

**BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND ENGLISH AS A SECOND
LANGUAGE PROGRAMS LONGITUDINAL SUMMARY
REPORT: 2005–2006 TO 2008–2009**



Austin Independent School District
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary report was prepared to document the numbers and demographic characteristics of students participating in bilingual education (BE) and English as a second language (ESL) programs in Austin Independent School District (AISD) and to examine the difference in performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) between English language learners (ELLs) and other students during the 2008–2009 school year. This report also provides a longitudinal overview of the academic achievement, English language acquisition, attendance rates, intra-district mobility, and BE and ESL exit patterns for ELLs across the 2005–2006 and 2008–2009 school years.

KEY FINDINGS

- Of the 24,257 ELLs enrolled in Fall 2008, 36% were in BE, 34% were in ESL, and 4% were in neither program as a result of parent choice; this pattern was consistent with the patterns of the previous 3 years.
- In recent years, the district has made progress in closing the achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELLs. Since 2005, the percentage of ELLs who passed the TAKS has increased across most grade levels and subject areas; many of the largest gains have been at the middle school level.
- However, gaps still exist between ELLs and non-ELLs with respect to TAKS performance, and some of these gaps are quite large among secondary school students.
- In 2008–2009, more than the required number of students made at least one level of progress on Texas Assessment of English Language Proficiency (TELPAS).
- Since 2005, annual attendance rates for elementary school ELLs consistently were higher than rates for non-ELLs at the same grade levels. Over the same period, no significant difference was found between ELLs' and non-ELLs' attendance rates at middle school; however, among high school students, ELLs consistently had lower attendance rates than did non-ELLs.
- Across the 2005–2006 through 2008–2009 school years, no difference was found between the percentage of elementary school ELLs and of other elementary students with respect to attending more than one non-disciplinary campus during the school year. In school years 2007–2008 and 2008–2009, middle school ELLs had higher rates of intra-district mobility than did other students at the same level. High school ELLs consistently had higher levels of intra-district mobility, compared with the rates of other high school students each year, except 2007–2008.

- Of all the measures examined in the report, longitudinal graduation rates showed the greatest difference between ELLs and other students. For example, the 4-year graduation rate for ELLs from the Class of 2008 was 36.5%, compared with a rate of 74.3% for students overall.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The district's BE and ESL programs appear to be helping most ELLs become proficient in English and learn core academic content. However, many ELLs, especially newcomer and long-term ELLs at the secondary level, are struggling academically and are at a higher risk for dropout than are other students. Based on the present summary report, the Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) recommends the following.

- *Integrated program evaluations.* District leaders are aware of the unsatisfactory achievement of secondary ELLs and have initiated several programs targeted to meet the needs of newcomer and long-term ELLs through the English Language Development Academy (ELDA) program and at International High School, and through the implementation of various professional development strategies (e.g., Quality Teaching for English Language Learners [QTEL], ESL middle school teacher leader training, and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol [SIOP] training). Although some of these programs have been evaluated (e.g., QTEL) and others will be evaluated at the end of the 2009–2010 school year (e.g., ESL teacher leader program), no plans have been made for an *integrated* evaluation of all secondary ELL initiatives.
- *ESL cost-effectiveness analyses.* As part of the recommended integrated secondary ESL program evaluation, it is recommended that district staff conduct cost-effectiveness analyses to determine which of the various programs and initiatives designed to serve long-term and newcomer ELLs are the most cost-effective means of increasing secondary ELL student achievement.
- *Close monitoring of elementary ELL student progress.* Because students who do not exit BE and ESL before the end elementary school are less likely to make strong academic progress in secondary school than are students who do exit by the end of 5th-grade, it is recommended that district staff develop an early warning system to ensure that as many 3rd-, 4th-, and 5th-grade ELL students as possible are on track with regard to being proficient in English and performing on grade level in the core subject areas by the end of 5th grade.
- *Close monitoring of ELL attendance and intra-district mobility.* Because low attendance rates have been associated with lower academic achievement

(Malerba, 2009) and because high school ELLs have lower average rates of attendance and higher intra-district mobility than do other students, it is recommended that ELLs' attendance and mobility be closely monitored to ensure that students consistently attend school.

- *Continued emphasis on early education.* Although further exploration is warranted, evidence suggests ELLs who entered the district in the early grades (e.g., prekindergarten [Pre-K] and kindergarten) exited BE and ESL programs before secondary school and went on to perform as well as or better than non-ELLs on TAKS in 2008–2009 (Herrera & Malerba, 2009). Therefore, it is recommended that district staff continue to emphasize the importance of early education for ELLs and to encourage as many ELLs as possible to enroll in Pre-K and kindergarten.
- *Continued emphasis on ELL family engagement.* The early successes of the ePromotoras™ program (Herrera, 2010) suggest meaningful ways exist to engage parents in the district's mission to maximize the school readiness and academic potential of every student. District staff should continue to find new ways to engage ELLs' families and to expand effective parent engagement models.

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REPORT PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

The purposes of the first section of this report are (a) to document the numbers and demographic characteristics of students participating in bilingual education (BE) and English as a second language (ESL) programs during the 2008–2009 school year, (b) to document BE/ESL students' progress toward English language proficiency, and (c) to compare English language learner (ELL) students' performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) with the performance of other students.

The purposes of the second section of the report are (a) to provide a longitudinal overview of the academic achievement, attendance rates, intra-district mobility, BE/ESL exit patterns, and graduation and dropout rates for ELLs across the 2005–2006 and 2008–2009 school years; (b) to provide an overview of the district's progress toward closing the achievement gap between ELLs and other students; and (c) to serve as a baseline for monitoring district progress toward meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan during the 2010–2011 through 2014–2015 school years (AISD Strategic Plan, 2009).

The student demographic and performance indicators summarized in this report are critical to a student's success in K-12th grade education and beyond. Although limited English proficiency (LEP) has been associated with increased risk of student dropout, previous district analyses have shown that students who pass the TAKS, attend school regularly, and remain on the same campus during the school year are significantly less likely to drop out and are significantly more likely to graduate from high school than are students with lower academic achievement, lower attendance rates, and higher mobility (Brunner, 2010; Malerba, 2009). Previous analyses also showed that students who become proficient in English and exit BE/ESL programs by the end of elementary school go on to do at least as well as native English speakers on TAKS (Herrera & Malerba, 2009).

The sections that follow provide (a) the national, state, and local demographic trends pertinent to the education of students whose first language is not English; (b) an overview of the BE/ESL programs offered in Austin Independent School District (AISD), the criteria for exiting the program, and program funding sources; (c) documentation of the numbers, demographic characteristics, and academic performance of students participating in BE/ESL programs during 2008–2009; (d) a longitudinal overview of the academic achievement, English language acquisition, attendance rates, intra-district mobility, and BE/ESL exit patterns from 2005–2006 through 2008–2009; and (e) conclusions and recommendations for future evaluation and research.

The terms limited English proficient (LEP) and English language learner (ELL) are used interchangeably throughout this report. LEP is a term used in state accountability

documentation to classify students whose dominant language is other than English and who have been tested and determined to be of limited English language proficiency. ELL is used more commonly to describe students who are not yet proficient in English.

NATIONAL, STATE, AND DISTRICT CONTEXT

School districts across the country have been responding to recent demographic changes and the resulting need for education programs that effectively serve students who primarily speak languages other than English at home. In many cases, students who are ELLs are children of immigrants. United States census data indicate that in 1990, 13% of the population of children aged 0 through 17 years were children of immigrants. In Texas, the percentage of students who were children of immigrants was higher in 1990 than the comparable percentage in the nation overall (19%), and this percentage has risen faster than the national percentage over the same time period. As of 2006, 31% of the children aged 0 through 17 years in Texas were children of immigrants, a 138% increase over the 16-year period (Fortuny, Capps, Simms, & Chaudry, 2009).

IMMIGRANT FAMILY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Children of immigrants are not necessarily immigrants themselves. In 2006, 86% of children of immigrants were U.S. citizens; however, children of immigrants were more likely to be economically disadvantaged, to speak a language other than English at home, and to have parents without high school diplomas than were children of parents born in the U.S. In 2006, 51% of children of immigrants were in families with incomes below twice the poverty level, compared with 35% of children of native-born parents. In the same year, 61% of children of immigrants had at least one parent who was LEP, and this rate was higher among parents who emigrated from some countries than other countries (e.g., 82% of children of immigrant parents from Mexico had at least one parent who was LEP) (Fortuny et al., 2009).

Children of immigrants also are more likely to have parents with low levels of education than are children of parents born in the U.S. In 2006, 26% of children of immigrants lived in families in which neither parent completed high school, compared with 8% of children with native-born parents who came from such families. These rates were higher for children whose parents emigrated from Mexico than many other countries; 47% of those families had at least one parent with less than a high school education (Fortuny et al., 2009). The family characteristics of LEP, low parental education, and poverty consistently have been associated—alone and in combination—with the risk of children’s low educational attainment and high rates of dropping out of school (Hammond, Smink, & Drew, 2007). The high incidence of these risk characteristics among immigrant families highlights the importance of providing exceptionally strong ELL programs that support students’ academic achievement and the development of

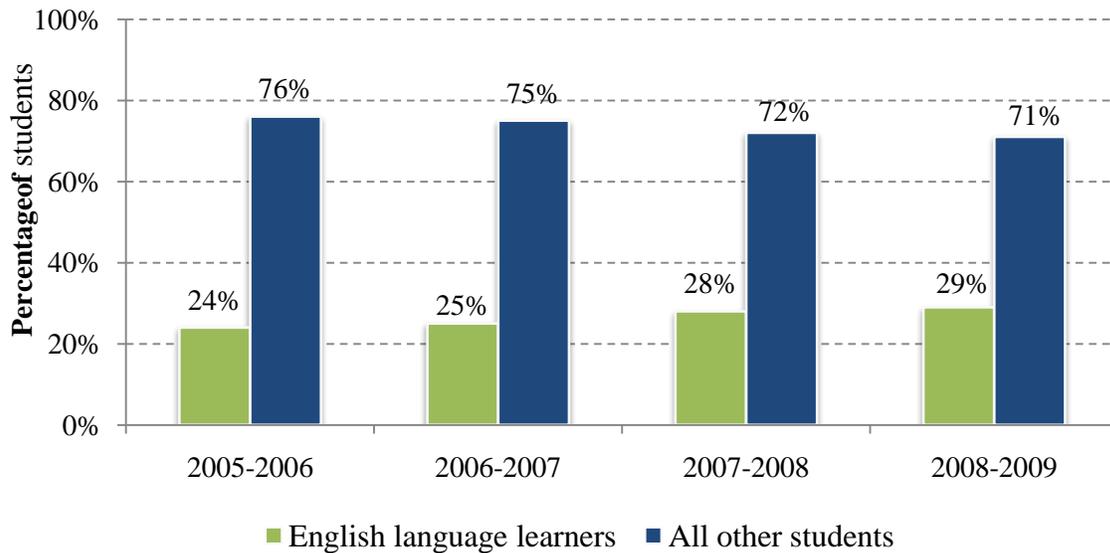
English language proficiency, often in the context of challenging demographic and economic factors.

