

# Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)

## Spring 2016 Results

### Background

The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) is used annually in Texas public schools by teachers to assess English language learners (ELL) in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. It measures students' English language acquisition in four domains (listening, speaking, writing, and reading) and yields an overall composite rating. Teachers who rate ELLs on TELPAS must be trained and certified annually. TELPAS results show ELLs' performance levels at beginning, intermediate, advanced, or advanced high, with the goal of having all ELLs reach the advanced high level as they progress through school. TELPAS was created to meet federal assessment requirements and is part of the Texas Administrative Code. TELPAS is aligned with the state's English language proficiency standards (ELPS), a part of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills curriculum.

TELPAS results are used to help parents monitor the progress their children are making in learning English; to inform instructional planning and programming decisions made by school staff for students; to report student performance; to evaluate programs, resources, and staffing; and to evaluate district and campus accountability. For more information on TELPAS, see <http://tea.texas.gov/student.assessment/ell/telpas/>.

This report summarizes TELPAS Spring 2016 results for the Austin Independent School District (AISD), with more than 20,000 ELLs tested.

### TELPAS Composite Ratings

A composite TELPAS rating is given to an ELL when he or she has scored on all four portions of the test. Each of the four domains is weighted as follows to determine the composite rating: 10% speaking, 10% listening, 50% reading, and 30% writing. The 2016 overall composite TELPAS ratings for all AISD ELLs at each grade level are shown in Figure 1. The percentages of ELLs attaining advanced or advanced high ratings were greatest at grades 5, 11, and 12.

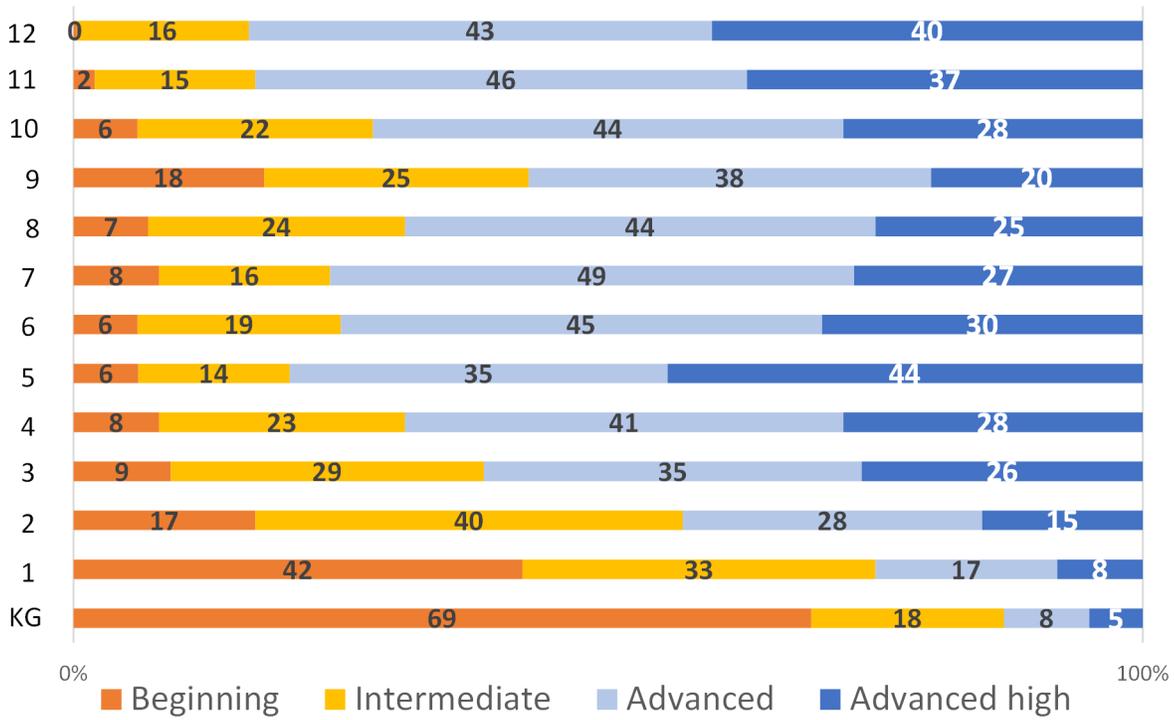
### TELPAS Yearly Progress

Figure 2 shows the percentages of ELLs at each grade level who made yearly progress on TELPAS. Yearly progress indicates whether an ELL increased one or more performance levels from the prior year to the current year. Thus, it requires two consecutive years of test data. AISD 5<sup>th</sup> graders had the greatest percentage who made yearly progress (64%), followed by 2<sup>nd</sup> (56%) and 3<sup>rd</sup> (53%) graders.



