

2021-22 Report



# ENGLISH LEARNER EDUCATION in MINNESOTA

# English Learner Education in Minnesota

## Introduction

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) ensures educational equity for multilingual learners through supporting school districts and charter schools to develop, implement and evaluate research-based language instruction education programs so that multilingual learners, including students with English learner status, attain academic language proficiency and achieve state academic content standards.

This report contains information regarding English learner demographics and achievement. In addition to including statutory and regulatory references pertaining to English learners, it also reports on available funding. It describes the Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE) support of local education agencies (LEAs) in implementing effective language instruction educational programs to ensure ELs are able to reach their academic potential. Additionally, it reports information about state and federal funds available to support ELs in Minnesota. We thank you for your continued efforts to collaborate with others to implement effective systems and programs across schools and districts that truly improve education outcomes and opportunities for all English learners in equitable ways!

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# Minnesota Multilingual Learner Education Strategic Framework

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is committed to ensuring educational equity and access for multilingual learners through high-quality language instruction and rigorous academic instruction.

MDE supports school districts and charter schools (referred to as local education agencies [LEAs]) to develop, implement and evaluate research-based language instruction educational programs so that multilingual learners attain academic language proficiency and achieve state academic content standards.

## Definitions

### English Learner (EL)

As defined in Minnesota under 2017 Minnesota Statutes, section 124D. 59, subdivision 2, an English learner is “a pupil in kindergarten through grade 12 or a prekindergarten student enrolled in an approved voluntary prekindergarten program under section 124D.151 or a school readiness plus program who meets the requirements under subdivision 2a or the following requirements:

1. the pupil, as declared by a parent or guardian uses a language other than English; and
2. the pupil is determined by a valid assessment measuring the pupil’s English language proficiency and by developmentally appropriate measures, which might include observations, teacher judgment, parent recommendations, or developmentally appropriate assessment instruments, to lack the necessary English skills to participate fully in academic classes taught in English.”

### Immigrant Children and Youth

An immigrant student is defined as a student who:

1. a child who is aged 3 through 21;
2. was not born in any state or any U.S. territory;
3. has not been attending one or more schools in any one or more states for more than three full academic years (on a cumulative basis); and,
4. while most immigrant students in Minnesota are also English learners, students who are not ELs can also be identified for funding and support.

For additional information, see the MDE web page on [Immigrant Children and Youth Grant](#).

### Long-term English Learners (LTEL)

Minnesota does not have a formal definition of LTELs within its statute, and ESSA does not formally define long-term English learners. However, under ESSA, all states are required to report the number and percentage of ELs who have not attained English language proficiency within five years of initial classification as an English learner and first enrollment in the local educational agency [ESSA, Section 3122(a)(6)].

## **Migratory Children**

According to sections 1309 of the ESSA, a child is a “migratory child” if the following conditions are met:

1. The child is not older than 21 years of age; and,
  - a. The child is entitled to a free public education (through grade 12) under state law, or,
  - b. The child is not yet at a grade level at which the LEA provides a free public education, and,
2. The child made a qualifying move in the preceding 36 months as a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher, or did so with, or to join a parent/guardian or spouse who is a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher; and,
3. With regard to the qualifying move identified in [2], above, the child moved due to economic necessity from one residence to another residence, and,
  - a. From one school district to another; or,
  - b. In a state that is comprised of a single school district, has moved from one administrative area to another within such district; or,
  - c. Resides in a school district of more than 15,000 square miles and migrates a distance of 20 miles or more to a temporary residence.

## **Recently Arrived English Learners (RAEL)**

An RAEL is an English learner enrolled in a school in one of the 50 States in the United States or District of Columbia for less than 12 months (ESSA 1111(b)(3)(A)).

## **Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)**

Students with limited or interrupted formal education make up a specific group of ELs. Signed into law in 2014, the Learning English for Academic Proficiency and Success (LEAPS) Act formally defined this group of ELs in state law and requires the MDE to report on the acquisition of English and academic progress of SLIFE. For the most current definition for SLIFE, please visit [MDE's SLIFE webpage](#)

## English Learner Education Legislation

Both state and federal legislation address needs of English learners. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 initially determined that students who do not demonstrate English language proficiency have a right to a language instruction educational program that provides them access to the academic content instruction that all children receive. Court decisions and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights with the United States Department of Education have described in more detail the responsibilities of LEAs. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, reauthorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), delineated more specifically the responsibilities of LEAs and state education agencies (SEAs). For a detailed list of state and federal laws as well as Supreme Court cases, see [English Learner Education Legislation](#).

## WIDA™

Minnesota joined the WIDA Consortium (formerly known as World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) in 2011 and adopted the WIDA English language development (ELD) standards in rule in January of 2012. WIDA provides language development resources to states and districts to support the academic success of multilingual learners. They offer a comprehensive, research-based system of language standards, assessments, professional learning and educator assistance. The consortium consists of 42 states and territories and 500 international schools worldwide.

Minnesota uses the ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) as the annual state English language proficiency assessment and the companion English language proficiency “screener” for identification purposes with incoming students who use or understand one or more other language in addition to English. The Kindergarten WIDA Screener was made available for use in Minnesota beginning in July of 2021. The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an assessment of ELD for students with English learner status in grades 1-12 who also have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. The ESEA, as amended by ESSA (2015), requires that all students identified as ELs be assessed annually for English language proficiency, including students who receive special education services.

You may visit the WIDA website to learn more about the WIDA Consortium, its assessments, the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, and resources and training for educators.

## Rollout and Implementation of the 2020 K-12 ELD Standards Framework in Minnesota

MDE staff will be working with Minnesota educators to update the English Language Development Standards Implementation Guide, which Provides guidance and support to educators implementing the WIDA ELD Standards.

**2021-22:** Planning, preparation, continued professional development and initial implementation. Consider ways to align and coordinate K-12 ELD standards implementation work with the implementation of other Minnesota standards, including physical education, arts, science, and language arts.

**2022-23:** Approaching full implementation by ELD teachers with efforts to inform integrated language and content instruction across the school-day and alignment with other Minnesota content standards.

**2023-24:** Ongoing implementation efforts-coincides with implementation of the Minnesota science standards (leverage opportunities for collaboration in standards implementation efforts) and the Minnesota Language Arts standards.

**2024-25:** Ongoing implementation efforts-coincides with implementation of the Minnesota science standards (leverage opportunities for collaboration in standards implementation efforts) and the Minnesota Language Arts standards.

## ***Some Applicable Uses of the WIDA Proficiency Level Descriptors***

- Collaboration between language development and content area educators
- Professional learning activities about language development
- School team discussion about the language growth of multilingual learners
- Conversations with families in their preferred language
- To help design and scaffold classroom instruction and assessment tasks (among other tools)
- To support teacher and student discussions around language performance in relation to learning goals
- To monitor progress of multilingual learners as they show language growth over time
- To evaluate evidence from student work (portfolio of speaking and writing samples) to inform instruction

## ***Inappropriate Uses of the WIDA Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs)***

The PLDs should not be used as restrictive examples or as a finite list of student abilities. Nor should they be used to limit access to complex texts and grade-level materials, participation in rigorous learning, or engagement in meaningful classroom discussions. Finally, the grade-level cluster PLDs should not be used to lower expectations. For more on intended and inappropriate uses of the PLDs, see page 35 of the [WIDA ELD Standards Framework](#).

## **WIDA™ Resources**

MDE embraces an asset-based approach in providing equity and meaningful access for multilingual learners. Minnesota focuses on expanding staff access to training and resources to improve instruction and assessment. Following are resources available to Minnesotans:

[Minnesota ELD Standards Page](#)

[WIDA ELD Standards Framework](#)

[ELD Standards in Action](#)

[Minnesota WIDA Membership Page](#)

### **WIDA Focus Bulletins to Note:**

[Language-Focused Family Engagement](#)

[Scaffolding Learning for Multilingual Students in Math](#)

[Interactive Learning with Multilingual Learners in Content-Area Classrooms](#)

[Supporting Early Literacy Development](#)

[Collaboration: Working Together to Serve Multilingual Learners](#)

[Oral Language in the Classroom](#)

[Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education \(SLIFE\)](#)

### **Self-Paced eLearning Workshops Available to Minnesota Educators Through August 31, 2022**

- **The WIDA ELD Standards Framework: A Collaborative Approach:** Explores ways to use the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition to support multilingual learners' achievement and language development. For K-12 educators. *Time to complete: 4 hours*
- **Engaging Multilingual Newcomers:** Explores community building and instructional strategies for teachers of multilingual learners who have recently arrived in the U.S. or who are new to U.S. schools. For K–12 classroom teachers. *Time to complete: 2 hours*
- **Engaging Multilingual Learners in Science: Making Sense of Phenomena:** Provides multiple strategies for engaging multilingual students in the central work of sense-making in science. For K-12 science and language educators. *Time to complete: 3-4 hours*
- **Social Studies: Engaging Multilingual Learners through Inquiry:** Focuses on the use of student and class assets to plan inquiry-based instruction, and explores how to consider the content and language needs of multilingual learners in social studies. For K-12 social studies teachers and ESL teachers. *Time to complete: 3-4 hours*

