

Michelle Lucas, PhD
Helen Poulsen, PhD

September 2020
Publication 19.46

Bilingual and English as a Second Language Academic Performance Summary Report, 2019–2020

Austin Independent School District



Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information about the academic performance of emergent bilinguals in the Austin Independent School District (AISD). This document summarizes performance on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) test, advanced placement (AP) course enrollment, AP exam performance, college readiness indicators, and graduation and dropout rates. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this report will not include summarizations of academic course performance or performance on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) tests and performance on the end-of-course (EOC) tests because the data were unavailable.

A total of 16,065 emergent bilinguals took the TELPAS this year, which was a 15% reduction from the number of students who took the TELPAS last year. This is likely due to the challenges associated with administering the test after school closures in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall composite ratings were similar to those for last year's scores. From 3rd grade through 8th grade, more than half of emergent bilinguals at each grade level received composite TELPAS ratings of advanced or advanced high. At grades 5, 8, and 11, the highest percentages of emergent bilinguals attained advanced high ratings. The percentage of 8th graders scoring advanced high increased from 9% in 2019 to 17% in 2020. Out of the four TELPAS domains, the lowest scores were seen in the speaking domain.

Greater percentages of emergent bilinguals at low-poverty campuses than at high-poverty campuses received advanced or advanced high ratings. For the majority of Bilingual Education (BE) programs, two-thirds of students reached advanced or advanced high proficiency in English by 5th grade. Greater percentages of elementary students achieved advanced or advanced high scores if they were in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program, relative to students in the late exit, one-way Dual Language (DL), and two-way DL programs. AISD ESL elementary students tended to receive greater or similar percentages of advanced or advanced high scores, compared with the percentages for emergent bilingual students across the state of Texas.

As for secondary emergent bilinguals, the percentages of middle school students in the ESL program achieving advanced or advanced high composite ratings were higher this year than in the 2018–2019 school year. In addition, a greater percentage of 6th graders enrolled in the secondary DL program achieved advanced or advanced high ratings this year than did so last year. Students who enrolled in only one DL course generally showed lower percentages of scoring advanced or advanced high on the TELPAS composite than did secondary students enrolled in two DL courses, especially at the lower grades. Students enrolled in one DL course were generally more likely to score advanced or advanced high on the TELPAS composite than were secondary students enrolled in ESL. Relative to emergent bilinguals across the state of Texas, AISD secondary DL students in grades 6, 8, and 9 received a greater percentage of advanced or advanced high ratings.

Another way to assess language acquisition is to examine the progress students make from one year to the next. Students in grades 1, 3, and 5 displayed the highest rates of progressing at least one proficiency level on the TELPAS composite among AISD emergent bilinguals. For many grade levels, AISD progress scores closely overlapped with those of

emergent bilinguals across the state, though AISD emergent bilinguals in grades 1, 2, 6, 7, and 9 were less likely to progress at least one proficiency level than were emergent bilinguals in corresponding grades statewide.

Scores on the TELPAS Alternate (for emergent bilinguals with significant cognitive disabilities) could be reported for the first time in the 2019–2020 school year. A total of 189 students in AISD took the TELPAS Alternate this year. Grades 5, 8, and 10 had the highest percentages of students receiving advanced or advanced high ratings.

Emergent bilingual students' enrollment in AP courses was underrepresented compared with the AP enrollment of students not in a BE or ESL program. Emergent bilinguals and monitored (currently English proficient, but an emergent bilingual 1–5 years ago) students scored higher than other student subgroups on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam but scored much lower than students not in a BE/ESL program on other AP exams.

Emergent bilinguals took college entrance exams (e.g., ACT, SAT, and Texas Success Initiative) at a similar rate to students not in a BE/ESL program. However, new immigrants and denial students lagged behind in taking college entrance exams. Scores on the college entrance exams revealed monitored students had twice as many college ready scores as did emergent bilinguals students, and students not in a BE/ESL program had the highest amount of college ready scores.

Over the last 5 years, AISD emergent bilinguals' dropout rate has been steadily declining and their graduation rate has been increasing. However, in the 2018–2019 school year, emergent bilinguals' dropout rate showed a slight increase, rising from 1.50 percent to 1.60 percent. For 2018–2019, the graduation rate increased by 2.6 percentage points for emergent bilinguals and by 1.1 percentage point for all students.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Introduction	6
TELPAS	6
Performance on the TELPAS	7
TELPAS Performance, by Economic Disadvantage	10
TELPAS Performance, by BE/ESL Program and Grade Level	10
TELPAS Alternate	12
AP Course Enrollment and Exams	13
College Readiness	14
Dropout and Graduation Rates	15
Summary and Conclusions	16
TELPAS	16
AP Course Enrollment and Exams	16
College Readiness	17
References	18
Appendix A	19
Appendix B	20
Appendix C	21
Appendix D	22
Appendix E	23
Appendix F	24

List of Figures

Spring 2020 TELPAS Composite Ratings, by Grade Level	7
Spring 2020 TELPAS Listening Ratings, by Grade Level	8
Spring 2020 TELPAS Speaking Ratings, by Grade Level	8
Spring 2020 TELPAS Writing Ratings, by Grade Level	9
Spring 2020 TELPAS Reading Ratings, by Grade Level	9
TELPAS Advanced/Advanced High Composite Ratings for AISD Emergent Bilinguals in Elementary Grades, Spring 2020, by BE/ESL Program	10
TELPAS Advanced/Advanced High Composite Ratings for AISD Emergent Bilinguals in Secondary Grades, Spring 2020, by BE/ESL Program	11
Percentage of AISD and Statewide Emergent Bilinguals Who Progressed at Least One Proficiency Level on 2020 TELPAS, by Grade Level	12
Percentage of Passing Scores on the Top Four AP Exams Taken by Emergent Bilinguals, by Student Subgroup	13
Percentage of Students Who Took One or More College Entrance Exam, by Student Subgroup	14
Percentage of Students Who Scored College Ready in Math and Reading, by Student Subgroup	15
Spring 2020 TELPAS Ratings by Subscale, District-Wide	19
Spring 2020 TELPAS Composite Ratings, by Grade Level	20
Spring 2019 TELPAS Composite Ratings, by Grade Level	20
Spring 2020 TELPAS Composite Ratings for Newcomer Students, by Grade Level	21
Spring 2020 TELPAS Composite Ratings for Non-Newcomer Students, by Grade Level	21
Spring 2020 TELPAS Alternate Composite Ratings by Grade Level	23
Percentage of AISD and Statewide Emergent Bilinguals Who Attained Developing Independence or Basic Fluency on 2020 TELPAS Alternate, by Grade Level	23

List of Tables

Emergent Bilinguals’ and All Students’ Dropout Rate, Grades 7 Through 12, 2014–2015 to 2018–2019	17
Emergent Bilinguals’ and All Students’ Graduation Rate, 2014–2015 to 2018–2019	18

Introduction

This report summarizes the academic performance of students in the Bilingual Education (BE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs implemented at the Austin Independent School District (AISD) in 2019–2020. It summarizes performance on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) test, college readiness indicators, advanced placement (AP) course enrollment, AP exam performance, and graduation and dropout rates. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this report will not include summarizations of academic course performance or performance on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) tests and end-of-course (EOC) tests because the data were unavailable.

Students previously known as English learners will be referred to in this report as *emergent bilinguals* (see García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008).

This is the second in a two-part series of reports on emergent bilinguals; for more information on programs offered and student demographics, see Lucas and Poulsen (2020); Poulsen (2020).

TELPAS

The TELPAS is the annual state-required assessment for emergent bilinguals. TELPAS assesses English acquisition and proficiency for kindergarten through grade 12 in four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The TELPAS is directly aligned with the Texas English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS). Additionally, the ELPS is directly aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the state-required curriculum. In kindergarten through grade 1, all four domains are holistically rated based on classroom observations and student-teacher interactions. In grades 2 through 12, reading, listening, and speaking are standardized online assessments. The writing for grades 2 through 12 is holistically rated based on writing collections completed by the student within the collection window. The collection window for the 2020 administration was originally set as February 24th through April 3rd, but due to the school closures implemented as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the closing date was extended to May 29.

Established cut scores define the performance levels, or English language proficiency, for the reading, listening, and speaking domains. Yearly student progress was reported, similar to what was done in the 2018–2019 school year, when progress data were available for the first time. Students' English proficiency in each of the four domains is classified into one of four performance levels: beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high. (For more information on TELPAS, see the Texas Education Agency [TEA] website, <https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/telpas/telpas-resources>).

The composite rating, when all four domains are completed, is determined by weighting the four domains as follows: 25% listening, 25% speaking, 25% reading, and 25% writing (see sidebar for calculation of the composite rating when one or two of the domains are not completed). There are four composite proficiency levels: beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high. Starting in 2018, the administration allowed for a composite rating to be calculated if the student was assessed in at least two domains and had admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee exemptions from taking the other domains.

TELPAS Composite Rating

A student can receive one of four composite proficiency ratings: beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high.