Acquiring a second language presents its own set of demands, regardless of children's social and economic background. All new learners of English progress through the same four stages to acquire language (McLaughlin, 1984). In the first stage, the period of home language use, children who are competent in their first language, but are in a setting where everyone is speaking a different language, frequently will continue to speak their home language even when others do not understand. In the second stage, the nonverbal period, ELLs rarely speak and instead use nonverbal means to communicate. During this is period of active language learning, children learn the features, sounds, and words of the new language (receptive language), but do not use it to communicate. The third stage is the period of telegraphic and formulaic speech. During this period, children begin using the new language through the use of simple words to express whole thoughts. The fourth stage is the period of productive language, during which children create unique phrases to express their thoughts. The length of time each student spends at a particular stage can vary greatly (Haynes, 2007). The ease and timing with which ELLs learn English depends heavily on the school context. Schools that offer a supportive sociocultural environment in which both the students' first and second languages are spoken enhance students' cognitive, academic, and linguistic development and greatly facilitate students' English acquisition (Thomas & Collier, 2002).

AISS DEMOGRAPHICS

Similar to school districts in the rest of the nation and state, AISD has had an increase in the number and proportion of ELLs in the student population. In October 2005, 81,155 students were enrolled in Early Education (EE) through 12th grade in AISD, 19,356 (24%) of whom were identified as LEP in Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) demographic records. By October 2008, the total district enrollment had risen to 83,483, of which 24,257 (29%) students were identified as LEP. Over the 4-year period from 2005 to 2008, the total number of students enrolled in AISD increased by 2.8%; however, the total number of ELLs increased by 20%. As a result, ELLs comprised a larger proportion of the overall student body each year (Figure 1).

Figure 1. English Language Learners in AISD, 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009



Source. Public Information Management System (PEIMS) 110 records: 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008

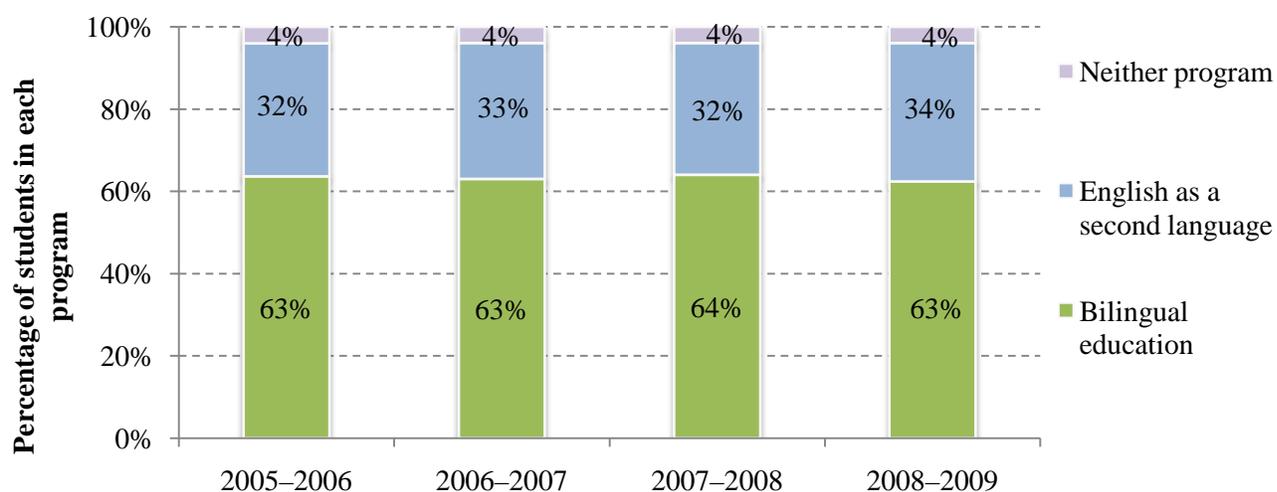
Note. Total student enrollment each year: 2005–2006 (N = 81,155), 2006–2007 (N = 82,140); 2007–2008 (N = 82,564); 2008–2009 (N = 83,483).

Like children of immigrants across the state and nation, district ELLs were not necessarily immigrants themselves; in October 2008, only 13% of district ELLs were classified as recent immigrants, which indicates that the majority of district ELLs are U.S. citizens (see technical note B1 for more details). Like other children of immigrants, district ELLs were more likely to be economically disadvantaged than were other students; for example, 92% of ELLs qualified for free or reduced priced lunch during the 2008–2009 school year (see Table 2 in the demographic section). Although AISD did not collect data about parents' level of education, it is possible that the parents of district ELLs had education levels similar to those of other immigrant parents in Texas (i.e., many may not have completed high school). Each of these trends highlights the importance of providing exceptionally strong BE/ESL programs to district ELLs; for many of these students, becoming proficient in academic English is only one of the challenges they face in reaching their full academic potential. AISD offers a wide range of programs to support ELLs and their families, which are outlined in the next section.

BE AND ESL PROGRAMS IN AISD

Texas law requires that upon entry to a school district, students for whom a home language survey has indicated a language other than English must be assessed to determine their level of English proficiency. Students identified as LEP have access to several programs in AISD, depending upon their grade level, level of English proficiency, and parent preference. The percentage of ELL students participating in BE and ESL programs and the percentage of families declining participation was very consistent across the 2005–2006 through 2008–2009 school years (Figure 2).

Figure 2. English Language Learner Students Participating in Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs, 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009



Source. Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) 110 records, Fall 2005 through Fall 2008

BE AND ESL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE IN AISD

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

AISD implements a late transitional BE model (i.e., literacy and core content skills initially are developed in the dominant language, although English is taught daily across the core

content areas, and the amount of instruction in English increases gradually across grade levels). Students are expected to become academically proficient in both English and Spanish by the end of 5th grade, after spending approximately 5 to 7 years in the program. Beginning in the 2010–2011 school year, BE will be expanded to include several dual language programs throughout the district. The goal of the dual language program is to help ELLs and non-ELLs to become bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural. The dual language program differs from the current BE model in the following ways: (a) it has more prescribed implementation for the amount of daily instruction in English and Spanish, (b) it has two-way dual language classrooms comprising native Spanish and native English speakers, and (c) it will be continued through 12th grade.

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

AISD also offers specialized support to secondary-level recent immigrants and other ELL students with beginning and intermediate English language proficiency through the English Language Development Academy (ELDA) programs for 6th-, 7th-, and 8th-grade students at Garcia and Webb Middle Schools and to recent immigrant students in 9th and 10th grade at International High School. An overview of BE and ESL programs offered during the regular school year is provided in Table 1.

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

Table 1. AISD Programs for English Language Learners During the School Year

Grade level	English Language				Dual language (beginning in 2010)
	Bilingual education	English as a second language	Development Academy (ELDA)	International High School	
Pre-K	✓	✓			✓
Kindergarten	✓	✓			✓
1	✓	✓			✓
2	✓	✓			
3	✓	✓			
4	✓	✓			
5	✓	✓			
6	✓	✓	✓		
7		✓	✓		
8		✓	✓		
9		✓		✓	
10		✓		✓	
11		✓			
12		✓			

Source. AISD Bilingual/English as a Second Language Handbook, 2009–2010

Note. See Technical Note B2 for more information about the dual language program.

FAMILY PROGRAMS

In 2008–2009, the district initially offered the ePromotoras™ program for mothers of rising ELL Pre-K students. This parent empowerment program trained Spanish-speaking mothers how to teach early literacy skills to their children and to see themselves as their children’s first teacher. Mothers who completed the 6-week program were certified to train other parents of young children in the early literacy skills they acquired. Preliminary results showed favorable academic outcomes for students of participating mothers. ELL students who enrolled in Pre-K in Fall 2009 had higher than average grades in all core content areas (Herrera, 2010). In 2008–2009, the ePromotoras™ program was offered at four AISD elementary campuses, and it since has been expanded to 24 campuses, using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

Low-income ELL students and their families also benefited from the full range of services and supports (e.g., the United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] National

School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs, and access to parent support specialists on Title I campuses) offered to all who qualified.

EXITING BE AND ESL PROGRAMS

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 requires states to monitor ELL students' progress in learning English. In response to this requirement, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) developed the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) for students in kindergarten through 12th grade to assess students' skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. Students are tested with the TELPAS annually to determine whether they have advanced sufficiently in their English language proficiency to be exited out of BE and ESL programs.

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

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

PROGRAM FUNDING

NCLB of 2001 includes the Title III, Part A grant, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students (P.L. 107-110). The grant provides funds to school districts through the TEA to ensure that ELLs at all grade levels can successfully learn English and meet the academic standards required of all students. These supplemental funds may be used to (a) support specialized student instruction, (b) provide professional development opportunities to staff, (c) acquire instructional supplies and materials, (d) provide community/family coordination and outreach for ELLs and their families, and (e) support other relevant programmatic efforts. In addition to the federal Title III, Part A funds, other state grant and local funds help support the instructional services provided to ELLs.

