan, it will receive an invitation to leave the ISA network.

## 6 - How can an ISA school continue to progress and offer even higher quality?

The ISA program provides two fundamental instruments to contribute to the educational progress of its schools: *quality standards* and *an educational growth program*. Quality standards are guidelines for growth and advancement that ISA schools commit to explore and follow according to their needs and capabilities. They are not, therefore, mandatory requirements to join the ISA network, but educational progress objectives, as a quality commitment.

ISA schools define their educational progress objectives and collect them in an educational growth program according to the guidelines for growth and advancement established by the quality standards. ISA schools will have the support and consultancy of the Education Office of Spain to study their progress and determine priority actions.

