Expanding Access

The Seal of Biliteracy, Language Competency Testing, and Linguistic Equity for Heritage Learners

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50%

of Mount Vernon School District Students are Multilingual walking in the door

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In the fall of 2021, thanks to a Heritage Language Grant from OSPI, Mount Vernon School District was able to change the way we approached language testing, competency credits, and the Seal of Biliteracy.

This work is part of the district's Racial Equity Action Plan and Framework for Multiliteracy.

an OPPORTUNITY

WORLD LANGUAGES

Need a way to ensure students are properly placed in Spanish classes

MULTILINGUAL SERVICES

Need for data on all a student's languages to better identify and serve their needs.

WL Placement Testing Year One

Identified all Spanish I students who had a personal or family history of Spanish language

Tested Spanish I, II, and III students in class

Made changes to the HS Master Schedule to reflect student abilities

Awarded Credits and Shifted Schedules through HS Counselors

What made large scale testing possible?

1. Connections between the WL Department and ML Services

2. District grants and resources to ensure that no student is charged for competency credit testing

3. Leveraged existing data and notification structures designed for state testing, including actionable data availability for educators

4. Connections between the registrars and ML Services

Impact on Students: Credits and the Seal of Biliteracy

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Students Tested	101 (134)	169 (213)	114	151	396
Languages Tested	2	2	5	3	2
Competency Credits Available	267 (381)	335 (464)	353	332	514
Proficiency for Seal Earned	58 (82)	77 (99)	72	44	72
Testing Structure	Recruited Spanish and Russian speaking seniors		MS Dual aligns to Seal Testing	ML Testing Coordinator	Heritage Grant

Impact on Instruction

- Teachers have more appropriately mixed classes
- Students seeing themselves as multilingual academics
- Counselor mindset shift

- Need to grow community understanding of the benefit of advanced level language study
- WL Teachers need training in HL *and* literacy instruction

Impact on School Systems:
Data Informed Spanish Programing

- Competency credit linked to initial Spanish language placement
- Course offerings shifted to AP and CiHS options our ML students needed
- Entry points to Spanish Language Arts created
- Heritage Spanish reintroduced at MVHS

Unexpected Benefits

Redefine Inclusive Access to Language Classes

More Efficient Processes and Data Management

Increased understanding of Heritage Language development and the importance of language education by counselors and administrators

Create connections between WL, DL, and ML educators

2021-2022 Language Testing Opportunities

1

September 2021

MVHS Spanish Course Realignment Testing

2

November 2021

Heritage Language Testing for Seniors

3

February- March 2022

MS Spanish Testing for HS Registration

4

March-April 2022

Heritage Language Testing for all Languages

5

May 2022

Dual Language Progress and Seal of Biliteracy Testing

6

Year Round

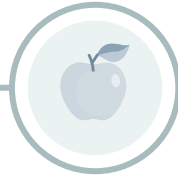Testing for Alternative Schools, New ML Students and by Request

Next Steps

Spanish Program Curriculum Adoption

Need for higher level literature and heritage language specific instructional materials.

Training for WL Spanish Teachers

Opportunity to develop in dual and heritage language instructional proficiency.

Multilingual Data Training

Training for all staff on how scores can be used to improve our understanding of our students and how they learn.

Looking Towards the Future

- How can we serve the needs of Heritage Learners at earlier ages?

- How can we ensure students who are manual language users or who are indigenous language speakers whose traditional lands are outside of Washington have equal access to competency credits and the Seal of Biliteracy?

- How can we ensure that our data on our heritage learners is portable for our highly mobile students?

Thank you!

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