

DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM

SUMMARY

Dual language is a form of bilingual education in which students are taught literacy skills and content in two languages. Beaverton School District currently has dual language programs at nine schools, and is developing a 5–10 year plan to expand dual language programs throughout the district so that all students have the option to work toward acquiring biliteracy/multiliteracy skills through high school. Phase one of the expansion will begin this school year with William Walker Elementary School making the transition to offering dual language learning.

BACKGROUND

Dual language is a form of bilingual education in which students are taught literacy skills and content in two languages that are strategically woven. Dual language programs are designed to support the acquisition of two languages from elementary to high school which prepare students to obtain proficiency-based recognition of their linguistic assets and academic skills.

The three main goals of Beaverton School District's dual language program are biliteracy/bilingualism, high academic achievement on grade level standards in both program languages, and sociocultural competency. Students in dual language programs have the added benefit of being awarded the Oregon Seal of Biliteracy or Multiliteracy if they are able to demonstrate proficiency in two or more languages prior to high school graduation.

BSD currently has dual language programs taught in Spanish and English in nine neighborhood schools: Aloha-Huber Park K–8 School; Barnes, Vose and (starting this year) William Walker Elementary School; Meadow Park and Whitford Middle School; Aloha, Beaverton and Southridge High School.

The district has been working to develop a 5–10 year plan to expand dual language programs throughout the district so that all students have the option to work toward acquiring biliteracy/multiliteracy skills through high school. Phase one of the expansion will begin this school year with William Walker Elementary School making the transition to offering dual language learning.

Planning to expand dual language programs is based on a number of factors:

- Research indicates that students in dual language programs have a higher on-track graduation rate and are more likely to attend college after high school.
- Research also suggests that students who participate in dual language programs experience greater confidence, self-esteem and a sense of belonging in their school communities.
- Dual language programming aligns to the mission, vision, strategies and outcomes of the district's strategic plan.
- Results from a survey of BSD families during the 2022–23 school year indicated Spanish as their preferred dual language program over other language options. However, there is also a strong desire to add a language other than Spanish.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff will present information on the district's dual language program. No board action is needed.

Belong. Believe. Achieve.