Figure 1.

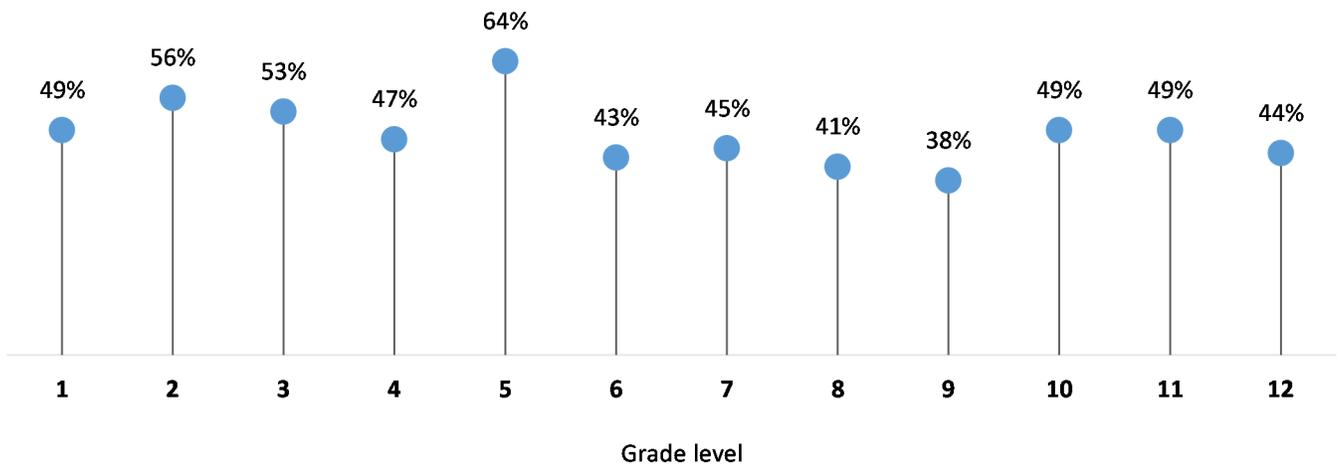
**Percentages of ELLs at Each Grade Level, by TELPAS 2016 Composite Rating**



Source. AISD TELPAS 2016 records

Figure 2.

