

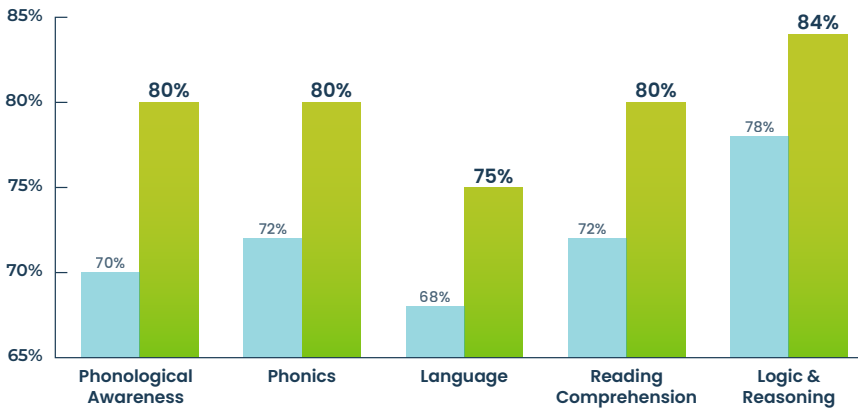
Challenge

Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District (PSJA), nationally recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (US DOE), is a leader in dual language education. One of the few districts offering a PreK-12 dual language pathway with a Seal of Biliteracy, PSJA knows the strongest investment in student success starts with early literacy. Research shows that children who build strong bilingual skills early are more likely to excel academically, graduate on time, and thrive in the workforce. However, providing access to high-quality, bilingual early learning remained a challenge due to varying home language exposure, limited resources for early literacy development, and the need for greater family engagement. To bridge this gap and extend dual language support from the start, PSJA partnered with Footsteps2Brilliance (F2B) to implement a scalable, research-driven bilingual literacy solution that accelerates language development, closes early learning gaps, and engages families in their child’s education.

Results

Students engaging with F2B’s bilingual curriculum achieved significant progress.

PSJA PK-1st Student Achievement
SY 24-25



- **Student Engagement:** Students interacted with 563,331,241 vocabulary words, read 997,679 books, played 2,756,373 literacy games, and completed 770,125 writing activities while spending 229,536 hours on literacy.
- **Parental Involvement:** Families logged nearly 62,000 hours of homebased literacy support, fostering a shared commitment to student success.
- **Literacy Gains (SY24-25):** PSJA students have demonstrated literacy growth on F2B domains: phonological awareness from 70% to 80%, phonics from 72% to 80%, language from 68% to 75%, reading comprehension from 72% to 80%, and logic and reasoning from 78% to 84%.

NOV 2020 – MAR 2025

563,331,241

Words read

997,679

Books read

229,536

Hours reading

LEADERSHIP TESTIMONIALS

“Our programs are not only equipping students with valuable language skills but also fostering multi-generational prosperity for families and communities.”

Dr. Alejandro Elias,
PSJA ISD Superintendent

“Footsteps2Brilliance has been a game changer for our students.”

Olivia Martinez,
PSJA Dual Language Director

DEMOGRAPHICS

Enrollment	29,928
Number of Schools	43
Economically Disadvantaged	92.5%
English Learners	44.9%
Special Education	10.1%
Hispanic	98.9%

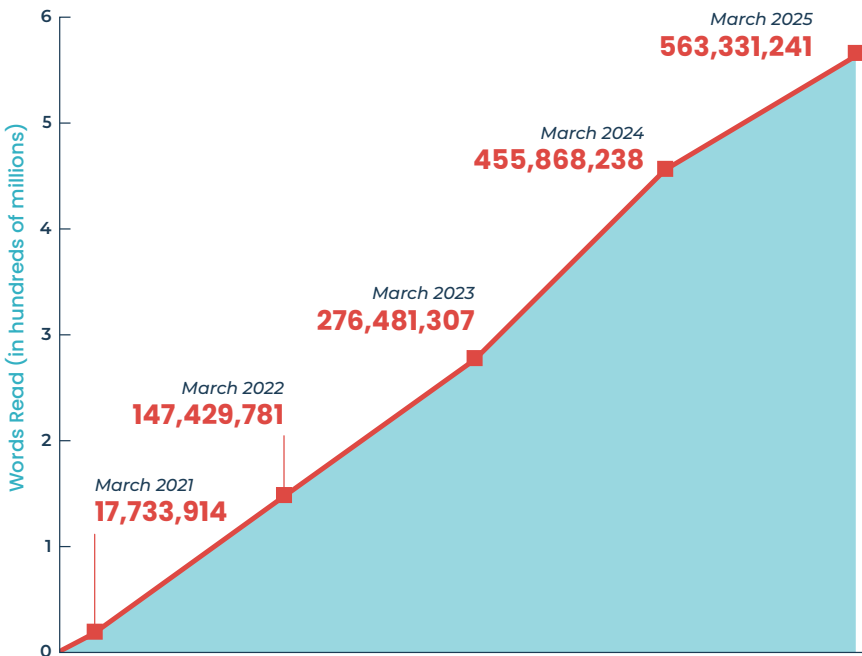
PSJA’s Dual Language Program: A National Model

PSJA has set the standard for dual-language education, earning national recognition from the US DOE. Featured in the *Dual Language Immersion Playbooks*, a federal guide to best practices, PSJA was highlighted for its research-based strategies in multilingual education and its commitment to dual language access for all learners. With more than 14,000 students enrolled, PSJA’s rigorous curriculum immerses learners in academic instruction in both English and Spanish, fostering fluency in speaking, reading, writing, and critical thinking. “Most school districts offer dual language mostly up to middle school, but at PSJA our program is available all the way through high school to make sure students continue to develop cognitively, linguistically, and academically in both languages,” said PSJA Dual Language Director Olivia Martinez.

Bridging Classroom and Home Learning

A key component of PSJA’s early bilingual success is its partnership with F2B, which provides game-based, literacy activities available on any device—including parents’ smartphones. “Footsteps2Brilliance has been a game changer for our students,” Martinez added. “It has helped our district provide them with a consistent, fun, and engaging language development experience that truly meets their affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs. Our teachers and students absolutely love using this program. It’s not only teacher and student friendly, but also parent friendly. They can also use this program and engage with their children from the comfort of their own home. PSJA ISD loves Footsteps2Brilliance!”

PSJA Vocabulary Exposure



Teachers Recommend Footsteps2Brilliance



9.7/10

Excited about
Footsteps2Brilliance!

TESTIMONIALS

“Footsteps2Brilliance is a great program! It has many resources that are helpful. I recommend this program. I use this program every day not only for my English language development block but also for my intervention groups.”

Sgt. Leonel Trevino ES Teacher

“It will benefit all the students English and Spanish. But I feel it will help enormously with my RTI and 504 students.”

Drs. Reed and Mock ES Teacher

“It was very effective and ground breaking.”

PSJA Teacher

“The assigned assignments will help the students in what they most need. Target instruction.”

Clover ES Teacher

“Having a different and interesting way for my students to create their own stories. I plan to have them create a weekly story that I can print. (Just like an author.)”

Drs. Reed and Mock ES Teacher

“Being able to have the English and Spanish component makes the program work better for the dual language students.”

Clover ES Teacher

“I like the ability to click for repeated instruction and the recording so they can hear themselves. Many of the activities are aligned to our curriculum.”

Kelly Pharr ES Teacher