- **Leading for Equity: Classroom Walkthrough:** Introduces leaders to a classroom walkthrough resource that highlights practices and principles of exemplary and equitable teaching for multilingual learners. For K–12 school leaders. *Time to complete: 2 hours*
- **School Improvement Planning for Multilingual Learners:** Introduces leadership principles and practices to provide equitable educational opportunities for multilingual learners, based on a distributive leadership model. For any K-12 school leader. *Time to complete: 6-8 hours*
- **Developing Language for Learning in Mathematics:** Illustrates the benefits of designing mathematics instruction to provide multilingual students opportunities to use language to express their ideas and co-construct ideas with others. For K–12 math and ESL teachers. *Time to complete: 4 hours*
- **Home Languages in the Classroom:** Focuses on the essential question: How can I set up routines and learning activities that promote the use of home languages in my classroom? Offered in partnership with the Interconnected Coalitions for Multilingual Education and Equity (ICMEE) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). For K-12 classroom teachers. *Time to complete: 20 hours (including classroom implementation)*

## Funding for English Learner Education

### State Funding

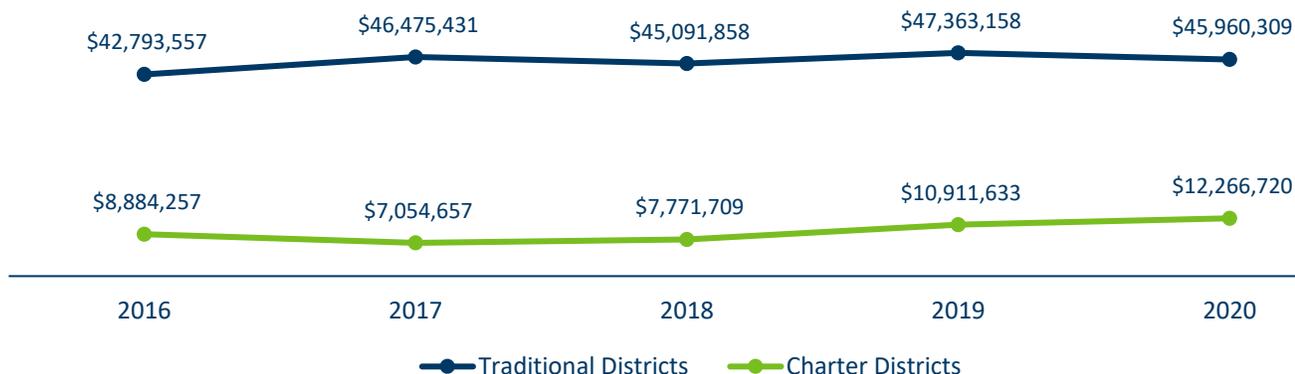
The primary responsibility in meeting the needs of English Learners (ELs) lies with the local education agency (LEA). LEAs cover the costs associated with addressing student needs by leveraging a variety of state and federal resources, which are used to supplement (but not supplant) local resources. Students with English learner status qualify for the same revenue that every Minnesota child in public education generates. In addition, English learners also generate supplementary state aid. Funding sources that can be used for quality EL programming include: general education revenue, state EL funding, compensatory funding, transition revenue, Title I funding and others.

State EL funding is allocated to students who:

- have been identified as English learners by state definition (Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.59);
- have generated fewer than seven years of average daily membership (ADM) in Minnesota public schools; and,
- are served in a language instruction educational program for English learners during the current fiscal year.

State EL funding status is not to be used in determining service for ELs. The funding formula exists simply to distribute the state funds available for ELs in an equitable manner across all the LEAs in the state. Figure 1 shows a decrease in funds to districts and a corresponding decrease in funds to charter schools, which aligns with the decrease in enrollment numbers for English learners (Figure 3).

**FIGURE 1. Actual State EL Funding in Dollars, 2016-2020**



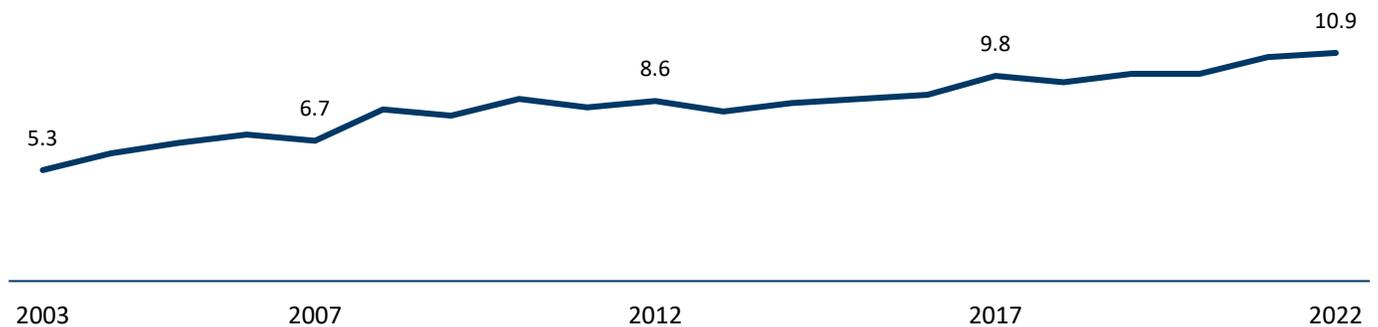
## Federal Funding

Title III, a component of the Elementary and Secondary Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), is another source of funding to supplement the resources of a local educational agency (LEA). These funds aid the district in enhancing: 1) language instruction educational programming for ELs and immigrant students; 2) parent, family and community engagement opportunities; 3) and professional development for staff working with English learners. The federal government awards Title III grants to all states, including Minnesota, based on their EL and immigrant student enrollments, and the Minnesota, in turn, distributes the funds to LEAs based on their enrollments of identified English learners and immigrant counts. Figure 5 shows that Title III funding amounts for Minnesota have increased from \$5.3 million in 2003 to \$9.8 million in 2017, \$10.9 million for 2021-2022.

In order to be eligible for Title III funds, an LEA must generate a minimum of \$10,000 in aid. Usually, an LEA needs to have identified at least 85 students with a status of English learner in the previous year to qualify for funding. LEA that does not meet the threshold may join other LEAs and form a consortium to reach the \$10,000 requirement in order to apply for funding. Furthermore, from the Title III allotment, the state education agency must set aside a certain percentage of the grant for LEAs highly impacted by a significant increase of immigrant children and allocate the remaining funds to eligible LEAs.

ELs are eligible on the same basis as all students to receive both state and federal funding. LEAs need to consider the allocation and coordination of all state and federal funding to coordinate services to meet all student needs including students identified with EL status or immigrant status. Federal funding includes funds for Title I, Title IV and the American Rescue plan.

**Figure 2. Minnesota's Federal Title III EL Education Funding, in millions 2003 to 2022**



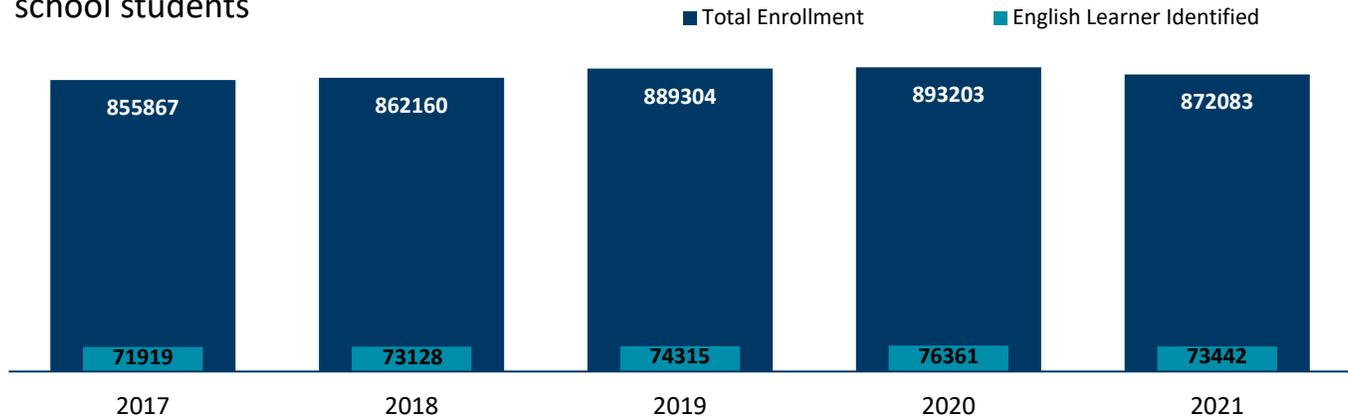
Source: [United States Department of Education](#)

## English Learners in Minnesota

In 2021, 872,083 K-12 students were enrolled in Minnesota public schools with 73,442 students, or 8.4 percent identified as English learners, 3.82 percent down from 2020. Figure 3 displays fall enrollment data from 2016-2017 through 2020-2021. The data indicates enrollment of ELs had remained fairly consistent through 2019-2020. In the 2020-2021 school year, in the first full school year impacted by COVID-19, enrollment of ELs and non ELs dropped.

