



English Learner Education in Minnesota

Fall 2019 Report

Multilingual Learner Education in Minnesota

Overview

Minnesota Local Education Agencies (LEAs) enrolled 74,315 students with English learner (EL) status in the 2018-19 school year, compared to an enrollment of 73,128 in the previous year (an increase of 1.6 percent). Students identified for EL status in pre-K-12 settings in Minnesota are multilingual learners with unique backgrounds, talents and funds of knowledge, including proficiency in a wide variety of world languages. The abilities to communicate in multiple languages and navigate distinct cultural settings are significant assets that need to be understood and supported in our schools. Minnesota values schools that strive to recognize and build on the linguistic and cultural resources of students and families. Recognizing and building on the strengths and resources of multilingual learners not only supports the continued development and exploration of their home languages and cultures, but also can create welcoming and supporting spaces in which students take academic risks and more fully engage in school and classroom communities.

In 2014 the Learning English for Academic Proficiency and Success (LEAPS) Act became law, signaling a shift toward more inclusive education policies that honor multilingualism and cultural competency as assets. Some additional policy implications in this law include a focus on:

- Building the capacity of educators and administrators to improve access to grade level content and ultimately improve opportunities and outcomes for multilingual learners (MLs);
- Differentiating for the wide variety of backgrounds and experiences of English learners and other multilingual learners; and
- Engaging multiple voices in school and district-level improvement efforts.

Another important recent development is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in the form of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This required states to work with stakeholders to develop statewide identification and exit procedures and criteria for multilingual learners identified for EL status. It has also shifted the accountability for progress towards proficiency in English to Title I. That means that the state's North Star system now includes ACCESS data in the progress toward English language proficiency indicator. At all schools where 20 or more students receive a progress score, the average student progress at the school will be the school's average. This average is one of the indicators used to identify schools for support and recognition. Under ESSA, schools will be recognized for improvement, with particular attention to the school's context and the way in which improvement was achieved. This recognition should provide additional ways for schools and districts to find similar schools and districts that have improved progress toward English language proficiency.

It is also important to remember that other existing education laws, including World's Best Workforce (WBWF) and early learning funding initiatives also include and impact multilingual learners. This means that we need to collaborate across departments and disciplines to ensure that multilingual learners have the learning conditions necessary to fully participate in these areas, including equitable opportunities to meet the five WBWF goals:

1. All children are ready to start Kindergarten.
2. All third-graders can read at grade level.
3. All achievement gaps between students are closed.
4. All students are ready for career and/or postsecondary education.
5. All students graduate from high school.

Systems should be in place to allow identification of eligible multilingual learners in Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) and School Readiness Plus programs for EL status. Students enrolled in these state funded programs can also generate additional EL funds that do not count against the seven-year funding cap on State EL Aid. With that in mind, we strongly recommend that all multilingual learners in early learning settings have structured opportunities to develop their home language and literacy along with English language and literacy. The LEAPS Act challenges early learning providers to focus on dual language development and to provide information to parents about the ongoing language development of their children in both English and the home language.

These state and federal policies hold the promise of improving opportunities and outcomes for multilingual learners, including those identified with EL status. These developments can reinforce and bolster the work of state, district and school staff to reimagine language development programs for multilingual learners in ways that emphasize enrichment, academic rigor, multilingualism and cultural competence.

It is of critical importance that students of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds in Minnesota schools are welcomed and included as full members of our district, school and classroom communities. Recognizing the primary language and culture as an important aspect of a student's identity, as well as a bridge to learning and expanding content knowledge, can improve school climate and outcomes for multilingual learners.

This report is intended for a number of audiences. It provides statutory and regulatory background information as well as Supreme Court cases pertaining to English learners. It describes the Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE) support of LEAs in implementing effective language instruction educational programs to ensure ELs are able to reach their academic potential. Additionally, it reports information about state and federal funds available to support ELs in Minnesota. We thank you for your continued efforts to collaborate with others to implement effective systems and programs across schools and districts that truly improve education outcomes and opportunities for all multilingual learners in equitable ways!

MDE is committed to making its electronic and information technologies accessible to individuals with disabilities by meeting or exceeding the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794d), as amended in 1998. This document still needs to be finalized for full accessibility. Please contact mde.el@state.mn.us if you need any accommodations to read and access this document.

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Minnesota Multilingual Learner Education Strategic Framework

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is committed to ensuring educational equity and access for multilingual learners through high-quality language instruction and rigorous academic instruction.

MDE supports school districts and charter schools (referred to as local education agencies [LEAs]) to develop, implement and evaluate research-based language instruction education programs so that multilingual learners attain academic language proficiency and achieve state academic content standards.

Definitions

English Learner

As defined in Minnesota under 2017 Minnesota Statutes, section 124D. 59, subdivision 2 and English learner is “a pupil in kindergarten through grade 12 or a prekindergarten student enrolled in an approved voluntary prekindergarten program under section 124D.151 or a school readiness plus program who meets the requirements under subdivision 2a or the following requirements:

1. the pupil, as declared by a parent or guardian uses a language other than English; and
2. the pupil is determined by a valid assessment measuring the pupil’s English language proficiency and by developmentally appropriate measures, which might include observations, teacher judgment, parent recommendations, or developmentally appropriate assessment instruments, to lack the necessary English skills to participate fully in academic classes taught in English.”

Immigrant and Refugee Youth

An immigrant student is defined as a student who:

1. a child who is aged 3 through 21;
2. was not born in any state or any U.S. territory;
3. has not been attending one or more schools in any one or more states for more than three full academic years (on a cumulative basis); and,
4. while most immigrant students in Minnesota are also English learners, students who are not ELs can also be identified for funding and support.

For additional information, see the MDE web page on [Immigrant Children and Youth Grant](#).

Long-term English Learners (LTEL)

Minnesota does not have a formal definition of LTELs within its statute, and ESSA does not formally define long-term English learners. However, under ESSA, all states are required to report the number and percentage of ELs who have not attained English language proficiency within five years of initial classification as an English learner and first enrollment in the local educational agency [ESSA, Section 3122(a)(6)].

Migratory Children

According to sections 1115(c)(1)(A) (incorporated into the Migrant Education Program (MEP) by sections 1304(c)(2), 1115(b), and 1309(3) of the ESEA, and 34 C.F.R. § 200.103(a)), a child is a “migratory child” if the following conditions are met:

1. The child is not older than 21 years of age; and,
 - a. The child is entitled to a free public education (through grade 12) under state law, or,
 - b. The child is not yet at a grade level at which the LEA provides a free public education, and,
2. The child made a qualifying move in the preceding 36 months as a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher, or did so with, or to join a parent/guardian or spouse who is a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher; and,
3. With regard to the qualifying move identified in paragraph 3, above, the child moved due to economic necessity from one residence to another residence, and,
 - a. From one school district to another; or,
 - b. In a state that is comprised of a single school district, has moved from one administrative area to another within such district; or,
 - c. Resides in a school district of more than 15,000 square miles and migrates a distance of 20 miles or more to a temporary residence.

Recently Arrived English Learners (RAEL)

An RAEL is an English learner enrolled in a school in one of the 50 States in the United States or District of Columbia *for less than 12 months* (Minnesota Standardized English Language Procedures; Identification, 2017).

Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

Students with limited or interrupted formal education make up a specific group of ELs. Signed into law in 2014, the Learning English for Academic Proficiency and Success (LEAPS) Act formally defined this group of ELs in state law and requires the MDE to report on the acquisition of English and academic progress of SLIFE. The Minnesota LEAPS Act, under 2017 Minnesota Statutes, section 124D. 59, subdivision 2a, allows for an EL to include “an English learner with an interrupted formal education who:

1. comes from a home where the language usually spoken is other than English, or usually speaks a language other than English;
2. enters school in the United States after grade 6;
3. has at least two years less schooling than the English learner's peers;
4. functions at least two years below expected grade level in reading and mathematics; and,
5. may be preliterate in the English learner's native language.

English Learner Education Legislation

Both state and federal legislation address needs of English learners. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 initially determined that students who do not demonstrate English language proficiency have a right to a language instruction educational program that provides them access to the academic content instruction that all children receive. Court decisions and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights with the United States Department of Education have described in more detail the responsibilities of LEAs. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, reauthorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), delineated more specifically the responsibilities of LEAs and state education agencies (SEAs) to ensure that ELs become proficient in English and meet the same challenging state academic standards as expected of their English-only peers.

The reauthorization to ESSA is an opportunity for creating additional growth towards proficiency of the Minnesota English learner as well as creating opportunities to meaningfully include and support English learners. In the past, Minnesota did not mandate statewide EL entry and exit criteria or procedures. However, as part of ESSA implementation, all states are required to develop and implement standardized entry and exit criteria and procedures. In collaboration with stakeholders, Minnesota has developed standardized entry and exit criteria and procedures that all Minnesota LEAs must follow.

State Laws

[Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.30](#) Improper Classification of Pupils: No LEA shall classify its pupils with reference to race, color, social position, or nationality, nor separate its pupils into different schools or departments upon any of such grounds.

[Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.59](#) Definitions: Defines an English learner, essential instructional personnel, English as a second language program, bilingual education program, primary language, parent, and educational program for English learners.

[Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.60](#) Rights of Parents: Outlines requirements for parent notification within 10 days after the enrollment of any pupil in an instructional program for English learners, parental right to withdraw from the program, and parent involvement in the program.

[Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.61](#) General Requirements for Programs: Outlines general requirements for programs for English learners including identification and reclassification criteria, programs and services, and professional development for teachers working with ELs.

[Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.65](#) English learner (EL) Programs Aid: Outlines LEA EL revenue, and participation of nonpublic school pupils.

[Minnesota Rule 3501.1200](#) Scope and Purpose: Outlines the purpose of standards that govern the instruction of English learners. The state of Minnesota's standards for English language development are the current standards developed by the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium.

[Minnesota Rule 3501.1210](#) English Language Development Standards: Outlines the language development standards: social and instructional language, the language of language arts, the language of mathematics, the language of science, and the language of social studies.

[Minnesota Rule 8710.4150](#) Teachers of Bilingual/Bicultural Education: Defines scope of practice, demonstration of oral and written proficiency, subject matter standard as part of the licensure requirements for teachers providing bilingual/bicultural education.

[Minnesota Rule 8710.4400](#) Teachers of English as a Second Language: Defines scope of practice, licensure requirements, subject matter standard as part of the licensure requirements for a teacher of English as a second language.