**Percentages of ELLs at Each Grade Level Who Made One or More Levels of Annual Progress on TELPAS 2016**



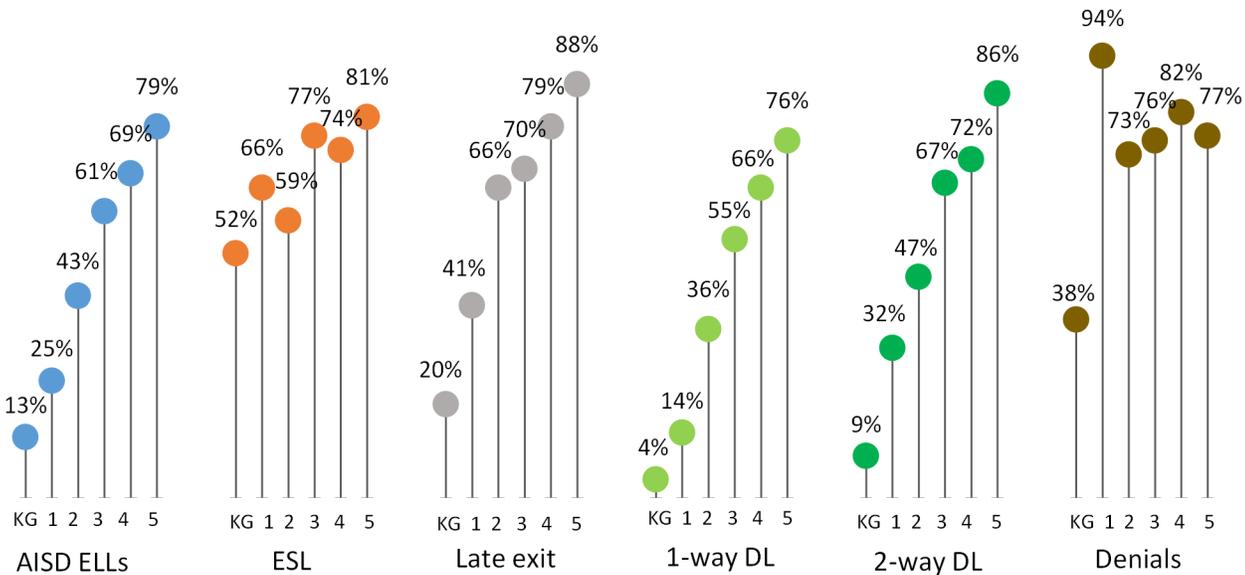
Source. AISD TELPAS 2016 records

## TELPAS Performance for Each Language Program, Kindergarten Through Grade 6

Figure 3 shows percentages of elementary ELLs in kindergarten through grade 5 in each type of language program who had either an advanced or advanced high composite TELPAS rating in 2016. With a few exceptions, greater percentages of ELLs had advanced or advanced high ratings at higher grade levels than at lower grade levels. ELLs in English as a second language (ESL) had greater percentages starting at kindergarten, and these results were consistent for students in ESL who received all English instruction with sheltered instructional support in their first language. ELLs in bilingual programs (i.e., late exit, one-way dual language [DL], two-way DL) tended to have smaller percentages at lower grade levels attaining advanced or advanced high ratings, but by upper elementary grade levels, they tended to have percentages similar to those in ESL programs. ELLs whose parents denied bilingual or ESL program services had mixed but generally high percentages of advanced or advanced high ratings across grade levels starting at grade 1. However, the number of ELL denials in kindergarten through grade 5 ( $n = 163$ ) was small compared with the numbers of ELLs in language programs in the same grade level range (ESL  $n = 2,142$ ; late exit  $n = 1,103$ ; one-way DL  $n = 9,473$ ; two-way DL  $n = 1,328$ ).

Figure 3.

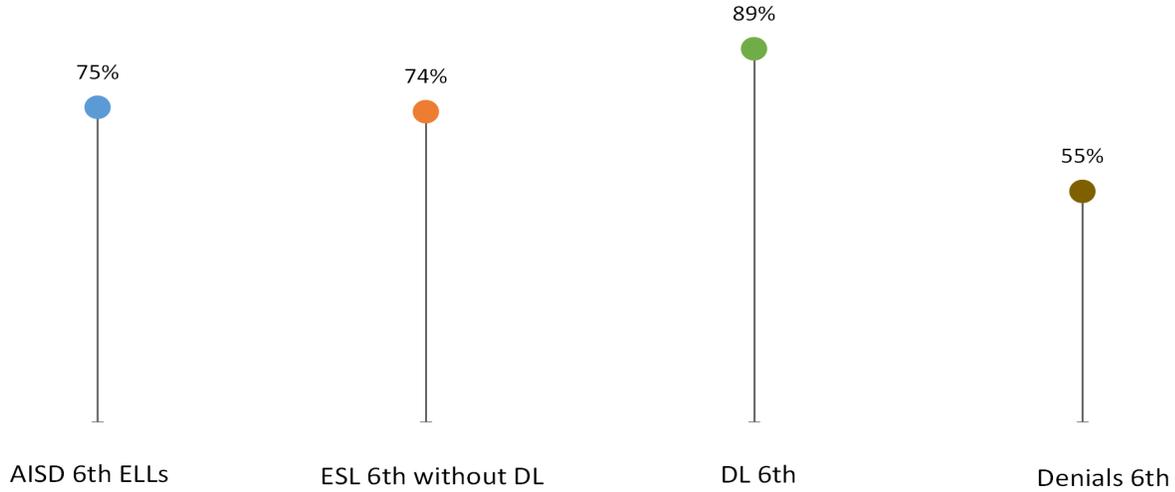
### Percentages of AISD ELLs With Advanced or Advanced High Composite TELPAS 2016 Ratings, by Language Program and Grade Level



