

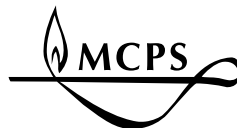


Evaluation of the Multidisciplinary Education, Training, and Support (METS) Program at the Elementary Level

PREPARED BY:

Nyambura Maina, Ph.D.

Applied Research and Evaluation



ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850
301-740-3000

Dr. Jack R. Smith
Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Janet S. Wilson
Chief, Teaching, Learning, and Schools

Dr. Kecia L. Addison
Director, Office of Shared Accountability

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Executive Summary

At the request of the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools-Curriculum and Instructional Programs (OTLS-CIP), an evaluation of the elementary-level Multidisciplinary Education, Training, and Support (METS) program was conducted. The METS program is designed to meet the linguistic and academic needs of recently arrived English Learners (ELs) who are identified as Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE). The METS program in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) includes students in elementary, middle, and high schools. At the elementary level, the METS program is offered in three schools: JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres, Sargent Shriver, and South Lake.

This study pursued three objectives:

- Assess how the elementary METS program in MCPS is being implemented
- Examine growth in English language development (ELD) and performance within reading and mathematics, among the current and former elementary METS students
- Identify the changes needed to accelerate ELD and learning across content areas for the ELs with interrupted formal education.

Methodology. Using a non-experimental, multi-methods design, data from a METS site questionnaire, a survey of previous and current METS program staff member, a review of documents, METS program records, and notes from meetings with a variety of stakeholders were analyzed as part of this study. Descriptive statistics and content analyses of qualitative information were used to summarize information on the students enrolled in the program from 2015 to 2020 and on the structure of METS as implemented, successful elements, challenges, and areas needing improvement.

Key Findings

How is the METS program implemented at the elementary level?

There are established guidelines from both the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and MCPS that detail the process for assessing and meeting the needs of students eligible for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services, including the ELs who are new to a school district and have interrupted or limited education. Per the guidance, ELs new to MCPS and or who have had limited or no previous schooling or significant schooling gaps due to interrupted or disrupted education will:

- 1) be assessed for eligibility for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services and interrupted education and
- 2) assigned to appropriate service delivery models, such as the METS program to support their English language development (ELD) and learning in the content areas.

In addition, MSDE expects all ELs to be instructed at grade-level standards, regardless of English language proficiency (ELP) levels. The implementation of the METS program is examined with the aforementioned guidelines and expectations.

Screening of students with interrupted education. There are three elementary METS sites (i.e., Sargent Shriver, JoAnn Leleck, and South Lake) where assignment to the school is based on the geographical location of their home schools. To assess ESOL services eligibility, an English language proficiency assessment – WIDA screener test – is administered to new students in Grades K–12 to identify students eligible for ESOL services. The FAST Math (available in the seven top languages among MCPS students) and Brigance (Spanish and English) assessments screen for ELs with interrupted education. A METS Intake Specialist and ESOL Testing and Accountability Center (ETAC) testing staff from the International Admissions and Enrollment Office administer both assessments. At the beginning of School Year (SY) 2019–2020, MCPS stopped admitting ELs with interrupted education to the METS sites; since then, any ELs with interrupted education were placed directly at their home school.

English language, English language arts, and mathematics skills of ELs identified with limited education at the point of entry into the program. Nearly all of the 298 students were at English Language Proficiency (ELP) Level 1, indicating that they were beginning to learn English in MCPS. The analysis of the data from the Brigance and FAST Math screening tests revealed the ELs identified with interrupted education demonstrated a gap of 2 to 3 years in reading and mathematics skills relative to their same-age peers. Specifically, nearly all of the students placed at Tier 1 or Tier 2, which is equivalent to MCPS targets for pre-K or fall K competencies in reading and about Grade 1 or lower in mathematics skills and competencies.

Planning and coordination of instructional programs for ELs identified with interrupted education. Corresponding to the allocation based on the number of students enrolled at each site, during SY 2019–2020, the METS classrooms had either one or two teachers, with the METS classroom support ranging from 1.0 to 2.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) paraeducators. All three sites reported that they make considerable within-school adjustments among the staff to cater to the various needs of their ELs with interrupted education. In addition, one site reported many challenges with recruiting a teacher for the METS classes and often relied on long-term substitutes.

In addition to classroom teachers and paraeducators, each elementary METS site reported providing ELs with interrupted education with the services of an ESOL transition counselor and parent community coordinator. These ESOL transition counselors and parent community coordinators worked with the ELs with interrupted education ELs at the METS sites on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Instructional foci. All instruction in METS classrooms is presented in English in a multi-grade classroom. Across the three elementary sites, the central emphases of instruction in METS classrooms were reported as follows: 1) to develop proficiency in the English language, including grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing); 2) to accelerate learning in the content areas; 3) to facilitate cross-cultural orientation within the United States, and 4) to provide reading intervention. The teachers of the METS classes and their colleagues make adjustments (cultural and content scaffolding) to ensure that the material is accessible to students. In addition, to the focus on ELD and accelerating learning in the content areas, one school reported that socio-emotional learning also was a key focus of their instructional program for ELs with interrupted education.

Instructional resources and typical schedule. Instruction for ELs is expected to be aligned with grade-level Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Every elementary METS site reported the use of either the New Elementary curriculum or the Curriculum 2.0 and the WIDA ELD standards as a basis for instructional planning. Two of the sites (Leleck and Shriver) also reported using a variety of instructional resources to boost ELD and learning in mathematics and literacy. Such resources included Imagine Learning for ELD, English language development (ELD) supplemental material from the new curriculum, iReady, or subscriptions to a variety of Internet-based resources.

The typical daily instructional schedules in the METS classrooms were similar across the three sites with slight variations. Two instructional day segments, ranging from 40 to 70-minute instructional blocks, were dedicated to English language arts, and a separate 70-minute block was spent on mathematics. In addition, time was set aside for electives or specials (i.e., art, music, physical education). To reduce the isolation of the students and provide opportunities for language modeling from native English speakers, two sites (Leleck and Shriver) reported that they mainstreamed their ELs with interrupted education during electives or specials or for recess and lunch with peers from standard classrooms.

Monitoring progress of ELs with interrupted education in ELD and content areas. In an effort to compile data needed to examine the progress the ELs with interrupted education have made in ELD and in content areas since enrolling in MCPS, the following resources were explored: ACCESS for ELLs and Measures for Academic Progress (MAP) in Reading and Mathematics.

Minimal evidence of ACCESS for ELLs and MAP assessment data was found that would reveal how the progress of ELs with interrupted education is monitored or for analysis of annual progress for this study. The exploration of these assessment data revealed that very few of the ELs with interrupted education had ACCESS for ELLs scores or MAP-Mathematics and MAP-Reading data. As such, there is a need to explore further from the schools why these students do not have these data. However, in the responses to the staff surveys, respondents expressed that the grade book tools and the grade-level content assessments were not suitable or valid for assessing learning gains for the ELs with interrupted education.

Transitioning students from the METS program. The decision regarding when students are ready to mainstream or transition into their home school is made by a team of teachers, specialists, counselors, and parents/guardians using a variety of assessment data and student records. Given that students spend two to three years in a METS program, the METS program staff reported that very few students had transitioned fully to ESOL classrooms at their elementary home school. Most ELs with interrupted education who started at the three elementary sites "age out" of the program--the students articulated to the middle schools before transitioning to their elementary home school. This is true, particularly for those who begin in the METS program in the fourth or fifth grades.

What are the demographic characteristics of ELs who started in the elementary METS program from 2015 to 2020?

Number assigned to elementary METS sites from 2015 to 2020. There are three elementary METS sites where new ELs can enroll in the program. From 2015 to 2020, 298 elementary school-age students were identified as ELs with interrupted education. The number identified varied by year,

ranging from a low of 40 students in 2016 to a high of 78 students in 2017. Across the five school years explored, 112 of the 298 students were assigned to the Sargent Shriver METS site, 95 were at the JoAnn Leleck site, and 91 at the South Lake site.

Demographic characteristics of ELs with interrupted education. The average age of students assigned to the three elementary METS sites between 2015 and 2019 ranged from 9 to 11 years old. A higher percentage of the students were of the age-appropriate for placement in Grade 3, with less than 15 percent entering the METS program in Grade 5. Of the 298 students assigned to a METS site, 231 were still enrolled in MCPS in the 2019–2020 school year, with most enrolled in Grades 6–9. Slightly more than half of the current students are males, and nearly all are Hispanic/Latino. The majority of the 231 in MCPS were receiving Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) services during the 2019–2020 school year. Less than five students have documented evidence of receiving special education services. One student was identified as gifted and talented. The non-English languages represented among the students were Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, and Amharic.

To what extent are ELs who started in the elementary METS program making progress in the academic English language?

The ELs with interrupted education who started at the three elementary sites from 2015 to 2020 made progress in ELD but at varying rates. The majority of students who began in 2015 (77%) and 2016 (65%), and close to one half of the 2017 cohort (48%) had progressed from Level 1 to Level 4 or beyond (as of SY 2019–2020). The METS program records showed that nearly all of the students who entered the METS program in 2015 and the majority of those who enrolled in 2016 and 2017 had completed the requirements for the METS program by 2019–2020 and receiving ESOL services in regular classrooms. On average, students exited the METS program within 2.5 years (mean=457 days; SD=168 days), slightly exceeding the minimum expectation, that students would be receiving ESOL services at their home school within two years (but not exceed three years) of entering METS. Therefore, on average, many of the students did not transition to homeschool when in elementary school; the transition to homeschool happened later in the middle school or high school.

To what extent are ELs who started in the elementary METS program making progress in mathematics and literacy?

The ELs with interrupted education who started at elementary METS sites made some progress in the content areas with about one third of students in the 2015, 2016, 2017 cohorts reached at least two of the three SY 2020 Evidence of Learning (EOL) attainment measures in literacy. Less than 15 percent of the 2015, 2016, or 2017 cohorts achieved all three of their EOL attainment in mathematics. Further analysis of academic performance of students based on the EOL framework measures revealed that the majority of the students who enrolled in 2015, 2016, and 2017 were meeting the classroom measures, but not the respective district or external measures in both literacy and mathematics. Nearly all of the students who enrolled in METS programs in 2018 and 2019 did not meet the EOL literacy or mathematics measures (i.e., classroom, district, and external), thereby confirming their skills gaps relative to their grade-level expectations.

What factors facilitated or hindered the implementation of the elementary METS program?

Factors that facilitated the implementation of the elementary METS program. In response to a survey, current and previous METS program staff reported successful elements of the METS programs included the expertise provided by a dedicated and skilled ESOL staff, getting to know students well and individualizing instruction, attention to socio-emotional needs of students, and a focus on the social-emotional learning of students. Another successful approach reported by two of the sites (Leleck and Shriver) was mainstreaming ELs with interrupted education with their grade-level peers for specials/electives to limit students' level of isolation in the METS classrooms and increase their interaction with and modeling from their native, English-speaking peers. Other successful aspects included concerted and deliberate efforts to create a welcoming and language-rich environment, the use of bilingual paraeducators and other staff, and co-planning and co-teaching practices among ESOL and general education teachers. Notably, one of the most successful aspects of the METS program was reported at Leleck Elementary School. Leleck staff said that they mitigated most challenges encountered in previous years by hiring a dually certified teacher, assigning additional bilingual staff, and departmentalizing the METS classroom instruction into smaller groups based on student skill/tier levels.

Factors that hinder implementation. In addition to successful factors, past and current METS program staff identified obstacles to implementing the instructional program for ELs with interrupted education. The main challenges identified in the survey feedback was related to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)/MSDE expectations that all students be instructed at grade-level standards, regardless of ELP levels. In particular, individual teachers found it very challenging to plan, align, and deliver instruction across Grades 3–5 in one classroom with up to 15 or more ELs with interrupted education. Furthermore, the staff members were overwhelmed by having to tackle the students' additional linguistic and academic needs while working with curriculum resources that are not designed for ELs with interrupted education.

Most of the other reported challenges stemmed from two related phenomena: 1) limited understanding of who the ELs with interrupted education are and their unique and various academic and socioemotional needs and 2) uncoordinated support, with autonomous central office departments engaging in limited interaction regarding the implementation of the elementary METS program. The specific difficulties reported included insufficient staff allocation for METS classes, irrelevant and inadequate tools for grading and documenting progress made by ELs with interrupted education, large class sizes, problems with securing adequate bus transportation for students in the METS program, and high METS teacher turnover at two of the sites. In addition, many instructional resources in MCPS are not tailored to ELs with interrupted education per se or beginner ELs.

What aspects of the elementary METS program would staff change?

METS program staff identified many areas for improvement at the METS site and district levels. The METS site-level staff proposed the following improvements: additional staff, improved scheduling that could provide more opportunities for mainstreaming ELs with interrupted education with non-METS grade-level peers, access to authentic curricula and assessment tools valid for use with ELs

with interrupted education, resolution of transportation obstacles, and the institution of concerted schoolwide and districtwide efforts to focus on socioemotional needs of ELs with interrupted education. The changes proposed by past and current METS program staff working at the central office level included: having clear and consistent expectations for instruction in each content area, small classes or increasing number of METS sites to reduce class size and distance traveled by students, providing instructional resources, and availing authentic assessments that are valid for use with ELs with interrupted education. To promote cross-functional collaboration among units in the central office, the past and current METS staff called for clarity of job descriptions and roles, streamlined communication, access to updated documentation related to all aspects of the elementary METS program, and improvements in the screening and intake process.

The METS program staff recommended the following for future professional development topics or areas for all staff working with ELs with interrupted education:

- Increasing the understanding the instructional needs and other needs of ELs with interrupted education
- Trauma informed practices
- Aligning instruction of ELs with interrupted education to grade-level CCSS
- Best practices for co-teaching and collaborative planning
- Intervention and instruction specific to the ELs with interrupted education
- Basic literacy and math skills
- Increased expertise in English language development in general, including monitoring the academic progress of ELs

Conclusion

MCPS specifies that the purpose of the METS program is to develop English language proficiency and literacy while providing students with the academic instruction in content areas that will help narrow students' educational gaps and facilitate articulation to non-METS classes. As such, by design, the METS program is a short-term intervention. The data confirmed that the academic skills of the ELs with interrupted education entering Grades 3, 4, 5 were comparable to kindergarten skills in literacy and first-grade-level in mathematics—demonstrating that their instructional needs are very different from those of their grade-level EL and non-EL peers. The expectation is that students would stay in the METS program for 2 years and a maximum of 3 years, before transitioning to receiving ESOL services in regular classrooms. On that regard, nearly all the students who entered elementary METS in 2015 (95%) and the majority of students who enrolled in 2016 (76%) and 2017 (78%) had completed the METS requirements based on criteria set by CIP. Because the yearly data on ACCESS for ELLs and MAP were not available for all students for the years in MCPS, the magnitude of yearly gains in ELD and content areas while the students were in METS program could not be determined. As such, the EOL achievement data presented in this report are very useful in gauging the standing of the ELs with interrupted education relative to grade-level expectations; however, they would be insufficient to for judging the effectiveness of the elementary METS program

The long-term goal of all programs for ELs is to enable students to exit ESOL services and to meet the same challenging academic standards on district and state assessments as their non-EL peers. Extant research on English language acquisition and progress of ELs with interrupted education show

that students' progress at different rates and that, in general, it takes ELs with interrupted education three years longer than the typical ELs to exit ESOL services (Cummins, 2012). As such, the goal of transitioning students from METS to standard classroom instruction within two years calls for dedicated attention to a carefully designed program aimed at compacting 1.5 grade levels into one year of learning. Carrying out such complex responsibilities requires a clear understanding of the ELs with interrupted education, the necessary ongoing intensive capacity building of all staff members associated with the program, and for extensive planning for adaptations from year to year in staffing and instructional resources.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from the findings in this report, the goals of the elementary METS program, literature, and MSDE stipulations. The recommendations focus primarily on actionable approaches to optimize the elementary METS program's design and implementation in particular and the instructional program for ELs with interrupted education at the elementary level in general.

- Clarify and update the guidelines for identifying ELs with interrupted education at the elementary level.
 - a. Clarify the intended outcomes of the elementary METS program to all staff and school administrators.
 - b. Review and, if needed, update the process and tools for screening and identifying elementary level ELs with interrupted education.
- Institute and communicate a clear plan for compacting and accelerating instruction for elementary ELs with interrupted education so that the students' transition to the standard instructional program within the projected time of 2 years.
- Increase staffing allocation as well as the levels of expertise of staff in the METS classrooms.
- Provide increased role-specific and ongoing professional development offerings related to instruction for ELs for all staff.
- Institute opportunities for the central office staff working with the METS program or implementing any program aspect for ELs with interrupted education to meet and collaborate on implementation.
- Connect METS program documentation to the MCPS databases on enrollment, district-level assessment, counseling services, and ESOL services receipt.
- Ensure that all documentation related to the services for ELs with interrupted education - screening tools, identification, school assignments - is up to date and readily available to all internal and external stakeholders as appropriate.

Evaluation of the Multidisciplinary Education, Training, and Support (METS) Program at the Elementary Level

Background

At the request of the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Schools-Curriculum and Instructional Programs (OTLS-CIP), an evaluation of the elementary-level Multidisciplinary Education, Training, and Support (METS) program was conducted. The METS program is designed to meet the linguistic and academic needs of recently arrived English Learners (ELs) who are identified as Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) and includes students in elementary, middle, and high schools (MCPS, 2020a; 2020b). At the elementary level, the METS program is offered in three schools: JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres, Sargent Shriver, and South Lake.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) stipulates that all schools will (1) assign ELs to appropriate service delivery models to support their English language development (ELD), proficiency, and academic achievement in the core academic subjects and (2) track the progress of ELs in ELD in challenging state academic achievement standards (MSDE, 2020; US Department of Education, 2016). Further, there are established guidelines from both the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and MCPS that detail the process for assessing and meeting the needs of ELs with unique needs, such as ELs with disabilities, long-term ELs, and recently arrived ELs. In particular, the following are true of ELs with interrupted formal education: 1) they are new to the U.S. school system and have had interrupted or limited schooling opportunities in their native country, 2) they have a limited background in reading and writing in their native language, and 3) they score below their same-age peers in most academic skills by at least a 2-year difference.

Per the guidance, each EL, including ELs new to MCPS and those who have had limited or no previous schooling or significant schooling gaps due to interrupted or disrupted education will be:

- 1) assessed for eligibility for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services and interrupted education;
- 2) assigned to appropriate service delivery models, such as the METS program to support their English language development (ELD) and learning in the content areas; and
- 3) instructed at grade-level standards, regardless of English language proficiency (ELP) levels.

This evaluation sought to:

- Assess how the elementary METS program in MCPS is being implemented
- Examine growth in English language development (ELD) and performance within reading and mathematics, among the current and former students of the elementary METS program
- Identify the changes needed to accelerate ELD and learning across content areas for the ELs with interrupted formal education

Overview of the Elementary METS Program in MCPS

Determining eligibility for ESOL services. When parents/guardians register their children for school, they are asked to complete a home language survey. An initial screening/placement for English Language proficiency is administered if information on the New Student Information form indicate a language other than English at the time of initial enrollment in MCPS. This screening is part of the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Screener placement assessments. The assessment includes four skill areas for Grades 1–12: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.¹ The State of Maryland belongs to the WIDA Consortium and thus all public school systems in Maryland use the WIDA English language development standards and assessments to guide the development of ESOL curriculum, assess English language proficiency levels, and inform ESOL instructional placement decisions. If a student is identified as eligible for ESOL services through the WIDA Screener placement assessments and other relevant indices, the student is enrolled in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services (MCPS, 2020b).

Identification of elementary-age ELs with interrupted formal education. Students can be referred to the METS program through the International Admissions and Enrollment Office (IAE), the ESOL Testing and Accountability Center (ETAC), school staff, a parent/guardian, or a family member (MCPS, 2020b; MCPS, 2019c). A METS Intake Specialist, along with an ETAC Testing Assessor, administers the assessments (Brigance for literacy and FAST MATH) for screening for interrupted education.

Before placement in an elementary METS program, students new to MCPS must meet the following criteria:

- The student scores at a level one or two on the WIDA Screener Assessment,
- The student's record must show a gap in school attendance,
- The student's age is appropriate for at least third-grade placement, and
- The student functions at more than three years below grade level in mathematics (MCPS, 2020b).

Location of elementary METS program sites. Although there are METS programs located in 25 MCPS schools, there were only three at the elementary level. Prior to October 2019, elementary students identified for enrollment in a METS program were assigned to one of the three elementary METS sites (Appendix A–1). The three locations for the elementary METS program are JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres (Leleck), Sargent Shriver, and South Lake. The METS program began at JoAnn Leleck in 1989, South Lake in 2000, and Sargent Shriver in 2006.

MCPS places only elementary-age students at these sites. No matter how wide the education gap, the METS student's grade assignment is adjusted, only one grade down relative to the student's same-age peers. For example, a student whose age corresponds to fifth grade can only be placed as low as fourth grade, even if her/his performance in reading and mathematics is at the kindergarten level.

¹ During Semester 1, students in prekindergarten and Kindergarten are screened only for Listening and Speaking. Students in Kindergarten are screened in all four domains if they enroll in Semester 2.

METS Program change in School Year (SY) 2019–2020. Starting October 4, 2019, elementary ELs with interrupted education were enrolled directly at their home school. METS students who were enrolled in each of the three METS program sites prior to 2019 continue in those programs until they meet the criteria for exiting the METS program and are able to return to their home schools.

