

Fifth-Grade Dual-Language Students' Performance on the Spanish Language Proficiency Assessment (STAMP 4Se)

Austin Independent School District, 2019–2020

Introduction

Each school year, Austin Independent School District (AISD) assesses the 5th-grade students enrolled in Two-Way Dual-Language (2-way DL) Program. Previous reports only assessed native English-speaking students, but this year's report includes both non-native English-speakers, or English learners (ELs), as well as native English-speakers (non-ELs). This report covers the performance of these students on the STAMP 4Se, a test measuring Spanish-language proficiency.

The test was administered from December 2019 through February 2020 to 450 2-way DL 5th-graders at 15 elementary schools (Allison, Becker, Blanton, Blazier, Casey, Dawson, Galindo, Manchaca, Maplewood, Perez, Pickle, Ridgetop, Sunset Valley, Travis Heights and Wooten). STAMP 4Se is composed of four domains:

- **Interpretive reading**, which consists of a series of dialogues and monologues in Spanish, followed by a question phrased in Spanish
- **Reading comprehension**, which consists of passages designed to mimic authentic reading tasks (e.g., reading signs, journal entries, or classroom materials), followed by a question that evaluates the students' ability to scan passages for the main topic as well as to extract detailed information
- **Presentational writing**, which consists of two short tasks that are presented to the students aurally in English and are designed to test the students' ability to express themselves in written Spanish
- **Presentational speaking**, which also consists of two tasks presented aurally in English that are designed to test the students' ability to express themselves in spoken Spanish

Results

Overall, 449 5th-grade 2-way DL students completed the STAMP 4Se during the 2019–2020 school year. Students' performance is scored on a scale of 1–6+ with scores between 1–3 in the novice range and 4–6+ in the intermediate range.

On the reading component, ELs scored an average of 4.76 (intermediate-mid range) while non-ELs scored an average of 3.68 (novice-high range). For the writing component, both ELs and non-ELs scored within the novice-high range, with an average of 3.73 and 3.21, respectively. On the listening component, ELs scored an average of 5.46 (intermediate-high range) while non-ELs scored an average of 4.04 (intermediate-low range). Lastly, for the speaking component, both ELs and non-ELs scored within the novice-high range, with an average of 3.71 and 3.30, respectively (Figures 1–4).

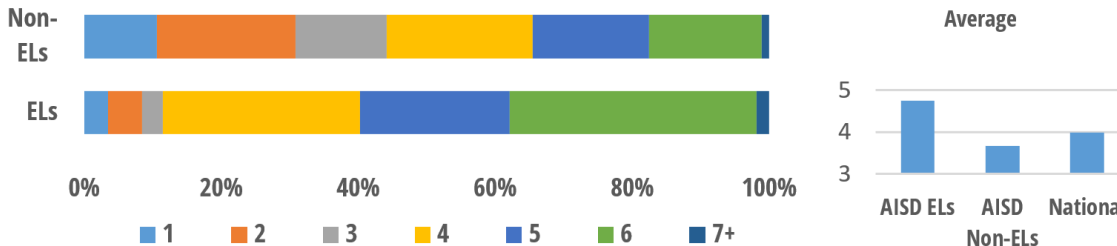
In comparison, in 2017–2018, the STAMP 4Se national average for 5th graders in Spanish immersion programs (predominantly 50/50 2-way DL) was 4 in reading, 4.4 in listening, and 3.7 in writing and speaking. Last year's national averages were not available for comparison.



The majority of AISD students performed at the intermediate or higher proficiency level (score of 4+) in the reading and listening domains of STAMP 4Se, 56% and 60%, respectively. Comparatively, the results for writing and speaking show that 38% and 34% of students performed at the intermediate or higher proficiency level, respectively.

Figure 1.

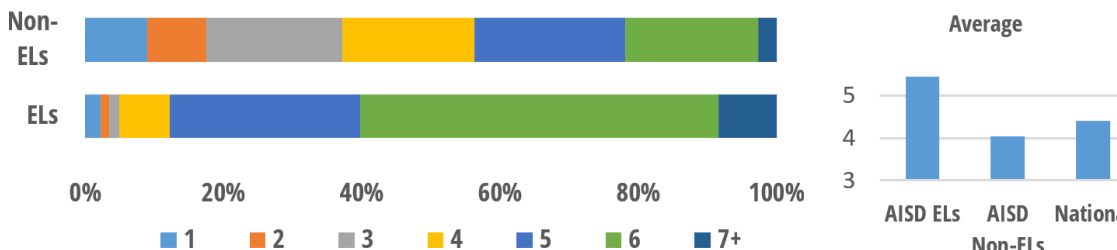
Fifth Grade, 2-Way Dual Language Program Students' Performance on the Reading Component of STAMP 4Se, 2020



Source. AISD STAMP assessment records, 2019 –2020 school year

Figure 2.

