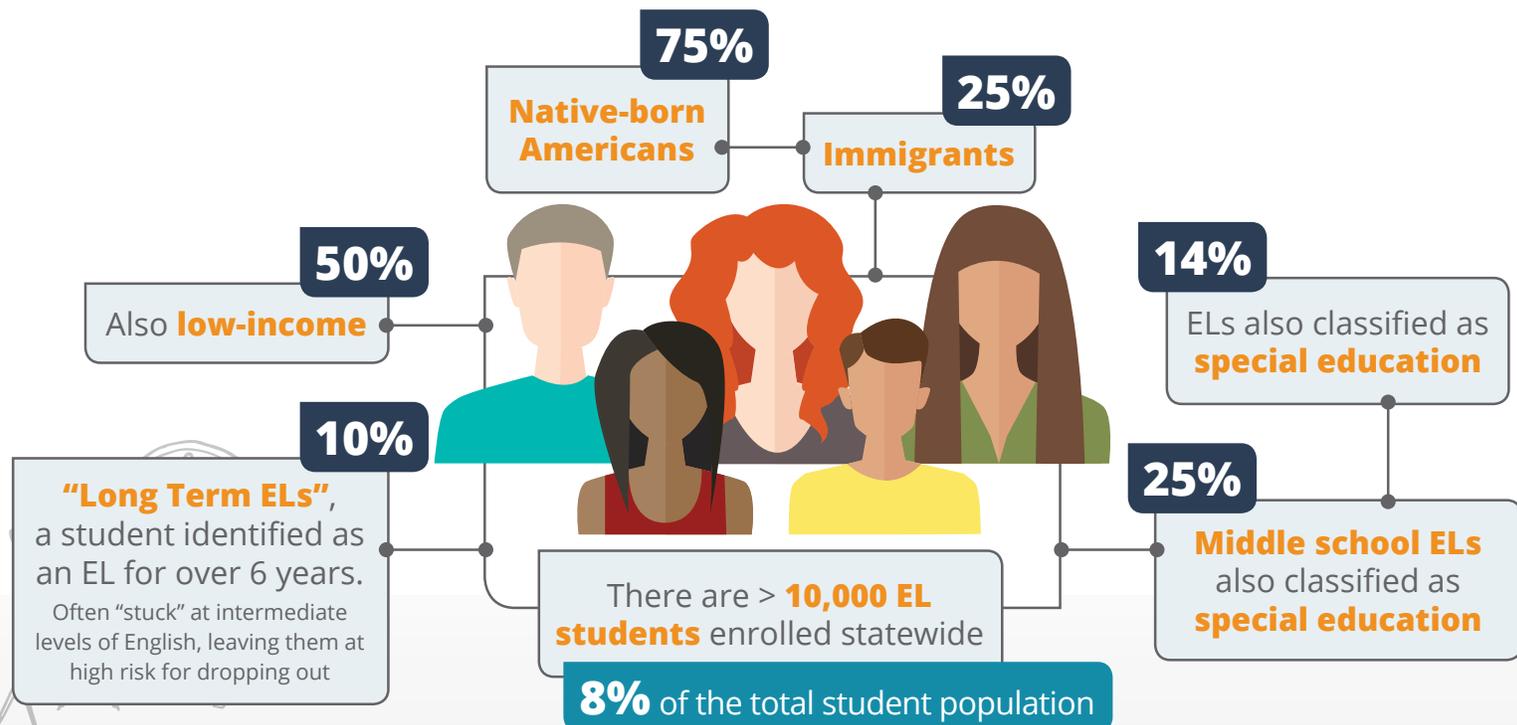




WHO ARE ENGLISH LEARNERS IN DELAWARE'S SCHOOLS?