**Figure 3. Total PreK-12 and English Learner Enrollment in Minnesota Public Schools, 2017-2021**

Identified English learners continue to represent about 8.5% of all public school students

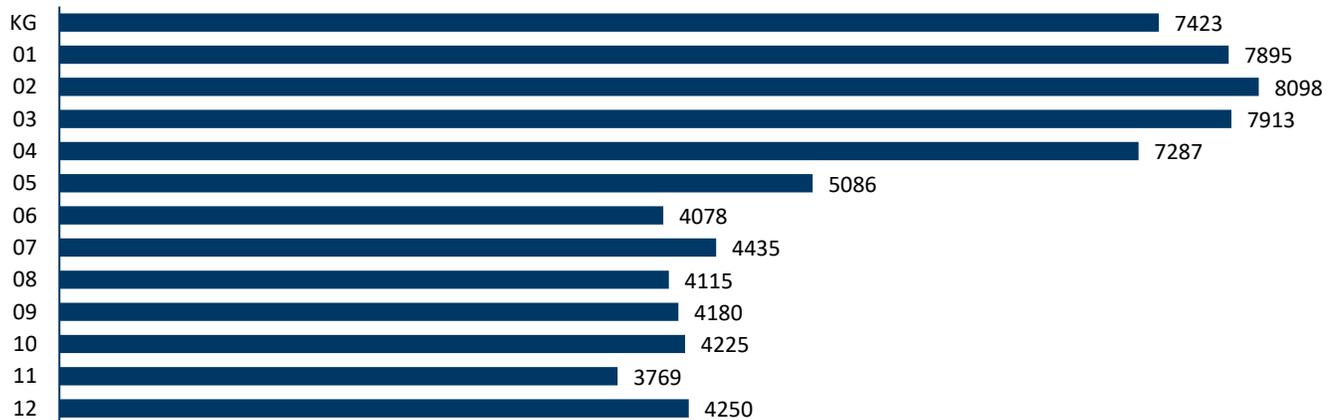


Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics Enrollment reports](#)

Figure 4 shows the distribution of Minnesota’s ELs across the grade levels. As indicated in the graph, the number of ELs in primary grades (averaging 7,700 students per grade in grades K-4, dropping to 5,084 in grade 5) is much higher than in secondary grades (averaging 4,150 per grade in grades 6-12), which is due in part to students reaching proficiency in English and exiting EL status.

**Figure 4. Distribution of K-12 Students Identified as ELs Enrolled in Minnesota Public Schools by Grade, 2020-21**

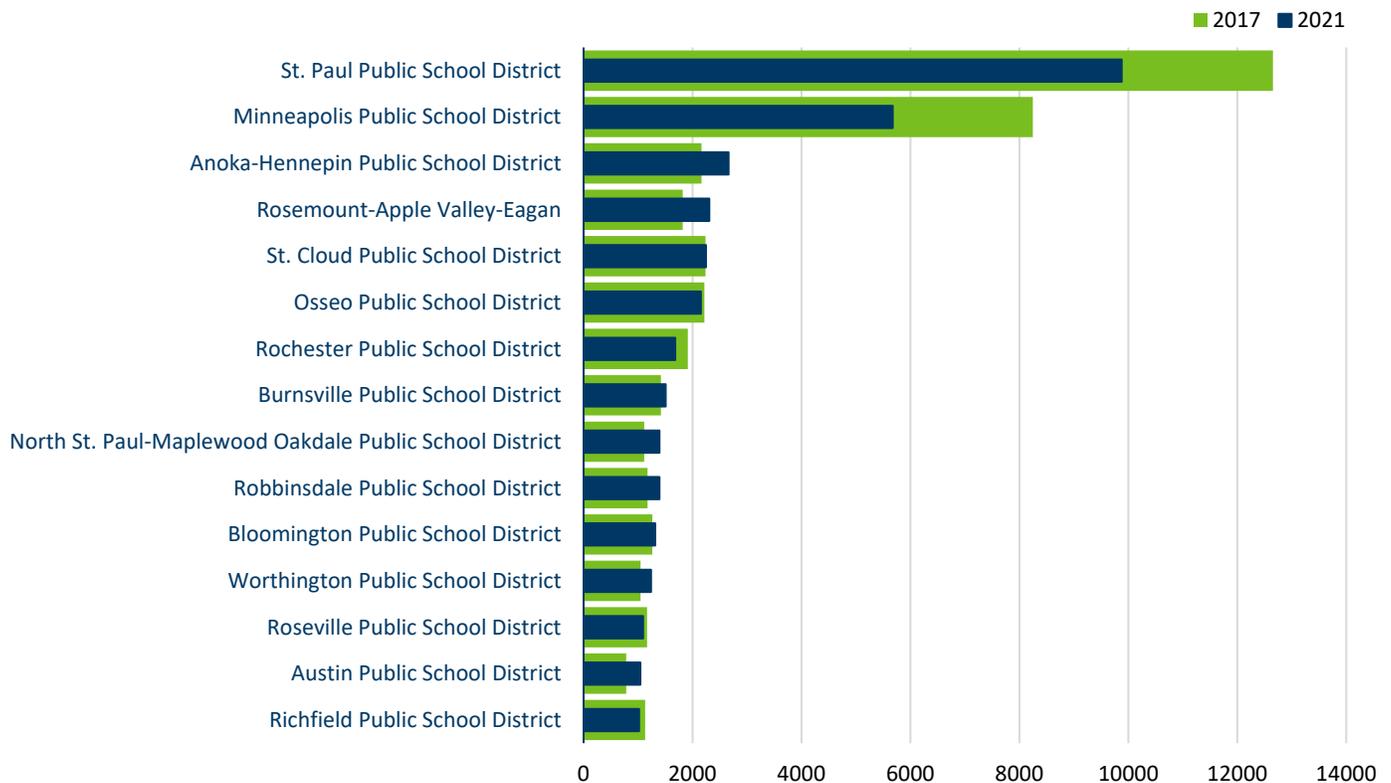
More students are identified as English learners in the lower grades



Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics Enrollment reports](#)

Figure 5 illustrates the growth in the number of ELs within the largest 15 school LEAs across the state looking at data from 2016 and 2020. Eight LEAs showed increased numbers of ELs (Anoka-Hennepin, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, St. Cloud, Burnsville, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale, Robbinsdale, Bloomington, Worthington and Austin). The largest increases from 2017-2021 were in Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan and Anoka-Hennepin school districts. Of the 15 LEAs, Minneapolis and St. Paul showed the most significant decreases in EL enrollment, though Rochester and Richfield also had decreases. Enrollment in St. Cloud, Osseo and Roseville’s EL enrollment numbers remained fairly consistent).

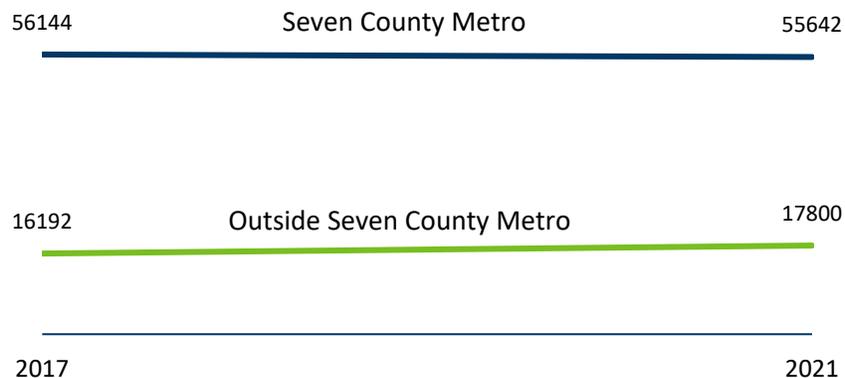
**Figure 5. English Learner Enrollment in the Largest 15 Minnesota Public School Districts, 2017 and 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics Enrollment reports](#)

Figure 6 shows that growth in numbers of English learners has been fairly consistent across the seven-county metro area of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties (56,144 in 2017 to 55,642 in 2021) and outside the seven-county metro area (16,192 in 2017 to 17,800 in 2021). The English learner population has shifted to be slightly more outside of the metro area.

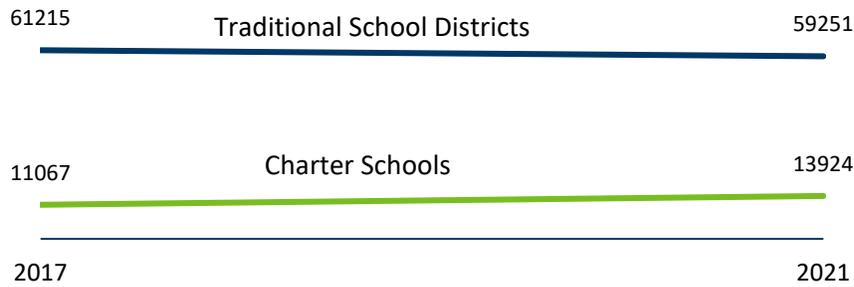
**Figure 6. Minnesota K-12 EL Enrollment Comparing 7-County Metro Area and Non-Metro School Enrollment, 2017 and 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics Enrollment reports](#)

Figure 7 show that English learner enrollment in charter schools (from 11,067 in 2017 to 13,924 in 2021) has increased while in traditional school districts (from 61,215 in 2017 to 59251 in 2021) the rate has decreased slightly. Charter schools in the 7-County Metro area experienced increases in EL enrollment over the past five years.

