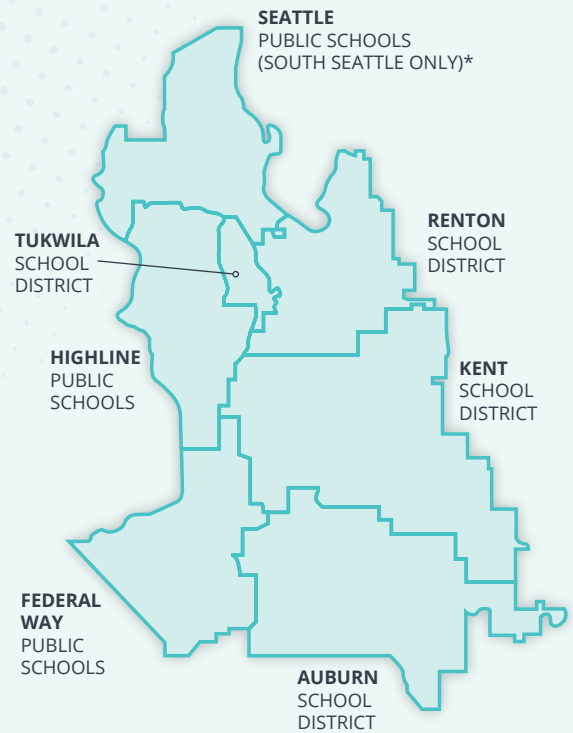# OUR RISING "VOICES

A Call to Action to Support Emergent Multilingual Students

This report is the result of the expertise and labor of many individuals and organizations working together in the Road Map Project region.

The Road Map Project is a collective impact initiative that began in 2010 to boost student success from early learning to college and career in seven King County, Washington school districts. It is a multisector network with the goal of increasing equitable policies and practices in our education systems so that every child and youth in South King County and South Seattle, particularly those who are low-income or of color, can thrive in their education, communities, and life.

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS (SOUTH SEATTLE ONLY)*

TUKWILA SCHOOL DISTRICT

RENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

HIGHLINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AUBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT

The **English Language Learners Work Group** is composed of educators, administrators, parents, and community leaders and pushes for systems-level change to create a more equitable educational experience for emergent multilingual students in the Road Map Project region and beyond. The Work Group is staffed by OneAmerica. Learn more at **rdmap.org/ELL-work-group**

The Road Map Project English Language Learners Work Group contributed to this report through participating in deep data dialogues, identifying objectives and key messages, reviewing drafts, and crafting solutions rooted in their diverse experiences in education.

OneAmerica is an immigrant rights organization that advances the fundamental principles of democracy and justice at the local, state, and national levels by organizing to build power within immigrant and refugee communities in collaboration with key allies. Learn more at **www.weareoneamerica.org**

OneAmerica contributed to this report through staff leadership in the collaborative writing process, facilitating the participation of the ELL Work Group, and engaging parent, community, and youth leaders in the development and review of content.

Community Center for Education Results is a nonprofit created to serve as the Road Map Project's backbone organization. The team provides data, research, communications, program, logistical, and other support in service to the initiative. Learn more at **www.roadmapproject.org/about-ccer/**

CCER contributed to this report by leading data analysis and presentation, facilitating data and narrative dialogues with the ELL Work Group, and staff leadership in the collaborative writing process.

INTRODUCTION

For too long, our education systems have described emergent multilingualism as a problem to manage and minimize.

Racism and xenophobia have steered policies and practices that frame linguistically diverse communities—immigrants, refugees, Indigenous people—as deficient. But these communities have always had stories of their own—stories of love, connection, resilience, learning, and justice—and now, more than ever, these stories are rising.

Our Rising Voices includes data, research, and stories that reveal the inadequacies of our current education system in supporting immigrant families, especially Black and brown emergent multilingual students. More importantly, it highlights attainable and equitable solutions to which all of us can contribute. With reimagination and resourcing, transformative changes are in reach.

We must lead with anti-racism and create an education system that works for students and families who have been too long marginalized and denied educational justice. Supporting all students requires that we first support those who the system was never designed to support. This means that our advocacy and work must focus more strongly on Black liberation and Indigenous sovereignty. When we do that, we will build a system for everyone, rooted in equity and care for generations to come.

This report begins with an introduction to emergent multilingual students in our region. It then dives into the three priority work areas of the Road Map Project English Language Learners Work Group: positive identity and primary language development, diversifying the teacher workforce, and postsecondary success. These are the levers for change that communities have been advocating for years. The goal of the report is to share intentional strategies that can drive sweeping yet specific systemic shifts, rather than to catalogue all the comprehensive data about emergent multilinguals in our region.

The recommendations at the conclusion of this report lay out specific actions to undo racist policies and practices, engage the love and wisdom of families, build the workforce our students and region require, and transform educational instruction so that equitable practices are in place in every school and classroom. We need bold and persistent action.

We hope that this report can be useful to anyone who is advocating for emergent multilingual students—families, grassroots organizers, educators, policymakers, and the young people most impacted by education policies and programs.

Key Term:
EMERGENT MULTILINGUAL

Students who are acquiring proficiency in more than one language—English in addition to one or more home or heritage languages. We use the term in this report to describe the same population referred to by school systems as English Language Learners (ELL), students who qualify for English language services. We use this term because it is a strength-based way to describe students (García, O., Kleifgen, J. A., & Falchi, L. 2008; Thompson, 2015; Weimer, Gil, & Esquierdo, 2019).

What does "Qualify for English Learning Services" mean?
Students qualify for English language development support when they do not meet the standards for English Language Proficiency, both knowledge and skills, in reading, listening, writing, and speaking on the annual English Language Proficiency Assessment.
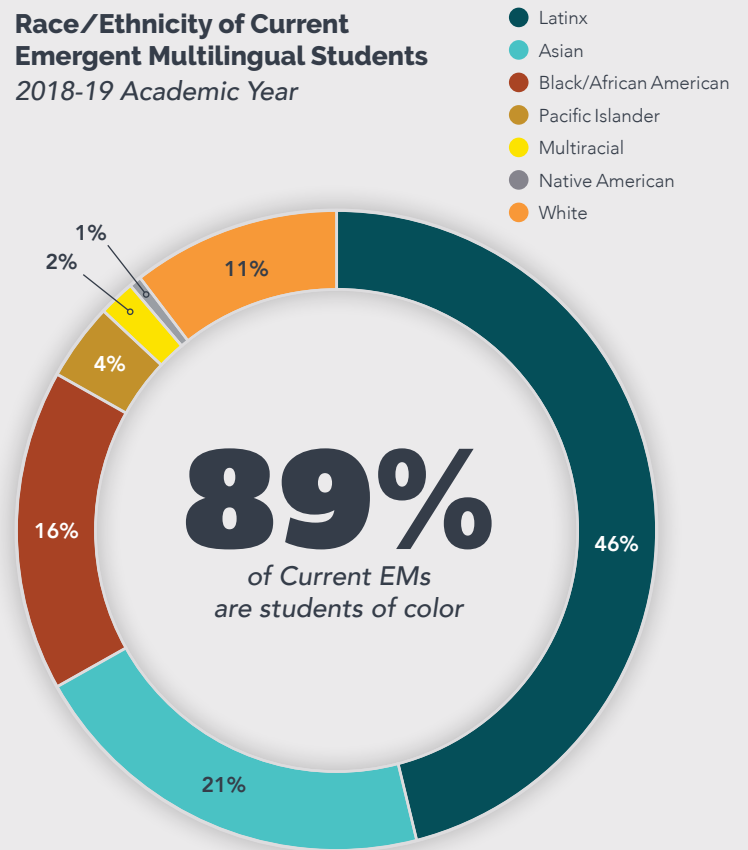
RISING VOICES:

Emergent Multilingual Students in South King County & South Seattle

Emergent multilingual students and their families are central to the Road Map Project region. **Nearly half of students in the region, 42 percent, are emergent multilingual at some point during their education.** In the 2018-19 school year, about one quarter of students were currently emergent multilinguals.

