



Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Angie Pedroza

DEPARTMENT: Teaching and Learning

Position: Bilingual Coordinator

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 15 years

Q. What are your primary responsibilities as bilingual coordinator?

A. One of my primary responsibilities is making sure the students are on the bilingual list so they are eligible to receive services. I review each child's needs to ensure they are getting the right support in the classroom. We identify the students based on the home language survey completed by their parents. We have to test them using a state placement test. Their score determines if they are eligible for bilingual services.

Q. How many students are currently in the bilingual program?

A. We have about 750, K-12 students. We test preschool students in the spring so we know their eligibility status before they enter kindergarten. Currently we are doing a review of our bilingual education programs to find ways to improve the services for all students.

Q. Why is it important to have a bilingual education program?

A. The Thomas & Collier research study that included over 8 million students tells us its important to have a bilingual education program. They must be able to access the right type of English acquisition skills to be successful.

Q. How long does it take to learn English?

A. A typical range is 6-10 years, but it depends on the student. Some will learn faster than others. In Walla Walla it is closer to 6-7 years because of our bilingual education program and the support we provide the students. If students are not in this type of setting it can take longer, especially once the academic content gets harder.

Over →

Angie Pedroza

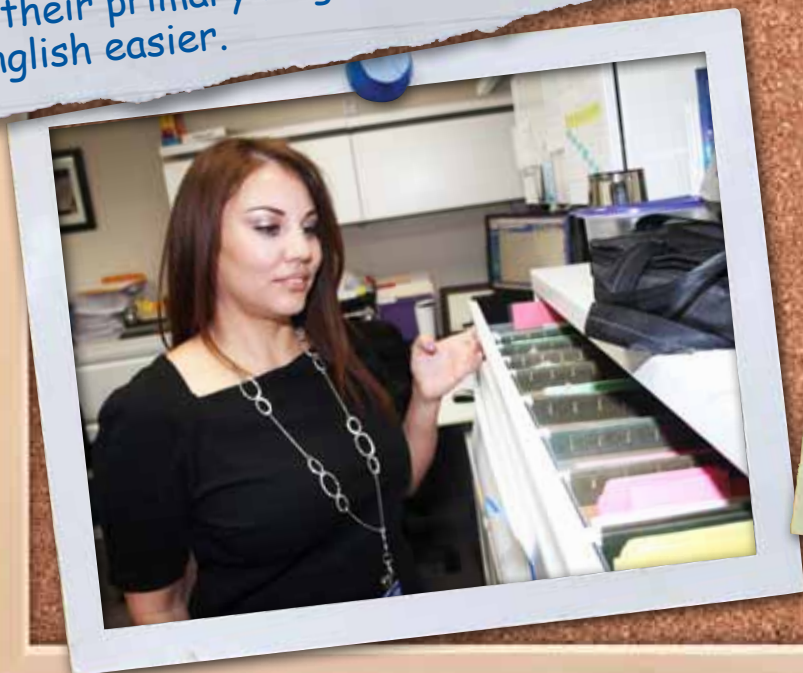
If you just put a child into a regular English only classroom they will do alright for the first three years. Once they start reading to learn is when they begin to struggle. They just don't have the skills for this level of instruction.



MORE COMMENTS FROM ANGIE:

When students move here at an older age it is more difficult, but we have strong programs. If the student moves from a Spanish speaking country with strong academics in their primary language they transition to English easier.

I was a student whose primary language was Spanish and was placed in an English only classroom in Touchet. Because of my strong native language skills, I was able to be successful.



I graduated from Whitman College and earned my Master's Degree with a focus on dual language education from Eastern Washington University. I have three sons and live on a farm.