Structure and Instructional Focus for the Elementary METS Program

Staffing of METS Classrooms

Guidelines for staffing of METS classrooms at the three METS sites. Teachers of the METS classrooms teachers are ESOL-certified teachers (Appendix A–2). Table 1 presents the guidelines for staffing the METS classrooms for the 2019 and 2020 school years. Notably, the allocations for METS classrooms are calculated separately from the other ESOL allocations. METS classrooms with 15 students receive 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) ESOL teacher and a 0.75-time paraeducator. METS classrooms with more than 24 students get 1.2 FTE ESOL teachers and 1 FTE paraeducator.

Table 1

Guidelines for Staffing of METS Classrooms for 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 School Years by ESOL Enrollment

2018–2019	2019–2020		
	Enrollment	METS (ESOL) Teacher	Paraeducator
For every 15 students: 1 teacher + 0.75 paraeducator	<5	0.4	
	5–14	1.0	
	15–24	1.0	0.75
	>24	1.2	1.0

Source: MCPS Department of ESOL Bilingual Programs

Support from central office. An ESOL Transition Counselor (ETC) from the International Admissions and Enrollment Office (IAE) is assigned to each elementary METS site (Appendix A–3). The ETCs perform under the expectation that they will provide counseling services to students who are ELs in Grades pre-K through 12. The services include supplementing the work of school counselors by providing mental health services and ensuring that the services are available in native language of the students, for the ELs with interrupted education. The work also includes helping newcomers understand and adjust to school in the United States, the community, and helping them acquire the socio-cultural skills necessary to succeed in MCPS and society.

Three Parent Community Coordinators (PCCs) support the METS program in a variety of ways (MCPS, 2019d). For the elementary METS sites, the PCCs support METS staff, parents/guardians, and students through the following actions:

- Facilitating communication and meetings between school and families, with particular attention to parents/guardians who may face language, cultural, or socioeconomic barriers;
- Providing orientation services for families of newcomer students; and

- Assisting parents/guardians in understanding school system policies and procedures.²

One supervisor and one ESOL/METS instructional specialist from OTLS-CIP provide central office support to the staff at METS sites. Furthermore, they provide professional development opportunities related to instruction of ELs and ELs with interrupted education for classroom teachers, instructional support professionals, and school-based administrators (MCPS, 2020b).

Instructional Focus of METS

Students enrolled in the METS program receive 1) instruction in developing English language proficiency, basic literacy, and academic skills and 2) instructional experiences and support to facilitate adjustment to both academic and social school environment.

English Language Development (ELD) Instruction. Students in a METS program receive instruction in English Language Development (ELD) in a multi-grade, all-day, self-contained model. METS teachers must ensure that students are working towards the WIDA standards. They provide instruction aimed at English language development instruction throughout the day as they teach content.

Content Area Instruction. Both federal and state laws require that all students, including ELs, have equal access to grade-level content standards (MSDE, 2019). MCPS recommends the placement of METS students into regular science and social studies classes with appropriate differentiation and scaffolding support for instruction (MCPS, 2020b). All teachers of ELs, including teachers in METS classrooms, must ensure that students are working toward grade-level Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (MCPS, 2020b).

Components of the METS Instructional Program

Elementary METS Instructional Sequence. Appendix A–4 illustrates the instructional sequence recommended for students in the elementary METS program. The instructional sequence for each EL in the METS program is based on Tiers. The curriculum for Tier 1 level METS instruction is aligned with the Grade 2 MCPS curriculum. At the Tier 2 level, instruction is aligned with the Grade 3 curriculum. In addition, the program allows for flexibility for METS students to advance to higher levels when ready.

Instructional Resources. In addition to curricular resources available to all, two elementary METS program sites use a curricular resource called *Imagine Learning* (MCPS, 2019c; Imagine Learning, 2019). *Imagine Learning Language Advantage*TM is an instructional resource that aims to promote rigorous and equitable development of language that accelerates learning across all subjects (Imagine Learning, 2020; MCPS, 2020b).

² Policies and procedures may include exploring special school programs for their children, including choice and magnet programs, understanding Montgomery County Board policies and MCPS regulations and procedures, students' and parents/guardians' rights and responsibilities, due process rights, Multidisciplinary Educational Training and Support (METS), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), the special education services available, and the school system and community programs and assistance.

Assessing the academic progress of METS students. Both federal and state laws require that all students, including ELs, participate in state assessments (MSDE, 2019). The only exemption to the federal and state laws applies to recently arrived ELs, who are exempt from one administration of its reading assessment during the first year of their enrollment in U.S. schools per federal law (MSDE, 2020). MCPS also provides guidance on the assessment of ELs on district-level assessments. Per the 2019–2020 MCPS Elementary ESOL English Language Development Program (ELDP) Staff Handbook, “As of School Year 19–20, ESOL students in Grades K–5 must complete all Evidence of Learning (EOL) classroom, district, and external assessments” (MCPS 2020b, p.11). METS students at the elementary level also are expected to take Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments to enable teachers to monitor student progress in literacy and mathematics (MCPS, 2020b).

Expected Outcomes of the Elementary METS program

ESSA specifies that, at a minimum, any successful EL program must ensure that EL students attain: 1) English proficiency within a reasonable time, and 2) full access to academic grade-level content comparable to their peers, who were never ELs. The logic model in Table 2 illustrates the expected short- and long-term outcomes of the elementary METS program.

Short-term outcomes. The purpose of the METS program is to develop English language proficiency and literacy while providing students with the academic instruction and support needed to help narrow students' educational gaps and facilitate articulation to non-METS classes (MCPS, 2020a). As such, it is expected that students placed in the elementary METS program should: 1) make progress in ELD and content areas, 2) transition from the METS program to receiving the ESOL services at their home school within two years of entering METS, and 3) not exceed a maximum of three years of continuous attendance in a METS program. Appendix A–6 outlines the criteria for exiting the METS program.

Long-term outcomes. The long-term goal of ESOL/Bilingual programs is to help ELs develop high levels of academic English language proficiency within a reasonable period (Appendix A–7). After exiting the METS programs, the ELs with interrupted education continue to receive ESOL services until they achieve the academic English language proficiency specified by MSDE. Appendix A–7 specifies the English Language Proficiency (ELP) minimum growth expectations as stipulated by MSDE. At ELP 4.5 or higher, students exit ESOL services (MCPS, 2020d).

A secondary, related goal of all programs for ELs is to enable students who exit ESOL services or Reclassified ELs to meet the same challenging academic standards on district and state assessments as their non-EL peers (MSDE, 2020).

Table 2

Logic Model for the MCPS Elementary METS Program: Inputs, Outputs/Results, and Anticipated Outcomes

Goal: Develop English language proficiency and literacy and accelerate learning in content areas					
Context/Needs and Issues	Inputs	Outputs/Results		Outcomes	
Rationale for METS	Resources and Structures Instituted	Activities/Structures: What we do/whom we reach?	Participation Metrics/Immediate results	Expected Short-Term Changes	Expected Lasting Changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is new to the United States • Student records show a minimum gap of two consecutive years in school attendance • Student scores are at level 1 or 2 in the WIDA Screener; Tier 1 or 2 on Brigance; FAST MATH Assessment • The student’s age is appropriate for elementary school • The student is functioning at more than three years below grade level in mathematics 	<p>Setting 3 elementary sites</p> <p>Staff 1 FTE METS intake specialist 0.4FTE to 1.2 FTE ESOL teachers (based on enrollment) 3.0 FTE central office, ESOL/METS instructional specialists and supervisor, 1.0 FTE ESOL/METS database specialist 0.75–1.0 FTE Para educators per site for classes >15 3 ESOL transition counselors (1/per site) 3FTE parent community coordinators</p> <p>Instructional resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIDA ELD standards • MCPS standards-based curriculum • Yearly ACCESS for ELLs data 	<p>Professional Development for METS staff School-based staff</p> <p>Processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification screening and assignment to METS sites • Monitor progress • Facilitate the exit of students from METS to home schools • Support from central office <p>Who is reached: Students Families Teachers Schools Administrators at METS sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a longitudinal database of students • Number of students assessed and placed in the METS program • Number and types of PD sessions and supports for METS staff • Number/roles of staff per METS site • Number of students making progress in ELD • Number of students attaining specified EOL benchmarks in reading and mathematics • Number of students exiting METS services to ESOL services at home school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased English language acquisition; movement in ESOL instructional levels • Accelerated performance in academic subjects to the level of age-appropriate grade level • Exit METS within 2 years • Maximum of 3 years of continuous METS program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exit ESOL services within 6 years • Performance on par with grade-level peers in mathematics and literacy after exiting ESOL services

Literature Review

This section presents a review of the literature on EL Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE). Notably, very little research that is specific to elementary school programs serving ELs with interrupted education were located.

EL definition. Close to 4.9 million students in the US public school system are ELs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). The U.S. Department of Education (2017) set expectations that schools will screen students to establish a starting point for ELs based on a student's (1) English proficiency level, (2) grade level, (3) educational background, and (4) language background. Additional screening also is critical for distinguishing ELs with interrupted formal education from other ELs. The Aftunion (2020) estimates that the SIFE student group makes up a relatively small proportion (10 to 20 percent) of recently arrived ELs.

The acronym SLIFE is used interchangeably with SIFE, coined by DeCapua and Marshall (2010), and is widely used in educational literature to describe recently arrived ELs students without age-appropriate formal education and first-language literacy (Browder, 2015; WIDA Consortium, 2015; Fenne, 2017; Morales, Cortada, & Austin, 2015; DeCapua & Marshall, 2010).

Characteristics of ELs with interrupted formal education (SIFE). ELs with interrupted formal education are described as typically illiterate, low literate, or non-literate and may have missed any number of years of schooling or may be entirely unschooled (Browder, 2019). In addition to the limitations in academic content knowledge, ELs with interrupted education also are reported to have minimal academic language and emergent literacy skills in their first language (Miller, 2010; Bigelow & Tarone, 2004). The literature states that an interruption in the formal schooling among ELs with interrupted formal education occurs for reasons including but not limited to migration, natural disasters, civil wars, cultural norms, under-resourced schools, poverty, prejudice, oppression, and geographic isolation. This interruption is more evident among ELs from countries where schools are poorly equipped, teachers are not adequately trained, or schools are not accessible due to geography, economics, and religion. The highest percentage of ELs with interrupted formal education in the United States are from Latin American countries (American Educator, 2020; Browder, 2019; US Department of Education, 2016; NYCSED, 2020; MCPS, 2020a; DeCapua, 2016). Patterns emerging from the research expounded on the wide-ranging profile of ELs with interrupted education. Such characteristics include:

- English learners aged 8 to 21 years.
- Newcomers to the U.S. with two or more years of education interrupted in their native country.
- Inadequate prior exposure to formal schooling characterized by one of the following:
 - No formal schooling.
 - Interruptions in formal schooling, defined as at least two or fewer years of schooling than their age peers.
 - Consistent but limited formal schooling.

- Previous attendance at a school in the U.S., a return to their native country for a period of time, lack of attendance there, and then a return to the U.S.
- Academic function at two or more years below the expected grade level in native language literacy relative to their same-age peers and/or abilities two or more years below the expected grade level in numeracy relative to age peers.
- Elementary-age ELs with interrupted education are not fluent readers in any language and are therefore unable to use academic text independently as a resource to build on their content-area knowledge (NYCSED, 2019; Ontario, gov.ca, 2019).

Depiction of Deficit Profile versus Funds of Knowledge of ELs is incomplete. Much research has stated that the U.S. educational setting values monolingual English proficiency, and central to the SIFE profile is a composite of deficits in ELs with interrupted education—gaps, low-level education. These educators have expressed concerns with operationalizing ELs with interrupted education because their educational outcomes are more variable than assumed and such constructs often exclude the fact that most SIFE are educationally resilient (Browder, 2019; Kibler & Valdes, 2016). The SIFE definition also obscures the competences the ELs with interrupted education bring to school, including the potential for bi-/multilingualism. Indeed, many anecdotal and media reports highlight that ELs with interrupted formal education possess rich backgrounds, skills, and assets that they can contribute to the school setting. Educators are urged to view ELs through the funds of knowledge concept—the knowledge, skills, and experiences acquired through the historical and cultural interactions of an individual in their community, family life, and culture through everyday living that ELs with interrupted education them bring to school (IGI Global, 2020; Browder, 2019). For many ELs with interrupted education, these skills are often not recognized, valued, or capitalized upon in standard education systems.

Benefits in teaching ELs with Interrupted Formal Education. A study by Doyle et al. (2016) conducted in Canada with an emerging population of newcomers, focused on the perspectives of a variety of educators regarding their experiences with newcomers in their classrooms. Participants provided the potential benefits of working with newcomer students and their families. School administrators and classroom teachers in the study cited the importance of the presence of newcomer students in offering other children the opportunity to develop an understanding of the diversity of the world outside their localized settings. The study found that the benefits to children were reciprocal—the newcomer student learned from inclusion in the classroom context, while the other students benefitted from the newcomer students. In addition, teachers mentioned the opportunity to learn about new cultures and therefore learn to respect people from these cultures. Furthermore, teachers reported feelings of satisfaction with working with their students, stating that the students were very motivated, which is very rewarding for a teacher.

Challenges with documenting interruptions in formal schooling. Educators face many challenges in establishing a composite profile of an EL with interrupted education. The typical first step in identifying ELs with interrupted education is the administration of a survey regarding a student's home language and screening as described earlier (MCPS, 2020; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Intake interviews and assessments are conducted to assess the individual's English language

proficiency and content knowledge. However, defining interrupted education can be problematic. Unlike the school calendars in the US, academic school year calendars in many countries are much shorter and track calendar years. Therefore, some students who were continuously enrolled in school may appear to have interruptions in their education because of the start of their school calendars (WIDA, 2015; Browder, 2019). In addition, student records and report cards are not necessarily comparable in structure to typical report cards with which US educators are familiar. Even if transcripts from the native country are available, attendance is often not documented, and the nature and scope of the curriculum in country of origin from documentation in the intake records. Therefore, even though student intake records are important to the screening process, they can be unreliable or insufficient indicators of interrupted formal education.

Validating the gaps in education and content knowledge beyond English language proficiency. Educators in the United States often use facility with the English language as the proxy indicator for identifying schooling gaps; since a) outside the US, English is taught as an academic subject and b) ELs with interrupted education tend to be at lower English proficiency levels than other ELs (DeCapua et al., 2010). Indeed, distinguishing ELs who are beginning to learn English (beginners) and ELs with interrupted education is a challenge to many educators who often equate minimal English language skills with interrupted education. As such, measuring only the predominant use of English to classify and confirm interrupted education among ELs' is considered problematic. On its own, low English language, literacy does not correlate with schooling gaps or missing years of schooling (Tarone, 2010). When the study controlled for ELP, persistent lower academic performance among SIFEs was strongly linked to previously undetected gaps in formal schooling. The finding revealed that, even when ELs with interrupted education eventually developed greater English language skills, schooling gaps continued to result in continuous lower academic achievement.

Most research on ELs with interrupted education is primarily focused on teenagers. The search for information on elementary school programs that provide detailed information as related to 1) starting point, 2) instructional models, and 3) monitoring and follow-up of elementary age ELs with interrupted education as they transition to the mainstream classroom, yielded minimal results. This may be because many school districts start identifying SIFEs after Grade 6 (Minnesota State Department, 2020). Only two school districts with the information related to this sub-section were located.

Boston Public Schools (BPS). The BPS (2016) lists on the district's website an example of a program designed for elementary-level ELs with interrupted education called the High-Intensity Literacy Training (HILT). The HILT program model applies to any newcomer ELs who are age nine or older, score at ELD level 1 or 2, are at least two years behind their grade-level peers in native language literacy, and have limited or interrupted formal schooling (Boston, PSC, 2019). New students participating in the HILT program receive intensive literacy instruction and age-appropriate core content instruction in the native language. Upon exiting HILT (exit criteria not provided), students can enter a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) program. Delivered in English,

the students in the SEI program receive English language instruction from qualified teachers who teach academic English for ELD Level 1 to 3 ELs from mixed linguistic backgrounds.

Ontario, Canada. Another model that benefits elementary-age ELs with interrupted education is the example of a school district in Ontario, Canada (Ontario, gov.ca, 2019). The model provides students time to adjust to the culture shock by providing a welcoming environment. The newcomer students arrive with gaps in formal schooling. The Ontario district is intentional and determined that their ELs with interrupted education must cover material from approximately two academic years each year to catch up with their grade-level peers. Therefore, a modified instructional program is developed for each new ELs with interrupted education collaboratively by both the classroom teacher and the support teacher with English as Second Language (ESL)/ELD qualifications. The students then work with the support teacher, classroom teacher, and their classmates. This interaction among students is intended to help facilitate the adjustment of ELs with interrupted education to the school culture. Scheduled time with classmates also encourages inclusion within peer groups.

Aspects of Promising and Effective Programming for ELs with Interrupted Education.

The most effective program for ELs with interrupted education incorporate most of the following characteristics.

Use of a Multilingual SIFE screener. Many school districts are adopting the use of a multilingual test screener. The report from a multilingual screener, available in most languages, can identify grade level (3 through 9) performance profiles of students according to the literacy skills and abilities standards of the home country (Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener, 2020; NYSED.gov, 2020). New York, for example, uses a multilingual SIFE screener to inform teachers and administrators of the home language literacy skills and mathematics of newcomer EL students when they begin schooling (NYSED.gov, 2020).

Parent notification within a reasonable time. Ideally, notifying parents about their child's English language proficiency level (ELP) level, assessment results, and designation as ELs with interrupted education should be completed within two weeks and, to the extent possible, in a language that the parents can understand (U.S. Department of Education, 2016; NYSED.gov, 2011; 2015).

Course scheduling. To accommodate the needs of ELs with interrupted education, a master schedule that includes the extended time during summer is needed to ensure sufficient resources, appropriate teacher assignments, and proper course placement (Custodio & O'Loughlin, 2020).

Integrating language instruction across content areas. Given that many SIFE students need to build their literacy and academic skills due to their inconsistent schooling experience, schools must integrate language instruction into all subject areas (Marshall, DeCapua, & Antolini, 2010).

Small class sizes. The common thread among the models and formats of programs designed for ELs with interrupted education is the effectiveness of small classes (Custodio & O’Loughlin, 2017; U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2016). Small classes are essential in order to provide 1) support for both academic and socio-emotional growth, 2) an intensive skill focus, and 3) appropriately scaffold instructional strategies.

Creating an inclusive environment/avoiding unnecessary segregation. The guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education (2016) provide caution for educators regarding the placement of ELs in programs that contain a degree of segregation. The guidelines state that a Local Education Agency (LEA) should ensure the following:

- (1) a necessary degree of segregation in the program to achieve the goals of an educationally sound and effective program,
- (2) ELs’ comparable access to the standard curriculum within a reasonable period, and
- (3) the same range and level of extracurricular activities and additional services among ELs as non-EL students.

Ongoing professional learning for teachers of ELs, content-area teachers, and administrators. Professional development designed to enhance the ability of teachers, principals, and other school leaders is a critical input to ensuring an optimal instructional program for ELs (US Department, of Education, 2016). Such professional development should on ongoing and:

- designed to improve the instruction and assessment of ELs;
- designed to enhance the ability understand and implement curricula, assessment practices and measures, and instructional strategies for English learners;
- effective in increasing children's English language proficiency or substantially increasing the subject matter knowledge, teaching knowledge, and teaching skills of such teachers;
- of sufficient intensity and duration (which shall not include activities such as one-day or short-term workshops and conferences) to have a positive and lasting impact on the teachers' performance in the classroom.

PD related to ELs with interrupted education. To be effective, teachers of ELs need in depth understanding of the beliefs, values, norms, and ways of thinking and learning among ELs with interrupted education (DeCapua, 2016). Moreover, DeCapua and several other researchers recommend the use of culturally responsive instructional models like the Mutually Adaptive Learning Paradigm (MALP) to build staff capacity and use students’ strengths during instruction (DeCapua, 2011, 2013; DeCapua & Marshall, 2015). MALP constitutes a major shift in perspective, from instruction focusing on student deficits to what they bring with them to their new educational setting (MALP, 2020).

Social services and counseling are essential. Research emphasizes the need to design an instructional program that integrates a support system that can address not only the academic but also complex social and emotional concerns of ELs (Callahan, 2013; NYSED.gov, 2019). Attention to the socio-emotional health needs of ELs with interrupted education helps set high expectations for ELs with interrupted education and also encourages positive attitudes toward education and motivates them to pursue future success via continued learning. Being behind in language and content knowledge relative to their age peers poses great challenges for students and schools. Frustrations with academic delays, a lack of familiarity with the US and school culture, and isolation in school pose additional challenges for ELs with interrupted education. Research shows that when students, and ELs with interrupted education in particular, do not get the support they require in school, they eventually drop out (NYSED.gov, 2016). In addition to working with adults, creating structures and experiences for peer support during the school day is very effective in order to increase students' sense of belonging. Peers also act as role models for new students, reducing the feeling of being overwhelmed by a new setting, a new language, and the academic demands of the U.S. educational system (Sánchez, Espinet, & Seltzer, 2014). Therefore, many schools utilize a system in which they pair newcomers with other students who speak their languages and others who speak English with or without similar backgrounds and experiences.

Scope of Evaluation

This evaluation pursued the following objectives: 1) to examine how the elementary METS program is being implemented, 2) to examine student growth in ELD and content areas, and 3) to identify areas for improvement.

Methodology

Study Design

A non-experimental, multi-method design was applied in this study. The data collection methods included document review, compilation and analysis of information from institutional databases (i.e., METS program records, enrollment, and achievement data), a METS questionnaire for each of the three elementary sites, and surveys of past and current METS teachers.

