



Austin Independent School District

BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

Summary Report, 2009–2010



AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Department of Program Evaluation

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ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) was established in 1972 to support program decision making and strategic planning in Austin Independent School District (AISD). The department is housed in the Office of Accountability and is charged with evaluating federal, state, and locally funded programs in AISD. DPE staff pride themselves on integrating best and innovative evaluation practices with educational and institutional knowledge. DPE works with program staff throughout the district to design and conduct formative and summative program evaluations. DPE's methods for evaluating programs vary depending on the research question, program design, and reporting requirements. The evaluations report objectively about program implementation and outcomes, and serve to inform program staff, decision makers, and planners in the district. DPE also responds to information needs at all levels. DPE reports may be accessed online at <http://www.austinisd.org/inside/accountability/evaluation/reports.phtml>.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2009–2010, Austin Independent School District (AISD) provided students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) with either a bilingual education (BE) or English as a second language (ESL) program to promote educational equity among all students. AISD's BE/ESL programs were provided funding through local, state, and federal (i.e., American Recovery and Reinvestment Act [ARRA]; Title I, Part A; and Title III, Part A) sources.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The BE/ESL programs enrolled 24,593 students identified as LEP in Fall 2009, representing 29% of the total AISD enrollment. According to AISD's student records, demographic and enrollment information included the following:

- Ninety-three percent of English language learners (ELLs) were also economically disadvantaged (i.e., qualified for free or reduced-price lunch).
- Ninety-three percent of ELLs were of Hispanic origin, followed by Asian (5%), White (1%), African American (<1%), and Native American (<1%).
- Eleven percent of ELLs ($n = 2,704$) were immigrants (i.e., born outside of the United States to non-naturalized or non-U.S. citizens).
- Seven percent of ELLs ($n = 1,825$) were identified as requiring special educational services.
- Four percent of ELLs ($n = 875$) did not participate in either a BE or ESL program due to parental denial of service.
- Sixty-three languages other than English are represented among AISD ELLs' primary home language.
- Seventy-five percent of ELLs were served at the elementary grade level (i.e., early education through 5th grade); 13% of ELLs were served at the middle school level (i.e., 6th through 8th grade); 12% of ELLs were served at the high school level (i.e., 9th through 12th grade).

STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Students' English language proficiency is assessed annually for kindergarten through 12th grade by the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). The Texas Education Agency (TEA) calculated a yearly progress indicator based on change in students' TELPAS composite ratings from Spring 2009 to Spring 2010. To meet the state's Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO) standards, at least 45% of district ELLs in kindergarten through 12th grade must have earned a yearly progress indicator of 1 or higher (i.e., students must have progressed by at least one proficiency level or maintained a rating of

advanced high from year to year). Sixty-two percent of AISD kindergarten through 12th-grade ELLs gained at least one proficiency level or remained at advanced high proficiency from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010.

STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The state mandated Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests are administered annually in mathematics (math), reading/English language arts (ELA), science, writing, and social studies. Although the achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELLs remained in 2009–2010 results, overall a greater percentage of ELLs met the minimum standard on the TAKS across the various content areas than did so during the 2008–2009 school year. The grade levels and content areas in which the percentage of ELLs who met standard on the TAKS decreased from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010 included 8th-grade math, and 3rd-, 6th-, and 8th-grade reading/ELA.

BE/ESL PROGRAM EXIT

The number of students exiting the BE/ESL programs increased by 14% ($n = 256$) from the 2008–2009 to 2009–2010. At least half of the students who exited BE/ESL each year did so between the 4th and 6th grade.

BE/ESL TEACHING STAFF

In 2009–2010, 1,746 teachers with BE or ESL certification worked with ELLs. Furthermore, 1,101 AISD staff (i.e., teachers and administrators) attended 24,607.5 hours of professional development activities in 17 courses directly related to BE and/or ESL instruction (i.e., an average of 22 hours of completed professional development activities per staff member).

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS

The BE/ESL program expenditures for 2009–2010 were \$6.6 million. The two largest sources of district funding for BE/ESL programs were the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Title III, Part A grant (52%) and local district funds (22%). The ARRA State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) (13%) supplemented the BE/ESL programs, which usually were covered by local funds for several summer school programs for ELLs. The district also used NCLB Title I (Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged), Part A funds (9%) and TEA reimbursement funds (2%) to support these summer school programs. ARRA Title I funds (1%) were used to fund the initial planning and development of AISD's 2010–2011 dual-language program. The Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners (CREATE) grant (<1%) provided professional development training to 7th-grade teachers on eight middle school campuses to improve the content knowledge of ELLs.

Overall, the BE/ESL program cost per ELL enrolled was \$206, approximately a \$27 increase from \$179 per ELL enrolled in 2008–2009. This amounted to an approximate \$660,000 increase in spending (based on total ELL enrollment). The additional cost was covered through a \$1,150,899 rollover from Title III A funds from the previous year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To advance the district’s goal to eliminate the achievement gap, further work should be done to determine factors related to ELLs meeting standards on TAKS, including compiling best practices of campuses that demonstrate high achievement among ELLs.
- The district should continue to improve the writing curriculum for all grade levels for ELLs because the TELPAS scores for this domain were consistently lower than were scores for all other domains (i.e., reading, listening, and speaking) for all grade levels.
- District staff should continue to recruit ELLs into the prekindergarten (pre-K) program and emphasize the importance of pre-K and kindergarten in terms of benefitting students’ long-term academic outcomes, as shown in previous research.

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INTRODUCTION

Texas law requires that every student with a primary home language other than English, who is identified as limited English proficient (LEP), be provided with a full opportunity to participate in a bilingual education (BE) or English as a second language (ESL) program. To ensure educational equity, the law also states that districts must seek certified teaching personnel and assess these students' achievement in the state-mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum. Students identified as LEP have access to several programs in Austin Independent School District (AISD), depending upon their grade level, level of English proficiency, and parent preference. The goal of the BE program is to enable English language learners (ELLs) to become competent in comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing through the development of literacy and academic skills in the students' primary language. The goal of the ESL program is to develop students' literacy through the integrated use of second-language instructional methods.

EVALUATION MANDATE

Chapter §89.1265 of the 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC, 1996, 2002) states the following in reference to program evaluation:

- (a) All districts required to conduct a bilingual education or English as a second language program shall conduct periodic assessment and continuous diagnosis in the languages of instruction to determine program impact and student outcomes in all subject areas.
- (b) Annual reports of educational performance shall reflect the academic progress in either language of the limited English proficient students, the extent to which they are becoming proficient in English, the number of students who have been exited from the bilingual education and English as a second language programs, and the number of teachers and aides trained and the frequency, scope, and results of the training.

The terms limited English proficient (LEP) and English language learner (ELL) are used interchangeably throughout this report. LEP is used in state accountability documentation to classify students whose dominant language is other than English and who have been tested and determined to be of limited English language proficiency. ELL is more commonly used to describe students who are not yet proficient in English.

The purposes of this report are (a) to describe the demographic characteristics of students participating in BE and ESL programs, (b) to summarize BE/ESL students' progress toward English language proficiency on the Texas English Proficiency Language Assessment System (TELPAS), (c) to compare ELLs' performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) with that of other students, (d) to provide the number of students who have exited the BE and ESL programs, and (e) to document the number of teachers who participated in professional development opportunities in the 2009–2010 school year.