To achieve the advanced high composite proficiency rating, a student must receive

- a composite score greater than or equal to 3.5 or
- a minimum proficiency level 3 (advanced) in all four domains.

To achieve the advanced composite proficiency rating, a student must receive

- a composite score greater than or equal to 2.5 or
- a minimum proficiency level 2 (intermediate) in all domains
- or a minimum proficiency level 3 (advanced) in at least half of the domains assessed.

To achieve the intermediate composite proficiency rating, a student must receive

- a composite score greater than or equal to 1.5 or
- a minimum proficiency level 2 (intermediate) in at least half of the domains assessed.

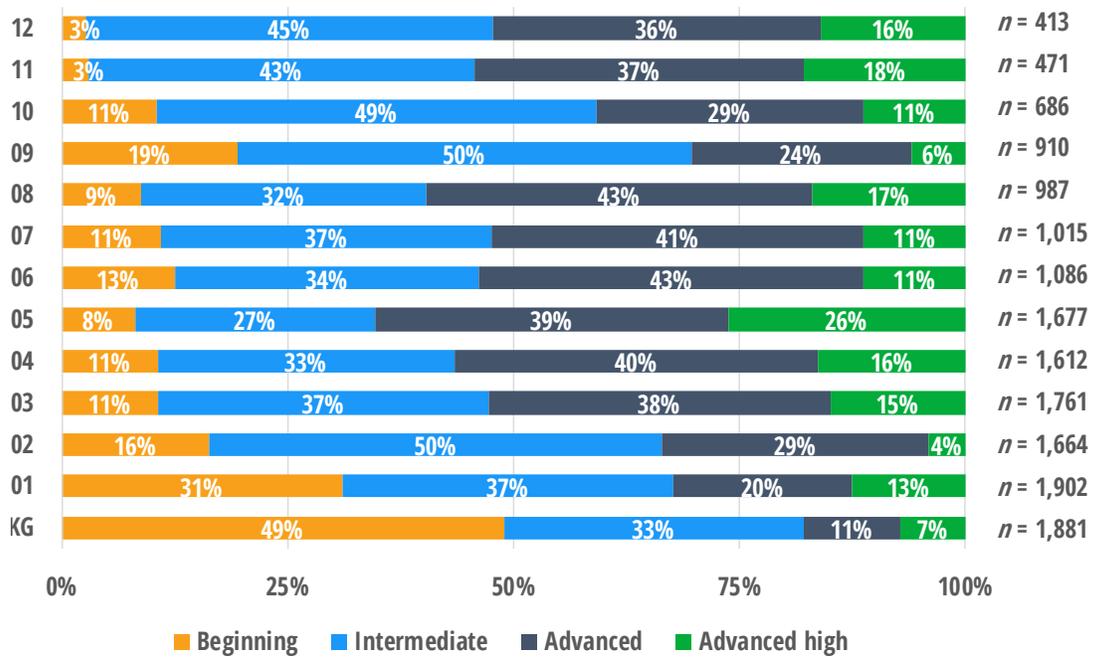
For more information, see Chapter 6 of the Technical Digest 2017–2018, found at: https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/TechDigest_2017_2018_Chapter6_TELPAS_R3_032019_tagged.pdf.

Performance on the TELPAS

Across the district, 18% of students scored at the beginning level of proficiency, 37% scored at the intermediate level, 32% scored at the advanced level, and 13% scored at the advanced high level ($N = 16,065$). Figure 1 shows percentages of composite ratings for each grade level. Appendix A, Figure 1 shows students’ ratings on each TELPAS subscale. Noticeably fewer students had access to the TELPAS this year compared with the 2018–2019 school year ($N = 18,974$), due to the COVID-19 school closures implemented in March. Overall TELPAS composite ratings were similar to last year’s scores.

Figure 1

Spring 2020 TELPAS Composite Ratings, by Grade Level



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

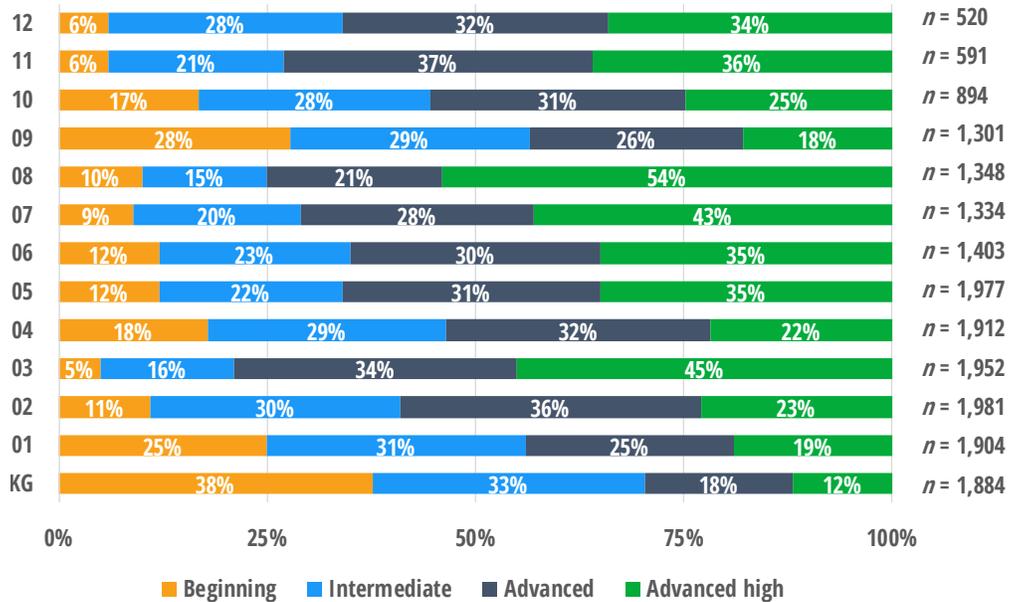
The percentages of students with advanced or advanced high ratings tended to be higher at upper elementary than at lower elementary grades. From 3rd through 8th grade, more than half of emergent bilinguals received composite TELPAS ratings of advanced or advanced high. At grades 5, 8, and 11, the highest percentages of emergent bilinguals attained advanced high ratings (Figure 1). These results differ slightly from last year’s results in that 12th grade was no longer among the highest scoring grades, though it was one percentage point behind 8th grade. Additionally, **the percentage of 8th graders scoring advanced high increased from 9% in 2019 to 17% in 2020.** Appendix B, Figures 1 and 2, show overall TELPAS composite ratings for emergent bilinguals tested at each grade level for 2019 and 2020.

The decline in percentages of emergent bilinguals attaining advanced or advanced high ratings in 6th and 9th grades may also be due to enrollment of some emergent bilinguals in U.S. schools for the first time. Appendix C, Figure 1, shows the 2020 overall TELPAS composite ratings for newcomer emergent bilinguals (i.e., students who have been in US schools for three years or less) at each grade level. Appendix C, Figure 2, shows the 2020 overall TELPAS composite ratings for non-newcomers (i.e., emergent bilinguals who had been in U.S. schools for more than three years) at each grade level. Across grade levels, the percentage of newcomers achieving advanced or advanced high proficiency was much lower than that of non-newcomers, consistent with findings from last year (see Jensen, 2019).

Figures 2 through 5 show the distribution of ratings for listening, speaking, writing, and reading, respectively. The distribution of ratings for listening exhibits a pattern similar to that for the overall composite ratings (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Spring 2020 TELPAS Listening Ratings, by Grade Level

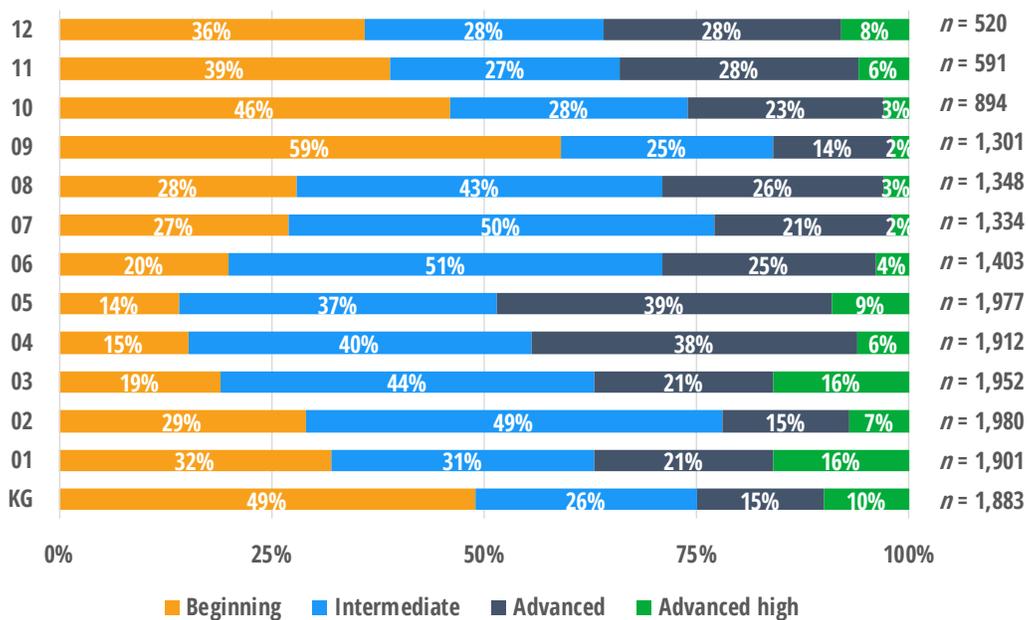


Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

The distribution of ratings for speaking differs from that of the composite ratings, with low percentages of students scoring advanced or advanced high and larger percentages scoring beginning or intermediate (Figure 3).

