

Concept Refinement

Bilingual Education Recommendation Committee (BERC)

February 8, 2017



Objectives

- Achieve consensus on which concepts will move forward for deeper conversation and input
- Name schools in concepts
- Solidify roll out recommendation based on concept(s) moving forward
- Discuss initial thinking on how students will preference, and be placed in dual programming
- Discuss next steps for sharing information

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.*

Summary of Input on Concepts

1 School Concept Feedback

Primary Strengths:

- Level of EL support (Traditional+ and/or ELD support) offered at non-dual schools
- More consistent programming for students
- All aspects of school contribute to a total dual environment
- A “slow roll out” option is viable to minimize impact to students, families, and staff
- Addresses single strands

Primary Concerns:

- Uncertainty about Traditional+ concept. Would standard ELD program better meet student needs?
- Loss of a “neighborhood feeder school”
- Reduction of seats in dual programming
- Assumption that this would increase segregation of Latino students (analysis shows only a slight reduction in Latino diversity at non-dual schools)
- Creates a higher concentration of higher-achieving Caucasian students at the dual school

Split School Concept

Strengths:

- Level of EL support (Traditional+ and/or ELD support) offered at non-dual schools
- Maintains partial “neighborhood feeder school” access
- Groups students more by grade level and developmental needs
- Addresses single strands

Concerns:

- Uncertainty about Traditional+ concept. Would standard ELD program better meet student needs?
- Splitting families
- Too many transitions for students
- Cost of transportation
- No slow roll out option-Requires significant shifting of students and staff in one summer
- Consolidation of 2-3 different dual program sites into one would be highly problematic for students and staff
- Cost of transportation and rerouting each year on a significant level as 2nd grade rolls up to 3rd grade, for example.

What We Have Learned from Parent Input

- Families have strong connections to current schools
- Desire for equitable entrance requirements into dual
- Desire for Blue Ridge to be considered
- Split input on a focus in one school vs. increasing seats
- With shifting demographics the priority needs to be on acquisition and attainment of English proficiency, for current and future demographics
- Student needs and what's best for them must come first
- Concerns about Traditional+
- Desire for language access for after school and in middle school, outside of dual programming
- Concerns about students currently in programming not being able to finish at their current school

Data about Heritage and Native Spanish Speakers

For purposes of this conversation, and not statistically valid:

–“Heritage” means a student who entered WWPS with Spanish marked as the first language they spoke. Their entrance scores at kindergarten were either stronger in English (and could be placed on the English side of dual), or low in both languages and usually placed on the Spanish side of dual.

–A “Native Spanish” speaker means a student entered WWPS with Spanish marked as the first language they spoke. Their entrance scores show that Spanish is their dominant language, and they are strong enough to serve as a Spanish model in a dual classroom.

In our current dual program, excluding Blue Ridge about 195 students are "Heritage Learners" and about 140 students are "Native Spanish" learners based on our unscientific calculations.

Consensus Based Decision Making

Building Consensus

Consensus is...

- Building and reaching collaborative agreement on the decision
- Taking into account opinions, ideas and concerns of others
- Being open to compromise and other ideas

Consensus is not...

- A yes or no vote with majority wins

What we are going to come to consensus on tonight?

- 1 or 2 concepts to move forward with for further input.
- School names on concepts
- Pace of the roll out
- Tentative program enrollment guidelines

*We are not building consensus on building/program principals and how staff will move.

Consensus Based Decision Making

1. I fully support the proposal
2. I will support the committee in implementing the proposal even though I have some reservations
3. I disagree with the decision so I need more time to discuss (write a specific concern on the sticky note)

K-2, 3-5 Split School Concept

Question to be answered: Will we move forward with this concept based on input we have received from staff and parents?

T+ Concept

Question to be answered: Will we move forward with the T+ strand as an addition to a concept presented, or focus on the core concepts and further develop how we support all ELL's who are not in a dual program?

One School Concept Discussion

Question to be answered: Which building will be named in the one school concept?

This discussion is about	This decision is not about
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical location in the district (bussing for example)• Facility• Historical consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who will be the principal, or who is the principal at a current building• Who will be the staff, or the current staff• Staff expertise at this time• Current model differences in each building

Individual School Information

Edison

- 18 general education classrooms (1 additional classroom for district autism program)
- About 75 students open enrolled in dual
- 74% Free/Reduced

Green Park

- 21 general education classrooms (5 additional classrooms are for special education and district programming)
- About 15 students open enrolled in dual
- 68% Free/Reduced

Sharpstein

- 21 general education classrooms (1 additional classroom is for elementary highly capable program)
- About 80 students open enrolled in dual
- 59% Free/Reduced

One School Concept Discussion

Question to be answered: Which building will be named in the one school concept?

Third Concept

Blue Ridge + Another Elementary

Why wasn't Blue Ridge considered in any of the original concepts?

