

January 2007

## **IMMIGRANT SECONDARY STUDENTS IN WASHINGTON STATE: POPULATION TRENDS AND HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PROGRAMS**

The 2005 Washington State Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to “conduct an analysis of the availability, services, and effectiveness of programs in community and technical colleges that serve the educational needs of recent immigrant students who are not proficient in English and who are or have been enrolled in high school but have not met graduation requirements.”<sup>1</sup> The review is to examine the types, funding models, availability, and effectiveness of programs provided in Washington State. The Legislature further directed the Institute to develop “recommendations for improving the programs to better meet the needs of recent immigrant students and for expanding the availability of programs statewide.”<sup>2</sup>

For this study, the Institute analyzed state and national data, interviewed program staff at Washington community and technical colleges, and reviewed national research.

This report is organized as follows:

- 1) Immigrant Students and Education: Background
- 2) Programs Serving Recent Immigrant Secondary Students
- 3) State Policy Recommendation

### **Summary**

Data tracking immigrant students are scarce, but available measures suggest that this population is increasing rapidly. In Washington State, English Language Learner (ELL) students make up an increasing share of K–12 students statewide, growing from 2 percent of students in 1985–86 to about 8 percent in 2004–05. Currently, there are more than 16,000 Washington high school students who are not proficient in the English language. It is unknown how many of these students recently immigrated to the state.

Immigrant students face unique barriers to academic achievement, including language challenges, cultural differences, lack of familiarity with American public school systems, and high rates of poverty. These challenges are associated with poor academic outcomes, including low test scores and graduation rates.

The study legislation directs the Institute to review community and technical college (CTC) programs for immigrant secondary students. This review finds that there are no CTC programs in Washington specifically designed to serve immigrant students seeking a high school diploma. Washington CTCs operate three types of diploma programs for any adult student: high school completion (29 programs), contract retrieval (ten programs), and technical high schools (three programs). Statewide, fewer than 200 immigrant students under age 22 enroll in these programs annually.

No rigorous, empirical research examines the effectiveness of programs for immigrant secondary students, and Washington State currently does not systematically collect information about students' immigration status. As a first step in improving and expanding high school completion programs for this population, the Institute recommends that the state track immigrant students in existing K–12 data systems.

<sup>1</sup> ESSB 6090, Section 608 (3), Chapter 518, Laws of 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## 1) Immigrant Students and Public Education: Background

This section provides information about immigrant student population trends, special challenges, and academic outcomes.

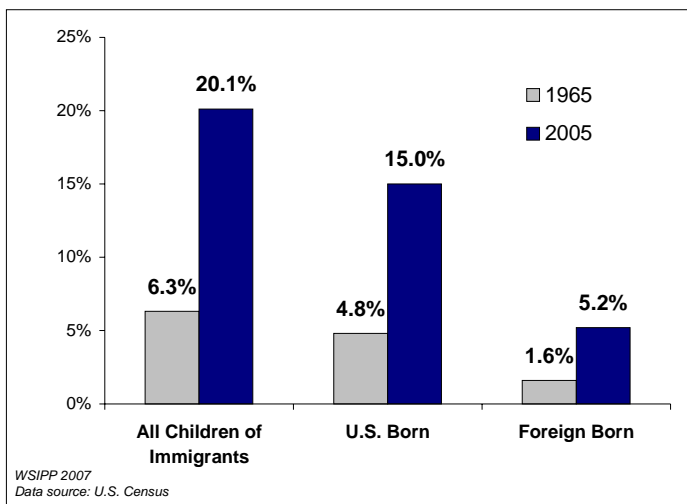
### Population Trends

Nationally and in Washington State, the immigrant population—many of whom are school-age children struggling to learn English—is increasing. Direct estimates of the size and distribution of immigrant public school students are not readily available, but there are indicators that outline population trends, including data from the U.S. Census and the Washington State Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP).

**Nationwide, the Immigrant Population Is Growing Rapidly.** The United States foreign-born population has nearly doubled since 1990, increasing from 19.8 million to 34 million in 2004. Children under age 18 make up approximately 30 percent of the foreign-born population.<sup>3</sup>

Foreign-born children and U.S.-born children whose parents are immigrants make up an increasing share of K–12 students nationwide (see Exhibit 1). In 2005, one in five U.S. K–12 students was a child of immigrant parents, compared with one in 16 students 40 years ago.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Children of Immigrants:**  
**Percentage of K–12 Students in the United States**



<sup>3</sup> R. Fry. (2005). *The higher dropout rate of foreign born teens: The role of schooling abroad*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, p. 1.

## Washington's Immigrant Population Is Increasing Faster Than Overall Population Growth

The number of immigrants in Washington State increased by about 91 percent between 1990 and 2000, nearly three times the overall population growth (see Exhibit 2).

**Exhibit 2**  
**Washington State Native and Foreign-Born Population Growth**

|  | 1990      | 2000      | Percent Increase |
|--|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| Total Population                                 | 4,866,692 | 5,894,121 | 21.1%            |
| Native Population                                | 4,536,084 | 5,266,201 | 16.1%            |
| Born in Puerto Rico or Other U.S. Outlying Areas | 8,464     | 13,463    | 59.1%            |
| Foreign Born                                     | 322,144   | 614,457   | 90.7%            |

Data source: U.S. Census

## Washington's School-Age Immigrant Population Is Also Growing Rapidly

Washington is considered a “high growth” state relative to the national averages in the percentage increase in public school immigrant students since 1990. One recent study estimated that the number of immigrant students in Washington elementary schools increased by 67 percent between 1990 and 2000; the increase in middle and high schools was 113 percent. The corresponding national averages are 39 percent and 72 percent, respectively. As of 2000, there were approximately 107,000 immigrant elementary students and 100,000 middle and high school students in Washington State, based on U.S. Census data.<sup>4</sup> Besides these broad estimates, however, there are no direct data sources that track this population in Washington State.