The two largest sources of district funding for BE and ESL programs are the federal NCLB Title III, Part A grant and local district funds. The district used NCLB Title I (Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged), Part A funds to support several summer school programs for ELLs; however, those programs and student outcomes are discussed in separate reports (Brunner & Malerba, 2010; Doolittle, 2009). During the long session of the 2008–2009 school year and the summer session of 2009, the district spent \$5,020,700 to provide supplemental instruction, materials, professional development opportunities, and community outreach for the benefit of 24,792 LEP students, resulting in an average cost of \$202 per student. The largest percentage of expenditures comprised teachers' and other professionals' salaries and benefits (Table 2).

Table 2. Funding Sources and Expenditures for Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs, 2008–2009

	Funding source				Percentage
	Local	Title I	Title III	Total	
Teacher and professional personnel	971,238	486,205	1,495,198	2,952,641	59%
Support personnel	141,968		74,382	216,350	4%
Employee allowances	45,751		352	46,103	< 1%
Employee benefits	190,611	89,984	345,743	626,338	13%
Professional services	89,183		24,722	113,904	2%
Rental/leases	10,428			10,428	< 1%
Contracted services	67,733		138,699	206,432	4%
Reading materials	3,045		171,599	174,643	4%
Testing materials	313,749			313,749	6%
Supplies and materials - general	96,374	21,311	24,947	142,632	3%
Employee travel	24,255		88,520	112,775	2%
Misc. operating costs	104,703			104,703	2%
Total	\$2,059,038	\$597,500	\$2,364,161	\$5,020,700	
Percentage	41%	12%	47%	100%	

Source. AISD finance records

Note. All amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS FROM THE 2008–2009 SCHOOL YEAR

In October 2008, the total district enrollment was 83,483, of which 24,257 (29%) students were ELLs. This section provides documentation of the numbers, demographic characteristics, academic performance, and language proficiency of students participating in BE and ESL programs during 2008–2009. Whenever possible, these students were compared with students who were not ELLs.

For the first time in 2008–2009, PEIMS demographic records included an indicator for students who were in their 1st or 2nd year after exiting BE and ESL programs. These recently exited students made up less than 2% of all students; 1,052 (1.3%) were in their first year after exit and 184 (< 1%) were in their second year after exit. Students who exited more than 2 years prior to 2008–2009 were not identified in PEIMS. Therefore, throughout this section, exited students were not distinguished from native English speakers. Instead, all exited ELLs and non-ELLs were combined in a group called “all other students.”

DEMOGRAPHICS

As shown in Table 3, ELLs were significantly more likely than were other district students to (a) be enrolled in the early grade levels, (b) be of Hispanic origin, (c) speak Spanish at home, (d) be recent immigrants, and (e) be economically disadvantaged. However, ELLs were somewhat less likely than were non-ELLs to be identified as special education students.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of the 2008–2009 Student Population ($N = 84,483$)

Demographic characteristic	English language learners		All other students	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Gender				
Male	12,634	52%	30,304	51%
Female	11,623	48%	28,922	49%
Ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaskan native	16	< 1%	181	< 1%
Asian or Pacific islander	1,086	5% ↑	1,774	3% ↓
Black, not of Hispanic origin	206	< 1% ↓	9,588	16% ↑
Hispanic	22,645	93% ↑	23,496	45% ↓
White, not of Hispanic origin	304	1% ↓	21,187	36% ↑
Home language				
Spanish	22,704	94% ↑	7,081	12% ↓
Vietnamese	340	1%	186	< 1%
Korean	186	< 1%	111	< 1%
All other languages	1,027	4% ↓	51,959	88% ↑
Immigrant status				
Immigrant	3,073	13% ↑	157	< 1% ↓
Economic disadvantage				
Eligible for free lunch	20,473	84% ↑	25,073	42% ↓
Eligible for reduced price lunch	1,887	8%	4,733	8%
Not eligible for free/reduced price lunch	1,897	8% ↓	29,420	50% ↑
Special education status				
Not in special education	22,534	93% ↑	53,097	90% ↓
In special education	1,723	7% ↓	6,129	10% ↑
Grade level				
Early education–5 th grade	18,120	75% ↑	28,638	48% ↓
6 th –8 th grade	3,355	14% ↓	17,687	30% ↑
9 th –12 th grade	2,782	12% ↓	12,901	22% ↑
Total	24,257	100%	59,226	100%

Source. PEIMS 110 records, Fall 2008

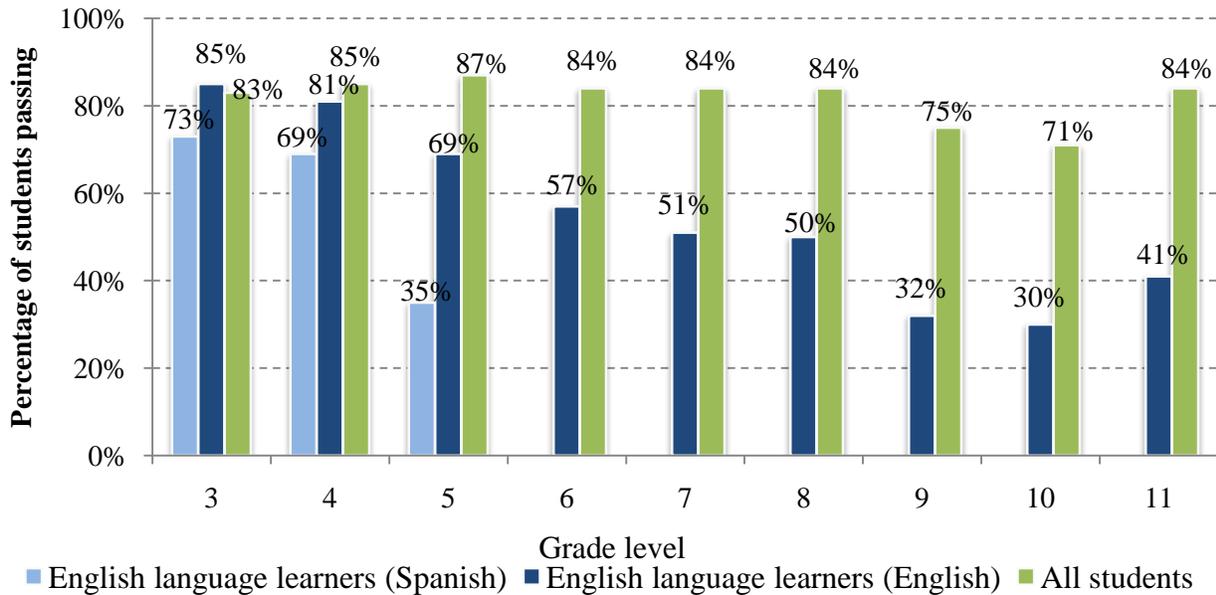
Note. Arrows indicate significant differences between ELLs and all other students, according to the z test of proportions.

TAKS PASSING RATES

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

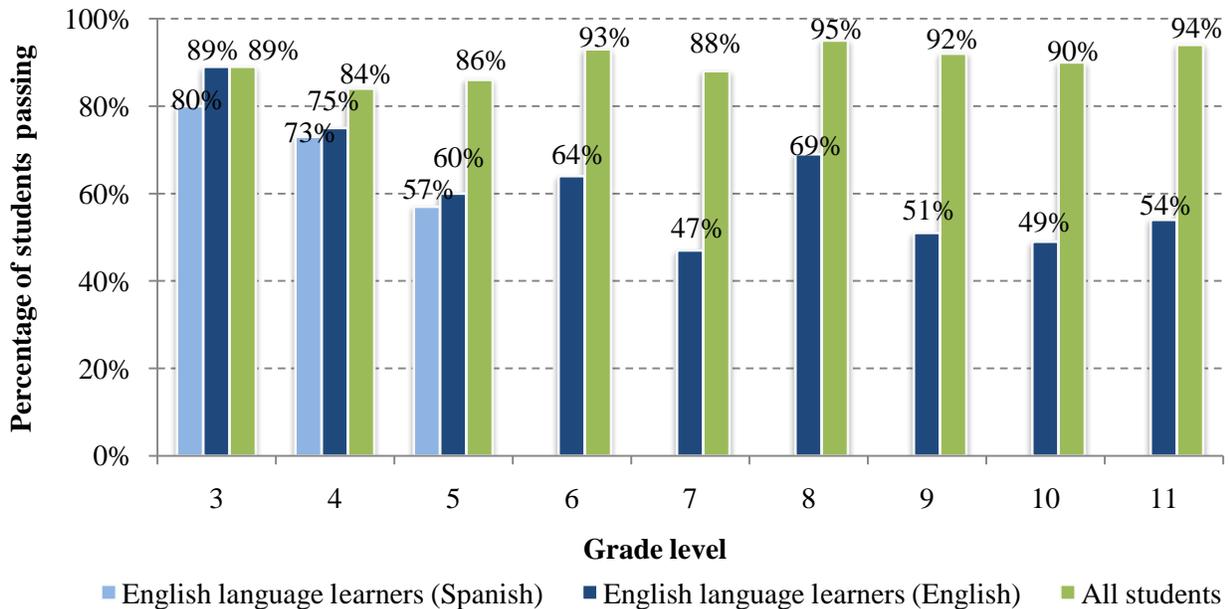
Although the district has made substantial gains in the TAKS passing rates for ELLs in recent school years (see the longitudinal section of this report for details), in 2008–2009, an achievement gap occurred between the academic performance of ELLs and of other students. This gap was observed across most grade levels and subject areas, particularly at the secondary school level (Figures 3 through 7). Two important factors should be considered in the interpretation of the trend. First, TEA offers subject area tests in Spanish only through 5th grade, which explains, in part, the noticeably lower passing rates for ELLs in the secondary grades. Second, because passing TAKS in reading/ELA and writing in English both are criteria for exiting BE and ESL programs, students who struggled with the content in these areas were likely to remain classified as ELLs from year to year. In contrast, the percentages of “all other students” passing were positively influenced by the inclusion of English-proficient and academically successful exited ELLs. The academic performance of exited ELLs is explored in detail in a separate report (Herrera & Malerba, 2009).

