

# ENGLISH LEARNERS IN MINNESOTA REPORT



# 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 educational programs (LIEPs) so that multilingual learners, including students with English learner (EL) status, attain academic language proficiency and achieve state academic content standards.

This report provides information using the previous year's data on funding available for ELs, EL demographics and achievement. It includes statutory and regulatory references pertaining to English learners and describes MDE's support of local education agencies (LEAs) in implementing effective LIEPs to ensure ELs are able to reach their full academic potential. MDE thanks Minnesota districts and charter schools, universities, families and community members for their continued efforts to collaborate with each other to implement effective systems and programs that continue to increase equitable educational outcomes and opportunities for all ELs!

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## Minnesota Multilingual Learner Education Strategic Framework

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 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. “a pupil in kindergarten through grade 12; an early childhood special education student under Part B, section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, United States Code, title 20, section 1419; 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.”
- b. A pupil enrolled in a Minnesota public school in any grade 4 through 12 who in the previous school year took a commissioner-provided assessment measuring the pupil's emerging academic English, shall be counted as an English learner in calculating English learner pupil units under section 126C.05, subdivision 17, and shall generate state English learner aid under section 124D.65, subdivision 5, if the pupil scored below the state cutoff score or is otherwise counted as a nonproficient participant on the assessment measuring the pupil's emerging academic English, or, in the judgment of the pupil's classroom teachers, consistent with section 124D.61, clause (1), the pupil is unable to demonstrate academic language proficiency in English, including oral academic language, sufficient to successfully and fully participate in the general core curriculum in the regular classroom.
- c. Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (b), a pupil in early childhood special education or prekindergarten under section 124D.151, through grade 12 shall not be counted as an English learner in calculating English learner pupil units under section 126C.05, subdivision 17, and shall not generate state English learner aid under section 124D.65, subdivision 5, if:
  - d. the pupil is not enrolled during the current fiscal year in an educational program for English learners under sections 124D.58 to 124D.64; or
    1. the pupil has generated seven or more years of average daily membership in Minnesota public schools since July 1, 1996.

**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)** – A 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)** – A student with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) is an English learner with limited or interrupted formal education [and] is an English learner under subdivision 2 who has at least two fewer years of schooling than the English learner's peers when entering school in the United States.

## 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 English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs) and the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs 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](#)

[ELD Standards in Action](#)

[WIDA ELD Standards Framework](#)

[Minnesota WIDA Membership Page](#)

### ***WIDA Focus Bulletins to Note (view the full list on the [WIDA website](#)):***

[Supporting Multilingual Learners Language Growth Through Language Development Portfolios](#)

[Embedding the Can Do Cycle Throughout the School Year](#)

[Educational Justice Through Policy](#)

[Translanguaging](#)

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

[Oral Language in the Classroom](#)

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

[Multiliteracies: A Glimpse into Language Arts Bilingual Classrooms](#)

[Making Science Multilingual: Supporting Equity Through Design Principles](#)

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

[Promoting Equity for Young Multilingual Children and Their Families](#)

[Language-Focused Family Engagement](#)

[WIDA Early Years Guiding Principles of Language Development](#)

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

[Providing Multilingual Learners with Disabilities Access to Complex Language](#)



### *Self-Paced eLearning Workshops through August 31, 2024*

Workshops are available at no charge to PreK-12 Minnesota educators with WIDA Secure Portal accounts.

1. **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
2. **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
3. **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)
4. **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
5. **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
6. **Making Language Visible: Exploring the Key Language Uses:** Highlights the Big Idea of a functional approach to language development. Focuses on intentional language instruction in the classroom using the Minnesota/WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. Time to complete: 1 hour
7. **Reframing Education for Long-term English Learners:** Gives educators an opportunity to reframe the education of multilingual learners defined locally as “Long-term English learners (LTELs).” **For K-12 educators and administrators.** Time to complete: 1 hour
8. **Newcomers: Promoting Success through Strengthening Practice:** Educators will be offered opportunities to build student-centered teacher agency by challenging personal and systemic biases, creating an atmosphere and system of shared responsibility, and incorporating and building on the rich resources that multilingual newcomers bring. Time to complete: 3 hours
9. **Exploring the WIDA PreK-3 Essential Actions:** Educators will have an opportunity to build their knowledge and understanding of the Essential Actions and reflect on their own ideologies, practices, and settings. Audience: educators who teach, or collaborate with educators working with multilingual children in PreK-3 classrooms and programs. Time to complete: 2 hours

## Funding for English Learner Education

### State Funding

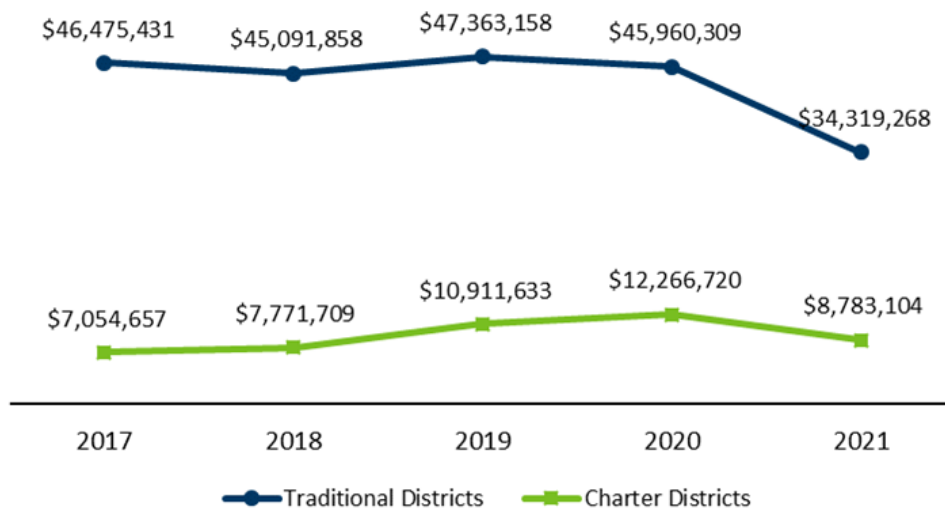
The primary responsibility in meeting the needs of ELs lies with the LEA. LEAs cover the costs associated with addressing student needs by leveraging a variety of state and federal resources, which are used to supplement (but not supplant) local resources. Students with EL status qualify for the same revenue that every Minnesota child in public education generates. In addition, ELs 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, 2017 to 2021**



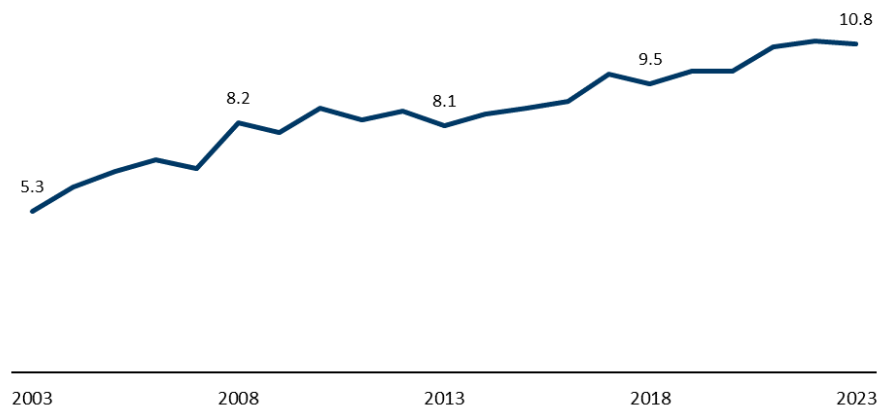
## Federal Funding

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 2 shows that Title III funding amounts for Minnesota have increased from \$5.3 million in 2003 to \$9.5 million in 2018, \$10.8 million for 2022–23.