**Figure 7. Minnesota EL Enrollment Comparing Traditional School District and Charter School Enrollment, 2017 and 2021**



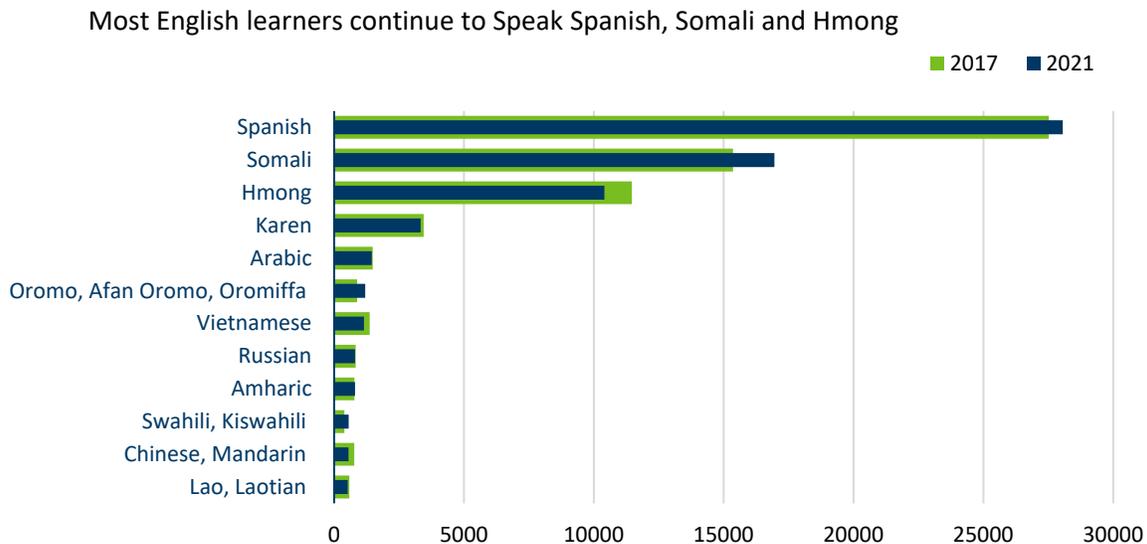
Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics Enrollment reports](#)

## Primary Home Languages

In 2020-2021, 334 different home languages were reported for 872,083 students in the Minnesota Automated Student Reporting System (MARSS), compared to the 339 home languages reported for 2019-2020. Of the 148,402 students in early learning programs through to grade 12 who were reported to have a home language other than English for 2020-2021, 73,442 students or 8.5 percent of the total enrollment were identified as English learners.

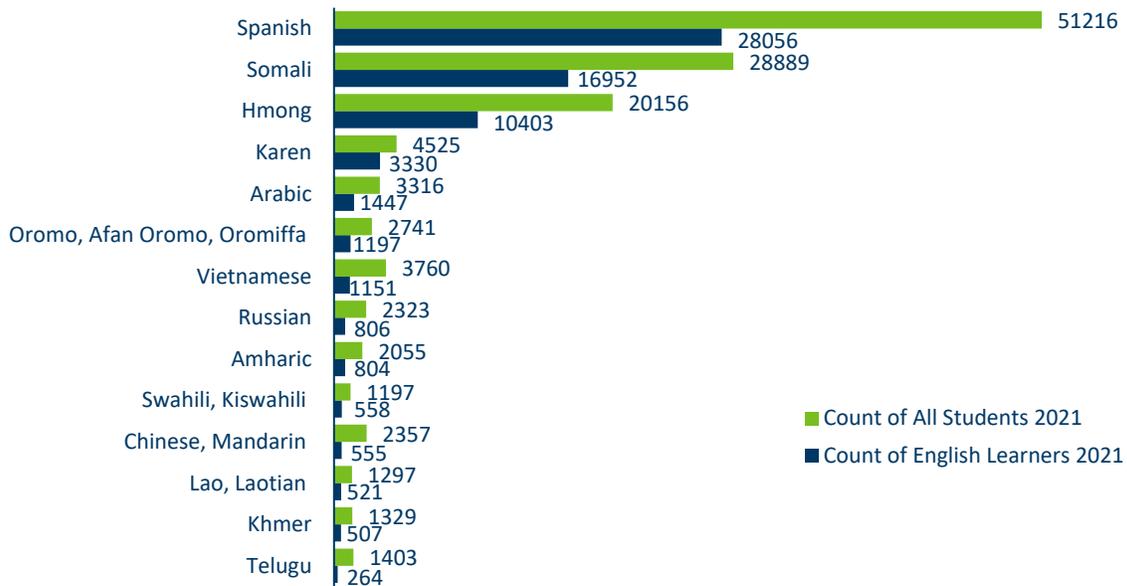
Figure 8 provides information on the top 12 primary languages other spoken by English Learners in 2017 and 2021. The top 12 languages spoken by English Learners do not change drastically from a year to year. When comparing the top 12 languages spoken by all Minnesota students to the list of English learners only, a slightly different list of languages emerges (see figure 9). For both groups, Spanish, Somali, and Hmong continue to be the largest languages spoken by Minnesota students other than English.

**Figure 8. Minnesota's Top 12 Languages Other than English for English Learners in 2021, 2017 and 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Enrollment Data

**Figure 9. Comparison of Minnesota's Top Languages Other than English Spoken by English Learners versus All Students, 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Enrollment Data and [Data Reports and Analytics Languages reports](#)

Figure 10 represents the fall 2020 distribution of the top 12 primary home languages spoken by English Learners, reported for the top 10 EL-enrolled Minnesota counties.

Hennepin County has the largest number of English learners (22,636). Among them, Spanish (9,206, 41 percent) is by far most identified as the primary home language, followed by Somali (6,529, 29 percent) and Hmong (2,587, 11 percent). The second largest enrollment of English Learners is in Ramsey County (18,549); of those, Hmong (6,176, 33 percent) is by far most frequently identified as the primary home language, followed by Spanish (3,892, 21 percent) and Somali (3,077, 17 percent). The third largest enrollment of English learners is Dakota County (4,903). Among them, Spanish (2,846, 58 percent) and Somali (1,125, 23 percent) are the most frequent languages represented in the county.

**Figure 10. The Top 12 Languages Spoken by English Learners in the Top 10 Minnesota Counties by Enrollment, 2021**

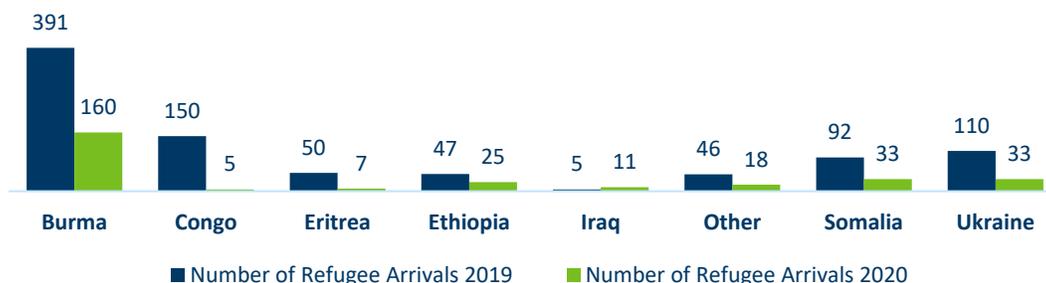
	Hennepin	Ramsey	Dakota	Anoka-Hennepin	Stearns	Olmsted	Washington	Scott	Nobles	Rice
Amharic	161	248	211	54	<10	<10	66	<10	26	<10
Arabic	239	169	141	410	28	172	65	27	<10	0
Chinese, Mandarin	170	89	77	35	<10	43	46	12	0	<10
Hmong	2587	6176	97	644	<10	31	529	<10	0	<10
Karen (Pwo, S'gaw)	0	2729	<10	<10	0	0	<10	<10	93	<10
Laotian	165	20	54	21	25	54	<10	45	44	0
Oromo	400	464	66	163	16	<10	50	<10	13	<10
Russian	296	19	94	113	<10	10	10	140	0	0
Somali	6529	3077	1125	578	2134	605	175	400	0	525
Spanish	9206	3892	2846	1838	638	627	547	783	1080	523
Swahili	178	140	37	50	11	12	19	48	<10	<10
Vietnamese	376	141	147	134	36	37	72	101	<10	12
<b>Total Speakers (EL)</b>	<b>20307</b>	<b>17164</b>	<b>4903</b>	<b>4044</b>	<b>2899</b>	<b>1604</b>	<b>1592</b>	<b>1576</b>	<b>1264</b>	<b>1075</b>
<b>Total EL Enrollment</b>	<b>22636</b>	<b>18549</b>	<b>5650</b>	<b>4653</b>	<b>3037</b>	<b>1958</b>	<b>1930</b>	<b>1799</b>	<b>1380</b>	<b>1093</b>

Source: Minnesota Department of Education Enrollment Data

## Refugees in Minnesota

Overall, fewer refugees arrived in Minnesota between 2019 and 2020. According to the Minnesota Department of Human Services' (DHS) website's [Primary Refugee Arrivals to Minnesota by Nationality table](#) and the [DHS Refugee Arrival Map](#), the number of primary arrivals between 2005 and 2020 was 33,481, with 292 arriving in 2020. Primary arrivals are recent refugees who have come directly to Minnesota from another country. In 2020, refugees arrived mainly from Burma (160), the Congo (5), Eritrea (7), Ethiopia (25), Somalia (33), and Ukraine (33), as shown in figure 11 below (2021 data is not yet available). There were decreases in the number of refugee arrivals for all countries with the exception of Iraq. All other country's refugee arrivals in 2020 decreased from 46 to 18. Of those 18, there were two refugee arrivals from El Salvador, one from Honduras, six from Liberia, three from Moldova, and six from Syria.