[2014 Minnesota Session Law, Chapter 272 – H.F. No. 2397, Article 1](#): The Learning English for Academic Proficiency and Success (LEAPS) Act was passed in Minnesota in 2014. The law revises many state statutes to add an increased emphasis to support English learners. The law is embedded into many existing statutes including areas such as early childhood, curriculum and instruction, adult education, and teacher licensing. The statute adds a definition and accountability reporting for Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE). The statute also adds a provision for LEAs to institute bilingual and multilingual seals to students who demonstrate certain levels of language proficiency in native and world languages.

Federal Laws

[Title III Part A](#) – English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act: Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by ESSA: the purpose of the Title III program is to ensure that ELs and immigrant children and youth attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet. To achieve this goal, LEAs receiving supplemental Title III funds are expected to provide:

- effective language instruction educational programs (LIEPs) for ELs and immigrant students, and
- meaningful professional development activities to ESL and Bilingual Education (BE) staff, as well as all staff who work with ELs.

LIEPs should utilize an evidence-based research program shown to be the most effective for teaching English language. Additionally, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), recognizes the importance of parent, family, and community engagement and requires every LEA receiving Title III to provide programming for these significant stakeholders.

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#): Title VI prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. The Title VI regulatory requirements have been interpreted to prohibit denial of equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English.

Equal Education Opportunities Act of 1974: This civil rights statute prohibits states which receive federal funding from denying equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin. The statute specifically prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunity to students learning English by the failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs. [20 U.S.C. §1203(f)]

Supreme Court Cases Related to English Learner Education

In addition to the Minnesota state law and Title III federal law, several other key Supreme Court cases listed below enforce English learners' access to equitable educational opportunities.

[Lau versus Nichols](#): Lau versus Nichols was a class-action suit brought by parents of non-English-proficient Chinese students against the San Francisco Unified School District. In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled that identical education does not constitute equal education under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The court ruled that the LEA must take affirmative steps to overcome educational barriers faced by the non-English-speaking Chinese students in the LEA. [414 U.S. 563 (1974)]

Castañeda versus Pickard: On June 23, 1981, the Fifth Circuit Court issued a decision that is the seminal post-Lau decision concerning education of language minority students. The case established a three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of an LEA's program for EL students:

1. is the program based on an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or is considered by experts as a legitimate experimental strategy;
2. are the programs and practices, including resources and personnel, reasonably calculated to implement this theory effectively; and,
3. does the school LEA evaluate its programs and make adjustments where needed to ensure language barriers are actually being overcome.

[648 Federal Report, 2nd Series 989 (5th Circuit, 1981)]

Plyler versus Doe: This 1982 U.S. Supreme Court case overturned an attempt by a Texas LEA to exact tuition money from students whose U.S. citizenship could not be confirmed. The LEA had alleged it was unfair to children who were citizens and legal residents to share resources—and, presumably, receive fewer of the resources—with children who were illegal residents, and was requiring all students to either prove their legal status in the United States or, if they could not, pay tuition. The High Court ruled that a state does not have the right to deny a free public education to undocumented immigrant children on the basis that it was not the state education agency's business to essentially create immigration policy, nor could it be proven that "legal" children suffered a poorer education as a result of including "illegal" peers. [457 U.S. 202 (1982)]

The May 25 Memorandum: On May 25, 1970, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, issued a policy statement stating, in part, that "where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national-origin-minority group children from effective participation in the educational program offered by an LEA, the LEA must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open the instructional program to the students." The statement purpose was to clarify an LEA's responsibilities with respect to national-origin-minority children. In addition, "School districts have the responsibility to adequately notify national origin-minority-group parents of school activities which are called to the attention of other parents. Such notice, in order to be adequate, may have to be provided in a language other than English."

WIDA™ (formerly known as World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment)

MDE joined the WIDA Consortium (formerly known as World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) in 2011. The consortium consists of 39 member states with additional states adopting the WIDA English language development (ELD) standards. WIDA advances social, instructional and academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high-quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators. By joining the consortium, MDE contributes to and embraces the WIDA™ research base, the guiding principles, values, and the asset-based “can-do” philosophy of English learner education.

As a member state, Minnesota has adopted the WIDA ELD standards and the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) as the annual state English language proficiency assessment. ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 has a companion English language proficiency “screener.” The WIDA Screener is used for identification purposes with by incoming students who use or understand one or more other language in addition to English.

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an assessment of ELD for students in grades 1-12 who are classified as English learners and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 assessment. The ESEA, as amended by ESSA (2015), requires that all students identified as ELs be assessed annually for English language proficiency, including students who receive special education services.

The five ELD standards reflect the social and academic language expectations of ELs in grades pre-K through 12 attending schools in the U.S. Each ELD standard addresses a specific context for language acquisition but should not be confused with academic content standards. The emphasis is on using the features of academic language to provide content-based ESL instruction and support that ensures language growth in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Along with their performance indicators and related framework, the standards provide Minnesota schools with a national model of social, instructional, and academic language guidelines. The standards were adopted into rule in Minnesota on January 3, 2012.

Figure 1. WIDA Standards Framework



Source: WIDA Booklet 2012 Standards Strands

Figure 2. English Language Development (ELD) Standards

Source: WIDA™ 2012 Amplification of the English language development standards, K-12, page 3

| ELP Standards | Standard Title | Abbreviated Title |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| ELD Standard 1 | English language learners communicate for Social and Instructional purposes within the school setting | Social and Instructional language |
| ELD Standard 2 | English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Arts | The language of Language Arts |
| ELD Standard 3 | English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Mathematics | The language of Mathematics |
| ELD Standard 4 | English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Science | The language of Science |
| ELD Standard 5 | English language learners communicate information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Social Studies | The language of Social Studies |

An *English Language Development Standards Implementation framework* has been developed for education leaders engaged in academic content standards, implementation, and curriculum development. It provides a broad overview of the implementation stages to assist LEAs to ensure that ELs are able to meet the more rigorous academic content expectations manifested in academic content standards. The framework can be used by LEAs to evaluate their current level of ELD standards implementation, to identify features already in place, and to identify areas in need of improvement. See the [English Language Development Standards Implementation website](#) for more information.

ACCESS for ELLs has six levels of proficiency ranging from the first, entry level for students who have few English language skills, to the sixth level at which students are deemed proficient. At the given level of English language proficiency, ELs will process, understand, produce or use the language as shown in Figure 3. For a closer look, visit the [WIDA English Language Development \(ELD\) Standards website](#).

Figure 3: WIDA Performance Definitions: Listening and Reading, Grades K-12

| Within sociocultural contexts for processing language... | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| Discourse Dimension | | Sentence Dimension | Word/Phrase Dimension |
| Linguistic Complexity | | Language Forms and Conventions | Vocabulary Usage |
| Level 6 - Reaching English language learners will process a range of grade-appropriate oral or written language for a variety of academic purposes and audiences. Automaticity in language processing is reflected in the ability to identify and act on significant information from a variety of genres and registers. English language learners' strategic competence in processing academic language facilitates their access to content area concepts and ideas. | | | |
| At each grade, toward the end of a given level of English language proficiency, and with instructional support, English language learners will process... | | | |
| Level 5 Bridging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rich descriptive discourse with complex sentences Cohesive and organized, related ideas across content areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of complex grammatical structures Sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical and abstract content-area language Words and expressions with shades of meaning across content areas |
| Level 4 Expanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected discourse with a variety of sentences Expanded related ideas characteristic of particular content areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complex grammatical structures A broad range of sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific and some technical content-area language Words or expressions with multiple meanings across content areas |
| Level 3 Developing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discourse with a series of extended sentences Related ideas specific to particular content areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compound and some complex grammatical constructions Sentence patterns across content areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific content-area language and expressions Words and expressions with common collocations and idioms across content areas |
| Level 2 Emerging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple related simple sentences An idea with details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compound grammatical structures Repetitive phrasal and sentence patterns across content areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General content words and expressions, including cognates Social and instructional words and expressions across content areas |
| Level 1 Entering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single statements or questions An idea within words, phrases, or chunks of language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple grammatical constructions (e.g., commands, Wh- questions, declaratives) Common social and instructional forms and patterns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General content-related words Everyday social, instructional and some content-related words and phrases |



Source: *Performance Definitions for Listening and Reading; WIDA Standards Website*

WIDA™ Resources

As part of the WIDA Consortium, MDE embraces an asset-based approach in providing all English learners appropriate language development instruction and meaningful access to the core curriculum. MDE focuses on expanding students' academic language by building on the inherent resources ELs and accentuating the positive efforts of educators.

Essential Actions: [A Handbook for Implementing WIDA's Framework for English Language Development Standards](#). The purpose of this handbook is to promote collaboration, mutual understanding, and use of language development standards among all educators who work with English learners. The Essential Actions, derived from current theory and research, provide a rationale for each component and element of WIDA's standards framework. They may be used in conjunction with WIDA's 2007 or 2012 standards books or independently, once staff have familiarity with the components and elements.

[WIDA's CAN DO Descriptors](#) are commonly used by EL teachers in coaching general education teachers about differentiated instruction for ELs.

[WIDA's CAN DO Philosophy](#) embraces inclusion and equity and focuses attention on expanding students' academic language by building on the inherent resources of English learners and accentuating the positive efforts of educators.