2009–2010 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

BE/ESL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE IN AISD

BE is a program of instruction in the native language and English, offered in prekindergarten (pre-K) through 5th grade (or 6th grade on elementary campuses with a 6th grade), which is provided to students in any language classification for which 20 or more ELLs are enrolled in the same grade level on a particular campus. Although the majority of BE participants in AISD are native Spanish speakers, the presence of sufficient numbers of Vietnamese- and Korean-speaking students warrants the provision of a few bilingual classes in those languages.

AISD implements a late transitional BE model (i.e., literacy and core content skills initially are developed in the dominant language, although English is taught daily across the core content areas, and the amount of instruction in English increases gradually across grade levels). Students are expected to achieve grade-level academic competency and English proficiency by the end of 5th grade, after spending approximately 5 to 7 years in the program. Beginning in 2010–2011, BE will be expanded to include several schools with dual-language programs throughout the district. Like the current bilingual program, dual-language programs prepare students for program exit at 5th grade; however, these programs differ from the current model in the following ways:

1. they have a more prescribed implementation of the amount of daily instruction in English and Spanish;
2. they have two-way dual-language classrooms comprising native Spanish and native English speakers; and,
3. they can be continued through 12th grade.

ESL, a program of specialized instruction in English, is provided to elementary students whose parents declined BE but approved ESL instruction, to elementary students for whom bilingual instruction in their native language is not available, and to all secondary ELLs. ESL students are immersed in an English learning environment. Core content instruction is provided through the use of second language methodologies, including content-based and pull-out sessions.

AISD also offers specialized support to secondary-level recent immigrants and other ELLs with beginner and intermediate English language proficiency through the English Language Development Academy (ELDA) programs for 6th-, 7th- and 8th-grade students at Garcia and Webb Middle Schools and to recent immigrant students in 9th and 10th grade at

International High School. An overview of BE/ESL programs offered during the regular school year is provided in Table A-1 in Appendix A.

Additional programs are available during the summer (e.g., all ELL rising kindergarteners and 1st graders are invited to participate in a month-long summer school program designed to accelerate English language proficiency and to prevent the summer learning losses that often occur among low-income students). High school ELLs who have been in U.S. schools for 3 years or less may take ESL classes and a selection of ESL core content classes for credit recovery or acceleration during the summer.

FAMILY PROGRAMS

In 2009–2010, the district offered the ePromotoras program for mothers of rising pre-K students. This parent empowerment program trained Spanish-speaking mothers how to teach early literacy skills to their children and to see themselves as their child’s first teacher. Mothers who completed the 6-week program were certified to train other parents of young children in the early literacy skills they acquired. In 2008–2009, the ePromotoras program was offered at four AISD elementary campuses, but has since been expanded to 10 campuses using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

Low-income ELLs and their families also benefit from the full range of services and supports (e.g., the United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] National School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs, and access to parent support specialists on Title I campuses) offered to all who qualify.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

In Fall 2009, 84,676 students were enrolled in early education (EE) through 12th grade in AISD, and of these, 24,593 (29%) were identified as LEP in Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) demographic records (Table 1). The number of ELLs enrolled in AISD increased by 1% from 24,257 students in 2008–2009. The BE program served 15,367 ELLs (62%). The ESL program served 8,347 ELLs (34%). Approximately 4% of ELLs ($n = 875$) did not participate in either program due to parental denial of any special language program.

Fall 2009 ELL Demographics

- *29% of enrolled AISD students were ELLs.*
- *93% of ELLs were economically disadvantaged.*
- *11% of ELLs were immigrants.*
- *4% of ELLs did not participate in either a BE or ESL due to parental denial of service.*
- *64 languages were represented among AISD ELLs*

Most ELLs (93%) primarily spoke Spanish at home, and 46% of Hispanic students within AISD were ELLs. Sixty-two languages other than English and Spanish were reported as being primarily spoken at home, including Vietnamese, Korean, Arabic, and Burmese. Forty percent of Asian students within AISD were ELLs. The number of immigrant students (i.e., students born outside the United States with no U.S. citizenship) described as ELL in 2009–2010 decreased by 369 students (12%) from 3,073 immigrant ELLs in 2008–2009.

Table 1. English Language Learners' (ELLs) Characteristics, 2009–2010

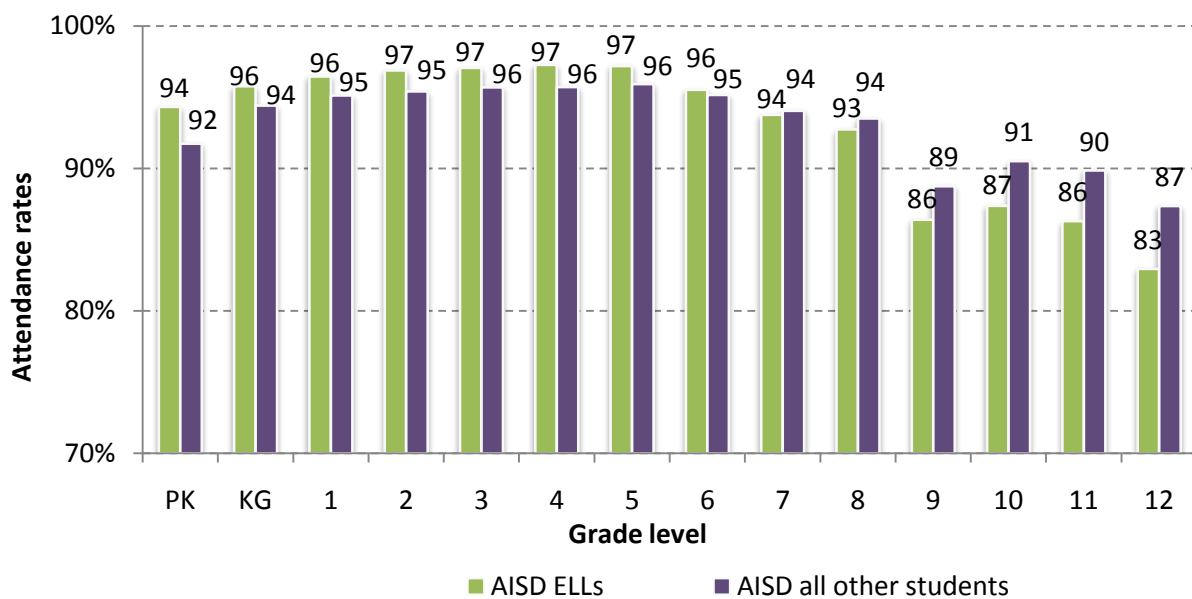
	All enrolled ELLs (<i>n</i> = 24,593)		All other students (<i>n</i> = 60,083)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Gender				
Female	11,665	47	29,375	49
Male	12,928	53	30,708	51
Ethnicity				
African American	188	<1	9,408	16
Asian	1,230	5	1,857	3
Hispanic	22,824	93	27,102	45
Native American	20	<1	204	<1
White	331	1	21,512	36
Low-income family				
Eligible for free or reduced-price lunch	22,851	93	30,793	51
Not eligible for free or reduced-price lunch	1,742	7	29,290	49
Primary language spoken at home				
Spanish	22,906	93	7,384	12
Vietnamese	370	2	183	<1
Korean	194	<1	116	<1
Arabic	143	<1	58	<1
Burmese	120	<1	16	<1
Other	860	3	940	2
Immigrants	2,704	11	157	<1
Received special education services	1,825	7	6,237	10
Grade level				
Early education through 5th grade	18,377	75	29,350	49
6th grade through 8th grade	3,277	13	13,129	22
9th grade through 12th grade	2,939	12	17,604	29

Source. AISD Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) 110 records, 2009–2010

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

For the 2009–2010 school year, ELLs had slightly higher attendance rates on average than did non-ELLs for pre-K through 6th grade (Figure 1). However, attendance rates for all students declined for the secondary grade levels, especially in high school and particularly for 9th grade. On average, non-ELLs had higher attendance rates in high school than did ELLs in the same grade level.

