

English Language Learners in Oregon

Annual Report 2018-19

June 2020



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Executive Summary

ORS 327.016 directs the Oregon Department of Education to prepare an annual report on English language learner program funding and student outcomes. The report is designed to describe the population of English Learners and to summarize state- and district-level progress in meeting the needs and objectives of students in English language learner programs. This report is also available on the [ODE website](#). Any member of the public can contact the Government Relations & External Affairs Director for copy of the report.

English Learners in Oregon's K-12 schools

As of May 1, 2019, there were 102,786 students (about 18 percent of all Oregon students) who had direct experience with the state's English learner programs, as current or former English Learners (ELs). Within this student population, there was tremendous diversity in their lived experiences, and in the cultural and linguistic assets they brought to their schools and districts.

About half of those students (51,122 or 8.9 percent of all Oregon students) were classified as **current ELs**, meaning they were still developing their proficiency in English. A similar number (51,664 or 9.0 percent of Oregon students) were classified as **former ELs**, students who were at one time classified as current ELs, but had developed proficiency in English.

ELs were not distributed equally across Oregon school districts. The district with the highest percentage (Woodburn) had 32.5 percent of its students classified as current ELs. In contrast, more than two-thirds of districts either had no ELs at all or had fewer than 5 percent.

Other key features of the EL student population included:

- Most current ELs were in the elementary grades.
- The number of recently arrived ELs (new immigrant students) dropped in both 2017-18 and 2018-19, compared to the previous year.
- Spanish was by far the predominant home language of current ELs (spoken by 79 percent of them), but overall there were 165 unique languages spoken.
- About three-quarters (76 percent) of current ELs were Latino/a/x, and about one quarter (28.7 percent) of Latino/a/x students were current ELs. Nearly the same percentage of Pacific Islander students (27.9 percent) were current ELs.

Participation in targeted programs

The report also looked at the involvement of ELs in targeted federal and state programs: free or reduced-price lunch, special education, Migrant Education, and the Talented and Gifted program.

Key findings included:

- A higher percentage of both current and former ELs received free or reduced-price lunch, compared to students who were never classified as English Learners (never ELs)

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- A higher percentage of current ELs received special education services compared to never ELs. However, when current and former ELs are combined into the ever EL group, the difference between ever ELs and never ELs almost entirely disappeared.
- Almost 15 percent of current ELs are also served in the Migrant Education program, more than half of these concentrated in just 11 school districts.
- While across the state 7.6 percent of never ELs were identified as Talented and Gifted, this figure was 5.9 percent for former ELs and just 0.5 percent for current ELs.

Progress Toward English Proficiency

For the past three years, Oregon has tracked whether or not current ELs were on-track to reach English proficiency within seven years. About two-thirds of current ELs (66%) in elementary school were consistently on-track over the past three years. In contrast, current ELs in middle or high school were much less likely to be on-track; these were the students who struggled most to develop proficiency in English.

Student Academic Outcomes in English Language Arts and Mathematics

On state assessments of English language arts, former ELs performed similarly to never ELs in elementary and middle school and somewhat below never ELs in high school. Few current ELs, who were still developing their English proficiency, met state standards.

In math, a smaller percentage of former ELs performed below never ELs, especially in middle and high school, while few current ELs met or exceeded state standards

Attendance

Among elementary students, former ELs had the highest levels of regular attendance, regularly at least 5 percent higher than the rates for never ELs. Current ELs had regular attendance rates similar to but slightly below those of never ELs.

Among middle and high school students, never ELs had the highest rates of attendance, and former ELs rates slightly below them. Attendance for current ELs was lower.

Graduation

Oregon collects data to determine whether students completing grade 9 are on-track to on-time graduation. In 2018-19, a higher percentage of former and never ELs in grade 9 were on-track to graduation, compared to current ELs.

When it comes to graduating in four years, former ELs graduated at rates similar to or better than never ELs, while substantially fewer students who were still ELs in high school graduated in four years.

Post-secondary enrollment

Post-secondary enrollment rates for former ELs, that is, students who were once ELs but were reclassified in elementary and middle school, were very similar to those of never ELs; in both cases, about 60-64 percent of high school graduates enroll in college within 19 months of graduation.

In contrast, students who were still classified as ELs at any point in high school were much less likely to enroll in post-secondary education. About 45 percent of those students went on to college within 16 months of graduation, with some variation from one year to another over the past decade.

Instructional Programming for English Learners

Program models are different ways that ELs can receive instruction that helps them develop their English proficiency and also learn grade-level content. About 17 percent of ELs participated in bilingual or dual language programs in 2018-19. Most ELs (77.3%) of ELs participated in sheltered instruction programs, implying that they received all their instruction solely in English.

District revenues and expenditures

As in reports from previous years, this report summarizes the ratio of expenditures to revenues. In 2018-19 that ratio was 1.04, higher than it was in the previous four years for which this ratio was reported.

Introduction

In 2018-2019, English Learners, and students who used to be English Learners, made up more than 18 percent of all students in Oregon, K-12. They form a vital part of our student communities and bring a variety of cultural and linguistic assets that enrich our schools and districts.

This report describes this diverse population of students, examines their academic progress and achievement, and summarizes information about some key aspects of the education they receive in our state.

Why this report?

ORS 327.016 directs the Oregon Department of Education to prepare an annual report on English language learner program funding and student outcomes. The report is designed to summarize state- and district-level progress in meeting the needs and objectives of students in English language learner programs. Specific information to be included in each report is as follows:

- English language learner student demographics
- Length of participation in English learner programs
- Participation in special education and related services
- Other information identified by the department.

In addition, the annual report must include financial information, specifically about

- Allocations to each school district from the State School Fund for students enrolled in English language learner programs
- The extent to which these district allocations are expended for students in English language learner programs
- The categories of expenditures for English language learner program funding.

Each year's report looks back at the prior school year, which for this year is the 2018-19 school year. This report is made available on the Oregon Department of Education website, submitted to House and Senate Education Committees, and provided to district school boards. State law requires the report to be made available at the district's main office and on school district websites.

Structure of this report

This report is divided into six sections:

Section 1: Demographics of English Learners

Section 2: Participation in Targeted Programs

Section 3: Language Development and Academic Achievement

Section 4: Attendance, Progress toward Graduation, Graduation, and Beyond

Section 5: Instructional Programming for English Learners

Section 6: State Revenues and Expenditures for English Learners

Several aspects of this year's report differ from the reports issued in previous years. For example, where appropriate, this report provides comparisons to never ELs (students who have never been identified as English Learners). For the first time, it also includes information about instructional programs, that is, the way in which ELs are taught. Furthermore, in addition to describing statewide patterns, in some cases the report indicates which districts serve high percentages of certain types of students, such as students in Migrant Education or adolescent newcomers.

Section 1: Demographics of English Learners in Oregon in 2018-19

As of May 1, 2019, there were 102,786 students in Oregon who had direct experience with the state’s English learner programs, as current or former English Learners. Within this student population, there was tremendous diversity in their lived experiences, and in the cultural and linguistic assets they brought to their schools and districts.

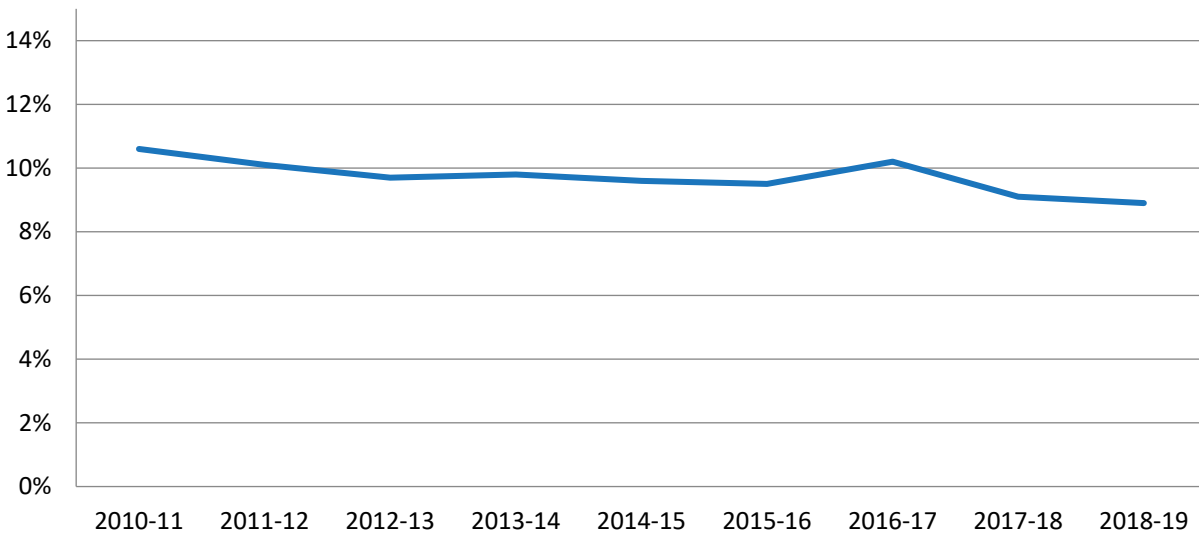
This section summarizes the demographics of Oregon’s English learner population, considering grade levels, interruptions in formal education among newcomer immigrant students, and racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity.

Current and Former English Learners

Current English Learners (ELs) are students who have limited English language proficiency either because English is not their native language or because they come from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on their English proficiency.

In 2018-19, 51,122 of Oregon’s 575,195 K-12 students, or 8.9 percent, were classified as current ELs.¹ This is the lowest percentage of current ELs in the state over the past decade (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percentage of all Oregon students who were current English Learners, 2010-11 to 2018-19



A similar number (51,664 or 9.0%) were classified as **former English Learners**. This simply means that these students were at one time classified as current ELs, but because they had developed proficiency in English, they were no longer eligible for services provided to ELs. Research does suggest, however, that former ELs

¹ This number, like other counts presented in the report, represents the number of current ELs enrolled in Oregon schools on the first school day in May, 2019. The total count of students can fluctuate from day to day, as students enroll in or leave schools. Using the first school day in May provides a consistent point of reference for the numbers in this report.