Figure 3

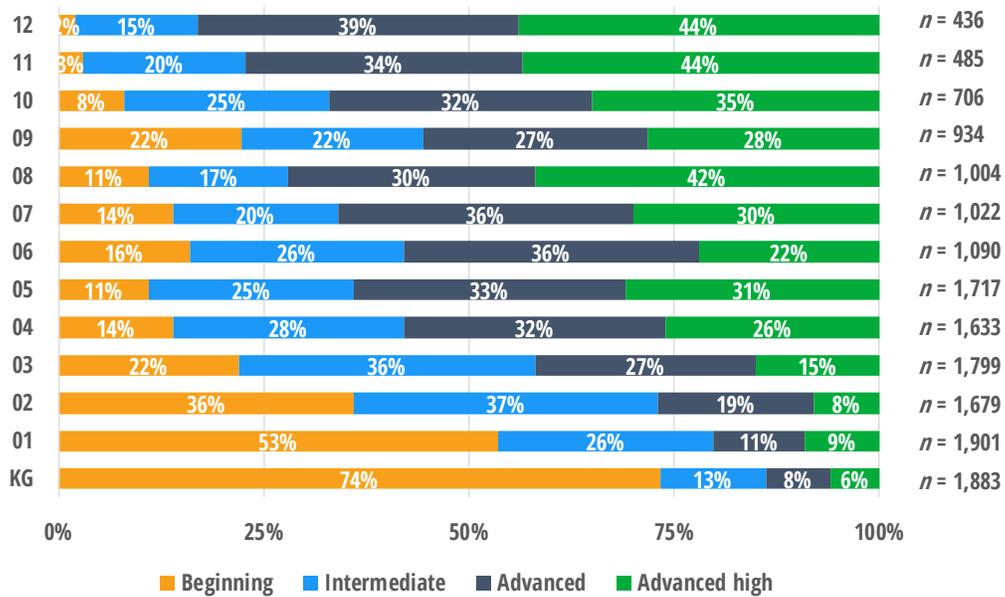
Spring 2020 TELPAS Speaking Ratings, by Grade Level



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

In the writing domain, a greater percentage of students in grades 4-12 scored advanced high; fewer students scored intermediate in all grades compared to the overall TELPAS rating (Figure 4), consistent with findings from 2018–2019.

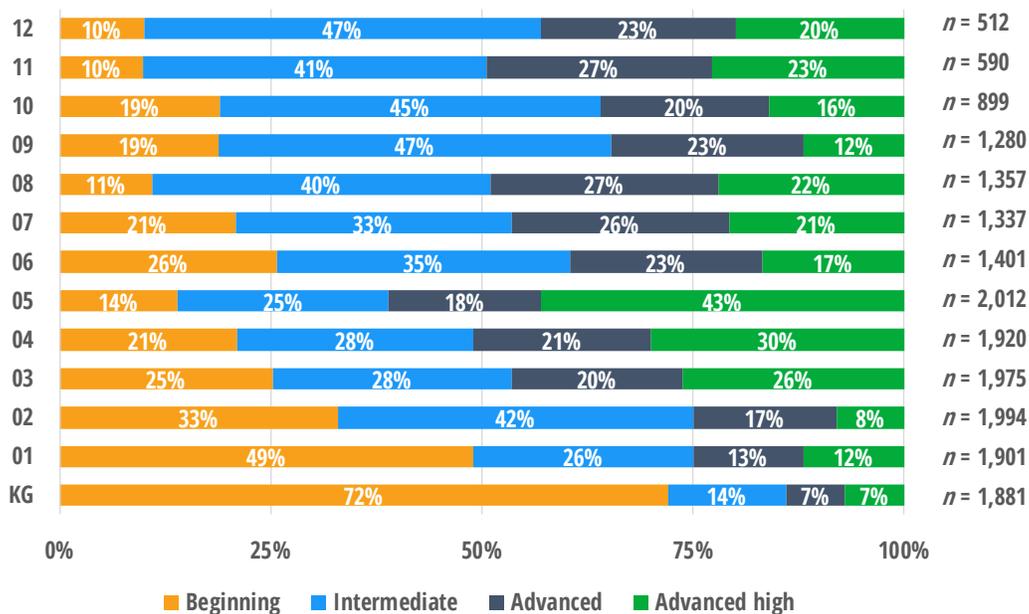
Figure 4
Spring 2020 TELPAS Writing Ratings, by Grade Level



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

The distribution of ratings in the reading domain closely replicated that of the composite score. Close to half of 3rd–8th graders scored advanced or advanced high, with the most advanced high being in grades 5, 8, and 11 (Figure 5).

Figure 5
Spring 2020 TELPAS Reading Ratings, by Grade Level



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

TELPAS Performance, by Economic Disadvantage

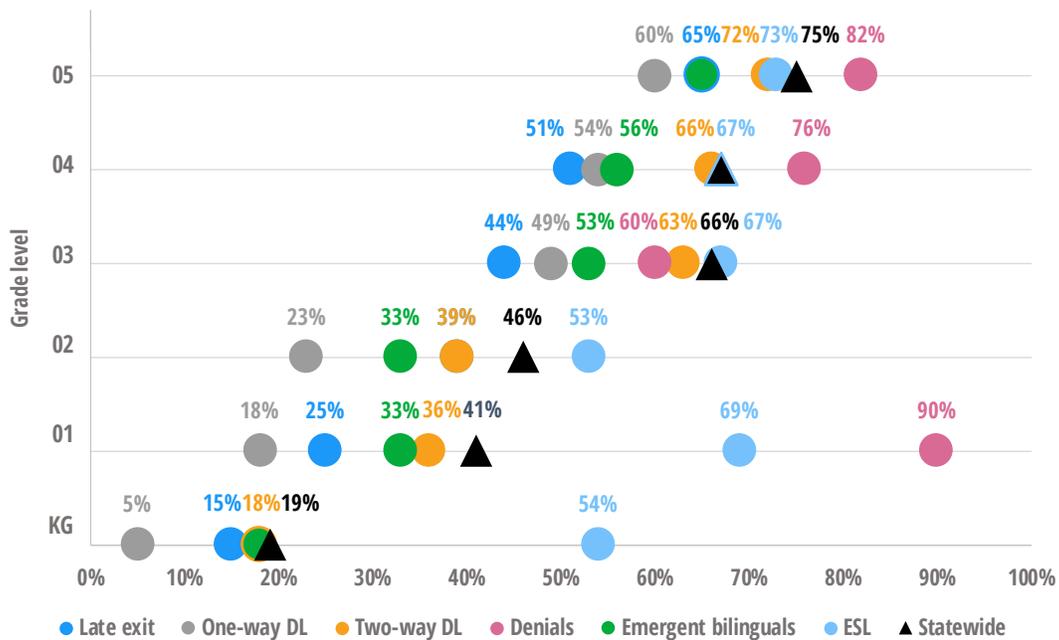
The majority of emergent bilinguals in AISD (86%) were eligible for free or reduced-price meals in 2019–2020. TELPAS performance tended to be higher at low-poverty schools, where fewer than 25% of students were eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals, than at high-poverty schools, where 75% of students were eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals. That is, 78% of emergent bilinguals at low-poverty schools ($n = 507$) scored advanced or advanced high on the 2020 TELPAS composite, whereas 39% of emergent bilinguals at high-poverty schools ($n = 5,113$) scored advanced or advanced high.

TELPAS Performance, by BE/ESL Program and Grade Level

Figure 6 shows the percentages of elementary emergent bilinguals for each grade level and in each type of language program who scored either advanced or advanced high on the TELPAS composite in 2020. For all programs except ESL, the percentages of students who scored advanced or advanced high progressively increased as the students advanced in grade level, and **for the majority of programs, two-thirds of students reached advanced or advanced high proficiency in English by 5th grade**. These findings are consistent with 5th grade proficiency levels from the 2018–2019 school year (see Jensen, 2019).

