



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

UPDATE: Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP)

2021

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

English learners (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 ELs receive TBIP services until they become proficient in English. During the 2019–20 school year, 139,238 students were identified as ELs, a 3% increase from 2018–19. Enrollment was highest in urban areas in the western part of the state and in the Yakima Valley.

ELs typically are eligible for TBIP services for three to four years. Each year, TBIP students take the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21) to measure their growth in English. When a student attains proficiency in English on the annual ELPA21 assessment, he or she exits TBIP. Beginning with 2017–18, ELs with significant cognitive disabilities could take an alternate English language proficiency assessment, the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Alternate ACCESS for English Language Learners, to measure their annual growth.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, school facilities closed during the administration of the ELPA21 and WIDA Alternate Access assessments. Of students expected to test in the 2019–20 school year, only 88% (120,984) participated in ELPA21 or WIDA prior to school facility closures. However, not all students that participated completed enough of the assessment to be used for analysis purposes. Of assessed students, 91% (110,642) completed the entire assessment.

Because of the incomplete administration, results should not be compared to prior years and should not 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 2019–20 school year, 15,986 students exited the program.

Students served by TBIP in 2019–20 spoke 231 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 continue to serve students who speak a diverse range of languages. The next 10 most common languages were Russian, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Somali, Arabic, Marshallese, Chinese Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, and Tagalog.

Total expenditures to support English language development services across the state was \$239.9 million, of which \$227.7 million was from TBIP funding. This was a 7.1% increase in the TBIP total 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 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;
- (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 English learners (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 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 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 funds for the TBIP to hold an endorsement in bilingual education or English language learner, or both, by the beginning of the 2019–20 school year.

UPDATE STATUS

English Learners Served

In the 2019–20 school year, the TBIP served 133,311 students, a 0.019% decrease (25 students) over the previous year:

- TBIP distinct count (students counted once regardless of multiple enrollments) 134,632 – 1,321 (parent waivers) = 133,311.
- TBIP headcount (number of students enrolled on October 1, 2019) was 129,236 – 1,321 (parent waivers) = 127,915.
- ELs comprised 12% of the statewide student population on October 1, 2019. This was 0.3 percentage points higher than the previous year.
- Of Washington’s 295 school districts, 233 reported EL enrollments.

Among districts with ELs:

- 36 districts enrolled more than 1,000 ELs. These districts collectively served 74% of all ELs enrolled in the TBIP statewide.
- 52 districts enrolled 500 or more ELs.
- 80 districts enrolled fewer than 50 ELs.
- 35 districts reported fewer than 10 ELs.

Most ELs served by the TBIP were enrolled in grades K–3. This group of ELs accounted for 47% of the TBIP enrollment in 2019–20. As students gain proficiency in English and exit TBIP services or leave the K–12 system, fewer TBIP students are enrolled in the higher-grade levels. Newly eligible ELs represented 20.5% of total TBIP enrollment in 2019–20.

Students served by TBIP in 2019–20 spoke 231 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 continue to serve students who speak a diverse range of languages. The next 10 most common languages were Russian, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Somali, Arabic, Marshallese, Chinese Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, and Tagalog.

Length of Program Participation

The median time-in-program for students served in the program in 2019–20 was 4.1 years, an increase of 0.6 year from the prior school year. ELs in grades K–2 comprised 37.4% of TBIP students and their average length in program was less than two years. The average length of program participation for ELs in grades 3–5 was about four years, middle school grades 6–8 was about six years, and high school grades 9–12 was slightly over six years. Please note that the increase in length of time in program may be a result of the shift to online learning due to COVID-19 and school facility closures.

Expectations, Monitoring, and Stakeholder Engagement

OSPI staff have focused on strengthening interagency collaborations and technical assistance to districts to support educators serving English learners. 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. Staff also support districts in data reviews and propose changes to instructional models to more effectively serve all eligible ELs.

In response to feedback received 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 teachers and administrators who serve English learners, and input from families and students, the OSPI-hosted professional learning opportunities have increased for educators to:

- Prioritize, build, and expand K–12 dual language programs for ELs,
- Provide a continuum of support to struggling ELs in core instruction, and
- Provide support to ELs who are dual-qualified for special education services.

The professional learning provided included in-person workshops several times a year, learning walks through dual language schools, monthly webinars, online toolkits, and classroom resources.

Program Funding and Expenditures

In addition to basic education funding provided for all students, districts receive TBIP state funds to provide supplemental instruction to support language development for ELs.

Funding to districts was based on an October through June average headcount of 129,935 TBIP-eligible students. In the 2019–20 school year, the TBIP reported a 0.03% decrease in students identified for services as compared to the previous school year. Over the 2019–20 school year, TBIP funds provided an average allocation of \$1,322 per eligible English learner in grades K–6, \$1,876 per eligible English learner in grades 7–12 and \$830 per former English learner who exited TBIP within the past two years. Total expenditures to support English language development services across the state was \$239.9 million, of which \$227.7 million was from TBIP funding. This was a 7.1% increase in the TBIP total expenditures from the previous year.

