



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND THEIR ACADEMIC AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROGRESS: 2014-2015

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INTRODUCTION

This report is intended to address the following three areas. First, it describes the demographic characteristics of students classified as English Language Learners (ELL). Second, it compares and contrasts the academic achievement of students in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program on the 2014 and 2015 End-of Course (EOC) assessments. Third, it describes the progress made by ELL students in the area of English proficiency based on the results of the Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) during the 2014-2015 period. Each of these three areas is described in a separate section of the report.

When a student enrolls in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) for the first time, a language survey inquiring about student and parent language use is completed. If the student's or parents' primary language is not English, the student is tested to determine his/her English proficiency. Based on the results of this assessment, the student is either classified as an English Language Learner (ELL) or deemed proficient in English. The English proficiency level for ELL students can range from ESOL 1 (lowest) to ESOL 4 (highest). ELL students are enrolled in specific ESOL courses tailored to meet students' language needs. The students' English proficiency levels are reassessed annually, and the appropriate ESOL placement is determined. Once it is ascertained that a student has acquired English proficiency, the student no longer participates in any ESOL course and is considered as having exited the ESOL program. At this point, the student is classified as *formerly ELL* (ESOL level 5); during the two-year period following the exit from the ESOL program, the student retains this status and the student's academic achievement is monitored.

In this report, the achievement of students in the ESOL program is disaggregated by grade and ESOL level. For comparison purposes, *formerly ELL* and *non-ELL* categories are included in the report. The non-ELL category includes students who have been out of the ESOL program for two years or longer, as well as those who have never been classified as ELL students.

SECTION I

2014-2015 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

This section describes certain demographic characteristics of ELL and non-ELL students in the District as of October 2014. Table 1 below exhibits demographic features for all K-12 students in the District disaggregated by their ELL status, race/ethnicity, free/reduced price lunch (FRL) status, SPED status, and student language.

Table 1
2014-2015 Demographic Characteristics of Students in Grades K-12 by ELL Status

		ELL (n = 74,224)		Formerly ELL (n = 12,345)		Non-ELL (n = 251,143)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Race/ Ethnicity	Asian	657	0.9	238	1.1	3031	1.2
	Black	6297	8.5	1246	5.6	69081	27.5
	Hispanic	65348	88.0	20178	90.3	153136	61.0
	White	1782	2.4	648	2.9	26199	9.5
	Other	139	0.2	35	0.2	2124	0.8
FRL Status	Free	58675	79.1	16159	72.3	155700	62.0
	Reduced	3721	5.0	1656	7.4	18950	7.5
	Non-FRL	11828	15.9	4530	20.3	76493	30.5
Student Language	Spanish	64338	86.7	19826	88.7	100948	40.0
	Haitian Creole	5752	7.8	1089	4.9	7277	2.9
	Other	4134	5.6	1430	6.4	143368	57.1
SPED Status	Gifted	668	0.9	2210	9.9	39494	15.7
	Specific Learning Disabled	3625	4.9	813	3.6	10364	4.1
	Other SPED	4047	5.5	834	3.7	13485	5.4
	Non-SPED	65884	88.8	18488	82.7	187800	74.8

Note: The percentages shown in Table 1 are those for subcategories of a particular demographic characteristic *within* each of the three ELL groups: ELL, formerly ELL, or non-ELL.

Table 1 shows that ELL students, as a group, differ from students in the formerly ELL and non-ELL groups on some important characteristics. Overall, ELL students are more likely to be eligible for the federal free/reduced price lunch program (the eligibility for which is based on the household income) than students in the non-ELL group. In addition, ELL students are much less likely to be classified as gifted than are students in the other two groups.

SECTION II

2014 AND 2015 ASSESSMENT RESULTS BY ELL STATUS

This section compares and contrasts the academic achievement of students in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program on the 2014 and 2015 statewide exams. It is separated into several subsections dealing with different academic disciplines.

2014 and 2015 FCAT 2.0 Science Results

This part of Section II describes student academic performance on the science component of the 2014 and 2015 FCAT 2.0. Table 2 shows student performance on the science subtest disaggregated by student ESOL/ELL classification status for each of the grade levels.