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. An 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 2023**



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

## English Learners in Minnesota

In 2022, 870,506 PreK-12 students were enrolled in Minnesota public schools with 77,473 students, or 8.9 percent identified as English learners. Figure 3 displays fall enrollment data from 2017–18 through 2021–22. The data indicates enrollment of ELs had remained fairly consistent through 2019-20. In the 2020–21 school year, in the first full school year impacted by COVID-19, enrollment of ELs and non ELs dropped, while in 2021–22 there continued to be a drop in overall enrollment but an increase in EL enrollment. Figures 3 through 7 are sourced from MDE [Data Reports and Analytics’ Enrollment reports](#).

**Figure 3. Total PreK-12 and English Learner Enrollment in Minnesota Public Schools, 2018 to 2022**

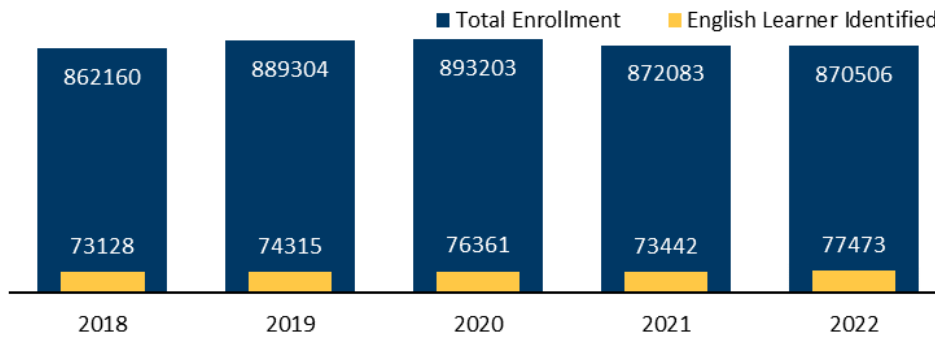


Figure 4 shows the distribution of Minnesota’s ELs across the grade levels. The number of ELs in primary grades (averaging over 7,900 students per grade in grades K-4, dropping to 6,100 in grade 5) is much higher than in secondary grades (averaging about 4,400 students per grade in grades 6-12), which 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, 2021-22**

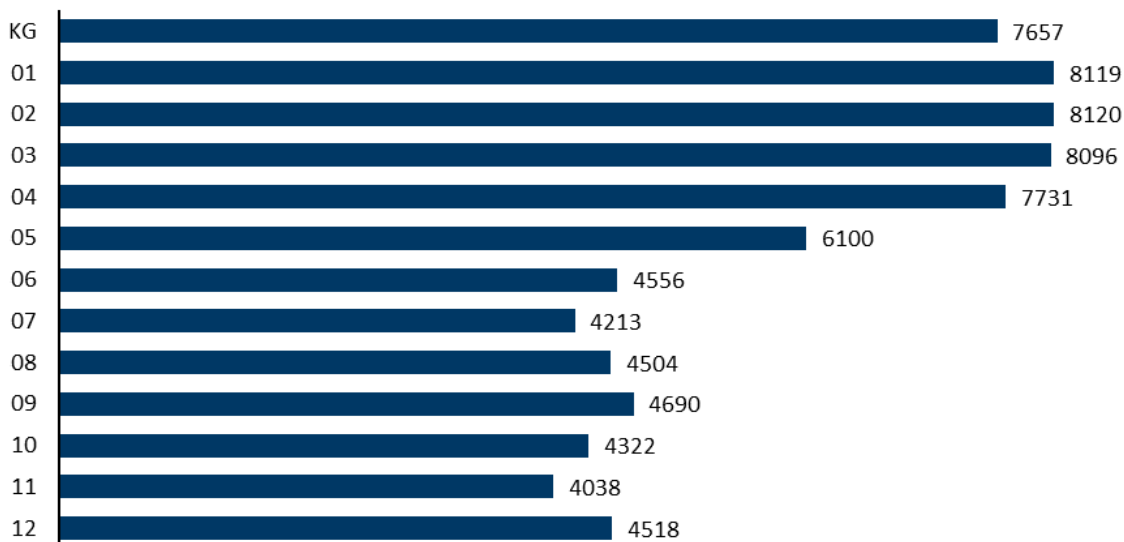


Figure 5 illustrates the growth in the number of ELs within the 15 LEAs serving the most English learners in the state. Ten LEAs showed increased numbers of ELs (Anoka-Hennepin, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, Osseo, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale, Burnsville, Bloomington, Robbinsdale, Worthington, Columbia Heights and Austin). The largest increases from 2018 to 2022 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 St. Cloud also had decreases. Enrollment in Osseo and Roseville’s EL enrollment numbers remained fairly consistent).

**Figure 5. English Learner Enrollment in the 15 Minnesota Public School Districts with the Most ELs, 2018 and 2022**

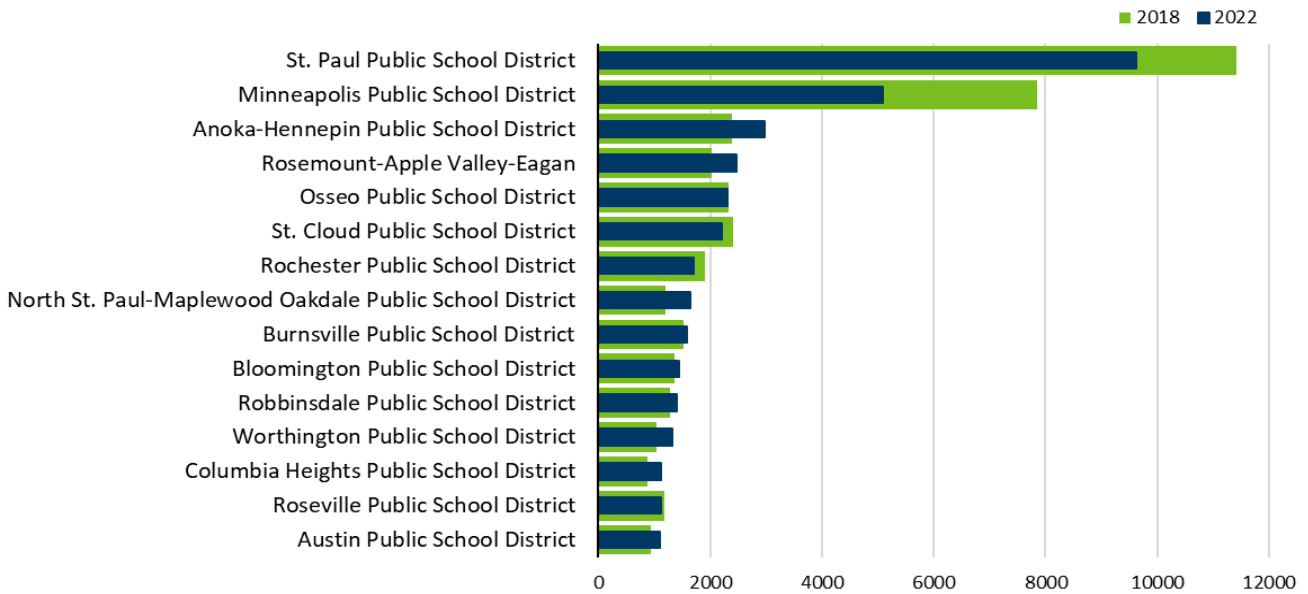


Figure 6 shows that growth in numbers of English learners has been similar in the seven-county metro area of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties (56,771 in 2018 to 58,772 in 2022) and outside the seven-country metro area (16,357 in 2018 to 18,701 in 2022). The English learner population has shifted to be slightly more outside of the metro area.