## State TBIP Data Indicate a Steadily Growing ELL Student Population

In Washington State, available K–12 data track non-English speakers in Washington public schools. School districts report Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP) student headcounts as well as teacher and program data to OSPI annually.

Students are TBIP-eligible if they score below the minimum threshold on the Washington Language Proficiency Test (WLPT).<sup>5</sup> Students whose WLPT

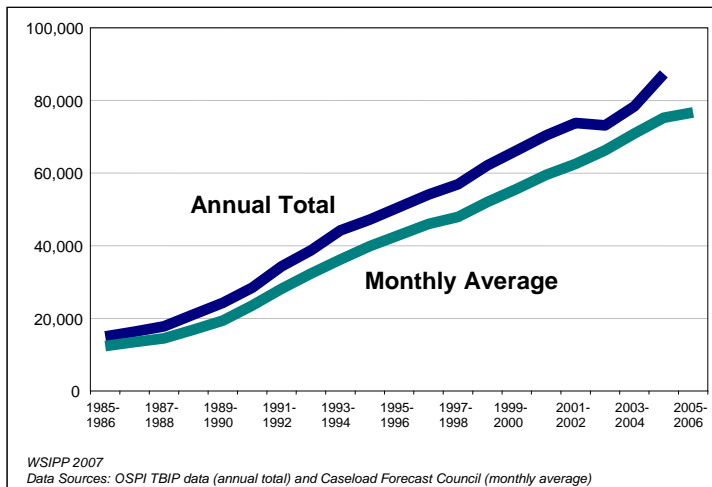
<sup>4</sup> R. Capps, M. Fix, J. Murray, J. Ost, J. Passel, & S. Herwanto. (2005). *The new demography of America's schools: Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute/Migration Policy Institute, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> WAC 392-160-020 and TBIP program guidelines, p. 5.

scores qualify them for the TBIP are considered to be English Language Learners (ELL students).

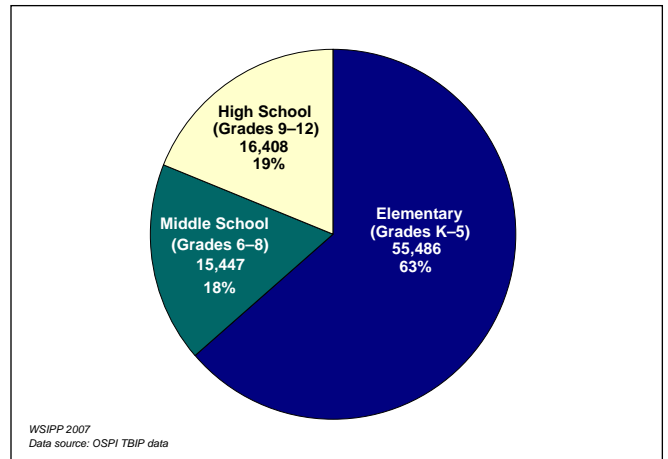
The number of students participating in the TBIP is increasing steadily and is outpacing general K–12 enrollment growth. In the 1980s, TBIP students represented less than 2 percent of the state’s K–12 students, and in 2004–05, about 8 percent. Exhibit 3 illustrates TBIP enrollment growth. This growth is due to two reasons: more ELL students enroll in Washington schools each year, and they remain in the TBIP for increasing lengths of time.<sup>6</sup>

**Exhibit 3**  
**Historical TBIP Enrollment**



**Most TBIP Students Are in Elementary or Middle School.** Nearly two-thirds of the 87,343 TBIP students enrolled in Washington schools during 2004–05 were in elementary school (see Exhibit 4). Just under one-fifth of TBIP students were in high school.

**Exhibit 4**  
**TBIP Students by School Level, 2004–05**



**Nearly One-Third of TBIP Students Are New to the Program.** While most TBIP students have attended Washington schools for one or more years, nearly one-third are new to the program (see Exhibit 5). At the high school level, in the 2004–05 school year, nearly 23 percent (3,731 students) had recently enrolled. It is unknown whether all of these students are recent immigrants to the United States or whether some had transferred between districts within the state.

**Exhibit 5**  
**Percentage of Newly Enrolled TBIP Students, by School Level, 2004–05**

| Grade Level                | TBIP Students  |                |             |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
|                            | Total Students | Newly Enrolled | Percent New |
| Elementary (grades K–5)    | 55,486         | 19,013         | 34.3%       |
| Middle school (grades 6–8) | 15,447         | 3,170          | 20.5%       |
| High school (grades 9–12)  | 16,408         | 3,731          | 22.7%       |
| Total                      | 87,341         | 25,914         | 29.7%       |

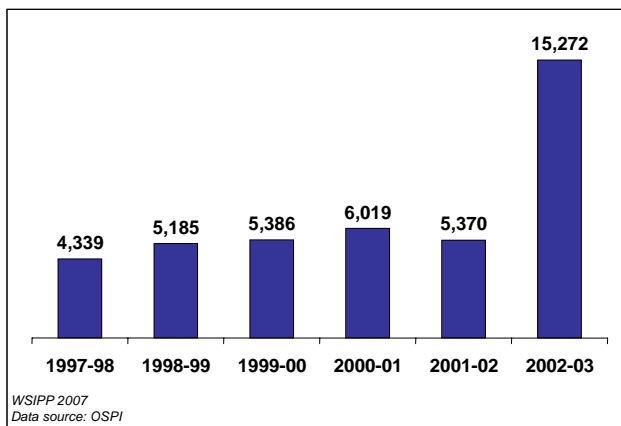
See: <<http://www.k12.wa.us/MigrantBilingual/pubdocs/TBIPGuidelines2007.doc>>.

