

Non-English School Guidance

The NDSP Education Specialist is Available to Assist:

If you would like to have a consultation with an Education Specialist regarding the education options in your location to help guide your decision for enrollment or if your child may need additional language assistance or supplemental materials/coursework, please contact the Education Specialist for your location by emailing the office for your area.

Americas: NDSP.Education.Americas@am.dodea.edu

Europe (Africa, Europe and Middle East): NDSP.Education.Europe@eu.dodea.edu

Pacific: NDSP.Education.Pacific@pac.dodea.edu

Key Questions for Parents to Ask:

- Does the non-English school have a Second Language Program?
- Does the school provide interventions, accommodations and support to students acquiring the school's language of instruction as a second language?
- Does the school focus on usage of four language domains (listening, speaking, reading and writing) for learning the second language?
- Will your child miss or have to opt out of core academic areas for instruction in the second language?
- What is the grading expectation while your child is acquiring the language and later as his or her academic proficiency increases?
- Will your child need additional support outside of school to help them access the curriculum content or maintain their literacy skills in English?
- Will your high school child need additional coursework outside of the non-English school to ensure the child is on track with the graduation plan when returning to the United States?

Key Information for Parents to Know and Consider:

- Social language skills in a second language may develop within 2–3 years. However full academic proficiency in a second language, which is more literacy dependent, can take 5–7 years. Younger children can often acquire academic proficiency in a shorter amount of time than older children.
- The primary years (K-2nd) are spent on learning foundation skills in reading, writing and math. Transitioning out of a non-English school to a school that provides instruction in English may be difficult, especially if the foundation for literacy in English has not been taught or supported.
- Each child is different, and various factors (such as age, personality, motivation, experiences, cognitive ability and mother tongue) can impact when and how they learn a second language. Consider your child's ability to thrive in this situation. Consider his or her resiliency, personality, motivation, experiences and cognitive abilities.
- External factors that can impact their acquisition of a second language include: curriculum, instruction, support, culture and access to native speakers in and out of school.
- It may take longer than the traditional 12-13 years to graduate from high school if your child needs additional years to catch up with the academic language either when transitioning into a non-English school or transitioning out to an English based school.
- It's important to know that the Non DoD Schools Program (NDSP) can only pay for one-time fees (often called registration or enrollment fees) once per tour of duty for a school at post (local education option) unless the school does not provide the next grade level.