Figure 1. Student Attendance Rates, by English Language Learner (ELL) Status and Grade Level, 2009–2010



Source. AISD PEIMS 400 records, 2009–2010

Note. The vertical axis of the bar chart has been truncated to represent 70% to 100% to better display the difference in attendance rates between AISD ELLs and non-ELLs.

STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (2001) requires districts that accept Title III, Part A funds to be accountable for their ELLs learning English. In Texas, ELL's proficiency is assessed annually using the TELPAS for kindergarten through 12th grade. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) examines year-to-year change in students' TELPAS scores to determine if districts met Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) in language proficiency (TEA, 2009). AISD uses TELPAS scores in combination with TAKS reading and writing scores and additional measures of English language proficiency to determine if students are ready to exit BE/ESL programs.

TELPAS COMPOSITE RATINGS

The four domains assessed by the TELPAS are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students receive a proficiency score and rating (i.e., beginning, intermediate, advanced, advanced high) on each domain. Students' scores on the TELPAS language domains are weighted in the following manner to create a composite score: listening is 5%, speaking is 5%, reading is 75%, and writing is 15%. ELLs' 2009–2010 composite ratings are provided in Table 2.

TELPAS COMPOSITE SCORES AND RATINGS

Composite range	Numeric value	Rating category
1.0 – 1.5	1	Beginning
1.6 – 2.5	2	Intermediate
2.6 – 3.5	3	Advanced
3.6 – 4.0	4	Advanced high

Table 2. Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Composite Ratings, by Grade Level, 2009–2010

Grade level	Number of ELLs	TELPAS beginning	TELPAS intermediate	TELPAS advanced	TELPAS advanced high
Kindergarten	3,044	72%	14%	8%	5%
1	2,981	49%	25%	14%	11%
2	2,960	17%	33%	25%	24%
3	2,739	14%	23%	26%	37%
4	2,204	7%	23%	28%	41%
5	1,582	6%	14%	24%	55%
6	1,250	6%	15%	39%	40%
7	1,144	4%	15%	33%	46%
8	906	6%	12%	26%	52%
9	989	15%	16%	26%	36%
10	799	3%	15%	28%	33%
11	532	2%	11%	27%	56%
12	451	3%	12%	29%	45%

Source. AISD TELPAS records, 2009–2010

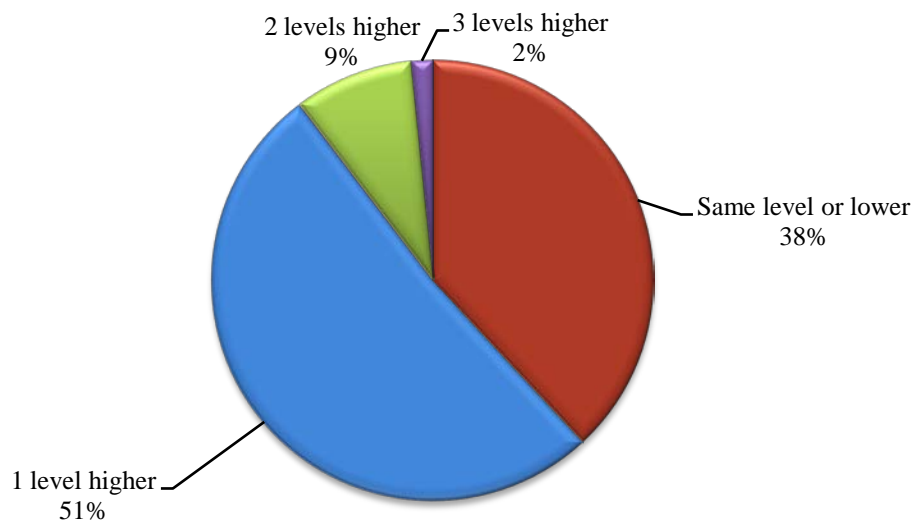
Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% because the *no rating available* category has been excluded.

ANNUAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY PROGRESS

TEA examined year-to-year change in students' TELPAS scores for all students who were enrolled on the PEIMS snapshot date in Fall 2009 and who had Spring 2009 TELPAS scores. For each student who met these criteria, TEA calculated a yearly progress indicator based on change in students' TELPAS composite ratings from Spring 2009 to Spring 2010. The resulting yearly progress indicator scores ranged from 0 (no change or a decline) to 3 (an increase of 3 composite levels); if students' ratings were advanced high in both years, then the yearly progress indicator was marked as 1 (one level higher). To meet AMAO standards, at least 45% of district ELLs in kindergarten through 12th grade must have earned a yearly progress indicator of 1 or higher (i.e., students must have progressed by at least one proficiency level or maintained a rating of advanced high from year to year).

As shown in Figure 1, district ELLs made more than the required AMAO growth in English language proficiency. Sixty-two percent of kindergarten through 12th-grade ELLs gained at least one proficiency level or remained at advanced high proficiency.

Figure 2. Students' Yearly Progress on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) between Spring 2009 and Spring 2010, Kindergarten Through 12th Grade



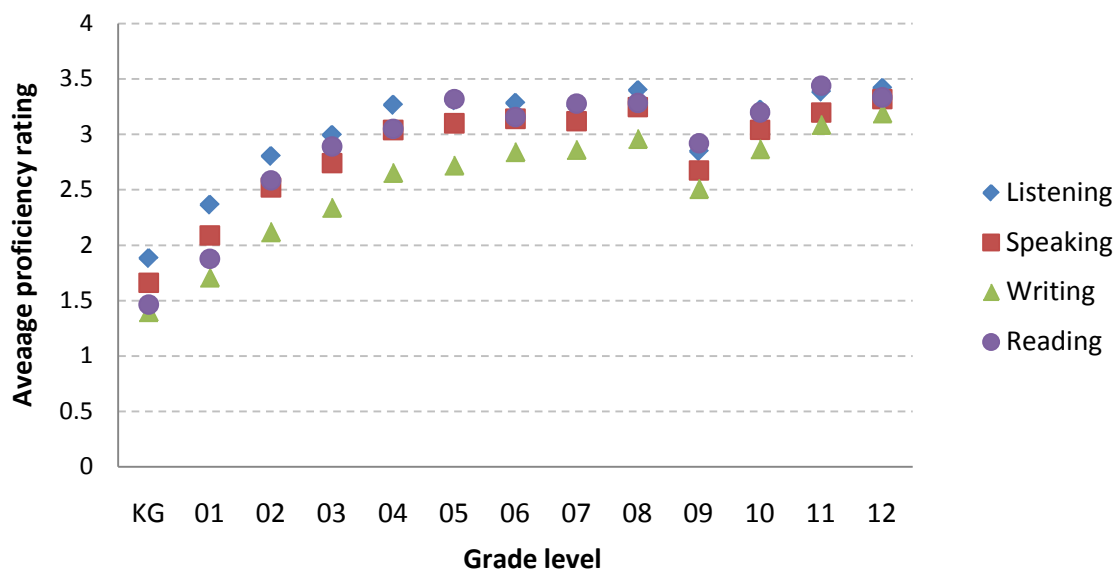
Source. AISD TELPAS records, 2010

Note. Percentages sum to greater than 100% due to rounding. The yearly progress indicator is coded on the following scale: 0 = the rating is the same or lower than the previous year, 1 = the rating is one level higher than the previous year, 2 = the rating is 2 levels higher than the previous year, 3 = the rating is 3 levels higher than the previous year. If students' ratings are advanced high in both years, then the yearly progress indicator is marked as 1 (i.e., one level higher).