<sup>6</sup> The average length of time students spend in the TBIP increased from 1.4 years in 1986-87 to 2.2 years in 2001-02. A. Pennucci, & S. Kavanaugh. (2005). *English language learners in K-12: Trends, policies, and research in Washington State*. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, document no. 05-01-2201.

**Estimates of Immigrant Students With Little or No Prior Schooling Are Unreliable.** Between 1997 and 2003, the state TBIP collected headcounts of middle and high school students new to the program who never attended school in their home countries. This measure is considered by state TBIP staff to be unreliable because it requires school districts to ask students and parents to identify themselves as immigrants—which may raise legal issues for some families—and the data have not been collected systematically.

As Exhibit 6 illustrates, statewide, the number of new TBIP middle and high school students with no prior schooling jumped from 5,370 in 2001–02 to 15,272 in 2002–03. This rapid, substantial increase could not be explained by enrollment or population trends and therefore raised reliability questions; in response, the TBIP discontinued tracking this data element. The TBIP re-introduced this measure in 2006; these new data were not available as of this report writing, but state TBIP staff report that this data element remains unreliable.

**Exhibit 6**  
**New TBIP Students Grades 6–12 With No Prior Formal Schooling**



In addition to being unreliable, these data provide an incomplete count of immigrant students because the measure excludes immigrant students who have been enrolled in a Washington school for one or more years as well as those who have proficient English skills.

### Barriers to Immigrant Student Achievement

Recently arrived immigrant students must learn English and acclimate themselves to the public school system. These hurdles can pose significant challenges to academic progress, particularly for students with little or no prior formal schooling. Many immigrant students “enter U.S. secondary schools with a weak foundation for

learning a second language and have difficulty working at age-appropriate levels in required subjects even when taught in their native/primary languages.”<sup>7</sup>

The following challenges have been identified by educators and researchers as barriers to success for immigrant students in secondary schools:<sup>8</sup>

- **Language:** Communication and language barriers, including the special challenge of teaching English to groups of students who speak different languages;
- **Culture:** Cultural differences and difficulties navigating the school system, especially for newly arrived students with no prior formal education;
- **Instructional staff:** Shortages of specially trained staff (including but not limited to ESL and bilingual teachers);
- **Assessment:** Lack of assessment tools appropriate for assessing academic skills without confounding language and culture issues;
- **Parent involvement:** Inadequate translation of school documents for parents and ongoing need for specially developed parent involvement programs for those unfamiliar with the American school system, particularly those with little or no education themselves;
- **Family circumstances:** Poverty, health, housing, transportation, and legal issues (related to immigration status); and
- **Literacy in the high school:** Secondary schools’ inexperience with basic literacy education.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> J. Ruiz-de-Velasco, M. Fix, & B.C. Clewell. (2000). *Overlooked and underserved: Immigrant students in U.S. secondary schools*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute, p. 46.

<sup>8</sup> As summarized in: A. Gershberg, A. Danenberg, & P. Sanchez. (2004). *Beyond bilingual education: New immigrants and public school policies in California*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

<sup>9</sup> “Secondary school curriculum is based on assumptions that the students have basic literacy skills, are able to read and write, and have had exposure to the basic curricular concepts. These assumptions simply don’t hold for many of the immigrant students in our schools.” L. Olsen & A. Jaramillo. (2000). When time is on our side: Redesigning schools to meet the needs of immigrant students. In P. Gándara (Ed.), *The dimensions of time and the challenge of school reform* (pp. 225–250). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Of special interest to this study's target population, the relatively **short time period** for newly arrived adolescent students to master both the English language and high school-level academic content poses a unique challenge for secondary school immigrant students, as illustrated by one researcher:

*Older immigrant students enter the educational system with the clock ticking. They are faced with the task of mastering English while simultaneously trying to earn the necessary credits toward graduation and often have only a few years to do so ... at least two factors contribute to a high drop-out rate for older immigrant students: the need to work and discomfort in a classroom setting with much younger classmates.<sup>10</sup>*

### Academic Outcomes

These challenges are associated with poor academic outcomes, including lower than average educational attainment and standardized test scores.

