



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Dual & Tribal Language Expansion Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over 30 years of research have shown that the most effective instructional models for multilingual learners are dual language programs which develop bilingualism and biliteracy, boost academic achievement, and foster sociocultural competence ([Collier & Thomas, 2020](#); [Lindholm-Leary, 2020](#)).

Washington's dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs have grown rapidly in the past 10 years:

- 44 districts have dual language programs in 141 schools including programs in Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, and Japanese.
- 36 schools including eight State Tribal Education Compact (STEC) schools have programs in 17 Tribal languages.
- 47 districts have heritage language programs in 88 schools in Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Somali, Marshallese, Korean, Hindi, French, and Mixteco.

Many districts would benefit from beginning new dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs:

- 72 districts with higher numbers of multilingual learners could benefit from planning and launching new one-way or two-way dual language programs.
- 180 additional districts may want to consider starting a world language immersion program, including nearly 100 districts with multilingual students who would benefit.
- Many districts would also benefit from additional heritage or Tribal language programs.

Annual funding for dual, heritage, and Tribal language grants in the past three years has ranged from about \$3–5 million and the needs will continue to increase over the next five years with \$6–8 million needed annually to support this program growth.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will continue to support the expansion of dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs by:

- Identifying districts that would benefit and encouraging them to begin planning programs.
- Providing guidance and resources for planning, expanding, and strengthening dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs.
- Leveraging expertise across the state through the Dual Language Steering Committee.
- Facilitating professional learning communities and regional networks to support professional development and collaboration among program leaders and educators.
- Managing grants and providing technical support from a team with specific expertise in dual, heritage, and Tribal language instruction and program development.

While efforts are underway to increase the bilingual educator pipeline, more support from the Legislature may be needed to replicate promising practices such as incentives, certification requirements, and residency models that can increase the number of Bilingual-endorsed teachers to staff these programs.

BACKGROUND

Dual Language Overview

Dual language programs, which teach content, language, and literacy in English and in another language, are designed to close opportunity gaps for student groups who have been traditionally underserved. These programs in Washington prioritize multilingual learners or Native American students but are also effective for all students. The goals of the program are to:

- Become bilingual and biliterate.
- Attain high academic achievement in all content areas.
- Develop sociocultural competence.

Most programs begin in kindergarten and continue through middle or high school to fully develop bilingualism and biliteracy.

Program Types & Models

The following types of dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs serve different groups of students in Washington.

- **Two-way dual language program types** enroll a balance of multilingual learners, including native speakers of the program language, and native English-speaking students.
- **One-way dual language program types** enroll mostly multilingual learners, including native or heritage speakers of the program language.
- **World language immersion program types** enroll mostly native English-speaking students. Some multilingual learners may participate, but typically make up less than a third of the class.
- **Heritage language program types** serve students who speak less commonly taught languages or have experienced language loss. Programs can also support students in schools where a full dual language program may not be feasible.
- **Tribal language program types** serve Native American students in STEC schools and in public schools in collaboration with local Tribes.

Dual language program models use the program language for at least half of the school day or at least two class periods per day at the secondary level. Heritage and Tribal language models vary in length, but typically provide at least 60–90 minutes of instruction in the program language per day.

- **90/10 or 80/20 dual language program models** begin in kindergarten with 80–90% of the school day in the partner language and 10–20% in English. English instruction is increased each year by about 10% until students have 50% of instruction in each language. Research shows these to be the most effective dual language models.