**Figure 6. Minnesota PreK-12 EL Enrollment Comparing 7-County Metro Area and Non-Metro School Enrollment, 2018 and 2022**

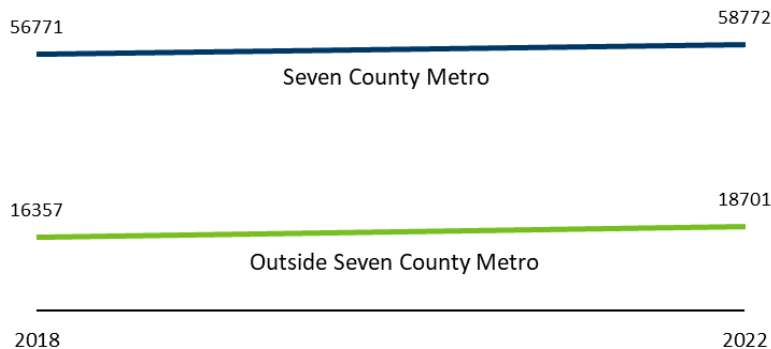
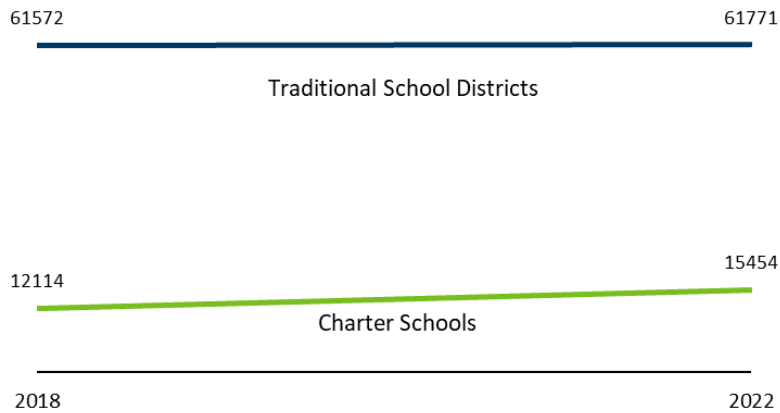


Figure 7 shows that English learner enrollment in charter schools) has increased (from 12,114 in 2018 to 15,454 in 2021), while in traditional school districts (from 61,572 in 2017 to 61,771 in 2021) the count has decreased slightly.

**Figure 7. Minnesota EL Enrollment Comparing Traditional School District and Charter School Enrollment, 2018 and 2022**

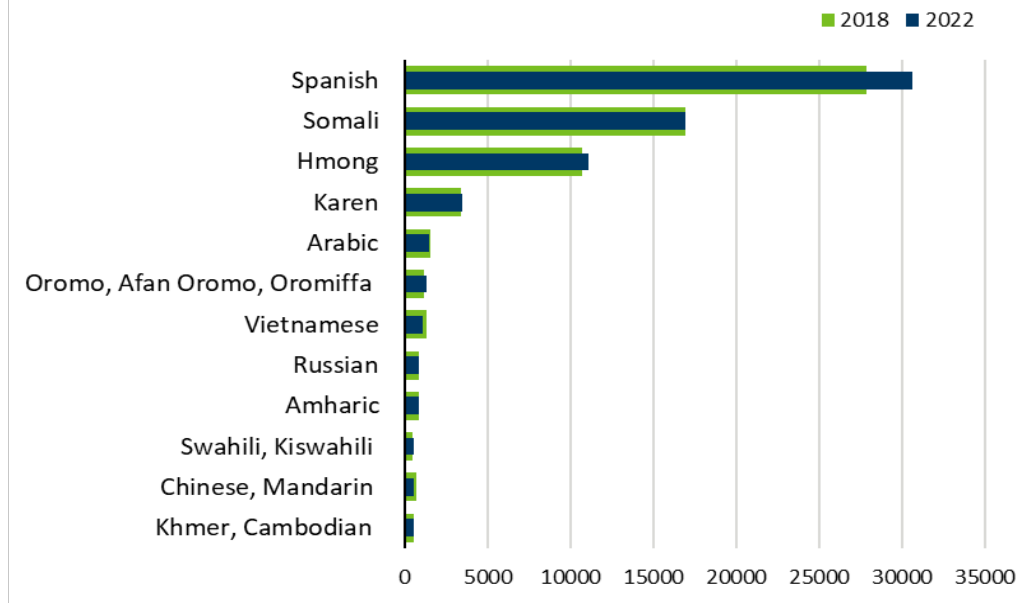


### Primary Home Languages

In 2021–22, 344 different home languages were reported for the 870,506 students in the Minnesota Automated Student Reporting System (MARSS), compared to the 324 home languages reported for 2020–21. Of the 149,561 students in early learning programs through to grade 12 who were reported to have a primary home language other than English for 2021–22, 77,473 students or 8.9 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 2018 and 2022. The top 12 languages spoken by English Learners do not change drastically from year to year. However, there was a noticeable increase in the number of English learners who speak Spanish in 2022 compared to 2018.

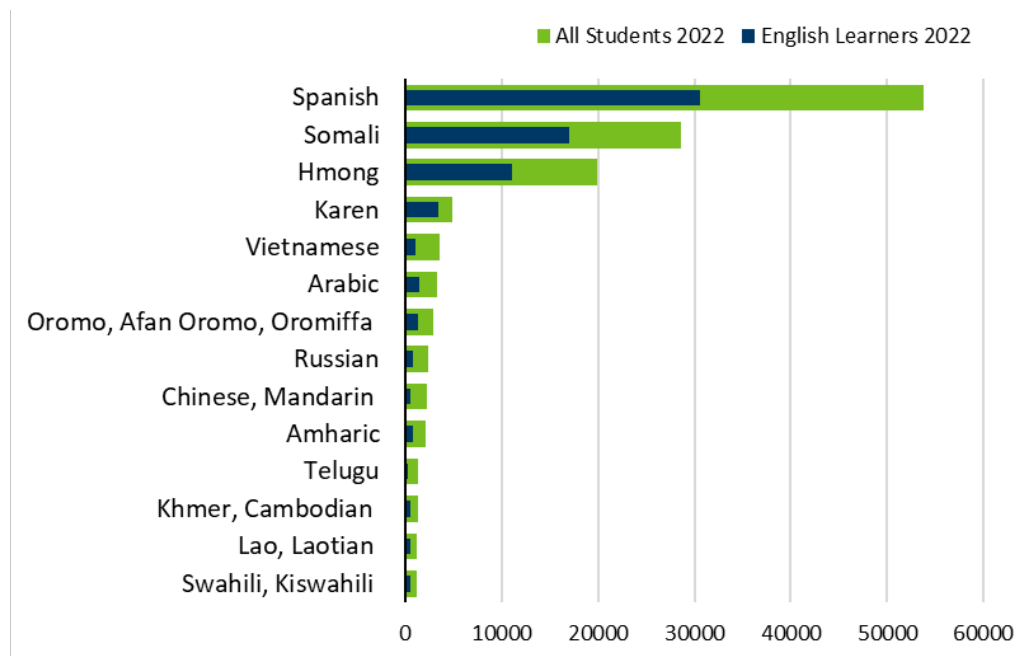
Figure 8. Minnesota's Top 12 Languages Other than English for English Learners in 2018 and 2022



Source: MDE Enrollment Data

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 9. Comparison of Minnesota's Top Languages Other than English Spoken by English Learners versus All Students, 2022



Source: MDE Enrollment Data and [Data Reports and Analytics Languages report](#)

Figure 10 represents the 2021-22 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 (23,258). Among them, Spanish (9,737, 47 percent) is by far most identified as the primary home language, followed by Somali (6,526, 31 percent) and Hmong (2,633, 13 percent). The second largest enrollment of English Learners is in Ramsey County (19,116); of those, Hmong (6,419, 36 percent) is by far most frequently identified as the primary home language, followed by Spanish (4,167, 24 percent) and Somali (3,058, 17 percent). The third largest enrollment of English learners is Dakota County (6,126). Among them, Spanish (3,144, 58 percent) and Somali (1,202, 22 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, 2022**