Figure 3. Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Math Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), 2008–2009



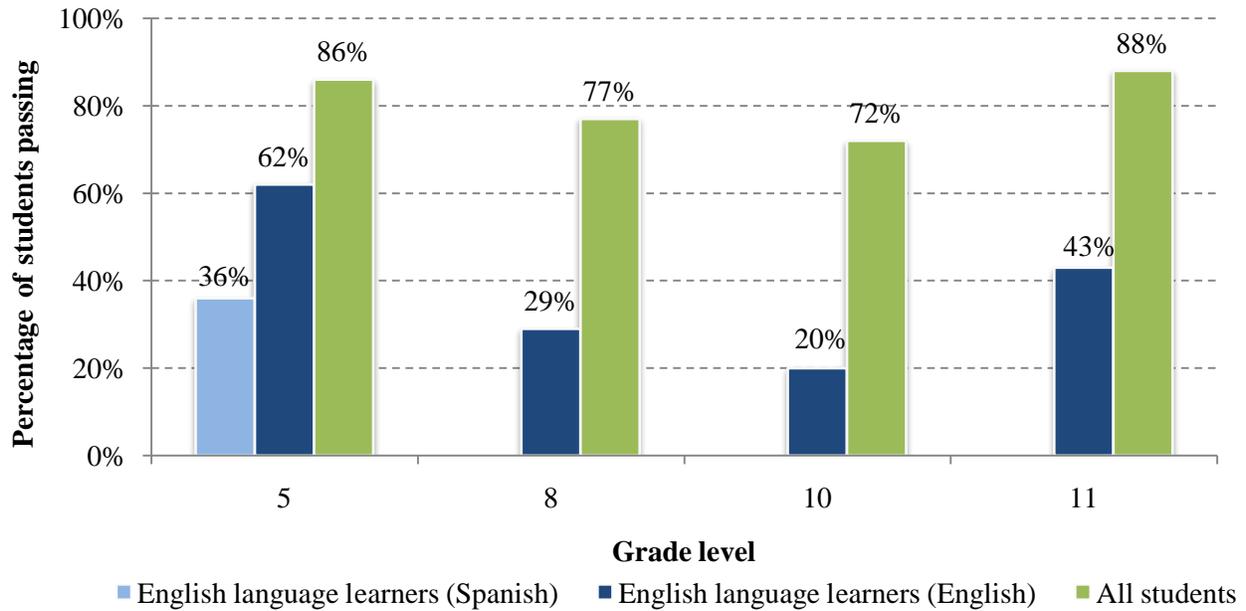
Source. Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2008–2009

Figure 4. Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Reading/English Language Arts Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), 2008–2009



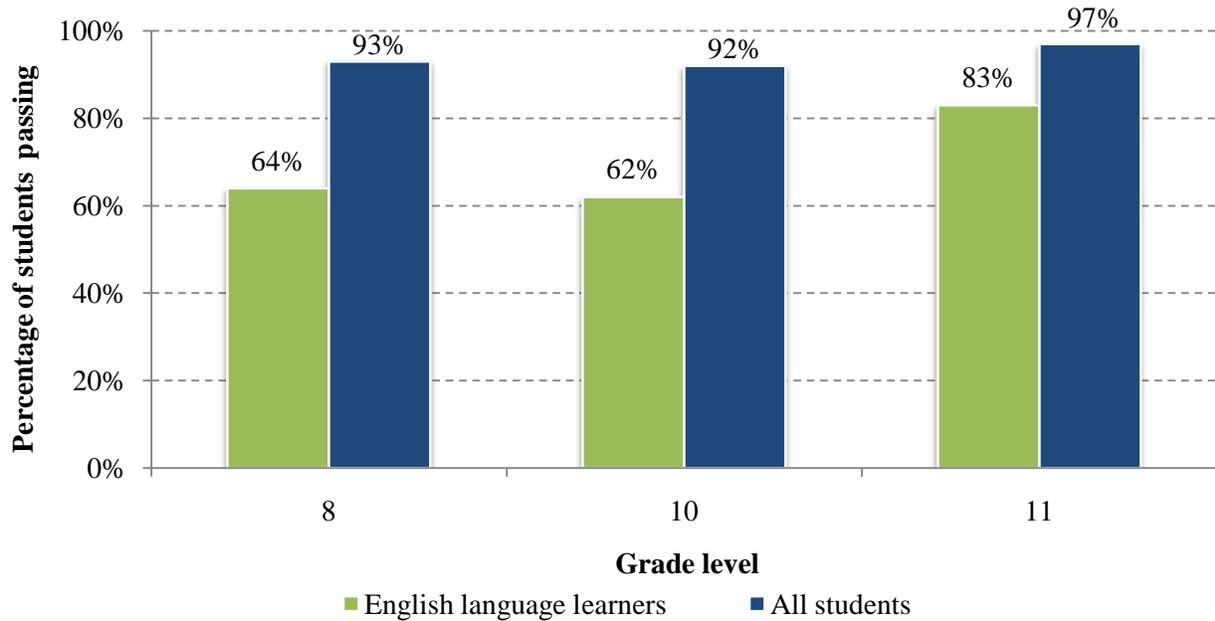
Source. Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2008–2009

Figure 5. Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Science Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), 2008–2009



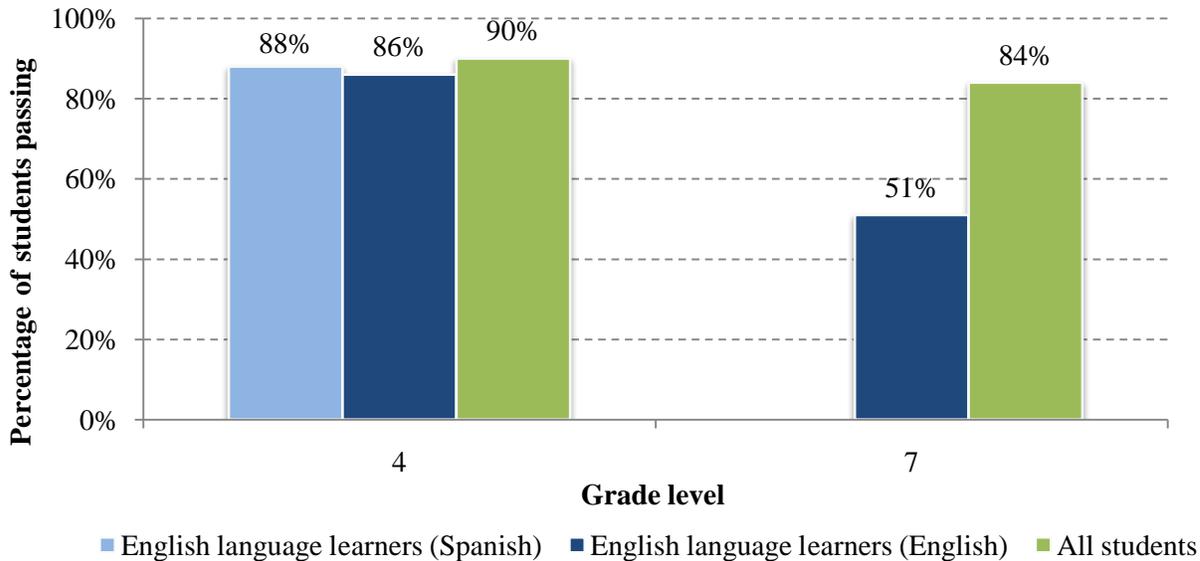
Source. Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2008–2009

Figure 6. Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Social Studies Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), 2008–2009



Source. Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2008–2009

Figure 7. Students Who Met the Passing Standard on the Writing Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), 2008–2009



Source: Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2008–2009

STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

NCLB legislation requires districts that accept Title III, Part A funds to be accountable for their ELL students learning English. In Texas, ELLs' proficiency in four language domains is assessed annually using TELPAS. TEA (2009a) examined year-to-year changes in students' TELPAS scores to determine if districts met Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) in language proficiency. AISD uses TELPAS scores in combination with TAKS reading and writing scores and additional measures of English language proficiency to determine if students are ready to exit BE and ESL programs (see the Program Overview section for more details).

TELPAS Composite Ratings

Students' scores on the TELPAS language domains are weighted in the following manner to create a composite score: listening is 5%, speaking is 5%, reading is 75%, and writing is 15%. The resulting scores are associated with numeric composite ratings and composite rating categories (Table 4).

Table 4. Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Composite Scores and Ratings

TELPAS Composite score range	Composite rating numeric value	Composite rating category
1.0–1.5	1	Beginning
1.6–2.5	2	Intermediate
2.6–3.5	3	Advanced
3.6–4.0	4	Advanced high

Source. TELPAS data file format with student item analysis

The average TELPAS composite ratings for ELLs from the 2008–2009 school year are summarized in Table 5. Although these data are cross-sectional, the score patterns indicate that students progressed in learning English as they moved from one grade level to the next, as was found in previous years (Doolittle, 2008). ELLs in early grades were likely to be rated at the beginning or intermediate level, whereas ELLs in the 5th and higher grades were likely to be rated at the advanced or advanced high level, according to their composite TELPAS ratings. The smaller numbers of ELLs tested at higher grades than at lower grades also indicate that as students' English proficiency increases over time, they are exited from BE and ESL programs.

Table 5. Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Composite Ratings by Grade Level, 2008–2009

Grade level	Number of ELL students	Composite TELPAS rating			
		Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced	Advanced high
Kindergarten	3,020	76%	11%	7%	5%
1	3,003	54%	23%	13%	9%
2	2,826	22%	35%	24%	18%
3	2,297	19%	28%	27%	25%
4	1,724	12%	30%	31%	25%
5	1,368	8%	18%	28%	45%
6	1,126	8%	19%	37%	35%
7	920	8%	15%	32%	43%
8	837	8%	15%	33%	40%
9	959	13%	16%	29%	33%
10	604	3%	17%	33%	41%
11	433	3%	15%	27%	48%
12	372	3%	11%	26%	43%
Total	19,489	29%	22%	23%	24%

Source. AISD TELPAS records, 2008–2009

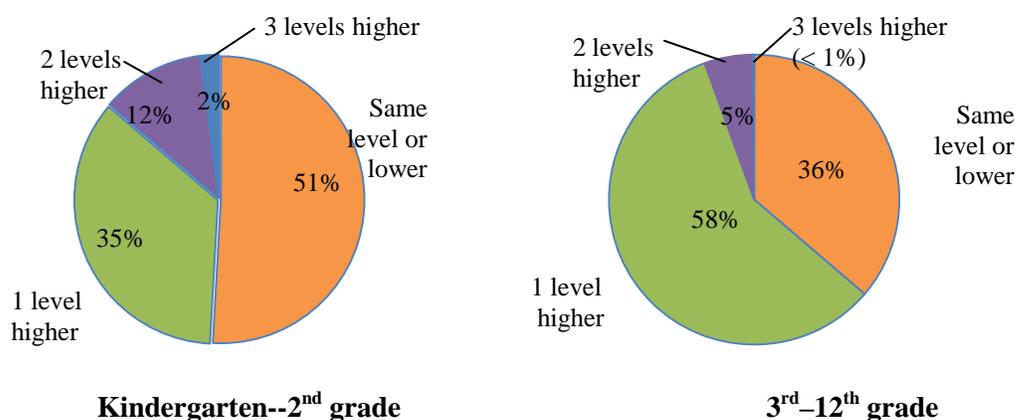
Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% because the “no rating available” category has been excluded.