ESSA recommends the use of longitudinal data as the only convincing way to assess the success of any EL program (ESSA, 2019). Therefore, to examine the contribution of the elementary METS program to students' growth in ELD and progress in the content areas, a longitudinal, entry-year cohort study design was applied. That is, any analysis of student growth was based on year of entry, and each group was followed over time. During the first step, changes in English language development levels from the year of entry to the most current data available for the student were examined. The second step examined the extent to which the students who started in an elementary

METS program attained the 2020 mathematics, and English language arts (ELA) measures specified in the Evidence of Learning (EOL) framework (ESSA, 2019; MCPS, 2020e).

Evaluation Questions

This evaluation was guided by the following questions:

1. How is the METS program implemented at the elementary level?
 - a. What is the structure of the elementary METS program at the program and site level?
 - b. How is the planning of instruction for students in the METS program coordinated at the school and county levels?
 - c. What instructional resources are the METS sites using to accelerate ELD/language acquisition and student learning in the content areas?
2. What are the demographic characteristics of Students in the Elementary METS Program from 2015 to 2020?
3. To what extent are ELs who started in the elementary METS program making progress in academic English language skills?

What percentage of students showed growth in English language acquisition and movement in ESOL instructional levels?

 - a. To what extent are the ELs with interrupted formal education students meeting the METS program exit criteria?
4. To what extent are ELs who started in the elementary METS program attaining the EOL measures in literacy and mathematics?
5. What factors facilitate or hinder the optimal implementation of the METS program?

Study Sample

Three different samples were used in this study.

Student sample. The student sample comprised of 298 identified as ELs with interrupted formal education and were eligible for, or placed in, an elementary METS site since the 2015–2016 school year.

METS Site-level questionnaire sample. This sample included staff respondents from the three METS elementary school sites—Leleck, Shriver, and South Lake.

Program staff survey sample. The sample for the METS program staff survey comprised current and past METS program staff members, including teachers at METS sites.

Measures and Data Sources

To examine the implementation status of the elementary METS program, data were gathered from many sources, including the METS site-level questionnaire, notes from meetings with stakeholders, and a survey of past and current METS classroom teachers. The following paragraphs describe the data sources and measures used to address the evaluation questions in this study.

METS program records and student information. Records of students identified as ELs with interrupted formal education and enrolled in the elementary METS program since 2015 included the following aspects:

- Currently enrolled in METS
- Currently enrolled in ESOL after exiting METS
- Exited ESOL recently (within 2 years)/ Redesignated ELs (RELL)
- Exited ESOL services more than 2 years ago

Records of the length of time from entry to exit from the elementary METS program and ESOL services included the following:

- Duration in METS—Number of days between the METS Entry Date and METS Exit Date
- Duration in ESOL after METS services—Number of days between METS Exit Date and exit date for ESOL instruction
- Duration in ESOL since enrolling in MCPS

Student enrollment records. This included demographic information and special services receipt status.

Student achievement data. The data regarding English language assessments included:

- WIDA Screener scores. Entry-level reading and mathematics derived from the English language proficiency assessment (ELPA) administered to English learners (ELs) in Grades K through 12 upon their entry into the school system.
- ACCESS for ELs scores. Use of the spring score/ based on End-of-Year status from 2015 to 2019. This English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) is administered to English learners (ELs) annually during a testing window in the second semester. This measurement assesses the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. ACCESS for ELLs is administered annually to students from kindergarten through Grade 12 to monitor students' progress in learning academic English.

District measures in math and literacy. These included records of students attaining the classroom, district, and state assessments as specified in the MCPS Evidence of Learning (EOL) Framework (Appendix A–5).

- Mathematics – Measures of Academic Progress in Math (MAP-M)
- Literacy – Measures of Academic Progress in Reading (MAP-R)

Stakeholder Experiences

Survey data were collected via a web-based survey system. Three instruments were developed in collaboration with staff from OTLS-CIP. Staff members from the three offices who implemented components of METS reviewed the METS program staff survey for content and face validity.

METS – Site-level Questionnaire. In January 2020, principals at the three elementary METS sites were asked to send a link to the METS-site level questionnaire to staff members. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit a comprehensive and shared description of enrolled students, program features, staffing levels, curriculum, and other instructional resources used in METS classes. Information on the METS typical schedule, strengths, and implementation challenges at each of the three sites also was collected on the questionnaire. A site questionnaire was chosen over conducting interviews primarily to elicit information in a more systematic and standardized way, involving more staff members in the process. In addition, the use of a survey provided the METS site staff with sufficient time to think collaboratively through the questions and cite relevant school documentation to confirm or supplement their responses. The site-level staff was instructed to complete the site-level questionnaire as a team to capture as much detail as possible. Staff members at each site submitted a questionnaire.

Survey of past and present METS program staff. An email distribution list of past and present METS program staff from three offices—CIP, Student and Family Support and Engagement, and the International Admissions and Enrollment office—was created using information that CIP provided and a web-based MCPS staff directory. A link to the survey was sent to each staff member (February to March 2020). The METS program staff survey was intended to gather information on the experiences of METS staff members with implementing various components of the METS program. At the request of CIP staff, the survey remained open until mid-April to provide opportunity for more principals to respond, and bi-weekly reminders were sent through email. Twenty-seven of 40 possible staff members completed the survey, for a response rate of 68 percent. The respondents comprised a variety of staff members who either currently work or previously worked in the implementation of the METS program. The survey respondents included ESOL transition counselors, past and current METS classroom teachers, METS intake specialists, past and present administrators of the METS program (for example, instructional specialists, coordinators, or supervisors), and the parent community coordinators. Other staff members surveyed included ESOL teachers, database administrators, testing assessors, ESOL instructional coaches, and ESOL team leaders.

Data and Analysis Procedures

Evaluation questions 1, 2, and 5. To address evaluation questions 1, 2, and 5, quantitative data was summarized from the MCPS METS program records, reviews of the ESOL program documents, and surveys of program staff. Furthermore, an analysis of the content of responses to open-ended survey questions was conducted to identify themes and categories that reflect the a) structure and components of the METS program at each site, b) successful aspects of METS, c) challenges to implementation, and d) changes needed to make the program more effective and efficient. Patterns

of evidence were drawn about the structure, successes, and challenges in open-ended responses to provide relevant insights about the METS program. Because there are three METS sites, the reporting of the salient themes from the content analyses of the site-level questionnaire represents an aggregate of responses rather than the number of respondents who provided particular responses.

Evaluation questions 3 and 4. To address question 3, data were compiled from the official ESOL student data files and METS program records. Summary statistics were used to examine changes in ESOL instructional levels from the year of entry to the most recent records on file as of October 2019. In addition, the number of students who had completed the METS program requirements by year of entry was examined, along with the number who had exited ESOL services, and the average number of days in the METS program. Because of the limited ACCESS for ELLs data at hand and small sample size, anticipated analyses was not conducted of 1) the annual change in ELP levels, 2) whether the growth had met the expected annual growth targets, and 3) significant differences among cohorts of students.

To address question 4, the percentage of students who attained the 2019–2020 mathematics and English language arts (ELA) measures specified in the Evidence of Learning (EOL) framework was computed, by year of entry and by grade level. Anticipated analyses of performance in mathematics and reading using MAP data were not completed, because the data for the ELs with interrupted formal education from 2015 to 2020 were insufficient.

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of the study include the use of information gathered from multiple stakeholders and different sources that triangulate the findings in the study. In addition, the data collection tools were developed and revised in collaboration with staff working with or familiar with the METS program to ensure the content-related validity of the surveys.

The main limitation in this study is that longitudinal data suitable for examining yearly growth in English proficiency and achievement in content areas were not available. The exploration of the MAP-R, MAP-M, and ACCESS for EL data showed that very few of the 298 students in the sample had data on these assessments and those who had data did not have them for consecutive years. Therefore, the researchers did not complete the anticipated analysis of annual growth in English proficiency levels and whether the students in the sample were meeting targets (in either ELD or content areas). In addition, due to school-building closures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the researchers did not complete the intended site visits to debrief with staff members at the site and follow up on the information elicited from the site questionnaires. As such, the study could not probe further and accord the site level staff opportunity to elaborate on their responses.

Because the data was collected before March 2020, the data in this report do not include information on how virtual learning was implemented for the students in the METS sites. In addition, the information on the experiences of students and parents/guardians was outside the scope of this study.

Results

The results are organized by the evaluation questions.

Question 1. How is the METS program implemented at the elementary level?

This section includes a summary of the information collected from the METS site questionnaire. Where applicable, information from METS program records, program staff survey, notes from meetings with stakeholders, enrollment data, and other MCPS documentation also are included.

Structure and Scope of the Elementary METS Program at District Level

Coordination of the elementary METS program. As described in the background section, the elementary METS program has three complementary components supported by staff members in different roles and is housed and supervised by three separate offices:

1. Screening and Placement (International Admissions and Enrollment Office)
2. Instructional (CIP)
3. Socioemotional Support (International Admissions and Enrollment Office, and Office of Student and Family Support and Engagement)

METS program staff and responsibilities

One item on the program staff survey asked respondents to indicate their role and their responsibilities with the elementary METS program. The 27 respondents identified themselves in these categories:

1. Current METS teacher (past and current)
2. METS Intake staff (past and present)
3. ESOL transition counselor (current)
4. Administrator [Instructional specialist, coordinator, supervisor] (past and current)
5. Parent community coordinator (past and current)
6. Classroom teacher-General education support staff

The METS program staff, housed in the three offices, reported having some distinct as well as overlapping responsibilities in their work with the elementary METS program (Table 3). The reported duties are grouped by the three components of the METS program, and a fourth category comprises administrative responsibilities.

Table 3

Responsibilities with Elementary METS Program Reported by Program Staff, by Role

Responsibilities specified on the survey	<i>Intake staff</i>	<i>Current Administrator*</i>	<i>METS teacher</i>	<i>ESOL transition counselor</i>	<i>Parent community coordinator</i>	<i>Past Administrator</i>
Screening and Placement						
Administering initial assessments for ELs with interrupted education (e.g., WIDA Screener Assessment, Brigance, FAST MATH)	Yes	--	Yes	--	--	Yes
Supporting process for mainstreaming	--	Yes	Yes	Yes	--	Yes
Program records	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
Determining a students' potential for identification as having interrupted education status	--	Yes	Yes	Yes	--	Yes
Preparing documentation/packets on ELs with interrupted education for schools	Yes	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
Socioemotional Support						
Bilingual counselling		--	--	Yes	--	--
Parent outreach/supporting families	Yes	--	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Instruction						
Instruction (teacher)	--	--	Yes	--	--	--
Intake of ELs with interrupted education	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
Instruction (para educator)	Yes	--	--	--	--	--
Data entry/preparing program records/maintaining databases	Yes	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
Implementing IEPs for ELs with interrupted education	--	--	--	--	--	--
Exiting students from METS	Yes	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
Administration						
Evaluating METS teachers	--	--	--	--	--	Yes
Providing professional learning sessions for teachers in the METS program	--	Yes	--	Yes	--	Yes
Providing professional learning sessions for staff in the METS program	--	Yes	--	Yes	--	Yes
Assigning identified students to METS sites	Yes	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
Maintaining METS rosters and databases	Yes	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
Participating in End-of-Year METS stakeholder meetings	--	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Responsibilities reported by central office administrators. The administrative staff—made up of the instructional specialist, coordinator, and supervisor—reported that they were responsible for the following:

- administering initial assessments for ELs with interrupted education (e.g., WIDA Screener Assessment, Brigance, and FAST Math);
- maintaining METS rosters and databases;
- providing professional learning sessions for teachers in the METS program;
- providing professional learning sessions for staff in the METS program; and
- determination/making decisions for mainstreaming.

Difference in responsibilities reported by past and current central office administrators. The data in Table 3 also revealed differences in the responsibilities reported by those who identified as past and current central office administrators in relation to the elementary METS program. This finding may be indicative of the changes that followed the restructuring of the ESOL/bilingual programs in 2015. This finding also could explain the reports from the site questionnaire and survey sections in which respondents explained that they did not know whom to contact if they had questions, and their job responsibilities were unclear. Respondents to the staff survey also noted that the guidelines for the implementation of the METS program were vague and inconsistent across offices.

METS Teacher/Instructional Staff. The responsibilities of the METS teachers' responsibilities span students' METS experience, from initial enrollment to time the students exit the program (Table 3).

In addition to providing direct instruction, the data showed that the METS classroom teachers were involved in virtually every aspect of the METS program that concerns students. These processes included intake, mainstreaming decisions, facilitating articulation to middle school, parent/guardian outreach and family support, data and administrative responsibilities, and participating in weekly collaborative planning meetings.

ESOL counselors. ESOL counselors reported that they support the students in the METS sites in a variety of ways, including bilingual counseling, professional learning sessions for METS staff, determining students' potential for interrupted education status, and mainstreaming decisions (Table 5).

Parent community coordinators. As reported, parent community coordinators' roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the elementary METS program include: 1) participating in end-of-year METS stakeholder meetings and 2) supporting families and involvement in parent/guardian outreach.

Community partnerships. The METS sites have a variety of community partners to help support newcomer ELs and SIFEs. These partnerships include local churches, after-school programs, music programs that include METS students, monthly family markets, Audubon Society, Linkages to Learning, Manna Food, Excel Beyond the Bell, the BELL program, and the Strathmore Project.

Screening of ELs with Interrupted Education

Entry-Level Skills and Instructional Needs of ELs with Interrupted Education. By design, the METS is a program for ELs with interrupted education, with a demonstrable 2- to 3-year gap in learning relative to same-age peers. Table 4 summarizes the ESOL entry-level assessment data in reading and mathematics for ELs approved for the METS program from 2015 to 2020. These data confirm that the students had 2- to 3-year learning gaps relative to MCPS expectations when compared with same-age peers.

ESOL entry level. Nearly all students assigned to Grades 3 (96%), 4 (99%), or 5 (96%) started as beginners or at ESOL instructional Level 1 indicating that they were beginning to learn English in MCPS (Table 4).

Entry-level reading tier. Based on the Brigance screening assessment data, nearly all of the students approved for the elementary METS program were performing at Tier 1 or 2 in reading (Table 4). The entry-assessment reading levels further corroborate that these performance levels correspond to pre-K or fall kindergarten pre-reading behaviors typically demonstrated by 5-year-olds (see Appendix A–3). Information from the site level questionnaire further elaborated that that students joined the METS program with a lack of many skills in the native language: reading foundational skills, which includes one-to-one correspondence, phonemic awareness, letter recognition, and/or lack of writing abilities.

Writing. Entry-level data in the area of writing was not captured for a majority of the students because they have minimal emergent writing skills in their first language and or English.

Table 4*Entry-Level Tiers in Reading for Students When Entering METS*

Entry-Level Tier/Reading Level		Entry Grade					
		3		4		5	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
ESOL Entry Level	1	102	96.2	94	98.9	22	95.7
	2	4	3.8	0	0.0	1	4.3
	3	0	0.0	--	1.1	0	0.0
Entry Reading Tier	No data	12	10.5	14	12.3	4	20.4
	1	67	54.5	50	43.9	8	32.0
	2	32	26.0	39	34.2	7	28.0
	Above	12	9.8	12	10.5	5	20.0
Entry Assessment Reading Level	No data	13	10.5	14	111.3	6	24
	0A	46	37.4	14	12.3	2	8.0
	0B	3	2.4	1	0.9	1	4.0
	1A	5	4.1	4	3.5	0	0.0
	1B	11	8.9	26	22.8	5	20.0
	2A	23	18.7	21	18.4	1	4.0
	2B	11	8.9	22	19.3	3	12.0
	3A	6	4.9	1	0.9	1	4.0
	3B	3	2.4	3	2.6	2	8.0
	4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	4.0
	5	1	0.8	4	3.5	3	12.0
	6	2	1.6	5	4.4	1	4.0
	Entry Assessment Writing	No data	85	69.1	81	71	22	88
0		10	8.1	8	7.0	1	4.0
1		11	8.9	11	9.6	0	0.0
2		11	8.9	8	7.0	0	0.0
3		1	0.8	2	1.8	1	4.0

Entry-level mathematics competences. Based on scores from FAST MATH screening assessments, nearly all students entered the METS program at Tier 1 level in mathematics or their skills were equivalent to Grade 1 or lower (Table 5). Unlike the reading, the site staff reported that the ELs with interrupted education have a wide range of skills in mathematics when they enroll and that most students came in with a substantial experience with addition and subtraction. However, the students had limited knowledge of computation using number sense and with multiplication. In addition, most did not demonstrate test-taking skills. Their skills rely on memorization instead of number sense, which makes it very challenging to keep up in mathematics, as the demands of the grade level standards get harder.

Table 5*Entry-Level Tiers in Mathematics by METS site*

Entry Level Tier/skills		Entry Grade					
		3		4		5	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Entry Math Tier	1	118	95.9	96	84.2	24	96.0
	2	5	4.1	18	15.8	1	4.0
Entry Assessment Math Level	0.0	39	31.7	17	14.9	5	20.0
	0.5	3	2.4	2	1.8	1	4.0
	1	23	18.7	27	23.7	5	20.0
	1.0	47	38.2	45	39.5	10	40.0
	1.5	5	4.1	2	1.8	1	4.0
	2.0	2	1.6	3	2.6	1	4.0
	2.0	4	3.3	17	14.9	2	8.0
	2.5	0	0.0	1	0.9	0	0.0

Changes observed instructional needs of ELs with interrupted education over time. Through an opened-ended item on the site-level questionnaire, staff members from two sites reported that they had observed differences in academic skills of incoming ELs as well as increased socioemotional needs among their students. The following verbatim comments describe the greater variation in the range of academic skills from student to student:

- *In the same classroom, you might have a student who never went to school and a student who went to school, but he/she is not on grade level and on paper shows a two-year interruption.*
- *Some children started school late; others did not complete a grade before coming to the U.S., etc.*
- *Academic levels fluctuate greatly depending on the years.*
- *These differences complicate academic programming but also increase socio-emotional issues in the classroom.*
- *A child who has limited exposure to school and peers function at a very different level than children who have been socializing and learning at the same time.*

Features of the METS Instructional Program

Staffing levels for the elementary METS classrooms. The data from the METS site questionnaire showed that staffing levels at elementary METS sites align with MCPS criteria for allocating staff (Table 6). For example, Leleck has 1 METS teacher and 1.0 FTE paraeducator for 24 students, and Shriver has 1 METS teacher and 1.25 FTE paraeducator for 26 students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 South Lake, with 32 students, has two METS teachers and 2.0 FTE paraeducators. Both Leleck and South Lake reported that they have one teacher with bilingual education certification and/or dual certification in ESOL/pre-K–6 content (Leleck) among their staff. All three METS sites reported that the staff for their METS classrooms are selected through an interview process.

Table 6*Staffing Levels and Credentials of METS Staff Reported on Site Questionnaire*

<u>Number /credentials</u>	<u>Leleck</u>	<u>South Lake</u>	<u>Shriver</u>
<u>Total number of teachers assigned to the METS program by MCPS.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Number of teachers with a bilingual education certification.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Number of METS teachers who speak languages other than English.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Total number of FTE teachers</u>	<u>1.0 FTE</u>	<u>2.0 FTE</u>	<u>1.25 FTE</u>
<u>Number of bilingual teacher assistants /paraprofessionals</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Number of dually certified teachers, Pre-k–6 content.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Languages that METS staff speak in addition to English.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Non-English languages represented among students on site.</u>	<u>Spanish, Arabic, Tigrinya</u>	<u>Spanish</u>	<u>Spanish, Portuguese, Amharic</u>

Adjustments sites made to staffing to meet student needs. When asked how their school adjusts staffing (within school) to meet the needs of the students in the METS program, open-ended responses varied by site. Staff at Shriver reported that they: 1) assigned one of their focus teachers to support English Language Development during the English Language Arts block and, 2) increased the number of paraeducators to support the program. Staff at Leleck reported that they adjust staffing in-house to meet the demands of the METS program as needed. During the recruitment phase, Leleck aimed to select candidates for the METS program who bring expertise to the school community as a whole. In that regard, for the 2019–2020 school year, the school added a full-time dually certified teacher to teach alongside the METS teacher. Having a dually certified teacher working with the METS students allowed the English Language Arts teacher to organize two groups of students throughout the day. This enables the assigned METS teacher at Leleck to teach math, science, social studies, and health to two groups of students throughout the day, departmentalized by tier. In addition, at Leleck, a third ESOL teacher supports language development of the students in the METS classrooms in a small group setting daily.

Instructional focus. In line with the intended goals of METS, responses from the METS site questionnaire indicated that the instructional foci at each of the three elementary METS sites was English language development (ELD), accelerated learning in the content areas, and cross-cultural orientation for the United States (Table 7). In addition, the three sites reported that reading interventions were a key focus of the METS classrooms. Another area of instructional focus for Leleck was socioemotional learning—the counseling staff at Leleck indicated that they provide

bi-weekly lessons to help the socio-emotional learning of their students. None of the METS sites reported a focus on study skills.

Table 7

Instructional Focus by METS Site

Instructional Focus	Leleck	Sargent Shriver	South Lake
English language development	✓	✓	✓
Accelerating learning in content areas	✓	✓	✓
Cross-cultural orientation to United States	✓	✓	✓
Reading intervention	✓	✓	✓
“Other”- socioemotional learning	✓	--	--
Study skills	--	--	--

Note. Respondents could check all the instructional foci that applied to their site.

Planning and Coordination of Instruction for ELs with Interrupted Education

When asked to describe how the planning of instruction for students in the METS program is coordinated among the staff at their school, the responses varied in the details provided by each site (Table 8). The staff reported that their METS teachers collaborate with specialist and general education during planning; and they have access to same resources as non-METS teachers.

Table 8

Instructional planning practices reported by staff at each school.