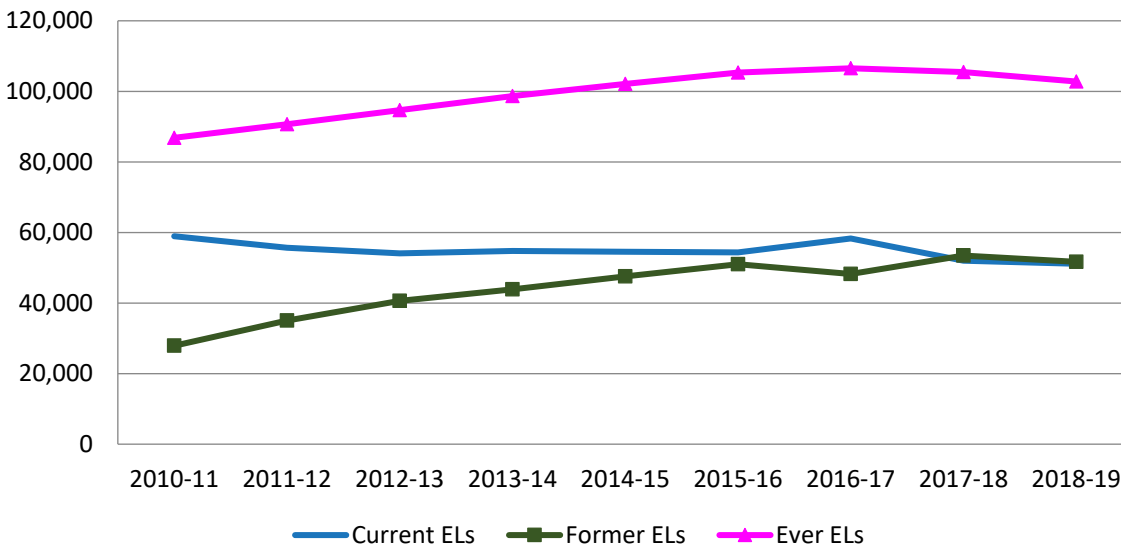
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may still need support to develop high levels of proficiency in academic English, the English needed to be successful in school (de Jong 2004; Flores, Batalova & Fix, 2012).

To better understand the experiences and outcomes for ELs over time, it is useful to compare what are called **ever ELs** (a group comprised of both current and former ELs) to **never ELs** (students who have never been classified as English Learners. Without this type of comparison, it can be easy to underestimate the achievement of English Learners, who tend to perform at lower levels while still developing their English, but who, once proficient, often perform academically at significantly higher levels (Hopkins, Thompson, Linqunti, Hakuta & August, 2013). In 2018-19, 17.9 percent of Oregon students were ever ELs, while 82.1 percent were never ELs.

Figure 2 depicts the change in the number of current, former and never ELs in Oregon over the past decade.² In general, it depicts a growing population of ever ELs in the state, peaking in 2016-17 at 106,543 and declining slightly since then to 102,799 students.

Figure 2. Number of current, former, and ever ELs in Oregon, 2010-11 to 2018-19



² The count of former ELs was limited prior to 2012-13 and may still have contained some minor inaccuracies for a couple of years afterwards, so it is possible that the ratio of current to former ELs may have changed less than the graph suggests.

Characteristics of current English Learners in Oregon

Most current English Learners were in the elementary grades.

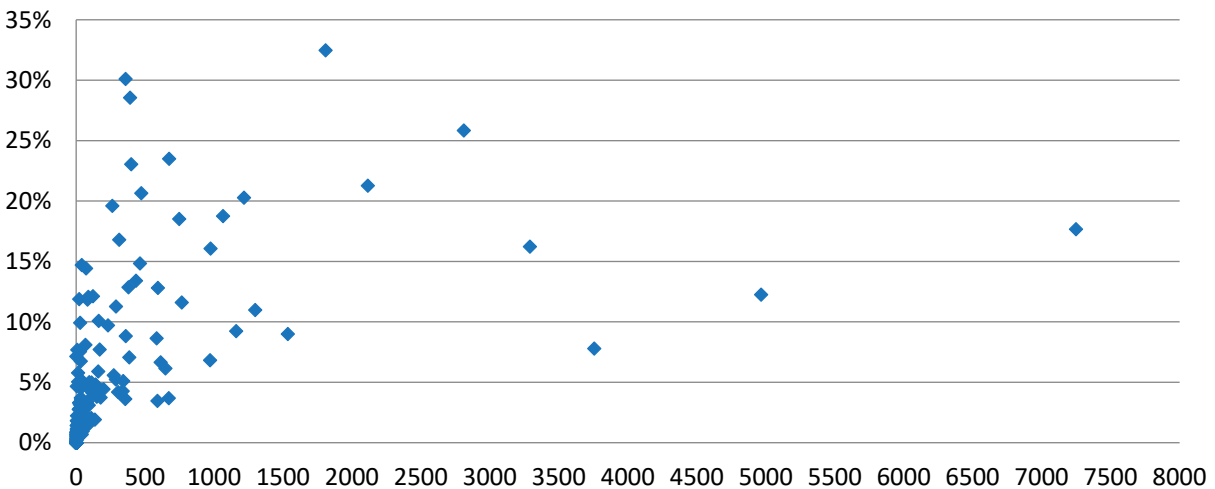
Although there were current ELs at every grade level, two-thirds of them (67.5%) were in kindergarten through fifth grade. Far fewer were in middle school (grades 6-8, 18.9%) or in high school (grades 9-12, 13.6%). This makes sense, given that most ELs develop proficiency in English by the end of elementary school.

English Learners were not evenly distributed across Oregon districts.

Oregon has 197 school districts. In 2018-19, 143 districts served current ELs, while 54 did not serve any. An additional 46 served between 1 to 19 current ELs, which means they have too few current to be identified for EL-specific improvement under state accountability guidelines.

Figure 3 provides a depiction of the distribution of current ELs across Oregon districts. The total number of current ELs in 2018-19 was plotted along the x axis. While most districts are clustered at the lefthand corner, with zero or few current ELs, there were six districts with more than 2,000 current ELs. As some of those districts were larger, however, even large populations of ELs might make up fewer than 10 or 15 percent of the student population (reflected by the y axis). Thus districts faced very different situations in terms of both the number of ELs they educated and/or the percentage of their student population who required EL services.

Figure 3. Scatterplot comparing the number of current ELs in individual districts with the percentage of all students in the district who were current ELs.



This variation can be seen as well in Table 1, which reports on the six districts with the highest numbers of current ELs (Salem-Keizer, Beaverton, Portland, Hillsboro, Reynolds, and David Douglas), as well as the six with the highest percentage of ELs (Woodburn, Nyssa, Umatilla, Reynolds, Jefferson County, and Milton-Freewater). Note that only Reynolds appears in both lists, and many of those districts with the highest percentage of ELs have comparatively small numbers of students.

Table 1. Districts with the highest number and percentage of current ELs, 2018-19

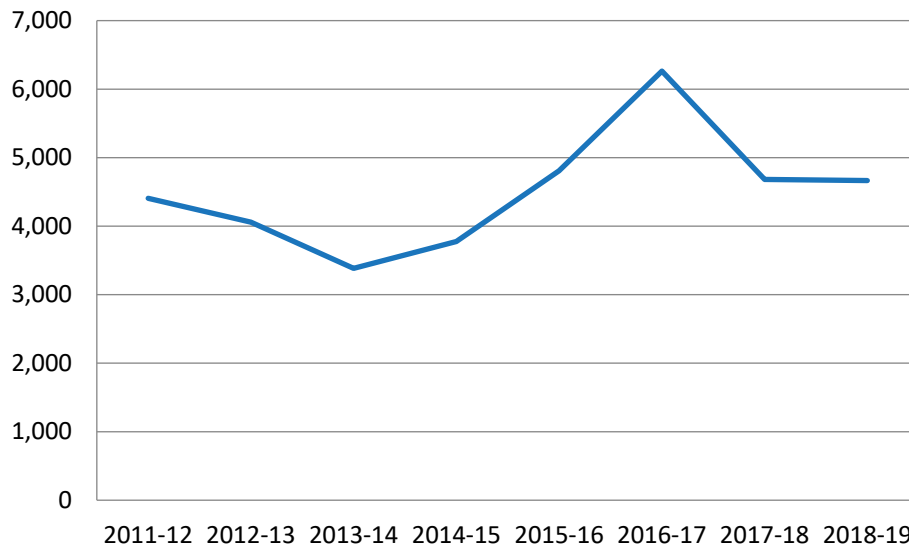
District Name	Number of Current ELs	Percentage of Current ELs
Salem-Keizer	7,249	17.7%
Beaverton	4,966	12.3%
Portland	3,756	7.8%
Hillsboro	3,290	16.2%
Reynolds	2,810	25.8%
David Douglas	2,114	21.3%
Woodburn	1,808	32.5%
Nyssa	358	30.1%
Umatilla	391	28.6%
Jefferson County	674	23.5%
Milton-Freewater	399	23.1%

The number of recent arrivers declined since 2016-17.

The term *recent arrivers* refers to students who were born outside of the U.S. and Puerto Rico and who have been educated in the U.S. for fewer than three cumulative years, that is, recent immigrants. They can be current, former or never ELs, but the majority are current ELs.

In 2018-19, 4,666 Oregon students were classified as recent arrivers. This number is very similar to the prior year’s count (4,683) but a sharp reduction from 2016-17 (6,263, see Figure 4.)

Figure 4. Number of recently arrived Oregon students, 2011-12 to 2018-19



Most recent arrivers (58.8%) were in the elementary grades, but 16.2 percent were in grades 6-8 and 24.9 percent were in high school. ELs who are recent arrivers in middle and high school generally face particularly big challenges, since they have to learn the language while also using English-language textbooks and lectures to learn the content of their courses in a variety of subject areas (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Recent arrivers in the secondary grades are often called *adolescent newcomers*, and districts sometimes design specialized programs to serve their unique language and cultural needs.