Emergent multilingual students are diverse in age, race, culture, language, and learning needs.

Nearly all emergent multilingual students, 89 percent, are students of color. Transforming racist policies and practices in education and creating culturally welcoming, equitable learning environments in the Road Map Project region's schools and communities is foundational to the success of emergent multilinguals.

Race/Ethnicity of Current Emergent Multilingual Students
2018-19 Academic Year

- Latinx
- Asian
- Black/African American
- Pacific Islander
- Multiracial
- Native American
- White

89%
of Current EMs
are students of color

46%
21%
16%
4%
2%
1%
11%

Source: OSPI CEDARS, n= 28,870

Key Term:

EVER EMERGENT MULTILINGUAL

Students who have been qualified for English learner (EL) services at some point in their K-12 education. This term includes both current emergent multilingual students and former emergent multilingual students.

Why look at data for both emergent multilingual students and ever emergent multilingual students?
Administrative education data often defines emergent multilinguals as students who are currently qualified for EL services. This data provides insight into the educational experiences and outcomes of students who are currently qualified for EL services, and how the educational system as a whole is serving them while they are developing English proficiency.

However, every academic year, this group of students changes. New students qualify for services and students who have achieved English proficiency are no longer qualified. This is why it is important to also look at data for ever emergent multilingual students.

Ever emergent multilingual data provides insight into the experiences of a larger group of students, including those who were emergent multilingual at any time during their educational experience. This allows us to continue to see how emergent multilingual students are doing after they no longer qualify for EL services. Looking at educational outcomes among ever emergent multilinguals makes it possible to understand the **progress** of our region's emergent multilingual students and the educational system that serves them.
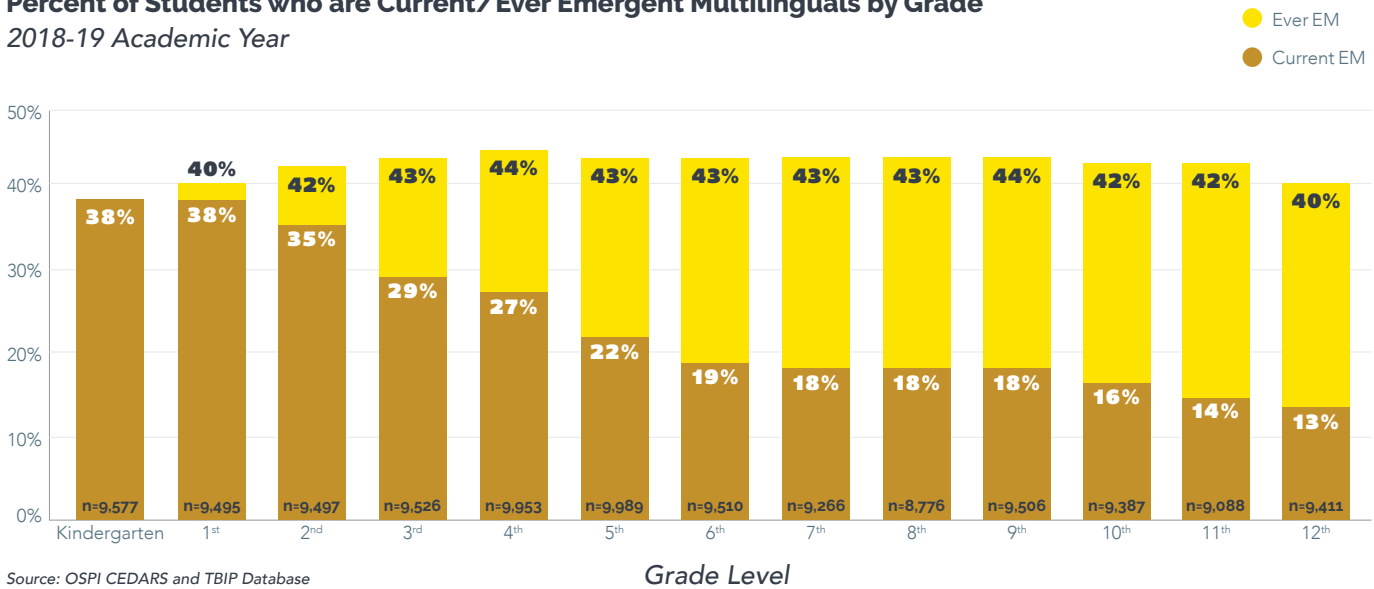
In-depth data related to different indicators for ever emergent multilinguals can be found on our supplemental Data Dashboard:

   rdmap.org/emergent-multilingual-data

Emergent multilingual students are in every grade span.

Developing multilingualism starts at birth and continues throughout life. High-quality early learning experiences are key to developing multilingualism and to setting students up to learn and thrive before they come through the school building door. **Most emergent multilingual students who enter kindergarten in the Road Map Project region were born in the United States.** That's why it's vital that opportunities for these students begin in early learning spaces.

Percent of Students who are Current/Ever Emergent Multilinguals by Grade
2018-19 Academic Year

Legend: ● Ever EM ● Current EM

Grade Level	Current EM	Ever EM	n
Kindergarten	38%	38%	n=9,577
1st	38%	40%	n=9,495
2nd	35%	42%	n=9,497
3rd	29%	43%	n=9,526
4th	27%	44%	n=9,953
5th	22%	43%	n=9,989
6th	19%	43%	n=9,510
7th	18%	43%	n=9,266
8th	18%	43%	n=8,776
9th	18%	44%	n=9,506
10th	16%	42%	n=9,387
11th	14%	42%	n=9,088
12th	13%	40%	n=9,411

