# Fifth-Grade Native English Speakers' Performance on STAMP 4Se, Spanish-Language Proficiency Assessment
## Austin Independent School District, 2017–2018

This report documents how native English speakers enrolled in the two-way dual language (DL) program at Austin Independent School District (AISD) performed on STAMP 4Se, a Spanish-language proficiency test.

The test was administered in January and February of 2018 to 153 5th graders at 12 elementary schools (Becker, Blanton, Brentwood, Casey, Dawson, Maplewood, Menchaca, Oak Hill, Perez, Ridgetop, Sunset Valley, and Travis Heights).

STAMP 4Se is a web-based test designed for children in grades 3 through 6. Test items are situated within the context of daily school life, and characters mentioned in the test items are attending a fictitious elementary school in the United States. STAMP 4Se is composed of four domains:

- Interpretive reading, which consists of a series of dialogues and monologues in Spanish, followed by a question phrased in Spanish

- Reading comprehension, which consists of passages that are designed to mimic authentic reading tasks (e.g., reading signs, journal entries, or classroom materials), followed by a question that evaluates the students' ability to scan passages for the main topic as well as to extract detailed information

- Presentational writing, which consists of two short tasks that are presented to the students aurally in English and are designed to test the students' ability to express themselves in written Spanish

- Presentational speaking, which also consists of two tasks presented aurally in English that are designed to test the students' ability to express themselves in spoken Spanish

STAMP 4Se is designed to give a general snapshot of proficiency, with a fairly limited number of items. This allows the test to be used as a dynamic tool to inform teachers, parents, and administrators about students' language learning progress. However, as with any test, STAMP 4Se scores should be considered as one piece of evidence of a child's proficiency. In addition, it should be noted that students, especially young ones, can perform differently on different days, due to a variety of factors. More information about STAMP 4Se can be obtained at www.avantassessment.com.
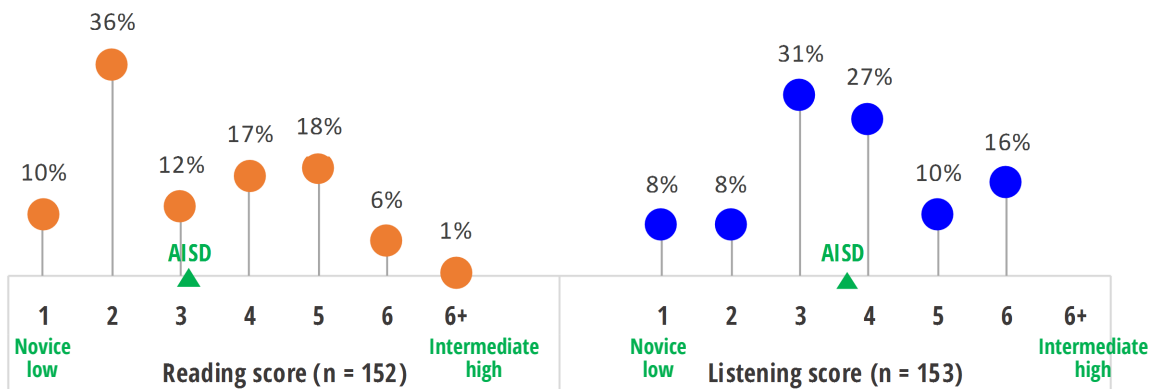
An interpretation guide describing a typical student at each proficiency level is provided in the appendix.

**Department of Research and Evaluation**
AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Results

Figures 1 and 2 show the percentage of AISD students at each proficiency level for each domain. On average, AISD students received scores of 3.1 in the reading domain, indicating a novice-high proficiency level in reading; 3.7 in the listening domain, indicating students were approaching an intermediate-low level of proficiency in this domain; and 2.9 and 3.1 in the writing and speaking domains, respectively, indicating a novice-high proficiency level in these domains. These results show that the majority of AISD students performed at novice high or above in all of the STAMP 4Se domains, indicating that in 5th grade, students were typically approaching intermediate proficiency levels.

**Figure 1.**

**Forty-two percent** and **53%** of the 5th grade two-way dual language program English speakers performed at intermediate level or higher on the **reading** and **listening** domains of STAMP, respectively.
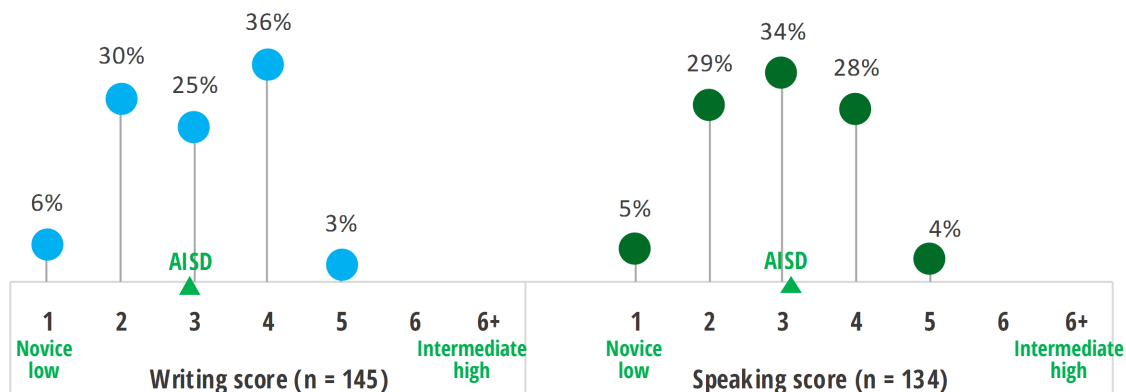


*Source*. AISD STAMP assessment records, 2017–2018 school year
*Note*. Not all 153 students completed the reading or listening assessments, percentages were rounded and may not add exactly to 100%.