Statewide, the total number of adolescent newcomer ELs in 2018-19 was 1,921. Not all districts served many adolescent newcomers, but six Oregon districts each had at least 100 such students in 2018-19 (Table 2).

Table 2. Districts serving at least 100 adolescent newcomers (recently arrived ELs in middle or high school) in 2018-19

District	Number of Adolescent Newcomers (Recently Arrived ELs in Middle or High School)
Portland Public	263
Salem-Keizer	184
Beaverton	182
David Douglas	175
Reynolds	124
Hillsboro	100

In 2018-19, 884 ELs had experienced interruptions in their education.

Some current and former ELs had their education interrupted or received limited formal education before arriving in the U.S. school system. Often, these were immigrant or refugee students who had spent time in refugee camps or whose process of immigration to the U.S. prevented them from attending school for a time. These students are classified as ***Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education***, sometimes abbreviated as SIFE or SLIFE.

Students are counted as SLIFE students if they are

Immigrant students or ELs who enter school in the U.S. after grade two and

a – Have had at least two fewer years of schooling than their peers of the same age, and

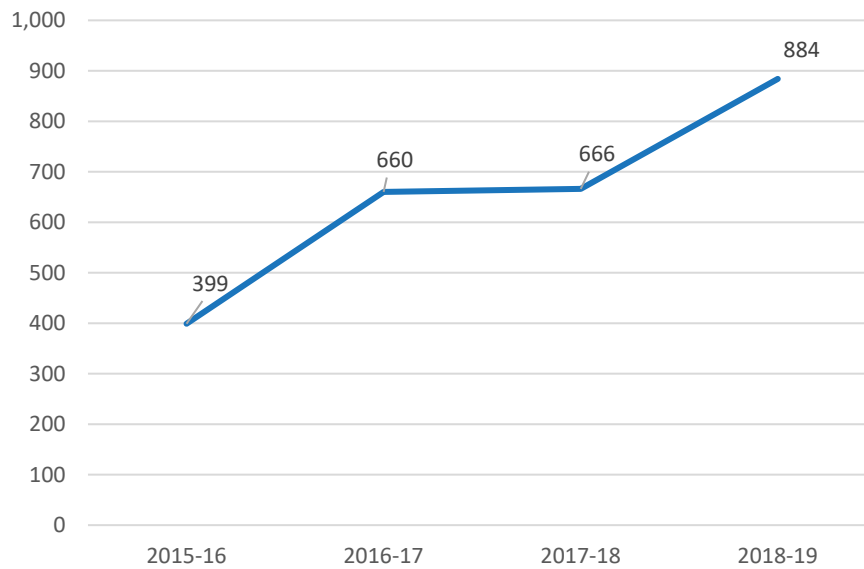
b – Function at least two years below their expected grade level in reading and in mathematics, and

c – May be preliterate in their native language.

SLIFE students face unique circumstances. In addition to having missed at least two years of schooling, some arrive having experienced significant trauma. Schools need to find ways to serve SLIFE EL students without placing them in classes with younger students, since forming relationships with peers, including non-EL peers, is a factor that appears to improve academic outcomes (Browder 2014).

The state began collecting data on the number of students with limited or interrupted formal education in 2015-16. For the 2018-19 school year, districts reported a total of 884 ELs with limited or interrupted formal education across Oregon (about 1.7% of all current ELs). As Figure 5 illustrates, the number of students with limited or interrupted formal education has increased each year since data were first collected in 2015-16. However, it is not clear whether that represents a genuine growth in the number of students or rather the improved ability of districts to collect and report the data to the state.

Figure 5. Number of current ELs with interrupted formal education, 2015-16 to 2018-19



Most students with limited or interrupted formal education were in high school (55.4%). Another 26.8 percent were in the middle school grades (grades 6-8), and only 17.7 percent were in the elementary grades.

The challenges involved in serving students with limited or interrupted formal education did not show up evenly across Oregon districts. Instead, ELs with limited or interrupted formal education were for the most part concentrated in a few districts. Twelve districts in the state, identified in Table 3, served at least 20 ELs with limited or interrupted formal education in 2018-19. These twelve districts alone served over 80 percent of all the SLIFE students in Oregon. Note that five of the six of the districts serving many adolescent newcomers (Table 2) also serve significant numbers of ELs with interrupted formal education (Portland Public, Salem-Keizer, Beaverton, Reynolds, and Hillsboro).

Table 3. Districts serving at least 20 current ELs with interrupted formal education in 2018-19

District	Number of ELs with limited or interrupted formal education
Beaverton	138
Reynolds	121
Hermiston	117
Hillsboro	103
Portland Public	83
South Lane	31
Salem-Keizer	31
Ontario	25
Centennial	25
Forest Grove SD 15	25
Springfield SD 19	24

ELs across the state spoke 165 unique languages.

Statewide, current ELs spoke about 165 different languages at home. By far the most prevalent home language among Oregon ELs was Spanish, spoken at home by 79.0 percent of all ELs. The four next most common languages were Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Arabic. Taken together, these top five languages represent 88.3 percent of home languages among ELs. However, some of the other languages were very common in individual schools or districts.

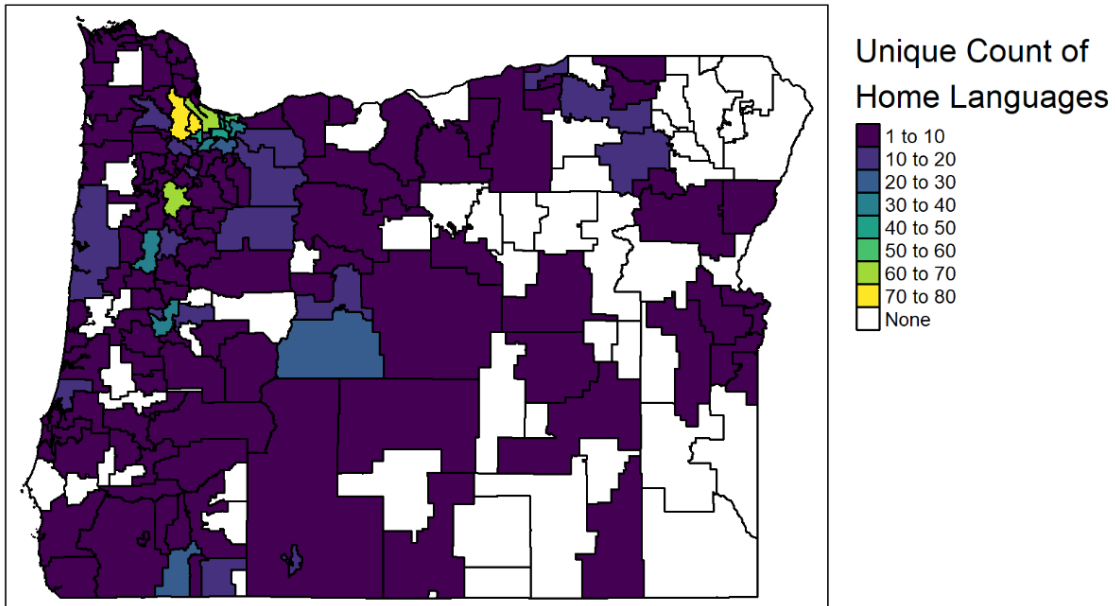
Table 4. Most prevalent documented languages of origin among current ELs, 2018-19

Language	Number of ELs with this Language	Percentage of ELS with this Language
Spanish	40,411	79.0%
Russian	1,564	3.1%
Vietnamese	1,114	2.2%
Chinese	1,091	2.1%
Arabic	964	1.9%
English ³	833	1.6%
Somali	700	1.4%
“Other languages”	685	1.3%
Chuukese	623	1.2%
Ukrainian	402	0.8%
Marshallese	372	0.7%
Japanese	348	0.7%
Mayan languages	306	0.6%
Korean	299	0.6%

Home languages other than Spanish tended to be concentrated in a few districts. Figure 6 provides a map illustrating the number of different home languages in different Oregon districts. A few districts, mostly in the Portland metropolitan area and around Salem, serve students with over 60 unique home languages.

³ All 833 ELs with English as the home language identified as American Indian / Alaska Native.

Figure 6. Geographic distribution of home languages across Oregon districts, 2018-19

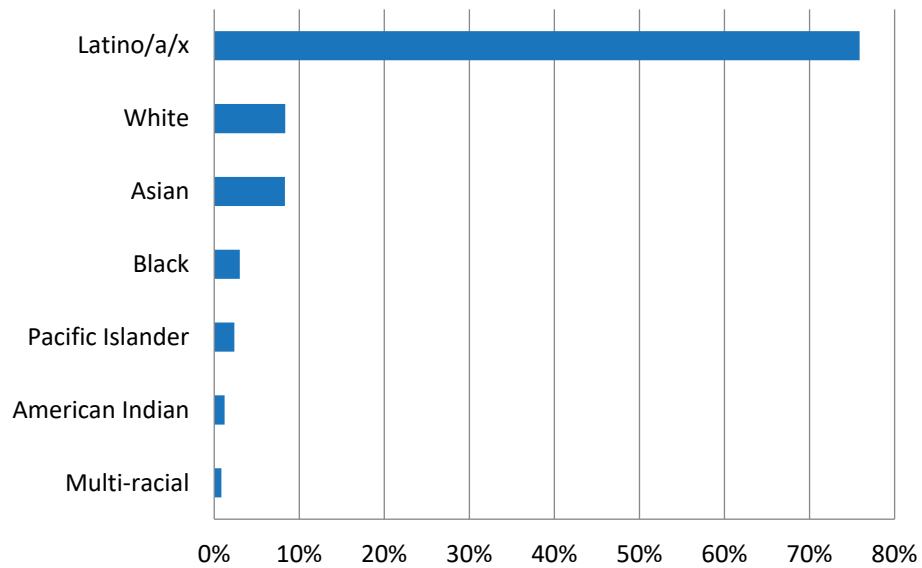


In recent years, the number of students speaking Somali, Mesoamerican languages, and some other languages have increased. The Oregon Department of Education is updating the way districts report home languages of ELs to allow for more detailed and accurate reporting in the future.