	Hennepin	Ramsey	Dakota	Anoka-Hennepin	Stearns	Olmsted	Washington	Scott	Nobles	Rice
Amharic	155	243	239	56	<10	10	77	10	23	0
Arabic	238	179	147	405	20	181	65	31	<10	<10
Chinese, Mandarin	179	80	75	32	11	39	60	<10	0	<10
Hmong	2633	6419	113	776	<10	34	673	11	0	<10
Karen (Pwo, S'gaw)	<10	2758	<10	<10	0	0	23	<10	104	<10
Khmer, Cambodian	81	58	87	10	<10	128	19	115	0	<10
Oromo	403	476	79	218	13	<10	65	<10	14	<10
Russian	312	17	108	127	0	<10	11	151	0	0
Somali	6526	3058	1202	605	2077	626	181	479	0	525
Spanish	9737	4167	3144	2185	716	645	679	803	1175	564
Swahili	171	149	41	56	11	12	26	39	<10	<10
Vietnamese	357	140	135	128	33	32	65	112	<10	12
<b>Total Speakers (EL)</b>	<b>20794</b>	<b>17744</b>	<b>5377</b>	<b>4063</b>	<b>2890</b>	<b>1718</b>	<b>1948</b>	<b>1768</b>	<b>1322</b>	<b>1128</b>
<b>Total EL Enrollment</b>	<b>23258</b>	<b>19116</b>	<b>6126</b>	<b>5303</b>	<b>3051</b>	<b>2042</b>	<b>2325</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1487</b>	<b>1146</b>

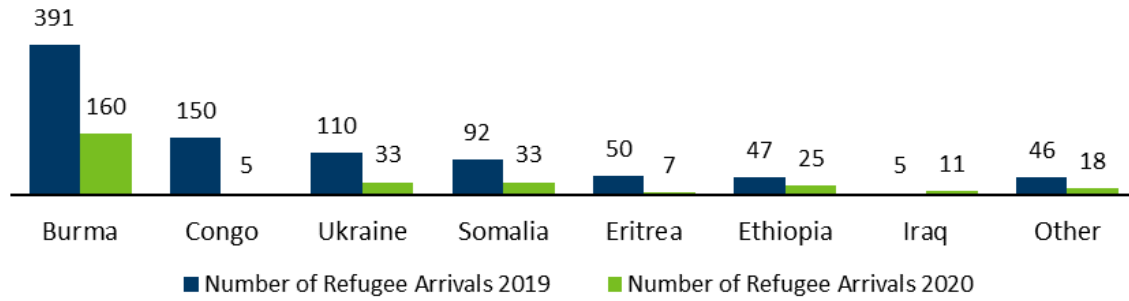
Source: Minnesota Department of Education Enrollment Data

## 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 (more recent 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

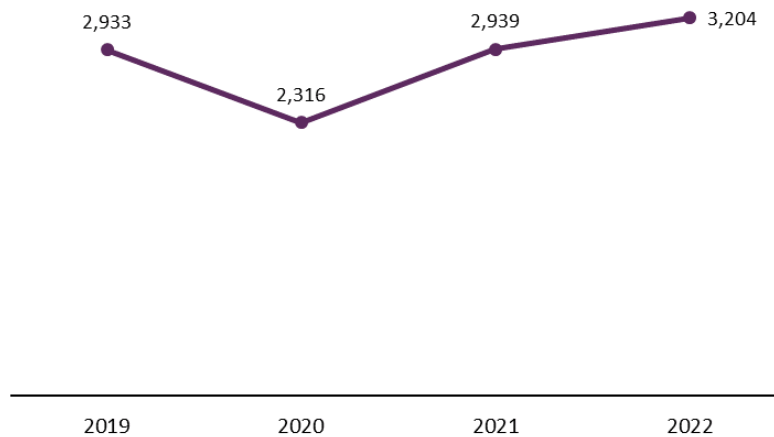


Source: [Minnesota Department of Human Services \(DHS\)](#), 2019 and 2020

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

Each year, Minnesota districts report the number of SLIFE enrolling in their districts to MDE. Figure 12 shows the number of SLIFE reported for the past four years, which dropped slightly in 2020 from 2,933 to 2,316 but rose to 2,939 in 2021 and slightly higher to 3,204 in 2022. 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, 2019 to 2022

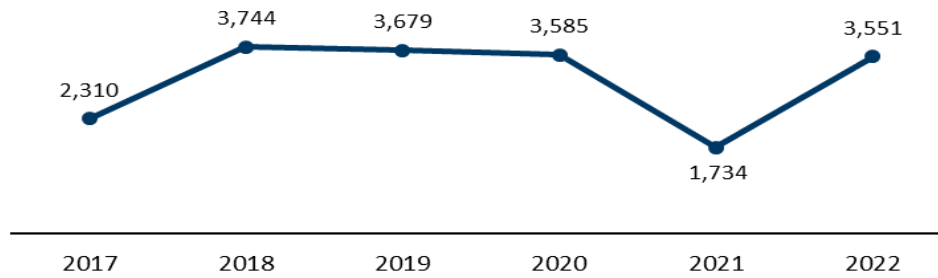


Source: Minnesota Department of Education State Student Data Collection (SSDC)

### 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, but seeing a rebound in counts in 2022 to 3,551.

**Figure 13. Number Recently Arrived English Learners (RAELs) Reported to MDE, 2017 to 2022**

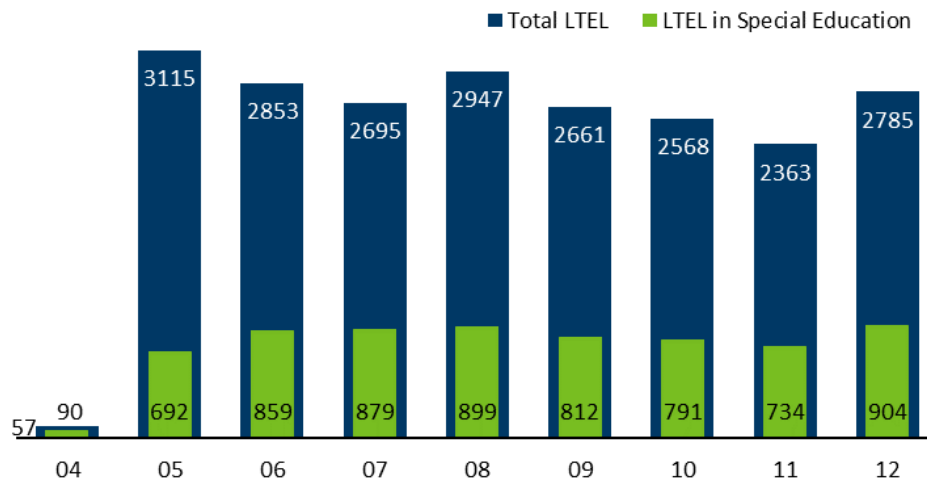


Source: Minnesota Department of Education State Student Data Collection (SSDC)

### 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 14, there is a sharp increase in the number of students with LTEL status between grades 4 and 5. From grades 5 through 12, the number of LTELs ranged between 2,363 (in grade 11) and 3,115 (in grade 5). On average, about 34 percent of LTELs were dual identified as eligible for both EL and Special Education Programs.

**Figure 14. Number of Students Identified as Long-Term English Learners (LTELs) by Grade and Special Education Status, 2022**



Long Term English Learner (LTEL) is defined as having been an EL in Minnesota for at least 5 average daily membership (ADM) units. A student typically generates 1 ADM per year.

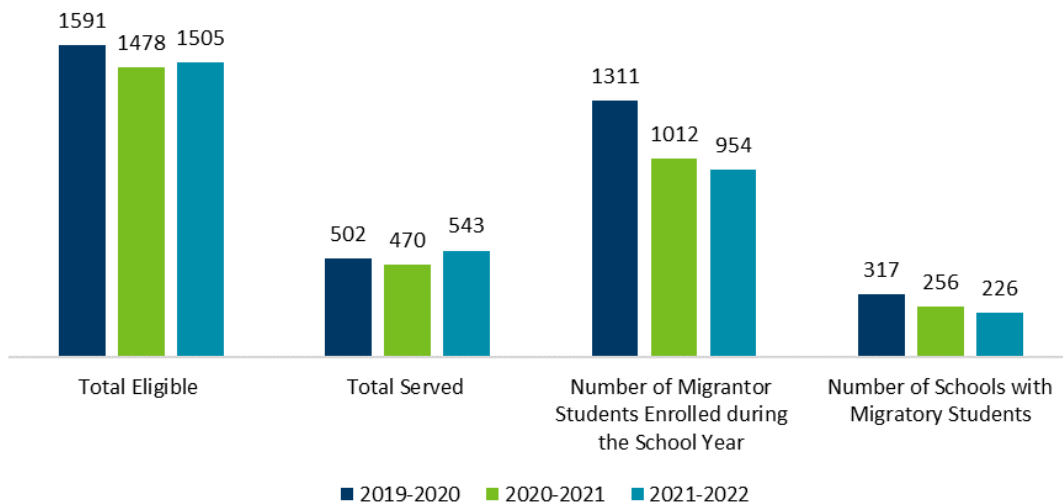
Source: Minnesota Department of Education Enrollment Data

## Migratory Children

In the summer of 2022, 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, between the 2019-20 and 2021-22 school years, eligible migratory child numbers have decreased from 1,591 to 1,505. However, the number of students served increased slightly from 502 to 543. There was a large drop in the number of migratory children enrolled during the school year from 1,311 in 2019-20 to 954 in 2021-22. This drop corresponded with a drop in the total number of schools serving migratory students from 317 to 226.

