

Bilingual Education Recommendation Committee

**Board Update #4
Draft Recommendation
February 28, 2017**



Why is this work critical?

- We must increase the performance outcomes for our non-English speaking students. The district's Hispanic/Latino students continue to struggle in English proficiency attainment as they mature through school, lagging behind both their non-Hispanic WWPS counterparts as well as Hispanic state averages in state testing, college entrance exams, and post-secondary remediation rates.
- The “traditional” (e.g. non-dual classrooms at Edison and Sharpstein) continue to be highly problematic as reported by staff and parents due to factors such as larger class sizes, high number of special population students, inability to separate and/or move students, and long-term student "tracking" drawbacks.
- There are an increasing number of "Heritage" Hispanic/Latino students who are struggling in the current program. Often 2nd and/or 3rd generation students, these are pupils entering kindergarten who may struggle in both English and Spanish, or who demonstrate stronger English than Spanish skills despite their Hispanic/Latino heritage.
- Modest numbers of native English speaking students on the "English side" of dual are struggling to meet and/or maintain grade-level academic standards in English as they progress in age.
- Student performance/success varies between bilingual programs at schools due to differences in program delivery, student entrance criteria, and student demographics, creating discrepancies in program outcome when students exit elementary school.
- With current programming spread across four of the six elementary schools to varying degrees, lack of program continuity/alignment, curriculum, collaboration, and professional development continues to be problematic.

Review of Current Charge

Walla Walla Public School's Board of Education requests the BEREC to complete the work necessary to provide PreK-8 program recommendation to the Board on or before March 7, 2017.

Must,

- be financially sustainable and programmatically feasible
- be research-based to best support the needs of English learner students
- ensure optimal learning environments for non-participating students

If feasible,

- attempt to capitalize on the opportunity to expose second language acquisition skills to native English language speakers

This is tough work...

But critically important...

It is our moral, ethical, and social obligation that we **MUST...**

- Improve English language proficiency for our non-native speaking population
- Develop the best possible bilingual program (in delivery, efficiency, coordination, and support) to ensure we meet this critical mandate

*Our kids deserve the best possible programming for their success.
It is our responsibility to provide it for them.*

Accomplishments

September 14-

Reviewed the history of the bilingual program in WWPS

September 28-

Reviewed applicable state and federal laws, requirements, and mandates associated with bilingual education programs

October 12-

Reviewed the current model being offered in Walla Walla Public Schools in addition to the outcomes, findings, and "White Paper" summary developed by the 2015-16 Bilingual Steering Team

October 26-

"Date dive" – Reviewed student performance data associated with bilingual ed and Latino students

October 28-

Committee performed site visits to schools/classrooms

November 1-

Board update at regular Board Meeting on progress to date

November 2-

Deep review of current data, programming, other bilingual models across the state, and school/classroom visit feedback

End of November-

Surveys administered to staff for feedback. Web survey administered to elicit parent input

November 30-

Parent listening session (English and Spanish) followed by additional Spanish parent outreach via paper/pencil surveys sent home with students

December-

Student interviews of current and former bilingual students

January 6-

Review of staff, student, and parent input. Initial concepts proposed

January 12-

Continued review and refinement of concepts

Accomplishments Continued

- Staff survey administered on the two initial concepts
- Parent sessions held in English and Spanish to elicit feedback on the two initial concepts
- Parent survey in English and Spanish administered
- A third concept emerged for review and consideration
- Met with transportation, facilities, finance, food service, and building leadership to identify challenges and cost-out the three initial concepts
- Met with diverse representation from Blue Ridge staff regarding current and historical programming and reviewed input related to the third concept

Committee Work Since February 7 Board Update

- Feb 8: BEREC met for 4+ hours to come to work toward consensus on model, school, roll out
- Communication through email, text, phone, newspaper, student mail about parent information sessions Feb 13-16
- 4 parent information sessions. 250-300 total attendees
- Online survey
 - About 720 English responses
 - About 120 Spanish responses
- Feb 22: BEREC met for 4+ hours and came to decisions on final model and school for board consideration. The roll out plan is still under review.