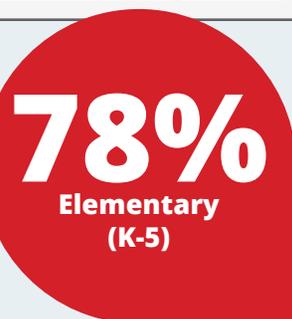
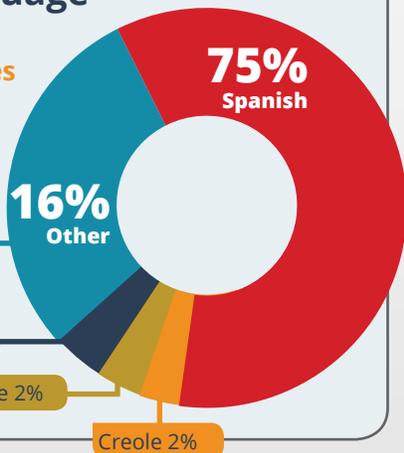
English Learners (ELs) are a diverse group of students representing numerous languages, cultures, ethnicities, nationalities, and social, economic, and educational backgrounds.



Home Language

There are **97 native languages** spoken by Delaware ELs

There are more than 90 languages spoken by less than 1 percent of ELs



% of Total ELs by School Grade Level



EL
English learner

ELL
English language learner

LEP
Limited English proficient

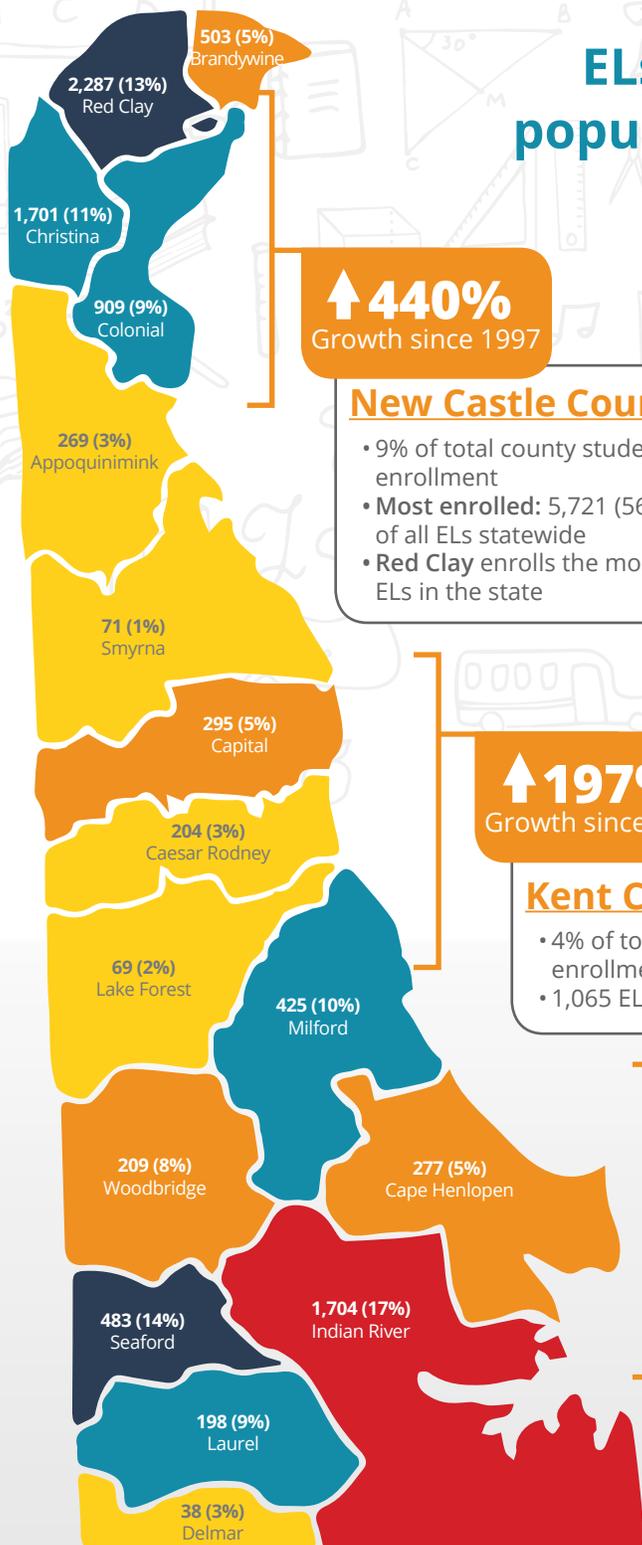
ESL
English as a Second Language

There are many identical terms used to formally describe this group of students.