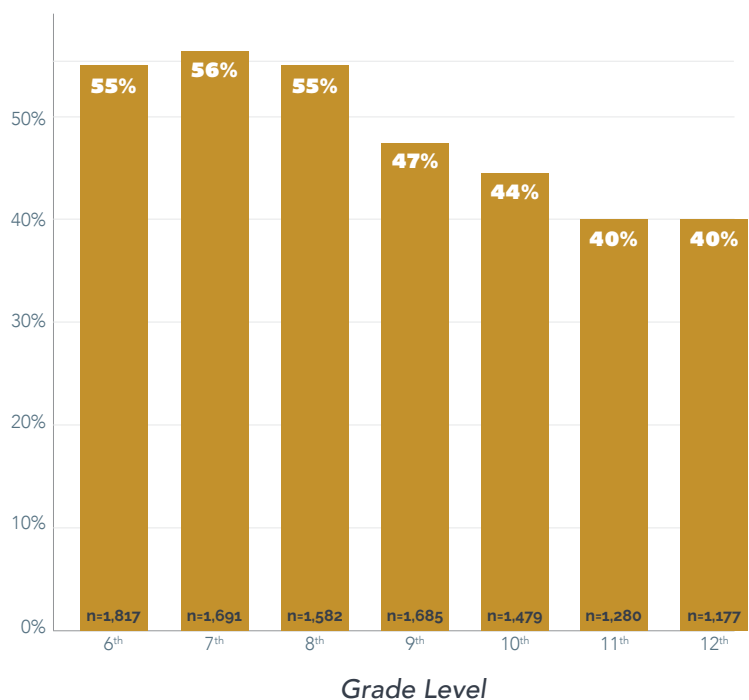*Source: OSPI CEDARS and TBIP Database*

While the number of emergent multilingual students is greatest in the early grades, the numbers remain high throughout middle and high school. Nearly one in eight 12th graders are emergent multilinguals. About half, 49 percent, of middle and high school emergent multilingual students have been eligible for some kind of English language development program for more than five years, and are considered "Long Term Emergent Multilinguals." **This percentage is too high and indicates that across our educational systems, too many emergent multilingual students are not receiving the support they need.**

Just 11 percent of emergent multilingual middle and high school students, many of whom are recent immigrants or refugees newly arriving to the U.S., qualified for EL services for the first time in middle or high school.

Intersecting learning needs should be recognized and supported

Emergent multilingual students, like all students, may have intersecting learning disabilities or health conditions and be dual eligible for both EL and special education services (e.g., Umansky, Thompson & Díaz, 2017). National studies show that many emergent multilingual students are misdiagnosed with learning disabilities (e.g. U.S. Department of Education, 2017; Mathews, 2014). This misidentification can be caused by educators not communicating with families of younger students, inadequate training, and educators mistaking language development as a disability, as well as other factors. To ensure students are well-served, educators must engage families and be dually skilled in language development and special education.

Percent of Current Emergent Multilinguals who have received EL services for more than 5 years

Grade Level	Percent	n
6th	55%	n=1,817
7th	56%	n=1,691
8th	55%	n=1,582
9th	47%	n=1,685
10th	44%	n=1,479
11th	40%	n=1,280
12th	40%	n=1,177

Source: OSPI CEDARS and TBIP Database

SUPPORTING POSITIVE IDENTITY AND MULTILINGUALISM

Multilingualism is a strength that education should cultivate. For years, educators and public policymakers sent families a message that their children would be better off if they only spoke English. This is a false idea rooted in racist and anti-immigrant beliefs and policies. Programs that cultivate multilingualism are essential, and we need more.

When young people use and develop their home languages, they build confidence, connections, and academic competency. **Children who have a strong foundation in their home language more easily learn a second language and achieve academically at the same or higher level than their peers.** (e.g. Espinosa, 2008, Lindholm-Leary, 2014).

Multiple strategies for developing multilingualism are essential

Dual language education is a potent force for educational equity and supporting multilingualism. Expanding access to dual language education is a priority. However, with 184 different primary languages spoken by students in our region, supporting the success of emergent multilingual students means implementing a variety of strategies.

Programs that support Primary Language Development

Programs	Description	Languages Offered in RMP
Dual Language Programs	A program that provides students with literacy and core content instruction in both English and their primary language. Dual language learning starts in kindergarten and goes through at least 5th grade. In Washington state, there are dual language programs in five world languages and seven Indigenous languages.	As of the 2020-21 Academic Year, there are 21 dual language programs in the Road Map Project region: 19 Spanish programs and two Vietnamese programs.
High School Heritage Language Courses	A program that helps students develop their speaking and writing skills in their heritage language during the school day or after school through partnerships with local community organizations. Students are then able to earn world language credits through the World Language Competency Testing.	As of the 2020-21 Academic Year, there have been heritage language courses offered in four different languages: Samoan, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
World Language Credit Program	A program that enables students to earn up to four World Language Competency credits for graduation by demonstrating proficiency in their home language. Currently, assessments are offered in 146 different languages.	In the 2018-19 Academic Year, there were World Language Competency Credits earned in 78 different languages in Road Map Project Region high schools.
Seal of Biliteracy	A program that recognizes students for their high level of proficiency in one or more World Languages in addition to English. Students demonstrate their proficiency through the World Language Credit Program Testing or AP/IB exams, and high school transcripts will indicate that they have earned the Seal when they graduate.	In the 2016-17 Academic Year, there were Seals of Biliteracy earned by over 602 students and in 38 different languages in Road Map Project region high schools.

Source: OSPI Report Card and OSPI CEDARS student level data.
WLCP Participation source: OSPI CEDARs student level data.

There are a total of 21 dual language learning programs among the region's more than 200 schools. This represents a fraction of the schools where there are large communities of EM students who would benefit from dual language learning (DLL). DLLshould be widely available across schools and grades.

For dual language education to realize its potential for educational equity, it must be supported by equity-based policies and welcome participation and guidance from families of emergent multilinguals. Otherwise, programs can shift from serving emergent multilinguals to serve primarily white, English-dominant, privileged families (e.g. Valdez, 2016, Chaparro, 2017). Policies that prioritize access for emergent multilingual students are crucial, especially in areas where gentrification is pushing families out of areas where they already fought for dual language programs (e.g. Ball, 2010).

Heritage and Indigenous language programs provide language development and cultural connections for emergent multilingual students who are more comfortable speaking, writing, and reading English than their home language. This lopsided language development happens when schools and public policies don't support heritage languages, whether Indigenous or immigrant, often for generations. *Heritage language programs are responsive to the language context of specific schools and districts, and are good for students and families. The number of programs and languages available should be dramatically increased to meet students' needs.*

The **World Language Credit Program (WLCP)** offers students a pathway to earn high school World Language credits for graduation by demonstrating their proficiency in their primary language. But far too many students are still not able to access the credits. In the 2018-19 school year, just under half (46 percent) of students who were emergent multilinguals in high school earned at least one World Language Credit by the end of 12th grade.

Schools and educators must create a culture that values multilingualism

Ensuring educational equity for emergent multilingual students requires both educational strategies and educators that embrace the value of multilingualism through their words, actions, and mindsets.

The **Speak Your Language campaign** educates policymakers and education leaders to spread awareness of and encourage the implementation of programs that advance multilingual education. The campaign brings together stakeholders to encourage systems and culture change to better activate student access to beneficial programs such as the WLCP and the Seal of Biliteracy. It should be embraced and uplifted in schools and communities.