METS site	Practices described	Other staff collaboration
South Lake	use same resources as non-METS classes	--
Shriver	METS teacher plans with Grade 4 team, including general education, ESOL, and special education teachers	METS teacher plans with the focus teacher assigned to support English Language Arts The paraeducators assigned to support the METS classroom.
Leleck	METS teacher meets with content specialist, ESOL teacher and team leader weekly METS students have access to the grade-level materials being created at the third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade levels	METS co-teachers collaborate regularly to adapt instruction Hold quarterly planning days to complete long-range planning that accounts for the content and skills to be taught at all three grade levels

Curriculum and Other Instructional Resources Used in METS Classrooms

Each of the three METS sites reported the use of the MCPS 2.0 or the new Benchmark Advance ELA curricula, and the associated grade-level CCSS as the basis for all the instructional planning in the METS classes (Table 10). Specifically, Shriver reported the use of the Benchmark Advance English Language Arts (ELA) for Grade 3, Ready Common Core Math Curriculum for Grades 3–5; and science, social studies, and health (Grade 3) for instruction to METS students. Both Leleck and Shriver reported the use of a variety of resources to support the literacy development of ELs with interrupted education (Table 9).

For ELD, both Leleck and Shriver reported using *Imagine Learning*. Shriver also uses Benchmark Advance – English Language Development curriculum resources. Both Leleck and Shriver reported using Dreambox to support the learning of mathematics. Shriver also uses iReady Diagnostic lessons for mathematics instruction.

Table 9

Instructional Resources Used in METS Classrooms by METS Site

Content area	Description	METS Site		
		JoAnn Leleck	Sargent Shriver	South Lake
General	MCPS Curriculum 2.0/New MCPS	✓	✓	
	Same curriculum as regular education students - with modifications			✓
	Benchmark Advance English Language Arts (ELA) Third Grade		✓	
	Ready Common Core Math Curriculum Grades 3–5		✓	
	Science, Social Studies, Health (Third Grade)		✓	
English language development	Imagine Learning	✓	✓	
	Benchmark Advance (ELD)		✓	
Mathematics	Dreambox	✓	✓	
	iReady Diagnostic Lessons		✓	
	Benchmark Advance – English Language Development (ELD)		✓	
	Countdown		✓	
	Blast		✓	
	Various website subscriptions (PebbleGo, PebbleGo Next, Capstone, Reading A-Z, Epic) to provide additional resources to our students	✓		
	Variety of guided reading-based texts here at school to support our guided reading program	✓		

Typical Schedule for Students in the Elementary METS Program

The typical instructional daily schedule for METS as reported on the METS site questionnaire is presented in Appendix A–8. Overall, the information shows that the routine schedule in METS

classrooms includes two literacy blocks, one mathematics block, and time devoted to science/social studies and specials. Each school begins the day with a morning meeting or community circle, and the schools vary in their scheduling of whole group, small group, or mainstreamed classes (Appendix A-8).

Socioemotional Support for ELs with Interrupted Education

Needs brought on by trauma and culture shock. In addition to the literacy and numeracy gaps, METS site staff explained that the ELs with interrupted education need more sustained counselor support. ELs with interrupted education often face trauma due to previous experiences prior to coming to the US, limited English skills, and being new to the US. Staff members at the three sites stated that the level of trauma endured or witnessed by the ELs with interrupted education is more extensive than in the past, even for some elementary METS students. Staff members indicated noticing that the more recent arrivals specifically faced dangerous situations before arriving in the United States. Responses from two of the sites specified that some of their students:

- have long histories of abuse, even though they are very young
- have more health/dental issues also are a big concern, as parents/guardians are hesitant to reach out for help (due to fear, misinformation, etc.)
- demonstrate more instances of unstable housing, homelessness, student absences, and transience

How METS sites are addressing the socioemotional needs of students. Data from the site questionnaire and program staff survey pointed out that the bilingual ESOL transition counselors met with the students on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. When a child begins in the METS classroom, they have an initial meeting with the ESOL Transition counselor (ETC) to discuss their experiences in their countries of origin, their journey to the U.S., and adjustment/acclimation. Parents/guardians are contacted by ETC to make a connection and obtain additional information. Resources and referrals are provided to the family if necessary. Other intermittent supports included the school Pupil Personnel Workers (PPW) as well as the school social worker. Students needing additional support are discussed during Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) and Education Management Team meetings. For example, at Shriver, the school-based parent community coordinator meets with students within a lunch bunch to support students, and the METS teacher and ESOL Transition Counselor work together to facilitate Restorative Justice Community Circles in English and Spanish. At Leleck, students have weekly sessions with the ESOL counselor and have access to the school-based counselor assigned to the METS classrooms.

Process to Facilitate Student Transition Out of the METS Program

Notably, with the exception of the Intake staff, program staff in various roles indicated that they 1) participate in End-of-Year METS stakeholder meetings and 2) determine decisions for mainstreaming (Table 5). The staff at the METS sites reported that the stakeholders review multiple data points to determine when students are ready to transition to mainstream classrooms. They view grades, district assessments, testing, history, and input from relevant parties. Eventually, the staff members decide when students are ready to mainstream based on the following criteria:

- The performance of students meets the METS exit/benchmark criteria provided by the METS office
- Demonstrated ability to perform in class
- Command of receptive language
- Independent skills

Following the decision to mainstream, the schools determine the best placement for the student and work with the home schoolteachers to help the student transition. The METS site staff members also reported that they also monitor students' progress to ensure that the students are successful, but it was not clear from the data provided exactly how the follow up is done or which staff members are involved.

Cross-office collaboration to support students' transition from the METS program to the home school or middle school. The METS program staff reported that a variety of staff is involved in the process of transitioning METS students to their home schools or regular classrooms. The staff members include school counselors, the ESOL Counselor Parent Community Coordinators (PCC), Central Office PCC PPW, and the attendance secretary at the receiving schools.

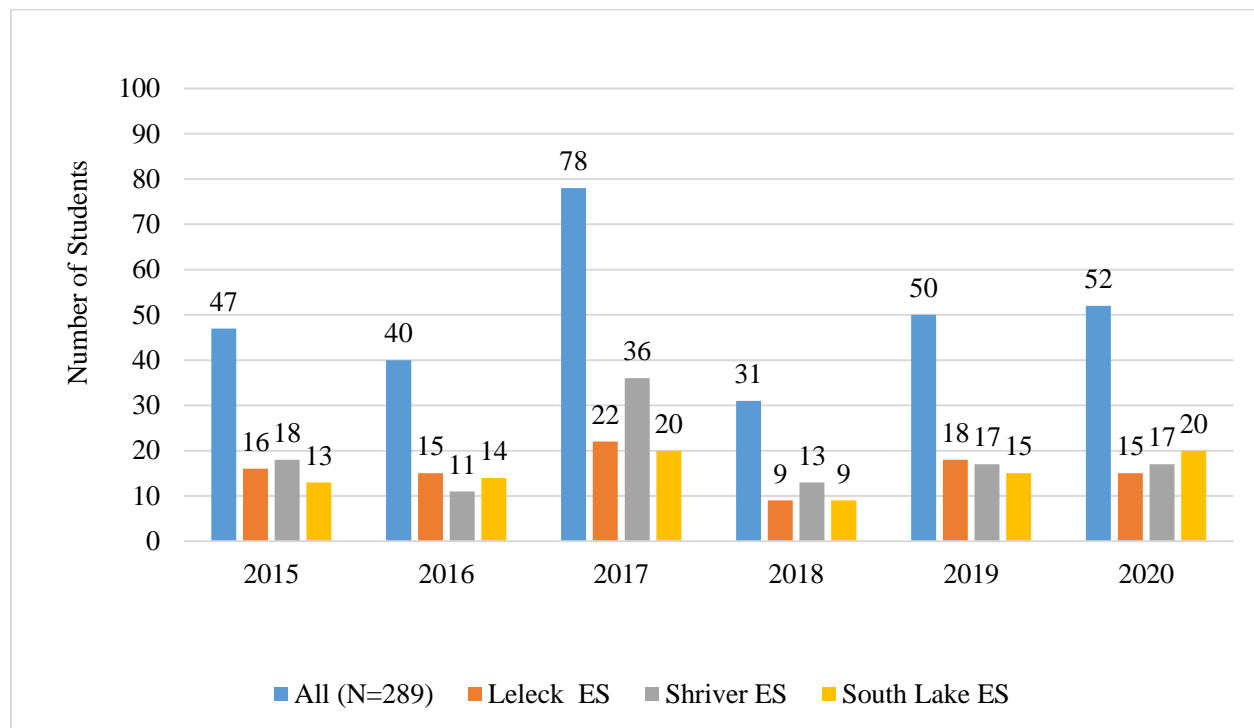
Question 2. What are the demographic characteristics of Students in the Elementary METS Program from 2015 to 2020?

Trends in enrollment ELs with interrupted formal education from 2015 to 2020.

The elementary METS program data and the student information system records included 298 students with interrupted education whose intake dates were between 2015 and 2020. Depending on the year, the number of students assigned to the elementary METS program from 2015 to February 2020 ranged from 31 to 78 per year (Figure 1). Figure 1 also illustrates that the students were not evenly distributed across the METS sites. The primary reason was that each site serves a specified geographical area/number of home schools to facilitate ease of transportation to and from the site. As of 2020, South Lake housed the largest number of METS students. Previously, Shriver housed the largest number of METS students in 2015, 2017, and 2018, and Leleck had the largest number in 2016 and 2019.

Figure 1

Trends in the Number of Students by Year and METS Site



Number of students still in MCPS during SY 2019–2020. Seventy-eight percent or 231 of the 298 students enrolled between 2015 and 2020 still were enrolled in MCPS as of February 2020 (Table 10). The 231 students still at MCPS represent 74 percent, 77 percent, and 82 percent of the students assigned to Leleck, Shriver, and South Lake, respectively (Table 11).

Table 10

Number of Students Enrolled in Elementary METS Program and in MCPS SY during 2019–2020 by Year of Intake

Year of Entry	Number Enrolled	Number in MCPS 2019–2020	% Retention
2015	47	39	83.0
2016	40	25	62.5
2017	78	60	76.9
2018	31	23	74.2
2019	50	38	76.0
2020	52	46	88.5
Total	298	231	77.5

Table 11*Number Still in MCPS SY 2019–2020 by Elementary METS Program Attended*

Elementary METS Site Attended	Number Enrolled	Still in MCPS	% Retention
Leleck ES	95	70	73.7
Shriver ES	112	86	76.8
South Lake ES	91	75	82.4
Total	298	231	77.5

Demographic characteristics

Table 12 presents a summary of the demographic characteristics and special services receipt information as well as their grade at entry and grade during the SY 2019–2020.

Gender. Slightly more than one half of the students were male.

Race/ethnicity. The majority overall and at every school were Hispanic/Latino.

MCPS entry grade level. The data showed that a higher percentage of the elementary level ELs identified with interrupted education started in Grades 3 and 4. Less than 15 percent of students approved for the elementary METS program from 2015 to 2019 started their MCPS journey in Grade 5.

Age of ELs with interrupted formal education at the elementary METS sites. Program staff reported that the age of the students in their METS classes at the three sites ranged from nine to eleven. The lowest age for Grade 3 was nine years old, and the highest age reported for students in both Grades 3 and 4 was ten. The lowest age reported on the site questionnaire for students placed in Grade 5 was ten years old, and the highest was eleven.

Table 12*Demographic Profile of Students in the METS Program by METS Site*

Characteristics		Leleck ES (N=95)		Shriver ES (N=112)		South Lake ES (N=91)	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Not indicated on file	9	9.5	8	7.1	-	1.1
	Female	43	45.3	44	39.3	35	38.5
	Male	43	45.3	60	53.6	55	60.4
Race/Ethnicity	American Indian/Native Alaskan	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Asian	3	4.1	1	1.2	2	2.5
	Black or African American	9	12.3	3	3.5	3	3.7
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	White	0	0	2	2.4	2	2.5
	Hispanic/Latino	61	83.6	79	92.9	74	91.4
	Two or More Races	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
FARMS	Yes	63	87.5	80	94.1	64	80.0
Focus Group	Non-FARMS White/Asian/All Other Student Groups	--	1.4	0	0.0	4	4.9
	Non-FARMS Black or African American	--	1.4	0	0.0	--	2.5
	Non-FARMS Hispanic/Latino	14	19.4	16	19.5	19	23.5
	FARMS White/Asian/All Other Student Groups	--	2.8	3	3.7	--	--
	FARMS Black or African American	8	11.1	--	2.4	--	1.2
	FARMS Hispanic/Latino	46	63.9	61	74.4	55	67.9
Special Education Services	Yes	4	4.2	--	1.8	5	5.5
Grade Entered MCPS	3	34	39.1	50	48.5	40	45.5
	4	42	48.3	40	38.8	39	44.3
	5	11	12.6	11	10.7	7	8.0
Grade 2019–2020*	3	4	5.5	9	10.6	10	12.3
	4	14	19.2	12	14.1	17	21.0
	5	11	15.1	11	12.9	11	13.6
	6	15	20.5	19	22.4	11	13.6
	7	11	15.1	16	18.8	12	14.8
	8	10	13.7	10	11.8	12	14.8
	9	8	11.0	8	9.4	8	9.9

Note. "--" indicates less than three students in these categories. * Specific to only students still enrolled in MCPS.

Special services receipt. Four-fifths or more of the students were receiving Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS), and more than two-thirds were Hispanic/Latino students receiving FARMS services. Fewer than five students at each site had documented evidence of ever having received special education services.

Current/Last grade level. The 231 students still enrolled in MCPS in the 2019–2020 school year were in Grades 3–9, with the highest percentages of the students enrolled in Grades 4 and 6.

Non-English languages of students in the elementary METS program. The non-English languages represented among students were Spanish, Arabic, and Tigrinya at Leleck; Spanish at Shriver; and Spanish, Portuguese, and Amharic at South Lake.

Question 3. To what extent are ELs who started in the elementary METS program progressing in their academic English language skills?

Challenges with examining trends in performance on ACCESS for ELs. As part of this evaluation, there was an intent to summarize the changes in annual growth in English proficiency levels (ELP) using ACCESS for ELs data for each year the students were in MCPS. The exploration of the ACCESS for ELs data revealed that very few of the SIFEs who were assigned to elementary METS sites from 2015 to 2020 had records of ACCESS ELs scores for a given year or for more than one year (Table 13). For example, only 5 of the 47 students who entered METS in 2015 had any scores in 2017, and only 1 of them had ACCESS for ELLs scores for 2019. Of the 31 who enrolled in 2018, 18 had scores for 2018, but only 4 had scores for 2019 administration. Furthermore, after disaggregating the data by grade level, it was found that the number of students with ACCESS for ELs scores for a given year was negligible. As such, there were no longitudinal data suitable for completing the analyses related to yearly changes in English proficiency.

Table 13

Number of SIFE Students Enrolled, Number with Data for ACCESS for ELS Scores by Year: Five Years of Testing

Year Entered METS		ACCESS for ELs Administration Year				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
2015	N enrolled	47	47	47	47	47
	n with data	0	0	5	0	1
	Min	.	.	1.8	.	3.4
	Missing	47	47	42	47	46
2016	N	.	40	40	40	40
	n with data	.	0.	3	6	2
	Missing	.	40	37	34	38
2017	N	.	.	78	78	78
	n with data	.	.	45	7	4
	Missing	.	.	33	71	74
2018	N	.	.	.	31	31
	n with data	.	.	.	19	3
	Missing	.	.	.	12	29
2019	N	.	.	.	.	50
	n with data	.	.	.	.	24
	Missing	.	.	.	.	26

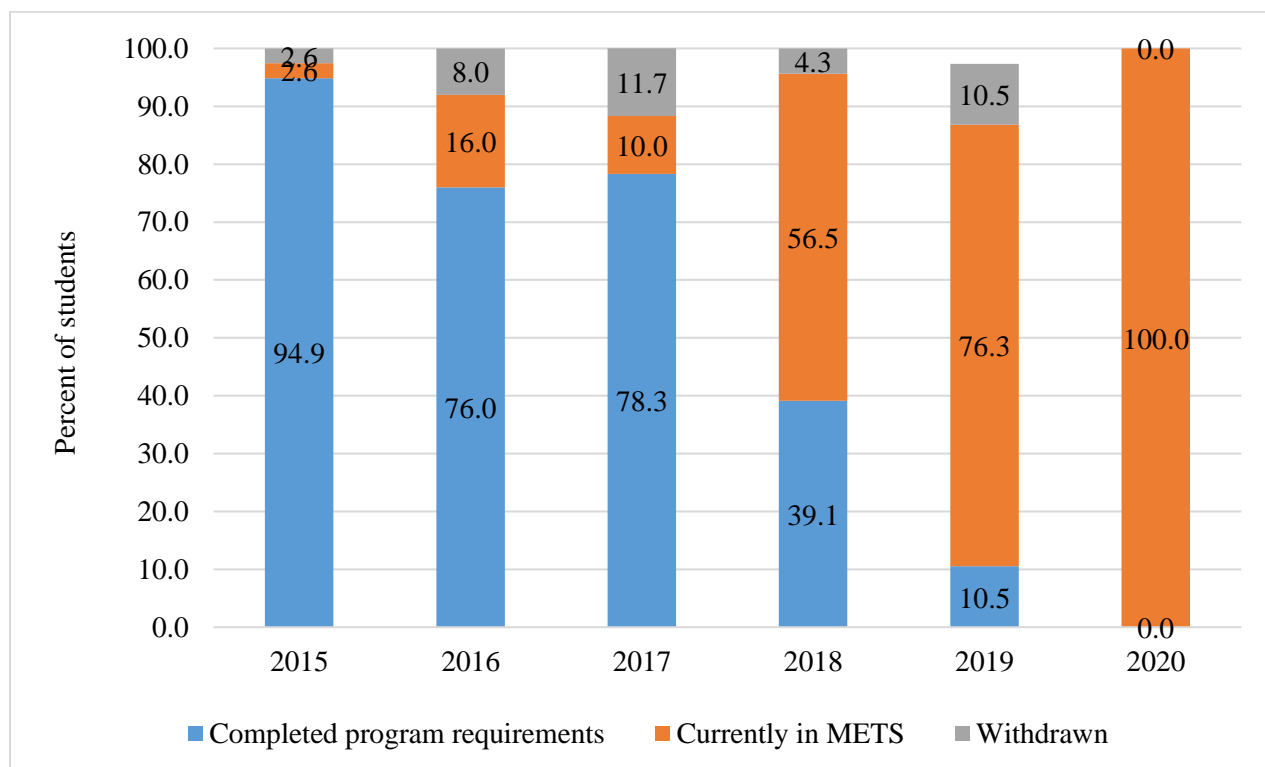
Note: Blank orange cells reflect years before students' enrolled.—no data were available at the time of analysis.

To what extent are students meeting METS program requirements?

Progress toward meeting METS program requirements by Year enrolled in MCPS. The expectation is that students would stay in the METS program for 2 years and a maximum of 3 years, before transitioning to receiving ESOL services in regular classrooms. Nearly all the students who entered elementary METS in 2015 (95%) and the majority of students who enrolled in 2016 (76%) and 2017 (78%) had completed the METS requirements based on curriculum standards, reading, and math assessments (Figure 2; Appendix A–6)³. As would be expected, the students who enrolled in recent years in 2018, 2019, or 2020, had not yet exceeded the maximum three years in the program and were still in the METS program. A small proportion of students from each cohort withdrew from the program or MCPS.

Figure 2

Percentage of Students who Have Completed METS Program Requirements, by Year of Entry



Duration in the METS program. Ideally, students would transition from the METS program within two years or 730 instructional days as specified in guidelines for METS program and not be continuously enrolled for longer than three years or 1,095 days. Analysis of METS program data show that some students exceeded the maximum stay of 1,095 days. These data suggest that some

³ Given the duration of the program, these criteria were met after students who entered in 4th or 5th grade had articulated out of the elementary sites.

of the students enrolled in 2015 and 2016 continued on to a METS program while in middle or high school in SY 2019–2020. The maximum number of days on record is 1,310 (Table 14).

Table 14*Average Days in METS by Year of Entry and Student Characteristics*

Background Information		Mean	SD	Max	Median	Percentile 25	Percentile 75	Valid N
Entry Year	2015	535.2	245.3	1026.0	549.0	318.0	661.0	39
	2016	584.0	372.4	1310.0	595.0	273.0	814.0	25
	2017	538.7	267.8	1019.0	543.0	291.0	767.0	60
	2018	584.6	205.0	830.0	647.0	371.0	766.0	23
	2019	266.7	98.4	434.0	284.0	219.0	301.0	38
	2020	101.0	13.1	108.0	107.5	98.0	108.0	46
Entry Grade	3	492.6	327.0	1310.0	504.0	199.0	767.0	106
	4	373.9	239.8	841.0	349.0	108.0	582.0	96
	5	265.1	202.0	830.0	283.0	106.0	291.0	23
Grade 2019– 2020	3	105.0	6.2	108.0	108.0	104.5	108.0	20
	4	172.4	102.6	434.0	108.0	97.0	284.0	40
	5	363.9	219.7	828.0	301.0	227.0	457.0	29
	6	605.0	254.8	1019.0	639.0	408.0	805.0	44
	7	601.3	301.8	1310.0	596.5	291.0	821.0	38
	8	448.9	307.3	1026.0	518.0	181.0	584.0	30
Focus Group	Non-FARMS White/Asian/All Other Student Groups	358.6	261.8	549.0	549.0	107.0	549.0	5
	Non-FARMS Black or African American	312.3	231.8	457.0	435.0	45.0	457.0	3
	Non-FARMS Hispanic/Latino	466.0	299.4	1292.0	457.0	260.5	661.5	44
	FARMS White/Asian/All Other Student Groups	451.6	291.6	841.0	371.0	291.0	647.0	5
	FARMS Black or African American	520.8	381.7	1310.0	302.0	294.0	655.0	11
	FARMS Hispanic/Latino	399.5	284.1	1026.0	299.5	108.0	630.5	152

Overview of change in proficiency levels from Year-of-Entry to Spring 2019. Table 15 shows the ESOL entry levels by year and current/last ESOL level as of February 2020 for students⁴ who entered MCPS from 2015–2020.