Delaware education regulations say:

"English learners are students with limited English proficiency who, because of foreign birth or ancestry, speak a language other than English. ELs either comprehend, speak, read, or write little or no English" when they enroll in public school.

ELs are the fastest growing student population. They are enrolled in every district and charter in the state.



↑ 440%
Growth since 1997

New Castle County

- 9% of total county student enrollment
- Most enrolled: 5,721 (56%) of all ELs statewide
- Red Clay enrolls the most ELs in the state

↑ 197%
Growth since 1997

Kent County

- 4% of total county student enrollment
- 1,065 ELs enrolled

↑ 597%
Growth since 1997

Sussex County

- Highest concentration: 11% of total county student enrollment
- 2,910 ELs enrolled
- Fast growing
- Indian River (17%) and Seaford (14%) enroll the highest concentrations of ELs in the state

428%
Over 20 Years

State of Delaware

From 2015 to 2016, ELs grew 15%, while the entire Delaware student population only grew 1%

Public School Choice: ELs are less likely to elect to attend a charter or vo-tech school

Charter

4% of ELs attend charter schools compared to 8% of all students.
La Academia Antonia Alonso (117 EL students) and Las Americas Aspira Academy (190 EL students) serve the most ELs (about 25% of the schools' enrollment)

Vo-tech

4% of all high school ELs (54 students) attend vo-tech schools compared to 5% of all high school students

Note: Other choice options (within district or cross-district) not captured

Map legend: Number of ELs and ELs as % of total 2015-16 district student enrollment



Note: ELs as a percentage of the total 2015-16 student enrollment was calculated for districts and charters using the end-of-year EL count and the September 30th total student enrollment count. This reflects the growth in ELs (over 2,000 students) but not the total change in student enrollment during the 2015-16 school year.

Source: Delaware Department of Education 2015-16 English Learners Annual Report.



Visit <http://bit.ly/ELsInDE> for more information on ELs in Delaware.



THE LIFE OF ENGLISH LEARNER STUDENTS IN DELAWARE

It's a new school year, and three new students arrive ready to enroll.

1) Identifying English Learners

1. All public school parents complete the Home Language Survey.
2. Students identified as learning English are **assessed to determine how much English they know.**

- **Maria**, a 9th grader from Venezuela, speaks fluent Spanish but no English.
- **Wei**, a kindergartener, is simultaneously learning English and Chinese. His parents only speak Chinese at home.
- **Tatiana**, a 3rd grader who moved from New Jersey, understands spoken English and speaks Haitian Creole at home.

What rights do ELs have?

Major requirements in federal law[^] for Maria, Wei, and Tatiana include:

- (1) Schools must accept and **educate all students**, immigrants and native-born.
- (2) EL students must be taught **English and also grade-level academic content.**
- (3) EL students with disabilities must be provided both the language assistance and disability-related services.

2) Teaching English Learners

In Delaware, all districts and charters are required to select a **program for ELs**, then implement with resources and personnel, and evaluate and revise the program regularly to **ensure students are making progress.**

EL programs must include daily or weekly language instruction.

- ➔ Yet even **EL students who comprehend no English will only receive 2-3 hours a week of English language instruction time** if districts and charters follow the minimum state recommendation.
- ➔ And there are **no requirements for how to support ELs in academic content areas**, where they spend most of their time.

Taking into consideration language background and proficiency, districts and charters chose the right instructional program for **Maria, Wei, and Tatiana.** Common EL program models in Delaware include*:

English as a second language (60% of EL students)

- Additional support for ELs provided within the traditional classroom, or a separate class period that can include several language groups
- Teacher does not need to be proficient in the students' native language(s)
- Instruction for ELs aimed at English language development skills. Amount of focus on academic content varies

Bilingual instruction (10% of EL students)

- Class comprised of all ELs (typically with the same language background)
- Teacher is bilingual
- All academic subjects taught in native language with a focus on English proficiency

Dual-language (5% of EL students)