Figure 6

TELPAS Advanced/Advanced High Composite Ratings for AISD Emergent Bilinguals in Elementary Grades, Spring 2020, by BE/ESL Program



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

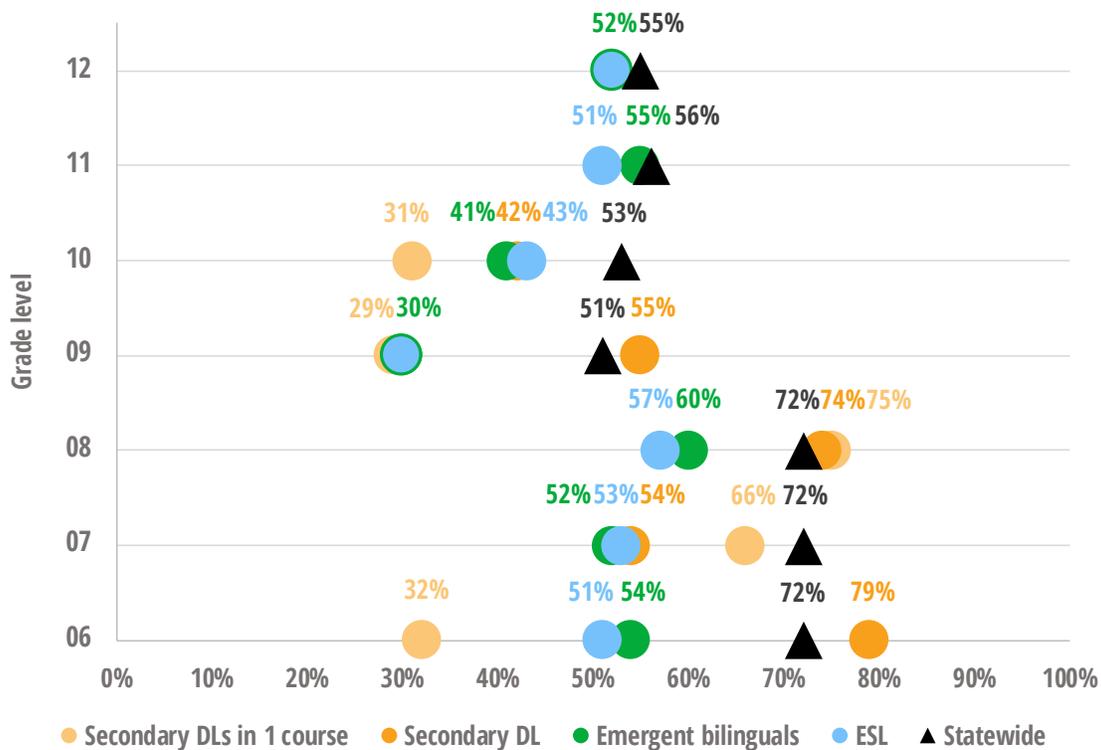
Note. KG = kindergarten. Percentages for parent denials are not displayed for all grade levels due to the small number of students being tested.

Two-way dual language (DL) performance becomes more comparable to ESL and statewide performance around the 4th and 5th grades. Figure 6 does not show TELPAS scores for students at all grade levels whose parents denied BE/ESL program participation due to a small number of students being tested. Appendix D, Table 1 displays the total number of students tested for each program as well as for parent denials. Students whose parents denied BE/ESL program participation tended to score higher on the TELPAS than did students enrolled in one of the BE/ESL programs. Finally, **greater or similar percentages of elementary emergent bilinguals in AISD’s ESL program achieved advanced or advanced high scores, compared with the percentages of emergent bilinguals across the state.**

Figure 7 shows the percentages of secondary emergent bilinguals for each program and grade level scoring advanced or advanced high on the 2020 TELPAS. Similar to last year’s findings, percentages of students in ESL with advanced or advanced high composite ratings increased through the middle school grades, dipped in 9th grade, and then began increasing again (see Jensen, 2019). Noticeably, **the percentages of middle school students in ESL who achieved advanced or advanced high composite ratings were higher this year (51%, 53%, and 57% for grades 6, 7, and 8, respectively), compared with their percentages in the 2018–2019 school year (45%, 46%, and 46%).** In addition, **the percentage of 6th graders in secondary DL achieving advanced or advanced high TELPAS composite ratings increased from 49% in 2018–2019 to 79% in 2019–2020.** The performance of secondary DL students was examined by grouping them according to whether they took one or two DL courses. The percentages of students enrolled in only one DL course scoring advanced or advanced high on the TELPAS composite were generally lower than the percentages of students enrolled in two DL courses, especially at the lower grades. However, students enrolled in only one DL course were generally more likely to score advanced or advanced high on the TELPAS composite than were students enrolled in ESL. As in the findings for elementary students, the performance of secondary students whose parents denied BE/ESL program participation was generally higher than was the performance of students enrolled in a BE/ESL program. Parent denials’ performance is not displayed in Figure 7 due to the small number of students tested (see Appendix D, Table 2 for the total number of students for each program and grade level). As for AISD students’ performance relative to that of emergent bilinguals across the state, a greater percentage of AISD secondary DL students than of emergent bilinguals across the state in grades 6, 8, and 9 achieved advanced or advanced high ratings.

Figure 7

TELPAS Advanced/Advanced High Composite Ratings for AISD Emergent Bilinguals in Secondary Grades, Spring 2020, by BE/ESL Program



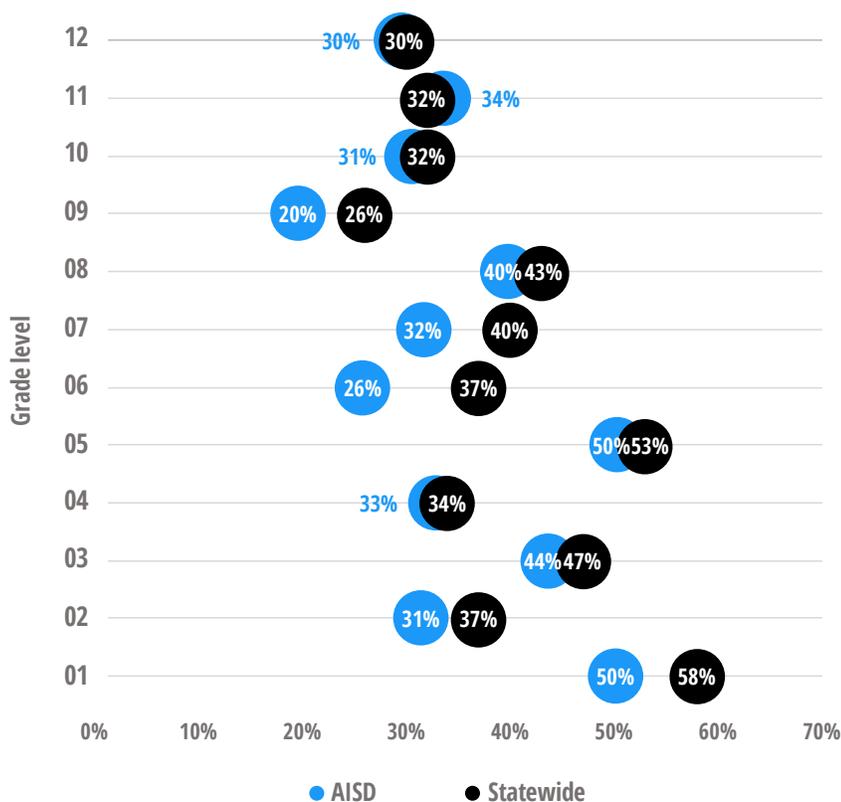
Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

Note. Percentages for parent denials are not displayed due to a small number of students being tested. Numbers tested for each grade level and BE/ESL program are included in Appendix D.

Another way to assess language acquisition is to examine the progress students have made from one year to the next. Yearly progress on students’ TELPAS scores was recorded for the first time in 2019 (due to changes that were made to the exam in 2018). For 2020, Figure 8 shows the percentage of AISD emergent bilinguals in each grade who progressed at least one proficiency level on the 2020 TELPAS. **Students in grades 1, 3, and 5 displayed the highest rates of progressing at least one proficiency level on the TELPAS composite rating among all AISD emergent bilinguals.** For many grade levels, AISD progress scores closely overlapped with those of emergent bilinguals across the state, though AISD emergent bilinguals in grades 1, 2, 6, 7, and 9 were less likely to progress at least one proficiency level than were emergent bilinguals in corresponding grades statewide.

Figure 8

Percentage of AISD and Statewide Emergent Bilinguals Who Progressed at Least One Proficiency Level on 2020 TELPAS, by Grade Level



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

TELPAS Alternate

The TEA supported the development of an alternate version of the TELPAS to assess English language proficiency in emergent bilinguals with significant cognitive disabilities. The TELPAS Alternate was piloted in 2018 and administered for the first time in 2019 (scores were not reported last year because standards had not yet been set). The 2019–2020 school year was the first year that scores could be reported for the TELPAS Alternate. Students are scored using the same language domains as for the TELPAS (listening, speaking, writing, and reading) while allowing for alternate forms of expressive and receptive language. In 2019–2020, 189 emergent bilinguals received a score on the TELPAS Alternate, with the highest percentages of students receiving high scores in grades 5, 6, and 10. Appendix E, Figures 1 and 2, display AISD and statewide TELPAS Alternate scores for each grade level. For more information on the TELPAS Alternate, see <https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/telpas/telpas-alternate-resources>.

