



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP)

2025

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

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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 2024–25 school year, 167,665 students were identified as multilingual learners. These students spoke 285 different home languages. The most common language was Spanish, spoken by 58.3% of students. The top ten languages, in order, were Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Dari, Vietnamese, Arabic, Marshallese, Mandarin Chinese, Somali, and Pashto.

In the 2024–25 school year, total expenditures to support English language development services across the state were \$314 million, of which \$293.3 million was from TBIP funding. There were 3,929 individual staff members funded through TBIP that provided instruction and support, and 94% of certificated staff funded by TBIP held one of the required English Language Learner or Bilingual endorsements.

MLs typically are eligible for TBIP services for four to six years until they attain proficiency in English. Each year, these students take an English language proficiency assessment to measure their growth in English. In the 2024–25 school year, eligible students took the WIDA ACCESS assessment or WIDA Alternate ACCESS to measure their annual growth.

WIDA, which was once an acronym for the original three states in the consortium, provides high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional learning for educators in 42 states, territories, and federal agencies, including Washington. The WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework was developed to align with national and state content standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

In the 2024–25 school year, 149,433 students (86.7%) participated in the WIDA annual assessment, and 13,720 students (8.3%) exited the program. Within the WIDA Consortium, each state sets its own exit criteria. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) conducted further review of data in 2023 and established additional exit criteria to include both WIDA and Smarter Balanced Assessment scores which took effect in 2024.

OSPI's Multilingual Education Advisory Committee developed a [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#) that includes goals, strategies, and action steps at the state, district, school, and classroom level to support MLs and expand dual language education programs. The OSPI Multilingual Education team prioritized professional learning, guidance, and technical assistance to districts in the 2024–25 school year that supported teachers and leaders in meeting these goals. This plan will continue to guide ongoing work and priorities for the TBIP in 2025–26 and beyond.

BACKGROUND

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

In 2024, the legislature enacted [RCW 28A.300.577](#) to establish a comprehensive approach to support and expand dual language education and tribal language education so that all school districts that want to may offer a program by 2040. Many of these programs serve students who are eligible for TBIP services.

UPDATE STATUS

Multilingual Learners Served

In the 2024–25 school year, the TBIP served 167,665 students, a 1.2% increase (2,003 students) over the previous year:

- TBIP distinct count (students counted once regardless of multiple enrollments) 167,665 minus 1,241 parent waivers for a total of 166,424.
- TBIP headcount (number of students enrolled on October 1, 2024) was 157,419 minus 1,219 parent waivers for a total of 156,200.
- MLs comprised 15.1% of the statewide student population on October 1, 2024. This was 0.2 percentage points lower than the previous year.
- Of Washington's 324 districts, 246 reported ML enrollments.

Among districts with MLs:

- 43 districts enrolled more than 1,000 MLs. These districts collectively served 78.9% of all MLs enrolled in the TBIP statewide.
- 66 districts enrolled 500 or more MLs.
- 87 districts enrolled fewer than 50 MLs.
- 40 districts reported fewer than 10 MLs.

Most MLs served by the TBIP were enrolled in grades K–3. This group of MLs accounted for 35.7% of the TBIP enrollment in 2024–25.

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 MLs represented 19.8% of total TBIP enrollment in 2024–25, a decrease of 0.7% in the last year. Washington state continued to have an influx of newcomer students arriving from Afghanistan (7,000) and from Ukraine (8,440) over the past few years.

Students served by TBIP in 2024–25 spoke 285 different home languages. The most common language was Spanish, spoken by 58.3% of students. The top ten languages spoken by multilingual learners, in order, were Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Dari, Vietnamese, Arabic, Marshallese, Mandarin Chinese, Somali, and Pashto.

Length of Program Participation

The mean time in program for students served in the TBIP in 2024–25 was almost five years (4.7), a decrease of a year from the prior school year. 34.2% of multilingual English learners were still receiving TBIP services after five years and are referred to as Long-Term English Learners (LTELs).

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 for the 2024–25 school year was based on an October through June average headcount of 161,264 TBIP-eligible students, which was a 7.5 percent increase in student identified for services as compared to the previous school year. In addition, funding was provided for 19,340 eligible students who exited TBIP within the past two years.