⁴ 2019–2020 ESOL official file to MSDE, OASIS, and METs program records.

The results revealed that, after one or two years in MCPS, many students showed growth in their ELP levels (Table 15). For example, 17 of the 45 students who enrolled in 2015 had moved from ELP 1 to ELP 3, and 11 students from the same cohort had moved up to ESOL Level 4. Similarly, nine students enrolled in 2016 at ESOL Level 1 had moved to Level 3, two moved to Level 4, and one moved to ESOL Level 5. Nineteen of the students enrolled in 2017 at ESOL Level 1 had moved to Level 3, seven students moved up to Level 4, and three moved to Level 5.⁵

Table 15*Evidence of Improvement in ESOL Levels by Year of Entry to METS Program*

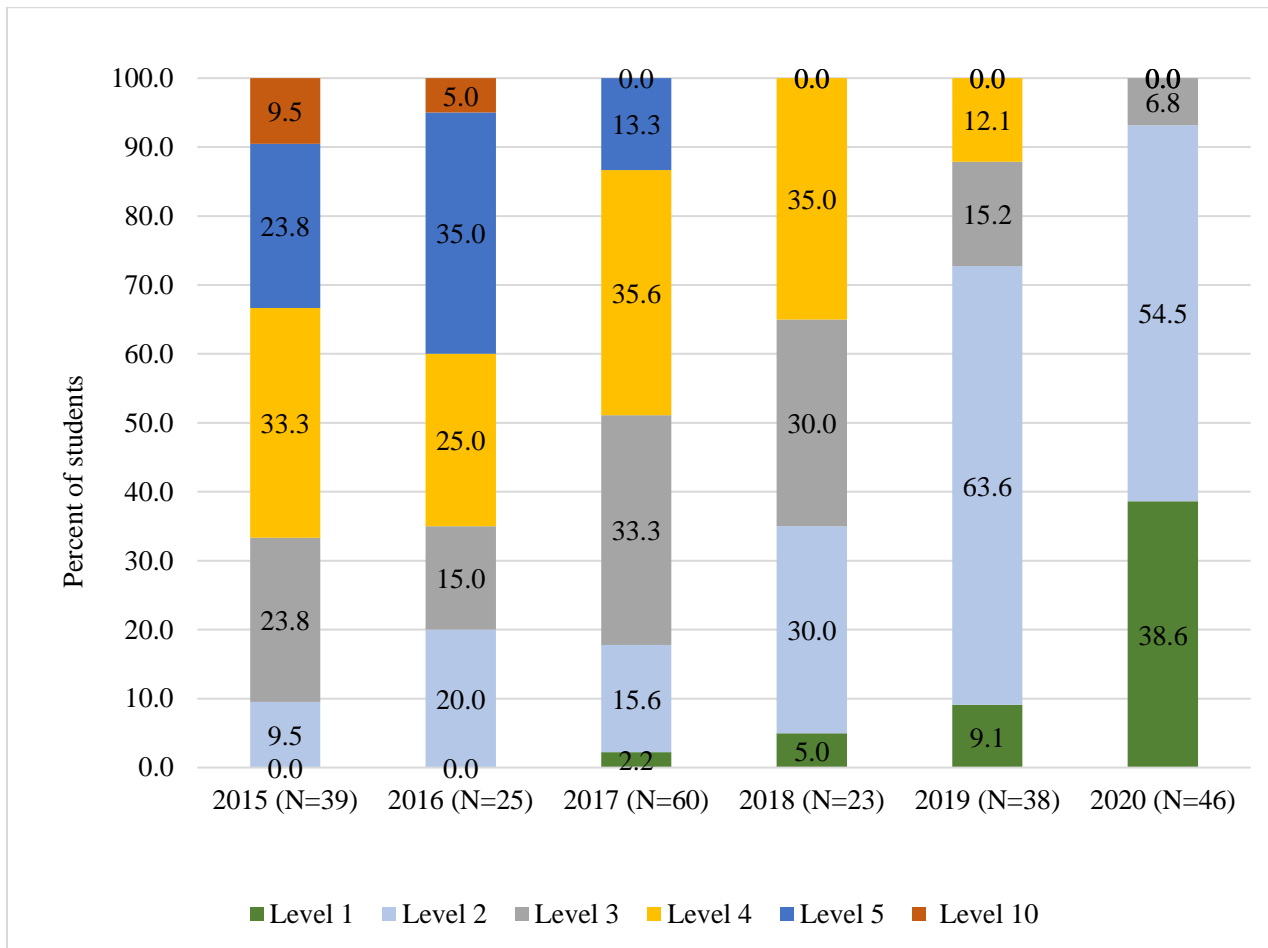
Entry Year	N	ESOL Level	Current/Last ESOL Level as of February 2020				
			1	2	3	4	5
			<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
2015	45	Level 1	6	11	17	11	0
2016	37	Level 1	7	18	9	2	1
	3	Level 2	0	1	1	1	0
2017	66	Level 1	5	32	19	7	3
	3	Level 2	0	1	0	2	0
2018	29	Level 1	4	17	7	1	0
2019	48	Level 1	38	10	0	0	0
2010	52	Level 1	52	0	0	0	0

Nearly all the ELs with interrupted education began the METS program at ESOL Level 1, regardless of the year enrolled in MCPS (Figure 3). As of SY 2019–2020, these data demonstrate growth in levels of English proficiency to level 3 and higher for students who have been in MCPS for at least 2 years. Notably, about two thirds of students who enrolled in METS in 2015 and 2016, who had been in MCPS for at least two years, were at ESOL levels of 4 and above (67% of 2015 cohort and 65% of 2016 cohort), which is close to exiting ESOL services.

⁵ ESOL instructional level

Figure 3

ESOL Levels in SY 2019–2020 by Year of Entry in the Elementary METS Program



To what extent are EL students meeting ESOL services exit criteria from EL programs?

Analyses of official ESOL files to MSDE as of October 2019 and other student-enrolled data showed that 23 of the 231 have exited ESOL services (Table 16). Of the 23, 13 are from the 2015 cohort, one is from the 2016 cohort, seven are from the 2017 cohort, and two are from 2018. The students who have exited ESOL services spent an average of 417 days (SD=168.4) in the METS program.

Table 16

Number and Percentage of SIFE ELs Who have Exited ESOL Services as of October 2019 by Year Started

Characteristic		Status unclear/not enrolled		ESOL Status			
				Exited (N=23)		Receiving ESOL Services (N=183)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Entry Year	2015	5	12.8	13	33.3	21	53.8
	2016	4	16.0	1	4.0	20	80.0
	2017	8	13.3	7	11.7	45	75.0
	2018	1	4.3	2	8.7	20	87.0
	2019	5	13.2	0	0.0	33	86.8
	2020	2	4.3	0	0.0	44	95.7
FARMS services receipt	No	15	30.0	9	18.0	26	52.0
	Yes	3	1.7	14	8.1	155	90.1
Focus Group	Non-FARMS White/Asian/All Other Student Groups	2	40.0	0	0.0	3	60.0
	Non-FARMS Black or African American	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3
	Non-FARMS Hispanic/Latino	12	27.3	8	18.2	24	54.5
	FARMS White/Asian/All Other Student Groups	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	100.0
	FARMS Black or African American	1	9.1	1	9.1	9	81.8
	FARMS Hispanic/Latino	2	1.3	13	8.6	137	90.1

Note: Data used to cross tabulate were from different institutional databases. Some students were in some but not all the databases.

Question 4. To what extent are ELs who started in the elementary METS program attaining the by Grade in 2019-2020 EOL measures in literacy and mathematics?

Evidence of Learning Measures. The EOL framework (Appendix A–5) includes classroom, district, and external measures that determine at strategic intervals how well students are making the transition from one grade to the next or are ready for the next grade level. Students are ready to transition or can access instruction at their grade level if they meet two out of three of the 2020 EOL measures—1) classroom (report card grades and teacher reports), 2) district level (ELA and mathematics assessments, progress checks), and 3) external (e.g., MAP, college and career readiness measures, MCAP/PARCC and ACCESS for ELLs).

Mathematics: Figure 4 illustrates the percentage of students who attained the classroom, district, or external EOL measures in mathematics by grade in MCPS in SY 2019–2020. About one-quarter of the 2015 cohort of ELs with interrupted education still enrolled in MCPS attained three (12%) or two (15%) of the SY 2019–2020 EOL measures in mathematics. About one-third of the students who enrolled in 2017 achieved three (6%) or two (30%) of their grade-level benchmarks in mathematics (Figure 4). Not surprising, the vast majority of the ELs with interrupted education who enrolled more recently in 2018, 2019, and 2020 did not attain the EOL mathematics measures. For these recent arrivals, this finding confirmed the vast disparity in the mathematics skills of ELs with interrupted education relative to corresponding grade-level expectations. In addition, grade-level measures are not sensitive to any small growth, these students make in 1 or 2 years.

Literacy: About 12 percent and 10 percent of the students enrolled in 2015 and 2016, respectively, attained all three of the SY 2019–2020 literacy measures at their grade level (Figure 5). In addition, about a third of students who enrolled in 2015 and 2016, and one-fifth of students who joined MCPS in 2017 and 2018 attained two of the three EOL literacy measures. As expected students new to MCPS, have not had sufficient time to learn English and bridge the gap in content knowledge with relative to CCSS grade level expectations.

MAP-R and MAP-M Scores. Similar to the ACCESS for ELLS data, there were insufficient data on MAP-R or MAP-M to complete any meaningful analyses of the performance of students in the sample on the measures of academic progress or growth over the students' duration in MCPS. Given this is an external measure used in EOL at the elementary and middle level, this might be why students did not show evidence of meeting. This will be good to point out to readers.

Figure 4

Percent of ELs with Interrupted Education who met one or more 2019–2020 EOL Mathematics Measures by Year Enrolled in MCPS.

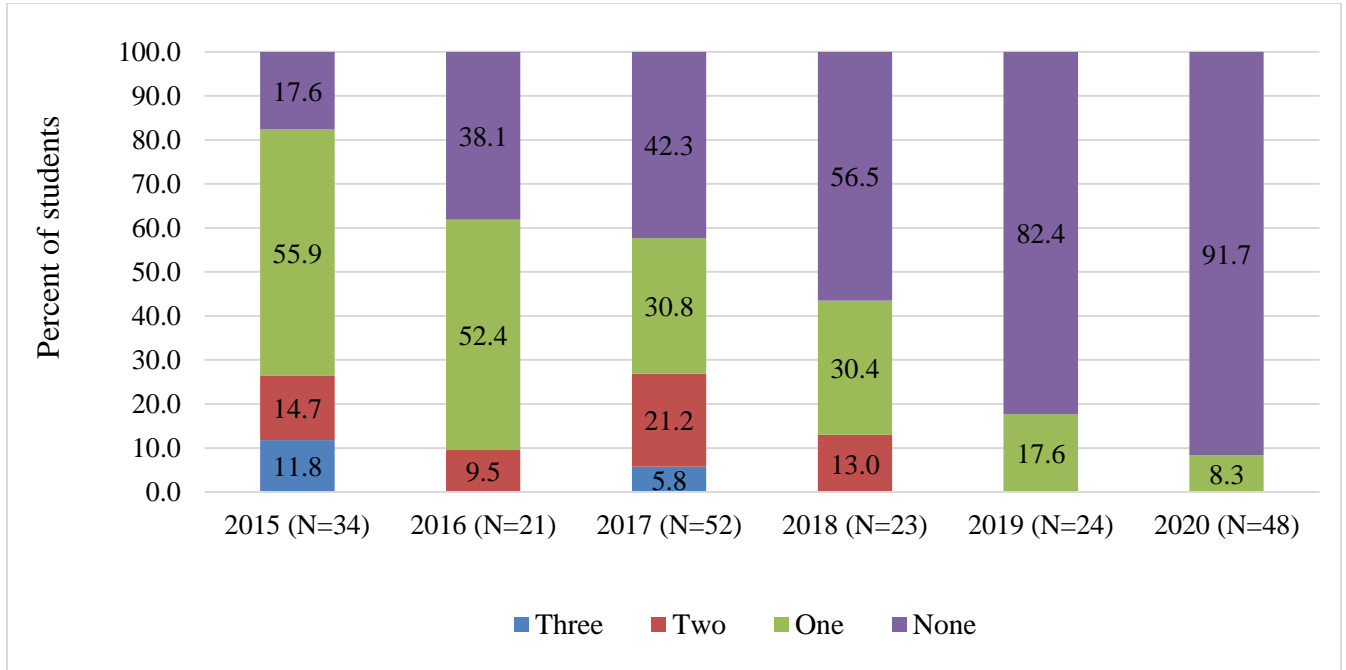
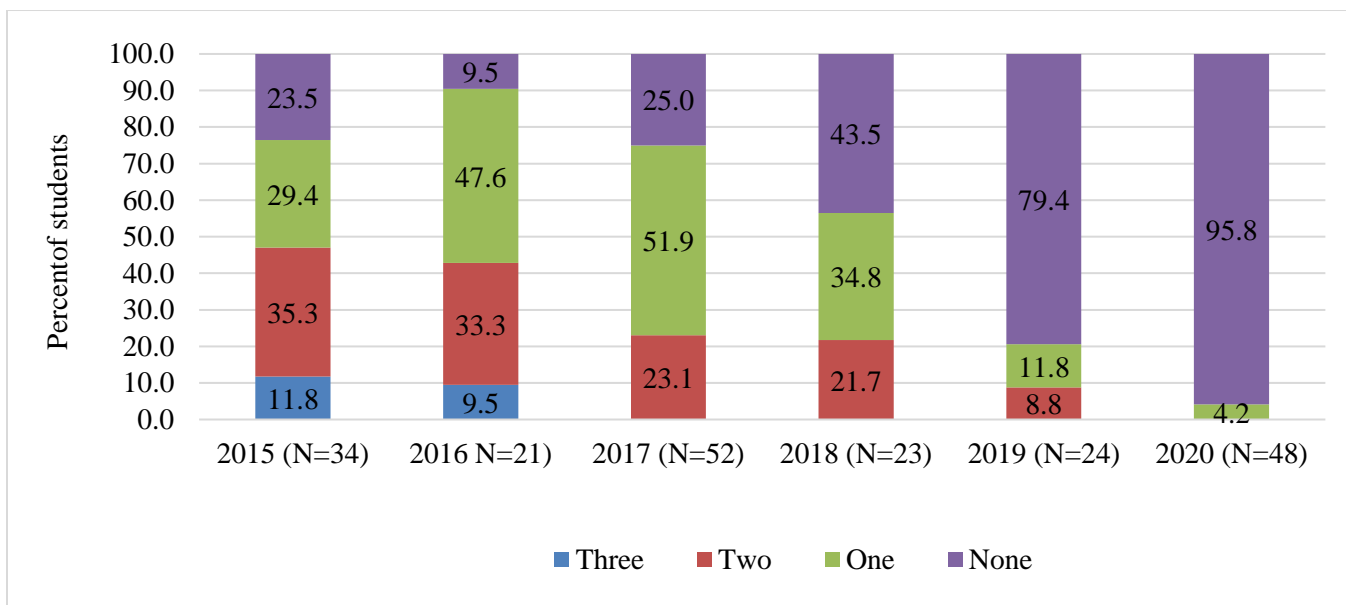


Figure 5

Percent of ELs with Interrupted Education who met one or More 2019–2020 EOL Literacy Measures by Year Enrolled in MCPS.



Attainment of EOL measures by grade-level. Among students who enrolled between 2015 and 2019 and were in Grade 9 during the 2019–2020 school year, one fourth (25%, n=5) attained all three of their EOL measures in mathematics (Figures 6 and 7). In literacy, 20 percent (n=4) of the Grade 9 students in 2019–2020 met all three EOL measures (Figure 7). Again, the majority of most recent enrollees in Grades 3 and 4, who have been in MCPS for less than 2 years, had not attained either the mathematics or the literacy EOL measures in 2019–2020. This finding confirms the vast disparities in mathematics and literacy competencies of the ELs with interrupted education relative CCSS at their respective grade levels.

Figure 6

Percent of ELs with Interrupted Education who met one or More 2019–2020 EOL Mathematics Measures by Grade in 2019-2020

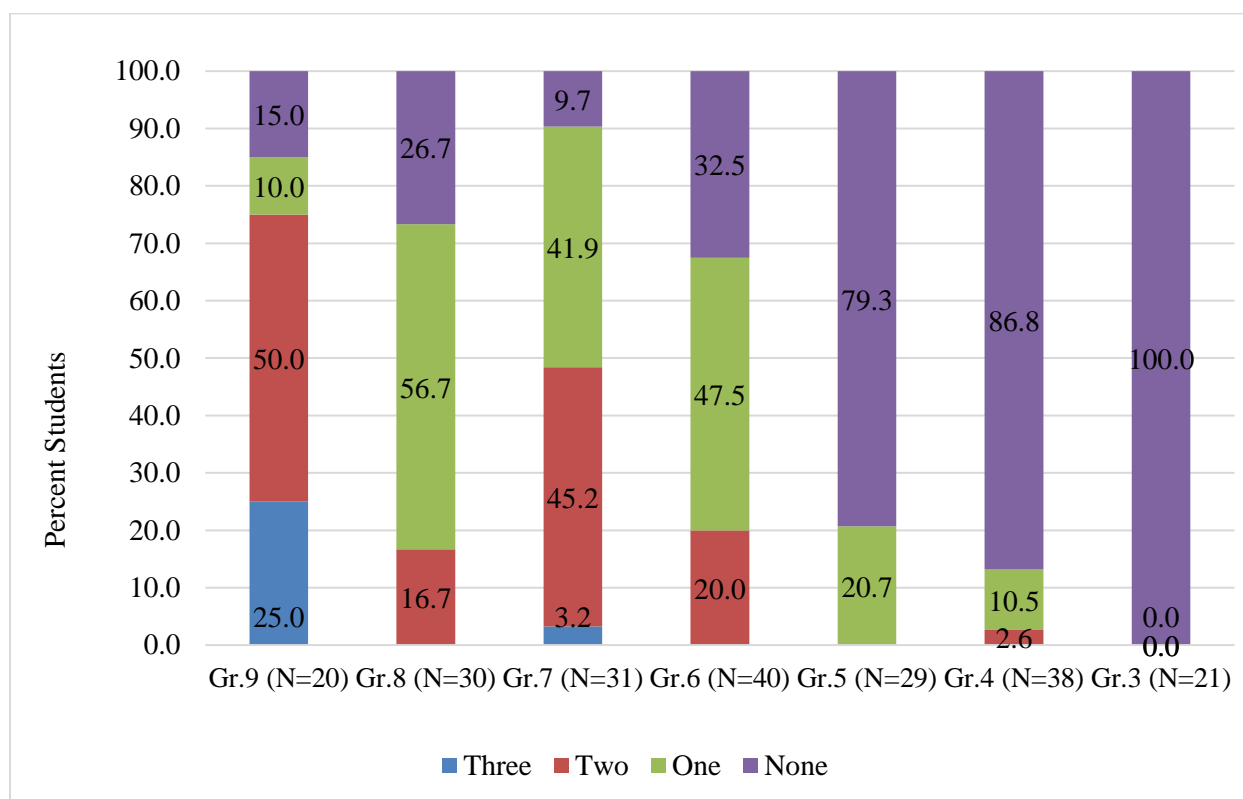
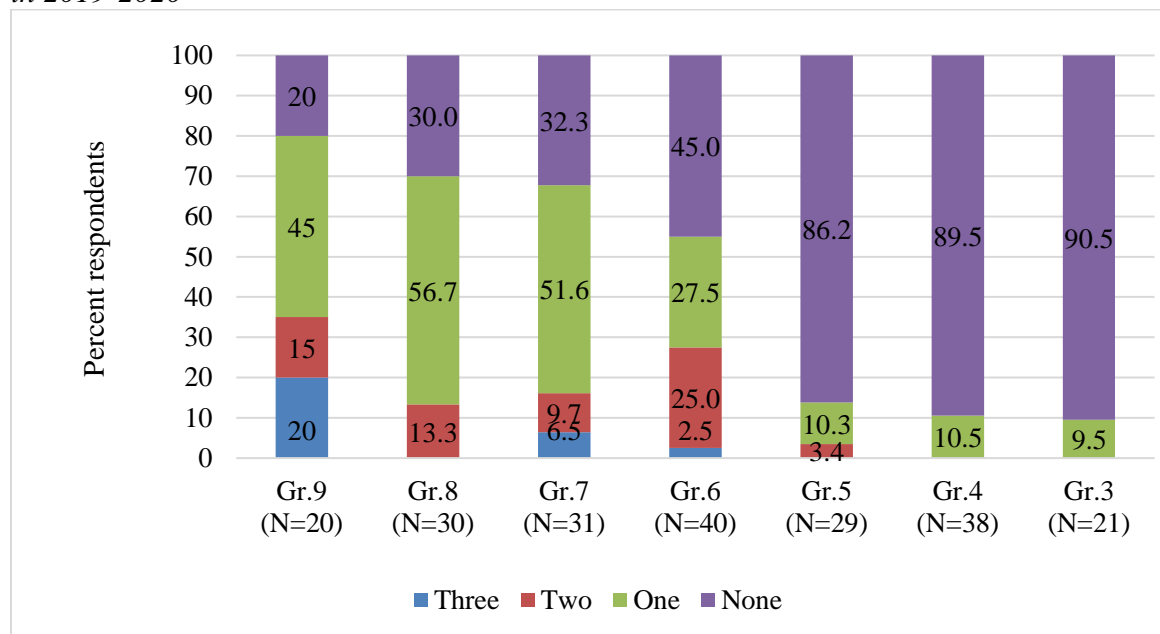


Figure 7

Percent of ELs with Interrupted Education who met one or more EOL literacy Measures by Grade in 2019-2020



EOL Measurement levels attained by ELs with interrupted education. The majority of the ELs with interrupted education in Grade 9 during the 2019–2020 school achieved the EOL classroom and external measures for literacy (76%). Surprisingly, only one-third (35%) of the same students met the district-level EOL measures for literacy (Table 175). Among the students who have been in MCPS for at least 3 years, the majority of those in Grade 8 (70%) and 7 (77%) met the classroom measures but the district or external measures in literacy. This finding indicates a lingering disparity in students’ literacy skills relative to grade-level expectations three to four years after enrollment. Not surprisingly, given the vast gap in learning that qualified them for the METS program, barely any of the recently ELs with interrupted education in Grades 3, 4, or 5 attained the classroom-, district-, or external-level EOL measures. These students have not had sufficient time to learn English and learn 2 to 3-year worth of content knowledge corresponding to their grade-level.

