



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP)

2024

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

Matthew Frizzell

**Assistant Superintendent of Office of System and
School Improvement at OSPI**

Prepared by:

- **Kristin Percy Calaff**, Director of Multilingual Education
kristin.percycalaff@k12.wa.us | 564-999-3144
- **Virginia Morales**, Assistant Director of Multilingual Education
virginia.morales@k12.wa.us | 564-669-1179
- **Emily Scott**, Assistant Director of Data and Implementation
emily.scott@k12.wa.us | 564-669-1359
- **T.J. Kelly**, Chief Financial Officer
thomas.kelly@k12.wa.us | 360-725-6301

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

During the 2023–24 school year, 165,662 students were identified as MLs. Enrollment was highest in urban areas in the western part of the state and in the Yakima Valley.

Students served by TBIP in 2023–24 spoke 266 different home languages. The most identified language was Spanish, spoken by 59% of students. The top ten languages spoken by multilingual students in Washington’s public schools are Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Dari, Arabic, Marshallese, Mandarin Chinese, Somali, and Pashto.

MLs are typically eligible for TBIP services for five to six years. Services are provided through a variety of programs including additional support in general education classrooms, specialized sheltered classes for MLs, and dual language or bilingual programs.

In 2023–24, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Multilingual Education Department focused on the expansion of K–12 dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs, implementing strong research-based program models and supports using the newly developed [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#), and supporting educators in using the [WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](#) and WIDA assessments.

WIDA is a 41-state consortium that provides 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 core content standards in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Each year, MLs take an English language proficiency assessment to measure their growth and determine their readiness to exit TBIP services. In the 2023–24 school year, eligible students took the [WIDA ACCESS](#) assessment and students with significant cognitive disabilities took the [WIDA Alternate ACCESS](#). In the 2023–24 school year, 143,338 students (86.5%) participated in the WIDA annual assessment, and 12,978 students (9.1%) exited the program.

OSPI established additional exit criteria which took effect for the 2024 annual assessment. Students typically must achieve an overall score of 4.0 in grades K-1 and a score of 4.7 in grades 2–12 to demonstrate proficiency and exit TBIP services. Starting in 2024, students in grades 3–12 who scored between a 4.3 and 4.6 and earned a level 3 or 4 on the English language arts (ELA) portion of the SBA test also exited services.

Total expenditures to support English language development services across the state were \$271.1 million, of which \$242.8 million was from TBIP funding. This was an 11% 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 \(SB\) 2149](#) in 1979, and is codified in the [Revised Code of Washington \(RCW\) 28A.180](#). Rules created by OSPI for the implementation of TBIP are found in Washington Administrative Code ([WAC](#)) [392-160](#).

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 learners (MLs). 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 MLs 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 MLs 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, starting in the 2019–20 school year.

UPDATE STATUS

Multilingual Learners Served

In the 2023–24 school year, the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) served 165,662 students, a 10.9% increase (16,305 students) over the previous year.

- TBIP distinct count (students counted once, regardless of multiple enrollments) was 166,979 minus 1,317 parent waivers for a total of 165,662.
- TBIP headcount (number of students enrolled on October 1, 2023) was 157,472 minus 1,317 parent waivers for a total of 156,155.
- Multilingual Learners (MLs) comprised 15.3% of the statewide student population on October 1, 2023. This was 1.9 percentage points higher than the previous year.

Of Washington’s 332 districts, 248 reported ML enrollments. Among districts with MLs:

- 43 districts enrolled more than 1,000 MLs. These districts collectively served 80.3% of all MLs enrolled in the TBIP statewide.
- 66 districts enrolled 500 or more MLs.
- 86 districts enrolled fewer than 50 MLs.
- 32 districts enrolled fewer than 10 MLs.

Languages

Students served by TBIP in 2023–24 spoke 266 different home languages. The most identified language was Spanish, spoken by 59% of students. The top ten languages spoken by multilingual students in Washington’s public schools were Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Dari, Arabic, Marshallese, Mandarin Chinese, Somali, and Pashto.