The vast majority of current ELs are Latino/a/x.

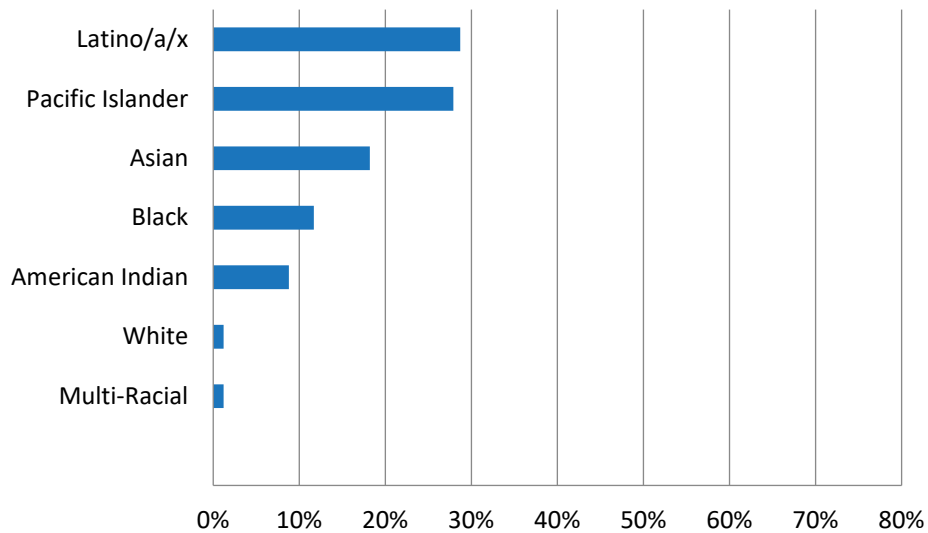
Of the 51,122 current ELs in Oregon in 2018-19, 38,794 (75.9%) were Latino/a/x. Slightly over 8 percent each were White and Asian, while smaller percentages were Black, Pacific Islander, American Indian, or multi-racial (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Percentage of current ELs by race/ethnicity, 2018-19



This does not imply, however, that most Latino/a/x students in Oregon were ELs; in fact, a little over a quarter of them were. This was also true of Pacific Islander students. Figure 8 depicts the percentage of students within each racial or ethnic group that were current ELs in 2018-19.

Figure 8. Percentage of each racial or ethnic group who were current ELs, 2018-19



Section 2: Participation in Targeted Programs

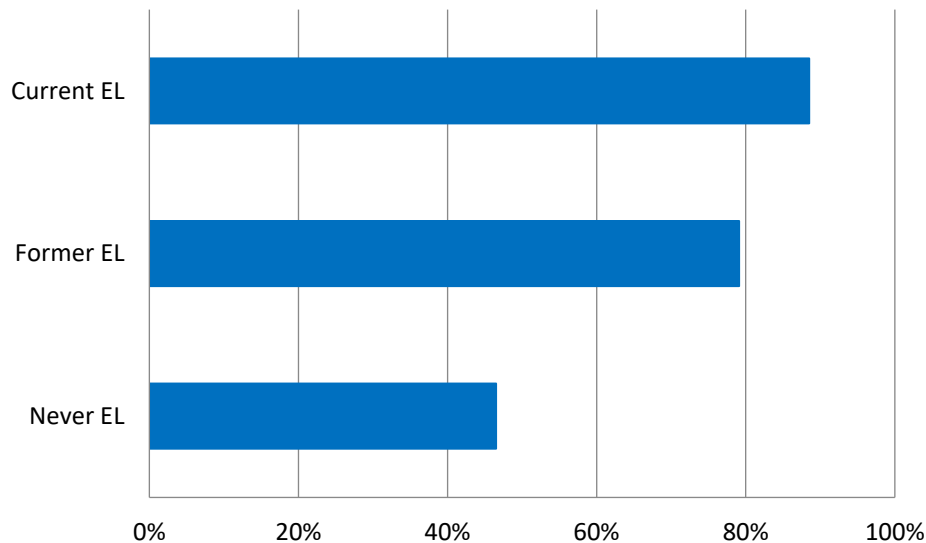
Schools and districts deliver a range of programs that aim to address the needs of particular groups of students. These include free and reduced-price lunches, special education, migrant education, and talented and gifted programming. Most of these received some federal funding; talented and gifted programming is funded only at the state level. This section of the report describes the participation of Oregon ELs in each of these programs.

Free and Reduced Price Lunch

Students who come from low-income families (those earning below 185 percent of the federal poverty line) are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL). The percentage of students receiving FRL is often used as an estimate of the level of poverty in a school. It is an imprecise measure, since some eligible students and families never apply to the program, but it provides the best data currently available to compare poverty levels across schools or districts.

Data on the percentage of students receiving FRL reveal that current and former ELs are much more likely than never ELs to come from economically-disadvantaged families (Figure 9). Overall, 88.5 percent of current ELs come from low-income families.

Figure 9. Percentage of current, former, and never ELs receiving Free or Reduced-Price Lunch, 2018-19



Special Education

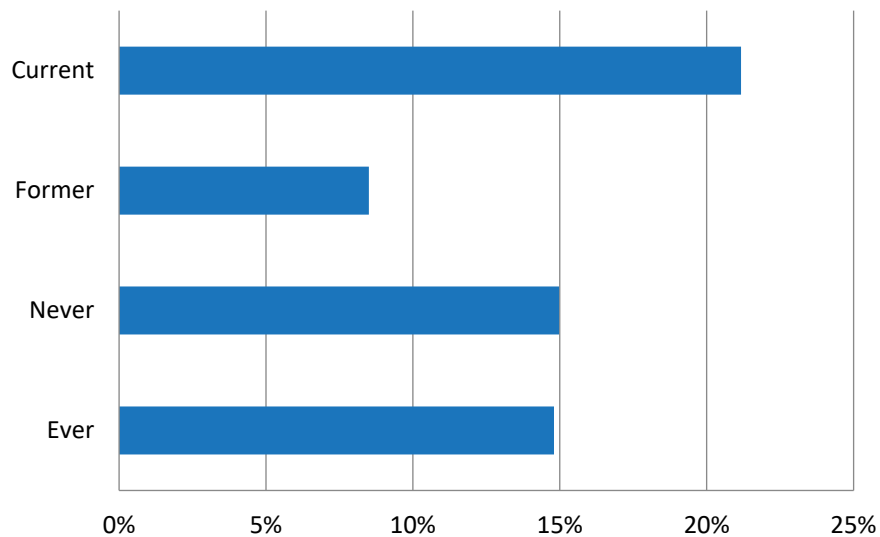
Students who are both current ELs and who received special education services for disabilities are often called **dually identified** students, since they are identified for two types of services, both English language services and special education.

There is concern in the field about the difficulty of accurately identifying ELs who need special education services. On the one hand, schools may incorrectly identify ELs as having a learning disability when in fact it is their still-developing English proficiency which is holding back their educational progress. On the other hand, some schools may overlook genuine disabilities, assuming that ELs just need more time to learn English. Both problems have been documented for years, not only in Oregon but across the United States (Artiles & Ortiz, 2002; Hamayan, Marler, Sanchez Lopez & Damico, 2007).

Ever ELs and never ELs received special education services at about the same rate.

As Figure 10 illustrates, a far higher rate of current ELs (21.2%) received special education services, compared to former ELs (8.5%) and never ELs (15.0%). However, the percentage of ever ELs (all current and former ELs combined) receiving services is very similar among never and ever ELs.

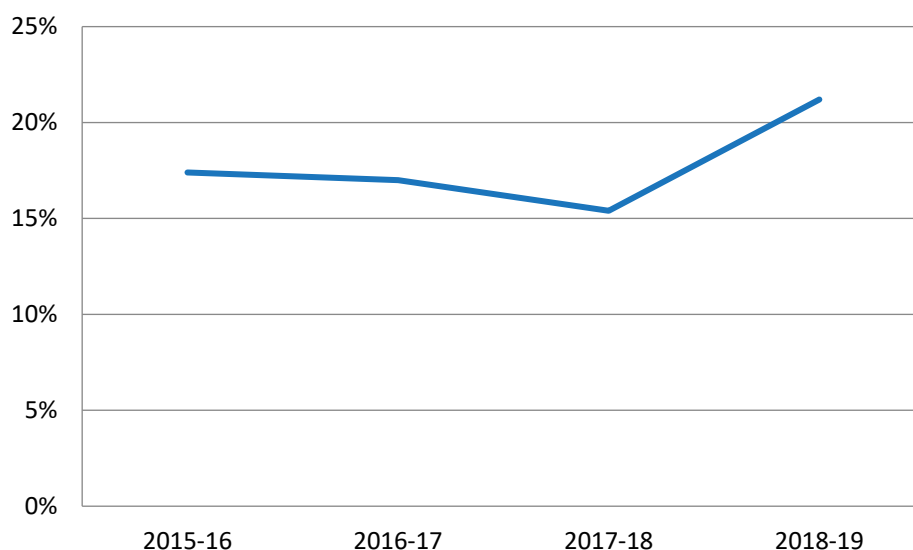
Figure 10. Percentage of current, former, never and ever ELs receiving special education services, 2018-2019



The percentage of current ELs receiving special education increased in 2018-19.

In 2018-19, 10,824 current ELs (21.2 %) were also identified as having a disability and receiving special education services. The number of ELs receiving special education services in 2018-19 represents a substantial increase from the year before, when 15.4 percent of current ELs were dual identified (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Percentage of current ELs receiving special education services, 2015-16 to 2018-19



Most dually-identified students were classified as having a specific learning disability (3,572 students) or a speech or language impairment (3,484).⁴ Other disabilities, in order of frequency, included other health impairments, “unknown,” autism, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, orthopedic impairment, visual impairment, and traumatic brain injury.⁵

Districts varied substantially in the percentage of current ELs who were dually identified.

Some districts had no current ELs who receive special education services, while others had up to 100 percent. The extreme cases (for example, 0% or 100%) however were districts with very small numbers of ELs, where the classification of a single student can shift the percentage a great deal.