Overall, only 21% of current ELL students in Grade 5 scored within achievement levels 3-5 on the science component of the 2014 FCAT 2.0. In 2015, the corresponding figure decreased to about 16%. Approximately 12% of the 8th grade ELL students scored at or above achievement level 3 in 2014. This percentage remained approximately 12% in 2015.

The results exhibited in Table 2 reveal that the percentages of students at each grade level scoring 3 or higher increase as students gain English proficiency moving from one ESOL level to the next. Note that the table below exhibits the academic performance of different groups of students for two academic years.

Table 2

Number and Percentage of Students Scoring at or above Achievement Level 3 on the Science Component of the FCAT 2.0 2014 and 2015

	ESOL/ELL Status	2014			2015		
		Total n	Levels 3-5 n	%	Total n	Levels 3-5 n	%
Grade 5	ESOL 1	1362	96	7	1480	85	6
	ESOL 2	795	102	13	812	77	9
	ESOL 3	1969	361	18	1865	293	16
	ESOL 4	1740	653	38	1456	449	31
	Formerly ELL	1067	630	59	1433	784	55
	Non-ELL	18705	11181	60	18366	10739	58
Grade 8	ESOL 1	1370	61	4	1447	61	4
	ESOL 2	654	74	11	698	56	8
	ESOL 3	727	84	12	851	117	14
	ESOL 4	819	193	24	822	206	25
	Formerly ELL	862	404	47	1251	437	35
	Non-ELL	20497	10114	49	18620	8926	48

2014 and 2015 End of Course Assessment Results

Biology

Students in grades 8-12 participated in the Biology EOC assessment during both 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years. However, the numbers of ELL students participating in the test were small in all grades other than grade 10. Consequently, only the results of students in Grades 10 who participated in the spring assessments are reported in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Number and Percentage of Students Scoring at or above Achievement Level 3 on the 2014 and 2015 Biology EOC Assessment

	ESOL/ELL Status	2014			2015		
		Total n	Levels 3-5 n	%	Total n	Levels 3-5 n	%
Grade 10	ESOL 1	1155	97	8	1196	84	7
	ESOL 2	593	96	16	626	121	19
	ESOL 3	579	166	29	624	174	28
	ESOL 4	623	273	44	603	251	42
	Formerly ELL	626	426	68	746	430	58
	Non-ELL	13331	7939	60	12427	6720	54

Of the current 10th grade ELL students, approximately 21% scored within achievement levels 3-5 on the 2014 Biology EOC. In 2015, this figure remained approximately 21%.

US History

Students in grades 9-12 participated in the US History EOC assessment during both 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years. However, the numbers of students participating in the test were small in all grades other than grade 11. Consequently, only the results of students in Grade 11 who participated in the spring assessment are reported in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Number and Percentage of Students Scoring at or above Achievement Level 3 on the 2014 and 2015 US History EOC Assessment

	ESOL/ELL Status	2014			2015		
		Total n	Levels 3-5 n	%	Total n	Levels 3-5 n	%
Grade 11	ESOL 1	787	58	7	893	46	5
	ESOL 2	525	74	14	619	66	11
	ESOL 3	547	121	22	586	119	20
	ESOL 4	625	241	39	607	203	33
	Formerly ELL	658	433	66	755	433	57
	Non-ELL	17938	11246	63	18649	12123	65

Of the current 11th grade ELL students, approximately 20% scored within achievement levels 3-5 on the 2014 US History EOC. In 2015, this figure decreased to approximately 16%.

Civics

The results of students in Grade 7 who participated in the spring assessment by their ELL status are reported in Table 5.

Table 5

Number and Percentage of Students Scoring at or above Achievement Level 3 on the 2014 and 2015 Civics EOC Assessment

	ESOL/ELL Status	2014			2015		
		Total n	Levels 3-5 n	%	Total n	Levels 3-5 n	%
Grade 7	ESOL 1	1434	91	6	1504	114	8
	ESOL 2	693	113	16	739	124	17
	ESOL 3	990	215	22	1124	261	23
	ESOL 4	918	338	37	1027	419	41
	Formerly ELL	1250	702	56	2052	1144	56
	Non-ELL	20976	13199	63	19392	13695	71

Of the current 7th grade ELL students, approximately 19% scored within achievement levels 3-5 on the 2014 Civics EOC. In 2015, this figure increased to approximately 21%.

