Washington State Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program

What is the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program?

The Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program helps English Language Learners (ELLs) speak, listen, read and write in English, understand their class work and meet state learning standards. The program serves about 90,000 students statewide. This program is supplemental to basic education.

How does it work?

When families register with a school, they complete a Home Language Survey to let the school know if a language other than English is spoken at home. If the child speaks a language other than English, the student’s English language ability is measured with a placement test called the Washington Language Proficiency Test. Based on student test results and resources available in a school district, the student may be offered one of the following:

- **Two-way bilingual instruction**, students are taught in their home language and in English. The amount of instruction provided in each language is about the same.
- **Transitional bilingual instruction**, students are taught in both their home language and English, with less use of the home language for instruction over time.
- **Content-based English as a second language (ESL) instruction**, students are taught in English with changes to the grade-level curriculum to help the English language learner understand the content being introduced.

What are schools supposed to do?

- Schools must ask every family that registers to complete a Home Language Survey, to see if a language other than English is spoken by the child.
- Based on the Home Language Survey, schools test the English ability of the child within the child’s first 10 days at school.
- Students who need help with English have a right to access the transitional bilingual instructional program to learn English as well as other school subjects.

How can parents access transitional bilingual instruction for their children?

By completing the Home Language Survey, parents will help schools determine if their child needs to take the placement test. Parents will be notified of their child’s eligibility for the transitional bilingual instructional program. If parents have questions about their child’s eligibility or services, they can speak with the classroom teacher or the principal.

Where can I find more information about the transitional bilingual program?

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Migrant & Bilingual Education Programs
PO BOX 47200
Olympia WA 98504-7200
(360) 725-6147
Visit: www.k12.wa.us/MigrantBilingual/

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