AP Course Enrollment and Exams

At the middle school level, several pre-AP courses and the AP Spanish Language and Culture course are offered. At the high school level, many more options for AP classes are available. Middle school and high students enrolled in AP courses can earn college credit by taking an AP exam and scoring a 3 or higher on a 1 to 5 scale. The number of credits earned depends on the score received (e.g., 3, 4, or 5).

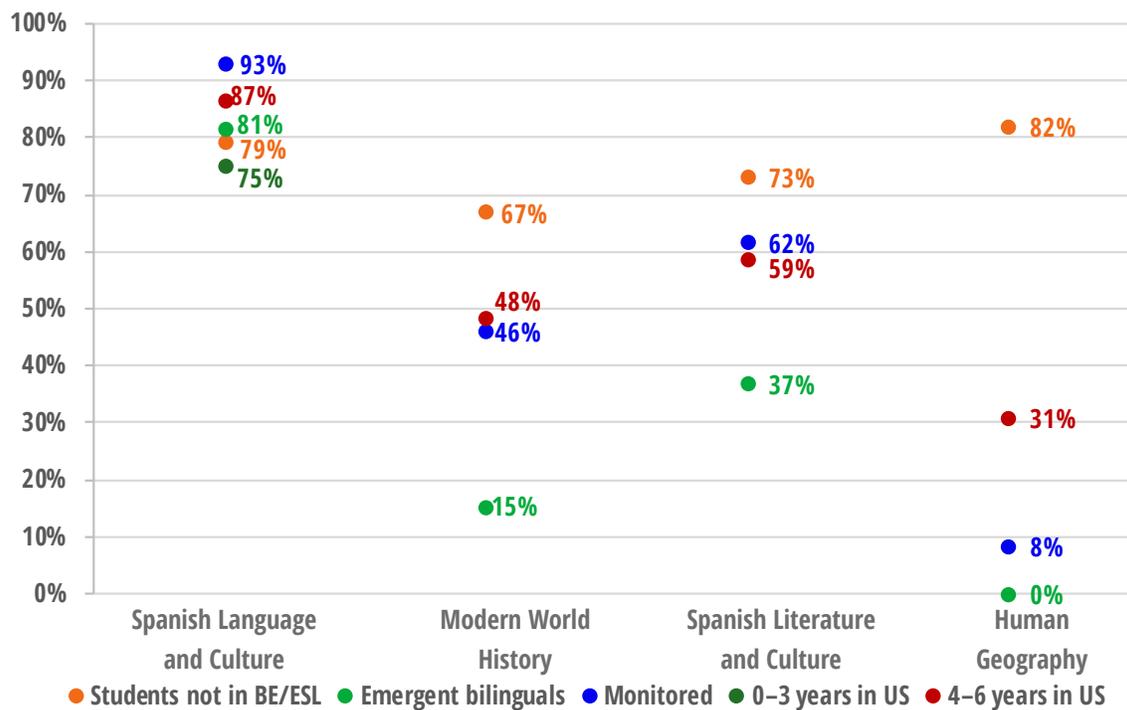
This school year, emergent bilingual students who took an AP exam were in grades 8 through 12. In total, 5,566 emergent bilinguals were in grades 8 through 12 in 2019–2020; 789 were enrolled in an AP course (14%) and 255 took one or more AP exams (32% of those enrolled in an AP course). In comparison, 20,724 students not in a BE/ESL program made up the rest of students in grades 8 through 12; 6,420 were enrolled in an AP course (31%) and 4,340 took an AP exam (68% of those enrolled in an AP course).

The four AP exams most often taken by emergent bilingual students are reported here since the number of emergent bilingual students who took other AP exams was less than 10. The top four exams taken by emergent bilinguals this school year, in descending order, were: Spanish Language and Culture, Modern World History, Spanish Literature and Culture, and Human Geography. Please see Appendix F for the counts of student subgroups who took each exam.

Emergent bilingual students earned less college credit on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam than did monitored students and immigrants who had been in US schools for 4 to 6 years, but earn more than did students not in a BE/ESL program and recent immigrants (Figure 9). On the other three AP exams, emergent bilinguals earned less college credit than did all other student subgroups.

Figure 9

Percentage of Passing Scores on the Top Four AP Exams Taken by Emergent Bilinguals, by Student Subgroup



Source. AISD student AP exam 2020 records

Note. Recent immigrants, with 0 through 3 years in the US, were too small a subgroup to include in three AP exams, and denial students were too small a subgroup to include in any AP exams.

College Readiness

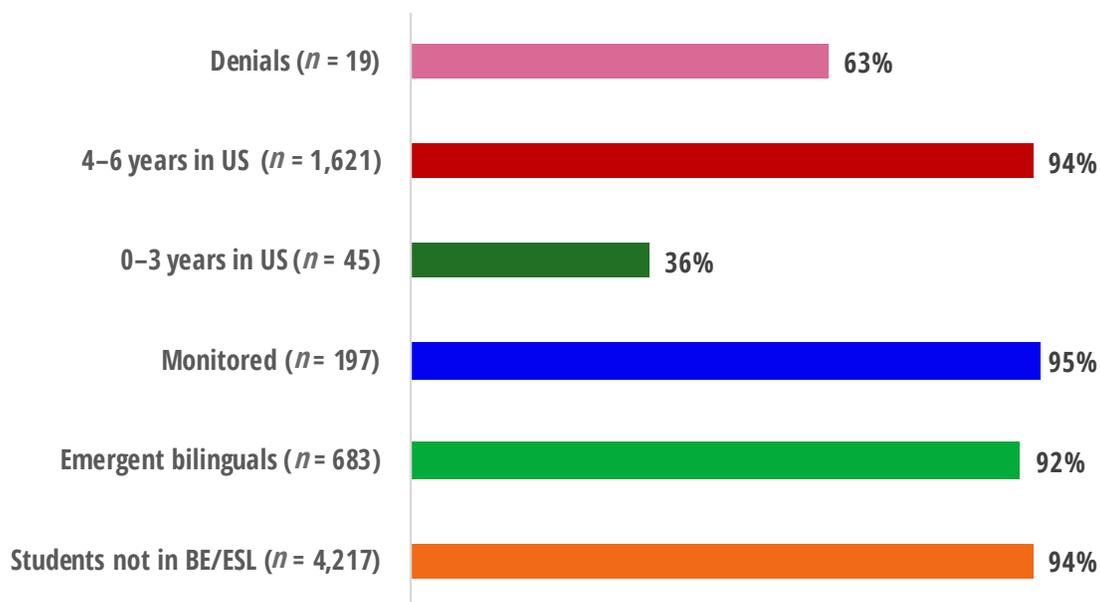
College readiness refers to the knowledge and skills a high school graduate needs to achieve successful college and career outcomes. Students and educators use multiple assessments to assess college readiness. These assessments include the ACT, SAT, and Texas Success Initiative (TSI) exams. Although test participation was optional, district staff identified students who had not taken a college readiness test or did not meet college readiness standards on a test, and provided necessary academic and/or procedural supports throughout the school year. If students meet college readiness benchmarks on these assessments, they are likely to succeed in the credit-bearing courses needed for a college degree or program certificate without the need for remedial coursework.

Figure 10 shows the college readiness results for 12th graders who were in the 2020 graduation year cohort. A cohort is defined as a group of students who began grade 9 in a particular school year and were expected to graduate 4 years later. In all, 630 emergent bilinguals; 187 former emergent bilinguals, or monitored students; 16 recent immigrants (in U.S. schools for 0–3 years); 1,520 immigrants in US schools for 4 to 6 years; 3,952 students not in a BE/ESL program; and 12 denials were in this school year’s 12th grade graduating cohort and took one or more college entrance readiness exam.

Overall, 92% of AISD emergent bilinguals took one or more college admissions test in the 2019–2020 school year. Compared with other student subgroups, emergent bilinguals were less likely to take a college readiness exam, except for denials and recent immigrants (Figure 10).