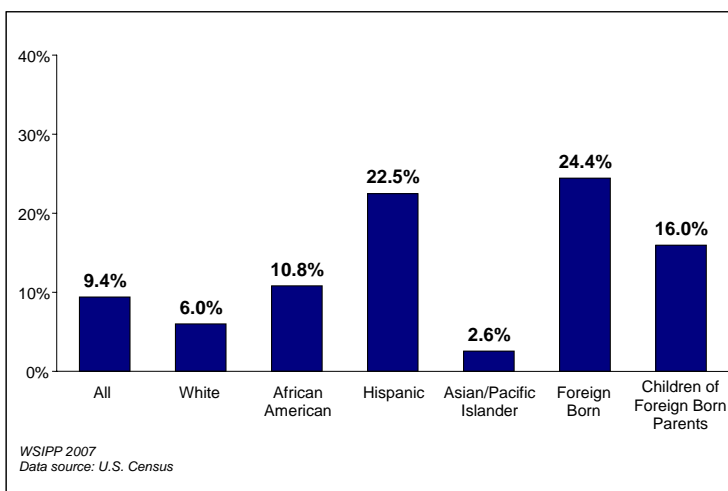
**Low Educational Attainment Among Young Immigrant Adults.** The U.S. Census estimates that foreign-born young adults (age 16–24) are least likely to obtain a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) credential, compared with other subgroups (see Exhibit 7).

**Low Educational Attainment Among Young Immigrant Adults With Little or No Prior Schooling.** Exhibit 7 shows that 24.4 percent of young immigrant adults left school without obtaining a high school diploma or GED. Disaggregating this statistic reveals that immigrants who attended school in their home country prior to moving to the United States have similar levels of educational attainment as the U.S. population overall. Ten percent of this group discontinued their education without a high school diploma or GED, compared with the 9.4 percent national average. In contrast, 71 percent of young immigrant adults with interrupted or no schooling in their home country do not have a high school diploma or GED.<sup>11</sup>

Washington State data also reveal an achievement gap between statewide and ELL student WASL results.

**Achievement Gap Exists for ELL Students.** Starting with the class of 2008, all Washington students must demonstrate proficiency in state learning standards on the 10th-grade Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in reading, writing, and math to obtain a high school diploma. “Met-standard” rates refer to the percentages of students who perform at proficiency levels on the WASL. The gap between statewide and ELL student WASL met-standard rates has increased over the past five years in all subject areas (see Exhibit 8). WASL data do not indicate whether ELL students are immigrants.

**Exhibit 7**  
**Percentage of U.S. Population Age 16–24 Without a High School Diploma or GED and Not Currently Enrolled in School (2005)**

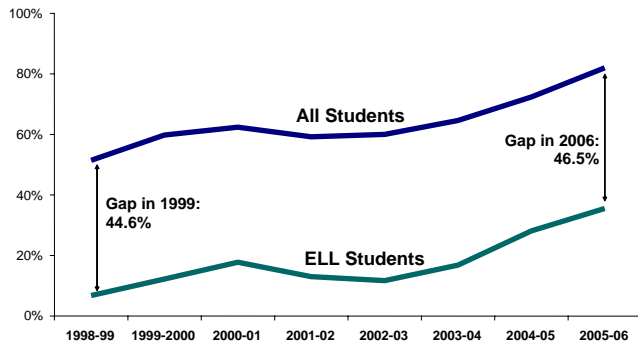


<sup>10</sup> E. Higgs. (2005). Specialized high schools for immigrant students: A promising new idea. *Journal of Law and Education* 34(2): 336.

<sup>11</sup> Fry (2005), p. 3.

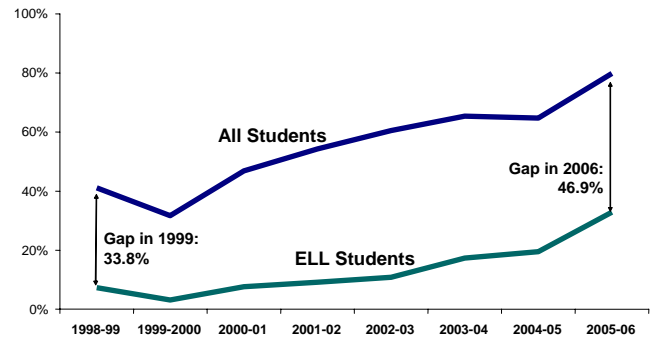
**Exhibit 8**  
**Achievement GAP for ELL Students, 10th-Grade WASL**

**Reading WASL: Percentage meeting proficiency standards**



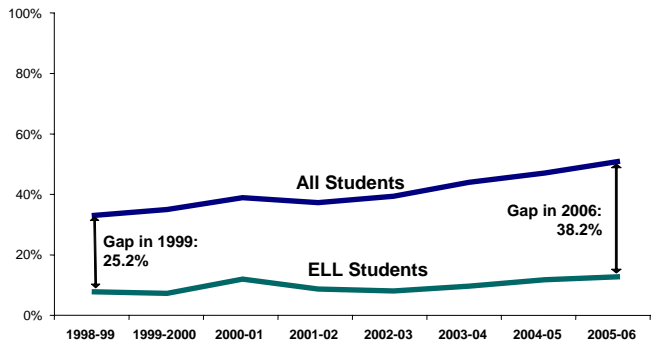
Data source: OSPI

**Writing WASL: Percentage meeting proficiency standards**



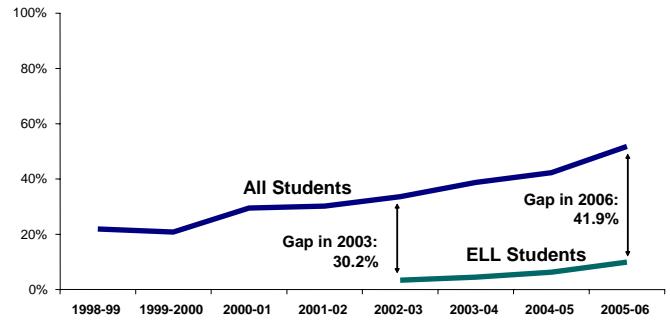
Data source: OSPI

**Math WASL: Percentage meeting proficiency standards**



Data source: OSPI

**Percentage meeting proficiency standards in reading, writing, and math WASL**



Data source: OSPI. ELL student WASL data covering all three subject areas combined were not available prior to 2003.