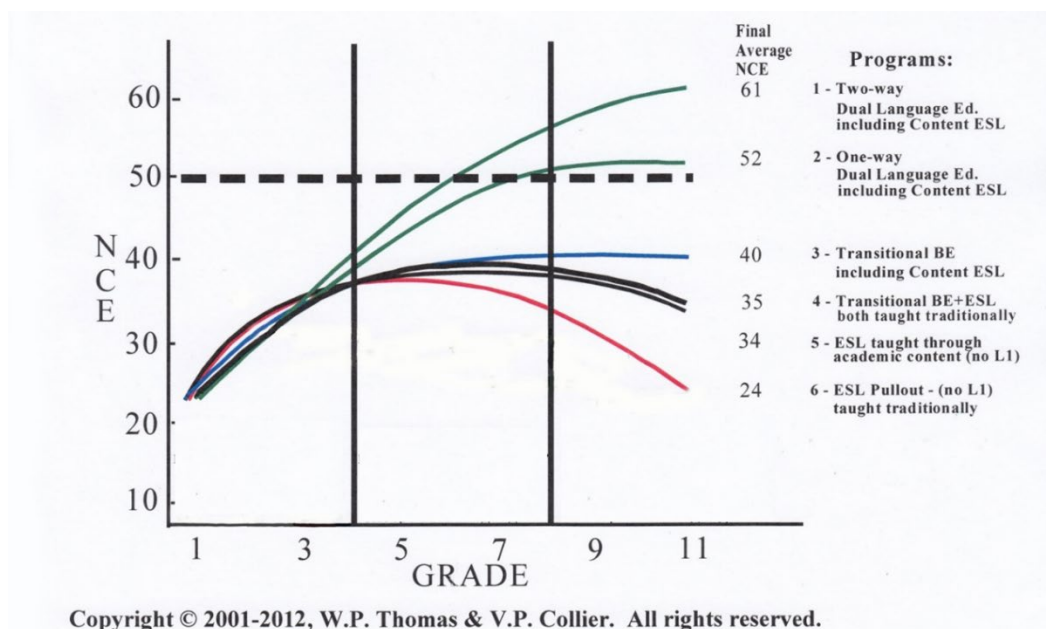
- **50/50 dual language program models** provide 50% of instruction in the program language and 50% in English beginning in kindergarten and continuing through middle or high school. These programs are also effective but may take longer for students to reach high levels of proficiency in the program language.
- **Heritage language program models** are similarly designed to support bilingualism and biliteracy for community languages that may include less commonly taught languages. Students typically have 60–90 minutes per day of instruction in the heritage language with a focus on development of language, literacy, and culture.
- **Tribal language program models** are planned and developed in collaboration and consultation with Tribal leaders to support the revitalization of Tribal languages. Programs vary in length and typically focus on the development of language, literacy, and culture including Tribal ways of knowing. These programs are taught by teachers who are certified by the Tribe and hold a First People's Language and Culture certificate which is recognized by the state.

Dual Language Research Outcomes

Over 30 years of research have shown that the most effective instructional models for multilingual learners are dual language programs ([Collier & Thomas, 2020](#); [Lindholm-Leary, 2020](#)).

Figure 1 represents data from Thomas and Collier's research which analyzed over eight million student records across the United States. Multilingual learners in both one-way and two-way dual language programs performed above the 50th percentile in standardized English reading comprehension, scoring higher than any other type of program and higher than the average of native English-speaking students.

Figure 1: English Learners' Long-Term Achievement on Reading Tests by Program Model (Thomas & Collier, 2012)