- Class comprised of native English speakers and ELs (typically with the same language background)
- Teacher is bilingual, or pair of teachers where one is bilingual
 - Academic instruction is split, with one part of the school day or week in English, the other in a different language

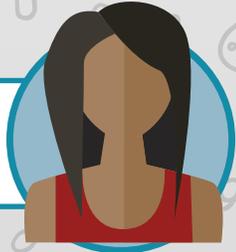
No program (20% of EL students)

- No English language instruction beyond what is provided to native English speakers



Maria may enroll in an intensive program to help her acclimate to the American school system. "We have a "newcomer program" for high-school age ELs, especially immigrants, to help them catch up and learn English and academics. Many have had interrupted education and need support adjusting to going to school in a new country. But not all districts have this program, and even we have very limited space available."

– Delaware English learner teacher



Tatiana's level of support depends on where she enrolls. "I have spoken with students who sit in the back of the classroom and receive no English language instruction at all. I know others who get help learning English, but fail to have support in math and science."

– Delaware English learner teacher

3) Assessing English Learners



Maria, Wei, and Tatiana, like all EL students, take an annual additional assessment called the ACCESS test to measure their English language proficiency growth. The results impact the type and level of services they receive the following school year, including the creation of new goals for obtaining English language proficiency.

Research indicates that students typically develop oral proficiency in English in 3-5 years, and academic proficiency in 4-7 years.

In Delaware, EL students spend an average of 3 years in an EL program. 10% of Delaware ELs were in an EL program for more than 6 years.

However, measures of English language proficiency growth will be publically reported by school and district for the first time starting with the 2017-2018 school year as **part of the school accountability system.**

"I have always wondered what goes into the decision for what type of program and instruction to provide ELs. Are we offering the services best suited for the diverse needs of our ELs, or is this simply the best we are able to do given limited resources and personnel?"

- Delaware English language learner teacher

4) Acquiring English Proficiency



A student exits out of EL status once they have met specific criteria on the ACCESS test to demonstrate English proficiency.

Once exited, the student must be monitored, and some students like **Tatiana** can be reclassified as an EL if additional supports are needed. **Under the new ESSA law, Delaware will begin to monitor and report on former EL students for 4 years after exiting EL status.**

Every year, the number of English Learners in Delaware rises, implying that **the number of students entering the program is outpacing the number of students exiting.**

"An EL student can test out of the EL program and stop receiving services but still not be able to write and read at grade level."

- Delaware English language learner teacher

With these supports, ELs are expected, like their native English-speaking peers, to achieve high school graduation, gain proficiency in all academic subject areas, and have access to SAT and college and career preparation courses.



^Sources: Title III of ESEA; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974; and several Supreme Court Cases. Note: Enforced by the Delaware Department of Education.

***Sources:** Delaware Department of Education. Title III/ English Language Learner Guidebook; 2013-2014 Delaware Department of Education ELL Annual Report.

Notes on EL program enrollment: Percentages do not equal 100% because there is also a "not specified" option in reporting so program type is unknown for some EL students. Dual-language programs have gradually grown since this most recent data. A small amount of students not receiving services may be due to parents withdrawing.

Visit <http://bit.ly/ELsInDE> for more information on ELs in Delaware including previous fact sheets and sources for this fact sheet.



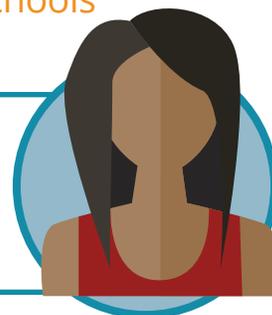


GRADE BOOK: HOW IS DELAWARE'S EDUCATION SYSTEM SERVING ENGLISH LEARNERS?

For English learners (ELs), large academic achievement gaps, limited English proficiency growth, and significantly under-resourced schools are deep-set systemic issues in desperate need of attention.

"When I moved here I knew I wanted to go to college but I wasn't aware of my options. I didn't know about AP or honors classes, or the necessity of the SAT. No one was guiding me. A lot of my EL peers started skipping school. They feel lost, and I don't blame them. It's challenging. Our EL teacher was really helpful, but they can't teach 1:1, and our school means well but just doesn't have a lot of resources."

