



## **Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND THEIR ACADEMIC AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROGRESS: 2019-2020**

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## INTRODUCTION

This report addresses the following two areas:

- Demographic characteristics of students classified as English Language Learners (ELL).
- English language acquisition results of ELL students on the English Language Proficiency assessments known as ACCESS for ELLs.

Each of these two areas is described in a separate section of the report. In previous years, annual ELL reports also included a section on academic achievement results of students in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program and those who exited the ESOL program on the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA), and End-of-Course (EOC) assessments. However, the Spring 2020 State assessment has been cancelled because of the closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

When a student enrolls in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) for the first time, a Home Language Survey is completed by the student's parents/guardians. This survey inquires whether a student's first language was a language other than English, whether a student's primary language is a language other than English, and whether a language other than English is used at home. If at least one of the answers is Yes, 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. Depending on the English proficiency levels, ELL students are enrolled in specific ESOL courses tailored to meet students' language needs. English proficiency levels for ELL students in M-DCPS range from ESOL 1 (lowest) to ESOL 4 (highest). Students' English proficiency levels are reassessed annually, and the appropriate ESOL placement is determined based on the results of that testing. Currently, ACCESS for ELLs is used as the State-mandated English Language Proficiency test. ACCESS for ELLs stands for Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners. Once it is ascertained that a student has acquired English proficiency and satisfied the State requirements for exit from the ESOL program, the student exits the program and is re-classified as formerly ELL (ESOL level 5).

## SECTION I 2019-2020 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

This section describes certain demographic characteristics of ELL students in the District as of February 2020. 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, special education (SPED) status, and student language.

Table 1  
*2019-2020 Demographic Characteristics of Students in Grades K-12 by ELL Status*

		ELL (n = 61,187)		The rest of M-DCPS (n = 275,023)	
		n	%	n	%
Race/ Ethnicity	Asian	488	<b>0.8</b>	3,242	<b>1.2</b>
	Black	4,259	<b>7.0</b>	60,184	<b>21.9</b>
	Hispanic	54,636	<b>89.3</b>	188,917	<b>68.7</b>
	White	1,770	<b>2.9</b>	20,470	<b>7.4</b>
	Other	34	<b>0.0</b>	2,210	<b>0.8</b>
FRL Status	Free	44,875	<b>73.3</b>	166,765	<b>60.6</b>
	Reduced	4,439	<b>7.3</b>	24,137	<b>8.8</b>
	Non-FRL	11,873	<b>19.4</b>	84,121	<b>30.6</b>
Student Language	Spanish	53,674	<b>87.7</b>	121,341	<b>44.1</b>
	Haitian Creole	3,903	<b>6.4</b>	6,993	<b>2.5</b>
	Other	3,610	<b>5.9</b>	146,689	<b>53.3</b>
SPED Status	Gifted	520	<b>0.8</b>	45,797	<b>16.7</b>
	Specific Learning Disabled	3,159	<b>5.2</b>	12,247	<b>4.5</b>
	Other SPED	3,918	<b>6.4</b>	18,428	<b>6.7</b>
	Non-SPED	53,590	<b>87.6</b>	198,551	<b>72.2</b>

## SECTION II ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION RESULTS

ACCESS for ELLs was developed by the multistate World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium. It measures students' English language proficiency in four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The assessment provides scale scores and proficiency levels in each of these domains as well as an overall composite scale score and proficiency level. Proficiency levels vary from 1 to 6 and are labeled (1) Entering, (2) Emerging, (3) Developing, (4) Expanding, (5) Bridging, and (6) Reaching. Level 6, or Reaching, is considered by the WIDA consortium as indicating proficiency in a particular English language domain. Proficiency level determinations are grade-level specific; proficiency levels below level 6 are reported as decimals. For example, a proficiency level of 3.4 indicates that a student is at the Developing level of proficiency and has made four tenths of the way to the Expanding level.

### Acquiring English Language Proficiency

Tables 2 and 3 show the percentages of ELL students scoring within proficiency levels 4-6 by language domain and on the composite scale by grade and year. These proficiency levels are selected because the Florida State Board of Education defines scoring "proficient" on ACCESS for ELLs as scoring at or above proficiency level 4 in reading and at or above level 4 on the composite scale.