For emergent multilingual students to have full equitable access to education, policymakers, district leaders, teachers, and staff must embrace multilingualism as an asset to be honored and supported through implementing language development programs and shifting educators' mindsets and school cultures.

"When we speak of sustaining Washington Tribal languages today, there is no doubt that public schools must play a role. It's crucial that everyone involved understands the range of experiences and models of language preservation that are possible in different settings. For today's Native children, immersion in their language and culture is the ideal academic path. It helps them develop their identity as a Native person, makes their school curriculum more relevant to their lived experiences, and strengthens their connection to tradition and culture.

As we continue to build out policies to support Native language revitalization, we need to be attentive to how Tribes, schools, and community-based organizations are taking up this challenge and support with resources that reflect the needs of the community."

Dana Arviso
Director, Unite:Ed

"We all need to feel and be proud of our heritage. Language is one of the most important ways to do so. This is why I believe in bilingual education."

**Faduma Bulale,**
OneAmerica leader and parent

EMERGENT REPRESENTATION:
BUILDING THE EDUCATOR WORKFORCE

Educators' expertise, commitment, and approaches changes students' lives and learning. Today, K-12 teachers in the Road Map Project region do not, as a whole, reflect the **racial, linguistic, or cultural diversity** of the region's students. Further, **too few are equipped** with the training, expertise, and skills to support multilingualism.

Teacher Diversity

Emergent multilingual students deserve schools filled with educators who reflect their languages, cultures, and communities. **However, just 21 percent, about two out of ten, of the region's teachers are people of color, while seven out of ten students are students of color.** The percent of teachers of color in the region has grown. But since the community of students of color has also increased, that growth represents stagnation, not progress.

Percent of Student and Teacher Population who are Persons of Color
2009-10 to 2018-19 Academic Year

● Students of Color
● Teachers of Color
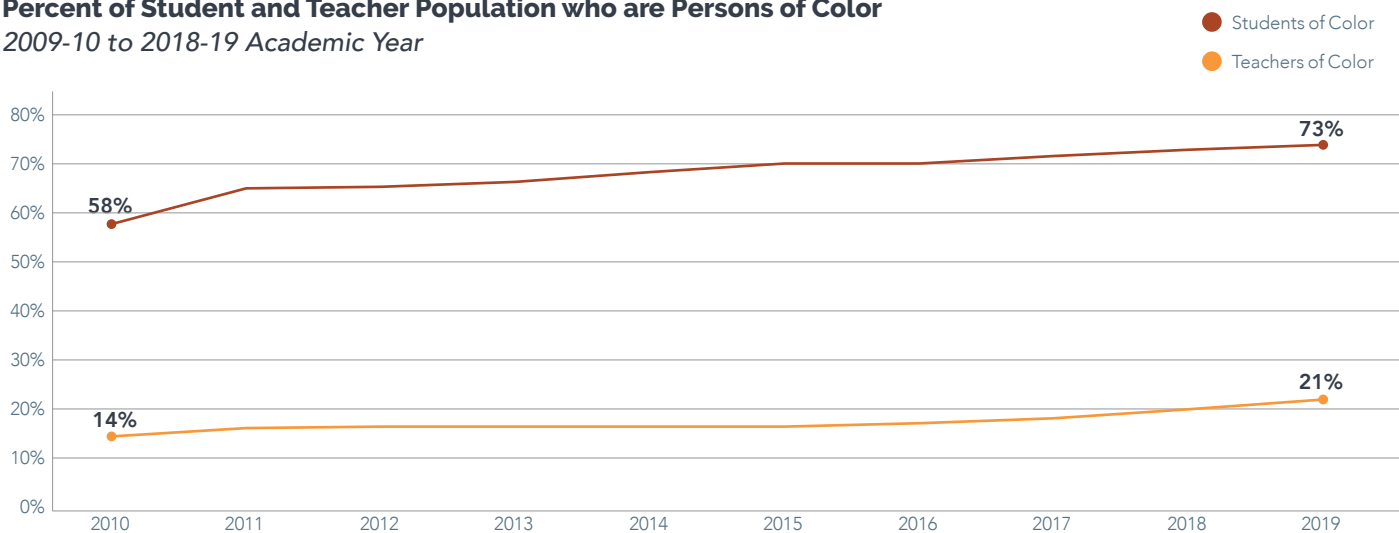
Source: OSPI CEDARS and s-275 Personnel Database; Students 2010 n= 116,498; Teachers 2010 n= 6,384; Students 2019 n= 128,442; Teachers 2019 n= 7,181

From birth through early childhood, children are more likely to be in learning environments that are multilingual and racially and culturally diverse (e.g. Whitebrook, 2018). But once they start kindergarten, many students lose language and cultural connections. For children who have special education needs, that loss can also disrupt or delay critical early intervention.

Research, as well as the lived experience of students, demonstrates that Black students and all students of color have greater academic success when they have teachers of color (e.g., Sun, 2018). Today, far too many students go through their school days and years without seeing people who look like them or share their culture.

" **The system is unprepared for our children. We need more bilingual and multilingual teachers in K-12. As one of the bilingual home visitors, we are preparing the kids and their families in their home language with social and emotional development, but then when we send them to the school they too often lose relationships and connection. The teacher needs to know the cultural and linguistic identity of each family and welcome each child in the classroom."**

Norma Maldonado
Early Learning Specialist

Educator Expertise

Teachers and staff with the skills and commitment to develop students' multilingual proficiency should be in classrooms across subjects and throughout the school day. **But in the Road Map Project region, far too few K-12 teachers—just eight percent—have an endorsement in English Language Learning, and less than one half of 1 percent have a bilingual education endorsement.**

It is critical to scale up teacher preparation and professional development in best practices for teaching emergent multilingual students and to cultivate teacher mindsets that embrace the value of multilingualism in school.

> " The truth is, emergent multilingual students are in everyone's classroom! They are not *just* EL teachers' students. Data shows that coaching for all teachers, along with incorporating ELL endorsement in teacher education is essential. This is also about leadership at the district level. They hold the power and if they don't put serving emergent bilingual students on the agenda - then teachers aren't going to either. If we truly hold the mindset that equitable education for emergent bilinguals is important, then that must be reflected in the principles and practices and the budget."