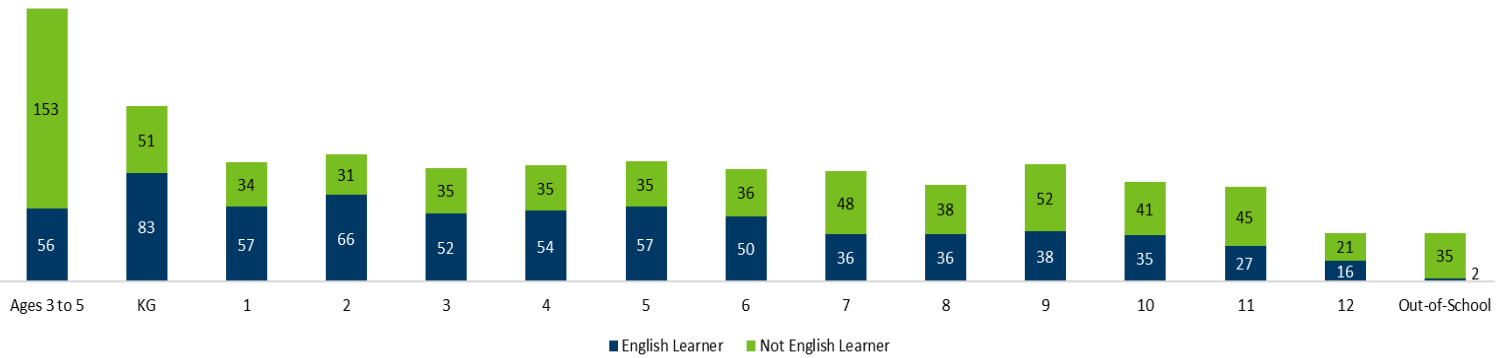
**Figure 15. Total eligible Migrant Children in Minnesota (ages 3 through 21), Total Served, Number Enrolled during School Year, and Total Schools Serving Migratory Student from 2019 to 2022**



**Source: Minnesota Department of Education Consolidated State Performance Reports (2019 to 2022)**

Forty-nine 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 those identified as English learners or not.

**Figure 16. Eligible Migratory Children in Minnesota (ages 3 through 21) by EL status in the 2021-22 Performance Period**



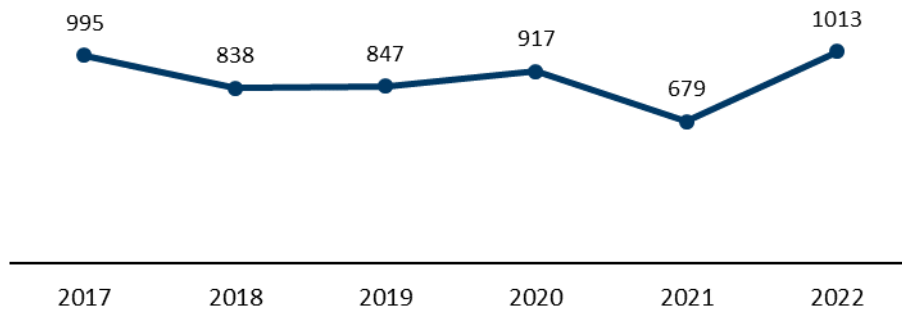
Source: Minnesota Department of Education Consolidated State Performance Reports (2021-22)

### 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 dropped slightly between 2017 and 2018, remained fairly constant between 2018 and 2020, saw a significant decline in 2021 and a significant increase in 2022.

**Figure 17. Number of Minnesota English Learners Identified as Experiencing Homelessness, 2017 to 2022**



Source: MDE Enrollment Data

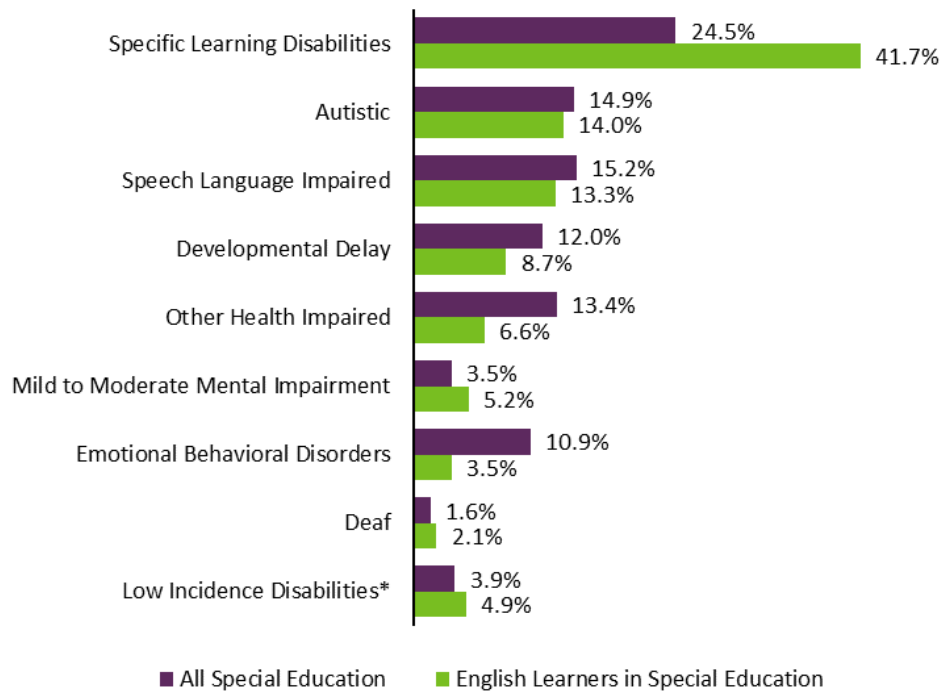
### English Learners and Special Education

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 suspect 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 2022. English learners who are dually identified are most likely to have a specific learning disability (5,688 students; 41.4 percent of the total), followed by autism spectrum disorder (2,102; 15.3 percent), speech or language impairment (1,815; 13.3 percent), and developmental delay (1,094; 8.0 percent), each seeing an increase in the past year. English learners are overrepresented in the specific learning disability, mild to moderate cognitive disabilities, deaf, and low incidence disabilities\* groups and underrepresented in the other disability groups compared to all students in special education.

**Figure 18. Distribution of ELs and all students with Disabilities, 2022**



\*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.