WSIPP 2007



## 2) Programs Serving Recent Immigrant Secondary Students

For this study, the Institute interviewed 32 program staff who oversee 42 Washington community and technical college-based high school diploma programs. We asked staff to describe program goals, funding methods, and instructional components. In these interviews, staff also discussed each program’s role in helping students obtain high school diplomas, including how each program aligns with Washington State high school graduation requirements.

This section summarizes the findings from these interviews, supplemented by enrollment data provided by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). Also included is a description of programs that serve young immigrant adults seeking high school diplomas in other states.

## Washington State Programs

None of the programs in Washington’s community or technical colleges are specifically designed for recent immigrant students of any age, including those “aging out” of high school. There are, however, three types of programs that help adult students complete high school graduation requirements: high school completion, contract retrieval, and technical high school programs.

**Contract retrieval programs** and **technical high schools** offer a structured setting where students 21 and under take classes that lead toward a high school diploma. At the same time, these students take classes that lead to some other academic credential, such as an associate’s degree or an industry certificate. **High school completion programs** are more loosely structured: there is no specific curriculum or coordination with programs leading to college degrees or certificates, but students take a series of college classes that count toward diploma requirements, and college staff provide oversight. Each of these programs is described in more detail in Exhibit 9.

*Exhibit 9*

### Washington State Community and Technical College Programs Focused on High School Completion

| Program  | Population Served  | Description  | Funding  | 2004–05 Enrollment   |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>High School Completion (HSC)</b><br><br>29 programs | Any adult who has not yet completed high school. Most students are age 18 or older. Students age 15–17 may attend with a release from their high school. | <p><u>Goal:</u> High school diploma.</p> <p>In most cases, not a clearly defined program with requirements and guidelines, but a series of independent college classes taken by the student with transcript reviews and guidance provided by college staff.</p> <p>Separate classes for diploma preparation are offered in 9 HSC programs.</p>   | <p>Regular SBCTC per-student FTE allocations.</p> <p><u>Tuition:</u> Students under age 19 typically pay full tuition on a per credit basis. Students age 19 and over pay reduced tuition.</p> <p><u>Funding authorization for reduced tuition:</u> RCW 28B.15.520 (a) (Waiver of fees and nonresident tuition fees differential—Community colleges.)</p>                        | 3653 statewide<br><br>126 students per college, on average |
| <b>Contract Retrieval (CR)</b><br><br>10 programs      | Students between ages 16 and 21 who have not yet completed high school.  | <p><u>Goal:</u> High school diploma, GED, and/or CTC degree.</p> <p>Students spend one to two college quarters taking basic education and academic skill development courses.</p> <p>CR staff then counsel students in selecting a technical, professional, or academic degree pathway and assist in course selection to help students meet high school diploma and CTC degree requirements.</p> | <p>Interlocal contract agreements between the college and the home school district of each student. The amount of per-student basic education funding allocated from the district to the college varies according to the agreement.</p> <p><u>Tuition:</u> none charged</p> <p><u>Funding authorization:</u> WAC 392-121-182 (Alternative learning experience requirements).</p> | 1377 statewide<br><br>275 students per college, on average |
| <b>Technical High Schools (THS)</b><br><br>3 programs  | Students between ages 16 and 21 who are pursuing a technical career pathway.   | <p><u>Goal:</u> High school diploma and industry certification.</p> <p>Technical high schools operate within technical colleges. Students take technical education college courses as well as separate high school content courses.</p>  | <p>Basic education allocation per student FTE via interlocal agreements with school districts. The technical colleges report directly to and receive allocations from OSPI.</p> <p><u>Tuition:</u> none charged</p> <p><u>Funding authorization:</u> WAC 392-121-187 (Technical college direct-funded enrollment).</p>   | 959 statewide<br><br>320 students per college, on average  |

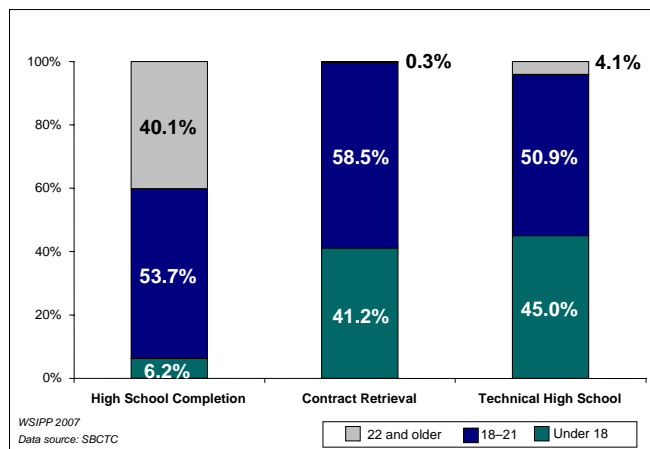
**Geographic Availability.** Most of the state's community and technical college (CTC)-based high school diploma programs are located in the Puget Sound region. There are no technical high schools and only one contract retrieval program in Eastern Washington. All types of programs are scarce on the Olympic Peninsula. Exhibit 10 depicts the geographic availability of each of these programs.