TELPAS PROFICIENCY BY LANGUAGE DOMAIN

In addition to providing composite language proficiency scores, the TELPAS provides ratings for each of four language domain skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Two interesting patterns emerged from the analysis of 2009–2010 TELPAS proficiency by language domain that mirrored results from the previous year (Malerba & Herrera, 2010). First, across grade levels, students consistently scored higher on the listening, reading, and speaking sections of the TELPAS than on the writing portion (Figure 2). This could be an indication that the BE/ESL writing curriculum should be strengthened across grade levels, or it could be that the writing section is the most challenging part of the TELPAS assessment, or both. Regardless, the consistency of the results indicates that BE program staff should examine the alignment between the TELPAS assessment and the writing curriculum to determine if program changes are warranted.

Figure 3. Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Ratings, by Language Domain and Grade Level, Spring 2010



Source. AISD TELPAS records, 2010

Ninth-grade ELLs consistently scored lower, on average, than did other secondary students on all sections of the TELPAS. In previous years, a higher percentage of 9th-grade ELLs with intermediate or beginning proficiency scores were retained in 9th grade (Malerba & Herrera, 2010). Also, 9th-grade ELLs had the lowest attendance rates, which might be correlated to the lower TELPAS scores (Figure 1).

STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

TAKS PASSING RATES

The state-mandated TAKS is administered annually to students in mathematics (math; grades 3 through 11); in reading (grades 3 through 9); in English language arts (ELA; grades 10 and 11), in writing (grades 4 and 7); in science (grades 5, 8, 10, and 11); and in social studies (grades 8, 10, and 11). English and Spanish versions of the TAKS are available for students in grades 3 through 5.

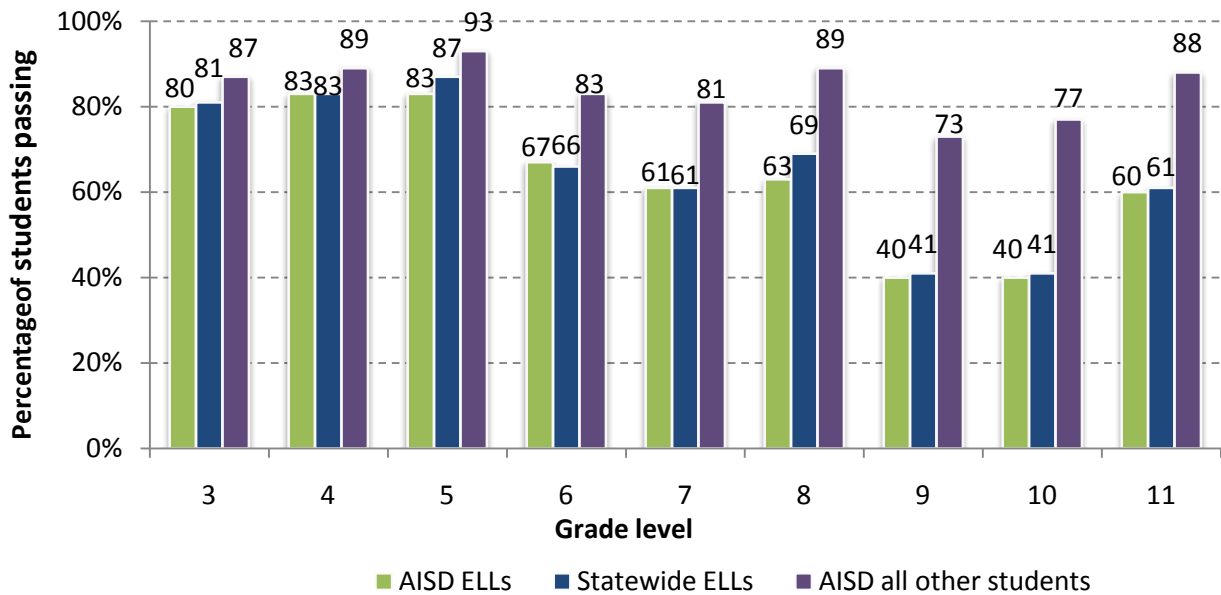
Although ELLs' TAKS scores have continued to improve over the years (Herrera & Malerba, 2010), the achievement gap persisted between the academic performance of ELLs and other AISD students across most grade levels and subject areas in 2009–2010 (Figures 3 through 7). Two important factors should be considered in the interpretation of this trend. First, TEA offers subject area tests in Spanish only through 5th grade, which may contribute to the noticeably lower passing rates for ELLs in the secondary grades. Second, because passing English TAKS in both reading/ELA and writing is a criterion for exiting BE/ESL programs, students who struggled with the content in these areas were likely to remain classified as ELLs from year to year. In contrast, the "all other students" group's passing percentages were positively influenced by the inclusion of exited ELLs who were English proficient and academically successful. Figures 3 through 7 present the combined English and Spanish TAKS results for ELLs. Tables 3 through 7 do not represent the gains of individual students over time; rather, they represent the cross-sectional performance of ELLs within the grade levels and school years indicated.

Math

The percentage of AISD ELLs who met standard on the math TAKS test was near or the same as the percentage of ELLs statewide who met standard across all grade levels, except for grades 5 and 8, where a lower percentage of AISD ELLs met standard than did ELLs statewide (i.e., -4% pts. and -6% pts., respectively). At most grade levels, percentage point gains from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010 showed the district's progress toward improving the academic achievement of ELLs in math (Table 3). Students at the elementary level consistently had the highest passing rates. Both middle and high school ELLs overall passing percentages continued to lag behind those of elementary ELLs, particularly at 9th and 10th-grade; however, this trend was applicable statewide (Figure 3). Overall, ELLs at all grade levels made gains with respect to the percentage passing math TAKS, except for 8th grade ELLs, who had a loss of 3 percentage points compared with the previous year. With the exception of 8th grade,

secondary-level ELLs made greater gains with respect to the percentage passing math TAKS than did elementary ELLs.

Figure 4. Percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) and Other Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Mathematics Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level, 2009–2010



Sources. AISD TAKS files and *Texas Education Agency (TEA) Statewide TAKS Summary Reports, 2009–2010*

Note. Fifth- and 8th-grade statewide results are cumulative from all periods of testing. 11th-grade statewide ELL results are for the primary administration of TAKS only.