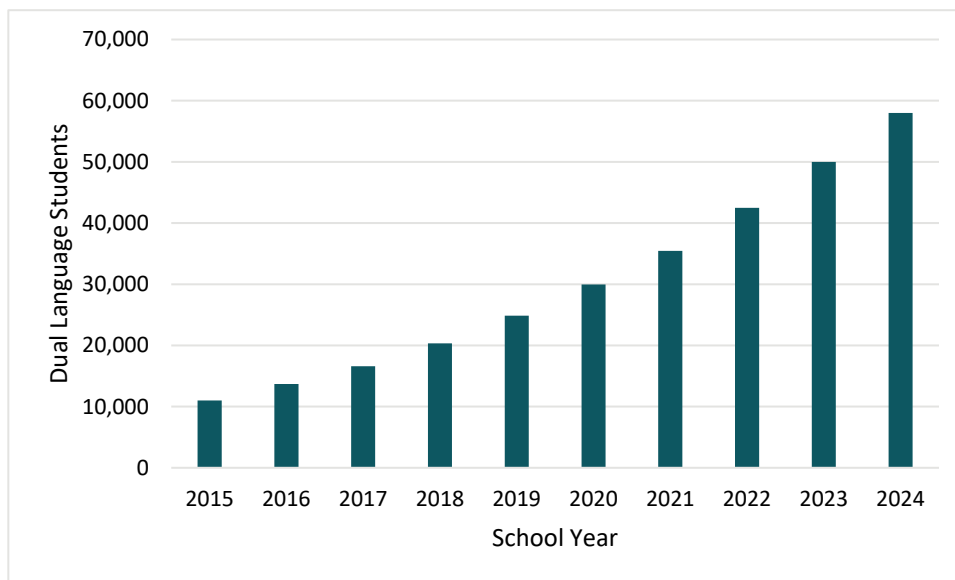
Dual Language in Washington

While bilingual programs have existed in Washington since the 1970's, many programs were initially designed as early or late-exit models that used students' home languages to support English development, but did not continue into middle and high school to develop full bilingualism and biliteracy.

Dual Language Growth

Two-way dual language programs have grown rapidly over the past 10 years in Washington as families have learned the benefits of these programs for both multilingual learners and fluent English speakers, and state funding has increased to support planning and expansion. Figure 2 shows the growth of these programs from 10,000 to nearly 60,000 students in the past 10 years.

Figure 2: Number of Students in Washington Dual Language Programs, 2015–2024



Legislative Support for Dual Language

In 2017, the Washington State Legislature established a proviso for dual, heritage, and Tribal language seed grants to support the planning, implementation, and expansion of these programs. This proviso provided \$1,425,000 per year for grants from 2018–2025. Additionally, OSPI supplemented these grants using state-level funds from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund from 2021–2023, providing \$10 million in funding for these two years.

During the 2023–2025 biennial budget, the Legislature allowed OSPI to use carryover from the ESSER Fund to continue support for these programs through 2024 and allocated an additional \$3,300,000 for the 2024–2025 school year to maintain annual funding at close to \$5 million per year. Figure 3 shows the total annual funding for dual, heritage, and Tribal language grants from 2016–2024.

Figure 3: Dual, Heritage, and Tribal Language Grant Funds 2016–2024

	2016– 2017	2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2019– 2020	2020– 2021	2021– 2022*	2022– 2023	2023– 2024
Dual	\$150,000	\$162,000	\$717,000	\$948,000	\$564,710	\$6,495,500	\$722,800	\$1,260,000
Heritage						\$853,953	\$200,000	\$495,000
Tribal		\$38,000	\$244,000	\$270,000	\$361,634	\$2,589,500	\$300,000	\$815,000
TOTAL	\$150,000	\$200,000	\$961,000	\$1,218,000	\$926,344	\$9,938,953	\$1,222,800	\$2,570,000

* Districts received two-year grants in 2021-22 that continued into the following year.

PROGRAM EXPANSION

Current Programs

There are currently 44 districts with dual language programs and 141 dual language schools in Washington. Figure 4 lists the number of programs in each language at the elementary, middle, and high school level. Some schools have programs in more than one language. Districts with languages other than Spanish include Bellevue, Highline, Pasco, Seattle, and Vancouver.

Figure 4: Current Dual Language Programs

Language	Number of Districts	Elementary School Programs	Middle School Programs	High School Programs
Spanish	44	100	27	12
Chinese-Mandarin	3	4	3	2
Japanese	1	2	1	
Russian	1	4		
Vietnamese	1	1	1	
5 languages	44 districts*	111 elementary school programs	32 middle school programs	14 high school programs

* Some districts have programs in more than one language.

Currently 47 districts have heritage language programs in 88 schools in Spanish, Arabic, ASL, Mandarin Chinese, French, Hindi, Korean, Marshallese, Mixteco, Somali, and Vietnamese. These languages represent many of the top languages in Washington. Figure 5 lists the languages of instruction and the number of districts and schools with heritage language programs. Languages other than Spanish are located in the Bellevue, Highline, Mount Vernon, Puyallup, Seattle, and Spokane districts.