Fenglan Nancy Yi-Cline, Ed.D.
易凤兰, 博士 *ELL Specialist*

Percent of Teachers who have an ELL Endorsement or Bilingual Ed Endorsement
2009-10 to 2018-19 Academic Year

- ELL Endorsement
- Bilingual Ed Endorsement
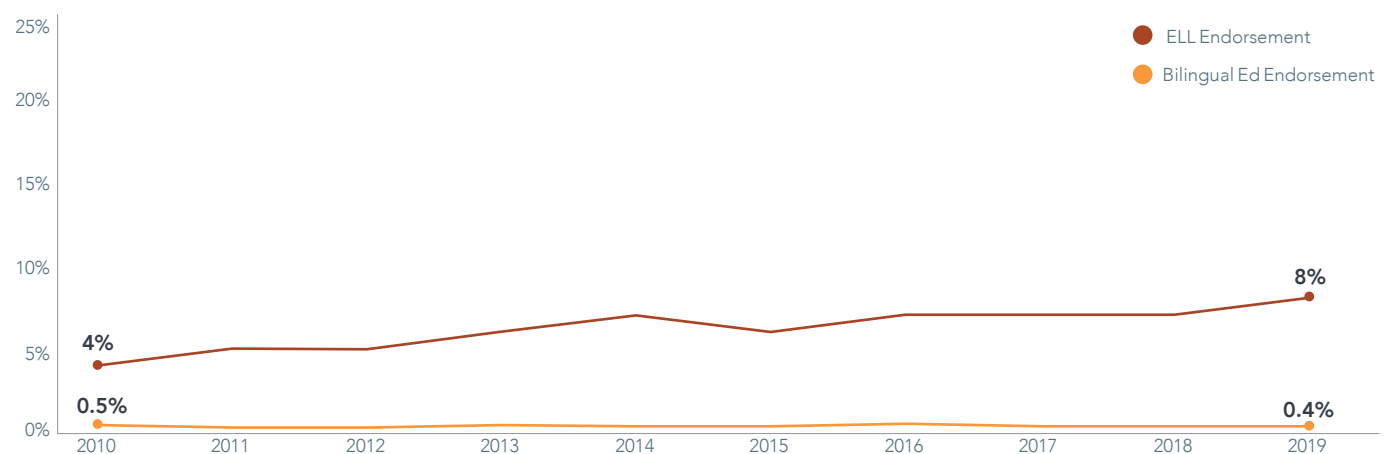
Source: s-275 Personnel Database and OSPI EGAD Database; 2010 n= 6,384; 2019 n= 7,181

There are bright spots in the region: innovative strategies that are recruiting and supporting multilingual and diverse educators.

GROW YOUR OWN TEACHER RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Future Bilingual Teaching Fellows is a collaboration between Highline School District and Western Washington University that helps paraeducators become K-8 certified teachers.

Recruiting Washington Teachers is a high school teacher academy that recruits and supports diverse future teachers. The program is state funded. In the Road Map Project region, Renton School District is one of the grant funded locations.

The Kent School District *partners with Antioch University* to offer classified staff the opportunity to earn a K-8 teaching certification with ELL endorsement while maintaining their district positions. Kent also partners with Pacific Lutheran University to support 1) certified teachers in earning a bilingual education or ELL endorsement and 2) ELL Leadership Academy for principals and district leadership, culminating in earning a bilingual ed or ELL endorsement. All classes offered by both universities are held in-district at locations selected by participants.

Seattle Public Schools Academy of Rising Educators supports Seattle Public Schools recent graduates and paraprofessional employees who would like to become certificated employees in specific, targeted, high-needs areas.

Grow Your Own marketing and recruitment at the Professional Educator Standards Board provides resources to help local communities build a diverse workforce.

University of Washington *BECA Fellowship for Elementary Bilingual Teachers* recruits and supports diverse candidates to become bilingual education endorsed teachers.

Uplifting and expanding innovative teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention strategies, as well as bold policy action, can create the diverse, multilingual workforce an equitable education system demands and that students deserve.

EMERGENT DREAMS:
SUPPORTING POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS

Like all students, emergent multilinguals have powerful aspirations for their lives after high school. When they are supported by educators, schools, districts, and policy—they can reach those aspirations. In high schools within the region, emergent multilinguals who access programs like the World Language Credit Program also have higher four-year graduation rates. Systemic support makes a difference for student outcomes.

Percent of Students who were Emergent Multilingual in High School who graduated within 4 years in the 2018-19 Academic Year
*Disaggregated by World Language Competency Credits earned*

● No WLCP Credits   ● At least 1 WLCP Credit

80% (n=245)
44% (n=349)
58% All EM in High School students
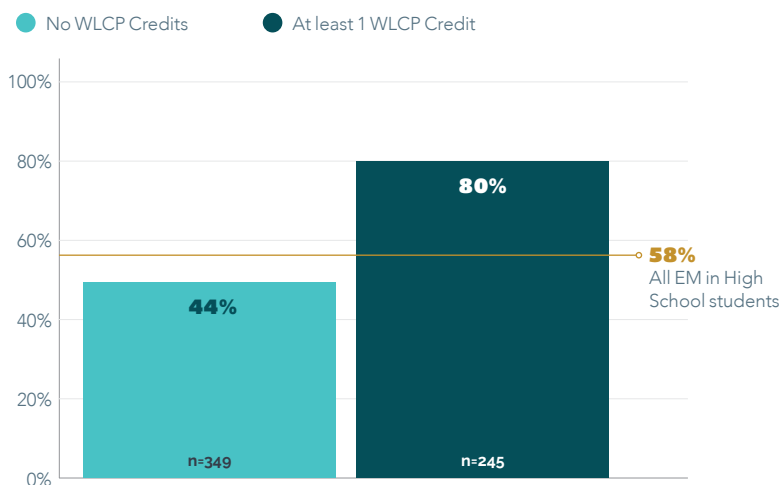
Source: OSPI CEDARS
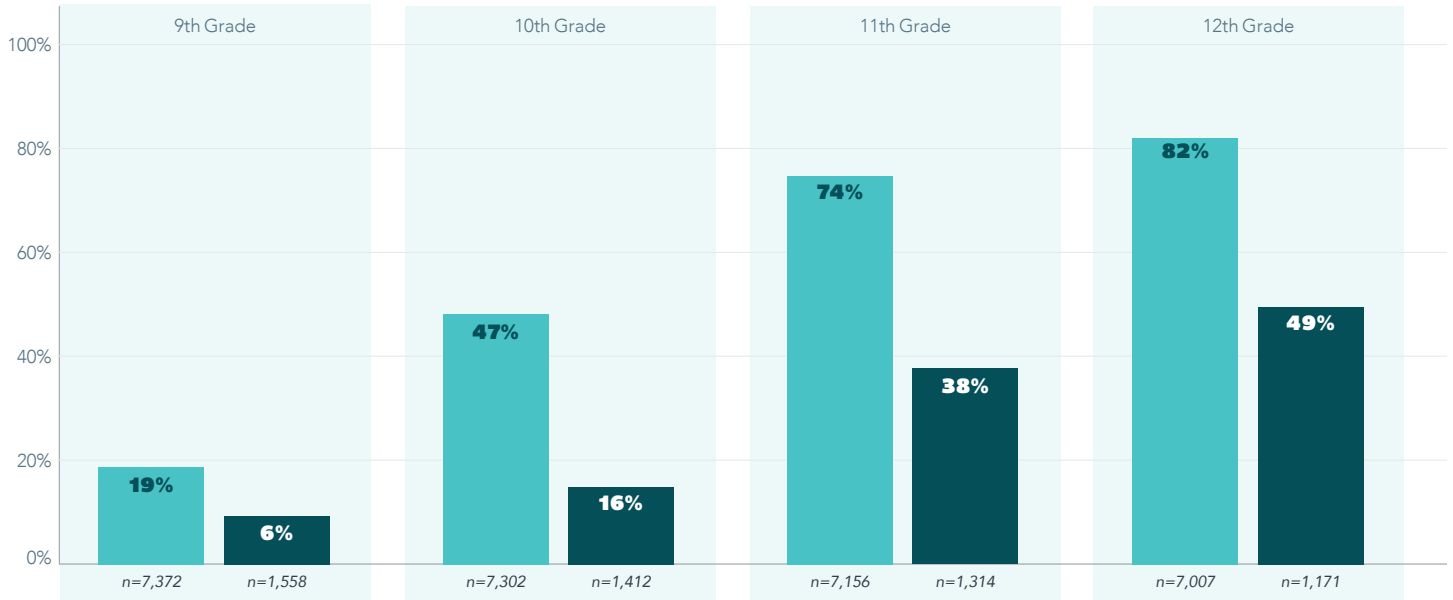
Students are "stuck" because the system is stuck.

