



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

# UPDATE: Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP)

*2022*

**Authorizing Legislation: [RCW 28A.180.020](#)**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Multilingual/English learners (M/ELs) are students whose primary language is not English and are eligible for English language development services through the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP). Eligible M/ELs receive TBIP services until they become proficient in English.

During the 2020-21 school year, 131,730 students were identified as M/ELs. This number includes students who were “provisionally qualified” based on their home language survey information but had not yet been formally screened for qualification due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Enrollment was highest in urban areas in the western part of the state and in the Yakima Valley.

M/ELs typically are eligible for TBIP services for three to four years. Each year, these students take an English language proficiency assessment to measure their growth in English. In the 2020–21 school year, eligible students took the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (ELPA21) When a student attains proficiency in English on the annual ELPA21 assessment, they exit TBIP services. Beginning in 2017–18, M/ELs with significant cognitive disabilities have taken an alternate English language proficiency assessment, the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for English Language Learners, to measure their annual growth.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many students remained in virtual schooling in the spring of 2021 during the administration of the ELPA21 and WIDA Alternate ACCESS assessments and families were unwilling to allow them to test in person. Of students expected to test in the 2020–21 school year, 69.9% (92,992) participated in ELPA21 or WIDA, with only about 1% of those who began testing not completing the full assessment. Due to the low participation rates of the past two school years, results should not be compared to prior years or be used to measure state, district, and school performance. However, students can still exit the program based on their individual results. In the 2020–21 school year, 11,295 students exited the program.

Students served by TBIP in 2020–21 spoke 230 different home languages. The most identified language was Spanish, spoken by 55% of students. While Spanish continues to be the top language other than English, districts serve students who speak a diverse range of languages including Russian, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Arabic, Somali, Marshallese, Chinese Mandarin, Korean, and Punjabi, which are among the top ten languages spoken by students in our public schools.

Total expenditures to support English language development services across the state were \$249.2 million, of which \$235.4 million was from TBIP funding. This was a 3.4% increase in the total TBIP expenditures from the previous year.

# BACKGROUND

The state's Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) has existed since the passage of Senate Bill 2149 in 1979, and is codified in RCW 28A.180. Rules created by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for the implementation of TBIP are found in Chapter 392-160 WAC.

Under WAC 392-160-005, a Transitional Bilingual program of instruction is defined as a system of instruction which:

- (a) Uses two languages, one of which is English, as a means of instruction to build upon and expand language skills to enable a student to achieve competency in English;
- (b) Introduces concepts and information in the primary language of a student and reinforces them in the English language.

The Transitional Bilingual Instruction Act recognized that classes taught only in English are inadequate to meet the needs of Multilingual/English learners (M/ELs). This legislation also aligns with federal civil rights and English language development legislation in Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Through TBIP legislation, all eligible Multilingual/English learners in Washington shall receive bilingual instruction, or an approved alternative program of English language development instruction, until the student is proficient in English.

In 2004, TBIP was amended in RCW 28A.180.090 and requires OSPI to measure increases in the English and academic proficiency of students who are eligible for TBIP services. OSPI also tracks the academic progress of former TBIP students (former M/ELs) throughout their K–12 career.

In 2016, TBIP was amended in RCW 28A.180.040 based on recommendations from the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC) and the TBIP Accountability Task Force. The amendment requires all classroom teachers assigned using TBIP funds to hold an endorsement in bilingual education or English language learner, or both, by the beginning of the 2019–20 school year.

# UPDATE STATUS

## Multilingual/English Learners Served

In the 2020–21 school year, the TBIP served 130,485 students, a 2.1% decrease (2,826 students) over the previous year:

- TBIP distinct count (students counted once regardless of multiple enrollments) 131,730 – 1,245 (parent/family waivers) = 130,485.
- TBIP headcount (number of students enrolled on October 1, 2020) was 119,721 – 1,185 (parent/family waivers) = 118,536.
- M/ELs comprised 11.9% of the statewide student population on October 1, 2020. This was 0.1 percentage points lower than the previous year.
- Of Washington’s 295 school districts, 230 reported M/EL enrollments.

Among districts with ELs:

- 34 districts enrolled more than 1,000 M/ELs. These districts collectively served 73% of all M/ELs enrolled in the TBIP statewide.
- 53 districts enrolled 500 or more M/ELs.
- 81 districts enrolled fewer than 50 M/ELs.
- 37 districts reported fewer than 10 M/ELs.

Most multilingual/English learners served by the TBIP were enrolled in grades K–3. This group of M/ELs accounted for 45% of the TBIP enrollment in 2020–21. As students gain proficiency in English and exit TBIP services or leave the K–12 system, fewer students are enrolled in the TBIP in the higher-grade levels. Newly eligible M/ELs represented 16.6% of total TBIP enrollment in 2020–21.