Figure 10

Percentage of Students Who Took One or More College Entrance Exam, by Student Subgroup

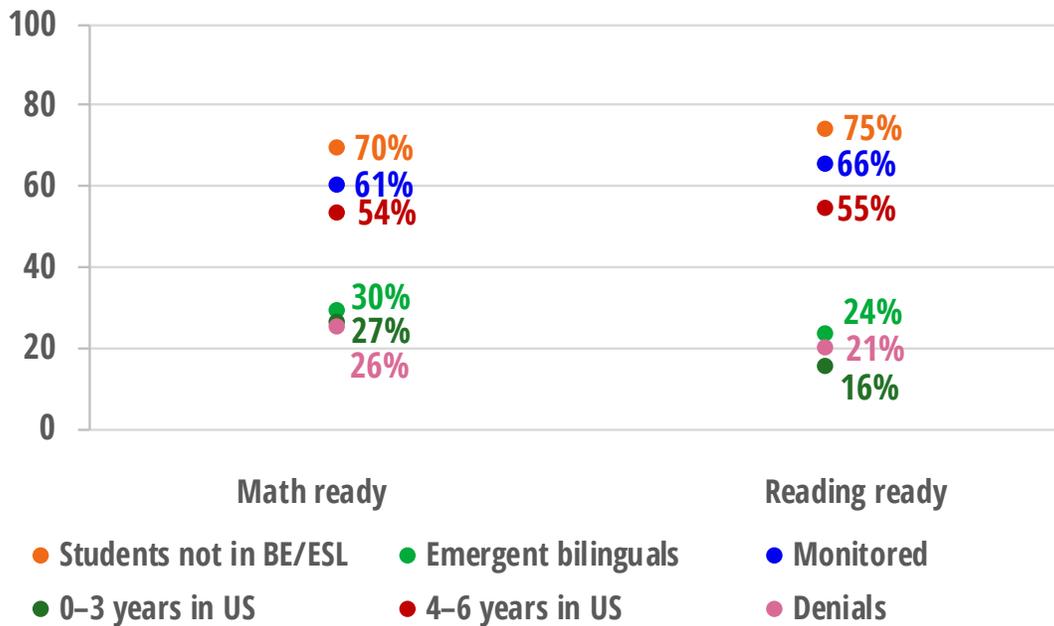


Source. AISD student College Readiness 2020 records

Similarly, emergent bilinguals were less likely to score college ready in math and reading than were other subgroups, except for denials and recent immigrants (Figure 11). Thirty percent of emergent bilinguals were math ready and 24% were reading ready. In comparison, 70% of students not in a BE/ESL program were math ready, and 75% were reading ready. The closest subgroup following students not in a BE/ESL program was former or monitored emergent bilinguals, who were 61% math ready and 55% reading ready.

Figure 11

Percentage of Students Who Scored College Ready in Math and Reading, by Student Subgroup



Source. AISD student College Readiness 2020 records

Dropout and Graduation Rates

AISD emergent bilinguals’ dropout rates declined from 2.7% in 2014–2015 to 1.4% in 2017–2018 (Table 1). A consistent trend of decreasing dropout rates across the most recent 5 school years can be seen in Table 1. While emergent bilinguals’ graduation rates increased by 9.1 percentage points in the past 2 years (Table 2), the emergent bilinguals’ rate (88.7%) was still lower than that for all AISD students in 2018–2019 (93.4%). Graduation and dropout rates for 2019–2020 will not be finalized until Winter 2020 when it is known whether students have been re-enrolled if ever unenrolled.

Table 1

Emergent Bilinguals’ and All Students’ Dropout Rate, Grades 7 Through 12, 2014–2015 to 2018–2019

Grades 7–12	School year				
	2014–2015	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019
Emergent bilingual dropout rate	2.70%	1.90%	1.50%	1.40%	1.60%
All students dropout rate	1.40%	1.10%	1.00%	0.90%	0.90%

Source. AISD student records

Table 2

Emergent Bilinguals' and All Students' Graduation Rate, 2014–2015 to 2018–2019

	School year				
	2014–2015	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019
Emergent bilingual graduation rate	79.60%	79.90%	79.60%	86.10%	88.70%
All students graduation rate	89.70%	90.70%	90.20%	92.30%	93.40%

Source. AISD student records

Summary and Conclusions

TELPAS

Fifteen percent fewer students took the TELPAS this year than did last year, likely due to the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall composite ratings remained similar to those reported in the 2018–2019 school year. For example, the percentages of students who attained advanced or advanced high ratings tended to be higher at upper elementary than at lower elementary grades, which suggests gradual language acquisition by emergent bilinguals as they matriculate through school. Out of the four TELPAS domains, fewer students across the district received advanced or advanced high ratings on speaking, consistent with prior years' findings (Jensen, 2019). This finding is also supported by research suggesting that the productive abilities of speaking and writing are usually attained after the receptive abilities of reading and listening (Bloom, 1974). The lower percentages of newcomers achieving advanced or advanced high proficiency on the TELPAS composite, compared with non-newcomers is expected because these students did not have enough time in U.S. schools to become English proficient. This year, the percentage of 8th graders scoring advanced high on the TELPAS composite increased by eight percentage points compared with scores in the 2018–2019 school year, which reflects AISD's recent efforts to prepare 8th graders for high school.

ESL students in AISD outperformed students in other BE programs at the elementary level. This could be due to the nature of the programs such that students who were in ESL may have started out with greater English proficiency than did DL or late-exit students. Elementary ESL students in AISD also outperformed emergent bilinguals across the state of Texas at many grade levels. At the secondary level, DL students (enrolled in either one or two courses) tended to outperform ESL students in AISD and emergent bilinguals across the state of Texas in grades 6, 8, and 9. Students in more than half the grade levels in AISD progressed at similar rates as did emergent bilinguals across the state of Texas on the TELPAS composite score. Future research can follow students over time to test whether progression is gradual. For the statewide summary reports by year, see <https://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/telpas/rpt/sum/>. Finally, this was the first year that TELPAS Alternate scores could be reported, and the highest percentages of advanced or advanced high ratings were observed in grades 5, 8, and 10.

AP Course Enrollment and Exams

Fourteen percent of emergent bilingual students enrolled in one or more AP courses this school year, and a third of those students took the corresponding AP exam to potentially earn college course credit. Emergent bilinguals earned college course credit at a rate similar to that of monitored and students not in a BE/ESL program for the Spanish Language and Culture AP Exam. However, for the Modern World History, Spanish Literature and Culture, and Human Geography AP Exams, few emergent bilinguals obtained college credit. Monitored and immigrant students in US schools for 4 to 6 years scored higher than did emergent bilinguals on all four AP exams, and students not in a BE/ESL program scored higher than did emergent bilinguals on all exams except for Spanish Language and Culture.

It appears that being currently English proficient as a former emergent bilingual, or monitored student, is not enough to be able to score as high on AP exams as students not in a BE/ESL program. This brings into question what may be behind such a trend. It is likely that former emergent bilinguals have not had as many opportunities to take advanced-level courses as have students not in a BE/ESL program. For instance, because their schedules may have been filled with BE courses, emergent bilinguals may not have had schedules that allowed for enrollment in pre-AP or AP courses. Another possibility is that these students were not encouraged to enroll in advanced-level courses. Steps should be taken to understand why monitored students and other emergent bilinguals are not scoring as well on AP exams as their counterparts are. AP exams offer an opportunity to obtain college course credit in high school, which is a factor associated with postsecondary credential rates, especially for underrepresented students (Hoffman, 2003).

College Readiness

While emergent bilingual students were almost as likely to take one or more college entrance exams as were students not in a BE/ESL program, students new to US schools lagged with respect to the number students who took one or more exams. It may be that newcomers were not familiar with the examinations or were not planning for college due to economic or academic achievement-related reasons. The poverty rate for recent immigrants is more than twice that of US natives (Chapman & Bernstein, 2003), and Hispanic (but not Asian) immigrants are less likely to attend post-secondary education (Baum & Flores, 2011). Denial students also took college entrance exams at a lower rate than other groups, although not as low as newcomers, and it is unclear why this may be. Thus, it is important to focus on recent immigrant and denial students' access to college guidance counselors and information about college preparation (e.g., college entrance exams, scholarship and funding opportunities), especially for Hispanic students.

Although emergent bilinguals take college entrance exams at a similar rate as students not in a BE/ESL program, they did not score nearly as college ready on math or reading as do students not in a BE/ESL program. This is a troubling finding. Emergent bilinguals, recent immigrants, and denial students all score similarly low on college readiness, while students not in a BE/ESL program score highest, followed by monitored students and immigrant students in US schools for 4 to 6 years. Considering this pattern of scores, it seems likely that lacking English proficiency was hindering emergent bilinguals, recent immigrants, and denial students from scoring college ready, because their English proficiency was not up to par with that of other student subgroups, the majority of whom scored college ready.