SECTION III

PROGRESS OF ELL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

This section illustrates the progress in acquiring English proficiency made by students enrolled in the ESOL program, as measured by the Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA). The CELLA outcomes are reported in three areas: Listening/Speaking, Reading, and Writing. In each of these three areas both the scale scores and proficiency levels are reported. CELLA uses four proficiency levels: Beginning, Low Intermediate, High Intermediate, and Proficient. Table 6 shows the numbers and percentages of ELL students who made progress in each of the three CELLA areas. “Making progress” is defined as earning a higher proficiency level or staying within the Proficient level. Only the results of those students classified as ELL in 2014 and had relevant CELLA scores in both 2014 and 2015 are included in the calculations.

Table 6

Numbers and Percentages of Students Making Progress in English Language Acquisition Between 2014 and 2015

2015 Grade	Listening/Speaking			Reading			Writing		
	Total n	Made progress n	%	Total n	Made progress n	%	Total n	Made progress n	%
1	9106	7621	84	9042	7565	84	9189	7446	81
2	8134	7354	90	8075	6801	84	8184	6329	77
3	5635	2349	42	5504	1071	19	5647	1048	19
4	4508	3392	75	4376	2898	66	4506	2718	60
5	4483	3722	83	4417	3309	75	4519	2929	65
6	3559	2283	64	3527	1270	36	3573	1511	42
7	3261	2385	73	3331	1940	58	3300	2082	63
8	2779	2069	74	2856	1821	64	2801	1823	65
9	2406	1867	78	2478	903	36	2425	1222	50
10	2456	1931	79	2514	1370	54	2460	1500	61
11	2231	1770	79	2293	1342	59	2231	1378	62
12	1388	1102	79	1442	814	56	1406	766	54
OVERALL	49946	37845	76	49855	31104	62	50241	30752	61

The drop in the percentage of students making progress from 2014 to 2015 shown for Grades 3, 6, and 9 students in Reading and Writing and to a smaller degree in Listening/Speaking is likely explained by the fact that proficiency level standards are defined for grade clusters K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12, but not for individual grades. This means that the standards are likely to be geared toward a student in the middle of the grade span of each cluster: a 1st grader for the K-2 cluster, and a 4th grader in the 3-5 cluster. Consequently, proficiency standards are likely to be easier to achieve for an average ELL student in the highest grade of a grade cluster than for a student in the lowest grade level of the next grade cluster.

For example, proficiency standards are likely to be easier for a 2nd grader than they are for a 3rd grader. As a result, many students in grade 3 in 2015 who were at a particular proficiency level in 2014 as grade 2 students did not meet the higher proficiency standards for the next level, thus failing to “make progress”.

Table 7 shows the 2014 and 2015 numbers and percentages of ELL students who scored within the Proficient category in each of the three CELLA areas and in all three areas. The results are disaggregated by grade level.

Table 7

Numbers and Percentages of ELL Students Scoring in the Proficient Category on the 2014 and 2015 CELLA

Grade	Listening/Speaking						Reading					
	2014			2015			2014			2015		
	Total n	Scored Proficient n	%	Total n	Scored Proficient n	%	Total n	Scored Proficient n	%	Total n	Scored Proficient n	%
K	9801	2459	25	9623	2323	24	9729	331	3	9513	214	2
1	10780	6568	61	10377	6271	60	10743	3102	29	10362	2899	28
2	9277	7296	79	9235	7332	79	9233	5301	57	9207	5767	63
3	6152	1204	20	6755	1966	29	6011	692	12	6622	605	9
4	6054	2609	43	5508	2711	49	6000	2422	40	5400	1580	29
5	5717	3122	55	5458	3378	62	5644	3235	57	5382	2678	50
6	4627	2499	54	4477	1972	44	4699	1037	22	4558	1020	22
7	3955	2152	54	4251	2036	48	4020	1125	28	4341	1310	30
8	3503	1920	55	3746	1756	47	3559	1284	36	3811	1311	34
9	3359	1334	40	3531	1585	45	3412	538	16	3687	744	20
10	3334	1373	41	3373	1655	49	3373	716	21	3465	851	25
11	2646	1235	47	2841	1490	52	2672	721	27	2895	925	32
12	1844	880	48	1707	993	58	1857	453	24	1756	599	34
K-12	71049	34651	49	70882	35468	50	70952	20957	30	70999	20503	29