Source. AISD TELPAS 2016 records

Figure 4 shows the percentages of 6<sup>th</sup>-grade ELLs who had advanced or advanced high composite TELPAS ratings in each language program. For the first time in the 2015–2016 school year, some 6<sup>th</sup> grade ELLs participated in middle school DL with an ESL program code and also were assigned a district program code of DL. When DL students were excluded from ESL ( $n = 1,201$ ), 74% had advanced or advanced high composite ratings. When DL students were analyzed separately from other ESL students ( $n = 75$ ), 89% had advanced or advanced high composite ratings, showing a greater percentage of these students attained high English proficiency levels. Sixth graders whose parents denied program services ( $n = 42$ ) had the smallest percentage (55%) attaining advanced or advanced high TELPAS composite ratings.

**Figure 4**  
**Percentages of 6<sup>th</sup>-Grade ELLs With TELPAS 2016 Advanced or Advanced High Composite Ratings, by Program**

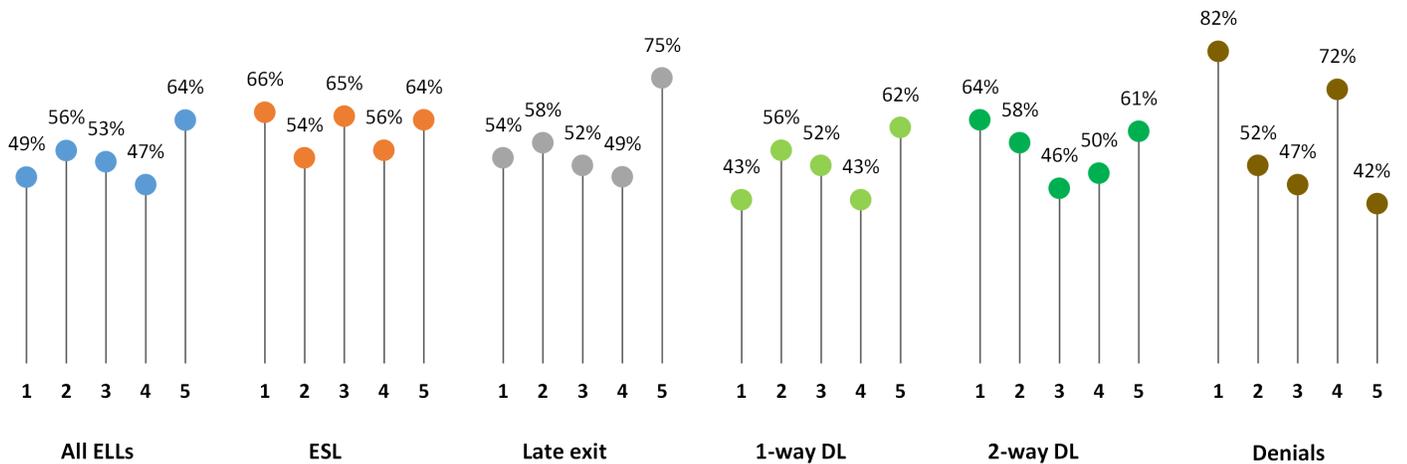


Source. AISD TELPAS 2016 records

**TELPAS Yearly Progress Results for Each Language Program in Elementary Grades**

Figure 5 shows percentages of elementary ELLs in each language program who showed growth of one or more TELPAS performance levels from last year to this year. Results were mixed, with some programs and grade levels showing smaller percentages of ELLs making yearly growth. For example, among ESL ( $n = 1,551$ ) and denial ( $n = 139$ ) ELLs, the greatest percentages of students made progress from kindergarten to 1<sup>st</sup> grade (66% and 82%, respectively); however, among late exit ELLs ( $n = 907$ ), the greatest percentage of ELLs made progress from 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade (75%). ELLs in one-way ( $n = 7,467$ ) and two-way ( $n = 1,095$ ) DL also had varying results, with the greatest percentage of one-way DL ELLs showing growth from 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade (62%), and the greatest percentage of two-way DL ELLs showing growth from kindergarten to 1<sup>st</sup> grade (64%).