Language is a powerful force that helps shape our individual and collective identities. WIDA views language as a resource and ELs as valued contributors to learning communities. The Principles of Language Development acknowledge the diverse linguistic resources our students draw from and the unique pathways they follow throughout the process of learning English. The Principles of Language Development were drafted by WIDA staff and enhanced by the WIDA standards expert panel, a group of researchers and practitioners in the field of academic language from across the U.S. WIDA believes in and adheres to the following principles in development of all of its products and services:

[WIDA's Guiding Principles of Language Development](#)

[Downloadable Complete Reference List for the WIDA Principles](#)

[Academic Language Development Webinars](#)

[Academic Language Series: Part 1 Academic Language](#)

[Academic Language Series: Part 2 ELD Standards Framework](#)

[Academic Language Series: Part 3 Language of Math](#)

[Academic Language Series: Part 4 Language of Science](#)

[Academic Language Series: Part 5 Language of Language Arts](#)

[Academic Language Series: Part 6 Language of Social Studies](#)

Funding For English Learner Education

State Funding

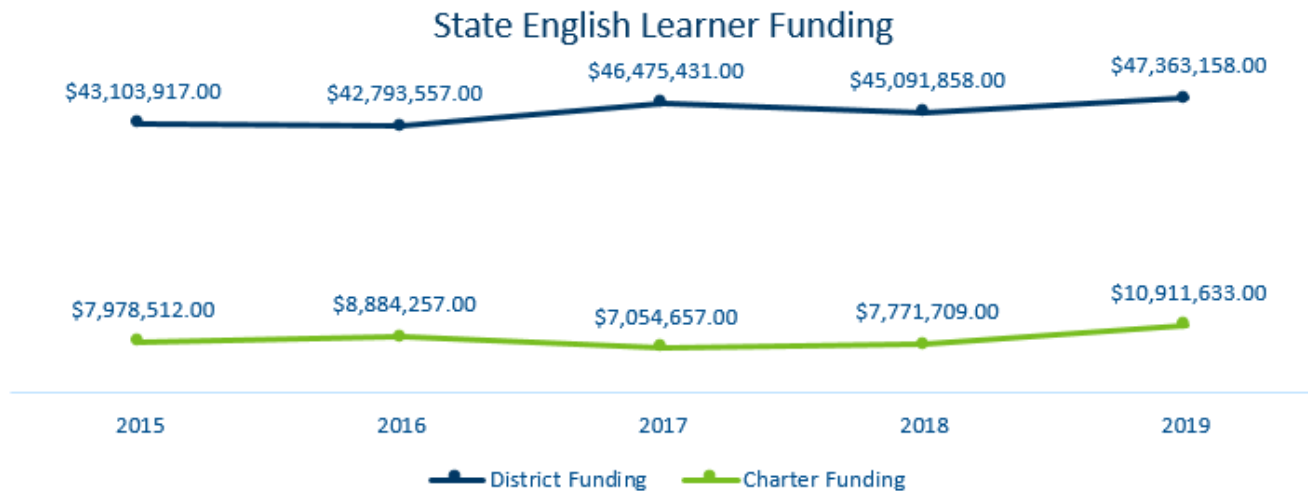
The primary responsibility in meeting the needs of ELs lies with the LEA. Hence, in addition to the revenue that every Minnesota child in public education generates, English learners also generate supplementary state aid. Furthermore, a variety of state and federal resources are available to supplement (but not supplant) local resources. [Funding sources](#) that can be used for quality EL programming include: general education revenue, state EL funding, compensatory funding, transition revenue, Title I funding and others.

State EL funding is allocated to students who:

- have been identified as English learners by state definition (Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.59);
- have generated fewer than seven years of average daily membership (ADM) in Minnesota public schools; and,
- are served in a language instruction educational program for English learners during the current fiscal year.

State EL funding status is not to be used in determining service for ELs. The funding formula exists simply to distribute the state funds available for ELs in an equitable manner across all the LEAs in the state.

FIGURE 4. ACTUAL STATE EL FUNDING in dollars



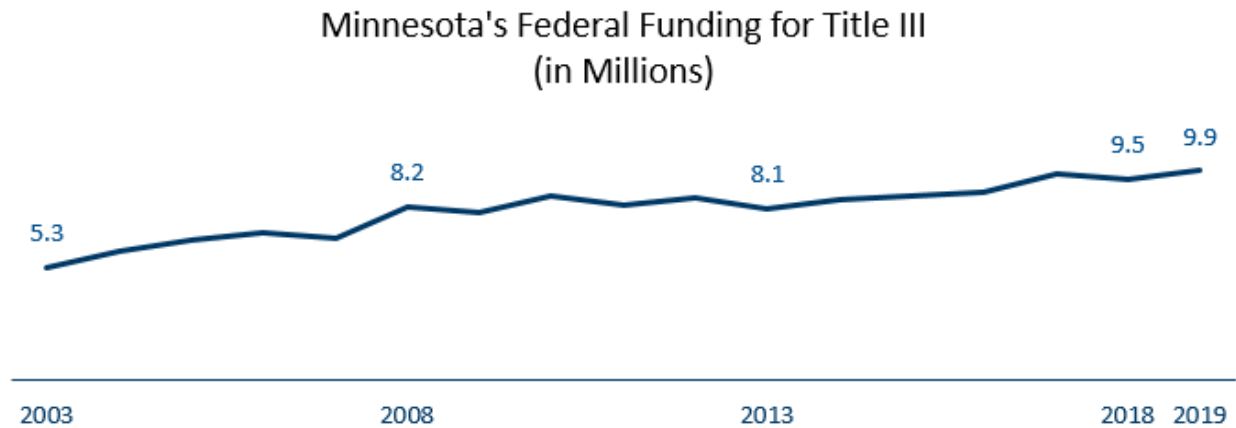
Minnesota Funding Reports, August 2019

Federal Funding

Title III, a component of the ESSA, is another source of funding to supplement the resources of a local educational agency (LEA) in providing quality education to ELs and immigrant students. The federal government awards Title III grants to states based on their respective EL and immigrant student enrollments, and the states, in turn, distribute the funds to LEAs based on their EL enrollments and immigrant counts. See Figure 5 for Title III funding amounts for Minnesota. In order to be eligible for Title III funds, an LEA must generate a minimum of \$10,000. An LEA that does not meet the threshold may join other LEAs and form a consortium to reach the \$10,000 requirement in order to apply for funding. Additionally, from the Title III allotment, the state education agency must set aside a certain percentage of the grant for LEAs highly impacted by a significant increase of immigrant children and allocate the remaining funds to eligible LEAs.

Title I, for the purpose of improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged, allocates federal funding to LEAs with a high percentage of students from low-income families. ELs are eligible on the same basis as all students to receive Title I services. LEAs need to consider the allocation of Title I funds and how best to coordinate services to meet all student needs.

Figure 5. Minnesota's Federal EL Education Funding 2003 to 2019



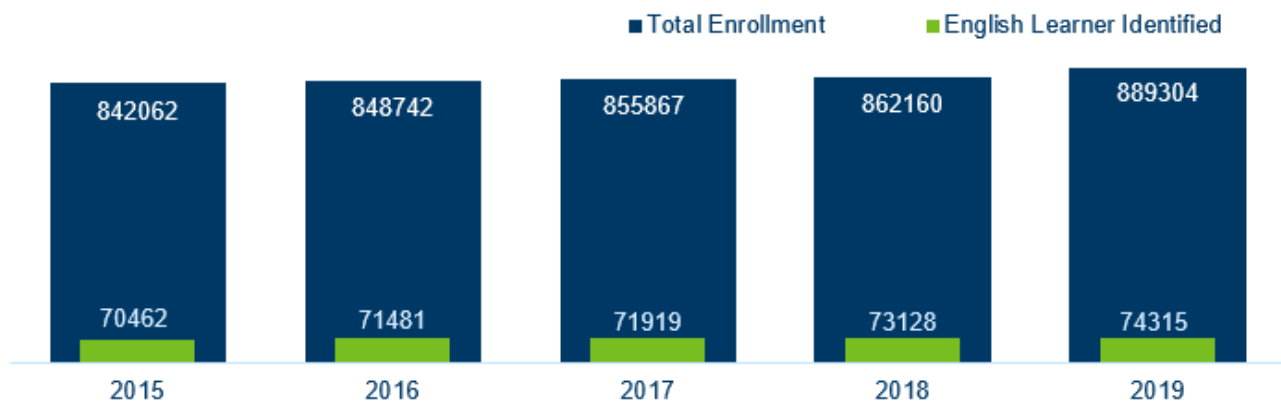
Source: [United States Department of Education](#)

English Learners in Minnesota

In the 2018-2019 school year, 889,304 K-12 students were enrolled in Minnesota public schools with 74,315 students, or 8.4 percent identified as English learners, .125 percent down from 2018. Figure 6 displays fall enrollment data from 2014-2015 through 2018-2019. The data indicates enrollment of ELs has kept pace with changes in overall enrollment since 2015 with incremental increases or decreases in the percentage of students identified as ELs. Figure 7 shows the distribution of Minnesota ELs across the grade levels. As indicated in the graph, the number of ELs in primary grades is much higher than in secondary grades.

Figure 6. Total K-12 and English Learner Enrollment in Minnesota Public Schools, 2015-2019

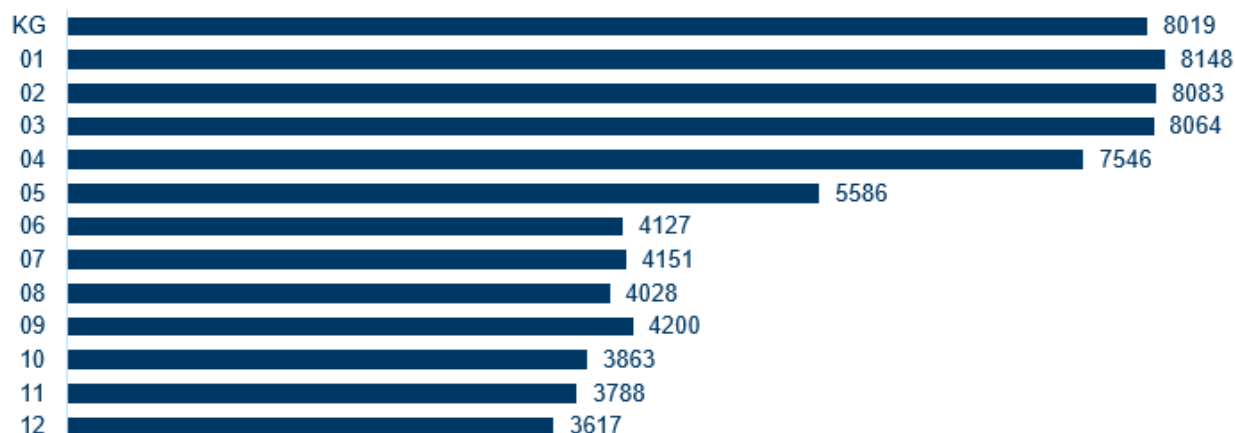
The number of identified English Learners have continued to rise at a faster rate than total enrollment



Source: *Minnesota Department of Education 2015-2019 all EL Enrollment*

Figure 7. Distribution of K-12 Students Identified as ELs Enrolled in Minnesota Public Schools by Grade, 2018-2019