- Delaware English learner



Grade Book: ELs in the Delaware education system

Academic Content			
Category	Description	English Learners	Native English Speakers
3rd grade Smarter Balanced (2017)	Percentage of students proficient in third grade reading and math	Reading: 32% Math: 40%	Reading: 55% Math: 56%
8th grade Smarter Balanced (2017)	Percentage of students proficient in eighth grade reading and math	Reading: 8% Math: 10%	Reading: 54% Math: 40%

College and Career Readiness			
Category	Description	English Learners	Native English Speakers
SAT (2017)	Percentage of high school students proficient in reading, writing, and math	Reading and Writing: 6% Math: <5%	Reading and Writing: 54% Math: 30%
Category	Description	English Learners	All Students
Graduation rates (2016)	Percentage of students who graduate high school in four years	72%	85%
College remediation (Class of 2015)	Percent of students who enroll in college who may not be able to take credit bearing course-work until completing remedial courses	49%	41%

English Language Proficiency			
Category	Description	English Learners	
English language proficiency growth (2017)	Students meeting individual goal set based on their baseline proficiency and grade	41%	
	Amount of progress made toward individual student goal	Average: 68%	

Social and Emotional Learning

Teacher comments:

"Many English learner students feel isolated in their classes because of the language barrier. This impacts not only academics, but his self-esteem. Makes it more attractive to drop out of school. There should be supports, so where is the disconnect?"

- Delaware Spanish teacher

"One English learner student I worked with had depression. Because he didn't speak English, no one diagnosed him. They just thought he was shy. He attempted suicide. The mother works two jobs and blamed herself, but the truth is that existing services were not enough, and also not tailored to unique needs of students."

- Delaware school counselor

Pop Quiz: Funding for English Learners

Questions:

1. Who is responsible for funding the major needs of English Learners? The state/districts or the federal government?
2. Most education funding in Delaware comes from the state. How much state funding does Delaware allocate for educating English learners?
3. How much federal funding does Delaware receive for EL students?

Answers:

1. **Districts and charters are expected to use state and local funds to meet their civil rights obligations to EL and immigrant students** such as providing teacher salaries; translation and interpretation services; and identifying, monitoring and evaluating EL students. **Federal funds can only be used for supplemental activities** such as upgrading EL educational programs, providing educator professional development, or offering community programs such as family literacy services.
2. **\$0. Delaware is 1 of 4 states that provides zero state education funding per English learner student.** The state formerly allocated a small amount of money but has since eliminated that allocation.
3. Federal EL funding makes up .05% of all funding in Delaware education (\$2.05 billion). Only about **\$1 million in federal funding** come to Delaware each year for approximately 10,000 EL students, though not every student receives funding. **If allocated evenly that would be about \$100/student—the cost of a textbook or a couple of hours of tutoring.**

Sources:

- Data provided by the Delaware Department of Education for 2014-2015 School Year, as reported by districts
- 2015-2016 School Year Delaware Consolidated State Performance Report for federal grants
- U.S. Department of Education Office of Postsecondary Education, Teacher Shortage Areas Nationwide Listing, August 2016

ELs are severely under-resourced, including a lack of sustained funding and chronic teacher shortage.

"EL teachers work hard, to the best of their ability, but many are splitting time between multiple schools and only seeing kids a few hours a week. We could do so much more for these students."

- Delaware English learner teacher

"In addition to needing more certified EL teachers, we are required to provide translation services yet are constantly on the hunt for interpreters and funds to pay them. It's a huge hurdle."

- Delaware district leader

"Student express feeling ignored in school. But the teachers also feel frustrated with the system that puts kids who don't speak English in a situation without resources. I know teachers feel they have to choose between slowing the whole class because of these two kids, or move ahead without them."