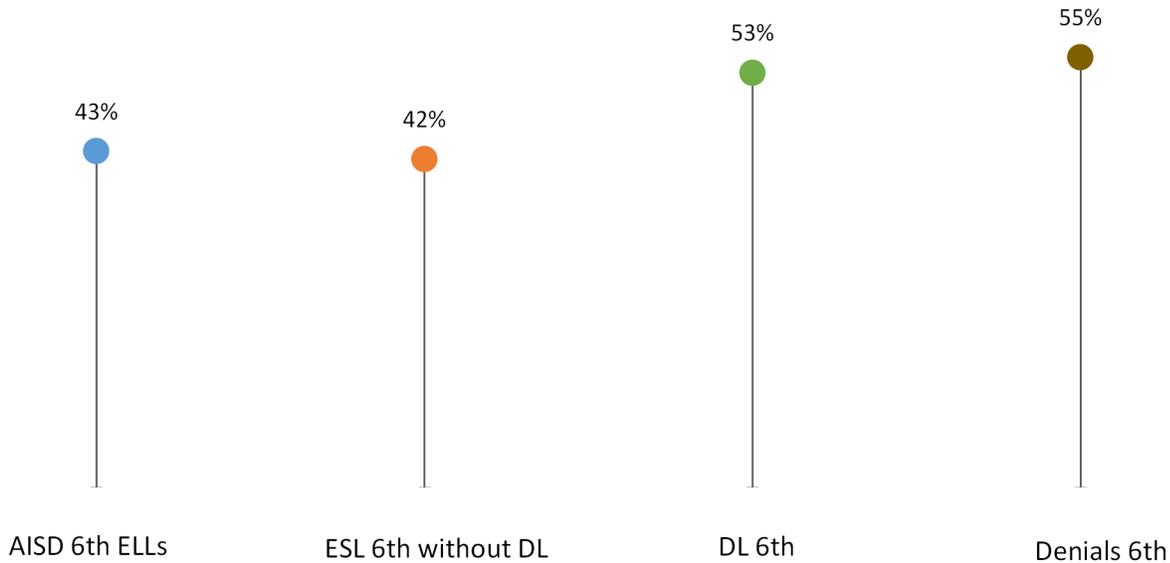
**Figure 5**  
**TELPAS 2016 Percentages of AISD ELLs Making One or More Years of Annual Progress by Elementary Grade Level and Language Program**



Source. AISD TELPAS 2016 records

Figure 6 shows percentages of 6<sup>th</sup>-grade ELLs in each language program who made yearly progress on TELPAS. When the 6<sup>th</sup>-grade DL ELLs were excluded from all ESL 6<sup>th</sup> graders ( $n = 1,090$ ), 42% made progress. When DL students ( $n = 75$ ) were analyzed separately from other ESL students, 53% made progress, showing that a greater percentage of these students than of students in ESL attained high English performance levels. Among ELLs whose parents denied program services ( $n = 33$ ), 55% made annual progress.