**Figure 2.**

**Thirty-nine percent** and **32%** of the 5th grade two-way dual language program English speakers performed at intermediate level or higher on the **writing** and **speaking** domains of STAMP, respectively.



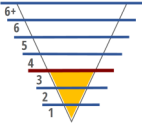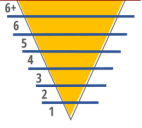*Source*. AISD STAMP assessment records, 2017–2018 school year
*Note*. Not all 153 students completed the writing or speaking assessments, percentages were rounded and may not add exactly to 100%.

The DL program at AISD has a target of intermediate proficiency level (corresponding to a score of 4 or higher) by 5th grade on the reading, listening, and speaking domains, and a target of novice high (corresponding to a score of 3 or higher) on the writing domain. The fact that students on average scored lower than AISD's target may reflect the fact that during the initial years of the DL program, many campuses had difficulties implementing the DL model instituted at that time. Since 2015–2016, the Multilingual Education Team  (MET) has worked with committees that include parents, teachers, principals, and community representatives, to adapt the DL program to better fit AISD's schools' characteristics and needs.
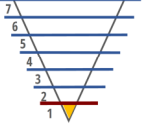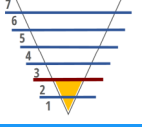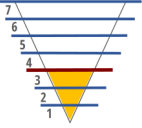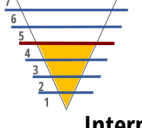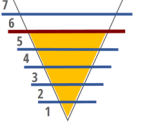
In addition,  MET staff along with campus staff are continuing to work collaboratively to make improvements in the implementation of two way dual language programs district wide.  This includes targeted professional development for teachers and support staff on biliteracy, clarification and alignment of multiple assessments of both Spanish and English for students and the creation of grade level expectations for the listening, speaking, reading and writing in Spanish.

# Appendix

## Guide for Interpreting Reading and Listening Scores

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Novice (scores: 1 to 3)** | • Reliance of learned phrases and basic vocabulary.<br>• Ability to recognize the purpose of basic texts.<br>• Can understand a core of simple, formulaic expressions, such as "I don't' know" or "how do you do?" |
| | **Inter-mediate (scores: 4 to 6+)** | • In reading, ability to understand the main ideas and explicit detail in everyday language.<br>• Ability to use language knowledge to understand information in everyday materials.<br>• Can follow short conversations and announcements on common topics and answer questions about the main idea and explicitly stated details. |

## Guide for Interpreting Writing and Speaking Scores

| | Text characteristics | Language control |
|---|---|---|
| **Novice-low (score = 1)** | Produces words in target language with no connection. Does not have enough vocabulary or the ability necessary to formulate even simple phrases to address the prompt. | Limited language control. Inability to create more than individual words. L1 (first language) influence may be strong. Errors are expected at this level, but the student must be able to produce at least two comprehensible words. |
| **Novice-mid (score = 2)** | Language production is beyond individual words but clearly shows the lack of ability to construct more than phrases. May include one simple sentence, but incapable of showing more. | May make frequent errors, but usually comprehensible to a sympathetic reader/listener. L1 (first language) influence may be present. |
| **Novice-high (score = 3)** | Short, common expressions or memorized statements that may be combined together. Able to create at least 2 different simple sentences. | Good accuracy for high frequency expressions. Usually comprehensible to a sympathetic reader/listener. Grammatical (syntax, spelling, conjugation) errors are expected at this level but sentences must make sense to be acceptable. |
| **Intermediate-low (score = 4)** | Variety of sentences that utilize different verbs to create independent thoughts, mostly composed of a recombination of learned simple sentences with added detail in the form of prepositional phrases and verbal phrases. | Good accuracy with formulaic sentences with some added detail. Errors may occur as student attempts higher level skills. Good Language Control is expected with the majority of the response. |
| **Intermediate–mid (score = 5)** | Logical organization of ideas and flow of sentences or statements. Contains at least 2 unique and non-formulaic sentences intermixed with a variety of sentences creating 'groupings of sentences showing connectedness. | Good accuracy evident with possible errors that don't affect the overall meaning. Delivery may be somewhat choppy. May have repetitive use of concrete vocabulary with occasional use of expanding terms. Accuracy for complex sentences is emerging. |
| **Intermediate-high (score = 6 or 6+)** | Able to demonstrate an Intermediate-High control of the language. Complexity is evident. Transition words and connectors are used correctly and efficiently a majority of the time to create a flow within the response. Groups of sentences focus on different aspects of the prompt and include transition words or phrases to introduce next concept. Does not have Advanced vocabulary or language to move into the Advanced level. | Response is well constructed. Intermediate-High sentence structures can be found throughout response. Demonstrates beginning ability to create a coherent response with increased use of complexity as well as transition words and phrases. No evidence of advanced vocabulary. |