Table 17

Percent of ELs with Interrupted Education Attaining Classroom, District, or External EOL Measures in Literacy

Grade SY 2019–2020	Classroom			District			External		
	Valid N	<i>n</i>	%	Valid N	<i>n</i>	%	Valid N	<i>n</i>	%
3	21	0	0.0	11	0	0.0	18	0	0.0
4	40	3	7.5	24	3	12.5	37	0	0.0
5	29	6	20.7	20	0	0.0	25	0	0.0
6	40	26	65.0	30	8	26.7	39	1	2.6
7	31	24	77.4	27	17	63.0	24	3	12.5
8	30	21	70.0	29	6	20.7	22	0	0.0
9	21	16	76.2	21	7	33.3	21	16	76.2

The data related to the performance on mathematics measures across the classroom, district, and external measurement levels were inconsistent and therefore inconclusive. Surprisingly, the majority of students in Grade 9 met their external measures (81%), but less than a third of the same students met the classroom (33%) or district (19%) measures (Table 16). Similarly, the majority of students in Grades 6, 7, and 8, who also represented students enrolled in 2016 (69%), 2017 (65%), and 2018 (53%) achieved the appropriate grade-level classroom measures. However, hardly any of the same students met the district goals, and barely anyone met the external measures for mathematics. Further, it is not surprising that hardly any students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 who enrolled in recent years attained the grade-level district or external measures in mathematics, given that they were performing at kindergarten to Grade 1 level when they enrolled (Table 18). This finding corroborates the evidence of the wide disparity in mathematics skills and competences relative to their grade-level expectations.

Table 18

Number and Percent of ELs with Interrupted Education Attaining Classroom, District, or External EOL Measures in Mathematics

Grade SY 2019–2020	Classroom			District			External		
	Valid N	<i>n</i>	%	Valid N	<i>n</i>	%	Valid N	<i>n</i>	%
3	21	2	9.5	4	0	0.0	20	0	0.0
4	40	4	10.0	18	0	0.0	38	0	0.0
5	29	4	13.8	19	1	5.3	24	0	0.0
6	40	21	52.5	33	11	33.3	40	2	5.0
7	31	20	64.5	27	6	22.2	22	2	9.1
8	29	20	69.0	27	5	18.5	21	0	0.0
9	21	7	33.3	21	0	0.0	21	17	81.0

Question 5. What factors facilitated or hindered the effective implementation of the elementary METS program?

The findings for question 5 are organized by experiences of METS program staff first as reported on the METS Site questionnaire, followed by experiences staff at the METS program site as reported on the METS site questionnaire. Both instruments used an open-ended question to elicit staff perceptions of the existing METS program.

Experiences of the Past and Current METS Program Staff

The following section describes the responses of former and current METS program staff members to the staff survey. The most successful aspects of the MET program elicited from the METS program staff survey included staff with diverse expertise, use of individualized instruction, and use of a variety of collaboration processes (Table 19).

Successful Aspects

Staffing. Respondents to the program staff survey overwhelmingly responded that staffing was integral to the success of the METS program (n=25). Most frequently mentioned were specific staff roles important to the success of the program; bilingual staff members, a paraeducator dedicated to the METS class and/or skilled paraeducators, ESOL transition counselors, reading specialists, additional ESOL support, and having a METS intake specialist.

Table 19

Successful Aspects of the Elementary METS Program as Reported by METS Program Staff (N=18)

Category	Number of Times Reported
Staffing	26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional staffing • Bilingual staff member • Para-educator dedicated to the METS class and/or skilled para-educators 	
Individualized Instruction	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small class size • Instruction tailored to student needs 	
Collaborative Processes	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with school-based METS team • Collaboration with school staff • Collaboration with paraeducators • Collaboration between METS sites 	
Attention to Physical, Social, and Psychological Factors	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belongingness, safe space, and increased student self-confidence • Restorative justice and trauma-informed practices 	
Outcomes: Academic Improvement and Growth, English Development, Transitioning to Mainstream Classroom	7
Data-Based Decision Making	7
Appropriate Instructional Materials	5
Professional Development	5
Communication with Families	4
Tiered Instructional Model	4

Note: The number of times reported may exceed 18, because some respondents provided more than one response related to the category.

A few respondents emphasized the number of teachers involved with the METS students as an important factor for successful implementation and mentioned co-teaching or the addition of extra teachers to METS classrooms during this school year. For example, one respondent noted the following:

“With our shift in the program's instructional model for this year (two teachers, two groups), departmentalization has allowed us to continue meeting our students' needs in a smaller setting that permits a more individualized and appropriate learning experience for all students.”

Another respondent noted:

“Additional staffing (METS teachers, METS paraeducators, ESOL Transition Counselors and Parent Community Coordinators) can help ensure that all students and families have proper supports both in and out of school so they can succeed despite gaps, trauma, or other challenges.”

Similarly, respondents to the METS site questionnaire reported success with appointing staff members with relevant skills to the needs of the students in the METS classroom. Successful elements included:

- appointing staff members with relevant skills to the needs of the students in the METS classroom as in the case of Leleck,
- mainstreaming students with grade-level peers during specials or lunch,
- co-planning and co-teaching between ESOL and general education teachers,
- appointing dedicated ESOL staff members who provide expertise and training for general education teachers and supported the METS teachers, and/or
- providing PD on trauma-informed practices that dramatically improved the program.

Individualized Instruction. Respondents frequently reported that the program provided the opportunity to offer an individualized instructional program that was customized to meet a student's academic and emotional needs (n=15). One respondent stated the following:

“The most successful aspect is that we are able to know the students' profiles deeply and create a plan for them that targets their specific needs....”

A major factor facilitating delivery of individualized instruction was smaller settings for instruction. There were five comments specifically noting smaller class sizes as critical to successful implementation. Additionally, several staff members responded that having smaller groups and small-group instruction were successful aspects of the METS program this year.

Collaborative Processes. Collaborative processes also were reported frequently as a successful aspect of the METS program (n=12). The processes discussed included collaboration with the following individuals and groups:

- the METS staff and team at the school,
- the METS staff outside the school,
- other school-based teams, and
- teams from other offices.

During these processes, respondents noted that teams were discussing student needs, student progress, making decisions about student placements, or sharing information. One respondent noted that implementation was successful “when transitions to mainstream/partial mainstream are a team decision.” Another respondent noted that the use of collaborative process to share data

helped implementation: “The scores, tier level, and additional information from ETAC collaborative processes support all MET students.”

Staff responding to the site survey also noted the importance of collaboration, reporting that co-planning and co-teaching between ESOL and general education teachers was a successful element in the program. They also noted the benefit of appointing dedicated ESOL staff members who provide expertise and training for general education teachers and support the METS teachers.

Physical, Social, and Psychological Factors (PSP). Another successful aspect of the program mentioned was addressing the physical, social and psychological factors of students (n=12). The majority of comments discussed how the METS program fostered a sense of belongingness, provided a safe space, and increased student self-confidence. Examples included the following comments:

- “*The joy they felt knowing that they were not alone.*”
- “*The most successful part of the ES METS program is the camaraderie the students form with each other.*”
- “*Provides an emotionally sensitive space for the transition into general ed classes.*”

Respondents also mentioned specific models such as Trauma Informed Practices and Restorative Justice Practices (e.g., community circles) as important factors for the success of the program. One respondent stated, “The implementation of community circles (Restorative Justice) helps build community in the classroom and builds interpersonal skills the students can apply to the classroom and beyond.”

Data based decision-making. The use of data to identify needs, monitor progress, and make educational decisions also was reported by respondents (n=7) as a factor that supports successful implementation of the METS program. One respondent noted, “I use the [MAP-R and MAP-M] graphs to attend to students’ growth and customize their immediate as well as future goals.” Several respondents noted that they use appropriate assessment tools to collect data. For example, one mentioned performed “proper screening of ESOL students with interrupted education using updated assessment tools and completed accurate and frequent monitoring of METS student academic progress also using effective and appropriate assessments.”

Outcomes--Academic, English language progress, and transition to mainstream classrooms. Several responding staff (n=7) reported some type of educational outcome as a successful aspect of the program. The outcomes most often reported were increasing academic progress, increasing English language proficiency, and successful transition to the mainstream.

Access to Instructional Resources and Professional Learning. Having appropriate instructional materials (n=5) and providing professional development (n=5) were cited less often as important factors in the success of the METS program. One respondent wrote, “Research-based curricula, texts, and reading materials further student progress effectively.” A response to the site questionnaire reported that providing PD on trauma-informed practices dramatically improved the program.

Additional factors. The factors mentioned less often were the use of a tiered model to deliver instruction and assess progress as well as communication with parents/guardians.

Challenges

Staff survey respondents were asked to list the challenges to the successful implementation of the elementary METS program at the classroom, school, and district levels. The number of staff members providing responses on the staff survey about each level varied (Table 20). The challenges reflect the level of implementation, with the challenge of staffing being reported at classroom, school, and district level.

Table 20

Challenges to Implementing an Effective Instructional Program as Reported by Staff

Classroom (n=10) ^a	School (n=8)	District (n=11)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Paraeducator support • Wide range of instructional levels • Transportation – buses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Mainstreaming Schedule • METS separate from school culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Transportation • Communication from the district or between schools • Instruction and assessment

^a Note: the n refers to the number of respondents providing feedback by level of schooling – classroom, school, or district.

Classroom Level. Ten survey respondents provided feedback about the challenges at the classroom level. Almost all staff members responding to this question discussed how the lack of appropriate levels of staffing affected the delivery of effective instructional services, particularly given the wide range of student needs. Some comments are cited below:

“There are too many students and too many grade levels in one classroom. The teacher is having to teach three grade levels of curriculum all at once.”

Responding staff members repeatedly mentioned the wide range of instructional levels as problematic.

“It is impossible to teach and to respond to all the needs at the same time.”

Also mentioned frequently was the need for increased paraeducator support. As one respondent directly stated, *“Paraeducators should be placed in the program all day.”* Other respondents mentioned additional challenges such as the need for counselors to deal with social-emotional challenges, the lack of appropriate instructional materials, buses that do not get the students to school on time, and high mobility rates among students.

School Level. Eight survey respondents provided feedback about challenges at the school level. Like at the classroom level, issues around staffing were mentioned by more than half of the respondents. These staffing issues included the need for more staffing for METS classrooms, the

need for staff training across the school regarding the needs of METS students, and the need for therapists and counselors on staff who speak Spanish. Half of the respondents discussed challenges with the process used to establish schedule for mainstreaming METS students. One respondent reported:

“Scheduling was an issue when we’d have students who were ready to be partially mainstreamed.”

Two respondents to this question commented on the following obstacle:

“The METS program is completely separated from the rest of the school, so students are disconnected socially and academically.”

District Level. Several survey respondents provided feedback about challenges at the district level. Again, staffing was mentioned as a challenge at the district level. One respondent noted,

“Staffing should include three grade levels to teachers in METS and two ESOL teachers along with paraeducators for each program.”

Transportation that ensures that students arrive on time and safely to school was mentioned by three of the respondents. Similarly, three respondents noted communication issues as described below:

- The district does not communicate clear expectations about how the program should be run.
- Timely communication between schools and the METS administrative office can ensure that students’ accommodations and needs are met.
- Coordination between METS sites can ensure smooth transitions between schools.

Finally, three respondents also mentioned issues around instruction and assessment. These issues are listed below:

- Expectations of staff members to teach to grade-level standards and use gradebooks make it difficult to show growth.
- Staff members need research-based practices to help guide the program.
- Better entry assessments for placement in math and English and reduced student-teacher ratios can benefit instruction.

Challenges Reported By Staff at the METS Sites

Staff responses elicited from open-ended items of the METS site-level questionnaire elaborated that insufficient staffing, staff turnover, and expectation to align all instruction to grade-level CCSS present many challenges. These elements restricted the optimal implementation of the programming for ELs with interrupted education at the site level. Insufficient curriculum and assessment tools, inconsistent transportation for new students, and students spanning three grade levels in one classroom with only one teacher also were noted as obstacles to implementation.

High METS staff turnover. The turnover rates of METS teachers varied by site. Since SY 2016, the program at South Lake has had four METS teachers. Shriver has had eight different METS classroom teachers since 2010. Because of the high turnover, Shriver reported that the METS teacher position at their school was often filled by long-term substitutes due to the difficulty of finding an interested and qualified applicant.

In contrast, Leleck has not historically had a high turnover of METS teachers. Due to the stable staffing of the METS program at Leleck, students have the opportunity to spend more than one year with the same METS teacher. The school reported that the stability in METS teachers allows the teacher to delve deeper into the specific needs of each student and allows them to build a stronger, safer classroom community. The stability created with the same METS classroom teachers was reported to foster student risk-taking and participation, two areas in which SIFE students consistently struggle.

Rolling enrollment and students with varying academic needs. Across the three sites, instruction in the METS classroom was disrupted more by the addition of new students than students moving to other areas of the county. The staff asserted that the addition of new students at different points in the school year was disruptive and created a social gap between students. Furthermore, teachers faced the task of dedicating time to accommodate the needs of newcomers to the U.S. as opposed to focusing on their existing students.

Staff members at Leleck noted that, before SY 2019–2020, the METS class was staffed with one FTE METS teacher and one paraeducator, and the ongoing addition of new students was difficult to manage. With a new model in SY 2019–2020 encompassing more staffing and smaller groups, addressing the needs of incoming new SIFE is manageable.

Problems with transportation. An increase in enrollment introduces the notable challenge of securing a bus in an efficient and timely manner for all three sites. In particular, METS site staff reported that their students do not attend after-school events because most live outside the school community and it would require transportation to get back to school. In addition, transportation to summer programs is needed; this disparity in access to programs and events available at the school increases the level of isolation of the students in the METS classrooms.

Large class size/over-enrolled classes. The size of METS classes was a major concern among the staff at the three METS sites. The staff recommended that the class size should be capped at 15 students, primarily because it is difficult to meet individual students' needs in a large group. The SY 2019–2020 Leleck model included two teachers and two groups, and the departmentalization format allowed the site to continue meeting students' needs in a smaller setting, permitted a more individualized, and appropriate learning experience for all students.

Aligning instruction to grade-level CCSS. The information from the site questionnaires validated discussions from various meetings with stakeholders. Staff members reported being overwhelmed with the expectation to align instruction to grade-level CCSS, specifically for SIFE students across Grades 3–5 in one classroom. The shift to aligning instruction to grade-level CCSS requires METS teachers to spend significantly more time planning to ensure that all grade levels are instructed on their respective grade-level content while considering the variety of curricular sequences at each

grade. As such, there was general agreement across the three sites that it is very challenging to align instruction to three different grade-levels within one classroom, with one teacher, with at least 15 level one English Learners, with interrupted education, using the curricula available.

Using the new MCPS curriculum in the METS classroom. For ELD, MCPS' expectations for ESOL teachers is that they teach the ELD Benchmark Advance curriculum every day for 30–45 minutes for each grade level in addition to the grade-level curriculum. Two of the sites that were implementing the new curriculum explained that it is difficult to plan, implement, and assess all components of the grade-level curriculum for three different grade levels in one classroom, even with the additional supports their home school provided.

Use of WIDA ELD standards. Staff members at one site specified that they use the WIDA ELD standards to guide instruction and assess students on adequate growth in their English language development. For the SIFE student population, they embed language objectives and goals for students into all aspects of teaching and aim to use translanguaging strategies to effectively bridge the gap between their students' native language literacy skills and the skills they are concurrently developing in English. At a different site, staff members noted that the setting of the METS classrooms made it very challenging to implement WIDA Standard I Social Instructional Language because students are not in an environment with native English speakers; hence, they have few opportunities to practice communicating in English. WIDA Standard I pertains to communicating to fulfill social and instructional purposes within the school setting.

Type of Program Students Exit Into. One of the schools reported that the criteria from central office are unclear. Another school said that they primarily used academic aspects and duration in the program to make the decision for mainstreaming and that such decisions were typically made solely by the school administration. Another site indicated that it had never exited anyone based on the MCPS exit criteria. Mostly, students left the elementary METS program because they aged out of the program. Nonetheless, the three sites reported that they review the exit criteria annually alongside their students' data to determine if they are ready to exit the program.

What Changes Would Staff Make to Make the Elementary MET Program More Effective?

Two items on the program staff survey and the site survey elicited proposals for changes that the program staff should make to optimize the design, processes, and structures and implementation of the elementary METS program. The goal was to surface a variety of proposals for improving the program. The responses are organized by themes salient in the content analyses. The responses from the METS program staff survey are presented first, followed by responses from the METS site questionnaire.

Taken as a whole, the responses pointed out that an ideal METS program would encompass three key elements as core components of the program: 1) academic support, 2) social-emotional support explicitly designed for SIFEs, and 3) opportunities for students to interact with grade-alike peers.

Changes in structure and design of the instructional program. The changes proposed by past and current METS program staff included dedicated attention to ELs with interrupted education, increasing number of METS staff at each site, clear and consistent expectations for instruction in

each content area, an increasing number of METS sites to reduce class size and distance traveled by students, instructional resources specific to SIFE, and authentic assessments for ELs with interrupted education. To improve the effectiveness of the instructional program, the following changes were proposed.

Increased attention to needs and instruction for ELs with interrupted education. It was envisioned that this would be accomplished by:

- Communicating clear expectations for instruction in each content area, taking into account the multifaceted needs of ELs with interrupted education.
- Adding more METS teachers and staff with diverse expertise in the METS classroom:
 - Recruiting and hiring Pre-6 content teachers for Grades 3, 4, and 5 to collaborate with ESOL teachers for the METS classrooms and to supplement the language development of the ELs with interrupted education.
 - Having bilingual or dually certified teachers. For schools without any bilingual staff, hire a school-based counselor who speaks Spanish.
- Improving the scheduling at the METS site level to provide more opportunities to mainstream students and departmentalize classes.
- Addition of new and a variety of instructional resources suitable for the instructional needs of ELs with interrupted education.
- Access to authentic assessments and grading and reporting tools aligned to a curriculum that matches the level of instruction for ELs with interrupted education is needed.

Increasing the capacity of staff to serve ELs with interrupted education through job-specific professional development for all staff. To best meet the various needs of ELs with interrupted education, staff and general education teachers need to be more prepared to address their needs on a comprehensive level. Suggestions for achieving this include:

- Providing the opportunity for METS teachers to be integrated deeply into the setting in which their students are learning.
- Making METS a joint schoolwide responsibility that extends beyond the teacher(s) of record for any particular group.
- Implementing trauma-informed practices.
- Professional development specific to SIFEs.
- Requiring more collaboration across content areas from the literacy and math teams at the elementary level.
- Extending learning opportunities by offering summer school options for METS students.

Differentiating levels of socio-emotional support. Teachers must determine whether students need specialized social-emotional support early, as all students have different needs for services.

Addition of new elementary METS sites and classes. To reduce class size, the staff proposed additional METS sites and additional teachers/classrooms in the current locations. Notably, adding more sites was deemed more effective, as some students spend an hour or more getting to school, and some of them arrive late.

Extending services to all identified ELs with interrupted education regardless of setting. Students identified as with interrupted education placed directly at the home school also need to be served in a METS-like classroom, with all of the necessary support therein.

Accelerating ELD and learning by strengthening the recent shifts toward mainstreaming. The mainstreaming efforts implemented in SY 2019–2020 at two sites are mentioned among the most successful components of the elementary METS program. As such, the staff proposed the inclusion of more opportunities for interaction of the SIFE ELs with peers to facilitate students' relationships while providing students with more opportunities to learn and interact with peers throughout the day.

Increasing cross-office coordination of the elementary METS program. When asked what changes they would make to promote cross-functional collaboration among offices, the staff called for:

- Streamlining communication across staff from the three offices. When asked what changes they would make to promote cross-functional collaboration among offices, the staff mentioned the following:
 - Increasing clarity of job descriptions, roles, and responsibilities for staff working with the METS program. The data suggested that the job announcements and the interview process need to be specific regarding the expectations for METS staff. Job descriptions and roles, which lacked clarity, need to be clear regarding which staff members are directly responsible for what. Furthermore, all staff, teachers, specialists, and administrators need orientation particular to the METS program before starting.
 - Streamlining information flow from the IAE office, OASIS (Synergy), transportation department, and schools so that they receive information before parents show up and students do not have to wait long to be assigned a bus.
 - Updating and sharing METS program documentation, connect counseling data with METS student data, and make it accessible to stakeholders.
- Instituting opportunities for direct METS staff to meet, collaborate, and train together to:
 - Discuss students' academic and emotional needs.
 - Coordinate regular monitoring and update meetings for all staff connected to METS students.
 - Improve communication and collaboration among METS sites.
 - Align all the programs at the three METS sites to facilitate smoother transfers of students between locations (when families move).
 - Coordinate and facilitate planning across METS sites.
 - Increase understanding of screening data and milestones.
 - Share best practices.