Annual Language Proficiency Progress

In Spring 2009, TEA examined year-to-year change in students’ TELPAS scores for all students who were enrolled on the PEIMS snapshot date in Fall 2008 and who had Spring 2008 and Spring 2009 TELPAS scores. For all students who met these criteria, TEA calculated a yearly progress indicator based on change in students’ TELPAS composite ratings from Spring 2008 to Spring 2009. The resulting yearly progress indicator scores ranged from 0 (no change or a decline) to 3 (an increase of 3 composite levels); if students’ ratings were advanced high in both years, then the yearly progress indicator was marked as 1 (one level higher). To meet AMAO standards, at least 21% of district ELLs in kindergarten through 2nd grade and at least 48% of district ELLs in 3rd through 12th grade had to have earned a yearly progress indicator of 1 or higher (i.e., students had to have progressed by at least one proficiency level or maintained a rating of advanced high from year to year).

As shown in Figure 8, district ELLs made more than the AMAO's required growth in English language proficiency. TEA required 21% of students in kindergarten through 2nd grade gain at least one proficiency level or remain at advanced high proficiency, and 49% of AISD's kindergarten through 2nd-grade ELL students met this standard. TEA also required 48% of 3rd-through 12th-grade ELLs gain at least one proficiency level or remain at advanced high proficiency; 64% of district ELLs at these grade levels met this standard.

Figure 8. Students' Yearly Progress on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) Between Spring 2008 and Spring 2009



Source. AISD 2009 TELPAS records

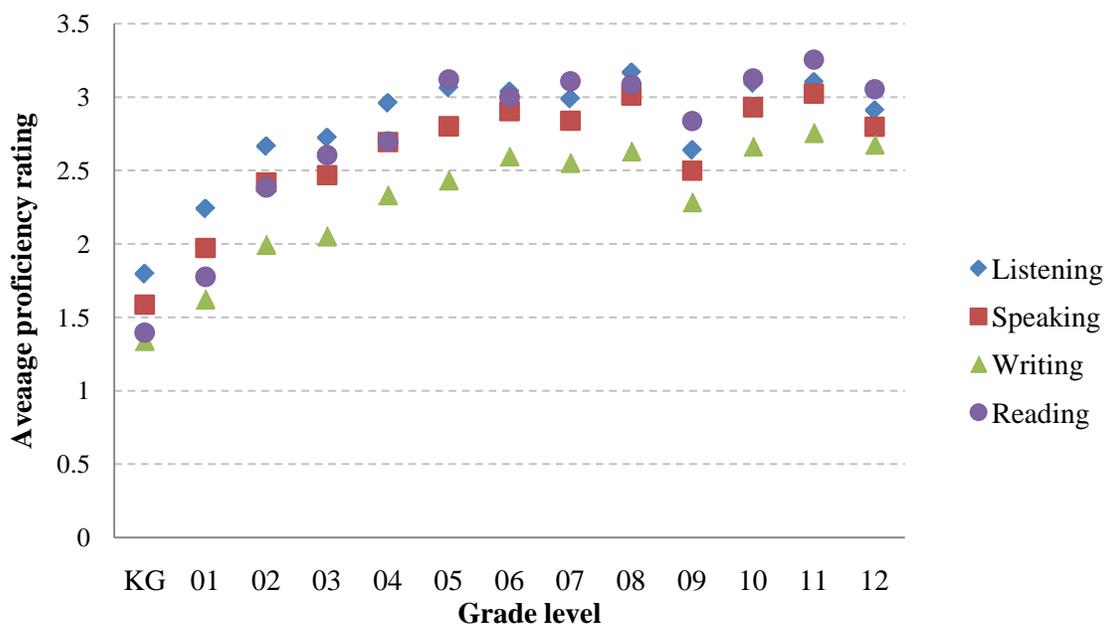
Note. ELL students are categorized according their grade level in 2008–2009. Only students with TELPAS scores from both Spring 2008 and Spring 2009 are included. The yearly progress indicator is coded on the following scale: 0 = the rating is the same or lower than the previous year, 1 = the rating is one level higher than the previous year, 2 = the rating is 2 levels higher than the previous year, 3 = the rating is 3 levels higher than the previous year. If students' ratings are advanced high in both years, the yearly progress indicator is marked as 1 (i.e., one level higher).

TELPAS Proficiency, by Language Domain

In addition to providing composite language proficiency scores, the TELPAS provides ratings on each of four language domain skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Two interesting patterns emerged from the analysis of 2008–2009 TELPAS proficiency by language domain. First, across grade levels, students consistently scored higher on the listening, reading, and speaking sections of the TELPAS than on the writing portion (Figure 9). This could be an indication that the BE and ESL writing curriculum should be strengthened across grade levels, or it could be that the writing section is the most challenging part of the TELPAS assessment, or both. Regardless, the consistency of the results indicates that BE program staff should examine

the alignment between the TELPAS assessment and the writing curriculum to determine if program changes are warranted.

Figure 9. Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System Ratings, by Language Domain and Grade Level, Spring 2009



Source. AISD 2009 TELPAS records

Ninth-grade ELLs consistently scored lower, on average, than did other secondary students on all sections of the TELPAS. This pattern can be explained, in part, by the tendency for struggling high school students to be retained in 9th grade because they have not earned enough credits to be promoted to 10th grade (Malerba, 2009). In 2008–2009, ELL students' language proficiency was associated with retention in 9th grade. As shown in Table 6, 39% of 9th-grade ELLs with beginning or intermediate TELPAS composite scores had been retained in 9th grade from 2007–2008, in comparison with 22% of ELLs with advanced or advanced high TELPAS composite scores who were retained, and 15% of 9th graders overall who were retained. It is interesting to note that exited ELLs had the lowest rates of 9th-grade retention (9%) of all the groups examined, including students who were never ELLs (11%).

These patterns indicate that 9th-grade ELLs with beginning or intermediate English language skills are the students most at risk of retention and most in need of specialized support to ensure they make adequate progress in school. Of the 281 ELL 9th graders with beginning or

intermediate TELPAS composite scores who finished the 2008–2009 school year in AISD, 43% were enrolled in International High School, 19% were enrolled at Lanier High School, and the remaining 38% were enrolled on other campuses (results not shown).

Across all high school campuses, 60% of 9th-grade ELL students with beginning or intermediate English language proficiency were promoted to 10th grade for the 2009–2010 school year (results not shown). Of the campuses with the largest concentration of these students, International High School had a slightly higher than average 10th-grade promotion rate of 66% (results not shown). This suggests that best practices may be in place at International High School, including the Quality Teaching for English Learners (QTEL) professional development program (Gossman, 2009), that could be shared with other campuses to ensure that as many 9th-grade beginning and intermediate English speakers as possible earn the credits they need to stay on track for graduation.

Table 6. First-Time and Retained 9th-Grade Students, by English Language Learner (ELL) Status, 2008–2009

Student group	First-time 9 th graders in 2008–2009	Repeating 9 th grade in 2008–2009	Total number of 9 th graders in 2008–2009
Non-ELLs	3,674 (89%)	479 (11%)	4,153
Exited ELLs	692 (91%)	68 (9%)	760
ELLs	736 (70%)	321 (30%)	1,057
Total of all 9th graders	5,102 (86%)	868 (15%)	5,970
ELLs with advanced or advanced high Texas Assessment of English Language Proficiency (TELPAS scores)*	491 (78%)	136 (22%)	627
ELLs with beginning or intermediate TELPAS scores*	172 (61%)	109 (39%)	281
Total ELLs with valid TELPAS scores*	663 (73%)	245 (27%)	908

Source. AISD Department of Program Evaluation, 9th graders at risk of dropout dataset, 2008–2009

* Only ELL students with valid, non-missing TELPAS scores are included in these rows. Other rows comprise the frequencies for all 9th-grade students enrolled on the last day of the 2008–2009 school year.

LONGITUDINAL PATTERNS OF ELL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, PROGRAM EXIT, ENROLLMENT, AND GRADUATION FROM 2005–2006 THROUGH 2008–2009

This section of the report provides an overview of the district's progress in closing the achievement gap between ELLs and other students and provides a baseline for monitoring district progress toward meeting the goals of the AISD's Strategic Plan during the 2010–2011 through 2014–2015 school years. This section also provides a longitudinal overview of several key student enrollment indicators that consistently have been associated with students making progress in school.

Although LEP has been associated with increased risk of student dropout, previous district analyses have shown that students who pass the TAKS, attend school regularly, and remain on the same campus throughout the school year are significantly less likely to drop out and are significantly more likely to graduate from high school than are students with lower academic achievement, lower attendance, and higher mobility (Brunner & Malerba, under review). Previous district analyses also showed that ELLs who become English proficient and meet the other criteria to exit BE and ESL programs by the end of 6th grade go on to do at least as well as native English speakers on TAKS (Herrera & Malerba, 2009).