Table 3. Math Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners (ELLs) From 2008–2009 and 2009–2010, by Grade Level

Grade level	Number of students 2008–2009	Percentage passing math TAKS 2008–2009	Number of students 2009–2010	Percentage passing math TAKS 2009–2010	Percentage points change from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010
3	2,446	77	2,595	80	+3
4	2,053	76	2,099	83	+7
5	1,522	79	1,492	83	+4
6	1,146	57	1,117	67	+10
7	906	52	998	61	+9
8	812	66	768	63	-3
9	716	32	802	40	+8
10	538	31	498	40	+9
11	456	41	500	60	+19

Source. AISD TAKS math summary tables

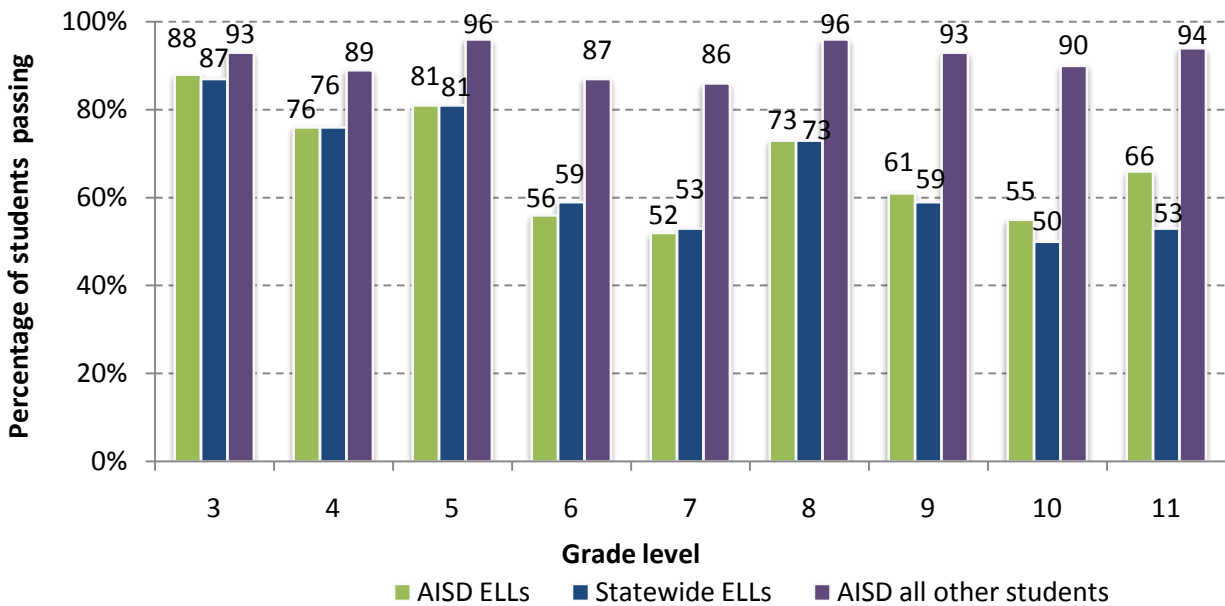
Note. Percentages represent students' final TAKS scores and are combined across English and Spanish versions of the tests in grades 3 through 5.

Reading/ELA

As shown in Figure 4, the percentage of elementary and middle school AISD ELLs who met standard on the reading/ELA TAKS test was near or the same as the percentage of ELLs statewide, with the exception of 6th grade, in which fewer AISD ELLs met standard than did ELLs statewide (-3 % pts.). However, a greater percentage of high school ELLs than ELLs statewide met standard (i.e., 9th grade +2% pts., 10th grade +5% pts., and 11th grade +13% pts.). Please note that the percentage of AISD 11th-grade students passing the reading/ELA TAKS represented cumulative exam periods, while the percentage of statewide ELLs passing was based on the primary test date; therefore, statewide ELLs were generally underrepresented.

High school ELLs had some of the largest passing rate increases in the reading/ELA TAKS from the previous year, particularly at 9th grade, where students had a 10 percentage point gain (Table 4). Data showed that 3rd-, 6th-, and 8th-grade AISD ELLs experienced a drop in the percentage passing the reading/ELA TAKS, although ELLs in the 3rd and 8th grade passed at near or the same rate as ELLs did statewide.

Figure 5. Percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) and Other Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Reading/English Language Arts Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level, 2009–2010



Source. AISD TAKS files and Texas Education Agency (TEA) Statewide TAKS Summary Reports, 2009–2010

Note. Fifth- and 8th-grade statewide results are cumulative from all periods of testing. 11th-grade statewide ELLs' results are for the primary administration of TAKS only.

Table 4. Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners (ELLs) From 2008–2009 and 2009–2010, by Grade Level

Grade level	Number of students 2008–2009	Percentage passing reading TAKS 2008–2009	Number of students 2009–2010	Percentage passing reading TAKS 2009–2010	Percentage points change from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010
3	2,479	92	2,594	88	-4
4	2,039	73	2,098	76	+3
5	1,537	79	1,490	81	+2
6	1,140	65	1,107	56	-9
7	901	51	998	52	+1
8	815	80	763	73	-7
9	775	51	824	61	+10
10	555	51	511	55	+4
11	459	60	500	66	+6

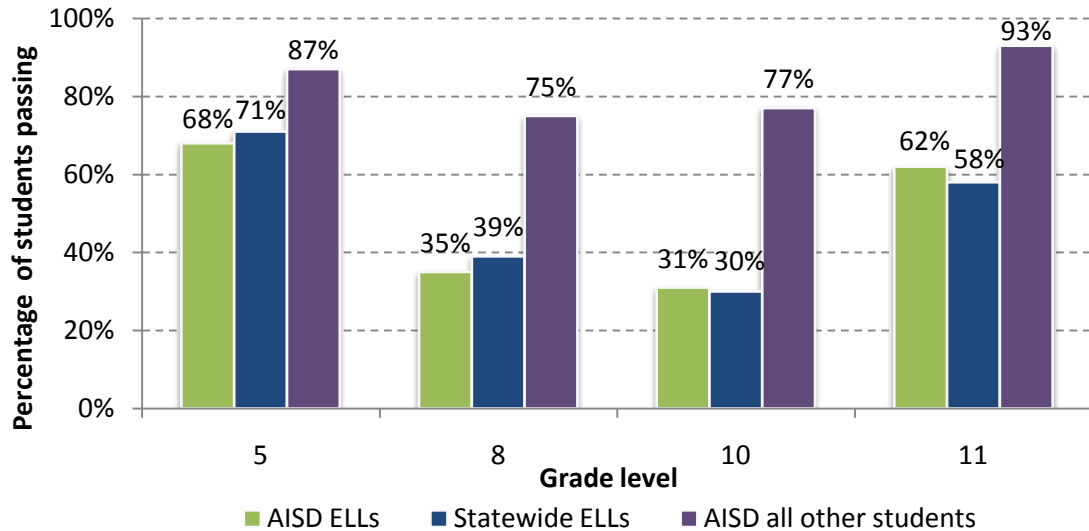
Source. AISD TAKS reading summary tables

Note. Percentages represent students' final TAKS scores and are combined across English and Spanish versions of the tests in grades 3 through 5.