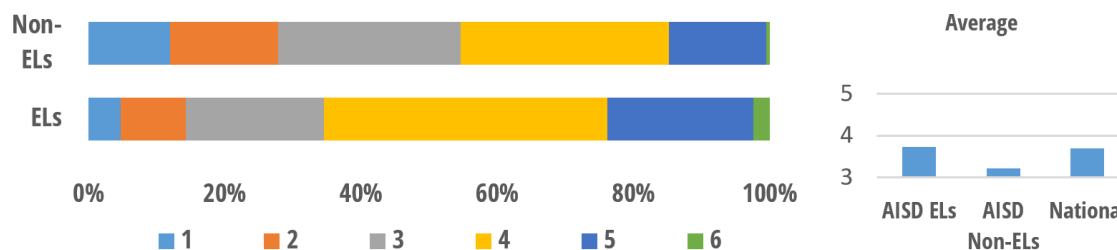
Fifth Grade, 2-Way Dual Language Program Students' Performance on the Listening Component of STAMP 4Se, 2020



Source. AISD STAMP assessment records, 2019 –2020 school year

Figure 3.

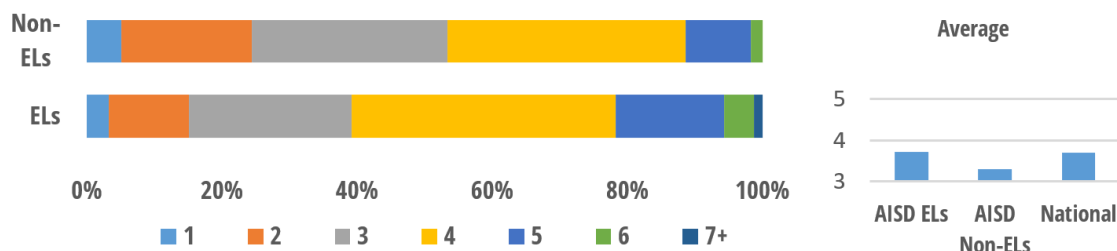
Fifth Grade, 2-Way Dual Language Program Students' Performance on the Writing Component of STAMP 4Se, 2020



Source. AISD STAMP assessment records, 2019 –2020 school year

Figure 4.

Fifth Grade, 2-Way Dual Language Program Students' Performance on the Speaking Component of STAMP 4Se, 2020



Source. AISD STAMP assessment records, 2019 –2020 school year

STAMP 4se is a computer adaptive test designed for children in grades 2 through 6. Computer adaptive tests allow for shorter tests because the items selected for each student are based on their responses to the previous items, thereby creating a test tailored to each test taker's ability. Test items are situated within the context of daily school life, and characters mentioned in the test items are attending a fictitious elementary school in the United States.

STAMP 4Se is designed to give a general snapshot of proficiency, with a fairly limited number of items (i.e., approximately 30 multiple-choice reading and listening items each, two writing prompts, and two speaking prompts). This allows the test to be used as a dynamic tool to inform teachers, parents, and administrators about students' language learning progress. However, as with any test, STAMP 4Se scores should be considered as one piece of evidence of a child's proficiency. In addition, it should be noted that students, especially young ones, can perform differently on different days, due to a variety of factors. More information about STAMP 4Se can be obtained at

www.avantassessment.com.

An interpretation guide describing a typical student at each proficiency level is provided in the appendix.

