



Dual Language Programs Expanding in Washington - 2014

Overview

In 2012 and then again in spring 2014, the Mapping and Enhancing Language Learning (MELL) project worked with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to conduct a survey of dual language programs in the state of Washington.

Dual Language programs provide content-based instruction to students in two languages where the goal is for the students, over a number of years of participation in the program, to become proficient and literate in both languages, while also meeting high academic standards in all subject areas. Other terminology that is commonly used for one of the variations of this type of program model is Dual Immersion, Two-way Dual Language, One-way Dual Language, Partial Immersion, Full Immersion, etc. Typically, programs begin at kindergarten or 1st grade and continue through elementary school, and, if possible, into middle and high school.

The initial survey results informed and facilitated the creation of Dual Language Washington, a Washington Association of Bilingual Education Special Interest Group, which has supported administrators and teachers in strengthening dual language programming. See www.duallanguagewa.org. The 2014 follow-up survey's results will be used to facilitate greater support and to increase sharing of best practices with the end goal of helping districts initiate, expand, and strengthen dual language programs.

Research from Collier and Thomas (2012) and others has shown that the Dual Language model, when well-implemented, is the most successful model for helping English Language Learner (ELL) students achieve success in academic subjects and English. In addition, they develop academic literacy in their home language. For this reason, the survey pays particular attention to the population of ELL students in the district.

Overall Response

As of September 2014, survey responses were received from 290 of the 295 WA school districts (98% response rate). These 290 districts contain 100% of the state's English Language Learner (ELL) students and 99.9% of the state's total student body. This represents an increase of 118 districts responding over the 2012 survey, with a slight increase in ELL percentage (up from 99%) and an increase in total student representation (up from 95%). Of the 5 districts who had not responded as of September 2014, the average total enrollment is 175 students.

In 2014, 24 districts responded that they have dual language programs, an increase of 2 since 2012. An additional 4 districts report that they will start a program in the next two years. As of spring 2014, those 28 respondents host 47 elementary (up 7 from 2012), 13 middle (up 1), and 6 high schools (up 2) with continued growth at all levels planned in new and existing dual language districts.

Table 1: Breakdown of Elementary Schools with Dual Language Programs by Language

Partner Language	2012 # Programs	2014 # Programs
Spanish	35	40
Chinese	3	4
Japanese	2	2
Vietnamese	0	1

Table 2: Breakdown of Elementary Schools with Dual Language Programs by Grade Level

Highest Dual Language Grade	2012 # Programs	2014 # Programs
Kindergarten	5	4
1st Grade	5	6
2nd Grade	2	5
3rd Grade	4	4
4th Grade	1	3
5th Grade	21	20
6th Grade	2	5



Tables 3 and 4 show what program models are generally used and which populations are served in these elementary dual language programs. The majority of programs follow a 50/50 model, which means that students spend half of their time in each language. Programs that start with 90% of their time in the partner language usually reduce that percentage over time ending up with 50/50 by 4th or 5th grade.

The percentage of heritage or native speakers outlined in Table 4 shows that the majority of programs have about half speakers of the partner language and are therefore two-way programs (serving both heritage or native speakers of the partner language and native speakers of English or another 3rd language). Next most common are the one-way enrichment programs (teaching native English speakers an additional language), which occur in districts with small ELL populations or with school zoning restrictions that limit the number of students coming from outside the neighborhood. The one-way ELL programs (supporting ELL students in their home language while acquiring English) are found primarily in Central and Eastern Washington.

Table 3: Time Split in Dual Language Programs

Language Time Split	2012 # Programs	2014 # Programs
50/50	27	34
80/20	1	2
90/10	9	11
Other	3	0

Table 4: Participation of Heritage and Native Speakers in Dual Language Programs

% Heritage/Native Speakers	2012 # Programs	2014 # Programs
Under 10%	6	8
11-20%	3	3
21-40%	5	5
41-60	21	25
61-80%	5	6

Dual Language Continuation: Middle Schools

Whereas a dual language program spends at least 50% of the day in the partner language, dual language continuation programs in middle or high school often have only 1-2 periods in the PL. In Washington, 13 districts have middle school continuation programs. This represents an increase of 1 new program since 2012. Only Seattle has offerings at more than one middle school. With the exception of one Japanese program, dual language middle school programs are for dual language programs using Spanish. Six districts plan to expand into middle school when their programs reach those grades, but another 6 do not plan to move beyond elementary school. For a breakdown of grade levels served, number of subjects and description of subjects taught, please see Tables 5, 6, and 7.

Table 5: Breakdown of Middle Schools by Grade

Highest MS Dual Language Grade	# Programs
6th Grade	1
7th Grade	3
8th Grade	9

Table 6: Breakdown of Middle Schools by # of Periods/Day

# of Periods in Partner Language	# Programs
1 period	2
2 periods	8
3 periods	2
Unknown	2

Table 7: Breakdown of Middle Schools by Subjects Taught in the Partner Language

Subjects Taught in Partner Language	# Programs
Language Arts	7
Social Studies	8
Science	1
Math	2



Dual Language Continuation: High Schools

In 2014, 6 districts now report offering high school dual language programs (up 2 since 2012) with 5 districts offering programs in Spanish, and 1 in Japanese and Spanish. In addition, 8 districts hope to add a high school program when their dual language programs reach those grades, while 11 have no plans to expand to high school. For a breakdown of grade levels served, number of subjects and description of subjects taught, please see Table 8.

Table 8: Breakdown of High Schools

Highest HS Dual Language Grade:	# Programs
9th Grade	1
10th Grade	2
12th Grade	3

# of Periods in Partner Language:	# Programs
1 period	1
2 periods	3
Not Sure	2

Subjects Taught in Partner Language:	# Programs
Science	1
Social Studies	2
Other	4

The Mapping and Enhancing Language Learning (MELL) project was initiated in 2006 by four National Resource Centers at the University of Washington's Jackson School of International Studies, which received funding through the U.S. Department of Education's Title VI program to launch a four-year project to collect data on world language learning and teaching in Washington K-12 schools. The Center for Global Studies (CGS), Center for West European Studies (CWES), East Asia Center (EAC), and the Ellison Center for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies (REECAS) are working with the UW Language Learning Center, Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Washington State Coalition for International Education, and Washington Association for Language Teaching (WAFLT) to establish an understanding of world language teaching trends in Washington state. With funding from the Title VI program grants and a State Innovations grant from Longview Foundation, the MELL project is creating a series of policy briefs based on the data collected through the MELL surveys of schools. For further information, call the Language Learning Center at 206.543.0563 or email mellwa@u.washington.edu. Web: depts.washington.edu/mellwa.