

Wednesday, May 10, 2023, 4-6 p.m.

District Office Board Room

Isabel Meaker, Executive Director of Family Engagement

Amy Carder, Director of Teaching and Learning, Multilingual Learners (ML)

Heidi LaMare (Education Impact Exchange)

Discussion at tables: Which aspects of bilingualism speak to you? What are you excited about? Visual: The powerful gift of bilingualism... Bilingualism links families, promotes creativity, increases focus, activates multi-tasking, enables worldly views, stimulates the brain, promotes brain health, opens the mind and enhances communication skills.

Subcommittees will report back to the whole group about their work. Then in small groups each team will review key takeaways from each subcommittee. Groups will create two posters that include questions and what does this mean for continuing the work in 2023-24?

The team has met 3 or 4 times and there are some changes to the structure that was originally discussed. The subcommittee wrestled with the question: whole school or strand-within-a-school program to start. Proposal is to initiate a Dual Language program at Birchwood Elementary School with a strand program that includes one class of Promise K and one class of Spanish/English. Considering how to begin, this would be a start.

*American Reading Company*. Committee members attended the Washington Association of Bilingual Education WABE Conference 2023 and brought back many ideas.

This team is planning how to support staff on all levels, including teachers, building leaders, and how to communicate to the community about Dual Language. They are considering what it looks like to train strand and non-strand teachers.

At tables review the key takeaways from each subcommittee – create two posters for each topic: Questions and Implications for our work in 23-24. Spend about 10 minutes on each topic. Four topics: Overall program structure; grade-by-grade program pathways; enrollment and applications; staff learning.

Consider: How can we move forward our thinking to present recommendations to the superintendent and the Board? How can we begin now to create a school culture to support teachers, students, and families in the school community to feel eager and ready for the transition.

Questions from the groups... What will the logistics look like? With the strand format, how will we avoid a silo effect in the school so students in the Dual Language strand are not perceived as or feel isolated, but rather that the school culture is rich in diversity and united? Will the Dual Language school remain as a neighborhood school or would students need to be bused from around the district? How will we ensure that the program and non-dual programs are equitably and well-funded? What will the requirements be to enter the program? What will the enrollment process be? What will be priorities for placement? Will there be a lottery program to decide who will enter the program? What if there are neighborhood shifts in population? How do we define clearly expected qualifications for teachers? What are best practices for hiring bilingual teachers? Will there be time for professional development and school wide training? What will mid-year enrollment look like in a Dual Language program?

At tables, make connections between the Three Pillars of Bilingualism and The Bellingham Promise. The Three Pillars of Bilingualism: Biliteracy and Bilingualism, High Academic