Time in Program

The mean time in program for students served in the TBIP in 2023–24 was nearly six years (5.9). Newly eligible MLs represented 20.5% of total TBIP enrollment in 2023–24, a decrease of 1.6% in the last year. Washington continued to have an influx of new students arriving from Afghanistan (5,550) and from Ukraine (7,667) in the past year. MLs who are still receiving TBIP services after five years are referred to as Long-Term English Learners (LTELs) and made up 33.6% of all MLs in 2023–24. Pandemic learning loss may be continuing to affect time in program.

Staffing and Instruction

In the 2023–24 school year, 3,831 individual staff members funded through TBIP provided instruction and support through the program. Instructional paraeducators represented approximately 37.7% of the total full-time equivalencies. OSPI continues to work with districts to ensure that TBIP funds are used for supplemental positions *only*, and not to supplant basic education funding for teachers of record for ML classes.

[RCW 28A.180.040](#) requires all classroom teachers funded through TBIP to hold an English Language Learner or Bilingual endorsement. In 2023–24, 93.6% of certificated staff funded by TBIP held one of the required endorsements. OSPI contacted all districts that were out of compliance with this requirement to develop a plan for ensuring all TBIP staff hold the necessary endorsement.

Language Instruction Programs

Most districts in Washington use a Supportive Mainstream model in which students access grade-level content and English language development through participation in general education classes with small groups or individual supports provided by TBIP staff or classroom teachers with specialized training. OSPI encourages districts with these models to move toward inclusive services through co-planning and co-teaching, rather than using traditional pull-out instruction for MLs.

In some districts with higher numbers of MLs, more recently arrived students may receive Sheltered Content-Based Instruction in classes that are specially designed for MLs. There are also a growing number of Dual Language Programs which are the most effective instructional models for MLs.

Dual Language Programs

Dual language is the priority educational program model for MLs who are eligible for TBIP services. Research indicates that dual language models are substantially more effective in realizing higher academic achievement and closing opportunity gaps for MLs. Additionally, students in dual language programs outperform peers on standardized tests in English.

In 2023–24, Washington had 142 schools in 40 districts operating dual language programs, and 43 schools in 24 districts and state-Tribal compact schools operating Tribal language programs. An additional 97 schools in 44 districts operated heritage language programs. These programs are designed for multilingual learners and American Indian/Alaska Native students and support home language maintenance, English language development, and development of a second language for English speakers.

Dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs continue to grow at a rate of 10–15 schools per year. At least 200 or more bilingual teachers will be needed annually over the next decade to staff dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs as many schools and districts aim to begin or expand programs.

OSPI Support and Stakeholder Engagement

In 2023–24, OSPI staff focused on providing technical assistance to districts to support program development and continuous improvement for multilingual learner programs. OSPI provides districts with student outcome data, disaggregated by various groups including LTELs, MLs with disabilities, and exited students, so districts can analyze their data and evaluate the effectiveness of their program.

OSPI staff continue to support districts in reviewing the data they have and proposing changes to instructional models to more effectively serve all eligible MLs through use of various resources and tools available on the [TBIP website](#).

With feedback from the statewide Multilingual Education Advisory Committee, Dual Language Steering Committee, and newly formed Multilingual Family Advisory Committee, the OSPI Multilingual Education Department focused on the following priorities in 2023–24:

- Supporting the expansion of K–12 dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs.
- Implementing strong research-based program models and supports for MLs and their families using the newly developed [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#).
- Supporting educators in using the [WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](#) and WIDA assessments.

These priorities included providing monthly information sessions to district leaders that included professional learning on special topics. OSPI also worked in partnership with Educational Service Districts to continue Language Learning Regional Networks (LLRNs) which engage school and district language educators and leaders in professional learning communities. Networks focused largely on continued implementation of the WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework and on developing collaboration and co-planning practices to meet the needs of multilingual learners.