Figure 5: Current Heritage Language Programs

Language	Number of Districts	Number of Schools
Spanish	44	76
Arabic	1	2
ASL	1	1
Chinese – Mandarin	1	1
French	1	1
Hindi	1	1
Korean	1	1
Marshallese	1	1
Mixteco	1	1
Somali	2	4
Vietnamese	1	1
11 languages	47 districts*	88 schools

* Some districts have programs in more than one language.

There are 36 Tribal language programs in Washington. Figure 6 lists the Tribe, language, and number of current public and State Tribal Education Compact (STEC) schools with Tribal language programs.

Figure 6: Current Tribal Language Programs

Tribe	Language(s)	Number of Schools
Colville	Nselxcin, Nxa?amixcín	6
Kalispel	Salish	2
Klallam	Kallam	2
Lummi	Lummi	3
Makah	Makah	2
Muckleshoot	Muckleshoot	1
Nisqually – Frank's Landing Indian Community	Quilshootseed	1
Puyallup	Lushootseed	1
Quileute	Quileute	1
Spokane	Salish	3
Suquamish	Lushootseed	1
Swinomish	Lushootseed	1
Tulalip	Lushootseed	3
Yakama	Ichiskiin, Sahaptin	9
14 Tribes	17 languages	36 schools

Potential Programs

Designing dual language programs for success and sustainability requires significant district cross-departmental planning, board support, and extensive collaboration with families, community members, and educators. For that reason, OSPI recommends that districts spend two to three years in the planning stage with grant support in preparation for launching a dual language program. Districts with dual language grants are also required to establish a Dual Language Advisory Board to guide program development.

Districts with over 25 kindergarten multilingual learners (K MLs) from one language group can immediately benefit from implementing a one-way or two-way dual language program. Districts with 10–24 K ML students from one language group could implement a single-strand program with one class at each grade level or may need to provide transportation to bring students together to implement two-way dual language. Districts with 1–9 K ML students or those with no ML students may want to consider a world language immersion program. Figure 7 identifies the number of districts with each of these demographics and how many have current planning grants.

Figure 7: Potential Districts for Dual Language Programs

Number of K students from one language group	Number of Districts	Number with Planning Grant	Possible Program
25+ K ML students within or across one or more schools	29	8	One-way or two-way dual language
10–24 K ML students across schools	43	3	Two-way dual language
1–9 K ML students across schools	99	2	World language immersion with some MLs
No K ML students	81	0	World language immersion

In some communities, starting with a heritage language program can be a step towards building awareness about the benefits of maintaining home languages. Heritage language programs are also beneficial for supporting less commonly taught languages for which there are not enough students or resources to sustain a full dual language program. Many of the districts above may benefit from starting heritage programs.

There are currently 12 districts that are collaborating with local Tribes to plan new Tribal language programs in Washington. There may be additional districts and schools with students who would benefit from Tribal language programs in the future as well.

Program Funding

There are typically 15–20 districts per year that are in the planning stages for beginning dual or heritage language programs. There are also currently 12 districts collaborating with local Tribes to begin Tribal language programs. These districts often need at least \$25,000–\$50,000 per year in grant funds to support their planning work with the final year before launching requiring more funding to support purchase of curricular and instructional materials.

There are currently about 40 districts that are expanding dual language programs as they roll up to higher grades and/or add additional schools to their programs. There are also 36 public and STEC schools that are actively implementing Tribal language programs that need ongoing support. Current programs typically need \$50,000–\$75,000 per year in grant funds to support development and expansion work until they are fully implemented.

During the grant period, it is important for districts and STEC schools to plan for sustainable funding sources including use of Basic Education, Title I, Title III, and Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) funds to cover the ongoing costs of staffing, professional development, materials, and resources once the program is fully implemented.