Grade	Writing						All Modalities					
	2014			2015			2014			2015		
	Total n	Scored Proficient n	%	Total n	Scored Proficient n	%	Total n	Scored Proficient n	%	Total n	Scored Proficient n	%
K	9893	372	4	9667	295	3	9659	128	1	9401	99	1
1	10856	4066	37	10452	3404	33	10691	2066	19	10278	1864	18
2	9336	4825	52	9294	4932	53	9186	3779	41	9142	4136	45
3	6149	642	10	6726	543	8	5953	154	3	6537	165	3
4	6066	2360	39	5507	1383	25	5959	1069	18	5343	681	13
5	5714	2806	49	5497	2251	41	5601	1718	31	5342	1534	29
6	4654	1044	22	4519	1097	24	4565	488	11	4422	455	10
7	3966	1131	29	4303	1332	31	3896	620	16	4187	709	17
8	3511	1202	34	3770	1180	31	3463	782	23	3681	765	21
9	3362	743	22	3581	823	23	3296	323	10	3448	458	13
10	3296	857	26	3380	954	28	3248	443	14	3299	562	17
11	2635	766	29	2854	877	31	2595	452	17	2793	610	22
12	1851	486	26	1722	518	30	1817	261	14	1662	340	20
K-12	71289	21300	30	71272	19589	27	69929	12283	18	69535	12378	18

Table 7 shows that the combined K-12 percentages of students scoring proficient increased from 49% to 51% in Listening/Speaking, decreased from 30% in 2014 to 29% in 2015 in Reading, and decreased from 30% to 27% in the Writing modality. The percentage of ELL students who scored proficient in all three modalities remained 18% in 2015.

Table 8 compares ESOL exit rates for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. The column labeled “Total n” refers to the number of ELLs as of February of a given school year. The figures shown in the next two columns reflect those who exited the ESOL program by the end of the school year. It should be noted that the rules for exiting students from the ESOL program used in 2013-2014 required a student in addition to scoring proficient in all modalities of CELLA to score at or above achievement level 3 on the reading component of the FCAT 2.0 for students in grades 3-9 or to satisfy a graduation requirement in reading for students in grades 10-12. However, in 2014-2015, the reading achievement data were not available from the State, so the ESOL exit decisions were made by ELL committees based on the 2015 CELLA data and other sources of student information. Therefore, the percentages exhibited in Table 8 for 2014 and for 2015 are not fully comparable.

Table 8

Numbers and Percentages of Students Exiting the ESOL Program in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015

Grade	2013-2014			2014-2015		
	Total n	Exited ESOL n	%	Total n	Exited ESOL n	%
K	10170	137	1	9822	108	1
1	11072	2078	19	10539	1844	17
2	9532	3794	40	9404	4113	44
3	6391	141	2	6863	483	7
4	6260	868	14	5606	1110	20
5	5909	1008	17	5559	2542	46
6	4879	443	9	4606	1622	35
7	4154	391	9	4394	1486	34
8	3652	429	12	3860	1092	28
9	3647	237	6	3749	796	21
10	3557	227	6	3514	793	23
11	2840	344	12	2932	858	29
12	2164	248	11	1799	22	1
K-12	74227	10345	14	72647	16869	23

Table 8 shows that the ESOL exit rates for 2014-2015 were higher than those in 2013-2014 for most grade levels. The overall ESOL exit rate increased from 14% in 2013-2014 to 23% in 2014-2015.