Over the 2024–25 school year, TBIP funds provided an average allocation of \$1,498 per eligible multilingual learner in grades K-6, \$2,125 per eligible multilingual learner in grades 7-12, and \$940 per former multilingual learner who exited TBIP within the past two years. Total expenditures to support English language development (ELD) services across the state were \$314 million, of which \$293.3 million was from TBIP funding. This was a 9.2 percent increase in total TBIP expenditures from the previous year. Nearly all the TBIP funding for ELD services was used for instructional activities, with most of the funding dedicated to staffing.

Staffing

In the 2024–25 school year, 3,929 individual staff members funded through TBIP provided instruction and support through the program. Instructional paraeducators represented approximately 37.6% of the total full-time equivalencies, which is a 2.5% increase from the previous year. 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 2024–25, 94% 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.

Instruction

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 (Collier & Thomas, 2017).

Additionally, students in dual language programs outperform peers on standardized tests in English. In 2024–25, Washington State had 152 dual language programs, 100 heritage language programs, and 43 Tribal language programs in 85 districts and state-tribal compact schools.

The majority of MLs receive support through an English Language Development (ELD) program taught entirely in English. Research shows that there is little to no benefit in grouping MLs separately to provide ELD services (Black et al., 2025, Kieffer & Weaver, 2023). Districts across the state are engaged in continuous improvement to shift ELD programs away from traditional pull-out services towards more inclusive models, guided by the Washington [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#).

Stakeholder Engagement and Priority Work

The OSPI Multilingual Education team works with multiple stakeholder groups to provide input and feedback on priorities and resources. These groups include:

- Multilingual Education Advisory Committee – a group of educators representing various regions and roles who have expertise and experience in supporting MLs.
- Multilingual Family Advisory Committee – a group of multilingual family members and school staff who support families who advise on family engagement and support.
- Dual Language Steering Committee – a group of educators with specialized expertise in dual language programs who provide input and support on the dual language initiative.

With feedback from these committees and other stakeholder input, the Multilingual Education Program at OSPI focused on the following priorities in 2024–25:

- Supporting the expansion of K–12 dual, heritage, and Tribal language programs.
- Providing clear and consistent information and support for districts to develop strong research-based program models for all MLs in alignment with the [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#) which was published in 2023.
- Supporting educators in using the [WIDA English Language Development \(ELD\) Standards Framework, 2020 Edition](#) and WIDA assessments.
- Collaborating with other programs to improve and coordinate family surveys that address multiple programs.

These priorities included professional development and collaboration such as:

- Facilitating monthly information sessions, dual language professional learning communities, and dual language site visits for school and district leaders.
- Facilitating a monthly ML Director Network focused on unpacking the [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#) through use of the new [ML Action Plan Toolkit](#). This toolkit provides resources for district and school leaders to reflect on and improve their programs.
- Facilitating a monthly ML Teacher Network focused on continued implementation of the WIDA ELD Standards Framework and on developing strong instructional practices for MLs.

Expectations and Monitoring

OSPI provides districts annually with student outcome data, disaggregated by various groups including long-term English learners, MLs with disabilities, and exited students, so districts can analyze their data and evaluate the effectiveness of their program. Program evaluation is an annual requirement for all TBIPs. 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](#). In addition, districts are reviewed thoroughly every 5 to 6 years through a formal Program Review.

English Language Proficiency

MLs are assessed annually to determine progress towards English language proficiency. In the 2024–25 school year, eligible students took the WIDA ACCESS assessment and students with significant cognitive disabilities took the WIDA Alternate ACCESS to measure their annual growth.

When a student attains proficiency in English on the WIDA assessment, the student exits TBIP services. During the following two years, the formerly qualified student is monitored and provided additional academic language and content 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.