**Exhibit 10**  
**Geographic Distribution of High School Diploma Programs in Washington Community and Technical Colleges**



**Age Groups Served.** Washington high school completion (HSC) programs enroll students of any age who have not yet obtained a high school diploma; 40 percent of HSC students are over age 21 (see Exhibit 11). Contract retrieval and technical high school programs target students age 21 and younger and the small percentages of students over age 21 are those who had a birthday (turned 22) while nearing program completion.

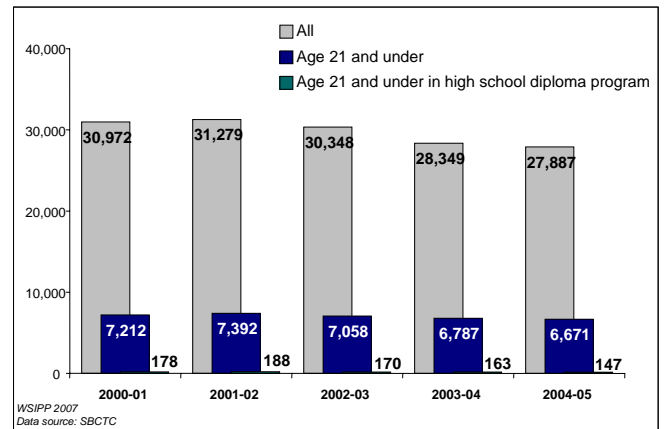
**Exhibit 11**  
**CTC-Based High School Diploma Programs: Student Enrollment by Age Group, 2004–05**



**Immigrants Enrolled in High School Diploma Programs.** The SBCTC asks community and technical college students to provide demographic information about themselves, including whether they are immigrants or refugees. A small percentage (3.2 percent) of the approximately 5,969 CTC students seeking a high school diploma in 2004–05 identified themselves as immigrants and refugees. This small percentage represents fewer than 200 students statewide.

**Immigrants Enrolled in Other Programs.** Most Washington community and technical college immigrant students are over age 21 and relatively few pursue high school diplomas. Exhibit 12 provides SBCTC immigrant/refugee student headcounts covering the 2000–01 through 2004–05 school years.

**Exhibit 12**  
**Immigrant and Refugee Students in Washington Community and Technical Colleges**



**Immigrant Student Course-Taking Patterns.** The SBCTC reports that about a quarter (25.7 percent) of immigrant/refugee students age 21 and under enroll exclusively in ESL courses, without attempting to obtain a high school diploma. Exhibit 13 provides student full-time enrollment (FTE) counts by the type of courses immigrant and refugee students of all ages take.<sup>12</sup> Academic courses have the highest levels of immigrant student enrollment.

<sup>12</sup> These data are not available disaggregated by age group or high school diploma program enrollment.



**Exhibit 13**  
**Community and Technical College**  
**Immigrant and Refugee Student FTEs**  
**by Course Enrollments, 2004–05<sup>13</sup>**

| Type of Course                                  | FTEs  |
|---|-------|
| Academic  | 1,926 |
| Vocational                                      | 766   |
| Basic Skills (ESL, Adult Education, GED, other) | 676   |
| Developmental (e.g., study skills)              | 498   |
| ESL   | 395   |
| Continuing Education                            | 7     |

**Washington State Program Challenges: WASL as a Requirement to Obtain a High School Diploma**

Of the program staff interviewed for this study, 25 staff overseeing 27 different programs expressed the concern that their college may not have adequate resources or program structures in place to help students prepare for the WASL in addition to meeting other high school graduation requirements.<sup>14</sup> Primarily at the more loosely structured high school completion programs, program staff anticipate difficulties administering the WASL in a community college setting; those interviewed cited scheduling conflicts for students and colleges as a key concern. Additionally, staff identified the length of time students must wait between completing course credit requirements and taking the WASL as a potential barrier to students obtaining high school diplomas. This wait can last months, and is followed by several additional months of waiting to learn the WASL results and subsequent eligibility to earn a high school diploma.

At least three of the 29 HSC programs statewide are actively considering closing their programs and four may limit eligibility to students age 21 and older (who are exempted from taking the WASL).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> FTE counts are much lower than student headcounts because many students enroll part-time.

<sup>14</sup> Starting with the high school class of 2008, general education students must complete four components to earn a high school diploma in Washington State: pass a minimum of 19 credits in a variety of subjects (plus any additional credits required by the school district), complete a culminating project, create a “high school and beyond” plan, and earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement by passing all sections of the 10th-grade WASL or by meeting standard through one of the approved alternative assessments.

<sup>15</sup> WAC 180-51-035 (Applicable standards for graduation for students under age 21).

**Programs in Other States**

In United States public schools, two types of educational programs are designed to address the unique needs of immigrant students: newcomer programs and international high schools.

High school-based **newcomer programs** are short-term, transitional programs intended to familiarize students with the American public school system and begin rudimentary English language instruction. There are at least four high school newcomer programs in Washington State: in Yakima, Seattle (2), and Wenatchee.

**International High Schools** are located either at a traditional high school or on a community college campus. International high schools are four-year schools that provide the regular high school curriculum in addition to language instruction and specialized support services. Both programs are described in more detail in Exhibit 14 on the following page.