More students are identified as English learners in the lower grades

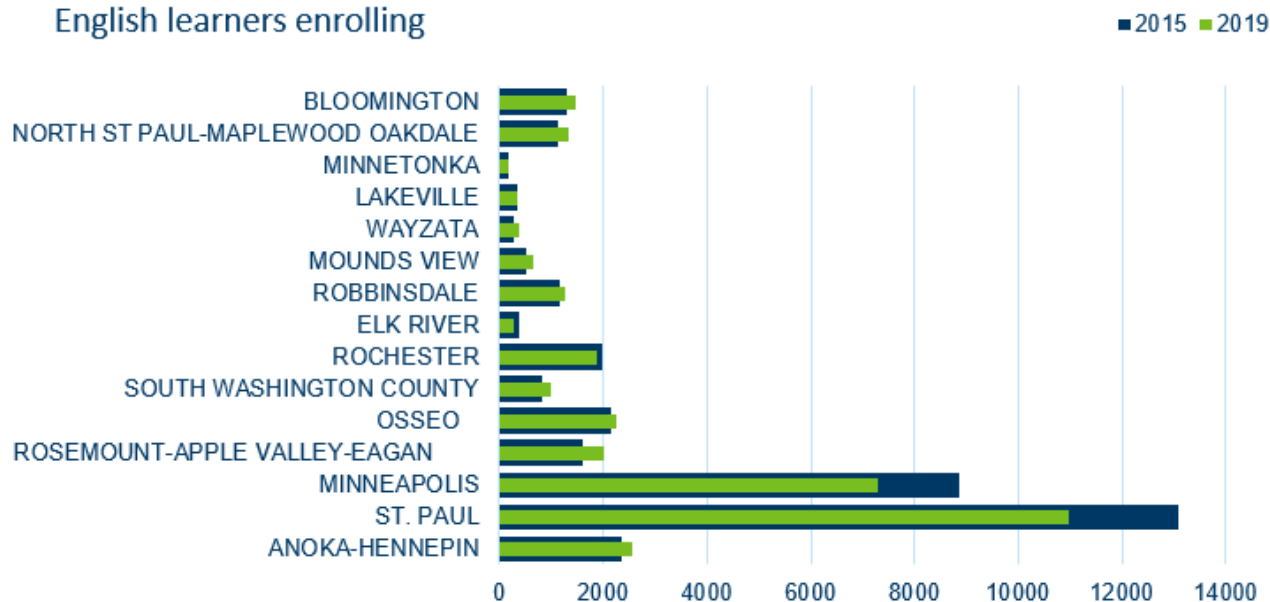


Source: Minnesota Department of Education 2018-2019 Fall EL Enrollment

Figure 8 illustrates the growth in the number of ELs within the largest 15 school LEAs across the state looking at data from 2015 and 2019. Nine LEAs showed increased numbers of ELs (Bloomington, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale, Wayzata, Mounds View, Robbinsdale, South Washington County, Osseo, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, and Anoka-Hennepin). The largest increases in these two years were in Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan and Anoka-Hennepin school districts. Of the 15 LEAs, five display a decrease of ELs between 2014 and 2018 (Elk River, Rochester, Minneapolis, and St. Paul).

Figure 8. English Learner Enrollment in the Largest 15 Minnesota Public School Districts

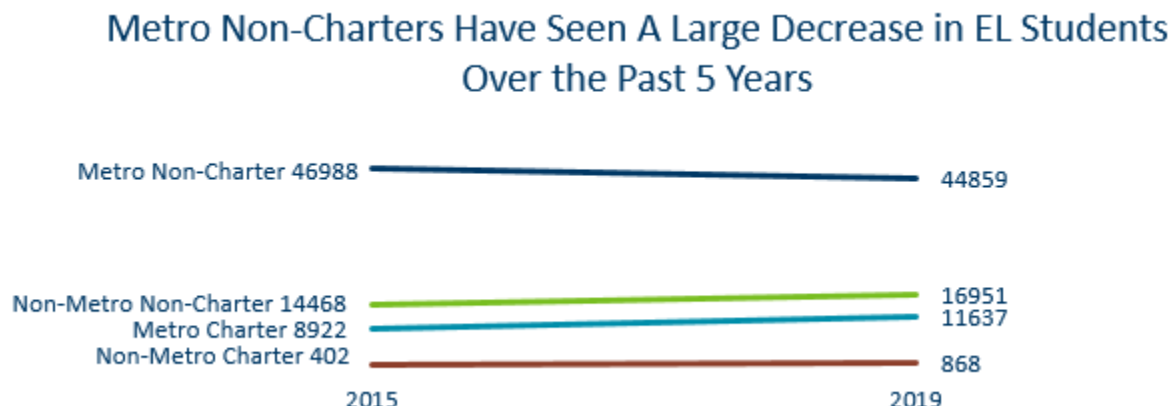
Some large school districts in Minnesota have seen increases in English learners enrolling



Source: Minnesota Department of Education 2014-2015 and 2018-2019 EL Enrollment

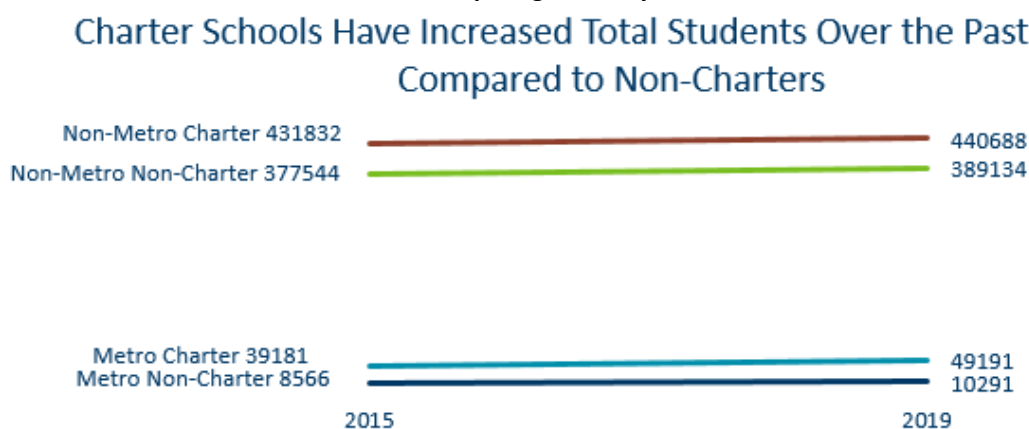
Figures 9.1-9.3 show that the 7-County Metro area (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties) experienced a large increase in ELs over the past five years.

Figure 9.1. Minnesota K-12 EL Enrollment Comparing 7-County Metro Area and Non-Metro School Enrollment



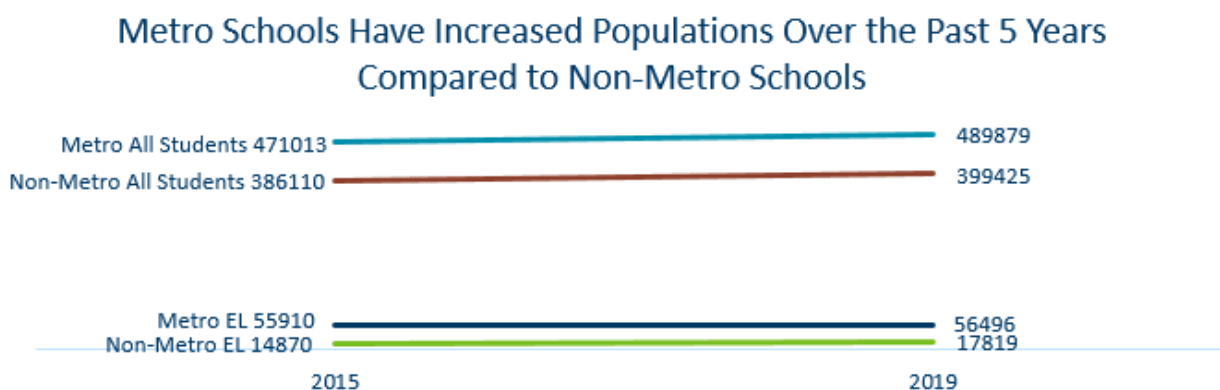
Source: Minnesota Department of Education 2014-2015 and 2018-2019 EL Enrollment

Figure 9.2. Minnesota K-12 Total Enrollment Comparing 7-County Metro Area and Non-Metro School Enrollment



Source: Minnesota Department of Education 2014-2015 and 2018-2019 Enrollment

Figure 9.3. Minnesota K-12 Enrollment Comparing 7-County Metro Area and Non-Metro School Enrollment



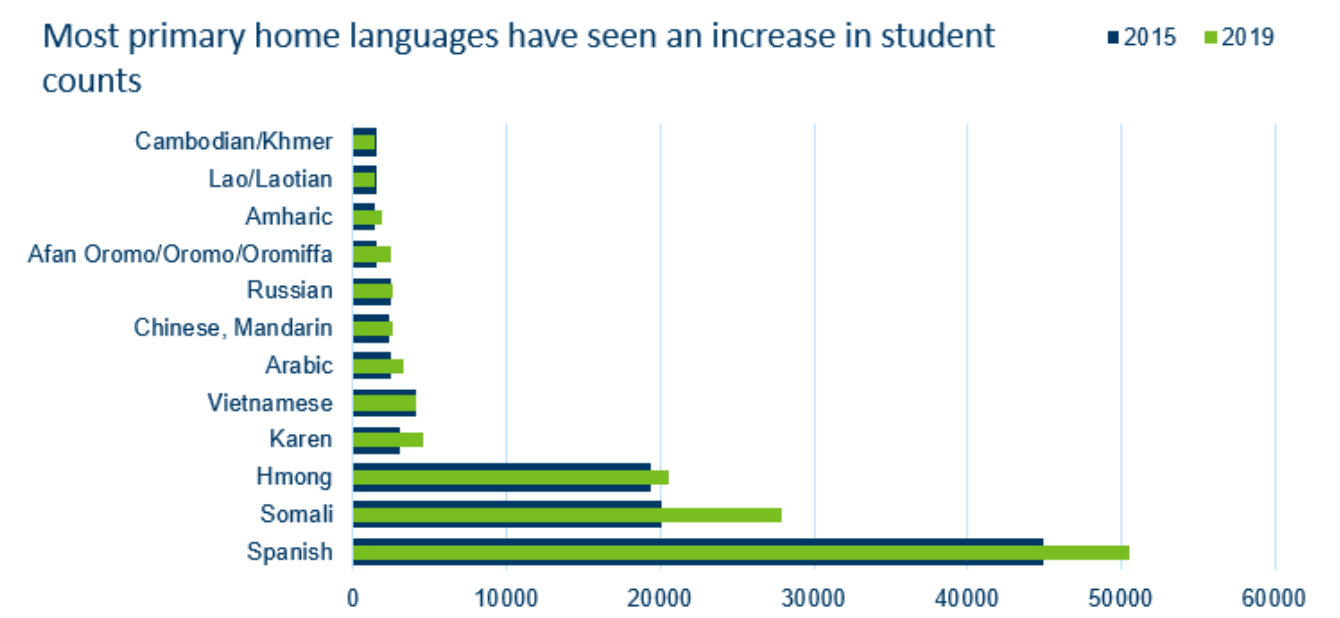
Source: Minnesota Department of Education 2014-2015 and 2018-2019 EL Enrollment

Primary Home Languages

In 2018-2019, 300 different home languages were reported for 889,304 students in the Minnesota Automated Student Reporting System (MARSS), compared to the 261 home languages reported for 2017-2018, an increase of 39 languages. Of the 143,271 students in Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) to grade 12 who were reported to have a home language other than English for 2018-2019, 74,315 students or 8.4 percent of the total enrollment were identified as English learners.