Looking only at districts with at least 25 current ELs, however, there is still notable variation in the percentage of ELs who were dual classified ranging from 4.0% to 38.7%. While some of that variation may reflect true differences in the prevalence of disabilities among ELs, it is also possible that the challenges involved in accurate identification was responsible for some of that variation.

⁴ A specific learning disability refers to a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language that may manifest itself in difficulties in listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or doing math calculations. A speech or language impairment refers to a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language or voice impairment that adversely affects a students’ learning or educational performance.

⁵ Some students show up in the database with an “unknown” disability because of the timing and way that datasets are merged. It does not mean that their disability is unknown. In future years, students who appear with an “unknown” disability will have the actual category of disability attached to their record.

Migrant Education

Some ELs are also participants in the Migrant Education Program (MEP). Students are eligible for the MEP if their parent or guardian is a migratory worker and they have moved from one school district to another during the regular school year. Many migrant children live in poverty, and when they move, they confront the challenges of having to adjust to different teachers with different instructional approaches and materials, as well as building new social connections. The MEP is designed to ensure that migrant children receive the support that addresses their unique situation.

Almost 15 percent of current ELs received Migrant Education Program services.

Across the state in the 2018-2019, 7,603 students were classified both as current ELs and participating in the MEP. That number translates to 14.9 percent of all current ELs. It also means that nearly half (49.9%) of the 15,242 students in the MEP were current ELs.⁶

Many districts in Oregon (94) did not serve ELs in migrant education. Many others served a few such students or a few dozen. Eleven districts had more than 200 students who were both current ELs and in the migrant education program (Table 5).

Table 5. Districts with over 200 current ELs in the Migrant Education Program, 2018-2019

District	Number of Current ELs in Migrant Education	District	Number of Current ELs in Migrant Education
Salem-Keizer	927	Canby	309
Hillsboro	678	Hermiston	243
Woodburn	455	Hood River County	234
Medford	398	Beaverton	227
Forest Grove	340	North Wasco County	220
Nyssa	314		

Talented and Gifted

The state requires that all school districts establish policies and procedures to identify students who are talented and gifted (TAG). These could be students who have high general intelligence and/or students who demonstrate unusual academic ability in one or more particular academic area. Districts are also required to develop a plan to provide programs and services beyond regular school programs to ensure that identified students can develop and realize their potential.

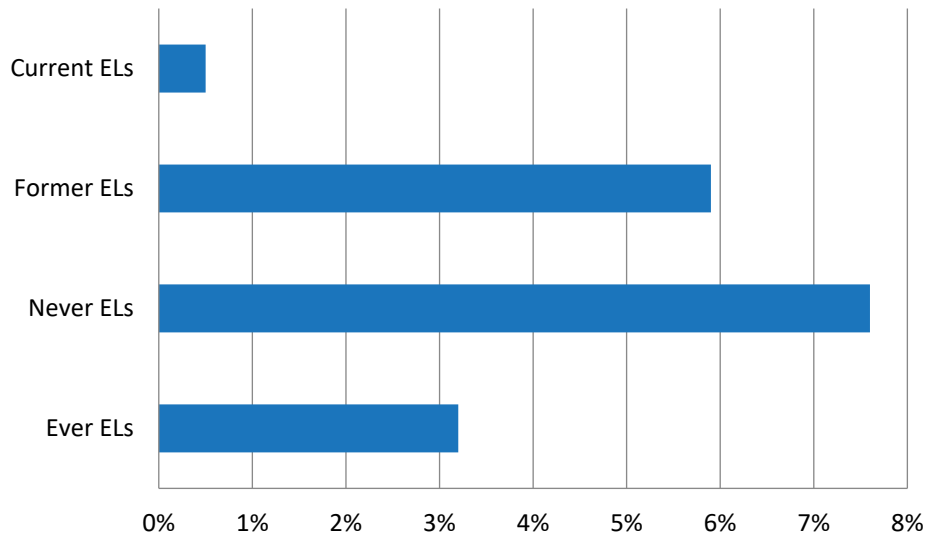
Correctly identifying TAG students and providing specialized services is important because these students may have both unique talents and face unique challenges. For example, some TAG students struggle with perfectionism and the ability to cope with failure; others engage only selectively at school and have high levels of absenteeism; about 10 percent of students identified as TAG drop out of high school (Allen, 2016).

⁶ Again, these numbers reflected counts from May 1, 2019.

ELs were very rarely identified for TAG services.

In 2018-19, 7.6 percent of never ELs (35,818 students) were classified as TAG. In contrast, 5.9 percent of former ELs (3,025) had this classification, but only 0.5 percent of current ELs (254 students) did. Among ever ELs, the percentage of TAG students is 3.2 percent (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Percentage of current, former, never and ever ELs identified for TAG, 2018-19



District-level variation in the percentage of students classified as TAG is very large for all three groups: never, former and current ELs. However, dramatically fewer current ELs were classified as TAG, compared to never and former ELs. Only 25 of the state’s 197 school districts had at least one current EL also classified as TAG (Table 6).

Table 6. District-Level variation in identification of TAG students, 2018-19

	Never ELs*	Former ELs*	Current ELs*
Statewide percentage of students classified as TAG	7.6%	5.9%	0.5%
Highest district-level percentage of students classified as TAG	19.0%	15.8%	4.4%
Lowest district-level percentage of students classified as TAG	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Number of districts with no students classified as TAG	54	123	172

*Districts were only included if they had at least 10 students in the category.

Section 3: Language Development & Academic Outcomes for English Learners

Students who are ELs have to develop proficiency in English. In addition and at the same time, they are expected to learn all the same academic content as other Oregon students. This section of the report provides data about ELs’ language proficiency and academic outcomes.

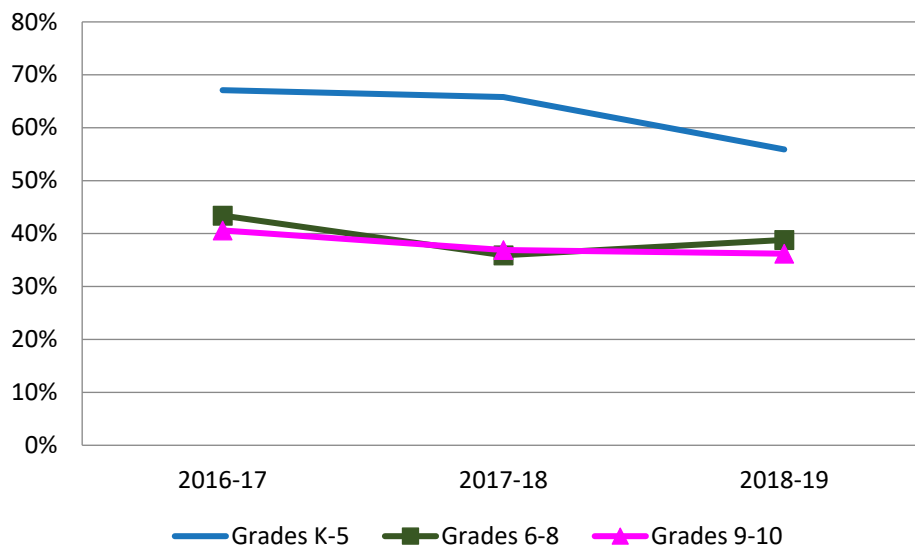
Progress Toward English Proficiency

Each spring, current ELs take a test called the English Language Proficiency Assessment, or ELPA. This test measures students’ proficiency in the domains of speaking, listening, reading and writing English, and determines students’ overall level of proficiency.

For the past three years, Oregon has tracked whether or not students were on-track to reach English proficiency within seven years. ELs are considered on-track if they meet or exceed the trajectory expectation in three of the four domains, compared to their initial level of proficiency and the number of years they have already been an English learner.

As Figure 13 illustrates, about two-thirds of current ELs (about 66-68%) in elementary school were on-track to proficiency in 2016-17 and 2017-18, but that percentage dropped to 55.9 percent in 2018-19. Smaller percentages of students in middle and high schools were on track to language proficiency. In middle school, in 2016-17, 43.4 percent of current ELs were on track, with that percentage dropping to 35.9 and 38.8 percent, respectively, in 2017-18 and 2018-19. Among students in grades 9-12, in 2016-17, 40.6 percent of current ELs were on track. This dropped to about 36 percent in both 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Figure 13. Percentage of current ELs on track to develop English proficiency, by grade span, 2016-17 to 2018-19



Long-term ELs made up 15 percent of all current ELs.

In recent years, educators have become concerned about the number of ELs who do not achieve English proficiency within the expected time frame, that is, they do not move from current ELs to former ELs. These students are often referred to as *long-term English Learners*. The state defines a long-term English learner as an EL who has not developed proficiency after seven years.

In the 2018-19, most current ELs (84.9%) had been classified that way for fewer than seven years. This meant that 15.1 percent of ELs were considered long-term ELs. This is a concern because slower development of English proficiency is highly predictive of other academic challenges (Menken & Kleyn, 2009).

Sometimes, development of English can be affected by a student’s disability. Statewide, 31 percent of long-term ELs received special education services due to some type of disability.

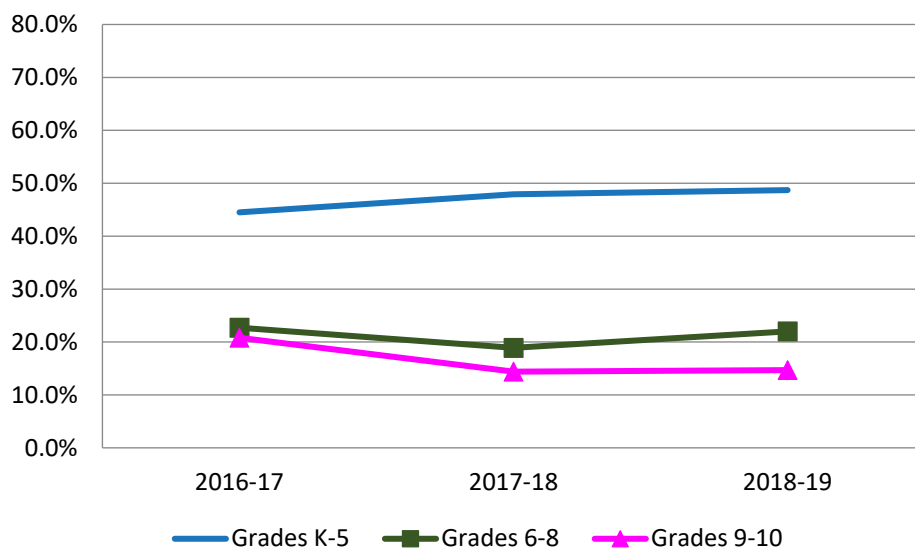
The percentage of ELs who were long-term ELs varied substantially across districts. In 2018-19, 15 districts reported that 20 percent or more of their ELs were long-term ELs.