District and STEC schools have expressed their preference for two-year grant cycles which provide more flexibility for use of the funds and allow time for sufficient community and advisory board input. Figure 9 shows anticipated needs for grant funds in the next five years from 2025–2030.

Figure 9: Anticipated Grant Funding Needs 2025–2030

Year	DL Planning	DL Expanding	Heritage Grants	Tribal Grants	Total Grants	Estimated Cost
2025–26	15	40	15	35	105	\$5,250,000
2026–27	15	45	15	35	110	\$5,500,000
2027–28	15	50	15	40	120	\$6,000,000
2028–29	15	55	20	\$6	130	\$6,500,000
2029–30	15	60	20	45	140	\$7,000,000

OSPI TECHNICAL SUPPORT

OSPI's Multilingual Education team provides guidance, planning resources, professional development and technical assistance for districts that are planning, expanding, and implementing dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs. The team also facilitates the Washington State Dual Language Steering Committee that provides input and support for ongoing expansion plans.

Guidance & Resources

The OSPI [Dual Language Program Guide](#), which is based on the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) Guiding Principles ([CAL, 2018](#)). It provides step-by-step guidance on how to plan and implement effective programs. The guide includes eight steps for developing strong dual language programs:

- 1) Build knowledge and advocacy.
- 2) Develop a program mission, vision, and goals.
- 3) Design or adopt a dual language program model.
- 4) Develop enrollment and family outreach plans.
- 5) Align curriculum and resources.
- 6) Establish a staffing and professional learning plan.
- 7) Implement effective instructional practices.
- 8) Develop a plan for assessment and program evaluation.

The guide is accompanied by a [Dual Language Program Planning Checklist](#) that districts can use for action planning as they work through the steps in the Program Guide.

OSPI also maintains a [Dual Language Education and Resources webpage](#) which includes information and resources for leaders and educators such as:

- OSPI-sponsored professional learning communities and workshops to support K–12 dual language program planning, implementation, and expansion.
- Biliteracy standards to support Spanish/English dual language programs.
- Videos, tools, and resources for effective, sustainable dual language programs.

OSPI also provides the [Dual Language Education in Washington: What Families Should Know](#) webpage which includes information for families with frequently asked questions, tips for supporting their children, and a step-by-step guide to the listing of programs in the state. Many districts use this information to develop their own webpages and resources.

Professional Learning

Districts that are actively planning, expanding, and implementing dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs need ongoing support as they strive to develop strong, research-based program models that are implemented effectively and will achieve the expected student outcomes.

In the past five years, OSPI has provided professional development and support in the following areas:

- Dual, Heritage, and Tribal language program planning and development, including support for less commonly taught languages.
- Biliteracy development and early literacy instruction in Spanish.
- Use of English and Spanish language development standards to support content, language, and literacy integration.
- Book studies on collaboration, co-planning, and co-teaching in dual language.
- Collaboration of institutes of higher education to support bilingual educator development.

In the next five years, OSPI will continue to provide regular professional learning communities to support leaders and educators in these programs. Plans include:

- Regular virtual statewide professional development and professional learning communities and networks for both elementary and secondary dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs.
- 4–8 dual language school visits per year with 20–30 participants at each visit to allow new and expanding programs to observe successful models.
- Facilitation of additional in-person professional development and local networking opportunities to support collaboration across schools and districts.
- Continued collaboration with institutes of higher education and districts to support pre-service and in-service bilingual educator development.

State Leadership and Technical Assistance

Districts that are actively planning, expanding, and implementing dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs need consistent and ongoing support as they strive to develop strong, research-based program models that are implemented effectively and will achieve the expected student outcomes.

Data Systems

OSPI is working on developing data systems to support program evaluation, expansion efforts, and continuous improvement of dual language programs. These systems include:

- Educator and family surveys for districts to collect feedback on program implementation and develop goals for improvement.
- Accurate identification of students in dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs to be able to provide district and statewide data on student outcomes.
- Educator data systems that can identify teachers and teacher candidates with bilingual skills.