Figure 10 provides information about the top 12 primary languages other than English. From school years 2014-2015 to 2018-2019, Amharic, Afan Oromo/Oromo/Oromiffa, Arabic, Karen language, inclusive of Pwo Karen and S'gaw Karen, Somali and Spanish languages continue to increase at significant rates. Spanish continues to be the largest reported home language other than English, followed by Somali and Hmong. Somali language has increased at the greatest rate since 2014-2015.

Figure 10. Minnesota's Top 12 Languages Other than English



Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics](#)

Figure 11 represents the fall 2019 distribution of the top 12 primary home languages other than English reported for 10 selected Minnesota counties. Hennepin County has the greatest number of students (37,958 or 36 percent) whose home language is one of the top 12 primary home languages other than English in these counties. Anoka-Hennepin County has the highest percentage of Arabic (30 percent) speakers. Hennepin County has the highest percentage of Mandarin/Chinese (37 percent), Lao (50 percent), Somali (48 percent), and Vietnamese (38 percent) speakers of the selected counties. Dakota County has the greatest number of Amharic speakers (29 percent) and Khmer or Cambodian speakers (20 percent). Ramsey County has the highest percentage of Hmong (64 percent) and Karen (88 percent) speakers. Nobles County has the highest percentage of Oromo (41 percent) speakers. Stearns County has the highest percentage of Russian (46 percent) speakers. In contrast to past years' data, this year, Spanish language not the most common language in counties such as Nobles, Olmstead, Ramsey, Stearns and Washington.

Figure 11. The Number of Students for the Top 12 Primary Languages Other than English in Selected Minnesota Counties

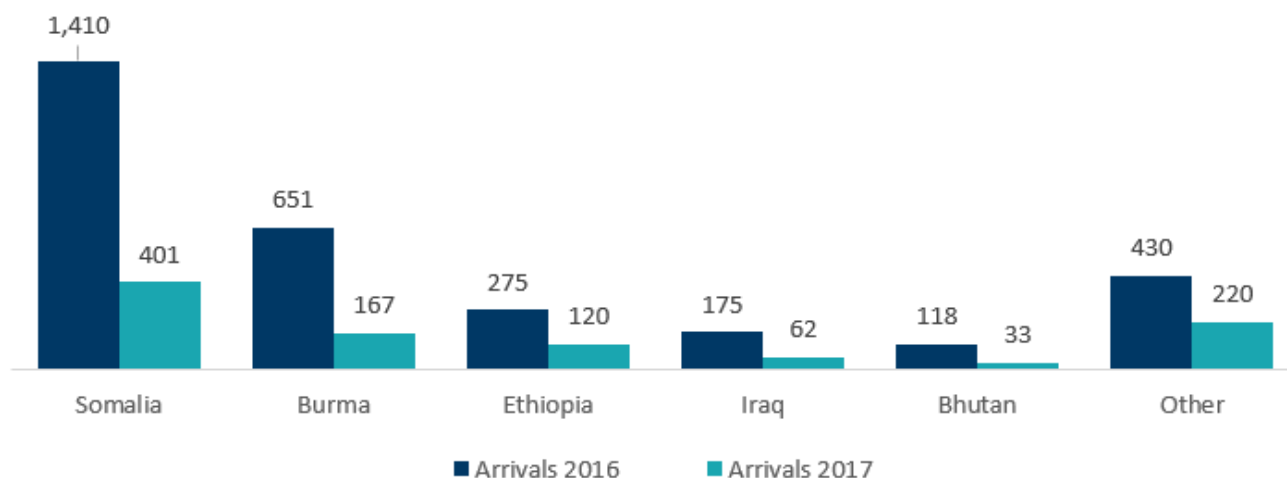
| | Anoka-Hennepin | Carver | Dakota | Hennepin | Nobles | Olmsted | Ramsey | Scott | Stearns | Washington | Total |
|--------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| Amharic | 155 | <10 | 546 | 376 | 41 | 34 | 485 | 25 | <10 | 198 | 1872 |
| Arabic | 851 | 26 | 312 | 603 | <10 | 490 | 301 | 53 | 41 | 147 | 2829 |
| Chinese, Mandarin | 109 | 61 | 333 | 829 | <10 | 249 | 294 | 86 | 31 | 252 | 2246 |
| Hmong | 1131 | 12 | 242 | 5191 | <10 | 96 | 12119 | 14 | <10 | 1272 | 18952 |
| Karen (Pwo, S'gaw) | 0 | <10 | <10 | <10 | 141 | 361 | 3810 | <10 | 14 | <10 | 4337 |
| Khmer, Cambodian | 21 | 33 | 245 | 212 | 66 | 135 | 138 | 223 | 50 | 76 | 1199 |
| Lao, Laotian | 71 | 32 | 139 | 496 | 17 | 13 | 32 | 121 | 40 | 25 | 986 |
| Oromo | 415 | <10 | 142 | 903 | 1720 | 36 | 787 | 27 | <10 | 115 | 4154 |
| Russian | 317 | 53 | 359 | 928 | <10 | 1236 | 68 | 362 | 2882 | 46 | 6260 |
| Somali | 1143 | 185 | 2152 | 10483 | 41 | 1255 | 4545 | 662 | 981 | 311 | 21758 |
| Spanish | 3076 | 828 | 5442 | 16603 | <10 | 194 | 6603 | 1521 | 120 | 1255 | 35647 |
| Vietnamese | 489 | 48 | 590 | 1333 | <10 | 34 | 479 | 307 | <10 | 249 | 3536 |
| Total | 7778 | 1291 | 10505 | 37958 | 2050 | 4133 | 29661 | 3405 | 4177 | 3949 | 104907 |

Source: Minnesota Department of Education 2019-2020 Fall Primary Home Language Totals

Refugees in Minnesota

Fewer refugees arrived in Minnesota in the past year. According to the Minnesota Department of Human Services' website's [interactive refugee arrival map](#), the number of primary arrivals between 2005 and 2018 is 32,298. These are recent refugees who have come directly to Minnesota from another country. Based on the map, since 2007, there were no primary arrivals from South American countries to Minnesota until 2017. Primary arrivals from Central America during this period did not occur until 2016. In 2016, refugees arrived primarily from Somalia, Burma, Bhutan, Iraq, and Ethiopia largely resettling in Hennepin, Olmsted, Ramsey, and Stearns counties, as shown in figure 12 below (current year data is not yet available). In 2017, significant numbers of arrivals were from Afghanistan (77), the Congo (24) and Zaire (33). Other arrivals decreased by almost half from 430 in 2016 to 220 in 2017.

Figure 12. Primary Refugee Arrivals, Minnesota 2016 and 2017

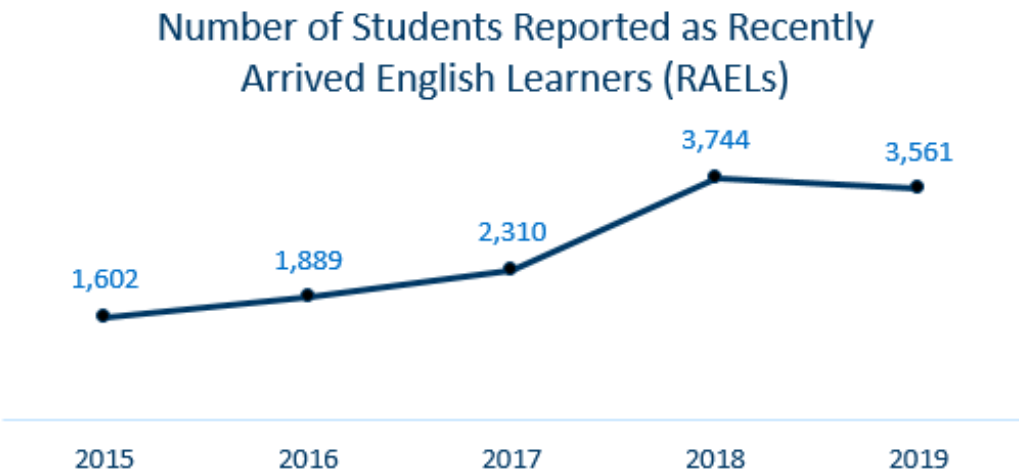


Source: Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2016 and 2017

Recently-Arrived English Learners (RAEL)

Minnesota also reports data on [RAELs](#), as defined on page 5 of this report. Figure 13 shows that the number of RAELs increased significantly from 2015 to 2018. In 2019, there was a slight decrease.

Figure 13. Number of Recently-Arrived English Learner from 2015 to 2019



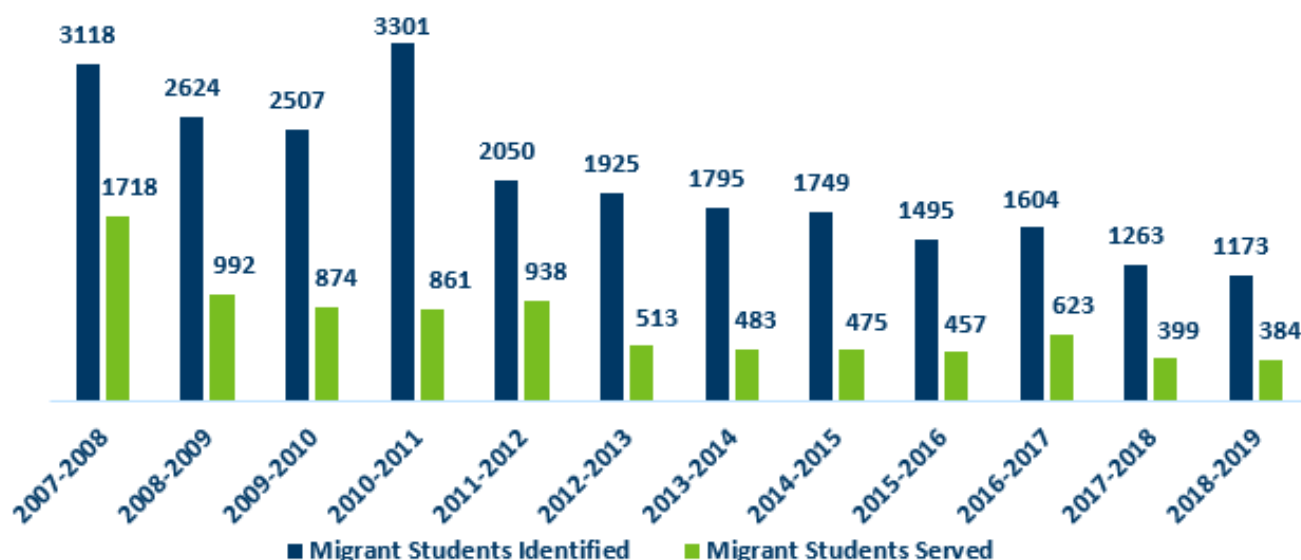
Source: Minnesota Department of Education Consolidated State Performance Reports (2015-2019)

Migratory Children

Migratory children (see [definition](#) on page 4) are eligible to participate in a summer Migrant Education Program and receive resources during the part of the school year in which they are enrolled in a Minnesota LEA. Migrant education programming in Minnesota ensures that migratory children fully benefit from the same free public education provided to other children. As shown in figure 14, 1173 migrant children, ages 3 through 21, were identified in Minnesota as eligible for migrant services during the 2018-2019 school year, and 384 were identified served in the summer of 2019 2017, with slight decreases from the previous year.