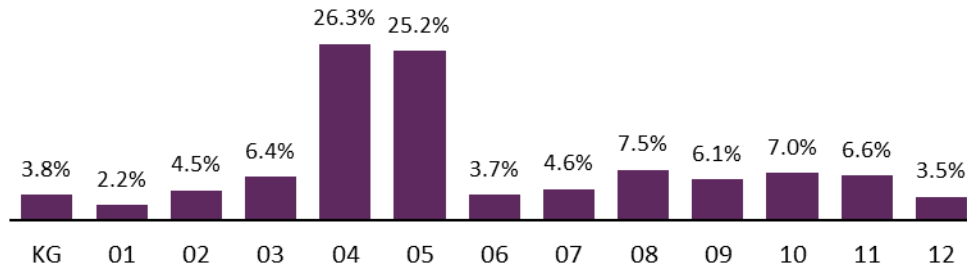
**Source: MDE Enrollment Data**

**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 English learners are most likely to

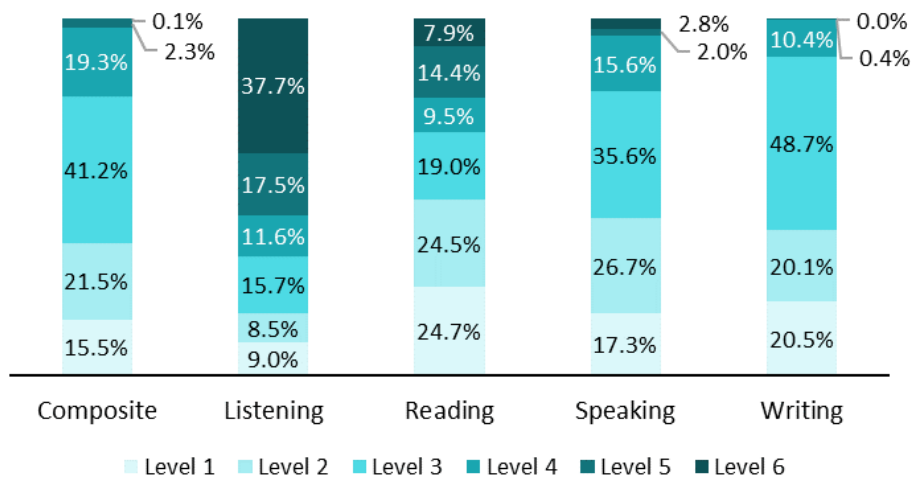
test proficient in grades 4 and 5. Figures 19 to 21 are sourced from MDE Data Reports and Analytics Assessment reports.

**Figure 19. Percentage of English Learners Assessing Proficient on the WIDA ACCESS, by Grade Level, 2022**



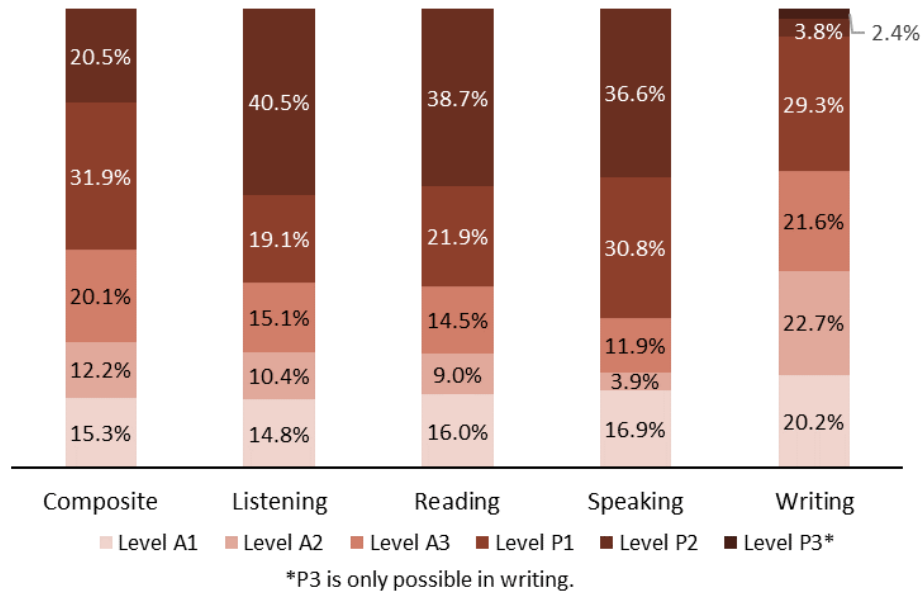
The distribution of ELs at each of the proficiency levels on ACCESS are displayed for the overall composite and each domain in Figure 20. Student typically progress to higher proficiency levels earlier in Listening, which is reflected in seeing larger percentages at proficiency levels 5 and 6. Typically, the productive domains of Speaking or Writing are the last for students to master.

**Figure 20. Percent Distribution of Students at Each Proficiency Level on WIDA ACCESS, K-12 Composite and Domain Scores, 2022**



The Alternate ACCESS is given to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, with levels ranging from A1 to P2 for the overall composite and most domains. Writing has an additional proficiency level of P3. The majority of students score in P1 or P2 for the overall composite, Listening, Reading and Speaking.

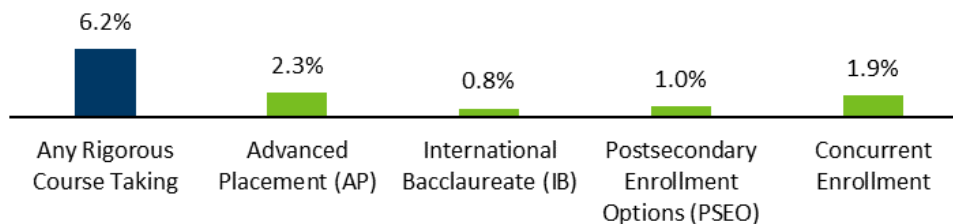
**Figure 21. Percent Distribution of Students at Each Proficiency Level on WIDA ALT-ACCESS, 1-12 Composite and Domain Scores, 2022**



### Academic Achievement

Figure 22 shows the percentage of English learners who participated in rigorous coursework in high school, disaggregating for four types (Advanced Placement [AP], International Baccalaureate [IB], Postsecondary Enrollment Options [PSEO] and concurrent enrollment). While the percentages reported are fairly low, 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. English Learners Participating in Rigorous Courses, 2021**

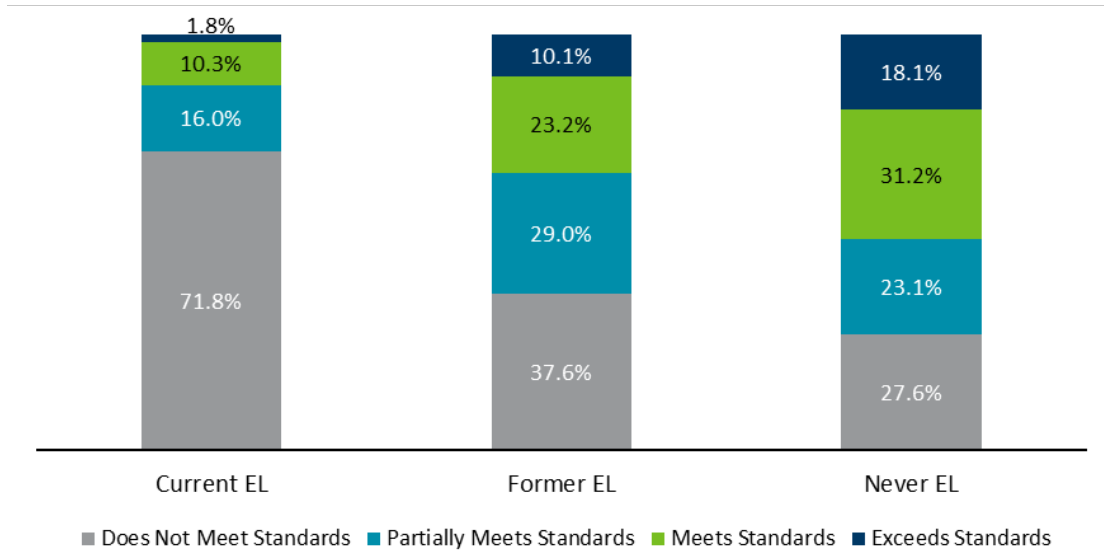


Source: MDE PSEO, Concurrent and Minnesota Common Course Catalog Data

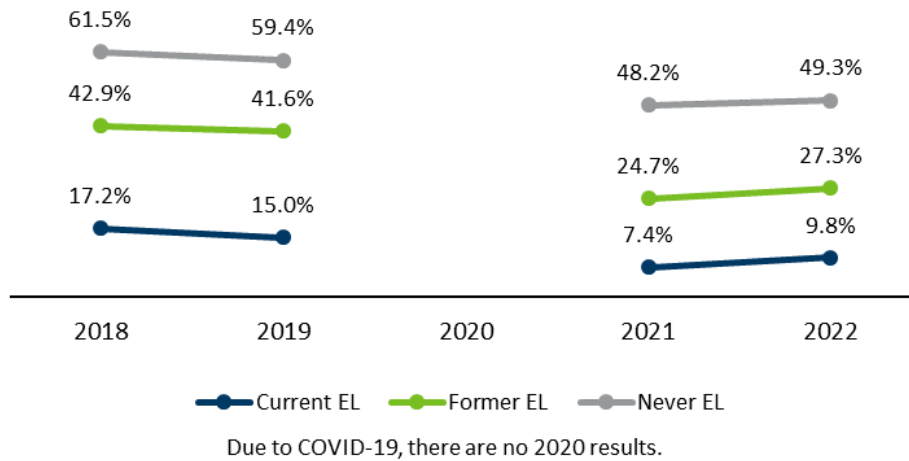
In 2022, the majority of current English learners did not meet standards on the statewide mathematics assessments (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)), while that was not the case for former ELs and never ELs. Figure 23 shows that students who still need English learner services are less likely to meet or exceed standards than former ELs and never ELs. Figure 24 shows that all groups had slight improvements in percent proficient between 2021 and 2022. However, because many