Students served by TBIP in 2020–21 spoke 230 different home languages. The most identified language was Spanish, spoken by 55% of students. While Spanish continues to be the top language other than English, districts serve students who speak a diverse range of languages including Russian, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Arabic, Somali, Marshallese, Chinese Mandarin, Korean, and Punjabi, which are among the top ten languages spoken by students in our public schools.

## Length of Program Participation

The median time in program for students served in the TBIP in 2020–21 was four years. The M/ELs, 32% were still receiving TBIP services after five years and are referred to as Long-Term English Learners (LTELs). Please note that these data may be affected by the limited number of students who were assessed in 2019–20 and 2020–21, due to COVID-19 and school building closures.

## Expectations, Monitoring, and Stakeholder Engagement

OSPI staff have focused on providing technical assistance to districts to support educators serving M/ELs including guidance on adapting instruction to the virtual learning platform. OSPI provides districts with student outcome data, disaggregated by years in the TBIP and years exited from the program, so districts can more easily analyze their data and evaluate the effectiveness of their program. While data were impacted by school closures during the pandemic, OSPI staff have continued to support districts in reviewing the data they have and proposing changes to instructional models to more effectively serve all eligible M/ELs.

In response to feedback from the TBIP Accountability Task Force (2015), the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC) Annual Report (2018), the OSPI Bilingual Education Advisory Committee, the annual OSPI survey of district teachers and administrators who serve English learners, and input from families and students, the Bilingual Education Program at OSPI focused on the following priorities in 2020–21:

- Continuing to develop, support, and expand K–12 dual, heritage, and tribal language programs;
- Providing updated program guidance and support for meeting the civil rights requirements for all M/ELs; and
- Providing initial professional learning on the newly adopted [WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](#).

## Program Funding and Expenditures

In addition to basic education funding provided for all students, districts receive TBIP state funds to provide supplemental staffing and resources to support English language development and accessible content instruction for M/ELs.

Funding to districts was based on an October through June average headcount of 126,894 TBIP-eligible students. In the 2020–21 school year, the TBIP reported a 0.02% decrease in students identified for services as compared to the previous school year. Over the 2020–21 school year, TBIP funds provided an average allocation of \$1,350 per eligible multilingual/English learner in grades K–6, \$1,914 per eligible multilingual/English learner in grades 7–12 and \$847 per former multilingual/English learner who exited TBIP within the past two years. Total expenditures to support English language development services across the state were \$249.2 million, of which \$235.4 million was from TBIP funding. This was a 3.4% increase in the total TBIP expenditures from the previous year.

In 2020–21, nearly all the TBIP funding for English language development services was used for instructional activities, with most of the funding dedicated to staffing.

## Staffing and Instruction

In the 2020–21 school year, 3,799 individual staff members (1,990 full time equivalent) funded through TBIP provided instruction and support through the program. Instructional paraeducators represented approximately 38% of the total full-time equivalencies, which is a 4% decrease from the previous year. RCW 28A.180.040 requires all classroom teachers funded through TBIP to hold an endorsement in bilingual education or English language learner, or both, by the beginning of the 2019–20 school year. In 2020–21, 96% of certificated staff funded by TBIP held an English language learner or bilingual education endorsement. Paraeducators may provide the majority of TBIP services to M/ELs in some districts due to a lack of qualified teachers with these endorsements, particularly in smaller districts and more rural areas. Effective supervision of paraeducators and TBIP service coordination by certificated staff with expertise in serving M/ELs is essential to achieving positive student outcomes.

Dual language is the priority educational program model for M/ELs who are eligible for TBIP services. Research indicates that dual language models are substantially more effective in realizing higher academic achievement for M/ELs as well as being the strongest instructional model for closing opportunity gaps for M/ELs. Additionally, students in dual language programs outperform peers on standardized tests in English. About 9% of TBIP students receive dual language or bilingual education. The majority of M/ELs receive support through an English Language Development (ELD) program or through sheltered English instruction.

Washington State currently has 119 schools in 47 districts operating dual language programs. This is an increase of 30 schools, or 34%, beginning dual language education designed for M/ELs and American Indian/Alaska Native students in the past year. Within the next two years, it is estimated that the state will need at least 75–100 bilingual teachers annually to meet the demand for staffing of dual language programs. It is anticipated this annual staffing need will triple within the next five years as about 100 districts are aiming to begin or expand dual language programs.

The circumstances of the pandemic affected many M/EL services as schools had to adapt services to the online environment. This is anticipated to have a significant impact on the productive language skills of speaking and writing, which were more challenging to support virtually. While M/ELs typically are eligible for TBIP services for three to five years, these circumstances might impact the length of time in program in future years. Eligible students remain in the program until they reach proficiency as measured by the annual English language proficiency assessment and lower participation rates on these assessments may also impact the length of time in program.