Improve the intake and screening processes. Staff expressed concerns with the intake and placement processes, elaborating that they had observed inconsistencies in placements level for mathematics assessments and discrepancies in the documentation of evidence of interrupted education. The staff proposed:

- Reevaluating the quality and validity of the intake assessments used by the IAE office for effectiveness and accuracy of screening;
 - reviewing and upgrading the math placement test.
 - using a more precise reading placement test, similar to Spanish F & P.
 - using technology and offering screening in all languages.
 - aligning screening assessment with MAP assessments for ease of monitoring growth in the content areas.
- Instituting changes to make the experience at IAE less overwhelming to newcomers-and reduce the amount of paperwork.
- Offering PD on trauma-informed strategies to IAE staff working with students and their families.
- Including trauma screening at the intake stage.
- Involving teachers in the decision regarding how children are placed in METS.
- Explaining to parents/guardians why their children are assigned to a METS site. Many parents/guardians do not understand the program or why their student is enrolled at a METS site.

Changes Proposed by METS Site Staff

The respondents to the METS site-level questionnaire noted several potential areas for improvement. The first improvement would be to increase the number of staff as well level of expertise of staff in METS classrooms. They also asserted that improved scheduling could provide more opportunities for mainstreaming ELs with interrupted education with non-METS peers. In addition, a great need for curricular and authentic assessment resources specific to ELs with interrupted education was identified. Further, resolution of transportation obstacles, and the institution of concerted schoolwide and districtwide efforts to focus on socioemotional needs of ELs with interrupted education would greatly improve the METS program. Details for proposed changes are provided below.

- Improve scheduling provides more opportunities to mainstream students, including implementing:
 - Appointing additional METS teachers.
 - Departmentalized classes, with small groups of students and students grouped by grade level.
 - Scheduling for and including students in the METS classes in general education classrooms and supporting them with general education and ESOL teachers, so that they can access more grade-level content and interact with native English-speaking peers.
- Increase alignment between the instruction in METS classes and with grade book/report card for authentic assessments that meet the needs of *ELs with interrupted education*.
- Use a concerted focus on the socioemotional issues of the *ELs with interrupted education*.
- Provide more opportunities for summer school, with reliable transportation provided.
- Provide more bilingual/native language support for students in the classroom.

- Offer trauma-informed training for all staff that support students (paraeducators, specialists, volunteers, office staff, etc.).
- Increasing staffing in numbers and levels of expertise—so as to meet the comprehensive needs of the family (PPWs, therapists).
- Create more opportunities to plan with other METS sites and professional development specific to SIFE.
- Provide additional funding for transportation
 - All of the METS students are bused to the school sites.
 - Because students and families do not live in the school neighborhoods, they have the additional challenge of traveling to the sites for out-of-school activities (afterschool, evening, and weekend events).
 - Resolution of bus transportation issues (potentially by adding more METS sites) and having reliable data on OASIS can ease delays in students starting in the program.
 - Additional funding for transportation would ensure that the students and families are included in our community and events.

Proposed Topics and Areas for Future Professional Learning Sessions

METS program staff also were asked to recommend topics/activities/strategies for inclusion in next year's professional development for a variety of different MCPS roles such as general education teachers, school-based leadership teams or administrators. The number of responses varied by the role. Appendix A–9 displays sample verbatim responses by role. Topics are arranged from most frequently to least frequently mentioned.

Overall, across all job roles, respondents overwhelmingly recommended training on trauma-informed practices, restorative justice and translanguaging. These suggestions were followed in frequency by training on understanding the needs of ELs with interrupted education students, strategies and interventions specific for ELs with interrupted education students, understanding the background of METS students, the impact of interrupted education on students, as well as acclimation, acculturation and reunification training.

Other topics mentioned included more training in intervention and instruction specific to the population like basic literacy and math skills, collaboration with other staff, and strategies for parent outreach. For administrators, respondents added some training that did not show up in other categories like how to provide support for overwhelmed staff, and understanding staff roles in the context of entrance, instruction and exit of students from the METS program.

Summary

This evaluation pursued the following objectives: 1) to examine how the elementary METS program is being implemented, 2) to examine current standing of students of students who started at the elementary METS program in ELD and content areas, and 3) to identify areas for improvement.

Overall, the findings presented in this report suggest that the three METS sites are implementing most of the provisions of an instruction program for ELs, as stipulated by MCPS and ESSA amid various, numerous challenges. The data of the ELs with interrupted education who attended the METS program confirmed that the academic skills of the ELs assigned to Grades 3, 4, 5 in the METS sites were comparable to kindergarten skills in literacy and first-grade-level mathematics—indicating evidence for interrupted formal education. This study also elicited accounts of many successful aspects of the elementary METS instructional program. Staff responding to the surveys noted that:

- students are showing varied, but demonstrated progress in ELD and the content area
- the program offers dedicated socioemotional support from counselors
- at all sites, the METS teachers plan with the members of grade-level teams
- the site level staff members are diligent and very dedicated
- sites are constantly adjusting the staffing allocations, and
- using staff with a variety of expertise to accommodate the needs of students in the METS classes.

Many proposals for optimizing the METS program were elicited from previous and current program staff. These proposals place a strong emphasis on the importance of accurate screening; sufficient staffing, both in terms of number and diversity of expertise; ongoing professional development with sessions dedicated to building capacity to serve the SIFE and ELs in general. Even more crucial to aligning the instruction of ELs with interrupted education to CCSS and WIDA standards is 1) ensuring that EL students have equal opportunities to meaningfully participate in all curricular and extracurricular activities and 2) avoid unnecessary segregation of EL students of expectations (US Department, 2016).

The long-term goal of all programs for ELs is to enable students who exit ESOL services and to meet the same challenging academic standards on district and state assessments as their non-EL peers. The data from this study showed that ELs with interrupted education who started at the elementary METS program are making progress in ELD, at different rates. In addition, students who have been in MCPS for at least 3 years attained at least one or two of the 2020 transition EOL measures in literacy or mathematics. These findings concur with the extant research on English language acquisition and progress of ELs with interrupted education, which shows that students' progress at different rates and that, in general, it takes ELs with interrupted education three years longer than the typical ELs to exit ESOL services (Cummins, 2012). Notably, it would be unrealistic to expect that students beginning to learn English in MCPS, with a documented gap of 2 to 3 years in formal education relative to age peers, would perform at par or above with peers right away.

Because the yearly data on ACCESS for ELLs and MAP were not available for all students for their years in MCPS, the magnitude of yearly gains while the elementary METS program could not be determined. As such, 2020 EOL achievement data are very useful in gauging the standing of the ELs with interrupted education relative to grade-level expectations. To get conclusive evidence with regard to value of any EL program, it would take the analyses of longitudinal data that are aligned directly with the program goals. Even, then, if the program is not implemented optimally with fidelity, the data would be more reflective of the incomplete implementation than the impact of the program per se.

On their own the achievement data presented in this report were insufficient to judge the growth students make while at the elementary METS program or determine the effectiveness of the elementary METS program for a variety of reasons:

- data documenting the annual growth in literacy and mathematics and ELD while in the METS program were not available
- students who enroll in Grades 4 and 5, articulate to middle school within a year/or before completing their METS requirements
- once students complete their METS requirements, the students transition to receiving ESOL services and content area instruction from non-METS classroom
- the study revealed that the three METS sites face various, numerous challenges:
 - The data reflect great variation in implementation across sites.
 - There has been yearly METS teacher turnover in two of the sites.
 - The staffing was reported to be insufficient.
 - The guidelines for implementation were unclear to many.
 - A program has to be implemented with fidelity before determining its efficacy.

A more sensitive set of measures, aligned to the goals of METS, to monitor the changes while students are in the program, would make for a better gauge of the effectiveness of the elementary METS program. Even, then, the EL program would be contributing to and not the only reason for any academic progress of the ELs with interrupted education in ELD and content area.

In conclusion, not every detail of the METS program model can be expected to be standardized in its implementation across the three sites or from one cohort to another cohort of students. The needs of ELs with interrupted education are complex; the context and reasons for interrupted education are too distinct, the language of origin varies, and the students are unique in their needs and knowledge.

Discussion

The identification of ELs' language and academic needs is a critical step that lays the foundation for the development of an appropriate instructional program—the findings pointed to a need to review and update the tools for screening. Indeed, the accurate identification of ELs with interrupted education is a weighty task, because of their academic skill levels, strengths, and needs are not well documented as they enroll in school, their instructional program will miss instructional components necessary to accelerate their learning in ELD and content areas.

There was evidence that the sites blended ELs with interrupted education with native English speakers during specials or recess to limited isolation and segregation of ELs from their peers. Attention was devoted to the social-emotional needs of students, and content and cultural scaffolding approaches are applied in instruction. Extant studies corroborate the successful aspects are indeed among the best practices for ELs with interrupted education because they build on their existing skills, cultural knowledge, and literacy levels and enable the students to interact with a peer (Perez & Holmes, 2010; Rubinstein-Ávila & Fink, 2013; Doyle, 2016). The collaboration among peers supports the improvement in English language proficiency as the students interact and communicate in "often a creative, situated, and multidirectional process" (Case, 2015; Collier & Thomas, 1989).

The difficulties reported with the implementation of METS include insufficient staffing allocation, large class sizes, inadequate bus transportation for students attending the METS sites, inadequate tools specific to the instruction of ELs with interrupted education, invalid grading tools for documenting progress made by students, and high METS teacher turnover at two of the sites. The high turnover in METS classrooms is not surprising—this finding concurs with the research by Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, and Driscoll (2005). These researchers found that, while teachers wanted to work with the ELs with interrupted education, they were frustrated by insufficient resources and support. Having limited support and resources for ELs with interrupted education presents a very challenging task for a teacher who is new to a school or classroom.

While the staffing was correctly aligned with the staffing formula set at the district level, the academic and socio-emotional needs of the ELs with interrupted education presented a significant challenge for METS classroom teachers and other school staff members. The socio-emotional needs were stemming from culture shock of being new in the United States and/or having experienced trauma in their countries of origins. The survey findings also revealed that only the staff members working directly with the ELs with interrupted education demonstrated familiarity with the educational and socioemotional requirements for ELs with interrupted education. Indeed, Cummins (2012) argued that teachers also need to take into account the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the children and draw upon these characteristics to bridge the learning of English and the curriculum. The calls for more and variety of sustained professional learning opportunities. Indeed, ESSA recommends that districts provide PD that are designed to give teachers of ELs, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills related to appropriate use of curricula and assessments with ELs (US Dept. of Ed, 2016). The high, yearly turnover of METS classroom teachers or other staff members working in the program also erodes any gains in staff capacity from year to year.

Extant research on English language acquisition and progress of ELs with interrupted education show that students' progress at different rates and that, in general, it takes ELs with interrupted education three years longer than the typical ELs to exit ESOL services (Cummins, 2012). As such, the goal of transitioning students from METS to standard classroom instruction within two years calls for dedicated attention to a carefully designed program aimed at compacting 1.5 grade levels into one year of learning. Carrying out such complex responsibilities requires a clear understanding of the ELs with interrupted education, and the necessary ongoing intensive capacity building of all staff members associated with the program for extensive planning for adaptations from year to year in staffing and instructional resources.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from the findings in this report, the goals of the elementary METS program, literature, and MSDE stipulations. The recommendations focus primarily on actionable approaches to optimize the design and implementation of the elementary METS program in particular and the instructional program for ELs with interrupted education at the elementary level in general.

Clarify and update the guidelines for identifying ELs with interrupted education at the elementary level.

- Revisit the intended goal of METS—to compact and accelerate learning within 2 years.
- Update the logic model to explicate the pathways to achieving the short-term and long-term goals of the elementary program:
 - Theory of action-METS program as intended;
 - Well-defined, measurable goals;
 - Resources/inputs;
 - Clearly outlined roles and responsibilities for offices and staff involved; and
 - Implementation milestones.
- Provide an updated set of documents that detail the METS processes – intake, criteria for identification of students identified with limited education, protocols for student assignment to METS program or the home schools, progress monitoring, and criteria for exiting the METS program to all staff working with ELs with interrupted education.
- Explain and clarify the unique academic and other needs of ELs with interrupted education relative to grade-level ELs and non-ELs peers to all MCPS administrators and program staff.
- Explain to parents/guardians why their students are in a METS program and how the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of their child.

Update the Process and Tools for Screening and Identifying Elementary Level ELs with Interrupted Education

- Evaluate the validity of the intake assessments in use for accuracy and comprehensive screening for ELs with interrupted education.
- Include a variety of multilingual tools for screening for ELs with interrupted education.
- Consider screening for trauma at the point of intake.
- Simplify the intake process for parents/guardians.

Increase staffing allocation as well as the levels of expertise of staff in the METS classrooms

- Reduce class sizes in METS classrooms by
 - increasing the staffing allocation for METS classrooms,
 - adding more METS sites, and/or
 - splitting the METS classroom by grade-level, if need be.
- Expand the levels of expertise in METS classrooms
 - Provide optimal staffing allocations that are differentiated by the range of needs at a given time and school setting:
 - consider having two teachers per METS classroom.
 - assign full-time classroom paraeducators to METS classrooms.

- Continue to hire bilingual staff for the METS program.
- Consider having dual certified Pre-K–6 teachers for all METS classrooms.

Institute and communicate a clear plan for compacting instruction for elementary ELs with interrupted education so that the students transition to the standard instructional program within the projected time of 2 years

- Continue to align the instructional program for ELs with interrupted education with 1) the CCSS, 2) WIDA standards, and 3) the stated goal of METS program: accelerating student learning.
- Add new, and variety of instruction resources specific to ELs with interrupted education and new students.
- Provide authentic and valid assessment resources for monitoring the progress of ELs with interrupted education in ELD and content areas.
- Prioritize scheduling for ELs with interrupted education at METS site level or home schools to provide more opportunities to mainstream students.
- Require the scheduling of ELs with interrupted education for some classes with grade-level peers during the school day/week to reduce isolation and promote oral language proficiency of the ELs with interrupted education.
- Plan early to accommodate the needs of ELs with interrupted education in the master schedule to “Ensure that EL students have equal opportunities to meaningfully participate in all curricular and extracurricular activities”⁶.
- Explore the extent to which remote learning resources could be used to accelerate for ELs with interrupted education during summer.
- Continue to promote a schoolwide culture of welcoming and accountability for student with interrupted education among all teachers:
 - In schools with METS, make METS a joint schoolwide responsibility that extends beyond the teacher(s) of record.
 - Ensure that students enrolled directly in their homeschools are receiving all appropriate support(s).
- Strengthen the collaborative processes within the schools housing METS sites -- focusing on grade-level planning, co-teaching, and databased decision-making.
- Consider adopting the aspects of the Leleck model that staff reported to be helpful in meeting the academic and socioemotional needs of the students: dually certified teacher, departmentalized; additional teacher working with the METS teachers; and support from a second ESOL teacher; focus on socio-emotional learning.

Continue to Provide Sustained Professional Development Learning Opportunities Related to ELs

- Ensure that all PD related to ELs meets the stipulation under ESSA for sustained PD (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short-term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused.
- Incorporate increased, role-specific, and ongoing professional development offerings to all staff -- for principals, teachers of ELs, content area teachers, and central office administrators to ensure the fidelity of implementation an optimal instructional program:
 - Use of the new curriculum and other instructional resources.

⁶US Department of Education (2016). P.

- Increasing (METS) teachers' knowledge and capacity to use content area resources to promote academic language.
- Using a variety of instructional strategies to integrate language instruction across content areas
 - Translanguaging
 - Trauma-informed practices
- Analyzing and using student level data-student work and achievement data from classroom, district, and external measures specified on the EOL framework.
- Focus on a holistic view of SIFE, strengths, and potential of ELs with interrupted education as well as their academic and other needs.
- Implementing evidence-based instructional practices for ELs and SIFE in particular.
- Establish and continually update a toolbox of research-based instructional techniques specific to the content and cultural scaffolding for SIFE and ELs.

Institute opportunities for the central office staff working with the METS program and or implementing any aspect of the program for ELs with interrupted education to meet, collaborate on implementation.

- Clarify roles and responsibilities of staff working with the METS program to the team and the schools they are serving.
- Institute opportunities for direct METS staff to meet, collaborate, and train together.
- Provide staff with a holistic view of the METS program during orientation.
- Promote parent/guardian, family and community engagement through a variety of approaches and community partners-partner with private, non-profit, for-profit and faith-based organizations to supplement the experiences at the METS program.

Connect METS program documentation to the MCPS databases on enrollment, district-level assessment, counseling services, and ESOL services receipt.

- Streamline information flow from the IAE offices, Synergy, and transportation department to ensure there are no delays in getting new students to school as soon as they are enrolled.
- Resolve the problems associated with transportation of ELs with interrupted education to the METS sites.

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Appendices

Appendix A–1: METS Sites by School Level

Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools
JoAnn Leleck at Broad Acres ES R. Sargent Shriver ES South Lake ES	Eastern MS Gaithersburg MS A. Mario Loiederman MS Montgomery Village MS Neelsville MS Takoma Park MS Julius West MS White Oak MS Sligo MS Wood MS	Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS Montgomery Blair HS Albert Einstein HS Gaithersburg HS Richard Montgomery HS Northwood HS Quince Orchard HS Rockville HS Seneca Valley HS Springbrook HS Watkins Mill HS Wheaton HS
<p><i>Note.</i> After October 2019, newcomer EL students identified as SIFE were enrolled directly at their home schools.</p>		

Appendix A–2: ESOL Teacher Certification Requirements

Appendix Sec. 13A.12.02.19: ESOL Teacher Certification Requirements

[\[Link\]](#)

A. To receive certification in English for speakers of other languages (prekindergarten-Grade 12), the applicant shall meet the requirements in §§B-D of this regulation.

B. Content Courses. The applicant shall have 21 semester hours of content coursework taken at an Institute of Higher Education (IHE) to include:

- (1) 6 semester hours of coursework in general linguistics and in the structure of American English;
- (2) 6 semester hours of coursework in a single modern foreign language at the college or university level or the completion of a college level examination program or comparable test;
- (3) 3 semester hours of coursework in cross-cultural studies to include coursework covering knowledge and sensitivity toward modern cultures; and
- (4) 6 semester hours of coursework in language learning to include coursework such as language learning and acquisition, psycholinguistics, and language development.

C. Professional Education Courses. The applicant shall complete a planned program of undergraduate or graduate coursework in professional education to include:

- (1) 6 semester hours in foundations of education, including a course in psychological foundations of education;
- (2) 12 semester hours in methodology for the ESOL teacher to include 3 semester hours in:
 - (a) ESOL methods;
 - (b) Methods in the teaching of reading to limited English proficiency (LEP) students;
 - (c) Methods in the teaching of writing to limited English proficiency (LEP) students; and
 - (d) ESOL tests and measurements;
- (3) 3 semester hours in inclusion of special needs student populations; and
- (4) 6 semester hours in supervised observation and student teaching in ESOL, or 1 year of successful teaching experience in ESOL.

D. Reading Courses. The applicant shall complete course work taken at an IHE or through CPDs including 6 semester hours in reading methods at the secondary level, which shall include:

- (1) Types of reading;
- (2) Use of reading assessment data to improve instruction;
- (3) Skills in reading including cognitive strategies in reading;
- (4) Reading instruction including reading aloud strategies and methods for diagnosing reading difficulties and making instructional modifications and accommodations for the student;
- (5) Strategies for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for reading;
- (6) Teaching students to learn from text by applying theories, strategies, and practices in daily classroom use including additional content in types of reading using authentic texts;
- (7) Skills in reading including processing of multimedia information and strategies to connect reading with study skills; and
- (8) Reading instruction that integrates content area goals with reading goals including strategies for students to communicate effectively orally and in writing about what they have read in content area texts.