To improve student outcome data, another important need is statewide testing for program language skills including reading, writing, speaking, and listening in Spanish and other languages.

Current OSPI Staffing

OSPI's Multilingual Education team currently assigns specific Dual Language Program Supervisors to provide technical assistance and support to each district that is planning or expanding a dual or heritage language program to ensure high quality program development and instruction. The team has two full-time positions to support this work.

OSPI's Office of Native Education also provides a Tribal Language Program Supervisor to provide technical assistance and support to districts and STEC schools that are planning or implementing a Tribal language program.

Future Staffing Needs

To ensure that dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs are designed and implemented effectively and in alignment with research-based practices and Tribal consultation requirements, OSPI will continue to need staffing to support this work. Currently there are three full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for Dual, Heritage, and Tribal Language program support.

The OSPI Dual Language and Tribal Language positions are each designed to support 15–25 programs with grant management, program development, professional learning support, and ongoing technical assistance. Given the current demands in the field, the following chart in Figure 10 shows anticipated staffing needs for 2025–2030.

Figure 10: OSPI Staffing Needs to Support Dual, Heritage, and Tribal Language Programs

Year	Number of Programs (Planning & Continuing)	OSPI Staffing Needed	Estimated Cost
2025–26	105	4 FTE	\$671,000
2026–27	110	5 FTE	\$783,000
2027–28	120	5 FTE	\$783,000
2028–29	130	6 FTE	\$939,000
2029–30	140	6 FTE	\$939,000

BILINGUAL EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT

The need for bilingual educators to support dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs continues to remain one of the greatest challenges of program development and expansion. In 2023–24, only 680 teachers held a Bilingual endorsement, and only 63% of them were working in Washington schools. These numbers have remained largely unchanged for the past five years. Figure 11 shows the number of Bilingual endorsed teachers in Washington over the past five years.

Figure 11: Bilingual Endorsed Teachers in Washington

	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Bilingual endorsed	692	726	703	683	680
Bilingual endorsed and working in Washington schools	453	465	460	435	430

Most teachers in dual language programs do not hold a Bilingual endorsement which includes pedagogical knowledge and specific language proficiency requirements. Because this endorsement is not currently a state requirement to teach in a dual language program, there is inconsistency in how language proficiency for dual language educators is determined within local programs. Districts may use interviews, local language screening, or proficiency tests to assess candidates' language skills and each district sets its own criteria for qualification.

The Professional Educator Standards Board is currently engaging a workgroup of experts to examine language proficiency requirements for the Bilingual endorsement and make recommendations about the required language level for dual language teachers. The workgroup is also examining alignment between teacher preparation standards for the English Language Learner and Bilingual endorsements to recommend a course of action to boost the number of Bilingual endorsed teachers.

More support from the Legislature may be needed to replicate promising practices for preparation, recruitment, and retention of bilingual educators. These include:

- Requirements for bilingual educators to hold a Bilingual endorsement that ensures strong pedagogical knowledge and consistent language proficiency.
- Residency programs that allow teaching candidates to work and earn a salary while training to become a bilingual teacher.
- Stipends or financial incentives for bilingual teachers and paraeducators.

CONCLUSION

OSPI is committed to expanding the number of dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs in Washington which build on the linguistic diversity of our state and provide students with the academic and linguistic skills to excel in a global society. To achieve the goal of all districts implementing programs by 2040 if they so choose, OSPI intends to:

- Identify and encourage districts with multilingual learners and Native American students to implement dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs.
- Provide guidance and resources for program planning and effective implementation.
- Provide grant funding and technical support for new and expanding programs.
- Facilitate professional learning communities, school visits, and collaboration opportunities.
- Develop data systems to support program evaluation and continuous improvement.

With ongoing support and funding from the Washington State Legislature, OSPI is prepared to provide expert guidance and assistance to districts and STEC schools in developing and implementing programs that will help Washington students become bilingual and biliterate citizens of the world.

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