## English Language Proficiency

M/ELs are assessed annually to determine progress towards English language proficiency. In the 2020–21 school year, TBIP eligible students took the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (ELPA21) or the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities. ELPA21 was first used in 2015–16 and resulted from the adoption of the English Language Proficiency Standards in December 2013. The WIDA Alternate ACCESS was adopted in 2017–18 to comply with Title I, Part A and Title III of the ESSA.

The ELPA21 assessment produces a proficiency status score of Emerging, Progressing, or Proficient.

M/ELs who score at the Emerging and Progressing levels will continue to receive TBIP services. Exit procedures have not yet been established for students taking the WIDA Alternate ACCESS.

When a student achieves proficiency in English on the annual ELPA21 assessment, they exit TBIP. During the following two years, the formerly qualified student is monitored and provided additional academic language and content support as needed. Former M/ELs may re-qualify for TBIP services if the school and family determine additional English language development is necessary for school success.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, English language proficiency assessments were delayed in spring of 2021, and many students remained in virtual schooling during the testing window and were unable to participate. Of students expected to test in the 2020–21 school year, 69.9% (92,992) participated in ELPA21 and WIDA Alternate ACCESS testing, with only about 1% of those who began testing not completing the full assessment.

**Due to the low participation rates of the past two school years, results should not be compared to prior years or be used to measure state, district, and school performance.**

However, students can still exit from program services based on their individual assessment results. In the 2020–21 school year, 11,295 students exited the program or 12.1% of those who tested.

Beginning in the 2021–22 school year, all multilingual/English learners will take the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs or the WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs assessments, after the adoption in 2020 of the new [WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](#). WIDA is a consortium of 41 states focused on providing high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional learning for educators of multilingual learners. The WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework was developed to align with Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.

## English Proficiency and Academic Performance

Washington’s statewide academic assessment instrument, the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA), measures levels of a student’s academic performance against specific statewide performance standards. Students in grades 3–8 are typically assessed on ELA and mathematics with the SBA. M/ELs are required to take the SBA even though they are still in the process of developing the English language skills needed to succeed on these assessments. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessments for the 2020–21 school year were delayed to the fall of 2021. Therefore, no SBA data for M/ELs are available for the 2020–21 school year.

## Academic Achievement of Former English Learners

RCW 28A.180.090 requires OSPI to develop an evaluation system designed to measure increases in the English and academic proficiency of students who are currently eligible for TBIP services and to track the academic progress of former TBIP students until they finish their K–12 career. In prior years, OSPI analyzed student’s academic performance using the Smarter Balanced Assessments. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessments for the 2020–21 school year were delayed to the fall of 2021. Therefore, no SBA data for former M/ELs are available for the 2020–21 school year.



# CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

[Superintendent Reykdal's strategic plan for OSPI](#) includes four goals to provide equitable access to strong foundations, rigorous learner-centered options in every community, a diverse, inclusive, and highly skilled workforce, and a committed, unified, and customer-focused OSPI. These goals are founded on building inclusive, asset-based policies and practices including dual language education programs that close opportunity gaps for multilingual/English learners and American Indian and Alaska Native students.

With these goals in mind, the TBIP work at OSPI in 2021–22 will focus on:

- Supporting the expansion of dual language programs through increased grant funding, additional data and program development resources, and ongoing statewide professional learning and collaboration networks;
- Supporting the development of strong research-based TBIP models for all multilingual/English learners through improved grant processes, direct district support, and establishment of Language Learning Regional Networks;
- Supporting educators in using the newly adopted WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, WIDA assessments, and WIDA professional learning resources;
- Partnering with internal and external stakeholders to increase the bilingual and M/EL educator workforce; and
- Providing clear and consistent information and support for transitional bilingual instruction programs through frequent communication, opportunities for interaction, and timely individualized support to districts.

# REFERENCES

Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC) Annual Report (2018), [RCW 28A.300.136](#), Recommendations and Status of English Language Learner Accountability, p. 31:

[https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/workgroups/eogoac/pubdocs/eogoac-2018\\_legislative\\_report.pdf](https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/workgroups/eogoac/pubdocs/eogoac-2018_legislative_report.pdf)

English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21): <http://www.elpa21.org/>.

TBIP Accountability Task Force Report (2015):

[https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/workgroups/tbip/pubdocs/tbip\\_taskforce\\_report2015.pdf](https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/workgroups/tbip/pubdocs/tbip_taskforce_report2015.pdf)

Transitional Bilingual Instruction Act (1979), Revised Code of Washington Chapter 28A.180:

<https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.180>. Washington Administrative Code, rules for the implementation of TBIP, Chapter 392-160 WAC:

<https://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=392-160>.

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs: <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/access>

WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs: <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/alt-access>.

WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition:

<https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld>.

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