Migratory children and families face unique language, social and academic challenges due to high mobility. As a result of this mobility in search of agricultural work, they may experience challenges such as unaffordable housing, low wages, limited resources to purchase nutritious foods, lack of affordable health and dental care and/or over-/under-immunization, health hazards (e.g., exposure to pesticides and other occupational harm), receiving appropriate academic placement, and difficulty with credit accrual. LEAs can address these needs by making referrals to appropriate resources, assessing students, facilitating inter- and intrastate coordination with the sending LEAs, and swiftly assessing the language and academic needs of eligible migrant students to ensure services are received in a timely manner. Migrant children may also qualify for English learner programs and services. It is each LEA’s responsibility to use Minnesota’s standardized identification criteria uniformly to ensure migratory students’ needs are identified and met, just as with all other students.

Figure 14. Eligible Migrant Children in Minnesota between 2007-2008 and 2018-2019, comparing the 12-month count to the count of students served (preliminary data)



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Consolidated State Performance Reports (2007-2019)

English Learners and Special Education

Title III of ESSA and other federal laws require that ELs who also qualify for special education services (dual-eligible students) receive both EL and special education services. Under the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, EL students who have a disability must be identified and evaluated for special education services in a timely manner, as would any student suspected of a disability. EL status must not be cause for delay of identification, evaluation or special education services. Likewise, being identified for special education services must not be a cause for removal from English learner services, regardless of disability or severity, unless the child has demonstrated proficiency in English. Appropriate accommodations consistent with the student’s individualized education program (IEP) must be made during testing. When severe disability exists, an adaptive exam should be given (see [Alternate ACCESS for ELLs](#) on the WIDA™ website). It is important to include EL staff who are familiar with the students English language needs both when evaluating the student to determine eligibility for special education and when developing the IEP. When assessing need for special education services, teams must assess the student in the language or languages that best shows what he/she can do “academically, developmentally and functionally [CFR 300.304 (c) (ii)]. In addition, teams must consider “the language needs of the child as those needs relate to the child’s IEP” when developing annual goals and planning services [CFR 300.324 (a) (2) (ii)].

Guidance on EL-Special Education Dual identification

For more information, see Part II, Section F of the January 7, 2015 [guidance letter](#) from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). Figure 15 shows the distribution of Minnesota ELs with disabilities. The disability type reported with the greatest number of students also identified as English learners is specific learning disabilities at 5,023, followed by speech/language impairment at 1,173, developmental delay at 1158, and autism spectrum disorder at 1463, each seeing an increase. In addition, the number of English learners identified with other health disabilities (807), emotional/behavioral disorders (470), developmental cognitive (mild/moderate) disorders (581), and

deaf/hard of hearing (286) has increased since last year. 639 English learners are identified for low incidence disabilities, which include severe/profound developmental cognitive disability, physical impairment, severely multiply impaired, visual impairment, traumatic brain injury and deaf/blind.

Figure 15. Distribution of ELs with Disabilities, 2019



***Low Incidence Disabilities:** for the purpose of this report, Low Incidence Disabilities include Severe/Profound Developmental/Cognitive Disorders, Deaf-Blind, Traumatic Brain Injury, Blind/Visual Impairments, Physical Impairments and Severe Multiple Impairments.

Source: Minnesota Department of Education, August 2019

English Learner Achievement

State Accountability Tests

Title I of ESSA requires LEAs to annually assess the English language proficiency of ELs. School systems are required to provide an equal educational opportunity for all students, including those identified as EL. Title III of ESSA holds state educational agencies, local educational agencies, and schools accountable for increases in the English language proficiency and core academic content knowledge of ELs. Therefore, ELs must participate in the administration of ACCESS for ELLs, the state English language proficiency assessment, and Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs), the state content achievement assessments.

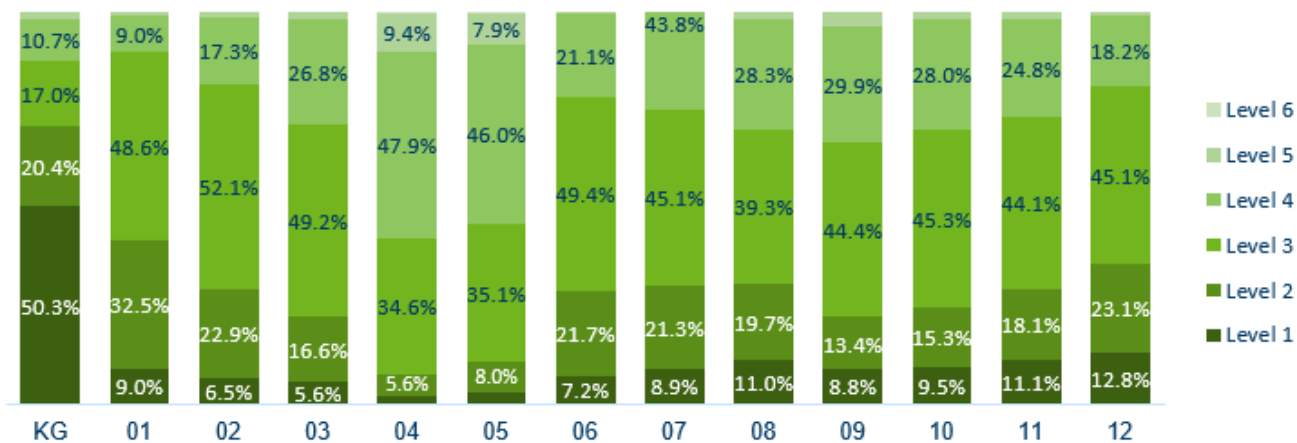
ACCESS for ELLs 2.0

ACCESS 1.0, was administered for the first time in Minnesota in 2012. The ACCESS test is designed to measure English learners' social and academic language proficiency in English and is aligned with the state English Language Development standards. The tests are banded into the following grade bands: K, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Students receive composite, listening, speaking, reading and writing scores between levels 1 through 6, with 6 being most proficient. With the change from ACCESS 1.0 to ACCESS 2.0, a reexamination of Minnesota's definition for English language proficiency on the assessment was required. Based on relevant data and stakeholder input, the commissioner approved the new proficiency definition, which has two required components: (1) an overall composite score of 4.5; and, (2) at least three of the four domain scores (listening, speaking, reading and writing) equal 3.5 or higher. See [MDE's English Learner Education webpage](#) and the [WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Scores and Reports webpage](#) for more information about the Minnesota's new proficiency criteria and the ACCESS 2.0 score changes.

Figure 16.1 depicts the percentage of ELs with composite score at each level by grade level. The majority of ELs in Kindergarten are at level 1 (50.3 percent). There are more ELs testing at level 2 in grade 1 than in any other grade. The majority of students in all grades except 4 and 5, where the majority assess at level 4. In grades 6 through 12, the percentage of students assessing at level one steadily increases. The greatest percentage of students assessing at level 6 is in grade 4 (9.4 percent). Figure 16.2 depicts percentage of ELs taking the Alternate (ALT) ACCESS with composite score at each proficiency level and by grade level. Levels on the ALT ACCESS are described on the [WIDA webpage](#). In grade 1, the majority of students score at level A3 while in grade 2, more students score at level A1. In grades 5, 6 and 10, the majority score at level P1. More students in grades 8, 9 and 11 score at level P2.

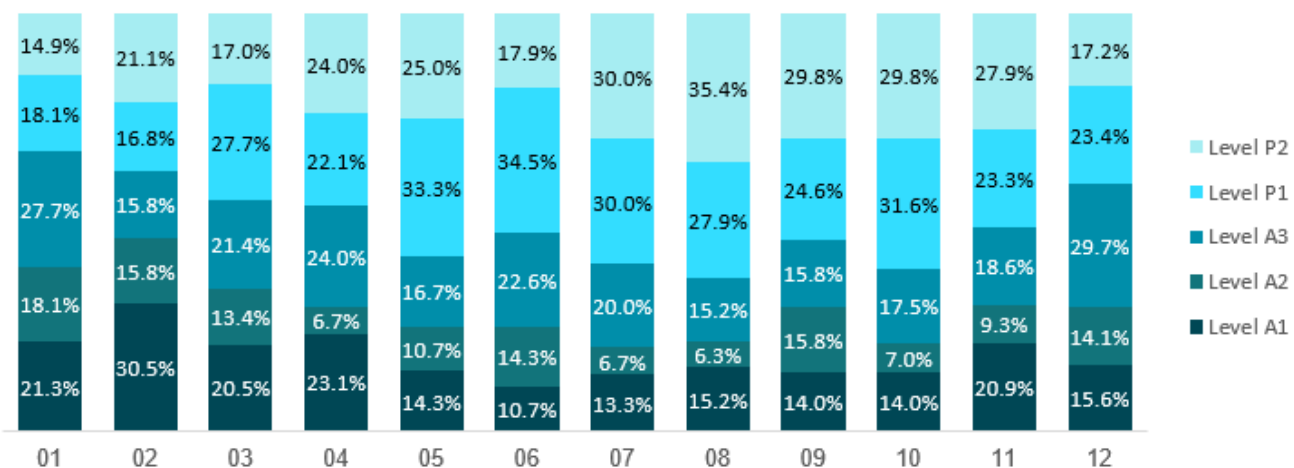


Figure 16.1 Percent Distribution of Students at Each Proficiency Level (PL), K-12