Draft of Final Recommendations

Model Recommendation

Committee Recommendation: One School Model

Level of Committee Consensus: Very strong

Primary Reasons for Recommendation:

- Allows for an initial focus on one wall-to-wall school to build program success
- Maintains the current supports, recent program progress, and access at Blue Ridge

Committee requests the following be considered with this model:

- Provide enrollment priority to ensure sufficient access to Spanish speaking students
- Carefully monitor future program enrollment/requests at the kindergarten level. If sufficient student need warrants sustainable program expansion, and results at Blue Ridge lack signs of sufficient student growth, implement two-school model in the future (not 2017-18 school year)

School Recommendation

Committee Recommendation: Edison

Level of Committee Consensus: Strong

Primary Reasons for Recommendation: (No consideration was given to current staffing.)

- Edison represents a higher Latino population so fewer Latino students would need to be bussed for programming
- If the district was to implement a two-school model in the future (Blue Ridge), both schools are situated better geographically, to support district programming
- The overall layout of the building has factors that better support the acquisition of a second language (more wall space for English and Spanish learning tools, more flexibility in space with moveable walls and open areas, more advanced technology)

***Both schools had many strengths for being the site which made this a difficult decision.

Additional Physical Plant Information

Edison

- Up to 23 available classrooms(excluding 1.5 resource rooms)
 - 20 general ed classrooms
 - 1 Computer Lab
 - 2.5 Resource rooms
 - 1 Staff room

Sharpstein

- Up to 22 available classrooms (excluding 1 resource room)
 - 19 classrooms
 - 1 Explorers classroom
 - 1 Resource Room
 - 1 Computer Lab (currently a classroom)
 - 1 Staff Room (currently a classroom)
 - 3 floors, but not sufficient room for all K/1 classes (8) to be on the same floor)

Impact on Diversity: Minimal

District Wide

Approximately 40% of our population is Hispanic/Latino

Elementary

- Approximately 1000 students in our elementary population are Hispanic/Latino
 - Approximately 60% of the 1000 are currently in elementary dual programming

Current Sharpstein Demographics

- 49% of current population is Hispanic/Latino, 56% total minority

Hypothetical Future Demographics at Sharpstein

- In the unlikely case all future Hispanic/Latino families at Sharpstein were to attend dual programming at Edison, 50% of the total Hispanic/Latino population would still remain, resulting in a continued, diverse campus.
- However, it is more likely that some Latino neighborhood families will request to remain at Sharpstein and receive English Language Learner (ELL) support rather than dual, resulting in a continued rich and diverse minority population somewhere between 25-40%.

Roll Out Recommendation

Committee Recommendation: To be finalized on March 7

Level of Committee Consensus: Slow or Moderate

Primary Reasons Being Considered for Recommendation:

Slow Strengths: Students finish elementary career where they started; most supported in the survey; time to solidify professional development each year; retains current seats; does not impact currently-enrolled non-dual students

Slow Concerns: Potential for families to be split in the future; the single strand classrooms, even with additional support from human resources, will remain for 5 years

Moderate Strengths: Middle of the road...not too slow and not too fast

Moderate Concerns: The single strands, even with additional support from human resources would remain for 3-4 more years; would likely result in a reduction in students currently in dual programming; challenges with shifting students and staff, in both dual and non-dual programming, from their current campus; careful review of transportation costs are proving to be costly for the district with the requirement to transport all affected students through their elementary career

Enrollment Recommendations

Type of Enrollment: Weighted Lottery (various entrance assessments, preference to those with siblings in program, preference if possible for students wanting dual in their attendance area school)

Timeline: Interested incoming families for kindergarten would indicate preference in early March, with testing before registration/open enrollment window. (All steps will be supported at the district level.)

- If there is a moderate roll out selected, the March 7 final recommendation will include steps to be taken for students currently in program.

Primary Enrollment Procedure Benefits:

- Latino population will be placed first
- Allows for appropriately placing students to ensure greatest opportunity for success
- Allows equal access to programming across the district, regardless of location
- Includes weighted accommodations for students with siblings currently in programming

Primary Survey Input on the Enrollment Plan:

- Support for a systematic and academic process and more equitable opportunity to be considered for dual program placement.
- Concern for splitting some families
- Ensure that the Heritage learner isn't left out

Middle School

To increase second language opportunities for all middle school students Garrison and Pioneer will both offer:

- World Language: Spanish 1 and 2

For students in elementary dual programming Garrison and Pioneer will both offer:

- Spanish Literacy: Extension of elementary dual language program

Next Steps

- March 1-5: Board asks questions for committee to consider
- March 6: Committee will review feedback from the Board and determine final roll out recommendation
- March 7: Board reviews committee recommendation and asked to make final decision on programming starting in the 2017-18 school year

Questions