Table 2

*Numbers and Percentages of Students Scoring in Levels 4-6 in the Listening and Speaking Domains on the 2019 and 2020 ACCESS for ELLs*

Grade	Listening				Speaking			
	2019		2020		2019		2020	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
K	4731	<b>55</b>	4392	<b>53</b>	4152	<b>48</b>	3718	<b>45</b>
1	6543	<b>78</b>	5315	<b>69</b>	2946	<b>35</b>	2157	<b>28</b>
2	6126	<b>79</b>	5591	<b>76</b>	2475	<b>32</b>	2428	<b>33</b>
3	5638	<b>81</b>	4861	<b>79</b>	2033	<b>29</b>	1615	<b>27</b>
4	4354	<b>81</b>	3742	<b>79</b>	2806	<b>52</b>	2127	<b>46</b>
5	3786	<b>79</b>	3320	<b>78</b>	2472	<b>52</b>	1817	<b>43</b>
6	2362	<b>68</b>	2484	<b>71</b>	1722	<b>50</b>	1814	<b>53</b>
7	2162	<b>64</b>	1830	<b>64</b>	1714	<b>51</b>	1253	<b>45</b>
8	1863	<b>58</b>	1665	<b>60</b>	1406	<b>44</b>	1097	<b>40</b>
9	1582	<b>51</b>	1475	<b>48</b>	978	<b>32</b>	983	<b>32</b>
10	1501	<b>50</b>	1293	<b>47</b>	1016	<b>34</b>	833	<b>31</b>
11	1210	<b>46</b>	1171	<b>48</b>	814	<b>31</b>	797	<b>33</b>
12	723	<b>44</b>	463	<b>33</b>	472	<b>29</b>	399	<b>29</b>
K-12	42581	<b>68</b>	37602	<b>66</b>	25006	<b>40</b>	21038	<b>37</b>

Table 3

*Numbers and Percentages of Students Scoring in Levels 4-6 in the Reading and Writing Domains and on the Composite Scale on the 2019 and 2020 ACCESS for ELLs*

Grade	Reading				Writing				Composite			
	2019		2020		2019		2020		2019		2020	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
K	1895	<b>22</b>	1877	<b>23</b>	319	<b>4</b>	264	<b>3</b>	1484	<b>17</b>	1301	<b>16</b>
1	2523	<b>30</b>	2535	<b>33</b>	125	<b>1</b>	69	<b>1</b>	1315	<b>16</b>	982	<b>13</b>
2	2936	<b>38</b>	3261	<b>44</b>	571	<b>7</b>	578	<b>8</b>	2312	<b>30</b>	2253	<b>31</b>
3	3006	<b>43</b>	3387	<b>55</b>	941	<b>14</b>	464	<b>8</b>	2411	<b>35</b>	2032	<b>34</b>
4	2521	<b>47</b>	2184	<b>46</b>	2051	<b>38</b>	1399	<b>30</b>	2963	<b>56</b>	2312	<b>50</b>
5	2020	<b>42</b>	1923	<b>45</b>	2099	<b>44</b>	1557	<b>37</b>	2695	<b>57</b>	2168	<b>52</b>
6	944	<b>27</b>	952	<b>27</b>	759	<b>22</b>	953	<b>27</b>	1312	<b>38</b>	1461	<b>43</b>
7	891	<b>26</b>	642	<b>22</b>	599	<b>18</b>	634	<b>22</b>	1222	<b>37</b>	1046	<b>38</b>
8	933	<b>29</b>	664	<b>24</b>	532	<b>17</b>	505	<b>18</b>	1103	<b>35</b>	917	<b>34</b>
9	1101	<b>36</b>	1030	<b>33</b>	1007	<b>33</b>	1220	<b>40</b>	1084	<b>36</b>	1056	<b>36</b>
10	969	<b>32</b>	877	<b>32</b>	994	<b>33</b>	1014	<b>37</b>	1042	<b>35</b>	965	<b>37</b>
11	942	<b>35</b>	764	<b>32</b>	883	<b>34</b>	836	<b>35</b>	867	<b>34</b>	806	<b>35</b>
12	376	<b>23</b>	231	<b>17</b>	302	<b>19</b>	262	<b>19</b>	364	<b>23</b>	269	<b>20</b>
K-12	21057	<b>34</b>	20327 <sup>1</sup>	<b>36</b>	11182	<b>18</b>	9755	<b>17</b>	20174	<b>33</b>	17568	<b>31</b>

Tables 2 and 3 show that the percentages of K-12 ELL students who scored within proficiency levels 4-6 in each of the language domains except Reading and on the composite scale were somewhat higher in 2019 than in 2020.

