**Myths and Research About Bilingual Development**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Myth #1:**Learning two languages will confuse children or delay their development of English. It can hurt the development of English to continue to teach or continue to use the home language. | **Research:**All young children are capable of learning two languages simultaneously. One language does not confuse another. In fact, it is beneficial to the development of English for children to continue development of their home language as well. |
| **Myth #2:**English immersion in school is the best way for a young English Learner to learn English | **Research:**Systematic, deliberate exposure to English combined with ongoing opportunities to learn in and develop the home language results in the highest achievement in both the home language AND in English by the end of third grade and beyond. Furthermore, by continuing to use the child's strongest language (home language) to study science, social studies, math and language arts while they are learning English will prevent academic gaps from developing. |
| **Myth #3:**Children will maintain their home language as they learn English, thus bilingualism will naturally happen as the home language is in use at home and as long as they are learning English at school.  | **Research:**Loss of the home language often occurs as children develop English if the use of the home language is not strongly affirmed at school and if families do not strongly reinforce the home language at home. |
| **Myth #4:**English is the only language needed for success in the United States. | **Research:**English is an essential language and skill for participation and success in the United States. However, proficiency in two or more languages has tremendous advantages. There are more job opportunities, and distinct economic benefits, social benefits and brain benefits for bilingual and biliterate individuals.  |