Source: Minnesota Department of Education August 2019

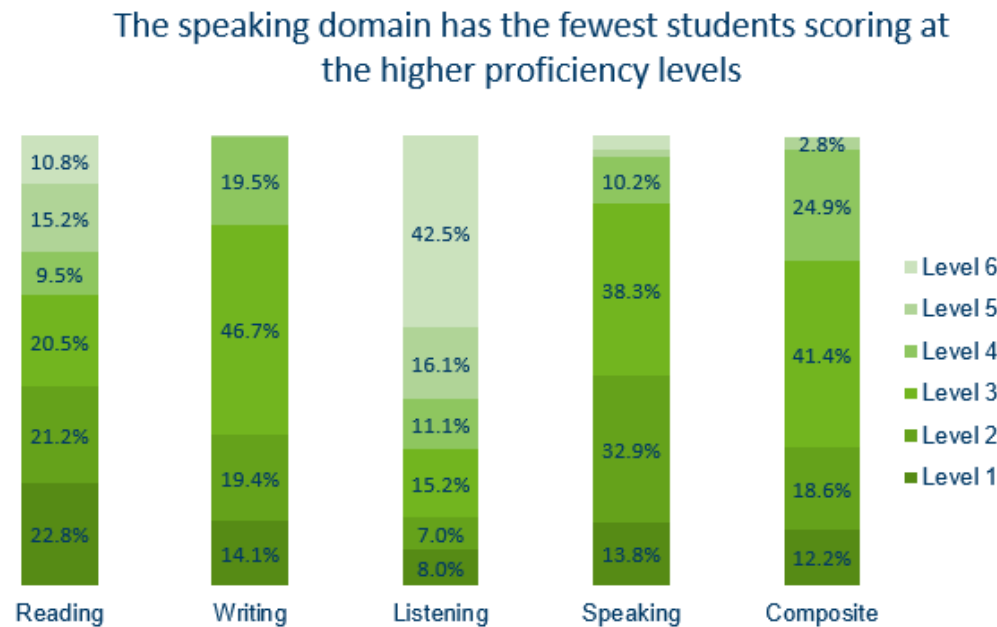
Figure 16.2 Percent Distribution of Students taking the Alternate (ALT) ACCESS at Each Proficiency Level (PL), K-12



Source: Minnesota Department of Education August 2019

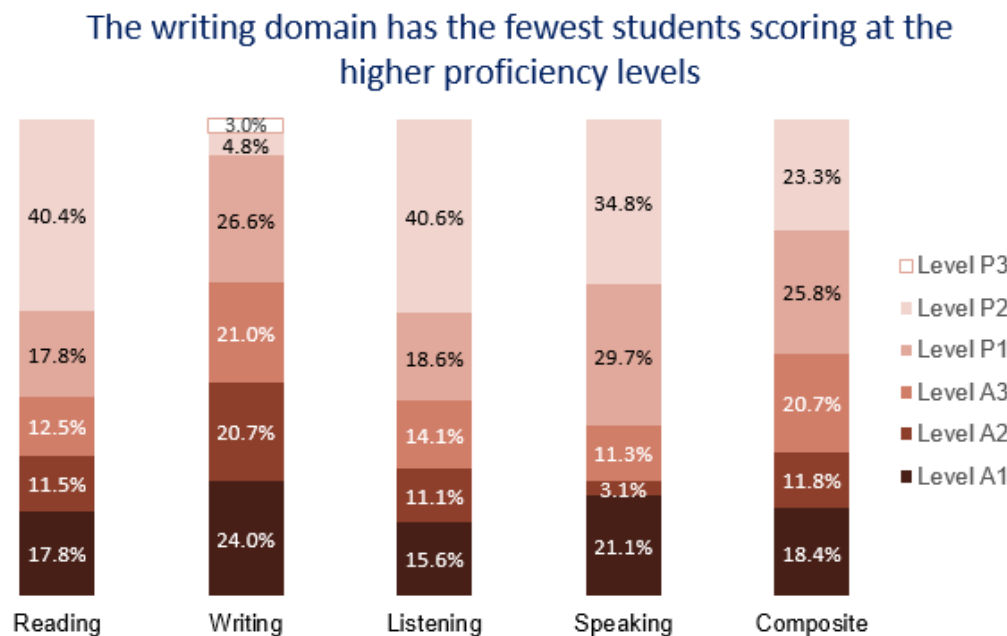
Figures 17.1 and 17.2 represent statewide 2019 overall ACCESS for ELLs, or as in 17.2, ALT ACCESS results. Figure 17.1 shows that most students score at level 3 in writing and speaking (productive domains), while scores are nearly evenly distributed between levels 1, 2 and 3 for the reading domain and 42 percent score at level 6 in listening (reading and writing being receptive domains). The largest percent (41.4 percent) of students score a composite of 3. Figure 17.2 shows that students taking the ALT ACCESS tend to score at a level P2 in reading, listening, and speaking. For speaking and writing, most students score at level P1. The only domain in which students score P3 is in writing. The majority of students reach a composite of P1 (20.7 percent), P2 (25.8 percent) or P3 (23.3 percent).

Figure 17.1 Percent Distribution of Students at Each Proficiency Level, K-12 Composite and Domain Scores



Source: WIDA Data Dashboard 2018-2019 Minnesota State ACCESS Test Results

Figure 17.1 Percent Distribution of Students at Each Proficiency Level, K-12 Composite and Domain Scores

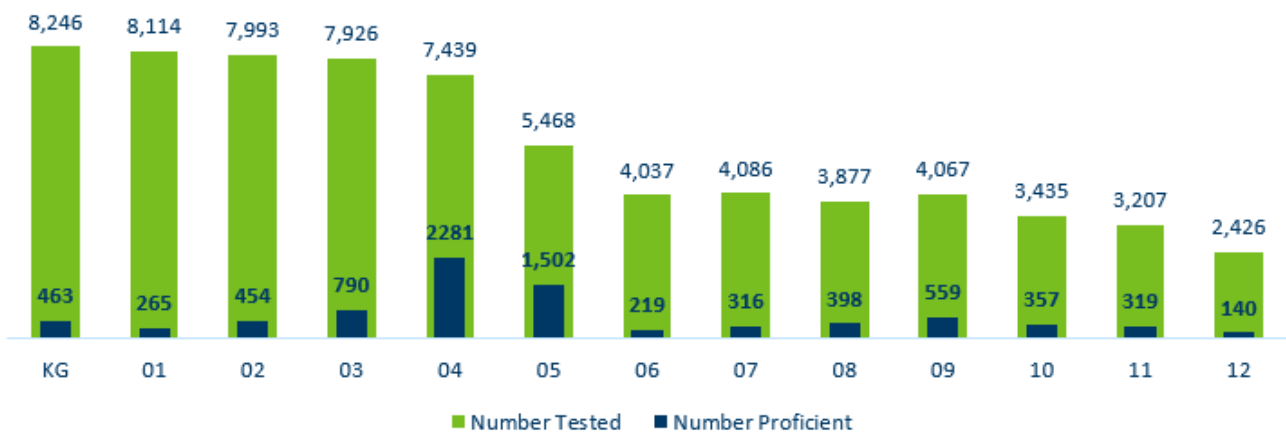


Source: WIDA Data Dashboard 2018-2019 Minnesota State ACCESS Test Results

Figure 18 shows the number of ELs who met the state proficiency criteria for each grade level. The data indicates that the greatest number of students who achieve proficiency are in grades 3 (790), 4 (2,281) and 5 (1,502).

Figure 18. Number of ELs Assessed and Met State Proficiency Criteria

More students test proficient in grades 4 and 5



Source: Minnesota Report Card, August 2019

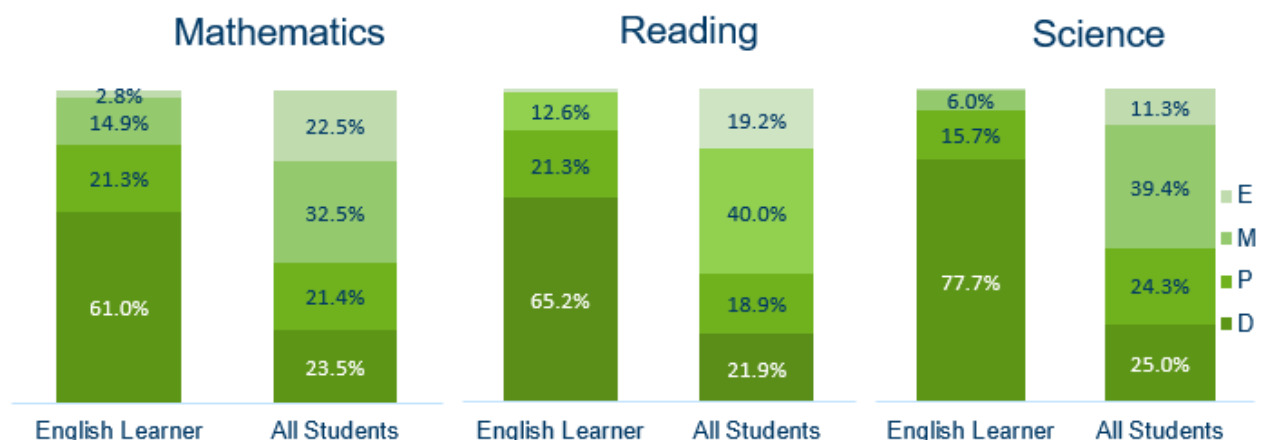
Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) and alternate assessments (MTAS for students with significant cognitive disabilities) are the state tests that help LEAs measure student progress toward Minnesota's academic standards and meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Students in grades 3-8 take the reading and mathematics test every year. In high school, students take the reading test in 10th grade and the mathematics test in 11th grade. Students take a science test in 5th grade, 8th grade and the year in high school when they take life science. Recently arrived English learners will be expected to take state academic tests during their first year of enrollment. That first year's results will not be included in accountability calculations. In such a student's second year of enrollment, their scores will be used when calculating academic progress, but not when calculating academic achievement. In their third year of enrollment, their scores will be used when calculating both academic progress and academic achievement. Figures 19-20 represent combined MCA and MTAS results for ELs for 2019, and longitudinal data from 2015-2019, respectively.