**Figure 11. Primary Refugee Arrivals in Minnesota, 2019 and 2020**



Source: [Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2019 and 2020](#)

## Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

Each year, Minnesota districts report the number of Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) enrolling in their districts to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Figure 12 shows the number of SLIFE reported for the past three years, which dropped slightly in 2020 from 2,933 to 2,316 but rose to 2,939 in 2021. For the most current definition for SLIFE, please visit [MDE's SLIFE webpage](#).

**Figure 12. Number of Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) Reported to MDE**

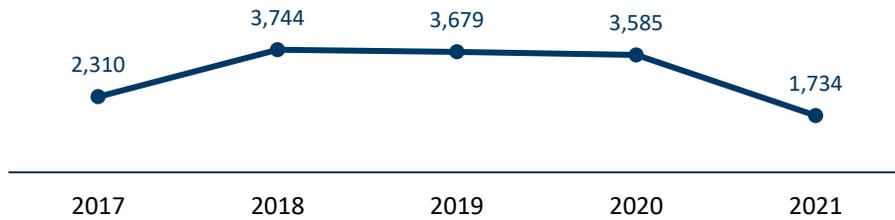


Source: Minnesota Department of Education State Student Data Collection (SSDC)

## Recently Arrived English Learners (RAEL)

Numbers of recently arrived English learners (RAELs) in Minnesota are reported to the SSDC by June 1 annually. Figure 13 shows that numbers of students identified as RAELs have risen from 2,310 in 2017 to 3,744 in 2018, dropping gradually through 2020 until a steep drop in 2021 to 1,734.

**Figure 13. Number Recently Arrived English Learners (RAELs) Reported to MDE, 2017-2021**

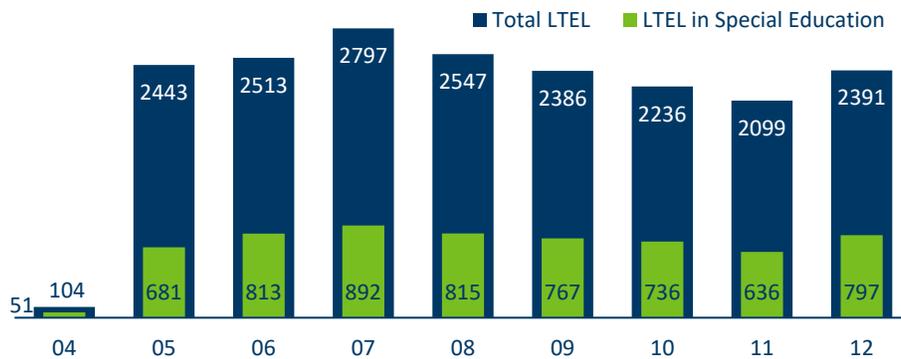


Source: Minnesota Department of Education State Student Data Collection (SSDC)

## Long-Term English Learners (LTEL)

Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the average time that K-12 students spent in EL status in Minnesota schools was 4.6 years. [Minnesota does not have a formal definition of “Long-term English learners \(LTEL\)”](#) within its state statute. The data displayed represents the number of students who have been identified as an English learner for 5 or more years. According to figure 13, the number of students with LTEL status jumped from 104 to 2,443 students between grades 4 and 5. From grades 5 through 12, the number of LTELs remained between 2,099 (in grade 11) and 2,797 (in grade 7). On average, 33 percent of LTELs were dual identified as eligible for both EL and Special Education Programs.

**Figure 13. Number of Students Reported to MDE as Long-Term English Learners (LTELs) by Grade, 2021**



LTELs are students who have been an EL in Minnesota for at least 5 average daily membership (ADM) units. A student typically generates 1 ADM per year of EL status.

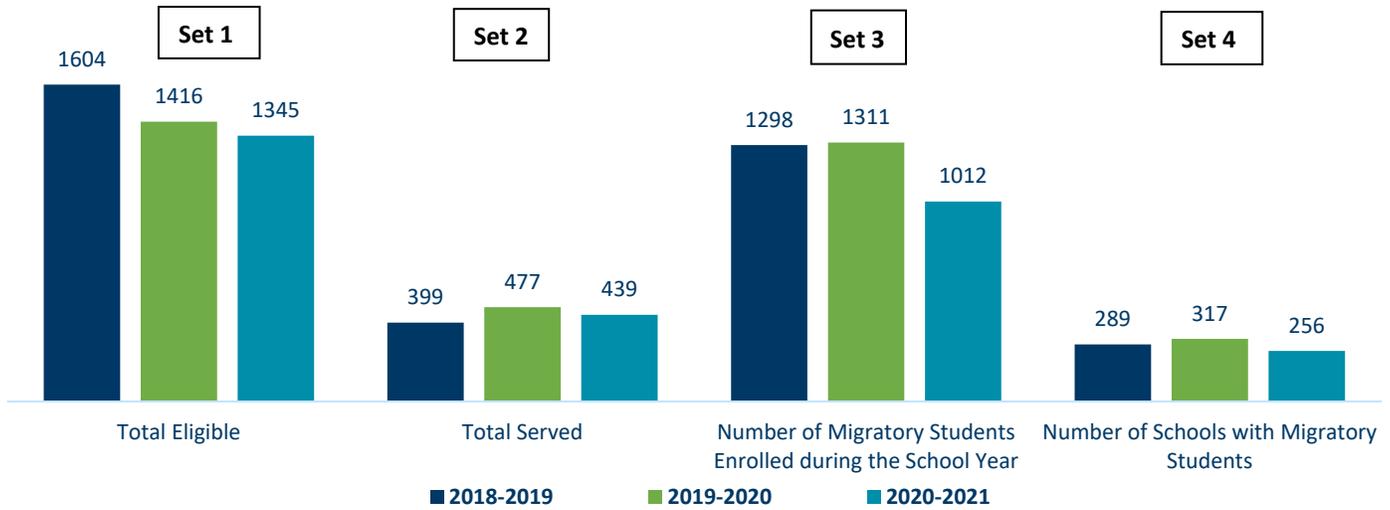
Source: Minnesota Department of Education Enrollment Data

## Migratory Students

In the summer of 2021, Minnesota supported migratory children (see [definition](#)) through seven summer migrant education programs (MEPs). Throughout the school year, migrant liaisons in each district seek to identify eligible migratory families and provide advocacy to address migratory children’s unique language, social and academic challenges due to high mobility. Migrant education programming in Minnesota ensures that migratory children fully benefit from the same free public education provided to other children. For more information, visit the [MDE Migrant Education Program website](#).

As shown in figure 15 (sets 1 and 2), between the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 school years, eligible migratory child numbers have decreased from 1,604 to 1,345. However, the number of students served increased slightly from 399 to 477 in 2019-2020, with a slight drop in 2020-2021 to 439. Set 3 shows a significant drop in the number of migratory children enrolled during the school year from 1,301 in 2019-2020 to 1,012 in 2020-2021. Set 4 shows that the number of schools enrolling migratory students has remained rather steady with a slight increase in 2019-2020 from 289 to 317 and a drop in 2020-2021 to 256.