ELLs' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT ON TAKS

This section summarizes the percentage point differences in TAKS passing rates by grade level and TAKS subject area for the 2005–2006 through 2008–2009 school years. In each case, tables show ELL passing percentages that are cumulative through the second administration of TAKS and that are combined across English and Spanish test versions. These tables do not represent the longitudinal achievement of individual students over time; rather, they represent the cross-sectional performance of ELLs within the grade levels and school years indicated (see Technical Note B3 for more details about the sample). Appendix Tables A1 through A4 summarize the numbers of ELL students who took the TAKS, across all subject areas for 2005–2006 through 2008–2009.

Math

At most grade levels, percentage point gains showed the district's progress toward improving the academic achievement of ELLs in math. Elementary level ELLs consistently had the highest passing rates among the grade levels in 2005–2006 and have maintained or increased those passing rates over time. Middle school ELLs had some of the largest passing rate increases over this time period compared to students at other grade levels; however, both middle and high school ELL overall passing percentages continued to lag behind those of elementary ELL students, particularly at 9th and 10th grade.

The decrease in math passing rates for 11th-grade ELLs is noteworthy both because it does not mirror the otherwise positive trends in math achievement and because passing the 11th-grade exit-level TAKS is an important criterion for graduation (Table 7). However, this result should be interpreted with caution because many more students were tested in 2008–2009 ($n = 384$) than in 2005–2006 ($n = 128$). This 200% increase in the number of 11th graders taking the TAKS test in math suggests that significant changes occurred in the high school ELL population over this time period.

Table 7. Longitudinal Math Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners' (ELLs), 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009

Grade level	Percentage passing math TAKS				Percentage point change between 2005–2006 and 2008–2009
	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	
3	60%	65%	73%	75%	+ 16
4	56%	67%	68%	71%	+ 15
5	76%	67%	72%	76%	0
6	36%	40%	53%	53%	+ 17
7	22%	35%	40%	48%	+ 26
8	15%	22%	59%	63%	+ 48
9	9%	14%	20%	27%	+ 18
10	17%	16%	19%	29%	+ 12
11	53%	37%	33%	38%	- 16
12	41%	27%	47%	46%	+ 5

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables as of June 30, 2009

Note. Percentages represent students' final TAKS scores and are combined across English and Spanish versions of the tests in grades 3 through 6.

Reading/ELA

At most grade levels, the percentage point gains showed the district's progress toward improving the academic achievement of ELLs in reading/ELA. Elementary level ELLs had the highest passing rates compared to students at other grade levels in 2005–2006 and have maintained or increased those rates over time. Middle school ELLs showed some of the largest passing rate increases compared to students at other grade levels, particularly at 8th grade; the 60

percentage point gain for 8th-grade ELLs taking the reading TAKS was the largest percentage point gain across all grade levels and TAKS subjects (Table 8).

Table 8. Longitudinal Reading/English Language Arts (ELA) Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners' (ELLs), 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009

Grade level	Percentage passing reading/ELA TAKS				Percentage point change from 2005–2006 to 2008–2009
	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	2008–2009
3	91%	85%	91%	91%	+ 0
4	53%	66%	61%	66%	+ 13
5	66%	64%	77%	76%	+ 10
6	39%	55%	65%	59%	+ 20
7	11%	32%	39%	40%	+ 29
8	17%	43%	71%	78%	+ 60
9	25%	34%	38%	46%	+ 21
10	19%	27%	38%	47%	+ 28
11	50%	29%	45%	55%	+4
12	35%	30%	57%	57%	+ 22

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables as of June 30, 2009

Note. Percentages represent students final TAKS scores and are combined across English and Spanish versions of the tests in grades 3 through 6.

Science

At most grade levels, the percentage point gains showed the district's progress toward improving the academic achievement of ELLs in science. The science TAKS passing rates increased between the 2005–2006 and 2008–2009 school years across all grade levels, except at 11th grade, which had a slight decline over time. Although passing rates increased for all grade-level groups, science TAKS passing rates were quite low compared with the rates for other subject areas, particularly at 8th and 10th grades (Table 9).

Table 9. Longitudinal Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Science Passing Rates for English Language Learners' (ELLs), 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009

Percentage passing science TAKS					
Grade level	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	Percentage point change from 2005–2006 to 2008–2009
5	27%	33%	43%	52%	+ 25
8	15%	13%	19%	30%	+ 14
10	9%	8%	14%	21%	+ 12
11	45%	24%	31%	43%	- 2
12	34%	36%	45%	50%	+ 17

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables as of June 30, 2009

Note. Percentages represent students final TAKS scores and are combined across English and Spanish versions of the test at 5th grade.

Social Studies

Social studies TAKS passing rates for ELLs increased between the 2005–2006 and 2008–2009 school years across all grade levels; the largest gains were at 8th, 10th, and 12th grades. The high passing rates among 11th graders were maintained and improved slightly over the same period (Table 10).

Table 10. Longitudinal Social Studies Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners' (ELLs), 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009

Percentage passing social studies TAKS					
Grade level	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	Percentage point change from 2005–2006 to 2008–2009
8	32%	37%	54%	59%	+ 27
10	30%	34%	48%	58%	+ 28
11	80%	56%	66%	83%	+ 3
12	51%	35%	65%	74%	+ 23

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables, June 30, 2009

Note. Percentages represent students' final TAKS scores.

Writing

ELLs' writing TAKS passing rates improved substantially among 7th-grade ELLs between the 2005–2006 and 2008–2009 school years. The gains at 4th grade were more modest; however, the writing TAKS passing rates were the highest across all subject area tests given at 4th grade in 2005–2006, and the passing percentages improved slightly over this time period (Table 11).

Table 11. Longitudinal Writing Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Passing Rates for English Language Learners' (ELLs), 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009

Grade level	Percentage passing writing TAKS				Percentage point change from 2005–2006 to 2008–2009
	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	2008–2009
4	79%	85%	84%	82%	+ 3
7	41%	56%	51%	61%	+ 20

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables as of June 30, 2009

Note. Passing percentages represent students' final TAKS scores and are combined across English and Spanish versions of the test at 4th grade.

BE AND ESL PROGRAM EXIT

As described earlier in the report, multiple criteria must be met by students exiting BE and ESL programs, including students' demonstration of reading, writing, and oral English language proficiency; grade-level academic achievement, as measured by TAKS; and the agreement of the campus LPAC and the student's parent(s) that the student will be successful in English-only classrooms without specialized program supports.

Although the process and timing of exit from BE and ESL programs is highly individualized, some broad patterns emerged from the examination of student exit patterns across the 2005–2006 through 2008–2009 school years. As shown in Table 12, at least half of the students who exited BE and ESL each year did so between 4th and 6th grade, and very few students exited before 4th grade—until the 2008–2009 school year, when 14% of exits occurred among 3rd graders. This pattern can be explained in part by the district's late transition model, the goal of which is to have students performing on grade level in English by the end of 5th grade, after approximately 5 to 7 years in the BE and ESL programs (i.e., program participation from Pre-K or kindergarten through 5th grade).

Table 12. Students Exiting Bilingual and English as a Second Language Programs, by Grade Level, 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009

Number and percentage of students exiting BE/ESL programs				
Grade level	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009
1	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (< 1%)
2	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	3 (< 1%)
3	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (2%)	260 (14%)
4	156 (14%)	277 (26%)	27 (12%)	490 (26%)
5	228 (20%)	153 (15%)	83 (36%)	348 (18%)
6	180 (16%)	172 (16%)	38 (16%)	229 (12%)
7	188 (17%)	107 (10%)	17 (7%)	212 (11%)
8	65 (6%)	64 (6%)	19 (8%)	160 (8%)
9	96 (8%)	109 (10%)	27 (12%)	65 (3%)
10	88 (8%)	68 (6%)	8 (3%)	57 (3%)
11	29 (3%)	41 (4%)	5 (2%)	48 (3%)
12	109 (10%)	56 (5%)	0 (0%)	14 (1%)
Total	1,139 (100%)	1,047 (100%)	231 (100%)	1,887 (100%)

Source. AISD Department of Management Information Systems (MIS) records

Note. District staff began using the Language Proficiency Assessment System (LPAS) database for the first time in 2007–2008. During that school year, delays occurred in the recording of data about ELLs, including dates of student exit from bilingual education programs. As a result, fewer exits than expected were recorded in 2007–2008, and more exits were recorded in 2008–2009 as staff learned to use the LPAS system.

Of course, not all of the district’s ELL students were enrolled in AISD for Pre-K or kindergarten, and many may not have been in the program long enough to have received all of the supports they required for successful exit into English-only classes by the end of 5th grade. However, previous analyses showed that among all students who exited by the end of the 2007–2008 school year, approximately 25% of students who enrolled in the district in elementary school did not exit BE and ESL until 7th grade or later. These “extended program” participants were less academically successful than were students who exited by the end of 6th grade (Herrera & Malerba, 2009). These findings and the entry and exit patterns described above suggest that district staff should (a) closely monitor student BE and ESL entry and exit patterns each year and (b) develop an early warning system to ensure that as many 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students as

possible are on track with regard to being proficient in English and on grade level in the core subject areas by the end of 5th grade.

ATTENDANCE AND MOBILITY

Previous district analyses showed statistically significant associations between high attendance rates, low mobility rates, and students' success in school regardless of ELL status (Brunner & Malerba, under review); however, very few district analyses directly examined differences in student attendance and mobility for ELL students in comparison with non-ELL students. This report examines the longitudinal attendance rates and mobility patterns for ELLs and non-ELLs across the 2005–2006 through 2008–2009 school years to determine if statistically significant enrollment patterns occurred across the two groups.

Attendance

Between 2005–2006 and 2008–2009, elementary ELL students had significantly higher attendance rates than did other students at the same grade level. No difference was found between the attendance rates of ELL and non-ELL middle schoolers, and high school ELLs had consistently lower attendance rates than did other students at the same level. Over this time period, the attendance rates for all groups showed very little change (Table 13).