Conclusion

On average, AISD's 5th-grade DL students scored in the novice-high range or higher for each component of the STAMP 4Se test in the 2019–2020 school year. Currently, the unofficial target set for AISD's 5th grade DL students is the intermediate range. Specifically, the components of reading and listening had the highest scores by students, with more than half of non-ELs and about 90% of ELs scoring in the intermediate ranges. Comparatively, students' scores on the writing and speaking components were in the novice-high range on average, which is one step below intermediate. The reading and listening components are considered the receptive abilities by language proficiency experts, and language learners usually attain these abilities before the productive abilities of writing and speaking (Bloom, 1974). Hence, it is understandable that students scored lower on the productive abilities of writing and speaking—a trend also mimicked in the STAMP 4Se national averages. Interestingly, the ELs appeared to outperform or score similarly to the STAMP 4Se national averages, while non-ELs fell short of the national averages. Again, the national average scores were created from data collected in Spanish-immersion classrooms; thus, they likely contained both ELs and non-ELs. For more information on how the national sample was created, see <https://avantassessment.com/avant-stamp-annual-averages-2017-2018>.

Last year's STAMP report included non-ELs only in its analysis. In comparison with those scores, non-ELs this year performed the same on the reading and listening components and slightly higher on the writing and speaking components. Last year's scores can be viewed in [Fifth-Grade Native English Speakers' Performance on the Spanish-Language Proficiency Assessment, STAMP 4Se](#).

References

Bloom, L. (1974). Talking, understanding, and thinking: Developmental relationship between receptive and expressive language. In R. Schiefelbusch & L. Lloyd (Eds.), *Language perspectives: Acquisition, retardation, and intervention* (pp. 285–311). Baltimore MD: University Park Press.



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Appendix

The Avant STAMP 4Se Scoring Rubric

Benchmark Level	Text Type Characteristics	Language Control
LEVEL 1 Novice-Low	Produces words in target language with no connection. Does not have enough vocabulary or the ability necessary to formulate even simple phrases to address the prompt.	Limited language control. Inability to create more than individual words. L1 (first language) influence may be strong. Errors are expected at this level, but the student must be able to produce at least two comprehensible words.
LEVEL 2 Novice-Mid	Language production is beyond individual words but clearly shows the lack of ability to construct more than phrases. May include one simple sentence, but incapable of showing more.	May make frequent errors, but usually comprehensible to a sympathetic reader/listener. L1 (first language) influence may be present.
LEVEL 3 Novice-High	Short, common expressions or memorized statements that may be combined together. Able to create at least 2 different simple sentences.	Good accuracy for high frequency expressions. Usually comprehensible to a sympathetic reader/listener. Grammatical (syntax, spelling, conjugation) errors are expected at this level but sentences must make sense to be acceptable.
LEVEL 4 Intermediate-Low	Variety of sentences that utilize different verbs to create independent thoughts, mostly composed of a recombination of learned simple sentences with added detail in the form of prepositional phrases and verbal phrases.	Good accuracy with formulaic sentences with some added detail. Errors may occur as student attempts higher level skills. Good Language Control is expected with the majority of the response.
LEVEL 5 Intermediate-Mid	Logical organization of ideas and flow of sentences or statements. Contains at least 2 unique and non-formulaic sentences intermixed with a variety of sentences creating 'groupings of sentences showing connectedness.	Good accuracy evident with possible errors that don't affect the overall meaning. Delivery may be somewhat choppy. May have repetitive use of concrete vocabulary with occasional use of expanding terms. Accuracy for complex sentences is emerging.
LEVEL 6 Intermediate-High	Able to demonstrate an Intermediate-High control of the language. Complexity is evident. Transition words and connectors are used correctly and efficiently a majority of the time to create a flow within the response. Groups of sentences focus on different aspects of the prompt and include transition words or phrases to introduce next concept. Does not have Advanced vocabulary or language to move into the Advanced level.	Response is well written and constructed. Intermediate-High sentence structures can be found throughout response. Demonstrates beginning ability to create a coherent response with increased use of complexity as well as transition words and phrases. No evidence of advanced vocabulary.
LEVEL 7 Advanced-Low	A paragraph response with advanced language with complexity, syntactical and grammatical control transitional words and phrases found within the text creating a natural flow. Demonstrates a connection of thoughts that create a coherent and extended discourse.	Language is error-free a majority of the time with familiar topics. If errors exist, they are patterned and do not hinder overall meaning. Delivery is mostly fluent with only occasional hesitancy. Some abstract and precise use of vocabulary and terms with familiar topics is evident.

Source. AVANT STAMP 4Se website updated Oct. 2019, <https://avantassessment.com/stamp4Se/benchmarks-rubric-guide>