students did not complete the tests in 2021, caution should be taken when interpreting the changes between years. The following figures, 23 through 28, are sourced from MDE Assessment Data.

**Figure 23. Math Achievement Levels by English Learner Designations on Statewide Assessments, 2022**



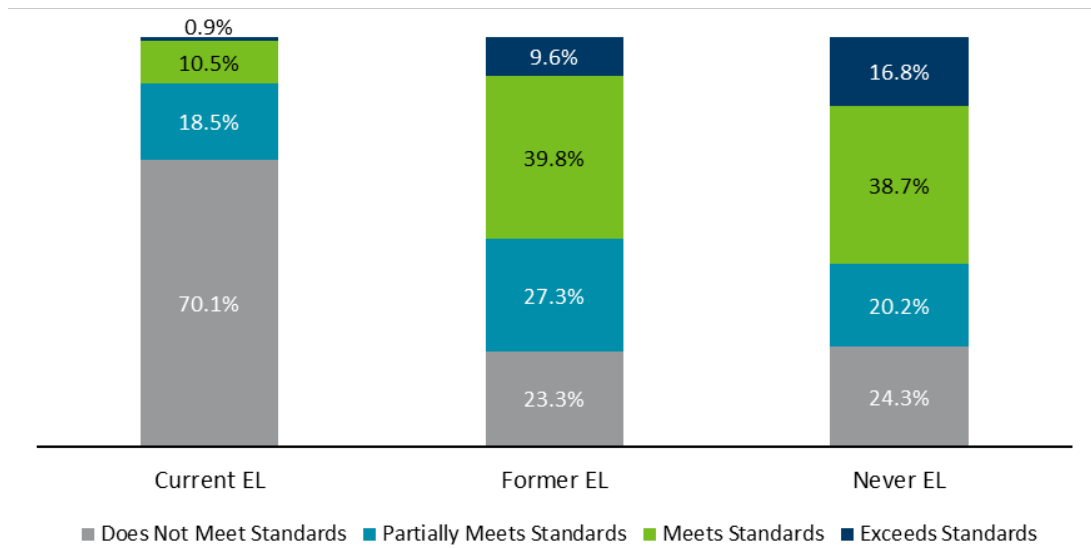
**Figure 24. Math Percent Proficient by English Learner Designation on Statewide Assessments, 2018 to 2022**



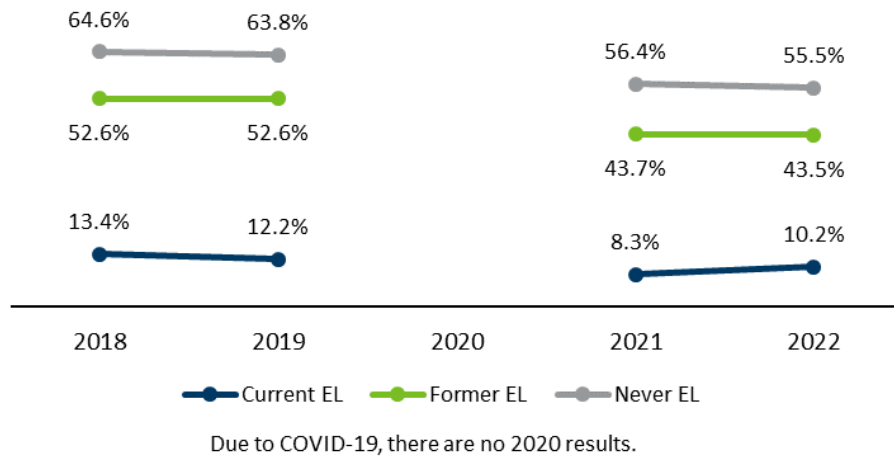
Achievement on the reading statewide assessments shows a similar pattern of results as in math. Figure 25 shows that former ELs and never ELs tend to perform similarly, while very few current ELs meet or exceed standards. Figure 26 shows some declines in 2021 from pre-pandemic proficiency rates that remained largely unchanged in 2022.



**Figure 25. Reading Achievement Levels by English Learner Designation on Statewide Assessments, 2022**

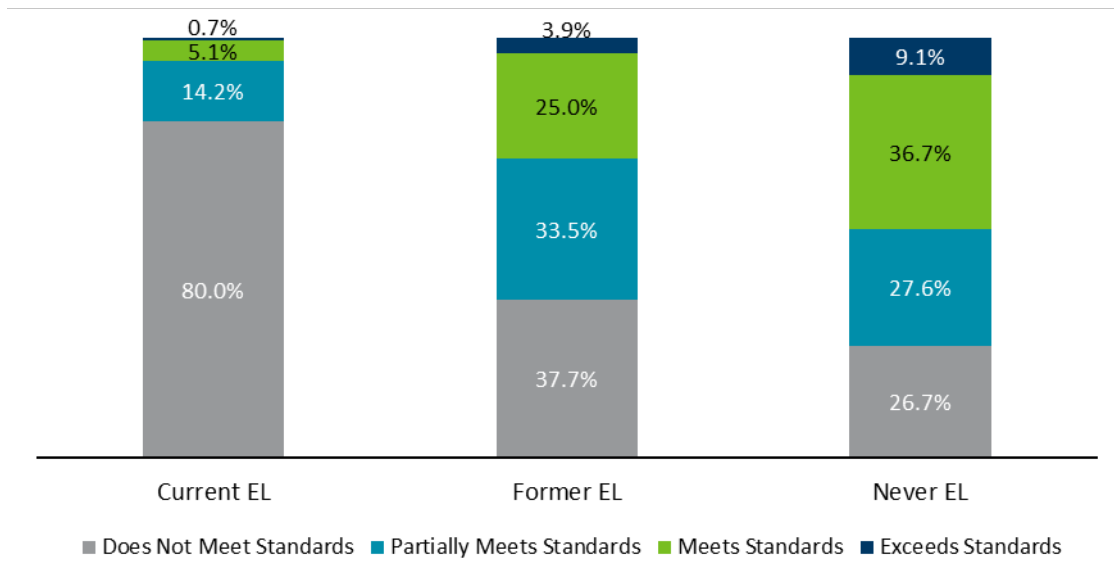


**Figure 26. Reading Achievement levels by English Learner Designation on Statewide Assessments, 2018 to 2022**

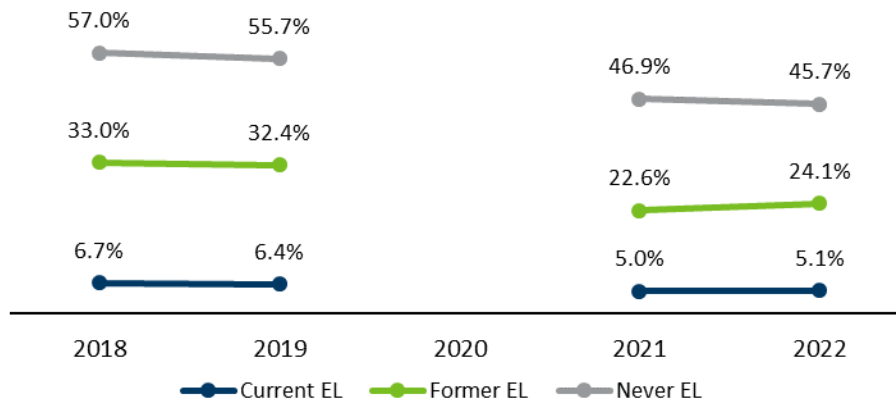


Achievement on the science statewide assessments highlights how few current English learners are proficient, with former ELs and never ELs looking more similar. Figure 27 shows the information broken down by achievement level and Figure 28 shows the proficiency rates of current ELs, former ELs and never ELs over time.