Dually classified ELs had lower rates of being on-track to English proficiency.

As described earlier, about 21 percent of ELs received special education services (see p.13). On-track to English proficiency, for students receiving special education services, is calculated using an eight-year trajectory, rather than seven years.

Compared to current ELs overall, fewer dually classified ELs were on-track to English proficiency. At the elementary level, about 45-50 percent of dually classified ELs were on-track to English proficiency (Figure 14). Fewer than 25 percent of dually classified ELs in middle and high school were on-track to develop English proficiency.

Figure 14. Percentage of dually classified ELs on-track to develop English proficiency, by grade span, 2016-17 to 2018-19

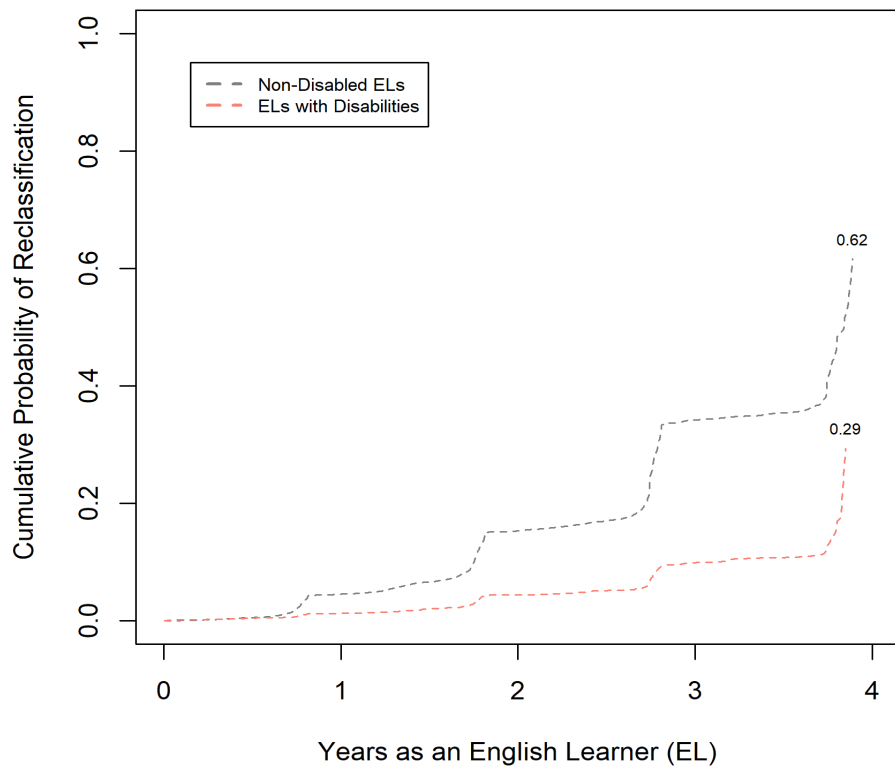


Half as many ELs receiving special education services developed proficiency in four years, compared to ELs not receiving these services.

It is also useful to look at the development of English proficiency from another angle, namely, what proportion of ELs have developed proficiency within a particular amount of time?

Figure 15 addresses exactly this question, for ELs both with and without disabilities. For ELs with no disabilities, the probability of developing proficiency and being reclassified as a former is EL in four years is 62 percent. For ELs with disabilities, it is 29 percent.

Figure 15. Probability of reclassification (development of proficiency), for ELs with and without disabilities, 2018-19



Student Academic Outcomes in English Language Arts and Mathematics

Each year, all Oregon students in grades 3-8 and 11 take state assessments in English language arts and mathematics. These assessments, offered in English, may be especially challenging for ELs who are still developing proficiency.

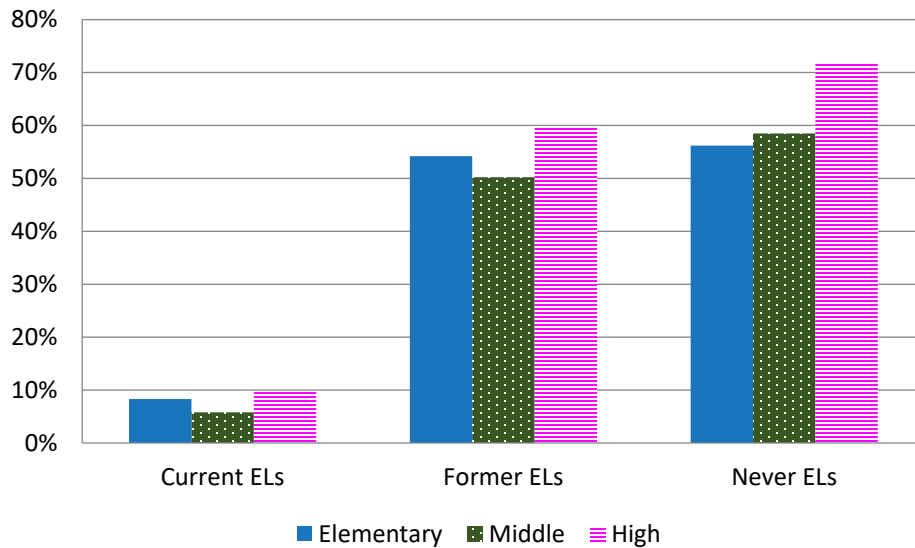
Former ELs performed similarly or slightly below never ELs in English language arts, while few current EL met or exceeded state standards.

At the elementary level (grade 3-5, represented by the solid blue bars in Figure 16), 8.3 percent of current ELs—who were still developing proficiency in English—met or exceeded state standards in English language arts. In contrast, 54.2 percent of former ELs in elementary hit this benchmark. This was close to the percentage of never ELs meeting or exceeding standards, 56.2 percent. In fact in many districts (56), a higher percentage of former ELs, compared to never ELs, met benchmark in elementary English language arts.

At the middle school level (grades 6-8, represented by the green dotted bars), 5.8 percent of current ELs met or exceeded state standards in English language arts. About half (50.2%) of former ELs and 58.5 percent of never ELs met or exceeded standards. In 42 districts, a higher percentage of former ELs, compared to never ELs, met benchmark.

Among high school students (grade 11, represented by the striped magenta bars), 9.7 percent of current ELs, 59.9 percent for former ELs, and 71.7 percent of never ELs met or exceeded state standards. At the high school level, there were 35 districts in which a higher percentage of former ELs than never ELs met the benchmark in English language arts.

Figure 16. Percentage of current, former and never ELs meeting or exceeding state standards in English Language Arts in elementary, middle and high school, 2018-19⁷



In math, former ELs performed below never ELs, especially in middle and high school, while fewer than 10 percent current EL met or exceeded state standards.

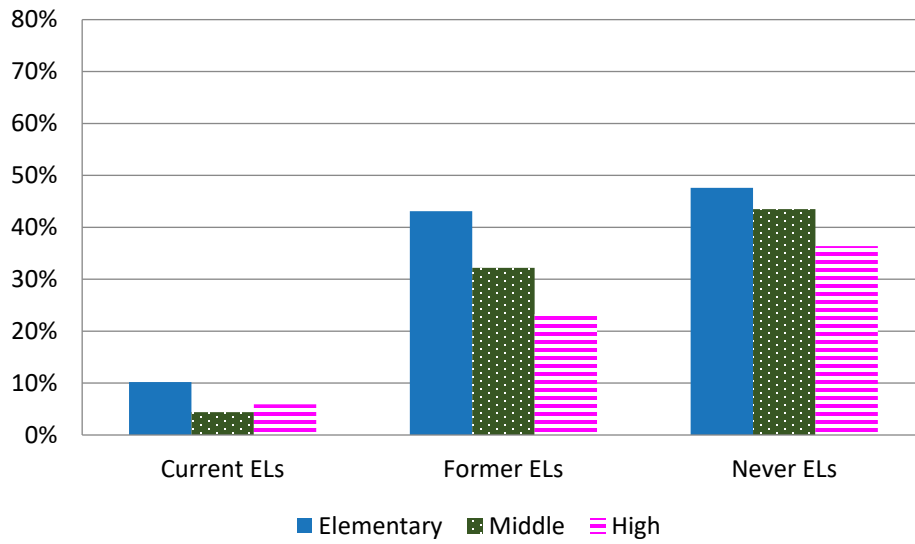
At the elementary level, 10.2 percent of current ELs met or exceeded standards in math (Figure 12). 43.1 percent of former ELs met or exceeded standards in math (Figure 17). The percentage of former ELs meeting or exceeding standards was somewhat higher, 47.6 percent.

Among middle schoolers, 4.4 percent of current ELs met or exceeded standards in math, compared to 32.2 percent of former ELs and 43.5 percent of never ELs.

Among students in grade 11, 5.9 percent of current ELs, 23.3 percent of former ELs, and 36.4 percent of never ELs met or exceeded standards in math. At all levels and among all groups, fewer students met or exceeded standards in math than in English language arts.

⁷ In this chart, the group “current EL” includes only students who were classified as current ELs at the time of testing. In some other state accountability reports, the performance of current and recently reclassified ELs are reported together.

Figure 17. Percentage of current, former and never ELs meeting or exceeding state standards in mathematics in elementary, middle and high school, 2018-19⁸



⁸ Also in this chart, the group “current EL” includes only students who were classified as current ELs at the time of testing.