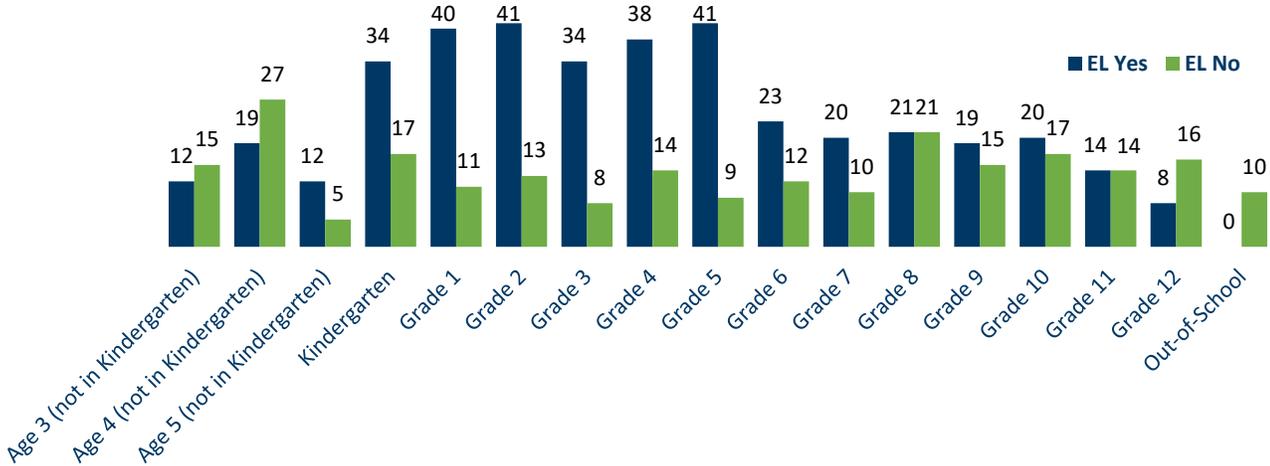
**Figure 15. Eligible Migrant Children in Minnesota (ages 3 through 21) between 2018-2019 and 2020-2021, Comparing the 12-month Count to the Total count of Migratory Students Served in Minnesota (sets one and two); Number of Migratory Students Enrolled in Minnesota Schools during the School Year (third set); and Number of Schools Enrolling Migratory Children (fourth set).**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Consolidated State Performance Reports (2008-2021)

Forty-eight percent of migratory students ages 3-21 in Minnesota were identified as ELs. Figure 16 shows the breakdown of eligible migratory children by grade level and identification as “EL Yes” (identified English learner) or “EL No” (identified not English learner). According to the data, migratory students were more likely to be EL identified from grades K through 5 than in any other grade.

**Figure 16. Eligible Migratory Children in Minnesota (ages 3 through 21) Identified as EL (EL Yes) and Non-EL (EL N) in the 2021-2022 Performance Period (preliminary data)**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Consolidated State Performance Reports (2020-2021)

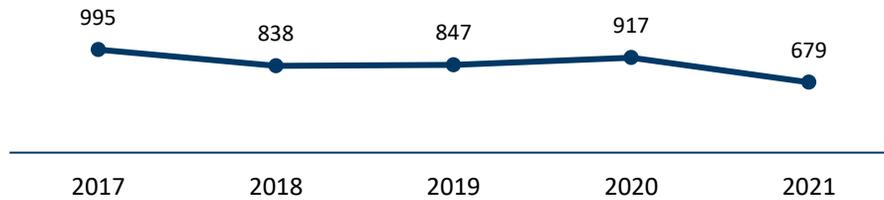
## English learners Experiencing Homelessness

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, the term “homeless children and youths” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youths who are sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals; who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings,

substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and who are [migratory children](#) who live in one of the above circumstances.

Figure 17 below shows that the number of English learners identified as homeless from 2017 to 2021 had dropped slightly from 2017-2018, began to rise until 2020, when it took a significant decline in 2021, from 917 students to 617.

**Figure 17. Number of Minnesota English Learners Identified as Experiencing Homelessness, 2017-2021**



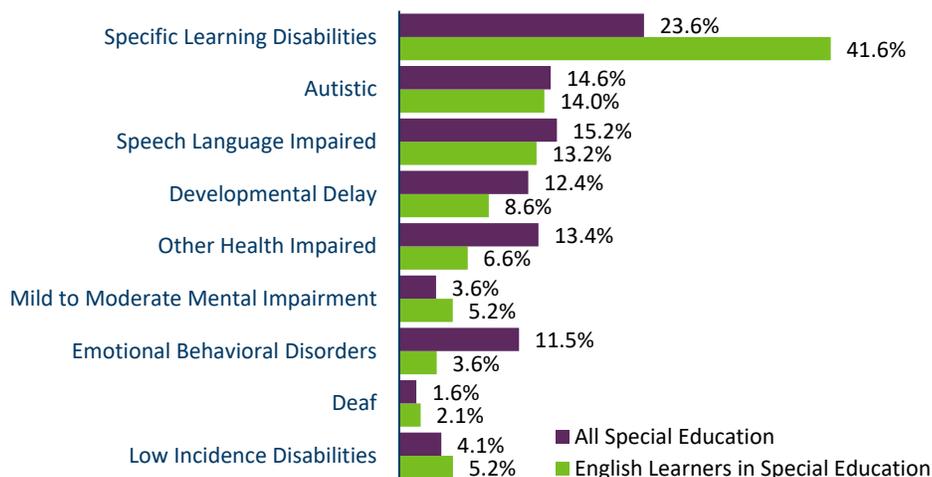
Source: Minnesota Department of Education Enrollment Data

## English Learners and Special Education

Title III of ESSA and other federal laws require that ELs who also qualify for special education services (dual-eligible students) receive both EL and special education services. Under the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, EL students who have a disability must be identified and evaluated for special education services in a timely manner, as would any student suspected of a disability. For more information on dual identification, see Part II, Section F of the [January 7, 2015 guidance letter](#) from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

Figure 18 shows the distribution of Minnesota ELs and all students with disabilities in 2021. English learners who are dually identified are most likely to have a specific learning disability at 5,491 (41.6 percent of the total), followed by speech/language impairment at 1,848 (or 14 percent), autism spectrum disorder at 1,748 (13.2 percent), and developmental cognitive (mild/moderate) disorders at 682 (5.2 percent), each seeing an increase in the past year. In addition, English learners made up 8.6 percent (1,140) of students with developmental delay, 6.6 percent (872) of those identified with other health disabilities, 3.6 percent of those with emotional/behavioral disorders (477), and 2.1 percent (272) of deaf/hard of hearing students, which all decreased in number and percent since last year. English learners made up 5.2 percent (684) of all students identified for low incidence disabilities\*.

**Figure 18. Distribution of ELs and all students with Disabilities, 2021**



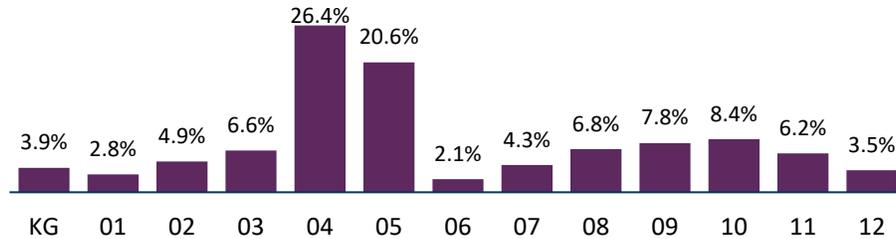
\*Low Incidence Disabilities: for the purpose of this report, Low Incidence Disabilities include Severe/Profound Developmental/Cognitive Disorders, Deaf-Blind, Traumatic Brain Injury, Blind/Visual Impairments, Physical Impairments and Severe Multiple Impairments.

Source: Minnesota Department of Education Enrollment Data

## Assessment of English Language Proficiency

English learners assess for English language proficiency (ELP) on an annual basis by taking the WIDA ACCESS assessment. Results of the assessment, as seen in figure 19, show that about 47 percent of English learners assess proficient across grades 4 and 5. The fewest students assess proficient in grade 6 (2.1 percent).

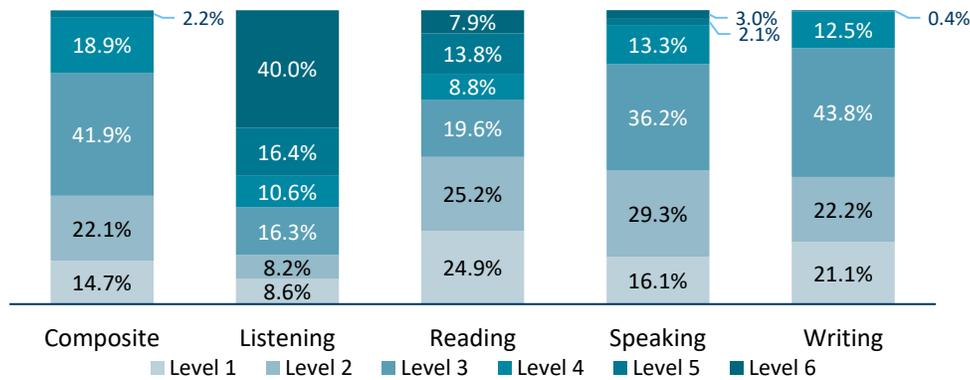
**Figure 19. Percentage of English Learners Assessing Proficient on the WIDA ACCESS, by Grade Level, 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics Assessment reports](#)

The percent distribution of ELs at ELP levels 1-6 are displayed in composite and domain scores in figure 20. The Listening domain is where more students score at levels 5 (16.4 percent) and 6 (40 percent). Speaking and Writing domains contribute the most to the composite score of 4 at 13.3 percent and 12.5 percent, respectively. The majority of learners assess at levels 1 and 2 in Reading, Speaking and Writing.