Districts supplement TBIP funds and federal Title III funds with local levy dollars. In the 2019–20 school year, districts reported contributing approximately \$29.4 million beyond TBIP funding to provide English language instruction to ELs.

In 2019–20, nearly all the TBIP funding for English language development services was used for instruction-related activities, with most of the funding dedicated to staffing.

Staffing and Instruction

In the 2019–20 school year, 3,770 individual staff members (1,769 FTE) funded through TBIP provided instruction and support through the program. Instructional paraeducators represented approximately 46% of the total full-time equivalencies, which is the same percent as the previous year. RCW 28A.180.040 requires all classroom teachers assigned using funds for the TBIP to hold an endorsement in bilingual education or English language learner, or both, by the beginning of the 2019–20 school year. In 2019–20, 86% of certificated staff funded by TBIP held an English language learner or bilingual education endorsement. Nothing in state law encourages districts to use TBIP funds to hire certificated staff rather than paraeducators, so districts stretch funds and rely on

paraeducators to provide the TBIP supplemental instruction to ELs. Effective supervision of paraeducators and TBIP service coordination by certificated staff with expertise in serving ELs is essential to achieving positive student outcomes.

Dual language is the priority educational program model for ELs who are eligible for TBIP services. Research indicates that dual language models are substantially more effective in realizing higher academic achievement for ELs as well as being the strongest instructional model for closing opportunity gaps for ELs. Additionally, students in dual language programs outperform peers on standardized tests in English. About 9.3% of TBIP students receive dual language education or bilingual education. The majority of ELs receive support through an English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) program or through sheltered English instruction.

Washington State currently has 89 schools in 39 districts operating dual language programs. This is an increase of 14 schools, 19%, beginning dual language education designed for English learners and Native American students. 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.

English Language Proficiency

TBIP students are assessed annually on the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21) to determine progress toward English language proficiency. New in 2017–18, ELs with significant cognitive disabilities could take an alternate English language proficiency assessment, the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Alternate ACCESS for English Language Learners, to measure their annual growth. Since this was the baseline year for this assessment, growth was not measured and TBIP exit procedures will be determined in 2022.

When a student achieves English proficiency on the annual ELPA21 assessment, they exit TBIP. During the following two years, the former EL is monitored and supported with additional content-based language support. Former ELs may re-qualify for TBIP services if the school and family determine additional English language development is necessary for school success.

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 federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The WIDA Alternate ACCESS was developed to align with Common Core State Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, and to the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards (which crosswalk with our state’s adopted English Language Proficiency Standards). The ELPA21 produces a proficiency status score of Emerging-Level 1, Progressing-Level 2, or Proficient-Level 3.

ELs who scored Emerging and Progressing will continue to receive TBIP services. The progress of these ELs will be calculated after ELPA21 develops a vertical score scale, WIDA Alternate ACCESS exit procedures are established, and OSPI has finalized the [English Learner Progress](#) measure for ESSA accountability in the Washington School Improvement Framework and in Washington’s ESSA Consolidated Plan.

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English Proficiency and Academic Performance

Washington’s statewide academic assessment instrument, the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA), measures levels of a student’s academic performance against specific statewide performance standards. Students in grades 3–8 are typically assessed on English language arts (ELA) and mathematics with the SBA. ELs are required to take the SBA even though they are in the process of developing the English language proficiency level necessary to succeed on these assessments. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, school facilities closed before a majority of school districts completed administration of the SBA for the 2019–20 school year. Therefore, no SBA data is available for the 2019–20 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 students’ academic performance using the Smarter Balanced Assessments. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, school facilities closed before a majority of school districts completed their administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment for the 2019–20 school year. Therefore, no data is available for the 2019–20 school year.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

In [Superintendent Reykdal's six-year vision](#), one of his priorities is that all students, not just English learners, have access to dual language education beginning in kindergarten and extending at least through 8th grade. To prioritize dual language as the TBIP model, OSPI staff have convened statewide stakeholders to develop a framework for state-approved dual language programs designed for English learners and Native American students.

OSPI will continue to focus support on the development of high-quality dual language programs for TBIP-eligible students by:

- Increasing internal and external collaborations with key partners.
- Facilitating dialog to move toward the development of assessments in native languages.
- Providing a statewide professional learning network for dual language practitioners.
- Creating an online repository of classroom materials in various languages.
- Adopting Spanish language arts standards and English and Spanish language proficiency standards to support biliteracy development in dual language programs.

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: http://www.k12.wa.us/WorkGroups/EOGOAC/pubdocs/EOGOAC-2018_LegislativeReport.pdf.

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

TBIP Accountability Task Force Report (2015), [ESSB 6002 Section 501\(y\)](#), http://www.k12.wa.us/Workgroups/TBIP/pubdocs/TBIPTaskForce_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>.

Washington School Improvement Framework: http://reportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/SchoolIndex_2018.aspx. English Learner Progress measure: <http://www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/ESSA/pubdocs/10WSIFEnglishLearnerProgress.pdf>.

Washington's ESSA Consolidated Plan: <http://www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/ESSA/pubdocs/ESSAConsolidatedPlan-Final.pdf>.

World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Alternate ACCESS for ELLs: <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/alt-access>.

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