Table 13. Longitudinal Attendance Rates, by English Language Learner (ELL) Status, 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009

Grade level	Average attendance rates				Change from 2005–2006 to 2008–2009
	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	
Elementary all others	95.0% ↓	95.1% ↓	95.2% ↓	95.3% ↓	-0.3%
Elementary ELLs	96.5% ↑	96.7% ↑	96.7% ↑	96.8% ↑	-0.3%
Middle school all others	93.7%	94.0%	93.8%	94.2%	-0.3%
Middle school ELLs	93.9%	94.0%	94.3%	94.6%	-0.7%
High school all others	88.5% ↑	88.5% ↑	88.6% ↑	88.4% ↑	-0.1%
High school ELLs	85.2% ↓	85.9% ↓	84.3% ↓	84.4% ↓	-0.8%

Source. PEIMS 400 records for students in all grades Early Education through 12th grade

Note. If a student was marked as limited English proficient (LEP) and not LEP within the same school year, the student was counted as an ELL. Attendance rate calculations included daily attendance on any campus, including disciplinary campuses.

↑ Arrows indicate statistically significant differences between ELLs and all other students at the same grade level within the same school year, using the z test of proportions.

Elementary and middle school ELLs and non-ELLs, on average, had attendance rates well over 90%, and the differences between the two groups, although statistically significant, were minimal. This suggests no cause for concern about ELL attendance rates at these grade levels; however, low attendance rates for individual students, regardless of their ELL status, should be monitored and addressed, as needed. Attendance rates for high school ELLs were significantly lower than for non-ELLs, which is a cause for concern. Previous district analyses showed a strong association between low attendance rates, low academic achievement, and an increased likelihood of dropping out of school (Malerba, 2009); these longitudinal attendance patterns suggest district staff should do more to monitor and encourage regular attendance among all high school students, particularly ELLs.

Mobility

One way to measure student mobility is to look at intra-district mobility (i.e., the number of students who attend more than one regular [non-disciplinary] campus during a given school year). As shown in Table 14, across the 2005–2006 through 2008–2009 school years, no difference was found in intra-district mobility between elementary ELLs and non-ELLs. In

school years 2007–2008 and 2008–2009, middle school ELLs were more likely to be enrolled on more than one regular campus during the year than were other students at the same level. High school ELLs had higher levels of intra-district mobility than did other students each year, except 2007–2008. Over the 4-year period, intra-district mobility declined slightly for all groups at all levels (Table 14).

Table 14. Longitudinal Intra-district Mobility Rates by English Language Learner (ELL) Status, 2005–2006 Through 2008–2009

Grade level	Percentage of students attending more than one non-disciplinary campus during the school year				Change from 2005–2006 to 2008–2009
	2005–2006	2006–2007	2007–2008	2008–2009	
Elementary all others	6.3%	5.9%	4.8%	4.9%	-1.4%
Elementary ELLs	6.4%	5.8%	4.9%	5.1%	-1.3%
Middle school all others	4.7%	4.0%	3.7% ↓	3.3% ↓	-1.4%
Middle school ELLs	4.9%	4.6%	4.8% ↑	4.3% ↑	-0.6%
High school all others	3.9% ↓	4.2% ↓	3.3%	3.0% ↓	-1.0%
High school ELLs	5.6% ↑	5.7% ↑	3.5%	4.7% ↑	-0.09%

Source. PEIMS 400 records for students in all grades Early Education through 12th grade

Note. If a student was marked as limited English proficient (LEP) and not LEP within the same school year, the student was counted as an ELL.

↑ Arrows indicate statistically significant differences between ELLs and all other students at the same grade level within the same school year, using the *z* test of proportions.

Overall, elementary and middle school ELLs appeared to have similar intra-district mobility rates when compared with non-ELL students; however, recent trends among middle school students should be monitored closely because attending more than one campus during the school year has been associated with academic failure and later dropout among 8th graders (Brunner & Malerba, under review).

High school ELLs consistently were more likely to attend more than one regular campus than were non-ELLs, with the exception of 2007–2008, when their intra-district mobility rates did not differ from those of non-ELLs. Intra-district mobility could present serious challenges for high school ELLs if it is associated with missed time in the classroom, different curriculum

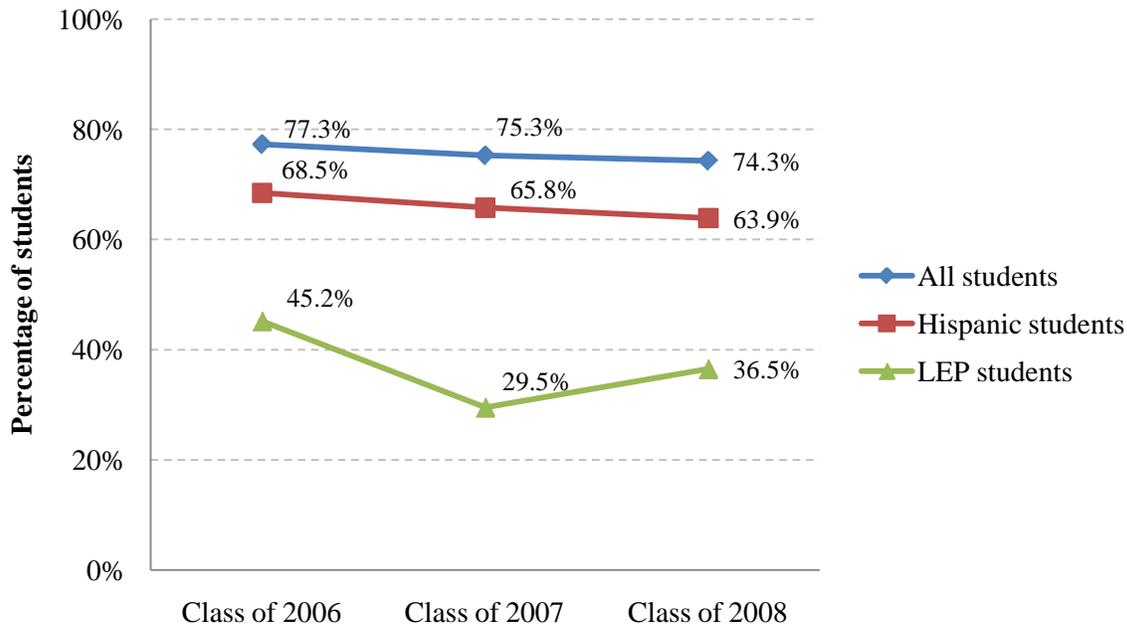
spacing, or the use of different ESL program strategies between campuses; however, this hypothesis has not been tested directly. Further analyses should actively explore the impact of student mobility on making progress toward English language proficiency and grade level academic achievement. If a direct link between mobility and student achievement can be established, it would allow district staff to make informed recommendations to students and parents before they make decisions about switching schools in the middle of the year.

GRADUATION AND DROPOUT RATES

Each year, the TEA calculates several measures of students' progress in school. Definitions for graduation, completion, and dropout have been in place since the 2005–2006 school year. Graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of graduates by the sum of graduates, continuers, General Educational Development (GED) certificate recipients, and dropouts from a particular 9th-grade cohort. Completion rate is calculated by dividing the number of students from a class of beginning ninth graders who complete their high school education by their anticipated graduation date or continue in high school in the fall after graduation was expected by the sum of graduates, continuers, GED certificate recipients, and dropouts from a particular 9th-grade cohort (TEA, 2009b)

Figure 10 displays the graduation rates for all students, Hispanic students, and students who were classified as LEP in their 9th-grade year, for the last three graduating classes for which data were available (i.e., the classes of 2006, 2007, and 2008). ELL students had much lower graduation rates than did AISD students overall and Hispanic students overall. LEP completion rates (i.e., the sum of graduates and students who continue school) were somewhat higher than LEP graduation rates (i.e., 69.9% in 2005, 64.0% in 2006, and 66.5% in 2007; results not shown). However, both graduation rates and LEP completion rates indicate that high-school-level ELLs did not receive the level of academic and language support they needed to successfully finish school with the rest of their graduating class.

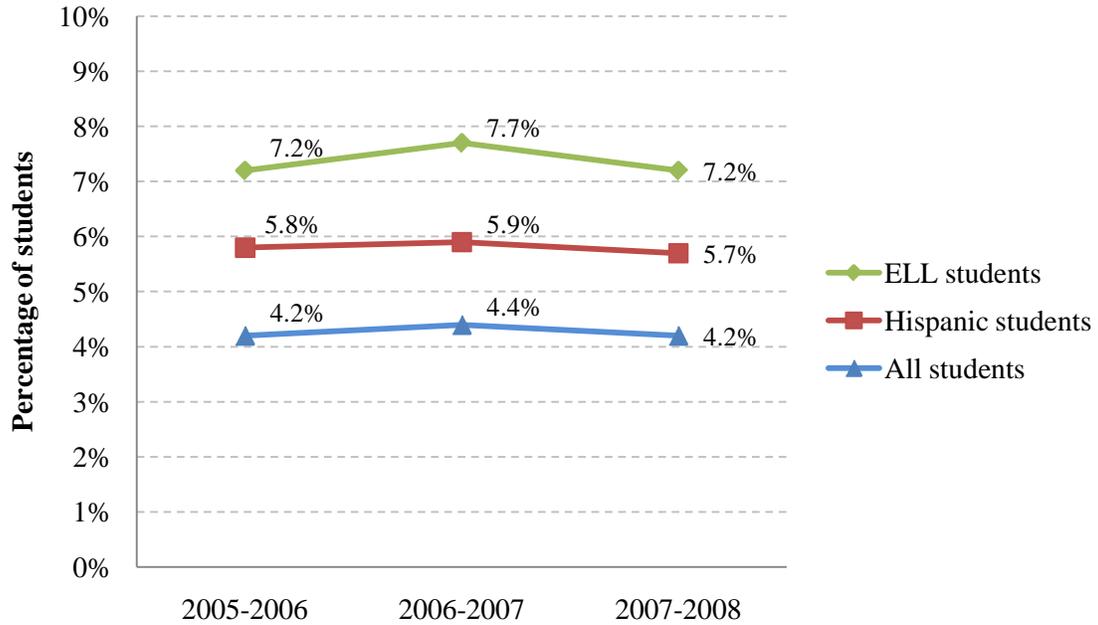
Figure 10. Graduation Rates, by Graduating Class and Student Group



Source. Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2007–2009

Note. These students groups are not mutually exclusive.