- Delaware school counselor

Study Guide: Certified Teachers of English Learners

Delaware requires that all content-area teachers (e.g. math, history) be certified in their subject, which nearly all are. The state also requires that EL-only instructors have an EL-specific certificate. Yet, available federal data, state data, and local anecdotes indicate that in reality, many ELs do not have access to certified teachers:

- The state reports that **25% of all EL students do not have access to a certified EL teacher.** The remaining **75% of ELs have an of average ratio of 1:38 certified teachers to EL students** (though there is no guarantee they receive services from the certified teacher).
- Yet federal reports show a ratio of **1:115 certified teachers to EL students** in EL programs receiving federal funding.
- Delaware **is suffering from a 14-year EL teacher shortage (and counting)** according to the U.S. Department of Education nationwide listing of teacher shortage areas.

Coming up: What can Delaware learn from other states and the research about how we can support EL students?

Visit <http://bit.ly/ELsInDE> for more information on ELs in Delaware including previous fact sheets and sources for this fact sheet.





HOW CAN DELAWARE SUPPORT ELs IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

There are plenty of bright spots to build on in Delaware, but resources for English learner students (ELs) are inconsistent and aren't keeping pace with the rapidly increasing EL student population.

← Five resources that research and Delawareans say matter →



High-quality
Early Learning



Parent and Family
Engagement



Rigorous
Coursework and
Quality Instruction



Certified, Trained
Teachers



Student-based
Funding System

To truly unlock the potential of ALL students, we must examine the whole education system, from early learning through graduation. Here are just a few current policies and practices in Delaware that impact EL students, presented alongside research and national best practices.

High-Quality Early Learning



Research says:

Pre-K is a critical foundation for young ELs to close or prevent achievement gaps, but ELs have less access to quality programs

- ELs (also called dual language learners when under the age of five) **benefit greatly from access to free pre-K and show greater improvement in learning** at the end of the pre-K year than English-proficient students
- Nationally, access to high-quality preschool is lower for ELs than for non-ELs. Children who **start kindergarten without speaking English rarely catch up with their English-speaking peers**
- ELs who start kindergarten with strong language skills in either English or their native language are **more likely to be on par with their English-fluent peers by the end of elementary school**

National best practices show:

Knowing how many young ELs are in the general population and the state, preschool programs are a starting place for understanding and increasing access, and a foundation for other policies

In Delaware:

Local families struggle with limited and varying access to programs with bilingual instruction and supports, and lack of statewide data makes this difficult to quantify

- **There is no statewide policy to collect information on home language** or count the total ELs enrolled in all pre-K programs or kindergarten programs
- **EL students are less likely than their peers to enter kindergarten with the skills needed for success**, not just language but also cognitive and social emotional skills, indicating the need for increased access to high-quality early learning

Parent and Family Engagement

Research says:

Family engagement contributes to better student outcomes for all students, yet parents of ELs face linguistic, socioeconomic, and cultural barriers

- EL parents report receiving less communication from schools than non-EL parents, despite being just as likely as non-EL parents to want their children to succeed in school



National best practices show:

Parent and family engagement isn't only beneficial, it's required:

- All schools are federally required to: **communicate with families in a language they can understand**; notify families of any program, service or activity communicated to English-speaking families; and provide language assistance services such as translators or interpreters
- Districts that receive federal **Title III funds** must conduct EL parent, family, and community engagement

In Delaware:

Local families and educators often report frustration over language barriers and engagement. They say:

"I have seen a 4th grader translating for her parents in an official meeting with the school where the topic of discussion was quite serious."

"Since I'm the only bilingual educator on staff, I am called on to interpret and translate often, but I have no formal training or certification to do this."

"We were lucky to have someone in our front office last year who was bilingual and could talk with parents who came in. She left for a job in the private sector."

"Our district subscribes to Language Line—a hugely helpful resource where teachers can call and get access to interpreter immediately. Not everyone has that."

"It is frustrating for everyone involved—parents and teachers."



The home language is a valuable resource for ELs

- Research shows that proficiency in both languages is more likely if children have sustained exposure in the home to the language that is used less extensively in the community
- Culturally relevant (and relatable) reading materials from an early age are linked to improved reading proficiency
- Families should immerse students in their home language, not abandon it in favor of assimilating to English

Rigorous Coursework and Quality Instruction

Research says:

High-quality English language instruction and academic instruction are necessary to close EL achievement gaps

- General education without support (otherwise known as “sink or swim”) doesn’t work
- EL high school students are less likely to take advanced classes such as dual-credit and Advanced Placement



National best practices show:

Multilingual classrooms produce results

- A rapid **increase in bilingual and dual language immersion** classrooms nationally supports recent research, which shows they can produce stronger outcomes than traditional, “pull-out” ESL programs
- Schools should design and resource EL programs based on student need

“My school enrolled me in classes I’d already taken in my old school. When I arrived in the U.S. I should have been in advanced math courses, not college prep.”