In 2021, Washington joined the WIDA Consortium which includes 42 states, territories, and federal agencies. WIDA, which was once an acronym for the original three states in the consortium, 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 national and state content standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

In the 2024–25 school year, 149,433 students (86.7%) participated in the WIDA annual assessment, and 13,720 students (8.3%) exited the program. Within the WIDA Consortium, each state sets its own exit criteria. OSPI conducted further review of data in 2023 and established additional exit criteria to include both WIDA and Smarter Balanced Assessment scores which took effect in 2024. Students in grades K-1 must score a 4 (out of 6) overall and students in grades 2-12 must reach an overall score of 4.7. Alternately, students in grades 3-12 can exit based on a 4.3 overall score in conjunction with a score of 3 or 4 on the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts Assessment.

Table 1: 2025 WIDA ACCESS Assessment Data

Grade Level	Number Tested	Percent Tested	Number Proficient	Percent Proficient
Kindergarten	13,794	95.8%	1,432	10.4%
1	13,502	95.7%	972	7.2%
2	14,056	95.9%	367	2.6%
3	15,661	96.5%	1751	11.2%
4	15,030	97.1%	3217	21.4%
5	12,604	95.8%	2366	18.8%
6	10,874	93.9%	428	3.9%
7	10,812	93.5%	655	6.1%
8	10,444	93.1%	742	7.1%
9	9,610	88.4%	467	4.9%
10	8,980	85.9%	700	7.8%
11	7,533	78.4%	427	5.7%
12	6,533	67.3%	196	3.0%

Source: CEDARS,11/18/25.

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 standards.

Students in grades 3–8 are typically assessed on 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 the English language skills needed to succeed on these assessments. There is a one-year exemption for the ELA assessment for newly arrived multilingual learners only.

Tables 2 and 3 show the number and percentage of current MLs and proficient MLs, based on the 2025 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 2025 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	3,315	22.5%	1582	47.7%	49.0%
4	2,927	20.5%	2253	77.0%	50.7%
5	1,822	15.1%	1317	72.3%	54.3%
6	873	8.5%	343	39.3%	49.5%
7	1138	11.1%	529	46.5%	52.7%
8	925	9.4%	529	57.2%	51.2%
10	1231	15.2%	555	45.1%	64.6%

Source: CEDARS, 11/18/25.

Table 3: Math Achievement of Current MLs and Proficient MLs based on the 2025 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	4,387	29.5%	1445	32.9%	52.5%
4	3,363	23.4%	1892	56.3%	49.6%
5	1,539	12.7%	862	56.0%	43.1%
6	808	7.8%	212	26.2%	40.1%
7	929	9.0%	308	33.2%	41.2%
8	686	7.0%	263	38.3%	37.6%
10	522	6.5%	199	38.1%	34.1%

Source: CEDARS, 11/18/25.

Academic Achievement of Former Multilingual 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 state average in meeting or exceeding standard in ELA and mathematics.

Table 4 shows data on the number and percent of former MLs, based on the 2025 WIDA ACCESS, who met or exceeded standard on the ELA and mathematics SBA tests.

Table 4: 2025 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	287,866	53.1%	230,440	42.6%
Current MLs	12,231	15.4%	12,234	15.3%
Proficient MLs	7,108	73.3%	5,181	53.5%
1 Year After Transition	5,984	68.0%	4,814	54.8%
2 Years After Transition	4,129	74.5%	3,551	64.2%
3 Years After Transition	4,385	82.3%	4,090	76.9%
4 Years After Transition	5,086	68.9%	4,024	54.6%

Source: CEDARS, 11/18/25.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

[OSPI's Strategic Goals](#) include providing equitable access to strong foundations and rigorous learner-centered options in every community. OSPI's Multilingual Education Advisory Committee developed a [Multilingual Learner Statewide Strategic Plan](#) that establishes action steps at the state, district, school, and classroom level to support MLs in meeting these goals including:

- **Promoting asset-based mindsets** by demonstrating a belief that all MLs can learn and excel in school, ensuring safe and supporting learning environments, and expanding dual, heritage, and tribal language programs.
- **Strengthening instructional practices** by providing high-quality instruction and assessment, implementing inclusionary practices, and increasing high school graduation rates of current and former MLs.
- **Providing support for educators** by using 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 continue to guide ongoing work and priorities for the TBIP in 2025-26 and beyond.

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