TEA also calculates dropout rates for every school district in the state each year. The definition of annual dropout rate is as follows: “The percentage of students in a specified grade range who drop out of school during one school year” (TEA, 2009b). Figure 11 displays the annual dropout rates for all students, Hispanic students, and students who were classified as ELLs during the specified school year. On average, ELLs had higher annual dropout rates than did AISD students overall and Hispanic students overall.

Figure 11. Annual Dropout Rates for 9th Through 12th Graders

Source. Source. Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2007–2009

Note. These students groups are not mutually exclusive.

CONCLUSIONS

From 2005–2006 through 2008–2009, the number and proportion of ELLs in AISD have grown substantially. Meeting the linguistic and educational needs of ELLs is a high priority for the district; the Strategic Plan goals focus on raising the academic performance of ELLs and eliminating the achievement gap between ELLs and other student groups (AISD, 2009).

In recent years, BE and ESL programs have increased the academic achievement and language proficiency of ELLs; passing rates across most grade levels and TAKS subjects have improved, and in 2008–2009, district ELLs showed more than the state-required progress in becoming proficient in English. Acquiring English as a second language while also learning academic content is not an easy feat, and recognition should be given to the district BE and ESL staff who strive to provide the instructional, academic, and linguistic support ELLs require. The improvement in ELLs' TAKS passing rates and the annual increase in the English proficiency of ELLs are even more remarkable when one considers the low costs of the program. As shown in the Program Funding section of this report, AISD spent \$202 per ELL student in 2008–2009 in supplemental grant and district funds, a small percentage of the average cost of \$9,062 per student, according to Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports provided by TEA for 2008–2009 (TEA, 2009c).

Despite recent gains in the academic progress of ELLs, large gaps remain between the percentages of ELLs who passed TAKS and the percentages of all other students who passed. The gaps in academic achievement, along with the higher dropout rates of ELLs compared with rates of other students, are critical issues that must be addressed by the district as a whole and by BE and ESL staff in particular. Future program evaluation efforts can inform this work and help determine how the BE and ESL programs should change to better meet the needs of ELLs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The district's BE and ESL programs appear to be helping most ELLs become proficient in English and learn core academic content. However, many ELLs, especially newcomer and long-term ELLs at the secondary level, are struggling academically and are at a higher risk for dropout than are other students. Based on the present summary report, the Department of Program Evaluation (DPE) recommends the following.

Integrated program evaluations. District leaders are aware of the unsatisfactory achievement of secondary ELLs and have initiated several programs targeted to meet the needs of newcomer and long-term ELLs through the ELDA program and at International High School, and through the implementation of various professional development strategies (e.g., Quality Teaching for English Language Learners [QTTEL], ESL middle school teacher leader training, and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol [SIOP] training). Although some of these

programs have been evaluated (e.g., QTEL) and others will be evaluated at the end of the 2009–2010 school year (e.g., ESL teacher leader program), no plans have been made for an *integrated* evaluation of all secondary ELL initiatives.

ESL cost-effectiveness analyses. As part of the recommended integrated secondary ESL program evaluation, it is recommended that district staff conduct cost-effectiveness analyses to determine which of the various programs and initiatives designed to serve long-term and newcomer ELLs are the most cost-effective means of increasing secondary ELL student achievement.

Close monitoring of elementary ELL student progress. Because students who do not exit BE and ESL before the end elementary school are less likely to make strong academic progress in secondary school than are students who do exit early, it is recommended that district staff develop an early warning system to ensure that as many 3rd-, 4th-, and 5th-grade ELL students as possible are on track with regard to being proficient in English and performing on grade level in the core subject areas by the end of 5th grade.

Close monitoring of ELL attendance and intra-district mobility. Because low attendance rates have been associated with lower academic achievement (Malerba, 2009) and because high school ELLs have lower average rates of attendance and higher intra-district mobility than do other students, it is recommended that ELLs' attendance and mobility be closely monitored to ensure that students consistently attend school.

Continued emphasis on early education. Although further exploration is warranted, evidence suggests ELLs who entered the district in the early grades (e.g., Pre-K and kindergarten) exited BE and ESL programs before secondary school and went on to perform as well as or better than non-ELLs on TAKS in 2008–2009 (Herrera & Malerba, 2009). Therefore, it is recommended that district staff continue to emphasize the importance of early education for ELLs and to encourage as many ELLs as possible to enroll in Pre-K and kindergarten.

Continued emphasis on ELL family engagement. The early successes of the ePromotoras™ program (Herrera, 2010) suggest meaningful ways exist to engage parents in the district's mission to maximize the school readiness and academic potential of every student. District staff should continue to find new ways to engage ELLs' families and to expand effective parent engagement models.

FUTURE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DIRECTIONS

Future research and evaluation planning should be based on frequent interactions between DPE staff and BE and ESL staff so that research questions and hypotheses directly correspond to the information and planning requirements of program staff. Although summative

reports such as this one are valuable, they do not provide a better understanding about the impact specific program features (e.g., specific curricular features) have had on student outcomes.

Dependant on funding, it is highly recommended that future evaluations examine as many of the following as possible: (a) the content of the district's BE and ESL curricula and the fidelity of implementation at the campus and classroom level; (b) direct comparisons of student engagement, language development, and progress in the BE, ESL, and dual language programs; (c) the associations between professional development opportunities, teacher classroom behavior, and student outcomes; and (d) the association between student mobility and attendance and student progress toward English language proficiency and grade level academic achievement.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. STATE REQUIRED ASSESSMENT

Table A1. Number of English Language Learners (ELLs) Who Took the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level and Subject Area, 2005–2006

Grade level	Subject area				
	Reading/English		Social studies	Science	Writing
	Math	language arts			
3	1,655	1,615	-	-	-
4	970	953	-	-	931
5	862	846	-	855	-
6	478	474	-	-	-
7	494	481	-	-	473
8	513	515	514	516	-
9	563	529	-	-	-
10	298	287	288	294	-
11	128	115	148	125	-
12	54	85	45	77	-

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables as of the second administration of TAKS, Spring 2006

Note. A dash indicates that the subject was not tested at that grade level.

Table A2. Number of English Language Learners (ELLs) Who Took the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level and Subject Area, 2006–2007

Grade level	Subject area				
	Math	Reading/English language arts	Social studies	Science	Writing
3	1,973	1,943	-	-	-
4	1,472	1,436	-	-	1,404
5	967	928	-	907	-
6	735	723	-	-	-
7	492	490	-	-	481
8	524	520	512	517	-
9	661	631	-	-	-
10	376	358	338	351	-
11	283	292	283	286	-
12	90	81	48	100	-

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables as of the second administration of TAKS, Spring 2007

Note. A dash indicates that the subject was not tested at that grade level.

Table A3. Number of English Language Learners (ELLs) Who Took the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level and Subject Area, 2007–2008

Grade level	Subject area				
	Math	Reading/English language arts	Social studies	Science	Writing
3	2,076	2,086	-	-	-
4	1,567	1,561	-	-	1,549
5	1,210	1,211	-	1,199	-
6	793	783	-	-	-
7	633	632	-	-	620
8	465	482	438	442	-
9	729	721	-	-	-
10	382	391	378	379	-
11	333	336	322	331	-
12	169	179	105	188	-

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables as of the second administration of TAKS, Spring 2008

Note. A dash indicates that the subject was not tested at that grade level.

Table A4. Number of English Language Learners (ELLs) Who Took the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), by Grade Level and Subject Area, 2008–2009

Grade level	Subject area				
	Math	Reading/English language arts	Social Studies	Science	Writing
3	2,212	2,219	-	-	-
4	1,644	1,631	-	-	1,540
5	1,291	1,295	-	1,283	-
6	991	985	-	-	-
7	762	754	-	-	652
8	694	687	562	662	-
9	584	612	-	-	-
10	499	500	437	487	-
11	384	387	380	382	-
12	207	170	118	224	-

Source. AISD Office of Accountability TAKS summary tables as of the second administration of TAKS, Spring 2009

Note. A dash indicates that the subject was not tested at that grade level.

APPENDIX B: TECHNICAL NOTES

B1. Although the majority of district ELLs likely are U.S. citizens, the percentage of AISD students listed as immigrants (13%) is somewhat of an underestimate of the percentage of students who are foreign born because of the way immigrant status is recorded in PEIMS and because that status can change during the course of a student's enrollment. Consistent with the definition of "immigrant" in Title III of NCLB (2001), TEA uses the following definition for immigrant children and youth:

Individuals who are aged 3 through 21; were not born in any state; and have not been attending one or more schools in any one or more states for more than 3 full academic years. The term 'State' means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. (P.L. 107-110 Title III, Part C, § 3301[6]).

After attending AISD for 3 full school years, a student who has been classified as an immigrant (coded as 1 in PEIMS) will be coded as a non-immigrant (coded as 0).

B2. The dual language program in AISD will begin in the 2010–2011 school year. Ten elementary campuses will participate. Six campuses (i.e., Sanchez, Ortega, Dawson, Blazier, Pickle, and Winn) will offer a one-way dual language program for children in Pre-K and kindergarten. Three schools (i.e., Perez, Ridgetop, and Wooten) will offer a two-way dual language program for students in kindergarten and 1st grade. And one school (i.e., Becker) will offer two-way dual language in Pre-K, kindergarten, and 1st grade. All of the dual language programs will follow the late transitional model (e.g., program exit at 5th grade). The one-way program is designed to assist Spanish-speaking ELLs in becoming bilingual and biliterate, and the two-way program is designed to assist both Spanish- and English-speaking students in becoming bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural in two languages.

B3. The TAKS passing rates for ELLs, in comparison with those for all other students, within the 2008–2009 school year, and the 2008–2009 TAKS passing rates presented in the longitudinal section of this report differ slightly because they are from different data sources.

- Passing percentages from the 2008–2009 school year for ELLs who tested in English and Spanish and for students overall are from AEIS reports provided by TEA through the first administration of TAKS in Spring 2009.
- AISD Office of Accountability prepared the TAKS summary files, as referenced in the longitudinal section of the report, after the second TAKS administration in each spring, from 2006 through 2009. The Accountability tables include TAKS scores from

students who took the TAKS A (Accommodated), which is a version of the TAKS designed for general education students with special needs, and ELL students who took the Linguistically Accommodated Testing (LAT) version of TAKS.

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