- Delaware English learner

“I had an EL student THANK ME for giving her a failing grade in my class. She says that other teachers just pass her through even though she just sits silently in the class, not participating.”

- Delaware general classroom educator



In Delaware:

Though bright spots exist, schools struggle to meet student needs

- Academic outcomes for ELs still lag behind peers
- A minority of EL students have access to bilingual and dual language immersion
- Every Student Succeeds Acts (ESSA) offers an opportunity to learn from new data on English learner proficiency

Certified, Trained Teachers

Research says:

Teachers matter most, and ALL teachers benefit from EL training

- Teacher quality is the most important school-based factor in student achievement
- Educators need **specific knowledge and skills (not necessarily knowledge of the ELs native language)** to bring ELs to English proficiency
- ELs perform best when EL teachers are required to be certified and teachers and administrators are trained in **EL instruction methods and cultural competency**



National best practices show:

Ensure all teachers are adequately prepared to work with ELs

- **Teacher education programs, state educator certification, and teacher evaluations** should be aligned around the essential knowledge and skills needed to teach ELs

“Local districts may choose to provide training, but is often at the discretion of the educator whether to pursue professional learning. Few general education teachers have the support to pursue actual certification even if they see the benefit.”

- Delaware EL Teacher

In Delaware:

There is no statewide requirement for general education teachers to receive EL training. State and local efforts fight to keep up with growing demand for trained educators.

- Schools with enough funding can hire ESL teachers on an **Emergency Certificate**. A limited amount of critical need scholarships is available to cover some coursework for some educators to work towards a Standard Certification.
- Some institutions of higher education have developed coursework. The University of Delaware allows Elementary Teacher Education students to pursue a secondary certification for English as a Second Language.

EQUITABLE STUDENT-BASED FUNDING ENABLES EQUITABLE ACCESS

Money supports critical pieces of a high-quality education. How our education funding responds to the needs of individual students sets the foundation for how we provide critical services to ELs.

Student-based Funding System

Research says:

Money matters, especially how it's spent

- School finance reform and additional funding for at risk students can meaningfully improve long-run educational and economic outcomes for students
- Generally speaking, spending increases should be coupled with **transparent reporting** that connects spending and outcomes



National best practices show:

46 other states provide additional state funding for ELs

- They recognize ELs cost more to educate, typically 25% more or \$1,500 – \$2,000
- Most states (25) allocate money for ELs through per-student weights in their primary funding formula

In Delaware:

With **no state funding dedicated to individual ELs**, quality of service depends on where the student lives

- *"We cobble together local funding and limited flexible state dollars to do the best we can for ELs"*
- *"In my school ELs are classified as special education because at least that way they receive funding for services"*
- *"We hope ELs are also special education so they have funding"*

ELs and Special Education Identification Concerns

- Districts and charters must not identify that EL students have disabilities simply because of their limited ability to speak English, and research shows that special education services are NOT adequate and often not appropriate for ELs
- Under federal law, ELs who do have disabilities must be provided both language assistance and disability-related services, decided in collaboration between educators and parents
- In practice, however, proper identification of students' educational needs remains an area for additional attention and discussion. Delaware districts and schools, like most of the country, vary widely in how many ELs they classify as special education

ACT NOW:

on the five resources that research and Delawareans say matter:

1. Ask your school how they are supporting ELs
2. Talk to your legislator about how state funding can support ELs
3. See the next fact sheet for other ways to get involved

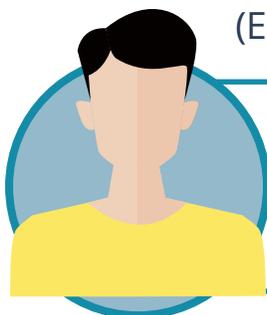
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ENGLISH LEARNERS IN DELAWARE'S GLOBAL ECONOMY

As Delaware's communities continue to become more diverse, so too will our economy, tax base, and workforce. Which is why, more than ever, we should focus on preparing all students—especially the growing number of English learners (ELs)—to graduate ready for college and career.