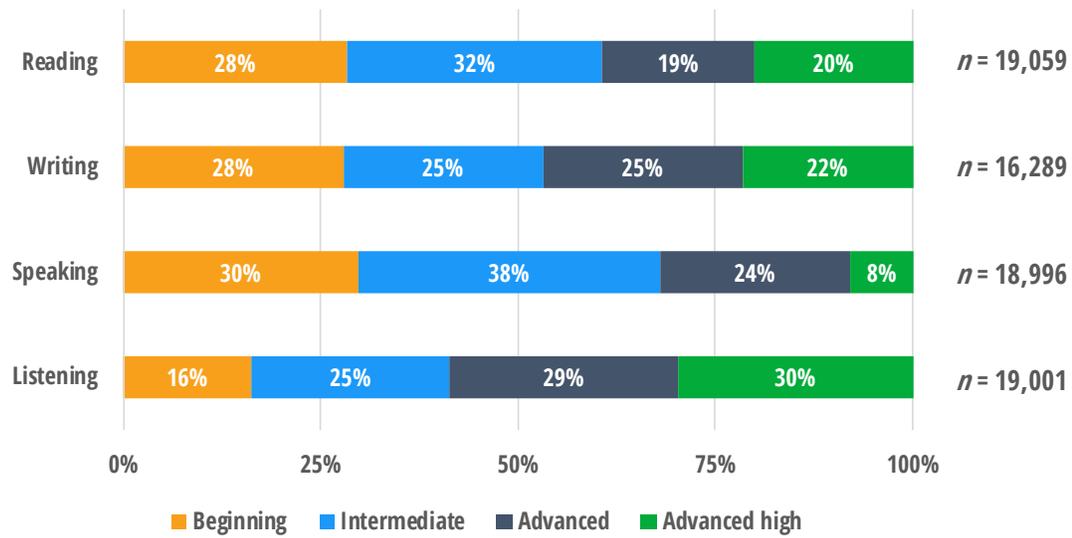
References

- Baum, S., & Flores, S. M. (2011). Higher education and children in immigrant families. *The Future of Children*, 21(1), 171–193. <https://doi.org/10.1353/foc.2011.0000>
- Bloom, L. (1974). Talking, understanding, and thinking: Developmental relationship between receptive and expressive language. In R. Schiefelbusch & L. Lloyd (Eds.), *Language perspectives: Acquisition, retardation, and intervention* (pp. 285–311). Baltimore MD: University Park Press.
- Chapman, J., & Bernstein, J. (2003). Immigration and poverty: How are they linked? *Monthly Labor Review*, 126, 10. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2003/04/art2full.pdf>
- García, O., Kleifgen, J., & Falchi, L. (2008). *From English language learners to emergent bilinguals* (1). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED524002.pdf>
- Hoffman, N. (2003). College credit in high school: Increasing college attainment rates for underrepresented students. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 35(4), 42–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00091380309604110>
- Jensen, M. (2019). *Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Spring 2019 results*. Austin Independent School District.
- Lucas, M., & Poulsen, H. (2020). *Bilingual and English as a Second Language programs and demographic summary, 2019–2020*. Austin Independent School District.
- Poulsen, H. (2020). *Secondary dual language academic performance summary report, 2019–2020*. Austin Independent School District.

Appendix A

Figure 1

Spring 2020 TELPAS Ratings by Subscale, District-Wide

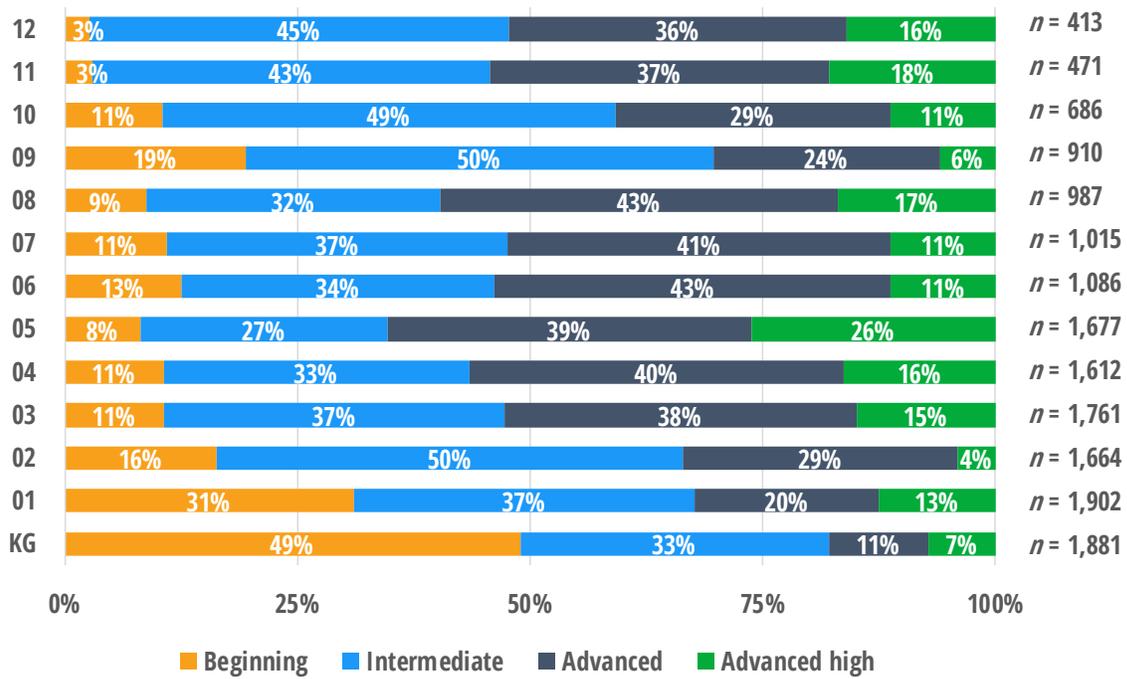


Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

Appendix B

Figure 1

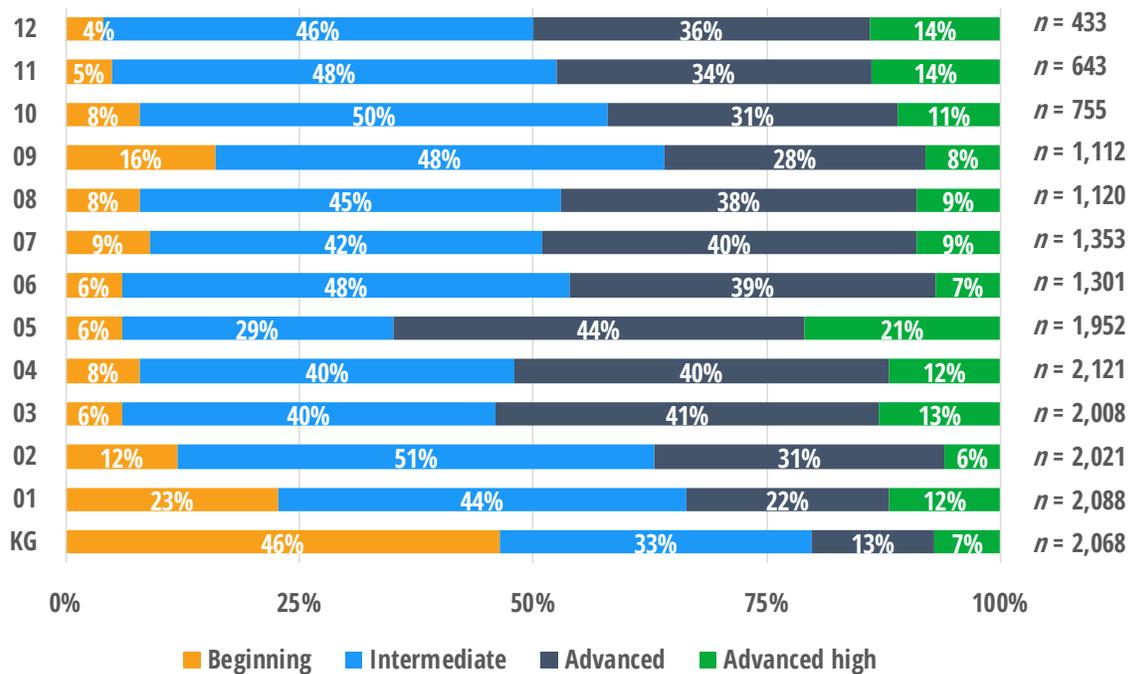
Spring 2020 TELPAS Composite Ratings, by Grade Level