Nearly half of emergent multilingual students in middle and high school have been eligible for EL services for more than five years. Before and during high school, there are many factors that contribute to a student becoming a long-term emergent multilingual. These include lack of primary language development, deficit-framed instruction, ineffective program models, educators who lack the professional development needed to address diverse language needs, and other systemic reasons (e.g., Motamedi, 2015; Varghese, 2004).

The course loads of emergent multilinguals contain lower amounts of dual credit courses—such as AP, IB, and Running Start that are graduation requirements which double as pre-college credits—than students who are not emergent multilinguals. Yet in schools where they are similarly prepared, they enroll in advanced classes at similar rates (Hanson, et al, 2016). There is also inconsistency in how emergent multilinguals changing schools can transfer credits from their previous schools. This could lead to students retaking courses to recover credits that they've actually already earned. Our education system creates barriers for emergent multilinguals in high school, particularly long-term emergent multilinguals, to graduate and enroll directly in college. We need to invest in the powerful capabilities these students have.

Highline Public Schools
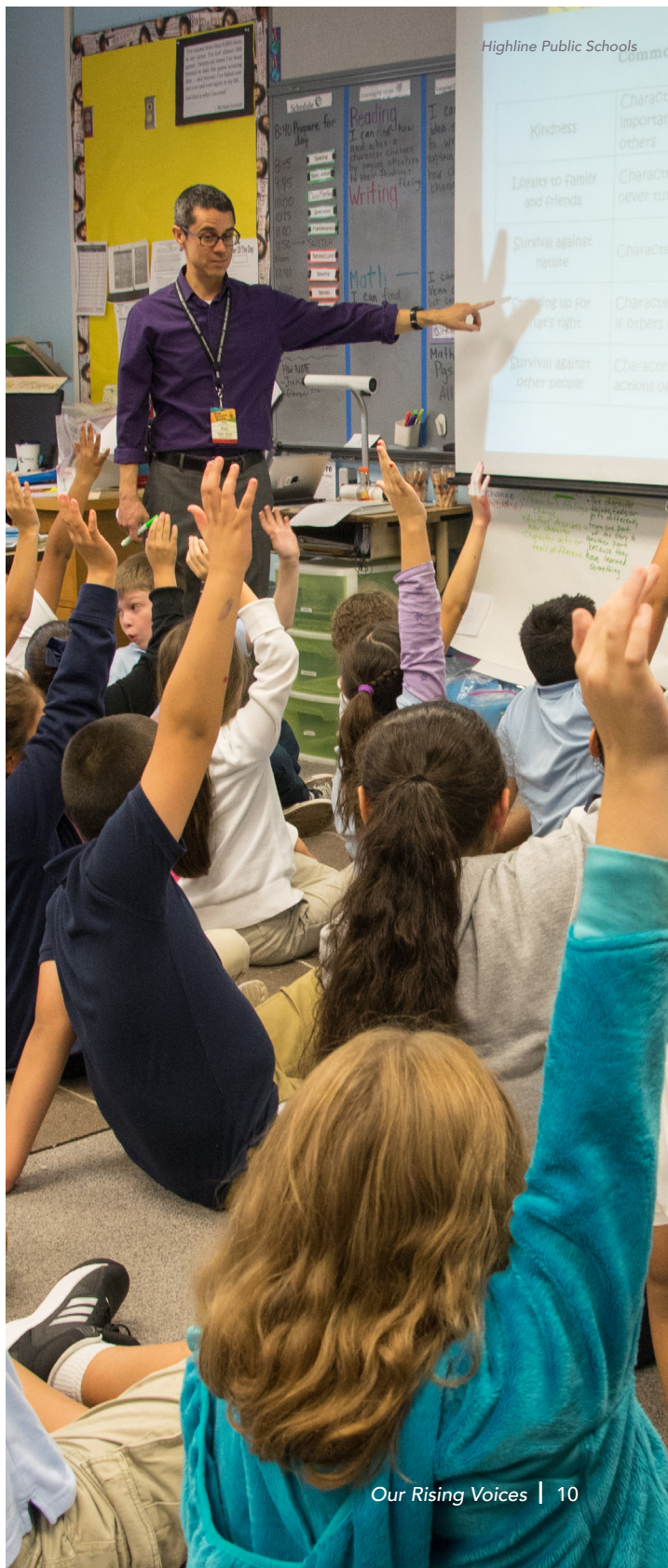
Percent of Students who have taken at least 1 Dual Credit Course since entering High School
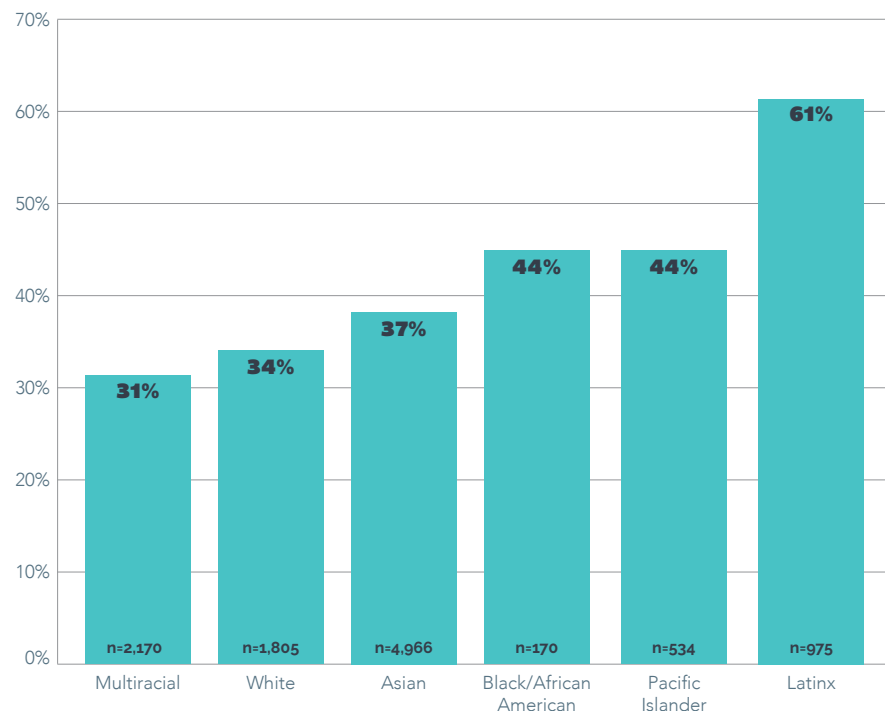*Disaggregated by Grade Level and Emergent Multilingual Status in High School*