Section 4: Attendance, Progress toward Graduation, Graduation and Beyond

This section of the report examines ELs' attendance levels, their progress in ninth grade toward graduation, and their rates of graduation. It also examines their levels of post-secondary enrollment.

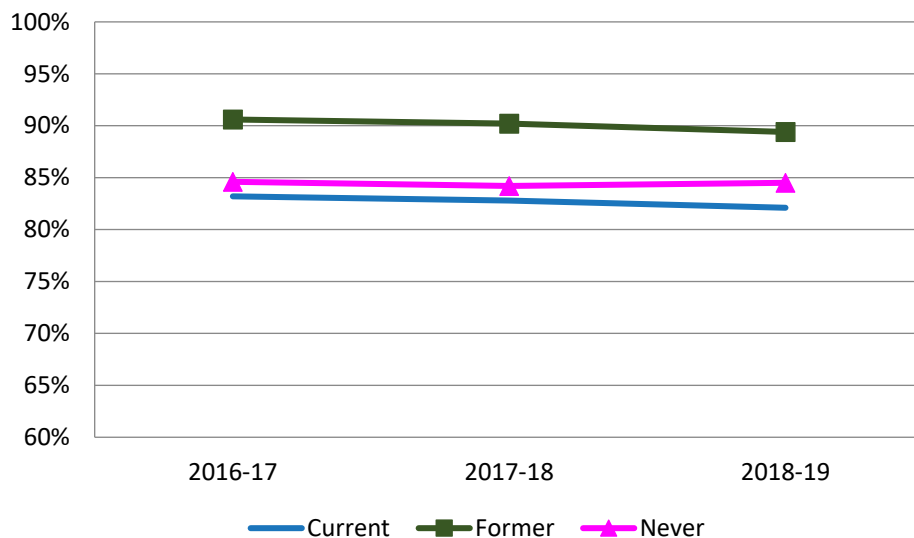
Attendance

In recent years, researchers and educators alike have devoted increasing attention to ensuring students attend school on a regular basis. Research has shown that even moderate levels of absenteeism can have a profound impact on students' grades, performance on standardized assessments, graduation rates, and success in college (Allensworth & Evans, 2016; Ginsburg, Jordan, & Chang, 2014). In Oregon, students are considered to have "regular attendance" at school if they attend over 90 percent of the school days in a year.

In the elementary grades, a higher percentage of former ELs attended regularly than did current and never ELs.

Among elementary students, former ELs had the highest levels of regular attendance, regularly at least 5 percent higher than the rates for never ELs. Current ELs had regular attendance rates similar to but slightly below those of never ELs (Figure 18). These trends changed little over the past three years.

Figure 18. Rates of regular attendance for elementary-grade students, by EL status, 2016-17 to 2018-19

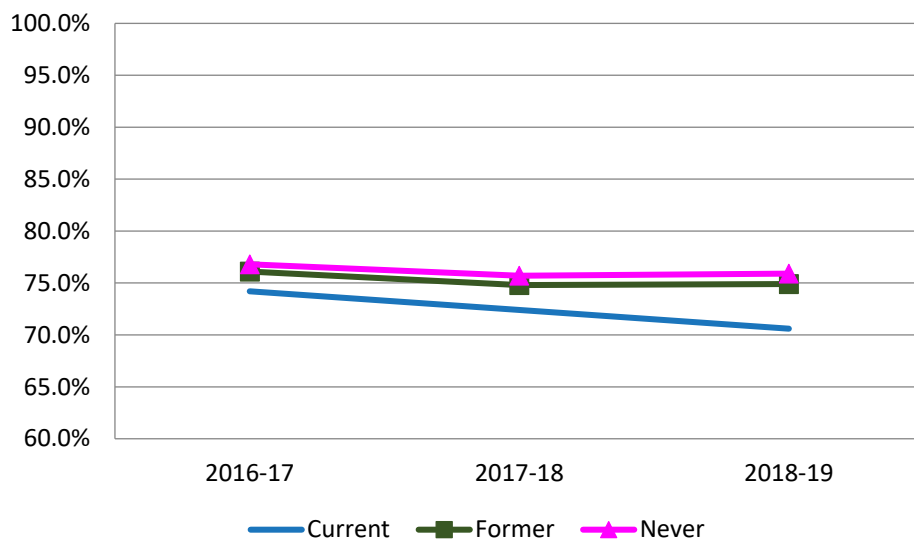


Among middle and high school students, never ELs had the highest rates of regular attendance, and former ELs rates slightly below them. The percentage of current ELs with regular attendance was lower and declined more in 2018-19.

Among secondary students, never ELs had the highest rates of regular attendance, followed closely by former ELs. Current ELs had somewhat lower rates of attendance. Over the past two years, attendance rates for current ELs have declined 3.5 percentage points, while that of former and never ELs have declined less than one percentage point (Figure 19).

Note that across all three groups, smaller percentages of students had regular attendance at the secondary level than at the elementary level.

Figure 19. Rates of regular attendance for secondary students, by EL status, 2016-17 to 2018-19



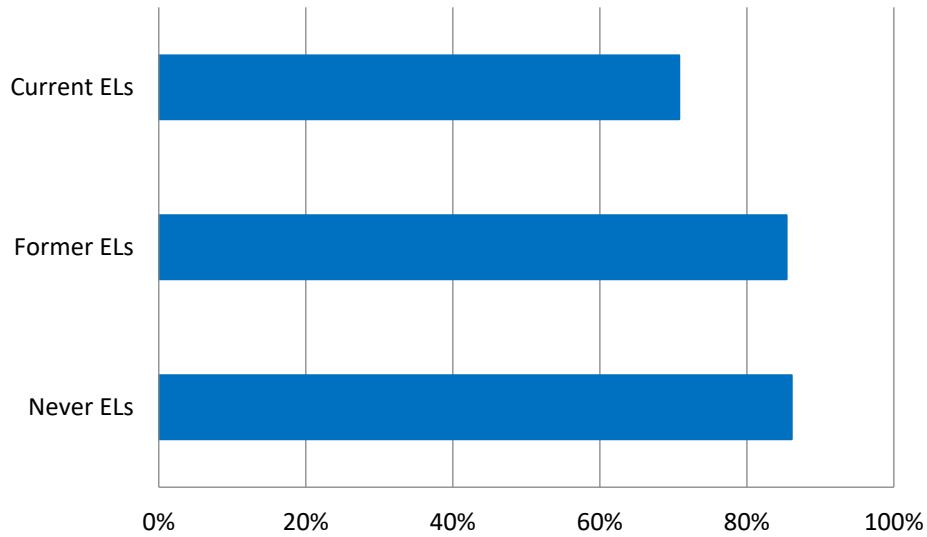
On-track to graduate

Around the country, states and districts track whether students in grade 9 are on-track to graduate. They do this because ninth grade is a critical year for determining whether students will ultimately graduate from high school; identifying students who are not on track allows schools to provide support and intervention to help keep students in school. In Oregon, students in grade 9 are considered on track if they earned at least six credits (a quarter of what they need to graduate).

In Grade 9, a higher percentage of former and never ELs were on-track to graduation, compared to current ELs.

As figure 20 illustrates, the highest percentage of on-track students was seen among never ELs (86.1%), but almost as many former ELs were also on-track (85.4%). A smaller percentage of current ELs, who were still developing English proficiency, were on-track in grade 9 (70.8%).

Figure 20. Percentage of grade 9 current, former and never ELs on-track to graduation, 2018-19



Four-Year Graduation

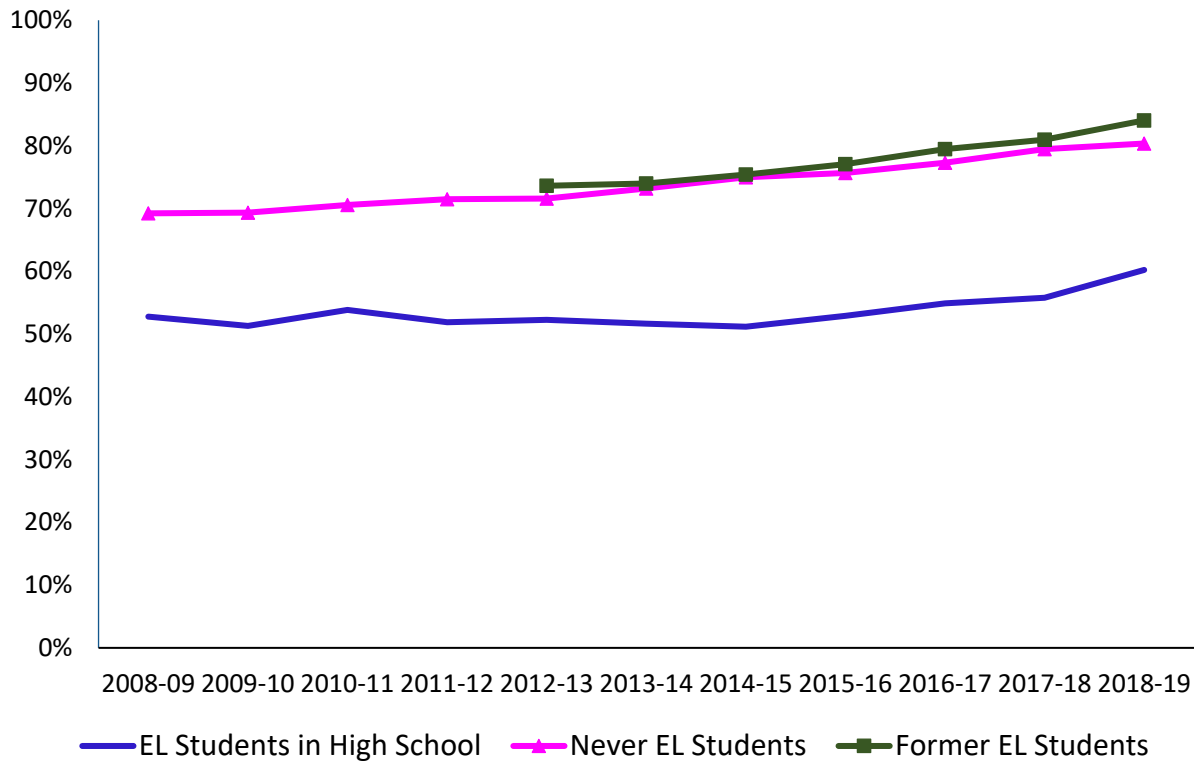
Figure 19 reports the percentage of students who graduated in four years, comparing three groups: students who were current ELs at any point in high school (whether they reclassified before graduating or not), students who were former ELs by the time they started high school, and never ELs. It also tracks those percentages over the past decade.