**Figure 6**  
**Percentages of AISD 6<sup>th</sup>-Grade ELLs Making Annual Progress TELPAS 2016, by Language Program**



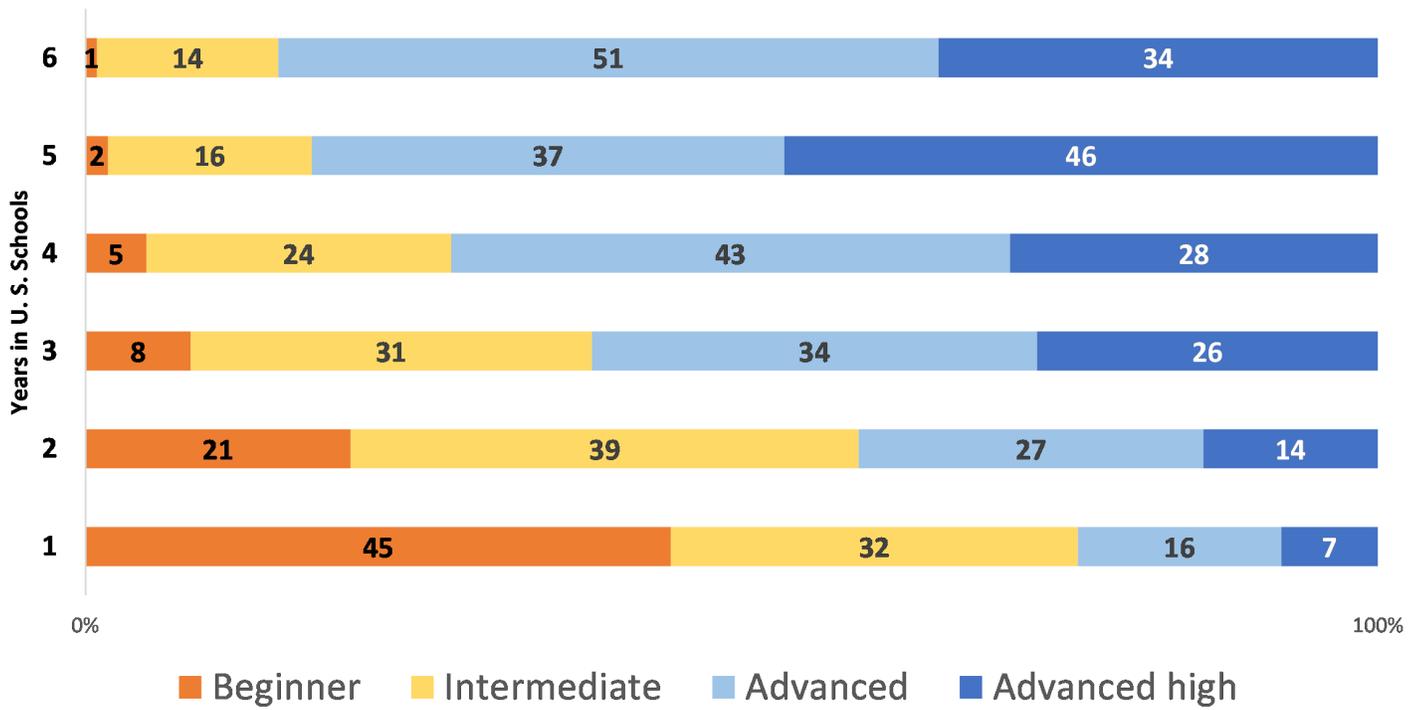
*Source.* AISD TELPAS 2016 records

## TELPAS 2016 Performance, by Years in US Schools

Figure 7 shows that the majority of ELLs who had been in US schools for a very short amount of time (i.e., 1 to 2 years) tended to have beginner or intermediate composite TELPAS ratings in 2016. The longer the ELLs had been in US schools (i.e., 3 to 6 years), the more likely they were to have attained an advanced or advanced high composite rating.

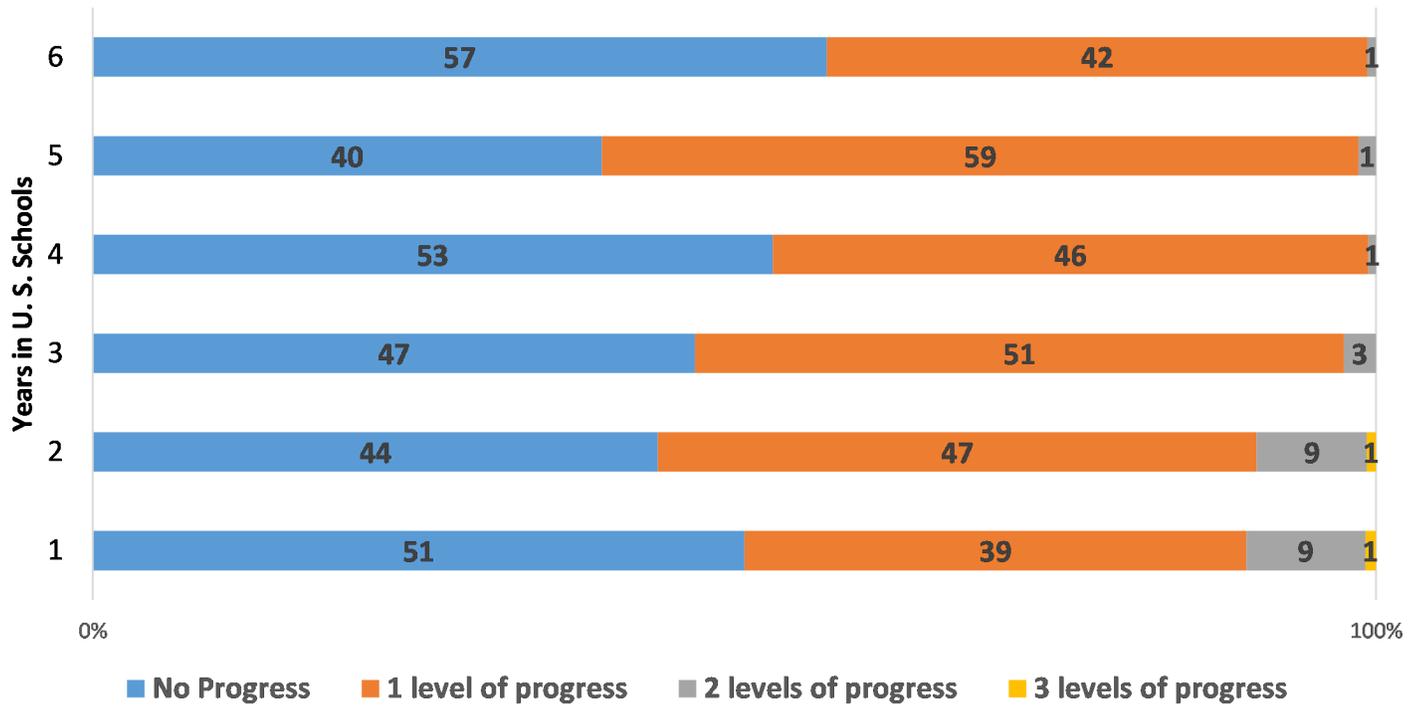
Figure 8 indicates that most ELLs, regardless of their years in US schools, made either no progress or one performance level of progress from 2015 to 2016. An area of concern is those ELLs who had been in US schools for 6 years but did not make any progress (57%,  $n = 2,407$ ). Sixty percent of long-term ELLs who had been in US schools for 6 years but did not make any progress on TELPAS were in middle school grades 6 through 8 ( $n = 1,455$ ). Of these, more than 70% had remained at an advanced TELPAS composite rating for 2 consecutive years.