Additionally, **Middle and Early College High Schools**, while not focused on immigrant students, are designed to serve at-risk students and promote access to postsecondary education; these programs are also described in Exhibit 14. Middle and Early College High Schools are small alternative high schools that offer instruction to at-risk students, especially “low-income youth, first generation college-goers, English language learners, and minority students.”<sup>16</sup> These schools collaborate with a local college or university to offer high school and college coursework simultaneously in a college or high school setting, depending on the program.<sup>17</sup> Twelve Middle and Early College High Schools also operate in Washington State.

<sup>16</sup> L. Campbell, K. Egawa, & G. Wortman. (2003). *Increasing the achievement of Native American youth at Early College High Schools*. New Horizons for Learning. See: <[http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/campbell\\_egawa\\_wortman.htm](http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/campbell_egawa_wortman.htm)>.

<sup>17</sup> The Seattle School District runs four Middle College High School programs. The Center for Native Education at Antioch University Seattle oversees eight Early College High Schools for native youth operating at community colleges throughout the state. For the directory of schools in the Middle College National Consortium, see: <[http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/mcnc/downloads/MCNC\\_Member\\_Directory.pdf](http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/mcnc/downloads/MCNC_Member_Directory.pdf)> and for the list of Early College High Schools, see: <[http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/2006openings\\_table.pdf](http://www.earlycolleges.org/Downloads/2006openings_table.pdf)>.

**Exhibit 14**  
**Programs Designed for Immigrant Secondary Students:**  
**Washington and Other States**

| Type of Program   | Students Served   | Program Structure  | Funding   | Reported Outcomes Data  |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Newcomer Programs</b>                                | Recent immigrants with limited English language skills, all ages        | Students attend separate half- or full-day classes focused on English language instruction and the American public school system. The goal is to prepare students to transition into ESL or bilingual programs in a local public school. Most programs provide academic content instruction in addition to English language courses. There are three models for the location of programs: separate schools, programs within a school, or programs located at a separate site.<br><br><u>Duration:</u> 1 or more years                  | <u>Federal:</u> Migrant and bilingual education, Emergency Immigrant Education Program (EIEP), and Title I funds<br><u>State:</u> Basic education and bilingual and migrant education funds<br><u>Local:</u> District funds | None available  |
| <b>International High Schools</b>                       | Recent immigrants with limited English language skills, high school age | Students pursue a high school diploma and English proficiency in a small high school setting exclusively for recent immigrant ELL students. Two of the nine New York international high schools <sup>18</sup> examined for this study are located on a community college campus and allow students to take college courses for high school and college credit.<br><br><u>Duration:</u> 4 or more years   | <u>Local:</u> District funds (basic per pupil funding allocation)<br><u>Other:</u> Grants and fundraising   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 65% graduation rate</li> <li>• 5% dropout rate</li> <li>• 92% college attendance rate<sup>19</sup></li> </ul>            |
| <b>Middle and Early College High Schools</b>            | At-risk students age 14–21  | Small alternative high schools located on a college campus. Students take both high school and college classes that count toward a high school diploma and college degree.<br><br>Early College High Schools (ECHS) are a specific type of middle college high school combining high school and two years of college (grades 9–14). ECHS programs may also be located in a traditional high school setting with college faculty teaching dual-credit courses at the high school. <sup>20</sup><br><br><u>Duration:</u> 2 or more years | <u>Local:</u> District funds (basic per pupil allocation)<br><u>Other:</u> Grants   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75% graduation rate</li> <li>• 85% student retention rate</li> <li>• 78% college attendance rate<sup>21</sup></li> </ul> |
| <b>High School Diploma Programs in Washington CTCs*</b> | Students 16–21 (primarily)  | Students pursue a high school diploma and/or technical, professional, or academic certification while attending classes at a community and technical college. Some programs offer separate high school courses but most integrate high school students into college courses.<br><br><u>Duration:</u> 1 or more years   | <u>State:</u> Basic education (K–12) and/or SBCTC FTE funding<br><u>Local:</u> Interlocal contracts with school districts   | None available  |

\*Washington's CTC-based high school diploma programs are included in Exhibit 14 for comparison purposes.

<sup>18</sup> These schools comprise the Internationals Network for Public Schools. In recent years several other high schools based on the International Network model have opened across the country including two in Colorado and one in Texas.

<sup>19</sup> Internationals Network for Public Schools. (n.d.) *Our results: Student performance*. New York: Author.

See: <<http://www.internationalsnps.org/studentperformance.php>>.

<sup>20</sup> M. Martinez, & S. Klopott. (2005). *The link between high school reform and college access and success for low-income and minority youth*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum and Pathways to College Network, p. 30.

<sup>21</sup> J.E. Lieberman. (1998). Creating structural change: Best practices. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 103, p. 15.

## Promising Practices: Empirical Research Is Needed

Research examining the effectiveness of programs for immigrant students is scarce. A 2004 review of immigrant education in the United States found that “there are neither credible studies of the effectiveness of newcomer programs or schools nor studies—quantitative or qualitative—of the effectiveness, benefits, and pitfalls of the wide range of classroom practices that schools and teachers are obviously developing and using on their own to educate recent immigrants.”<sup>22</sup> No empirical research links program strategies with student outcomes, but the literature does highlight strategies that educators and researchers believe positively impact immigrant students’ academic achievement. These strategies include:

- Combined language and academic content instruction
- Parent outreach
- Individualized student support
- Professional development
- Systematic student assessment
- Postsecondary access

Each of these is described below.