English Language Proficiency

MLs are assessed annually to determine progress towards English language proficiency (ELP). In the 2023–24 school year, eligible students took the [WIDA ACCESS](#) assessment or [WIDA Alternate ACCESS](#) for students with significant cognitive disabilities to measure their annual growth and determine proficiency. When a student attains proficiency in English, the student exits TBIP services. During the following two years, formerly qualified students are monitored and provided with additional academic support as needed. Former MLs may re-qualify for TBIP services if the school and family determine additional English language development is necessary for school success.

WIDA, which was once an acronym for the original three states in the WIDA Consortium, now includes 41 states, territories, and federal agencies. WIDA provides high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional learning for educators of multilingual learners. The [WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](#), was developed to align with core content standards in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

In the 2023–24 school year, 143,338 students (86.5%) participated in the WIDA annual assessment, and 12,978 students (9.1%) exited the program. Families and students continue to opt out of testing at higher rates than pre-pandemic in the secondary grades. OSPI conducted further review of data in 2023 and established additional exit criteria which took effect for the 2024 annual assessment. Students must achieve an overall score of 4.0 in grades K-1 and a score of 4.7 in grades 2–12 to demonstrate proficiency and exit TBIP services. Starting in 2024, students in grades 3–12 who scored between a 4.3 and 4.6 and earned a level 3 or 4 on the English language arts (ELA) portion of the SBA test also exited services.

Table 1 shows the number and percentage of students who reached proficiency and exited services.

Table 1: 2024 WIDA ACCESS Assessment Data

Grade Level	Number Tested	Percent Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
Kindergarten	13,208	89.16%	1,295	9.80%
1	13,497	95.47%	957	7.09%
2	14,758	95.78%	385	2.61%
3	15,126	96.25%	1,490	9.85%
4	15,116	96.98%	3,729	24.67%
5	12,374	96.20%	2,417	19.53%
6	10,293	93.45%	357	3.47%
7	10,151	93.74%	536	5.28%
8	9,219	92.50%	527	5.72%
9	8,740	86.67%	337	3.86%
10	7,990	83.87%	492	6.16%
11	6,881	77.81%	332	4.82%
12	5,985	69.01%	124	2.07%
TOTAL	143,338	86.50%	12,978	9.10%

Source: OSPI data; Spring 2024 ELP assessment score files, November 2024

English Proficiency and Academic Performance

Washington’s statewide academic assessment, the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA), measures a student’s academic performance against state content standards. Students in grades 3–8 and 10 are typically assessed in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics with the SBA. MLs are federally required to take the SBA, even though they are still in the process of developing English proficiency. There is a one-year exemption for the ELA assessment for newly arrived MLs only.

Tables 2 and 3 show the number and percentage of current MLs and proficient MLs, based on the 2024 WIDA ACCESS, who met or exceeded standard on the ELA and mathematics SBA tests.

Table 2: ELA Achievement of Current MLs and Proficient MLs Based on the 2024 WIDA ACCESS and State Average

Grade Level	Current MLs Met or Exceeded Standard	Current MLs Percent Met or Exceeded Standard	Proficient MLs Met or Exceeded Standard	Proficient MLs Percent Met or Exceeded Standard	Statewide Met or Exceeded Standard
3	3,290	23.18%	1,383	42.04%	48.90%
4	3,261	22.90%	2,636	80.83%	49.66%
5	1,866	16.01%	1,441	77.22%	53.60%
6	753	7.84%	281	37.32%	48.12%
7	1,010	10.74%	443	43.86%	51.87%
8	741	8.67%	403	54.39%	49.81%
10	1,102	15.43%	406	36.84%	66.23%

Source: OSPI data; Spring 2024 ELP and ELA/Math assessment score files, November 2024

Table 3: Math Achievement of Current MLs and Proficient MLs Based on the 2024 WIDA ACCESS and State Average