Figure 7  
TELPAS 2016 Composite Ratings by Years in US Schools



Source: AISD TELPAS 2016 records

Figure 8  
TELPAS 2016 Yearly Progress by Years in US Schools



Source: AISD TELPAS 2016 records

## Summary and Recommendations

According to the 2016 overall composite TELPAS ratings, the percentages of ELLs attaining advanced or advanced high ratings were greatest at grades 5, 11, and 12. When examining composite TELPAS ratings by elementary language programs, with a few exceptions, greater percentages of ELLs had advanced or advanced high ratings at higher elementary grade levels than at lower elementary grade levels. By grade 5, ELLs in late exit had the greatest percentages at advanced or advanced high (88%), followed by two-way DL (86%), and ESL (81%). Sixth-grade DL students outperformed other ELLs in their grade level on the TELPAS 2016 composite ratings (DL [89%], non-DL in ESL [74%], parent denial [55%]). ELLs who had been in US schools for fewer years tended to have greater percentages with beginning composite ratings than did ELLs who had been in US schools longer.

AISD 5<sup>th</sup>-grade ELLs had the greatest percentage who made yearly progress (64%), followed by 2<sup>nd</sup>- (56%) and 3<sup>rd</sup>- (53%) grade ELLs. When examining yearly progress by elementary language program and grade level, results were mixed. For example, while the greatest percentages of ELLs in some programs made annual progress at grade 5 (e.g., late exit 75%, one-way DL 62%), the greatest percentages of ELLs in other programs made annual progress at grade 1 (e.g., ESL 66%, two-way DL 64%, and parent denials 82%). Sixth-grade DL ELLs (53%) outperformed other ESL ELLs (42%) with respect to the percentage who made yearly progress. More than half of ELLs who were in US schools for 6 or more years did not make progress on TELPAS 2016; of these students, most had an advanced composite rating for 2 years in a row.

Recommendations include the following:

- District and campus administrators and teachers should use individual student TELPAS results to understand and design appropriate instruction that will increase ELLs' abilities to improve their English language proficiency, and thus allow them to make annual progress.
- Further investigation is needed to determine why students' performance differs across language programs and elementary grade levels.
- District and campus administrators for middle school ELLs who have been in US schools for 6 or more years and not made annual progress on TELPAS should give these students priority when planning instruction and develop interventions to improve their English language skills so they can reach higher TELPAS performance levels before going further in their education. English skills will be critical to them when learning more complex academic content in middle and high school.



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June 2016

Publication 15.59