**Combined Language and Academic Content Instruction.** Newcomer programs viewed as successful use “specialized curriculum that emphasizes rapid English language acquisition and academic content instruction.”<sup>23</sup> Researchers agree that language instruction alone—without connection to the regular school curriculum—is not sufficient to meet immigrant student needs.<sup>24</sup> Preliminary research on the International High School at LaGuardia Community College found that “an integrated approach to language development through content area studies”<sup>25</sup> is associated with improvements in student retention, test scores, and high school graduation.

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<sup>22</sup> Gershberg (2004), p. 78.

<sup>23</sup> M. Friedlander. (1991). The newcomer program: Helping immigrant students succeed in US schools. *NCBE Program Information Guide Series*, 8.

<sup>24</sup> Ruiz-de-Velasco (2005), p. 45.

<sup>25</sup> J.E. Lieberman., et al. (1989). *After three years: A status report on the International High School at LaGuardia Community College*. New York: LaGuardia Community College, p. 20.

**Parent Outreach.** As noted above, involving parents of immigrant students in their child’s education is a challenge. Both parents and students “need information to become successfully integrated into the US school system.”<sup>26</sup> However, immigrant parents face language and cultural barriers to their participation in their children’s schooling.<sup>27</sup> Models for immigrant parent outreach include parent information centers staffed with bilingual professionals, workshops and seminars tailored to the needs of immigrant parents, and translated materials on school policies and procedures.<sup>28</sup>

**Individualized Student Support.** Providing structured, individualized support for immigrant students throughout their schooling is viewed by educators and researchers as a vital component of successful programs. Such support may involve assigning each student a staff counselor or “advocate” to meet with the student on a regular basis to discuss issues affecting a student’s performance, including academic as well as health, mental health, language, or other needs.<sup>29</sup> Other individualized strategies used by newcomer and international high schools include mentoring, peer coaching, counseling centers, and tutoring.

**Professional Development.** Specialized staff training is mentioned frequently as a key feature of programs serving immigrant students. Professional development is recommended by researchers and practitioners for mainstream and language teachers as well as school-wide staff. The types of training may include strategies such as “cooperative learning, language acquisition theory, and sheltered English techniques.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> T. Lucas (1996). *Promoting secondary school transitions for immigrant adolescents* (CAL Digest No. EDO-FL-97-04). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> H.N. Chang. (1990). *Newcomer programs: Innovative efforts to meet the educational challenges of immigrant students*. Los Angeles: California Tomorrow, Immigrant Students Project, p. 37.

<sup>28</sup> Lucas (1996), pp. 1-2; and L. Hood. (2003). *Immigrant students, urban high schools: The challenge continues*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Hood (2003), p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> Chang (1990), p. 37.

**Systematic Student Assessment.** Assessment of student language skills and academic performance is considered a key component of promising programs. According to national researchers, assessment data should, for the purpose of monitoring immigrant student achievement, be disaggregated because “individual students and their problems become visible through the embedded assessment process.”<sup>31</sup> Some researchers have concluded that “one reason schools are not more responsive to the academic needs of [Limited English Proficient] LEP/immigrant youth is that teachers and administrators have so little information about them.”<sup>32</sup>

There are two barriers to the systematic assessment of immigrant students: (1) national and state data systems currently track ELL, but not immigrant, student progress; and (2) there is disagreement over which assessment tools and methods are appropriate for immigrant and ELL students.<sup>33</sup>

**Postsecondary Access.** Programs that provide information about and, by virtue of being located on a college campus, expand access to higher education may lead students “to invest more in time and effort in learning...and to formulate meaningful personal goals for the future.”<sup>34</sup> High school diploma programs located on college campuses that allow students to take both high school and college courses (such as International High Schools) are one way to bridge high school and college programs. Providing college-student mentors or opportunities to visit college campuses are additional ways researchers have suggested for improving immigrant students’ higher education outcomes.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> M.J. Waits, H.E. Campbell, R. Gau, E. Jacobs, T. Rex, & R.K. Hess. (2006). *Why some schools with Latino children beat the odds...and others don't*. Phoenix and Tempe, AZ: Center for the Future of Arizona and Arizona State University, School of Public Affairs, Morrison Institute for Public Policy, p. 28.

<sup>32</sup> Ruiz-de-Velasco (2005), p. 68.

<sup>33</sup> Gershberg (2004), p. 149.

<sup>34</sup> L. Cavaluzzo, W. Jordan, & C. Corallo. (2002). *Case studies of high schools on college campuses: An alternative to the traditional high school*. Charleston, WV: AEL, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup> Lucas (1996), p. 1.

### 3) State Policy Recommendation

The 2006 Washington State Legislature directed the Institute to develop “recommendations for improving the programs to better meet the needs of recent immigrant students and for expanding the availability of programs statewide.”<sup>36</sup> The “promising practices” described in the previous section primarily involve school-level practices, such as individualized instruction and parent involvement programs, and there are no research-proven state policy interventions the Institute can recommend at this time. Because, however, existing data covering immigrant K–12 students are inaccurate, a necessary first step in developing specialized programs is to identify the number, geographic distribution, and academic performance levels of immigrant students in Washington State.

Therefore, the Institute recommends that the state consider requiring school districts to identify immigrant students as part of the Core Student Record System (CSRS) data collection process. Ideally, this data element would also include information about students’ prior schooling in their home countries. If immigrant students are tracked in the CSRS rather than the TBIP dataset, the state could track all immigrant students (not just those with limited English skills) and link this information with students’ WASL and other assessment results.

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<sup>36</sup> ESSB 6090, Section 608 (3), Chapter 518, Laws of 2005.

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