Science

A lower percentage of AISD ELLs passed the science TAKS in 5th and 8th grade than did ELLs statewide; however, at all grade levels, students had gains with respect to the percentage passing science TAKS compared with the percentage passing the previous year, demonstrating the district's progress toward improving the academic achievement of ELLs in science (Table 5). Although passing rates increased for students at all grade levels, science TAKS passing rates continued to be quite low compared to those of other subject areas, particularly at 8th and 10th grade (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) and Other Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Science Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level, 2009–2010



Source. AISD TAKS files and *Texas Education Agency (TEA) Statewide TAKS Summary Reports, 2009–2010*

Note. Eleventh-grade statewide ELLs' results are for the primary administration of TAKS only.

Table 5. Science Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners (ELLs) From 2008–2009 and 2009–2010, by Grade Level

Grade level	Number of students 2008–2009	Percentage passing science TAKS 2008–2009	Number of students 2009–2010	Percentage passing science TAKS 2009–2010	Percentage points change from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010
5	1,502	57	1,467	68	+11
8	774	32	748	35	+3
10	529	22	491	31	+9
11	456	45	501	62	+17

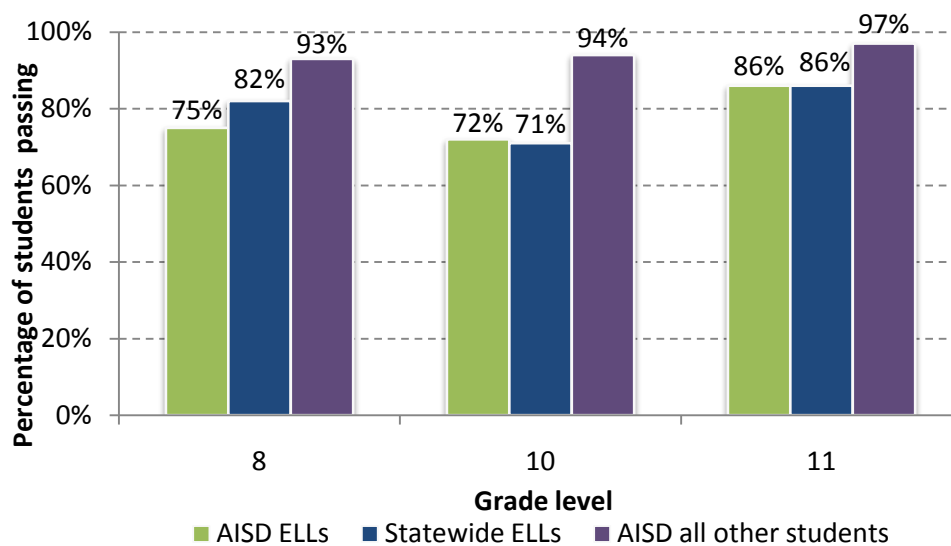
Source. AISD TAKS science summary tables

Note. Percentages represent students' final TAKS scores and are combined across English and Spanish versions of the tests in grade 5.

Social Studies

The AISD ELLs' social studies TAKS passing rate was lower than the statewide ELLs' rate for 8th grade (-7% pts.). However, the largest gain in social studies TAKS passing rates, compared with rates the previous year, was at 8th grade (+13% pts.). The high passing rate among 11th graders was maintained, and even improved slightly over the previous year's rate (Table 6).

Figure 7. English Language Learners (ELLs) and Other Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Social Studies Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level, 2009–2010



Source. AISD TAKS files and Texas Education Agency (TEA) Statewide TAKS Summary Reports, 2009–2010

Note. Eleventh-grade statewide ELLs' results are for the primary administration of TAKS only.

Table 6. Social Studies Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners (ELLs) From 2008–2009 and 2009–2010, by Grade Level

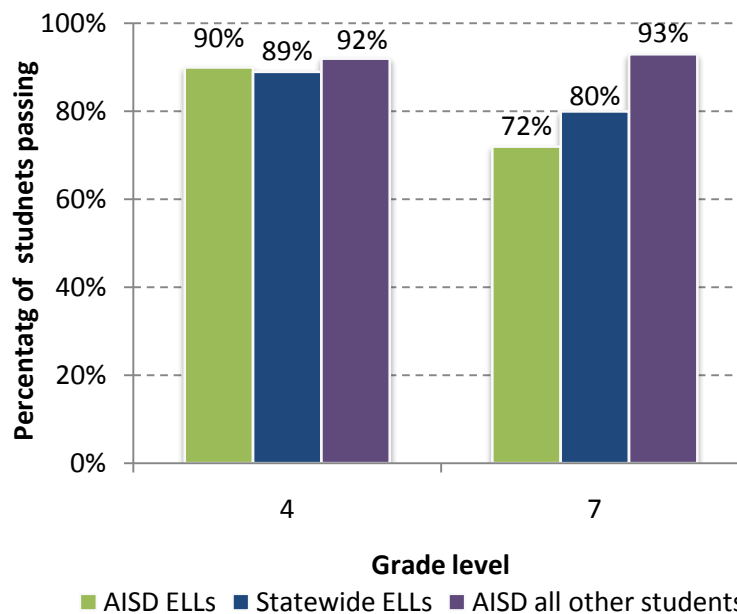
Grade level	Number of students 2008–2009	Percentage passing social studies TAKS 2008–2009	Number of students 2009–2010	Percentage passing social studies TAKS 2009–2010	Percentage points change from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010
8	773	62	742	75	+13
10	527	62	481	72	+10
11	455	82	486	86	+4

Source. AISD TAKS social studies summary tables

Writing

The achievement gap in writing between 4th-grade AISD ELLs and all other AISD students was minimal (2% pts. gap). However, in 7th grade, the achievement gap widened by 21 percentage points (Figure 8). Further, the passing rate on the writing TAKS for AISD ELLs was 8% lower than the statewide ELLs' passing rate. The writing TAKS passing rates improved among 4th- and 7th-grade ELLs, compared with rates the previous year (Table 7).

Figure 8. English Language Learners (ELLs) and Other Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Writing Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level, 2009–2010



Source. AISD TAKS files and *Texas Education Agency (TEA) Statewide TAKS Summary Reports, 2009–2010*

Table 7. Writing Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners (ELLs) From 2008–2009 and 2009–2010, by Grade Level

Grade level	Number of students 2008–2009	Percentage passing writing TAKS 2008–2009	Number of students 2009–2010	Percentage passing writing TAKS 2009–2010	Percentage points change from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010
4	2,030	85	2,087	90	+5
7	905	69	996	72	+3

Source. AISD TAKS writing summary tables

BE/ESL PROGRAM EXIT

In Texas, the TELPAS monitors ELLs' progress in learning English under the NCLB Act of 2001. Students are tested with the TELPAS annually to determine whether they have advanced sufficiently in their English language proficiency to be exited out of BE/ESL programs.

In accordance with state mandate TAC §89.1225(i), ELLs may qualify to exit the BE/ESL programs no earlier than 1st grade. In AISD, it is preferred that ELLs spend a minimum of 2 years in BE/ESL; however, students may exit as early as 1st or 2nd grade if the following criteria have been met: (a) the student scored fluent in English speaking on the Language Assessment System Links (LAS Links) test, (b) the student scored above 40th percentile on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) English reading and language arts assessments, and (c) the campus Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) and student's parents have agreed the student will be successful in an all-English classroom.