● Not EM in HS
● EM in HS

	9th Grade		10th Grade		11th Grade		12th Grade	
	19%	6%	47%	16%	74%	38%	82%	49%
	n=7,372	n=1,558	n=7,302	n=1,412	n=7,156	n=1,314	n=7,007	n=1,171

Source: OSPI CEDARS

For emergent multilingual students, equitable opportunity means college and career readiness that supports their aspirations. This requires better language access for college knowledge materials, more in-school support for postsecondary options, and support from a collaborative community that includes families, school staff, and other supportive adults. It also means that we must consider the specific needs of emergent multilinguals during the transitional years of middle school and the specific needs of high school students who are newly arrived immigrants.

Percent of Current Emergent Multilinguals in Middle and High School who have received EL services for more than 5 years as of the 2018-19 Academic Year

Multiracial	White	Asian	Black/African American	Pacific Islander	Latinx
31%	34%	37%	44%	44%	61%
n=2,170	n=1,805	n=4,966	n=170	n=534	n=975

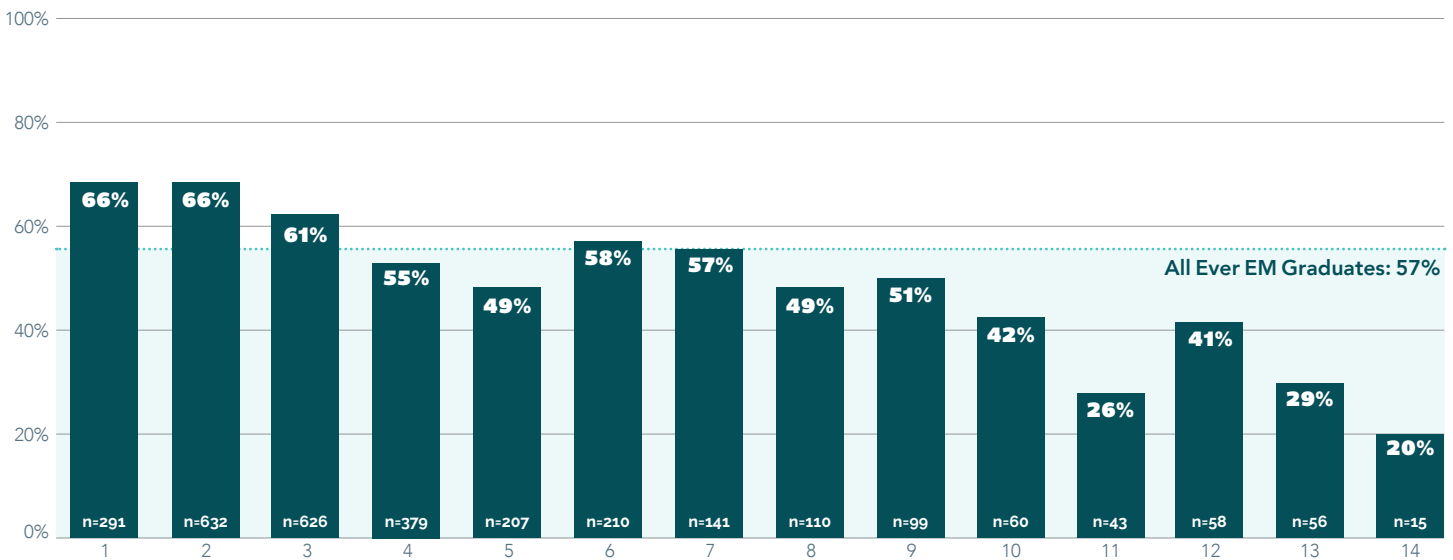*Source: OSPI CEDARS and TBIP Database*
Note: Native American Students have not been included because we have limited data regarding ELD services through Title III, which leads to an undercount of Native American LTEM students

Percent of Ever Emergent Multilingual graduates from the Class of 2018 who directly enrolled in college
Disaggregated by Years of EL Services Received

All Ever EM Graduates: 57%

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Percent	66%	66%	61%	55%	49%	58%	57%	49%	51%	42%	26%	41%	29%	20%
n	n=291	n=632	n=626	n=379	n=207	n=210	n=141	n=110	n=99	n=60	n=43	n=58	n=56	n=15

Source: OSPI CEDARS, TBIP Database, and National Student Clearinghouse

" Postsecondary success in the school system matters to me because very often BIPOC identifying students are marginalized heavily within our school system, as well as in their communities. Their success in schools are often not celebrated, and on top of that there isn't a system(s) in place that focuses on the transition from secondary schooling to postsecondary. They should be celebrated for their success."

Aden Yirdaw
Youth Leader, OneAmerica Youth Council

Just as opportunity gaps are not about race, but about racism, it is clear that there are intersectional, systemic factors impacting students learning multiple languages. Being an emergent multilingual is not an obstacle to student success; in fact, being multilingual is a powerful asset. **Students who exit English language services within three years enroll in postsecondary at higher rates than monolingual students.** Yet, too many students do not get the support they need from our education systems.

INEQUITIES LAID BARE BY THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AND UPRISINGS FOR RACIAL JUSTICE:

A CALL TO ACTION AND COMPASSION

Many students, from early learning through K-12 and postsecondary, and their families and communities, are experiencing additional challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rising unemployment, hazardous work, increased economic insecurity, death or illness of family members, loss of routine, separation from community, racist inequities that were embedded in education, and inadequate access to online learning are hurting students.

Racist violence has brought pain and trauma to the forefront in the lives of many, especially Black students and their families. In some communities, local and federal officials have elevated a frightening police or military presence in response to protests for justice.

The trauma and anxiety that all of these factors bring are different and more intense for Black, Indigenous, and many people of color and refugee groups. This is due to history, disparate health policy impacts, racial discrimination based in xenophobic myths about COVID-19, anti-immigrant rhetoric, deportation and family-separation practices, and other crises that are both longstanding and increasing. Many emergent multilingual students and their families are acutely impacted. Our educational systems and everyone within those systems need to recognize the impacts and act with urgency towards racial equity.

Times of crisis are also times of opportunity. We have the possibility of making profound changes to deeply-seated problems. The recommendations in the following pages come from years—often generations—of organizing from students, families, advocates, and communities. This is a call to ensure that students furthest from justice have pride in their identities, representation in their classrooms, and promise towards their dreams.