Some of the considerations:

- Lack of classroom space (only 15-16 rooms) made Blue Ridge not feasible as a stand alone dual school (e.g. 1-school concept)
- If Blue Ridge were to implement a two-way dual model, a significant number of Blue Ridge students (between 1/3 to 1/2) would likely need to attend another elementary school to make room for the English side of dual programming.
 - First concern: is there enough interest from non attendance area families to enroll their students in the English side of dual (this has historically been problematic)?
 - Second concern: by relocating historical attendance area students to other campuses, how would that:
 - Affect Health Center access to Blue Ridge student/family clientele?
 - Affect the coordinated community and family services already in place (e.g. C2C, parent outreach, comprehensive support for Spanish-speaking families, concentration of poverty/Title 1 supports, afterschool programming)?
 - Impact the Blue Ridge attendance area families that participate in pre-school programming at Blue Ridge?
 - Access to the fruit and vegetable food program.

Why is Blue Ridge identified for a concept now?

- Parent and stakeholder inquiry has led to the current review of our initial “let stand” thinking
- A concept involving Blue Ridge might provide an opportunity to revisit the concentration of poverty and ethnicity at the campus
- An intentional review of current programming will provide either an affirmation of the current one-way dual programming, or present an opportunity to modify the current model to improve outcomes for students
- Presents an opportunity to expand dual programming to more Latino and English speaking students.

Blue Ridge's Prior Experience with Two-Way Dual in the last 8 years

General Findings:

- A majority of Blue Ridge students do not present strong enough English skills to be placed in a two-way dual model
 - It was difficult to match students as “language buddies,” for example
- Lack of “English” side of dual enrollment from non attendance area families left multiple open seats and students without English language partners.

Current one-way dual programming at Blue Ridge

- More phonemic awareness in Spanish for K-1 students
- Maximizing native language instruction with fewer transitions
- English introduced ~ mid year 2nd grade when Spanish foundations are stronger
- Mixing students for math, specialists, recess and lunch.
 - Mix for interventions in the upper grades
- Common planning time each day for staff
- 50/50 Spanish/English instruction by third grade. As students increase in grade level there can be more mixing of students as they increase their English proficiency

Strengths of one-way dual currently at Blue Ridge

- More phonemic awareness in Spanish for K-1 students
- Maximizing native language instruction with fewer transitions
- English introduced in January this year for kindergarten when Spanish foundations are stronger
- Mixing students for math, specialists, recess and lunch.
 - Mix for interventions in the upper grades
- Common planning time each day for staff
- 50/50 Spanish/English instruction by third grade. As students increase in grade level there can be more mixing of students as they increase their English proficiency
- The single one-way dual strand does not currently exhibit the behavior challenges realized in the single-strand traditional classrooms in the other campuses

Blue Ridge staff wonderings regarding possible program modifications

- Many of the Blue Ridge attendance area students lack strong enough English skills to serve as English models in a two way dual program.
- Bringing in non-attendance area students to Blue Ridge might serve problematic to current school culture
- Blue Ridge recently started the one-way dual model as a result of their current school makeup and student need. The building is currently working with outside consultants for “turn around” schools and has changed their building schedule and delivery. Many staff request additional time to implement and evaluate success.

Blue Ridge Health Center

Health Center

- 353 students signed up in 2015-16 school year
- 72 students were served for mental health reasons
 - 33 students received counseling. (20/33 were Latino and 5/20 were in dual programming)
- There were 1134 visits.
 - 1030 of these visits were for mental health
 - 104 visit were for medical services and support.
- 7/10 classroom teachers reported improved behavior in students who had accessed mental health services
- Discipline referrals reduced 32% from 2014-15 school year to end of 2015-16

Blue Ridge and Another Elementary

Question to be answered: Do we want to include this concept of Blue Ridge and other, previously named elementary for further input?

How will the changes be rolled out?

Question to be answered: Will we be advocating for a slow or fast roll out?

Roll Out Options/Recommendations

Slow

Strengths:

- Impacts incoming kindergarten students only
- Entrance criteria changes only impact kindergarten
- If two schools, allows us to further confirm the need for programming at two sites

Concerns:

- Single strands remain longer

Fast

Strengths:

- Single strands eliminated

Concerns:

- Moving students currently in programming to another building
- Impact of students not in dual programming having to move schools over one summer
- Number of staff who are moved over one summer

Process for kindergarten students to participate in dual programming: Initial Thoughts/**DRAFT**

- Models will be advertised after March 7 Board Decision
- Applications from families interested in dual programming for their kindergartener will be accepted the 2nd and 3rd week of March
- Screening will occur before open enrollment period
- For students who meet the entrance guidelines there will be a weighted lottery, if needed
 - Sibling already in program
 - By law, child of district staff member
 - Preference for a building
- This is a district program so the district will assign students to kindergarten classes to create balanced programming to support the success of all students in the program
- For attendance area students who do not want dual openings in other kindergarten classes will be offered, similar to how we place overload students now.

Next Steps

- Feb 13-20 Stakeholder input on recommended models
 - Parent night at each of 4 bilingual elementary schools, followed by survey
 - Feb 13: Sharpstein, 5:30-6:30pm
 - Feb 13: Green Park 7:00-8:00pm
 - Feb 16: Blue Ridge 5:30-6:30pm
 - Feb 16: Edison 7:00-8:00pm
 - Staff survey
- Feb 22: Additional committee meeting to review latest input
- Feb 28: Board presented with refined draft models
- March 6: Committee reviews feedback and makes final revisions to model(s)
- March 7: Board reviews committee recommendation and asked to make final decision on programming starting in the 2017-18 school year