Grade Level	Current MLs Met or Exceeded Standard	Current MLs Percent Met or Exceeded Standard	Proficient MLs Met or Exceeded Standard	Proficient MLs Percent Met or Exceeded Standard	Statewide Met or Exceeded Standard
3	4,286	29.91%	1,250	29.16%	52.50%
4	3,684	25.63%	2,318	62.92%	49.01%
5	1,492	12.74%	876	58.71%	42.95%
6	733	7.60%	184	25.10%	38.84%
7	805	8.51%	276	34.29%	39.70%
8	553	6.44%	199	35.99%	35.59%
10	403	5.66%	153	37.97%	33.42%

Source: OSPI data; Spring 2024 ELP and ELA/Math assessment score files, November 2024

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. Former MLs typically outperform the statewide average of students who meet or exceed standard in ELA and mathematics. Students who transitioned in 2020 (4 years after transition in 2024) and 2021 (3 years after transition in 2024) may have been affected by pandemic learning loss as trends usually show increased performance for MLs in each year after transitioning.

Table 4 shows data on the number and percentage of former MLs who met or exceeded standard on the ELA and mathematics SBA tests in 2024.

Table 4: 2024 ELA and Mathematics Achievement of Former MLs

Group	Met or Exceeded Standard in ELA	Percent Met or Exceeded Standard in ELA	Met or Exceeded Standard in Mathematics	Percent Met or Exceeded Standard in Mathematics
All Students	282,773	52.6%	223,341	41.7%
Current MLs	12,023	16.1%	11,956	15.9%
Proficient MLs	6,994	74.5%	5,257	56.1%
1 Year After Transition	3,370	69.6%	2,828	58.5%
2 Years After Transition	3,146	79.6%	2,857	72.3%
3 Years After Transition	5,192	65.1%	4,352	54.7%
4 Years After Transition	5,670	58.2%	4,119	42.4%

Source: OSPI data; Spring 2024 ELP and ELA/Math assessment score files, November 2024

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 MLs. Funding to districts was based on an October through June average headcount of 153,675 TBIP-eligible students in the 2023-24 school year, which is a 7.2% increase as compared to the previous school year.

Over the 2023–24 school year, TBIP funds provided an average allocation of \$1,438.51 per eligible ML in grades K–6, \$2,040.64 per eligible ML in grades 7–12 and \$903.21 per former ML who exited TBIP within the past two years. Total expenditures to support English language development services across the state were \$287.6 million, of which \$262 million was from TBIP funding. This was a 6% increase in the total TBIP expenditures from the previous year. In 2023–24, nearly all the TBIP funding for English language development services was used for instructional activities, with most of the funding dedicated to staffing.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

[Superintendent Reykdal's vision and priorities for OSPI](#) include 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 MLs and Native American students.

The OSPI Multilingual Education Advisory Committee developed a [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#) that establishes specific goals and key actions at the state, district, school, and classroom level to support MLs that align with the Superintendent's plan. These include:

- **Promoting asset-based mindsets** by demonstrating a belief that all MLs can learn and excel in school, ensuring safe and supportive learning environments, and expanding dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs.
- **Strengthening instructional practices** by providing high-quality instruction and assessment and implementing inclusionary practices to increase high school graduation rates of current and former MLs.
- **Providing support for educators** by using funding and resources to support inclusive service models, providing professional learning on effective strategies, and requiring all educators to have the knowledge and skills to support MLs in their classrooms.
- **Engaging multilingual students and families** by communicating effectively, elevating their voices, and partnering with community organizations.

This plan will guide the ongoing work and priorities for the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program in 2024–25 and beyond.

REFERENCES

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>.

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://ospi.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/2023-10/eogoac-2018_legislativereport.pdf

OSPI (2023): [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#)

WIDA English Language Development Standards Framework, 2020 Edition: <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld>

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

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

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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Chris Reykdal | State Superintendent
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building | P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200