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

Figure 2

Spring 2019 TELPAS Composite Ratings, by Grade Level

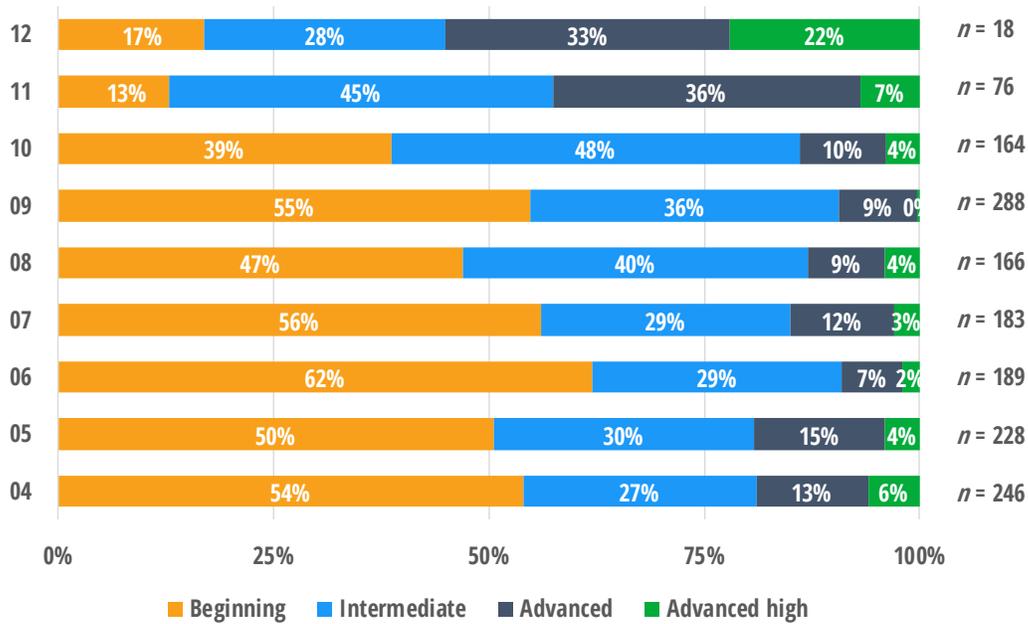


Source. AISD student TELPAS 2019 records

Appendix C

Figure 1

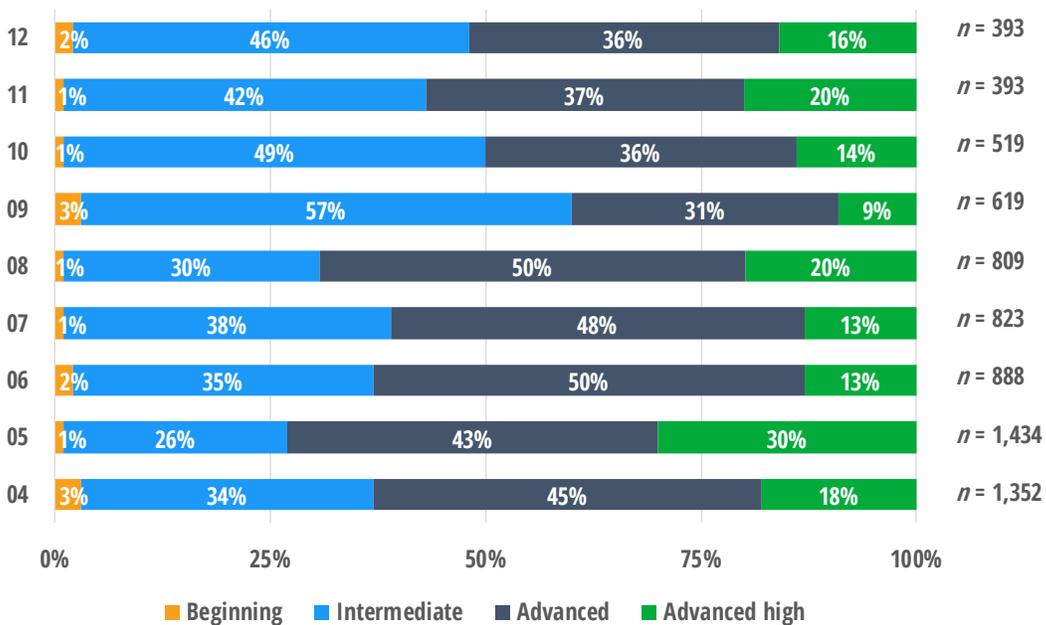
Spring 2020 TELPAS Composite Ratings for Newcomer Students, by Grade Level



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

Figure 2

Spring 2020 TELPAS Composite Ratings for Non-Newcomer Students, by Grade Level



Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

Appendix D

Table 1

Elementary Emergent Bilinguals' TELPAS 2020 Numbers Tested, by Grade Level and BE/ESL Program

Grade level	Emergent bilinguals	ESL	Late exit	One-way DL	Two-way DL	Denials	Statewide
KG	1,881	364	201	966	334	5	63,065
01	1,902	363	171	992	344	10	68,431
02	1,664	333	223	872	216	9	40,821
03	1,761	337	411	816	187	10	41,270
04	1,612	317	527	605	146	13	42,546
05	1,677	298	613	568	168	17	42,024

Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

Note. KG = Kindergarten, ESL = English as a Second Language, DL = Dual Language.

Table 2

Secondary Emergent Bilinguals' TELPAS 2020 Numbers Tested, by Grade Level and BE/ESL Program

Grade level	Emergent bilinguals	ESL	Secondary DL	1-Course DL	Denials	Statewide
06	1,094	844	111	62	9	30,781
07	1,019	784	72	61	12	28,525
08	1,006	678	68	79	7	25,169
09	923	625	33	28	9	25,309
10	692	517	12	16	19	18,527
11	471	395	-	-	8	13,325
12	413	304	-	-	8	9,564

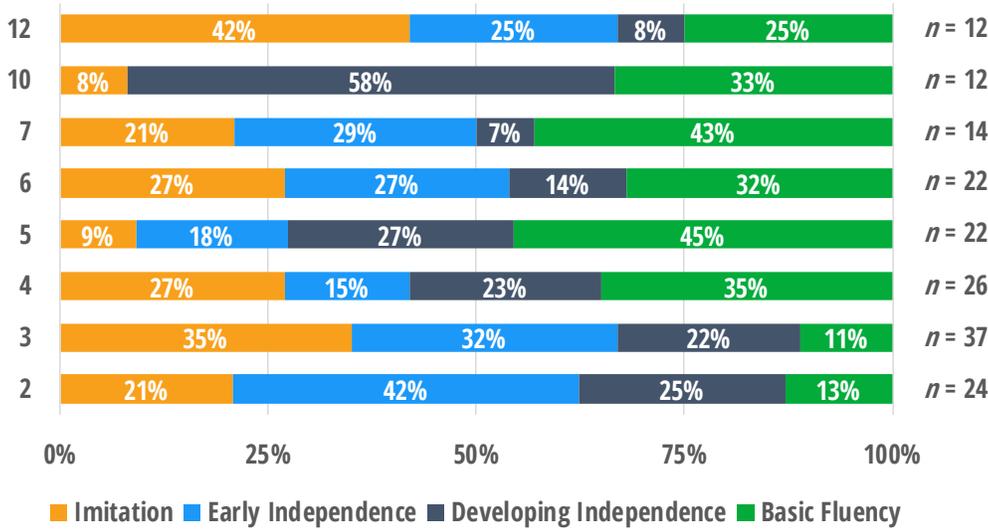
Source. AISD student TELPAS 2020 records

Note. ESL = English as a Second Language, DL = Dual Language.

Appendix E

Figure 1

Spring 2020 TELPAS Alternate Composite Ratings by Grade Level

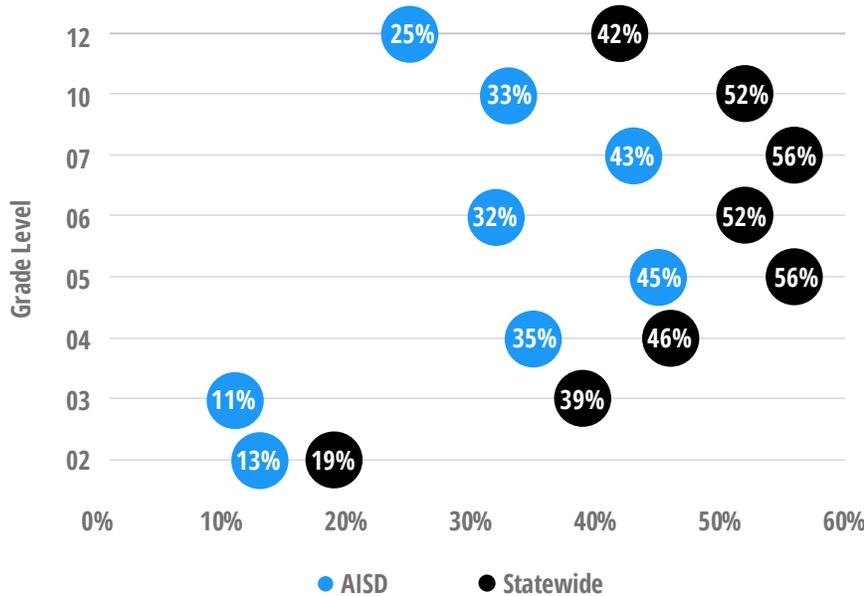


Source. AISD TELPAS 2020 records

Note. Scores are not reported for grades 8, 9, or 11 due to a low number of students who took the exam.

Figure 2

Percentage of AISD and Statewide Emergent Bilinguals Who Attained Developing Independence or Basic Fluency on 2020 TELPAS Alternate, by Grade Level



Source. AISD TELPAS 2020 records

Note. Scores are not reported for grades 8, 9, or 11 due to a low number of AISD students who took the exam. No AISD students attained Basic Fluency on TELPAS Alternate (scores above represent percentage of students who attained Developing Independence).

Appendix F

Table 1

Student Subgroup Counts for the Top Four AP Exams taken by Emergent Bilingual Students

AP Exam	Student Subgroups					
	Students not in BE/ESL	Emergent bilinguals	Monitored	0-3 yrs in the US	4-6 yrs in the US	Denials
Spanish Language & Culture	370	161	85	16	320	< 10
Modern World History	1,301	20	104	< 10	242	< 10
Spanish Literature & Culture	26	19	13	< 10	46	< 10
Human Geography	155	11	24	< 10	55	< 10

Source. AISD student AP exam records

Note. Student subgroups under a count of 10 were not included in analyses and figures.



Michelle Lucas, PhD
Helen Poulsen, PhD

Department of Research and Evaluation



4000 S IH 35 Frontage Road | Austin, TX 78704
512.414.1724 | fax: 512.414.1707
www.austinisd.org/dre | Twitter: @AISD_DRE

September 2020

Publication 19.46