**Figure 27. Science Achievement levels by English Learner Designation on Statewide Assessments, 2022**



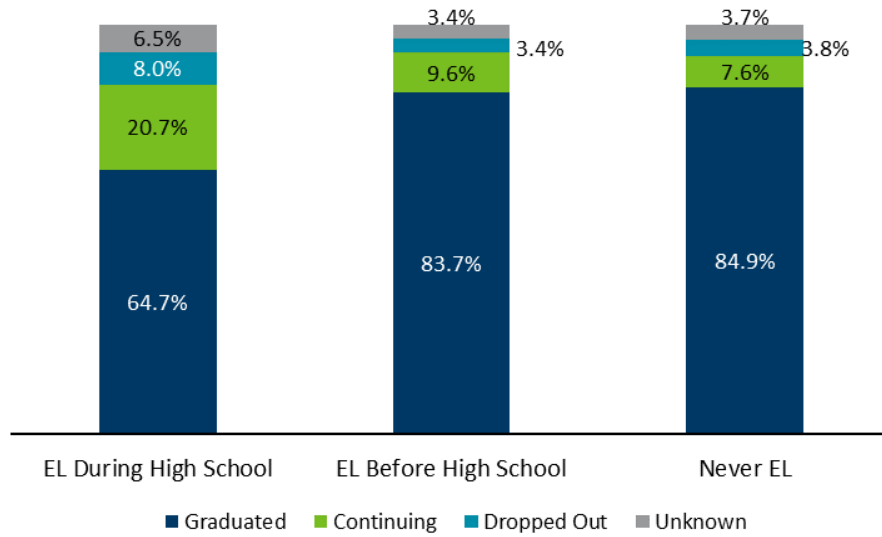
**Figure 28. Science Achievement levels by English Learner Designation on Statewide Assessments, 2018 to 2022**



### English Learners’ Graduation Rate

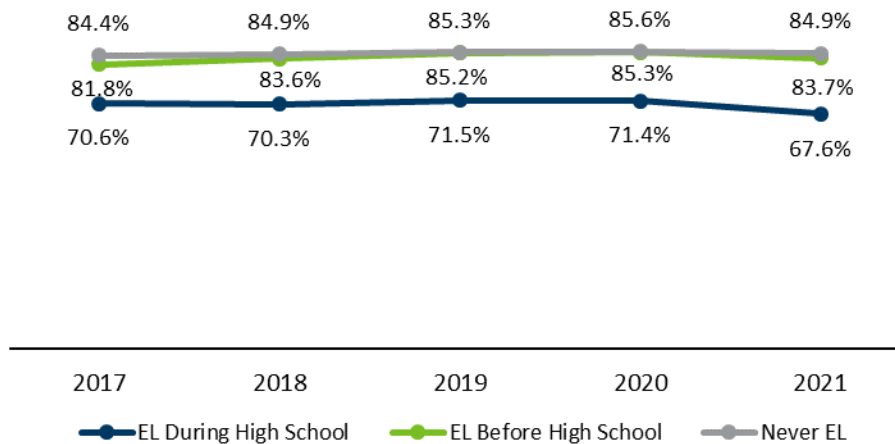
The Four-year graduation rate is a graduation rate based on a cohort of first-time 9th grade students plus transfers into the cohort within the four-year period, minus transfers out of the cohort within the four-year period. For more information on the graduation rate, please visit the MDE [Accountability Indicators webpage](#). All data for figures in this section are sourced from MDE Graduation and Enrollment Data.

**Figure 29. 4-Year Graduation Rate by English Learner Designation, 2021**



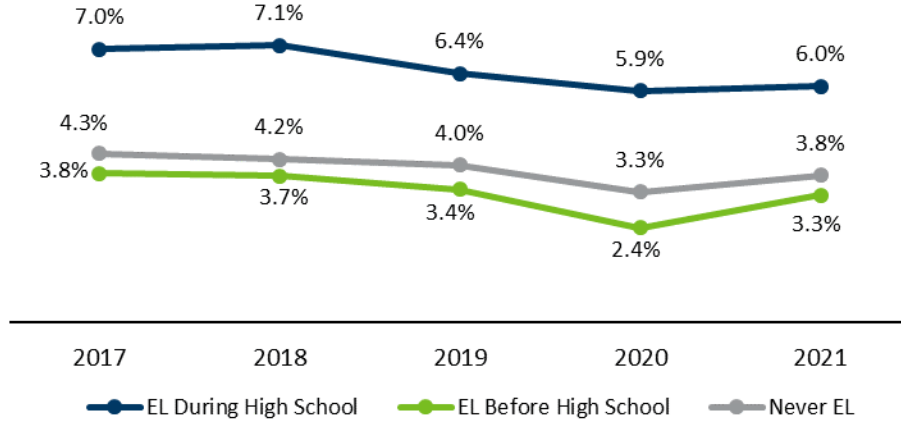
Graduation, dropout, and continuing trends for 2017–2021 are depicted in Figures 30, 31 and 32. All figures show that students who were English learners before high school have similar graduation outcomes to students who were never English learners. Students who were English learners in high school are less likely to graduate in four years (Figure 30), but are more likely to continue into year five (Figure 32).

**Figure 30. Four-Year Graduation Trends by English Learner Designation, 2017–2021**



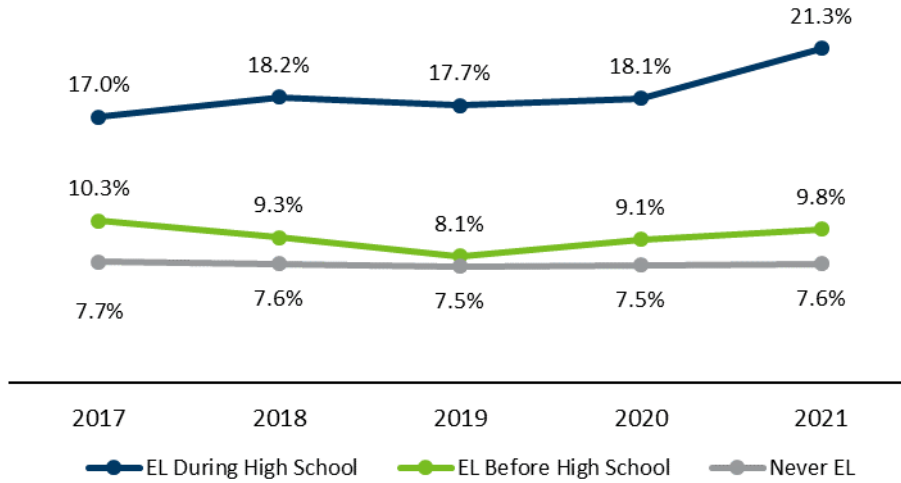
While students who are English learners in high school are more likely to continue for additional education beyond their fourth year of high school, they are also more likely to drop out, though the dropout rates have declined between 2017 and 2021 (Figure 31). Figure 31 also show that students who were EL before high school are less likely to drop out than students who were never ELs.

**Figure 31. Four-Year Drop-out Trends by English Learner Designation, 2017–2021**



Since 2017, students who were ever English learners stay enrolled into a fifth year as needed to finish graduation requirements compare to students who were never ELs.

**Figure 32. Four-Year Continuing Trends by English Learner Designation, 2017–2021**



## MDE EL Education Contacts

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