Figure 19 shows a comparison of ELs to all students for math, reading, and science in 2019. For math, 2.8 percent of ELs exceed, and 14.9 percent meet academic standards, while 21.3 percent partially meet and 61 percent do not meet academic standards. This compares to all students, 22.5 percent of whom exceed, 32.5 percent meet, 21.4 percent partially meet and 23.5 percent do not meet academic standards for math. For reading, 1 percent of ELs exceed, 12.6 percent meet academic standards, while 21.3 percent partially meet and 65.2 percent do not meet academic standards. This compares to all students, 19.2 percent of whom exceed, 40 percent meet, 18.9 percent partially meet and 21.9 percent do not meet academic standards for reading. For science, 0.7 percent of ELs exceed, 6.0 percent meet, 15.7 percent meet partially, and 77.7 percent do not meet

academic standards. This compares to all students, 11.3 percent of whom exceed, 39.4 percent meet, 24.3 percent partially meet and 25 percent do not meet academic standards for science.

Figure 19. Comparison of ELs to All Students on Statewide Achievement Tests in Math, Reading and Science, 2019 (“E” stands for “Exceeds standards”, “M” for “Meets standards”, “P” for “Partially meets standards” and “D” for “Does not meet standards”

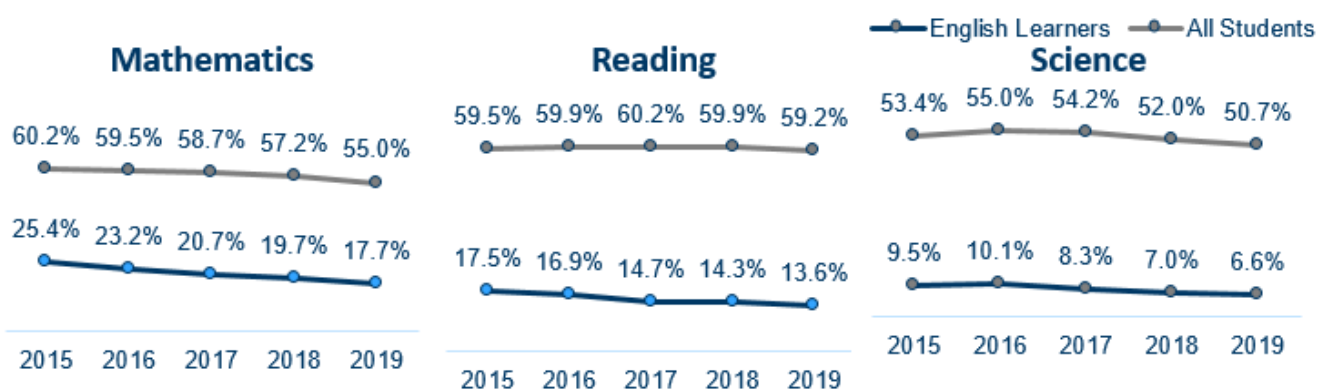


Source: Minnesota Report Card August 2019

English Learners’ Achievement in Math, Reading and Science

The report in Figure 20 shows the percent of EL compared to all students tested who met or exceeded achievement standards in mathematics, reading and science set by Minnesota educators. The proficiency trend shows results over time. In mathematics, all students scored 34.8 percent higher than English learners in 2015, while in 2019, the gap between ELs and all students increased to 37.3 percent. In reading, all students scored 42 percent higher than EL in 2015, as opposed to 45.6 percent in 2019. In science, all students scored 43.9 percent higher than English learners in 2015, while in 2018, the gap between ELs and all students increased to 44.1 percent.

Figure 20. Comparison of English Learners to All Students on Statewide Achievement Tests in Math, Reading and Science 2019

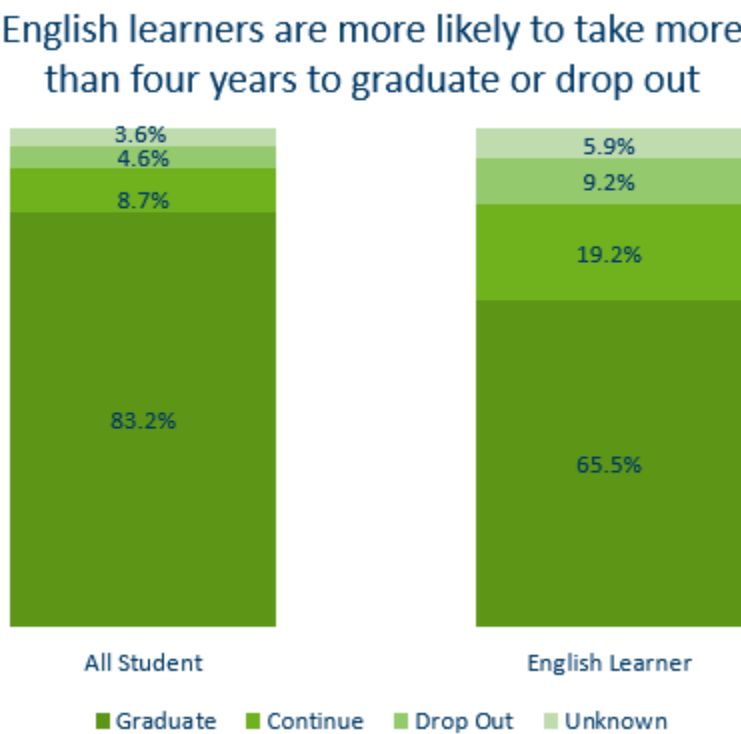


Source: Minnesota Department of Education August 2019

English Learners' Graduation Rate

The Four-year graduation rate is a graduation rate based on a cohort of first time 9th grade students plus transfers into the cohort within the four-year period, minus transfers out of the cohort within the four-year period. Based on these calculations, figure 21 shows that only 65.5 percent of English learners graduate from Minnesota schools, 19.2 percent are continuing students, and 9.2 percent drop out of school. For all students, 83.2 percent graduate, 8.7 percent continue, and 4.6 percent drop out. For more information on the graduation rate, please visit the Minnesota Department of Education [Data Analytics webpage](#).

Figure 21. Comparison of English Learners' and All Students' 4-Year Graduation Rate

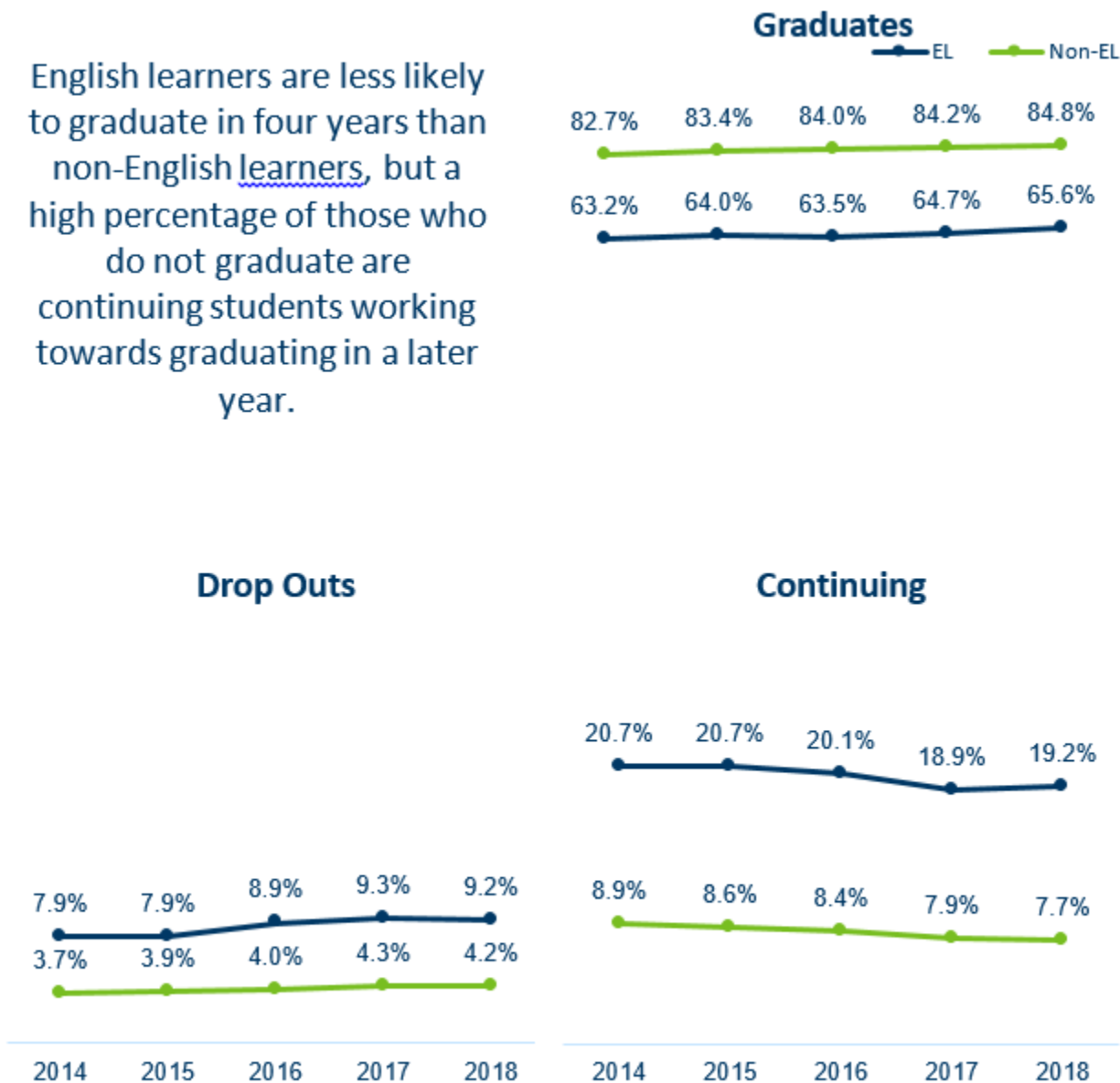


Source: Minnesota Report Card August 2019

Graduation, dropout, and continuing trends for 2014-2018 are depicted in Figure 22. Since 2014, the dropout rate for non-ELs has increased slightly, whereas the dropout rate for ELs had been rising but has held steady in the past year. The graduation rate for ELs increased by .9 percent to over 65 percent in the past year.

Figure 22. Minnesota Drop Out, Graduation and Continuing Trends for 4-Year Graduation Cohort Comparing ELs and Non-ELs 2014-2018

English learners are less likely to graduate in four years than non-English learners, but a high percentage of those who do not graduate are continuing students working towards graduating in a later year.



Source: Minnesota Report Card August 2019

A Note on Accountability:

On September 15, 2017, the Minnesota Department of Education submitted the Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan to the United States Department of Education. On January 10, 2018, the state plan was accepted and began implementation throughout the state. The submitted plan includes specific information about [Progress towards English language proficiency](#) as part of the state's accountability system.

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