"Today's students are going to be tomorrow's business and community leaders. After I graduated high school, I went on to DelTech and now work in Kent County. I know firsthand that when English learners and their parents are taught English and get a good education, they purchase more, pay more in taxes, and improve their communities. If students graduate unable to speak English and unable to read and write, we are creating a cycle that hurts our state."

– Former Delaware English learner

Who Are We?

> **120,000 people in Delaware speak a language other than English**, or 13% of the total state population age 5 and over

Nearly **1 in 10** Delaware residents is an immigrant
7% of Delawareans are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent

Hispanics make up more than **9%** of the state population

Nearly **4 in 10 adult learners** enrolled in state-funded adult education courses are English learners

There are > **12,700 EL students** enrolled statewide in 2017-18, 9.3% of the total student population
EL students graduate high school at a rate of 76%, and 49% of ELs who graduate require college remedial courses

Statewide Diversity

Immigrant population

Hispanic population

Adult English learners

K-12 English learner

Where Are We Headed?

Delaware will rank as the **14th most diverse state in the country by 2060**

New Castle County's racial and ethnic mix will rise to **the top 6% of counties nationwide**

Delaware currently has the **4th fastest growing** immigrant population in the country

No group will increase faster than Hispanic residents: The Hispanic population is projected to rise 125% between 2010 and 2050

Delaware adult learners are becoming more diverse: Over the last five years, the percent of adult education students that are English learners has increased 30%

In the past ten years, the EL student population has nearly doubled in size
In another ten years, thousands could leave school not prepared for college and career if we don't provide more support

OUR OPPORTUNITY: ACT NOW TO SUPPORT ELS

1) Recognize multilingualism as an asset and crucial 21st century career skill

Brain benefits of being bilingual:

- Increased executive function or the ability to stay focused, remember information, and solve problems
- Increased empathy, a fundamental social and emotional skill
- Protection against cognitive decline and dementia

Student benefits of being bilingual:

- Higher test scores
- Better attendance
- Fewer behavioral problems
- Increased family and parent involvement
- Increased sense of belonging in school

ACT NOW:

Encourage Delaware high school students to apply for the **Certificate of Multiliteracy**. Students who are proficient in one or more languages in addition to English can learn more about the award from a world language teacher, English Learner teacher, or school counselor.

2) Implement the English Learner Strategic Plan

Delaware has a strong foundation to build upon with the **English Learner Statewide Strategic Plan**:

FOUR GOALS:

1. High-quality, instruction and assessment

- Dual language immersion and bilingual learning
- College and career opportunities and preparation
- Individualized support

2. Highly effective educators

- Student-focused funding system
- Recruit and retain diverse workforce
- Professional learning for educators about ELs
- EL-certified teachers

3. Community mobilization

- Family liaisons
- Culturally responsive staff and resources
- Adult education and family literacy
- Community services

4. Data analysis

- Transparency
- Longitudinal data for current and former ELs

STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

ACT NOW:

Read the **English Learner Statewide Strategic Plan**. Attend meetings of the **Governor's Advisory Council on English Learners**, the **Delaware Hispanic Commission**, and **DELLTA** (Delaware English Language Learner Teachers and Advocates) to discuss and help implement the plan.

3) Advocate for ELs and the resources they need to succeed

Education Equity Delaware is a coalition of organizations advocating for equitable education funding according to student needs, including ELs

ACT NOW:

Visit www.educationequityde.org and subscribe to the Education Equity Delaware newsletter for news, events, and ways to get involved, including advocating to your legislators and hosting public workshops.



"I value education for a couple of reasons. Education is important to me because I want to be a good role model for my kids. Pursuing my education will allow me more opportunities to be successful in expanding my business. Now that I have finished my ESL classes, I plan to complete my GED and attend Delaware Technical Community College to pursue a degree in business."

– Delaware adult education student

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