ELLs exiting BE/ESL services at the end of 3rd grade or later must meet the following requirements: (a) students must have passed the English language version of the reading/ELA TAKS, (b) students must have scored advanced on the speaking and reading sections of the TELPAS, (c) students must have scored advanced high on the writing portion of the TELPAS or pass the writing TAKS in English; and (d) students must have scored fluent in English speaking on the LAS Links. Additionally, the campus LPAC and the students' parents must approve transitioning the student to all-English classes.

The number of students exiting the BE/ESL programs increased by 14 percentage points ($n = 256$) from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010. Although the process and timing of exit from BE/ESL programs is highly individualized, the student exit patterns between the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 school years were similar. As shown in Table 8, at least half of the students who exited BE/ESL each year did so between 4th and 6th grade. More than a tenth of program exits occurred before 4th grade (15% pts. in 2008–2009, 13% pts. in 2009–2010). This pattern can be explained in part by the district's late transition model, the goal of which is to have students performing on grade level in English by the end of 5th grade after approximately 5 to 7 years in the BE/ESL programs (i.e., program participation from pre-K or kindergarten through 5th grade).

Table 8. English Language Learners (ELLs) Exiting Bilingual and English as a Second Language Programs, by Grade Level, 2008–2009 and 2009–2010

Grade level	Exited ELLs			
	2008–2009		2009–2010	
	Number of students	Percentage	Number of students	Percentage
3	282	15	279	13
4	487	26	571	27
5	299	16	259	12
6	231	12	209	10
7	208	11	299	14
8	151	8	182	9
9	63	4	105	5
10	65	4	82	4
11	53	3	103	5
12	18	1	24	1
Total	1,857	100	2,113	100

Source. AISD student records

Note. This table has been redacted to exclude cells with fewer than 5 students. Grades 1 and 2 are represented in grade 3.

BE/ESL TEACHING STAFF

Annually, AISD reports information about the NCLB Title III, Part A grant to the TEA as part of the requirements for receiving funds to support ELLs. The district compliance report includes a variety of information (e.g., the number of teachers licensed or certified as BE/ESL who are working with ELLs). According to the district’s human resource records, 1,746 teachers with BE or ESL certification worked with ELLs in 2009–2010. This group included teachers with language proficiency in Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, and Mandarin. Furthermore, the district projected that 436 teachers will be needed over the next 5 years.

In 2009–2010, 1,101 AISD staff (i.e., teachers and administrators) attended 24,607.5 hours of professional development activities in 17 courses directly related to BE and/or ESL instruction (i.e., an average of 22 hours of completed professional development activities per staff member). Table 9 provides a list of the professional development opportunities offered in 2009–2010, staff attendance, and the total accumulated hours for the courses.

Table 9. Employee Attendance of Professional Development Opportunities Offered Through the Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Department, 2009–2010

Professional development opportunity	Number of employees who attended	Total hours credited
AISD Bilingual Education Program Essentials	66	402
Academic English for Bilingual Teachers	48	552
Avenues Training: Module 1 for Bilingual ESL Teachers	68	204
ELPs Toolkit Training	38	576
ESL Academy	122	2,358
Fifty Strategies for English Language Learners	94	576
LAS Links Training	143	429
LPAC Chairperson Training, Secondary Schools	100	330
LPAC Chairs' Decision Process for the Texas Assessment System	71	172
LPAS Open Lab	2	4
New Bilingual Teacher Institute	511	13,064
Pre LAS (Pre Language Assessment Scales)	16	32
Sheltered Instruction In the Classroom	186	2,232
TAKS Boot Camp for ELL Teachers	49	300
TELPAS Contact Training	92	232.5
TELPAS Holistic Rating Training	477	2,868
TexES Review for ESL Supplemental (154) Endorsement	46	276

Source. AISD professional development activity records

Note. Professional development opportunities were provided between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS

The BE and ESL programs were supported through the use of local, state, and federal funds. The NCLB Act of 2001 includes the Title III, Part A grant Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students. The grant provides funds to school districts through the TEA to ensure that ELLs at all grade levels can successfully learn English and meet the academic standards required of all students. These supplemental funds may be used to (a) support specialized student instruction, (b) provide professional development opportunities to staff, (c) acquire instructional supplies and materials, (d) provide community/family coordination and outreach for ELLs and their families, and (e) support other relevant programmatic efforts. In addition to the federal Title III, Part A funds, other state grant and federal funds helped support the instructional services provided to ELLs.

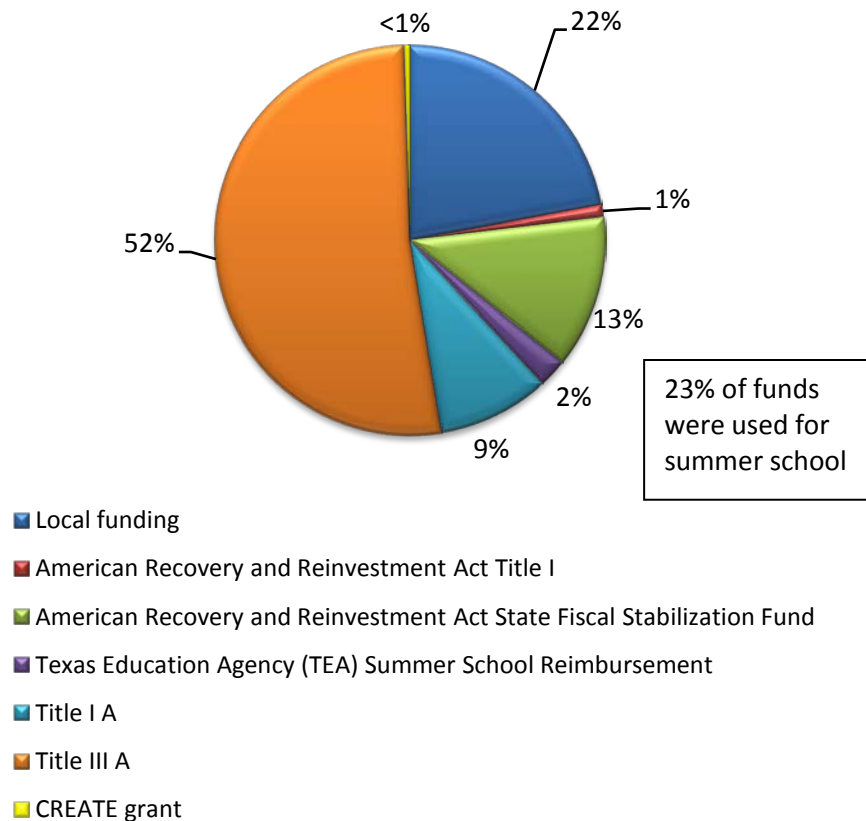
The two largest sources of district funding for BE/ESL programs were the federal NCLB Title III, Part A grant (52%) and local district funds (22%) (Figure 8). The ARRA's State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) supplemented the BE/ESL programs, which usually were covered by local funds for several summer school programs for ELLs. The district also used NCLB Title I (Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged), Part A funds and TEA reimbursement funds to support these summer school programs; however, those programs and student outcomes are discussed in a separate report (Doolittle, 2010). ARRA Title I funds were used to fund the initial planning and development of AISD's dual-language program.

The Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners (CREATE) granted the district \$80,000 to provide professional development training to 7th-grade teachers on eight middle school campuses to improve the content knowledge of ELLs. To receive funds, AISD agreed to participate in a research study conducted by the University of Texas Meadows Center in collaboration with CREATE. This research study took place in 7th-grade classrooms at eight middle school campuses in 2009–2010 and will continue in the 2010–2011 school year. The purpose of the study is to collect data about the effectiveness of instructional strategies designed for improved outcomes for ELLs' content learning and academic vocabulary. The program goal is to improve the content knowledge of ELLs, while concurrently building their language and literacy skills.

During the 2009–2010 school year and the summer session of 2010, the district spent \$6,638,238 to provide supplemental instruction, materials, professional development opportunities, and community outreach. Excluding the summer school programs and the CREATE program, the district spent \$5,076,560 for the benefit of 24,625 LEP students, resulting in an average cost of \$206.15 per student. Excluding the summer school programs,

the district spent \$179.29 per student in the 2008–2009 school year,¹ for an increase of \$26.86 per student. This additional cost per student amounted to a \$661,428 increase in program cost from year to year. Title III had a \$1,150,899 rollover from the 2008–2009 year, which covered the additional expense. A table of expenditures is located in Appendix B-1.

Figure 9. Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Funding Sources, 2009–2010



Source. AISD fiscal records as of August 31, 2010

Note. Title I A, ARRA (SFSF), and TEA reimbursements were used to fund the summer school programs.

¹ The district spent a total of \$6,167,524 in 2008–2009, including support for the summer school programs, and served a total of 24,972 students. The district spent \$1,690,221 on summer school in 2008–2009. The funding totals have been revised from the 2008–2009 BE/ESL summary report (Malerba & Herrera, 2010).

CONCLUSION

Patterns in the 2009–2010 TELPAS were mostly consistent with ELLs' performances from previous years (Malerba & Herrera, 2010): writing remained the lowest scoring content area; overall, 9th graders had lower proficiency scores on TELPAS than they did in prior years; and more 5th-, 6th-, and 7th-grade ELLs, compared with ELLs in other grades, had English proficiency levels that were advanced or advanced high (i.e., at the grade levels when students are more likely to exit the program). However, the greatest percentage of ELLs exited BE/ESL programs at 4th grade (Table 8), which did not correspond to the grade level with the highest percentages of English proficiency levels of advanced or advanced high (Table 2). Further investigation might consider whether academic outcomes differ between students exiting the BE/ESL programs in their 4th-grade year and those exiting in their 5th or 6th-grade year. Under the dual-language model, students do not exit the program prior to 5th grade. Rather, students remain in dual language through their 5th-grade year, and make a natural exit in 6th grade (i.e., if the program is not available in secondary schools). AISD is implementing a dual-language pilot program in 2010–2011 in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and 1st grade at 10 schools.

The ELLs' 2009–2010 TAKS passing rate performance varied by grade and content area, but generally the district showed overall improvement for this group of students. However, compared with the prior year, a lower percentage of ELLs met standard on the reading/ELA TAKS in 3rd, 6th, and 8th grade. The 8th-grade ELL passing rate for math TAKS also declined from 2008–2009 to 2009–2010. Although the achievement gap between AISD ELLs and non-ELLs persisted, AISD ELLs passed TAKS at near the same rates as did ELLs statewide. The largest discrepancy between AISD ELLs' and statewide ELLs' passing rates on TAKS was on 7th-grade writing TAKS (i.e., 8% fewer ELLs in AISD than ELLs statewide passed writing TAKS), followed by 8th-grade performance on the social studies TAKS exam (i.e., 7% fewer ELLs in AISD than ELLs statewide passed social studies TAKS).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The AISD BE/ESL programs are essential to students' growth, not only for English language proficiency, but also for success in core content areas. Based on the present summary report, the Department of Program Evaluation recommends the following:

- To advance the district's goal to eliminate the achievement gap, further work should be done to determine factors related to ELLs meeting standards on TAKS, including compiling best practices of campuses that demonstrate high achievement among ELLs.
- The district should continue to improve the writing curriculum for all grade levels for ELLs because the TELPAS scores for this domain were consistently lower than were scores for all other domains (i.e., reading, listening, and speaking) for all grade levels
- District staff should continue to recruit ELLs into the pre-K program and emphasize the importance of pre-K and kindergarten in terms of benefitting students' long-term academic outcomes, as shown in previous research. ELLs who entered the district in pre-K and kindergarten were more likely than were non-ELLs to exit BE/ESL services before entering secondary school and were likely to perform as well as or better than non-ELLs on the 2008–2009 TAKS (Herrera & Malerba, 2009).

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Table A-1. AISD Programs for English Language Learners

Grade level	English Language				
	Bilingual education	English as a second language	Development Academy (ELDA)*	International High School	Dual language**
Pre-K	✓	✓			✓
Kindergarten	✓	✓			✓
1	✓	✓			✓
2	✓	✓			
3	✓	✓			
4	✓	✓			
5	✓	✓			
6	✓	✓	✓		
7		✓	✓		
8		✓	✓		
9		✓		✓	
10		✓		✓	
11		✓			
12		✓			

Source. AISD Department of English Language Learners

* The ELDA program was at Webb and Garcia Middle Schools in 2009–2010.

** Dual-language programs will be piloted on 10 elementary campuses in 2010–2011 (i.e., Becker, Blazier, Dawson, Ortega, Perez, Pickle, Ridgetop, Sanchez, Winn, and Wooten). In 2011–2012, dual-language programs will be extended to all elementary campuses with bilingual programs ($n = 70$) for pre-K, kindergarten, and 1st grade, and the program will be extended to 2nd grade on pilot campuses. Each year, the next grade up will be incorporated, 5th grade being the highest grade. Dual language will be considered for program incorporation at secondary grade levels in future years.

Appendix B

Table B-1. Funding Sources and Expenditures for Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs, 2009–2010

	Funding source							Total	Percentage
	Local	ARRA (SFSF)*	ARRA Title I	Title I*	Title III	TEA*	CREATE		
Instruction	\$166,279	\$680,319		\$508,452	\$2,680,632	\$148,773	\$8,148	\$4,192,603	63
Curriculum and Instructional Staff Development	\$582,624	\$25,708	\$23,218	\$37,928	\$720,933	\$7,876	\$5,402	\$1,403,688	21
Instructional Leadership	\$529,002	\$13,596	\$43,929	\$69,567	\$66,476			\$722,570	11
School Leadership	\$31,233	\$105,340			\$388			\$136,961	2
Guidance, Counseling, and Evaluation Services	\$156,175				\$122			\$156,297	2
Health Services		\$12,475						\$12,475	<1
Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities	\$33							\$33	<1
Plant Maintenance and Operations	\$211	\$427				\$3,512		\$4,149	<1
Security and Monitoring Services		\$3,723						\$3,723	<1
Community Services	\$5,680				\$60			\$5,740	<1
Total	\$1,471,236	\$841,587	\$67,147	\$615,947	\$3,468,610	\$160,160	\$13,550	\$6,638,238	100
Percentage	22	13	1	9	52	2	<1	100	

Source. AISD finance records, as of August 31, 2010

Note. All amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar.

* ARRA SFSF is the acronym for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. TEA is the acronym for Texas Education Agency. CREATE is the acronym for Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners. ARRA SFSF, Title I, and TEA funds went to the summer school programs. Title I funds (\$69,567) also went to year-round programming. TEA reimbursed the district for summer school. ARRA Title I was used for the district's transition to the dual-language program.

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