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations lay out actions for people at every level of decision-making in education: state policymakers, teacher preparation programs, superintendents, school board directors, principals, educators, and staff. They encompass both policy and educational practices. The recommendations are also a tool for students, families, and advocates to work together for positive change.

If you are in a position of decision-making in education, use these recommendations to identify your next steps.

If you are an advocate, use these recommendations to form an action plan to bring these solutions to educators and policymakers in your community.

Your actions can strengthen our education system and move our region toward a new reality, one where every emergent multilingual student has full access to an equitable education that cultivates their strengths and helps them reach their dreams.

RECOMMENDATION 1:
Scale up proven anti-racist education strategies to create welcoming schools and equitable access to high-quality education for everyone.

RECOMMENDATION 2:
Strengthen engagement of families and participation in decisions for families of emergent multilingual students from early learning through graduation.

RECOMMENDATION 3:
Scale up recruitment, hiring, and retention of educators who are racially diverse, culturally responsive and equipped to educate emergent multilinguals.

RECOMMENDATION 4:
Expand access to dual language learning and multilingual educational environments for emergent multilingual students.

RECOMMENDATION 5:
Implement educational best practices, rooted in racial equity, for emergent multilingual students in every school and classroom.

RECOMMENDATION 1:
Scale up proven anti-racist education strategies to create welcoming schools and equitable access to high-quality education for everyone.

Action	Who is responsible
Ensure every educator engages with students in culturally responsive ways, including implementing the **cultural competency standards** created by the WA Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) that span teacher preparation and development.	Teacher preparation programs Principals Educators & staff
Provide all students access to high quality ethnic studies classes and use resources developed by the **Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee** established by **SB 5023** (2020).	Superintendents School board directors Principals & teachers
Implement culturally informed, language accessible, trauma informed mental health supports for students, and provide related professional development for educators and staff.	Principals Educators & staff
Hire and retain more teachers of color.	See Recommendation 3
Create classrooms and educational environments that reflect, embrace, and celebrate racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity through conversation, art, history, celebrations, curricula, etc.	Principals Educators & staff

RECOMMENDATION 2:
Strengthen engagement of families and participation in decisions for families of emergent multilingual students from early learning through graduation.

Action	Who is responsible
Train and inform students and families about their civil rights in the school system and how they can advocate for themselves. Training should be multilingual and multi-channel i.e. video, social media, in-person, written materials, etc.	Superintendents School board directors Principals Educators & staff Community-based organizations
Implement emergent multilingual education community/family advisory councils, including for dual language learning programs, with a direct and regular feedback loop to staff and leadership.	Educational service districts Superintendents Principals Educators & staff
Ensure that all staff provide access to interpreter resources as laid out in state and federal requirements to communicate with families in a language they speak and understand.	Superintendents Principals Staff
Establish professional standards for interpretation and translation in education settings.	State policymakers
Ensure translated and interpreted information, pass policies and procedures to institutionalize language access, and provide direct outreach to families of emergent multilingual students during the coronavirus pandemic to ensure that students can fully access education.	Superintendents Principals Educators & staff

RECOMMENDATION 3:
Scale up recruitment, hiring, and retention of educators who are racially diverse, culturally responsive and equipped to educate emergent multilinguals.

Action	Who is responsible
Require all teachers to hold the equivalent of ELL or Bilingual Education endorsement by 2030.	State policymakers
Sustain and expand effective recruitment, education, and retention strategies. • Scale up **"Grow Your Own"** strategies (see page 9 for examples). • Implement a **case by case exception process** for content knowledge assessments for teacher candidates, as recommended by the PESB • Provide assessment flexibility with **multiple measures** for the performance assessment to offer multiple pathways into the profession.	PESB Teacher preparation programs OSPI Educational service districts Superintendents School board directors Principals
Implement race and educational equity-based best practices for layoff decisions beyond "last hired, first fired."	Labor associations Superintendents Principals
Implement questions regarding strategies for educating emergent multilingual students in all hiring.	Superintendents Principals HR staff
Create welcoming, equitable working environments where educators and staff of color are respected and where everyone actively works to eliminate racism and create equity. This includes opportunities for affinity groups for teachers of color and expectations that all teachers and staff, including white teachers, will address bias and racism with reflection, words, and actions.	School board directors Superintendents Principals Educators & staff

RECOMMENDATION 4:
Expand access to dual language learning and multilingual educational environments for emergent multilingual students.

Action	Who is responsible
Increase funding for startup costs of early learning and K-12 dual language programs as part of the dual language grant program.	State policymakers
Implement two-way dual language programs in all districts that have the student population to sustain them, with priority access for emergent multilingual students, and continue dual language programs in middle and high school.	Superintendents School board directors Principals Educators & staff
Fund and implement language development for heritage and Indigenous languages in school and through partnerships with community organizations.	State policy makers Superintendents Principals Educators
Create an aligned plan between DCYF and OSPI to expand dual language opportunities for multilingual children from early learning through K-12, including a smooth transition into kindergarten.	Staff at OSPI and DCYF

RECOMMENDATION 5:
Implement educational best practices, rooted in racial equity, for emergent multilingual students in every school and classroom.

Action	Who is responsible
Implement collaborative planning and teaching between general education and EL teachers and do not excessively pull emergent multilingual students out of classrooms.	Principals Educators & staff
Implement full access to technology, technical support, and high speed internet for all students during the coronavirus pandemic and beyond.	OSPI Superintendents School board directors Principals Educators & staff
Implement high-quality, culturally responsive special education evaluation and services that ensure that emergent multilingual students receive the services they need and are not mistakenly qualified for special ed.	Principals Educators & staff
Create an aligned plan between DCYF and OSPI to expand dual language opportunities for multilingual children from early learning through K-12, including a smooth transition into kindergarten.	Staff at OSPI and DCYF
Ensure emergent multilingual students know and use their rights to choose their own classes and have full access to classes that provide a pathway to graduation and their post-secondary goals.	Principals Educators & staff
Improve data collection and reporting for dual language and other programs that support emergent multilinguals, and create additional disaggregated categories so results can be viewed by Ever, Former, and Long Term Emergent Multilinguals on the Washington State Report Card.	OSPI

OUR EMERGENT POWER

As the powerful stories of emergent multilingual communities rise against the status quo, what role will you play?

Everyone who makes decisions that impact students can and must take specific actions to create equitable policies and practices, engage the love and wisdom of families in students' success, build the workforce our students and region require, and implement best practices in every school and classroom.

Districts and other institutions in our region are implementing different strategies to support emergent multilinguals, and these initiatives should be uplifted. Individual programs, schools, and educators deserve to be celebrated for the amazing work they do—but we also need to focus on how to expand these efforts for collective impact. Let's move beyond "bright spots" and work to illuminate our entire community.

Let's imagine a future where all children and youth have access to a meaningful education that cultivates their strengths and prepares them to reach their dreams. A future of learning environments that nurture young people's brilliance and embrace their communities' languages, cultures, and histories. A future in which students, families, educators, and policymakers work together to continually push our systems forward.

That future is already emergent.

Highline Public Schools

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