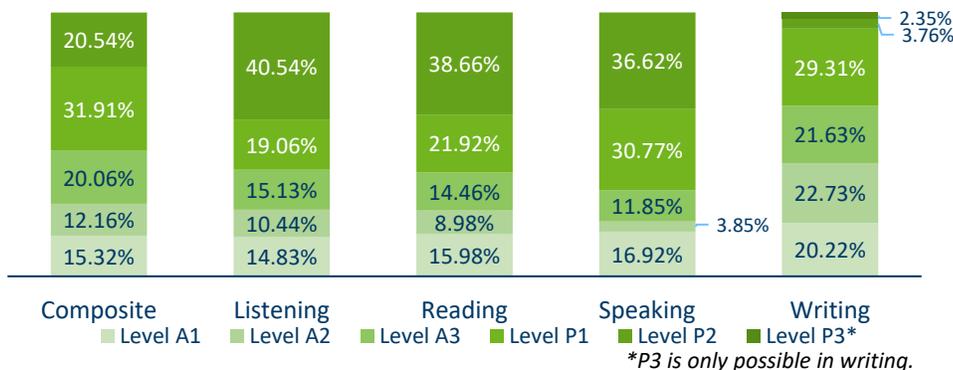
**Figure 20. Percent Distribution of Students at Each Proficiency Level on WIDA ACCESS, K-12 Composite and Domain Scores**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics Assessment reports](#)

The Alternate ACCESS is available for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, with levels ranging from A1 to P3. The majority of students assess at the P2 level across Listening, Reading and Speaking (averaging 38.6 percent), followed by P1, with Speaking and Writing highest, (about 30 percent). A2 is most common in Writing (22.73 percent). A1 is similarly frequent in Writing (20 percent) and consistent across domains. Level P3 is only possible in Writing and is achieved by few (2.35 percent).

**Figure 21. Percent Distribution of Students at Each Proficiency Level on WIDA ALT-ACCESS, K-12 Composite and Domain Scores**

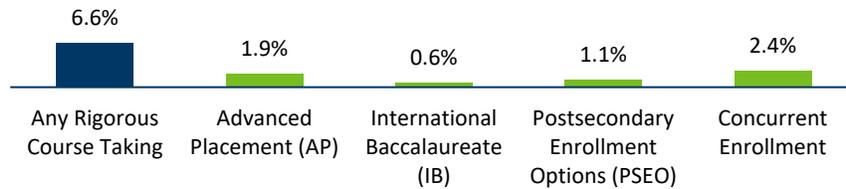


Source: Minnesota Department of Education, [Data Reports and Analytics Assessment reports](#)

## Academic Achievement

Figure 22 shows the percentage of English learners who participated in rigorous coursework, disaggregating for four types (Advanced Placement [AP], International Baccalaureate [IB] Postsecondary Enrollment Options [PSEO] and concurrent enrollment). According to the data in the figure, very few ELs participated in rigorous courses in 2020. Note that some large EL districts did not report AP and IB data to MDE. Percentages are likely underestimates for these types of rigorous courses and for overall rigorous course taking.

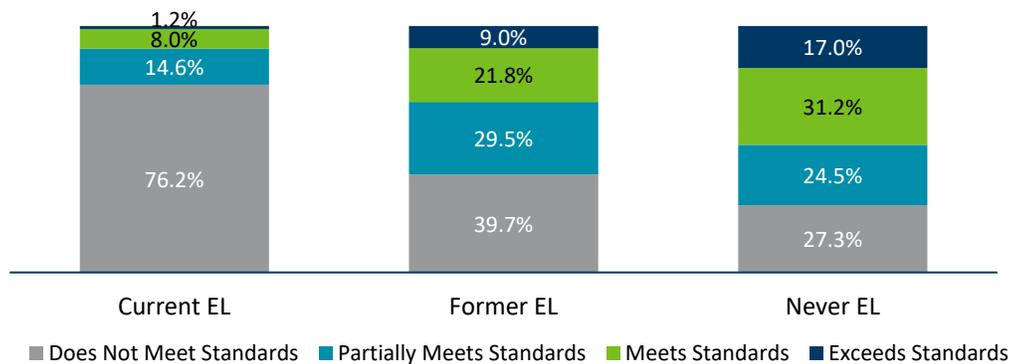
**Figure 22. Participated in Rigorous Courses in 2020**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education PSEO, Concurrent and Minnesota Common Course Catalog Data

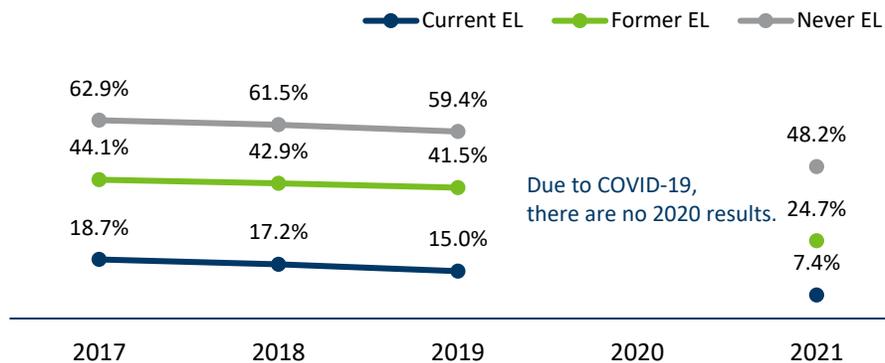
In 2021, the majority of English learners did not meet standards on the Math section of the statewide Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) compared to 39.7 percent of former ELs and 27 percent of never ELs. According to figure 23, only 9.2 percent met or exceeded standards versus 30.8 percent of former ELs and 48 percent of never ELs. According to figure 24, math achievement has continued to drop for all students between 2017 and 2021.

**Figure 23. Math Achievement Levels by English Learners on Statewide Assessments, 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Assessment Data

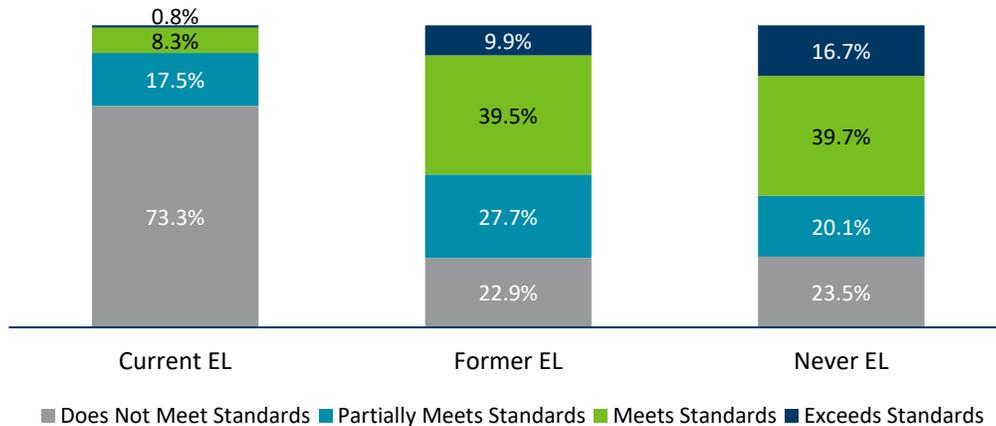
**Figure 24. Math Achievement Levels by English Learners on Statewide Assessments, 2017 to 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Assessment Data

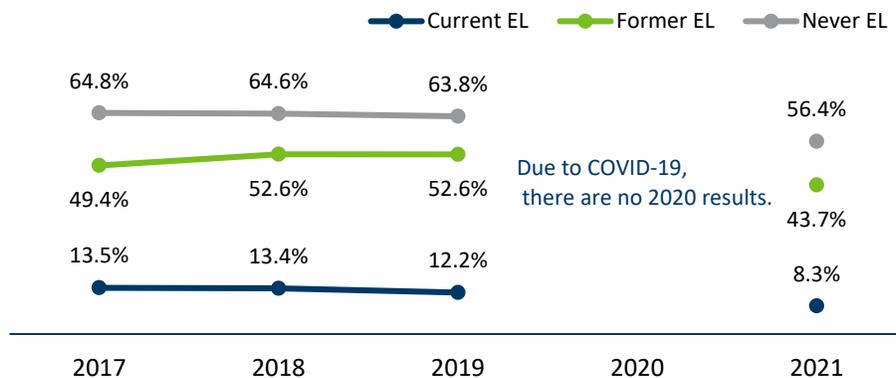
English learner achievement in Reading on the MCA was slightly lower than math with 9.1 percent meeting or exceeding standards. Figure 25 shows that 73.3 percent of ELs did not meet standards for Reading at a higher rate than former and never ELs (about 23% each), as seen in figure 25. According to figure 26, only 9.2 reading scores remained fairly consistent from 2017-2019 but dropped in 2021. There are no results for 2020 due to the pandemic.

