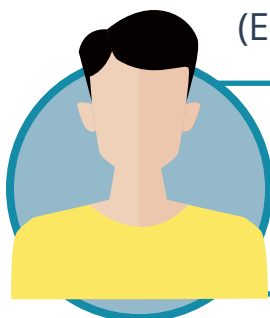




ENGLISH LEARNERS IN DELAWARE'S GLOBAL ECONOMY

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

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