### **Making Progress in English Language Acquisition**

Table 4 exhibits percentages of non-ESE ELL students who made progress in each language domain and on the composite scale between 2018 and 2019. ESE students are those who have any primary exceptionality except gifted. Non-ESE students are those who are identified as gifted or have no primary exceptionality. Making progress in a language domain is defined in this report as having improved the domain proficiency level by at least 1 (for example, moving from a proficiency level 1.2 to 2.2 or higher in the language domain of Listening) or maintaining a proficiency level 4 or higher.

Table 5 shows the same information for ESE ELL students (those with any primary exceptionality except gifted).

Table 4

<sup>1</sup> Some schools submitted incomplete ACCESS for ELLs testing information in 2020 due to the COVID-19 and the closure of schools.

*Numbers and Percentages of Non-ESE Students Making Progress in Each Domain and on the Composite Scale between 2019 and 2020 based on ACCESS for ELLs Results*

2020 Grade	Listening		Speaking		Reading		Writing		Composite	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	5390	<b>88</b>	2922	<b>51</b>	4369	<b>75</b>	2772	<b>49</b>	3529	<b>63</b>
2	4924	<b>88</b>	2717	<b>51</b>	3291	<b>60</b>	1596	<b>30</b>	2542	<b>48</b>
3	3911	<b>92</b>	1826	<b>47</b>	3055	<b>75</b>	853	<b>22</b>	2092	<b>54</b>
4	2854	<b>92</b>	1887	<b>66</b>	1955	<b>66</b>	1503	<b>53</b>	2108	<b>74</b>
5	2582	<b>91</b>	1566	<b>59</b>	1743	<b>65</b>	1462	<b>56</b>	1950	<b>75</b>
6	2152	<b>87</b>	1729	<b>74</b>	1036	<b>44</b>	942	<b>41</b>	1485	<b>65</b>
7	1688	<b>84</b>	1252	<b>64</b>	742	<b>38</b>	775	<b>41</b>	1140	<b>60</b>
8	1575	<b>78</b>	1121	<b>58</b>	754	<b>39</b>	679	<b>36</b>	974	<b>52</b>
9	1518	<b>70</b>	1074	<b>51</b>	1181	<b>54</b>	1486	<b>69</b>	1229	<b>60</b>
10	1404	<b>65</b>	1023	<b>48</b>	948	<b>44</b>	1054	<b>49</b>	1046	<b>51</b>
11	1244	<b>62</b>	994	<b>51</b>	853	<b>42</b>	928	<b>47</b>	884	<b>47</b>
12	21	<b>32</b>	21	<b>40</b>	3	<b>5</b>	5	<b>9</b>	7	<b>15</b>
1-12	29263	<b>84</b>	18132	<b>55</b>	19930	<b>59</b>	14055	<b>43</b>	18986	<b>59</b>

Table 5  
*Numbers and Percentages of ESE Students Making Progress in Each Domain and on the Composite Scale between 2019 and 2020 based on ACCESS for ELLs Results*

2020 Grade	Listening		Speaking		Reading		Writing		Composite	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	603	<b>75</b>	321	<b>41</b>	494	<b>62</b>	282	<b>36</b>	344	<b>44</b>
2	702	<b>73</b>	350	<b>37</b>	291	<b>31</b>	222	<b>24</b>	208	<b>22</b>
3	995	<b>80</b>	441	<b>37</b>	816	<b>66</b>	194	<b>16</b>	373	<b>31</b>
4	881	<b>87</b>	596	<b>60</b>	437	<b>44</b>	312	<b>31</b>	453	<b>46</b>
5	716	<b>88</b>	474	<b>59</b>	353	<b>44</b>	285	<b>35</b>	423	<b>53</b>
6	340	<b>82</b>	283	<b>69</b>	95	<b>23</b>	105	<b>26</b>	162	<b>41</b>
7	179	<b>78</b>	150	<b>66</b>	48	<b>21</b>	53	<b>24</b>	74	<b>34</b>
8	120	<b>80</b>	110	<b>73</b>	36	<b>25</b>	44	<b>31</b>	62	<b>44</b>
9	54	<b>57</b>	51	<b>55</b>	35	<b>36</b>	43	<b>47</b>	35	<b>40</b>
10	40	<b>63</b>	38	<b>64</b>	15	<b>24</b>	25	<b>40</b>	22	<b>39</b>
11	13	<b>35</b>	18	<b>47</b>	8	<b>20</b>	11	<b>27</b>	10	<b>27</b>
12	2	<b>50</b>	0	<b>0</b>	0	<b>0</b>	1	<b>25</b>	1	<b>25</b>
1-12	4645	<b>80</b>	2832	<b>50</b>	2628	<b>46</b>	1577	<b>28</b>	2167	<b>39</b>