**Figure 25. Reading Achievement levels by English Learners on Statewide Assessments, 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Assessment Data

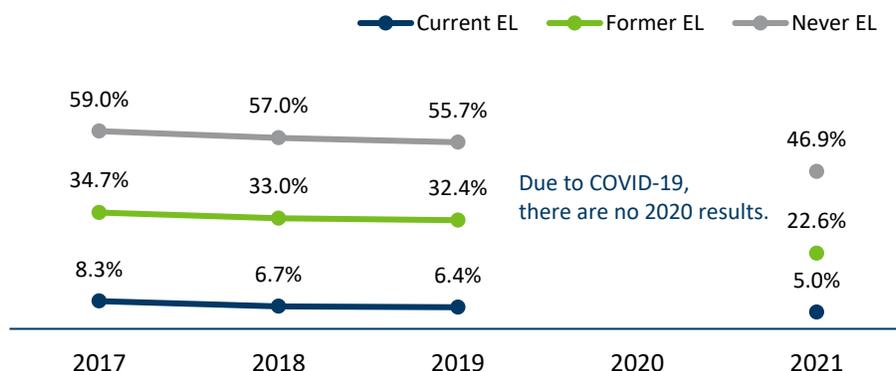
**Figure 26. Reading Achievement levels by English Learners on Statewide Assessments, 2017 to 2021**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Assessment Data

According to figure 27, Science achievement dropped for all students between 2017 and 2019. The drop in 2021 was less significant than that for former and never ELs (1.4 percent drop for ELs compared to nearly 10 percent drops for former and never ELs).

**Figure 27. Science Achievement levels by English Learners on Statewide Assessments, 2017 to 2021**

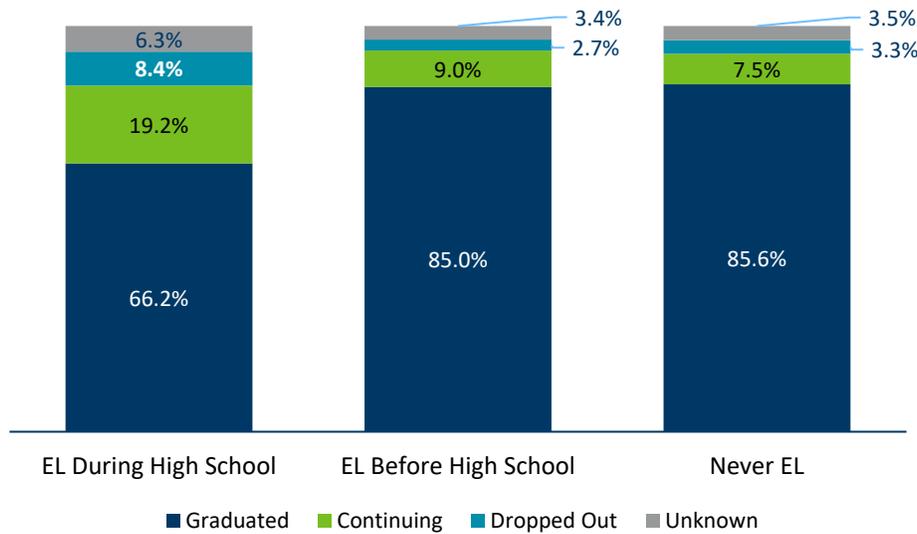


Source: Minnesota Department of Education Assessment Data

## English Learners' Graduation Rate

The Four-year graduation rate is a graduation rate based on a cohort of first-time 9th grade students plus transfers into the cohort within the four-year period, minus transfers out of the cohort within the four-year period. For more information on the graduation rate, please visit the Minnesota Department of Education [Data Reports and Analytics webpage](#).

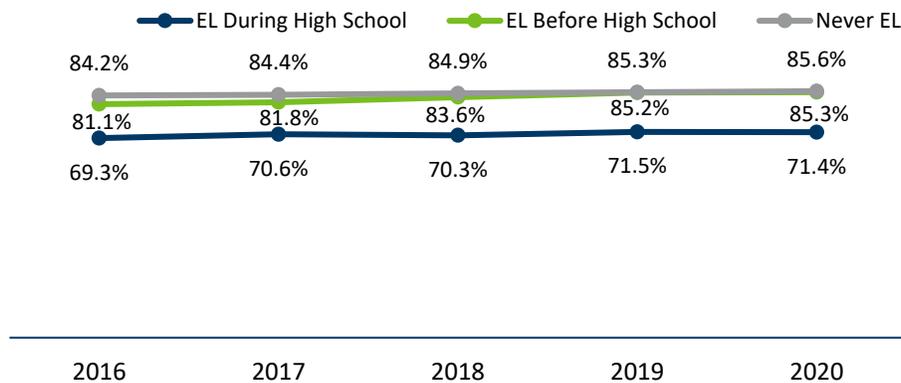
**Figure 28. Comparison of English Learners' and All Students' 4-Year Graduation Rate**



**Source: Minnesota Department of Education Graduation and Enrollment Data**

Graduation, dropout, and continuing trends for 2016-2020 are depicted in Figures 29, 30 and 31. Based on these calculations, figure 29 shows that graduation rates for English learners and students who exited EL identification before high school increased at a faster pace than never ELs (ELs at a 2.1 percent increase, former ELs at a 4.2 percent increase, and never ELs at a 1.4 percent increase).

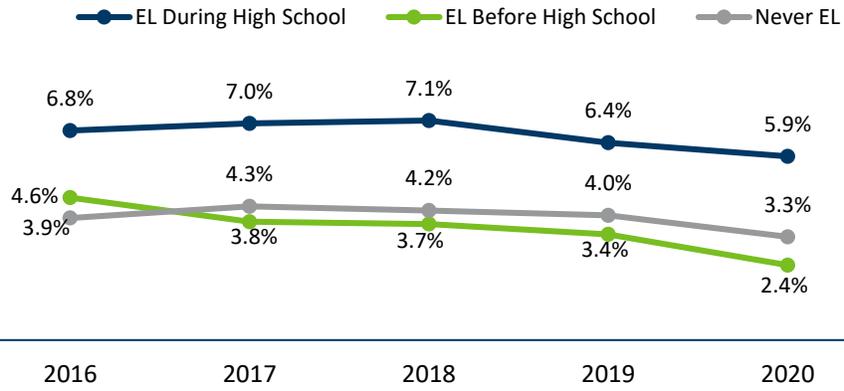
**Figure 29. Four-Year Graduation Trends by EL Status, 2016-2020**



**Source: Minnesota Department of Education Graduation and Enrollment Data**

The drop-out rates shown in figure 30 point to higher drop-out rates for ELs during high school (5.9 percent in 2020) than never ELs (3.3 percent in 2020). However, Students who exited EL status prior to enrolling in high school had the lowest drop-out rate (2.4 percent). Drop-out rates across all three groups has been trending downward since 2017.

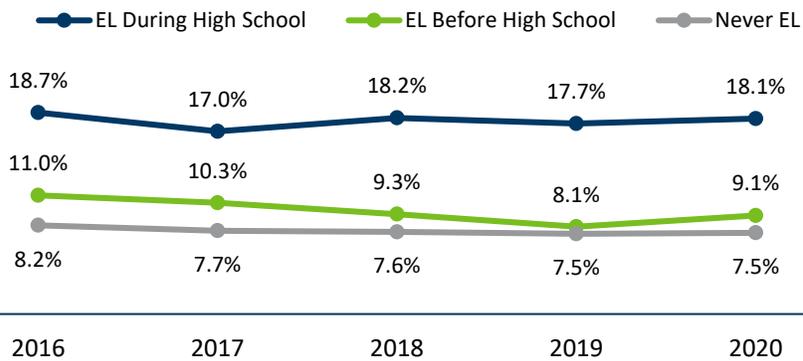
**Figure 30. Four-Year Drop-out Trends by EL Status, 2016-2020**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Graduation and Enrollment Data

Since 2016, English learners while in high school (18.1 percent in 2020) and those exiting EL status before high school (9.1 percent in 2020) have continued to work toward graduation at rates higher than the never-EL cohort. Students who exited EL status prior to beginning high school (9.1 percent in 2020) remain at a low continuing rate similar to that for never ELs (7.5 percent in 2020). From 2017 to 2020, four-year continuing rates have been trending upward.

**Figure 31. Four-Year Continuing Trends by EL Status, 2016-2020**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education Graduation and Enrollment Data

## MDE English Learner Education Contacts

Title/Role	Phone and Email
<a href="#">English Learner Education</a>	651-582-8579 <a href="mailto:mde.el@state.mn.us">mde.el@state.mn.us</a>
<a href="#">Statewide Testing</a>	651-582-8674 <a href="mailto:mde.testing@state.mn.us">mde.testing@state.mn.us</a>
<a href="#">Adult Basic Education (GED)</a>	651-582-8594 <a href="mailto:mde.abe@state.mn.us">mde.abe@state.mn.us</a>
<a href="#">MARSS Reporting</a>	651-582-8456 <a href="mailto:marss@state.mn.us">marss@state.mn.us</a>
<a href="#">World Languages</a>	651-582-8579 <a href="mailto:mde.worldlang@state.mn.us">mde.worldlang@state.mn.us</a>
<a href="#">Migrant Education Program</a>	651-582-8579 <a href="mailto:mde.migrant@state.mn.us">mde.migrant@state.mn.us</a>
<a href="#">Special Education – Diverse Populations</a>	651-582-8616 <a href="mailto:mde.special-ed@state.mn.us">mde.special-ed@state.mn.us</a>