Appendix A–3. Summary Description of ESOL Transition Counselor

ESOL Transition Counselor

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CLASS DESCRIPTION		
OFFICIAL TITLE: ESOL Transition Counselor	CODE: 6980	SQ/OQ: Optimal Qualified
WORKING TITLE: ESOL Transition Counselor	GRADE: 22	MONTHS: 12
<p>SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF CLASSIFICATION: Provide counseling services to students who are English Language Learners (ELL) in grades Pre-K through 12. Workers in this class help ELL students understand and adjust to the American school and community, acquire the socio-cultural skills and develop positive self-concept that are necessary to succeed in MCPS and in American society. Help students gain a greater understanding of their cultural origin and identity as well as their changing role within the family. Determine students’ availability for learning by assessing post traumatic stress they may be suffering due to exposure to traumatic events in their childhood such as, war, famine, illnesses, sexual or physical abuse, domestic violence, grief and loss issues, migration issues as well as current family reunification issues. Assist families and school staff with understanding the impact of acculturation in the lives of the students. Workers provide these services in the native language of the student, operating from a cross-cultural perspective while demonstrating a heightened sensitivity and respect toward complex backgrounds.</p>		
MINIMUM QUALIFICATION STANDARDS		
<p>KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES: Thorough knowledge of crisis intervention techniques and procedures. Knowledge of state laws and reporting procedures for child abuse and neglect. Native or native-like proficiency in a language other than English, as well as proficiency in English. Strong understanding and knowledge of customs, mores, as well as protocols of the American culture and other cultures. Knowledge and sensitivity toward immigrant issues. Thorough knowledge of resources serving the language minority communities. Ability to establish rapport with students from other races and cultures. Ability to work with parents and staff from other cultures and bridge cultural gaps between families and the school community. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity to families’ views regarding mental health services. Ability to inform and help culturally diverse families understand the benefits of community mental health services. Skill in alternative counseling techniques other than traditional Western approaches. Well versed in all developmental stages within a cultural context. Knowledge of all ES, MS, and HS school processes ranging from social skills, parenting, conferences, graduation requirements, college scholarships, financial aid and community resources. Ability to effectively communicate and collaborate with all entities in the schools. Ability to handle all types of situations including crisis intervention and conflict resolution. Proficient in computer applications. Demonstrate strong time management skills. Good oral and written communications skills. Ability to make presentations before large audiences. Bilingual/bicultural skills necessary. Knowledge of the seven core competencies of the Supporting Services Professional Growth System (SSPGS).</p>		
<p>EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE: Masters degree required. Degree major in counseling, psychology, social work or related field with specific training in cross-cultural counseling techniques. Experience with crisis intervention techniques and procedures. Considerable experience working directly with school-age children from other cultures and their families. Other combinations of applicable education, training, and experience equivalent to a masters degree, which provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform effectively in the position, may be considered.</p>		

Appendix A–4. Elementary METS Instructional Sequence

Elementary METS Instructional Sequence

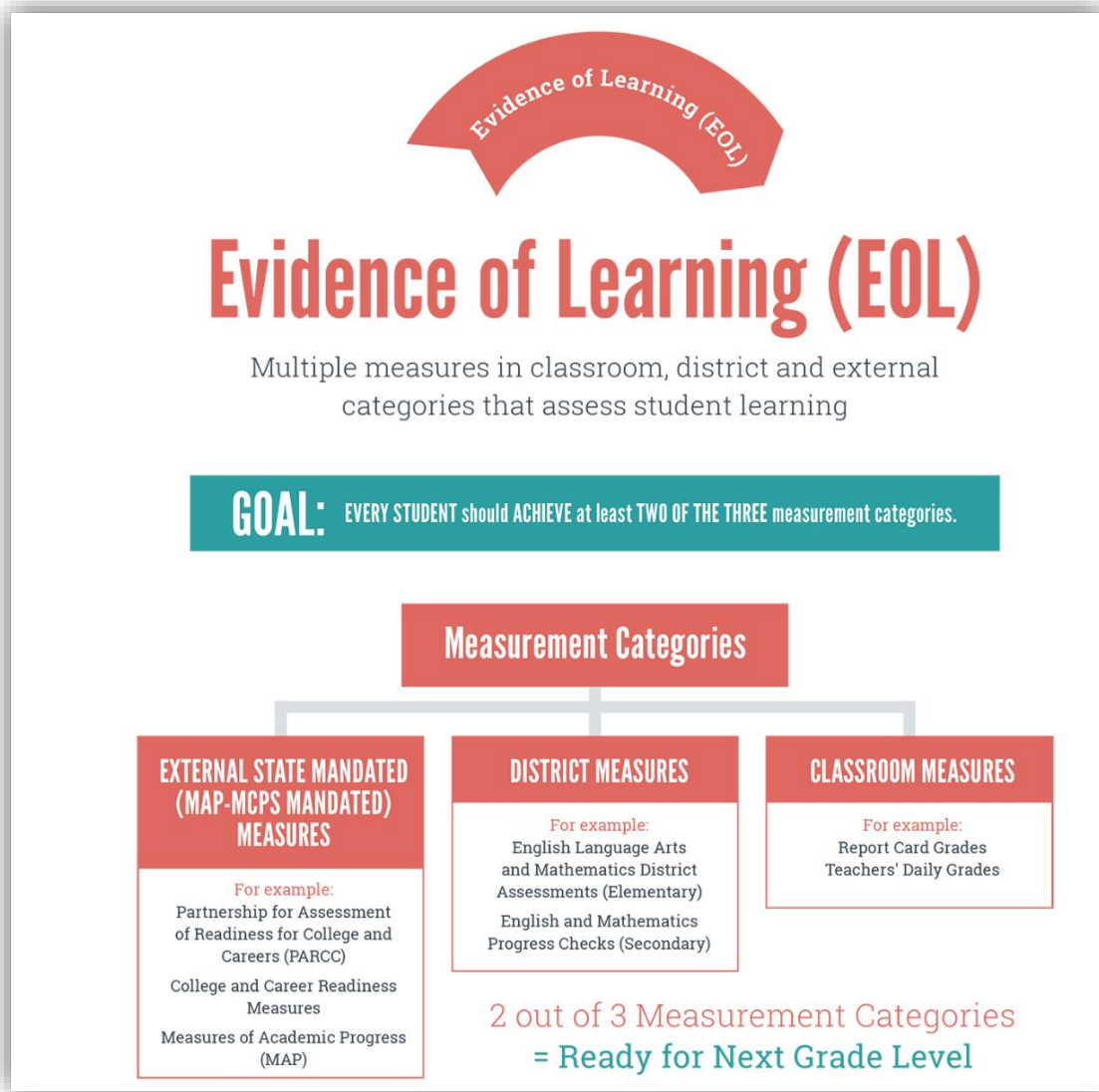
Content Area	Tier 1 Curriculum*	How do we measure progress?	Additional Resources	Tier 2 Curriculum**	How do we measure progress?	Additional Resources
Reading	Curriculum 2.0 Lang. Arts (Adjusted Outcomes based on K-2 indicators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Running Records Checking for Understanding MAP-R 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIDA Standards On Our Way to English Imagine Learning 	Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0 Lang. Arts (scaffolded instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Running Records Checking for Understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIDA Standards Leveled Texts
Writing	Curriculum 2.0 Writing & Handwriting (Adjusted Outcomes based on K-2 indicators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIDA Writing Rubrics Teacher observation Conferencing Checklists, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIDA Standards On Our Way to English Imagine Learning 	Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0 Writing & Handwriting (scaffolded instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIDA Writing Rubrics Teacher observation Conferencing Checklists, etc 	WIDA Standards
Math	Curriculum 2.0 Math (Adjusted Outcomes based on K-2 indicators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum 2.0 Math formative assessments Checking for Understanding MAP-M 	WIDA Standards	Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0 Math (scaffolded instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum 2.0 Math formative assessments Checking for Understanding 	WIDA Standards
Science	Curriculum 2.0 Science (Adjusted Outcomes based on K-2 indicators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking for Understanding 	WIDA Standards	Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0 Science (scaffolded instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking for Understanding 	WIDA Standards
Social Studies	Curriculum 2.0 Social Studies (Adjusted Outcomes based on K-2 indicators)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking for Understanding 	WIDA Standards	Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0 Social Studies (scaffolded instruction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking for Understanding 	WIDA Standards

- METS teachers will plan with the 3rd grade planning team. They will scaffold instruction based on students' needs. Teachers should use the WIDA Standards for language development. ESOL instruction should be integrated across all curriculum areas.
- *Tier 1: Students who are assessed at K-1 grade level in math and/or reading upon placement. Student are expected to progress to Tier 2 after one year or less on Tier 1. In some cases, a student may need to repeat Tier 1; in such cases, consult the METS instructional specialist for your school.
- **Tier 2: Students who are assessed at 2-3 grade level in math and/or reading. Students are assessed to exit the METS program at the end of Tier 2.
- Students may be placed in different tiers for reading and math or advance to higher levels when ready.

Revised on 11/17/16

Source. Elementary METS Instructional Sequence (MCPS, 2019c)

Appendix A–5 Evidence of Learning Measurement Categories



Source. MCPS (2020c). <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/learning-journey/MCPS-EOL-9thGrade-v3.pdf>

Appendix A–6. Benchmarks for Exiting the METS Program

Benchmarks for Exiting the METS Program

Elementary Level

Purpose: The benchmarks on the charts below represent data-based proficiency targets for students to reach *by the end* of each tier. When data indicate that a student has met benchmarks, the student may progress to the next level or exit METS. Other data points should also be used to inform instructional and placement decisions.

METS Progress Benchmarks: Reading

Grade 3	Tier II Benchmarks for Exiting METS	Assessments
Curriculum Standards	<i>MCPS Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0 with adjusted outcomes based on K-2 standards</i>	Curriculum 2.0 formative assessments
Targeted Fountas & Pinnell Reading Level	<i>Instructional Reading Level: J-L</i>	Running Records
Primary Skills	<i>Sight Word Recognition: 90-100% Grade 2 list Mastery</i>	Sight word recognition
MAP-R RIT Score Range	<i>MAP- R RIT Score: 179-186</i>	MAP-R Assessment
Grades 4 & 5	Tier II Benchmarks for Exiting METS	Assessments
Curriculum Standards	<i>MCPS Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0, scaffolded as needed for METS students</i>	Curriculum 2.0 formative assessments
Targeted Fountas & Pinnell Reading Level	<i>Instructional Reading Level: M-N</i>	Running Records
Primary Skills	<i>Sight Word Recognition: 90-100% Grade 2 list Mastery</i>	Sight word recognition
MAP-R RIT Score Range	<i>MAP- R RIT Score: 182-190</i>	MAP-R Assessment

METS Progress Benchmarks: Mathematics

Grade 3	Tier II Benchmarks for Exiting METS	Assessments
Curriculum Standards	<i>MCPS Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0 with adjusted outcomes based on K-2 standards</i>	Curriculum 2.0 formative assessments
Math Formative Assessments	<i>Targeted Performance Level: Grade 3 Students performing at the 2nd grade level may be placed in the mainstream classroom with additional support.</i>	Curriculum 2.0 formative assessments
MAP-M RIT Score Range	<i>MAP- M RIT Score: 191</i>	MAP-M 2-5 Assessment
Grades 4 & 5	Tier II Benchmarks for Exiting METS	Assessments
Curriculum Standards	<i>MCPS Grade 3 Curriculum 2.0, scaffolded as needed for METS students</i>	Curriculum 2.0 formative assessments
Math Formative Assessments	<i>Targeted Performance Level: Grade 3 or higher. Students performing at the 3rd grade level may be placed in the mainstream classroom with support.</i>	Curriculum 2.0 formative assessments
MAP-M RIT Score Range	<i>MAP- M RIT Score: 203</i>	MAP-M 2-5 Assessment

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Appendix A–7. ACCESS for ELLs Growth-to-Target Tables

Growth-to-Target Tables *

English Language Proficiency (ELP) Minimum Growth Expectations					
Initial Year Proficiency Level(based on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0)	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
1.0 - 1.9	+1.0	+0.9	+0.7	+0.5	+0.4
2.0 - 2.9	+0.9	+0.7	+0.5	+0.4	---
3.0 - 3.9	+0.7	+0.5	+0.3	---	---
4.0 - 4.5	+0.3	+0.2	---	---	---
Proficiency Attainment Met	---	---	---	---	---

ELP Annual Growth OPL Target					
Initial Year Proficiency Level(based on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0)	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
1.0 - 1.9	2.0	2.9	3.6	4.1	4.5
2.0 - 2.9	2.9	3.6	4.1	4.5	---
3.0 - 3.9	3.7	4.2	4.5	---	---
4.0 - 4.5	4.3	4.5	---	---	---
Proficiency Attainment Met	---	---	---	---	---

Source. MCPS (2019d; MSDE, 2019).

*Note. Subject to Change based on MSDE

Appendix A–8 Typical Schedule for METS Classes as Reported (Verbatim)

South Lake

- ✓ Morning Meeting
- ✓ Literacy Block (45 minutes)
- ✓ Lunch & Recess (70 minutes)
- ✓ Literacy Block (45 minutes)
- ✓ Science/Social Studies (40 minutes)
- ✓ Specials (45 minutes)
- ✓ Movement Break (20 minutes)
- ✓ Mathematics (75 minutes)

Sargent Shriver. Arrival (Students arrive up to 20 minutes late due to transportation)

- ✓ Morning Meeting (10 minutes)
- ✓ Literacy Block (75 minutes)
- ✓ Lunch & Recess (70 minutes)
- ✓ Literacy Block (45 minutes)
- ✓ Science/Social Studies/Health (40 minutes)
- ✓ Specials (45 minutes)⁷
- ✓ Mindfulness Break (20 minutes)
- ✓ Mathematics (75 minutes)
- ✓ Dismissal

JoAnn Leleck. All students begin the day together for breakfast and a community circle. Then groups split into homeroom classes based on tier level at intake. Each group starts with a whole group lesson in the content area and then small group instruction daily with a classroom teacher and paraeducator. During the ELA block, a majority of the students in the Tier 1 group receive additional ESOL/EB support. Students are mainstreamed into general 5th grade classrooms for specials. They return to homeroom to finish small groups and then switch into afternoon groups where they continue with whole group and small group lessons in that content area. Students are mainstreamed with 5th grade students for lunch and recess. They return to their PM teacher to finish small groups.

Note. Information is presented as reported on the questionnaire.

⁷ Response to a different question indicated that Shriver students are mainstreamed with 4th grade for specials.

Appendix A–9 Future Professional Development Related to SIFE ELs Recommended by METS Program Staff

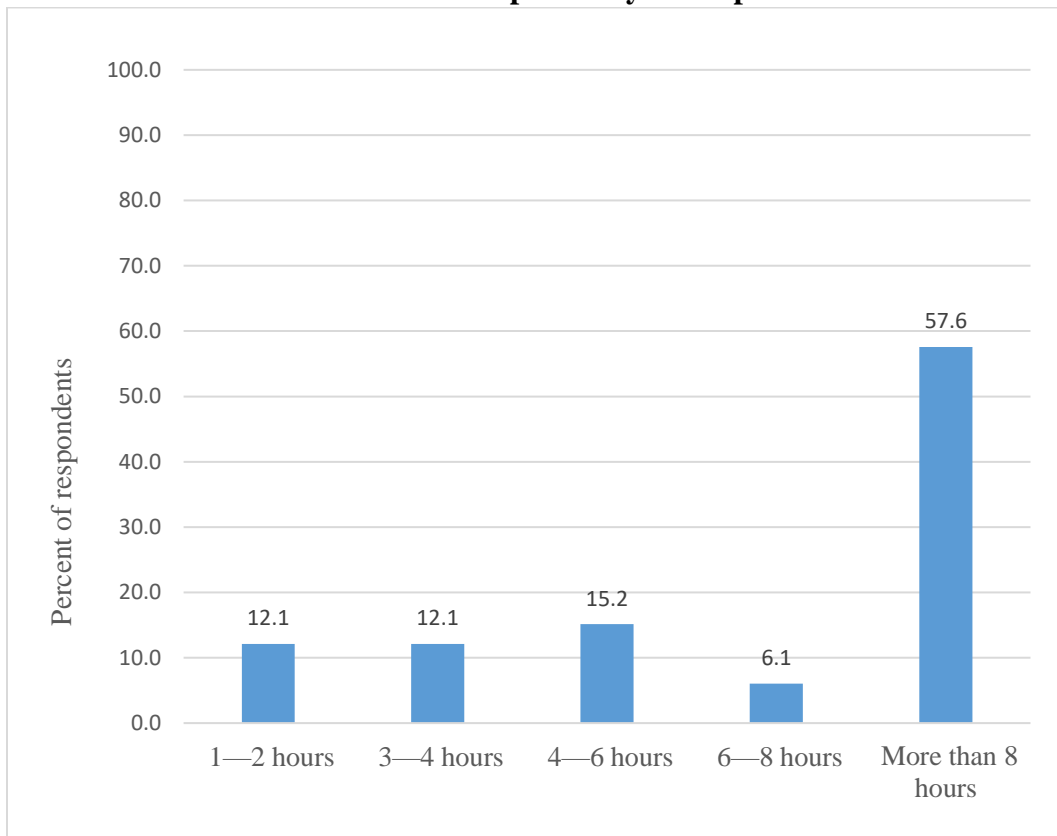
Recommended for	Topics and Activities
ESOL Teachers (N=11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma informed training • Restorative Justice • Translanguaging • Difference between newcomers and SIFE in academic foundational skills and socio-emotional skills • Making content and language instruction accessible for limited L1 literacy • More systemic literacy and math professional development • Sufficient cross-cultural training to understand the background and needs that each student brings
Classroom Teachers(N=13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma informed training/ Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools CBITS • Restorative Justice • Translanguaging • How to teach SLIFE <p><i>Interventions and Instruction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundational skills for students in upper elementary grades (math and literacy) • More systematic approaches to interventions and instruction • More specialized reading and math instruction that are age-appropriate and effective • Making content and language instruction accessible for limited L1 literacy <p><i>Other SEL professional learning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching social emotional learning in the classroom • Mindfulness
Specialists (reading, math content coaches, GT coordinator, school library media specialists, etc.) (N=11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma-informed training • Translanguaging • Planning interventions around the needs of SIFEs • Provide professional learning to reading specialists about the METS program • More time for collaboration between specialists and METS staff • Culturally appropriate literature for METS students • Require the reading specialist, MCC and SDT plan with METS teachers
ESOL Transition Counselors (N=10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma-informed training • Restorative justice • Meeting the needs of SIFE students and families

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More supports and resources to support the socioemotional needs of METS students • Acculturation, acclimations and reunification training • ACES Training • Collaboration with administrators and teachers • Meeting with parents, advising parents on how best to help their children, Q & A sessions on homework, report cards, absenteeism
<p>Parent Community Coordinators (N=11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma-informed training • Restorative justice • Meeting the needs of SIFE students and families • Training on overview of where students come from • Training on the short and long-term effects of interrupted education • More training for PCCS working with METS families, • Provide online resources for METS and ESOL program • Increased assignment time for PCCs at METS sites • More parent workshops for the families • Collaboration with other school personnel • Supporting families of SLIFE students • Meetings with parents to advise them of their role and how they will help parents and students
<p>Staff supporting ELs with interrupted education (cafeteria staff, PPWs, secretaries, paraeducators) (N=11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma-informed trainings • SLIFE teaching strategies • Training on specific interventions based on SIFE needs (paraeducators) • Restorative justice • How to collaborate to monitor and track progress • Cross-cultural education
<p>Administrators (N=12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma-informed trainings • Restorative Justice • Translanguaging • Overview of where students come from • Short and long-term effects of interrupted education • Specific needs of SIFEs • Meeting the needs of SIFE students and their families • Acclimation and reunification training • Collaboration with staff • Training on staff roles is in context of the entrance, instruction and exit of METS identified students • Training on understanding the mechanisms of stress and difference between self-care and context care • How to offer support to overwhelmed staff • Better understanding of the METS students and teachers

Appendix A–10. Background Information on Schools Led by Principals Who Reported Having Students Identified with Interrupted Education at their School

School Characteristics		<i>n</i>	%
School category	Prek-5	18	56.3
	K-2	2	6.3
	3-5	3	9.4
	K-5	9	28.1
	Not indicated	0	0.0
Title 1	Title 1	12	37.5
	Not Title 1	20	62.5
Focus School	1	14	43.8
	2	18	56.3
	100	1	3.1
Number of ELs identified with interrupted education	1	4	12.5
	2	7	21.9
	3	5	15.6
	4	4	12.5
	5	3	9.4
	6	1	3.1
	10	2	6.3
	15	1	3.1
	20	1	3.1
	22	1	3.1
	26	1	3.1
	40	1	3.1
	100	1	3.1
Number of ELs who came to your school after attending a METS program	0	27	90.0
	1	1	3.3
	3	1	3.3
	5	1	3.3
High and Low ELS	Low ELS schools (Percentile 1 and 2)	8	25.0
	High ELS (Percentile Groups 3 and 4)	24	75.0

Appendix A-11: Number of PD Hours Related to ELs during the Last Three Years Reported by Principals



Appendix A–12 Representative Verbatim Comments: Successful Aspects of the Elementary METS Program Reported by METS Program Staff

Benchmark Curriculum Resources
Benchmark ELD Lessons
ELD supplements in Benchmark relates to what is being taught in the classrooms
ESOL instruction incorporated in Benchmark Instruction
Use of grade level curriculum Flexibility in scheduling Language rich environment Flexible grouping
Use of the new Benchmark ELD resources
ELD Models
Plug in
Plug in support
Push in
Two-way immersion program
Collaboration
Co creating and analyzing weekly common formative tasks to monitor student learning and language development
Co teaching
Co-planning and ESOL teachers being involved in extended planning
Co-Teaching
Co-teaching and co-planning with ESOL teachers and general education teachers.
Co-teaching appears to be successfully supporting students, while minimizing the amount of classroom instruction that they miss.
The collaboration of the ESOL teachers with the Gen Ed teachers (when done with consistency).
The co-teaching models
Gen Ed teachers using their knowledge of strategies to support their ESOL students with the CCSS's
Flexibility in scheduling Language rich environment Flexible grouping
Having separate newcomer times to address specific language needs (Social and instructional)

Data Analysis and Professional development

Data Analysis and instruction

Data chats

Discussing students and needs at CPS meetings and EMT/IEP meetings

Review of language profiles with homeroom teachers

School data monitoring model

embedded PD regarding effective strategies for ELLs

Professional development provided by ESOL teachers

Using a variety of instructional strategies

Culturally proficient classroom strategies looking for what is working and what is not on a regular basis per student

There is knowledge of sentence frames and the explicit teaching of vocabulary; however, I think we can improve in the consistency of this area.

Language objective and a focus on the 4 +1 language domains for all teachers

Guided reading practices with ELs

Inclusion in gen ed curriculum

We also are skilled at teaching early literacy through guided practice. T

Our use of the Being a Writer writing program is successfully increasing student motivation, as well as the quality and quantity of writing for our ELs.

Our work with Orton-Gillingham strategies, which use a structured, multi-sensory approach to teaching literacy foundational skills, appears to be significantly helping our ELs.

Writing support with co-planning from grade level teachers and modeling examples

Heterogeneous grouping