Tables 4 and 5 show that the percentages of ELL students making progress between 2019 and 2020 varied by language domain with the smallest percentages making progress in Writing and the largest percentages in Listening. This was true for both ESE and non-ESE students.

**Acquiring English Language Proficiency and Exiting the ESOL Program**

The Florida State Board of Education defines scoring “proficient” on ACCESS for ELLs as scoring at or above proficiency level 4 in reading and at or above level 4 on the composite scale on ACCESS for ELLs. Students in grades K-2 who score proficient on ACCESS for ELLs (as defined above) exit the ESOL program in accordance with the State Board Rule. Students in grades 3-9 must in addition score within achievement levels 3-5 on the FSA ELA to exit the ESOL program. Students in grades 10-12 must satisfy the ELA graduation requirement on the FSA ELA or via concordance scores. Because the statewide FSA testing in the spring of 2019-2020 was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these rules were only applied to students in grades K-2 and 10-12.

Schools were provided with the lists of students in grades 3-9 who satisfied the proficiency criteria on ACCESS for ELLs. These lists contained the 2019-2020 final grades in the Language Arts courses so that the schools’ ELL committees could make appropriate ESOL exit decisions. A recent Executive Order (2020-EO-07) from the Florida Department of Education allowed districts to use the local assessment reading scores along with the ACCESS for ELLs results to exit students from the ESOL program. Currently, the District is working on a plan to use the 2020-2021 iReady AP1 and Mid-Year Assessment scores in reading to make the ESOL exit determinations.

Table 6 shows English language proficiency ESOL exit rates in 2018-2019 and in 2019-2020 in selected grades. The column labeled “Total n” refers to the number of ELLs as of June of each school year who participated in the ACCESS for ELLs. The figures shown in the next columns reflect those who scored proficient on ACCESS for ELLs and those who exited the ESOL program based on the State criteria.

Table 6  
*Numbers of ELL Students tested on ACCESS for ELLs and of those, Numbers and Percentages of Students Scoring Proficient and Exiting the ESOL Program in 2018-2019 and in 2019-2020*

Grade	2018-2019					2019-2020				
	Total n	Proficient		Exited		Total n	Proficient		Exited	
		n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%
K	8555	1143	<b>13</b>	1143	<b>13</b>	8233	1053	<b>13</b>	1053	<b>13</b>
1	8408	1117	<b>13</b>	1117	<b>13</b>	7694	898	<b>12</b>	898	<b>12</b>
2	7710	1988	<b>26</b>	1988	<b>26</b>	7409	2048	<b>28</b>	2048	<b>28</b>
10	3010	744	<b>25</b>	178	<b>6</b>	2782	689	<b>25</b>	21	<b>1</b>
11	2531	613	<b>24</b>	261	<b>10</b>	2458	597	<b>24</b>	199	<b>8</b>
12	1361	137	<b>10</b>	112	<b>8</b>	1431	166	<b>12</b>	124	<b>9</b>
Total	31575	5742	<b>18</b>	<b>4799</b>	<b>15</b>	30007	5451	<b>18</b>	4343	<b>14</b>

Table 6 shows that the K-12 English proficiency rate for ELL students in selected grades was 18% in both 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. The ESOL exit rate was 15% in 2018-2019 and 14% in 2019-2020. The relatively small number of students in grade 10 exiting the ESOL program in 2019-2020 was likely caused by the fact that students in grade 10 did not have an opportunity to satisfy the reading graduation requirements using the FSA results due to the cancellation of testing in the spring of 2019-2020.