Former ELs graduated at rates similar to or better than never ELs, while substantially fewer students who were ELs in high school graduated in four years.

A comparison of the blue line (ELs in high school) to the pink line (never ELs) reveals a persistent difference in the percentage of students graduating in four years (ranging from 16.5 to 23.7 percentage points).

Data for former ELs were first collected in 2012-13 and are represented by the green line in Figure 21. Since then, former ELs have consistently had the same or greater percentage of students graduating in four years, compared to never ELs.

Figure 21. Percentage of ELs in high school, former ELs, and never ELs graduating within 4 years, 2008-09 to 2018-19



Oregon State Seal of Biliteracy

The Seal of Biliteracy offers recognition of the many cognitive, academic, and economic benefits of bilingualism. Forty-six districts, two charter schools, one private school, and Chemeketa Community College offered Seals of Biliteracy in 2018-19. Students can earn a Seal of Biliteracy on their diplomas if they meet the following requirements:

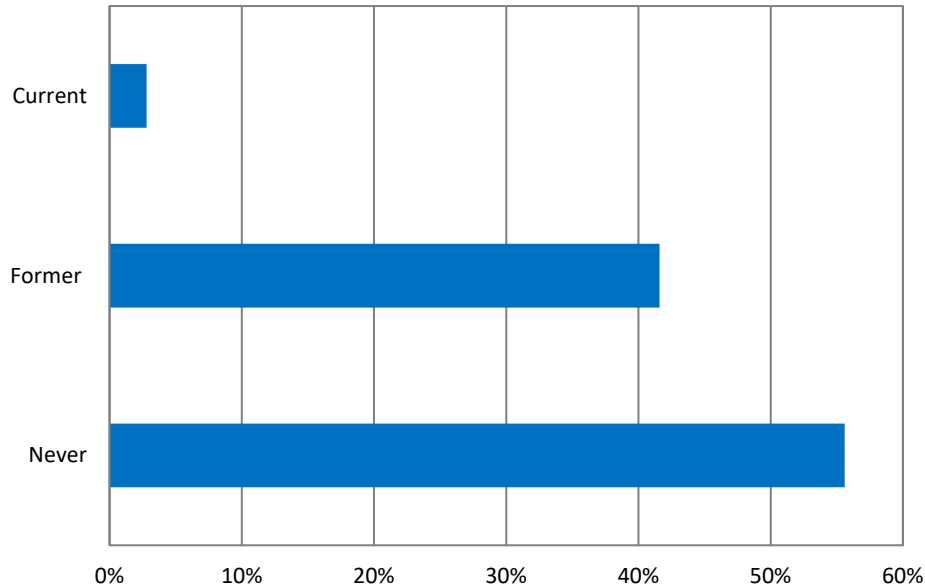
- Meet all graduation requirements
- Demonstrate reading and writing skills in English (the means for doing this may vary by district)
- Score at the intermediate high level in listening, speaking, reading and writing in a partner language (i.e., the partner language is the assessed language)

In 2018-19, 2,727 students earned the Seal of Biliteracy, most of them never ELs

Of the 2,727 students who earned the Seal in 2018-19 (including 27 students from Chemeketa Community College), over half of them (1,517 or 55.6 percent) were never ELs (note that never ELs include students who have never been identified as an EL and have a home language of English or another language). Former ELs are students who exited EL program services before the 12th grade and made up most of the rest of those

earning the seal; they earned 41.6 percent of the seals (1,135 students). Seventy-five students, or 2.8 percent of all those who earned seals, were current ELs while in the 12th grade (Figure 22).

Figure 22. Percentage of students earning the Seal of Biliteracy who were current ELs, former ELs, or never ELs, 2018-19



Over the past five years, the number of students earning the Seal of Biliteracy has grown dramatically.

In 2014-15, only 350 students earned the Seal of Biliteracy. This number has increased consistently in each subsequent year, reaching 2,727 in 2018-19.

Students earned the Seal of Biliteracy for their knowledge of 22 different partner languages, but Spanish was by far the most common partner language.

More than three-quarters of those earning the Seal of Biliteracy (78.5%) had Spanish as their partner language. The next five partner languages, in order, were Chinese, French, Japanese, German and Russian, all with 50 or more students earning the Seal with that language. A few students (49) had two partner languages, and two students had three.

About half (49%) of those earning the Seal reported English as their primary language, while 51 percent reported another language.

Ten districts had over 50 students earning the Seal of Biliteracy.

In 2018-19, the ten districts identified in Table 7 all had at least 10 students earning the Seal of Biliteracy.

Table 7. Districts with 10 or more students earning the Seal of Biliteracy

District	Number of Students	District	Number of Students
Portland*	991	Corvallis	78
Salem-Keizer	260	North Clackamas	74
Eugene	237	West Linn/Wilsonville	63
Woodburn	205	Hood River	61
Beaverton	173	Hillsboro	56

*In 2018-19, Portland submitted data to the Biliteracy Seal data collection for students who earned Seals of Biliteracy in 2018-19 and prior years.

Postsecondary Enrollment

Over the past ten years, Oregon has tracked the percentage of high school graduates who go on to postsecondary education. Such an education offers students a wide range of advantages, including greater employment and financial security, particularly in tight labor markets, as well as more opportunities to contribute to their community and often, greater life satisfaction.

Never ELs enrolled in post-secondary education at higher rates than did students who were current ELs in high school. Rates of postsecondary enrollment of former ELs were very similar to those of never ELs.

Figure 23 reports the rates of enrollment in postsecondary education (two- or four-year college programs) for three groups of Oregon students.⁹ Never ELs, represented by the green line on the graph, are those students who were not English Learners at any time in their K-12 education. During the decade represented on the graph, postsecondary enrollment rates ranged from 62.6 to 67.0 percent.

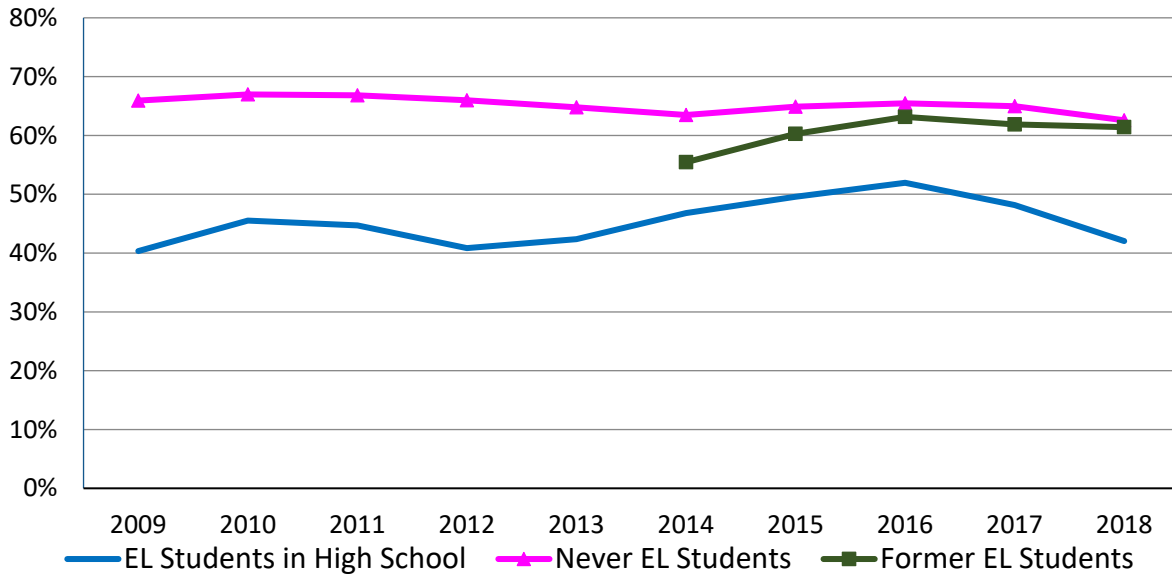
The blue line in figure 23 reports the same information for students who were English Learners at any time in high school, whether or not they were reclassified as former ELs during their high school years.

Postsecondary enrollment rates for students who were ELs in high school were substantially lower for non-ELs, averaging about 45 percent, and dropping to 42.0 percent for 2018 graduates.

The magenta line in figure 23 represents the rates of postsecondary enrollment for students who were former ELs in high school. These were students who had at one time been classified as ELs but who were reclassified in either elementary or middle school. Data were first collected for this group of students in 2014. Since then, enrollment in postsecondary education has increased from 55.4 to 61.4 percent, nearly matching rates for never ELs.

⁹ Because students do not always enroll in college in the fall after their graduation, ODE tracks and reports any postsecondary enrollment with a 16-month time span after graduation. So for example, if a student graduated in May 2015 and enrolled in college in January 2016 or in September 2016, that student would be counted as enrolled in college. However, if the student first enrolled in college five years later, that student would not be included in the postsecondary enrollment rate for his or her cohort.

Figure 23. Percentage of ELs in high school, former ELs and never ELs enrolling in college within 16 months of high school graduation, 2009-10 to 2018-19



Section 5: Instructional Programming for English Learners

Districts and schools are required to provide instruction to ELs that ensures they have access to comprehensible content area learning even while they are learning English, as well as a program to help them develop English. They may accomplish this using one of five program models (see Box 1.)

Most current ELs were taught in sheltered instruction programs.

In Oregon in 2018-19, the majority of current ELs (77.3%) were taught in sheltered instruction programs. Two-way immersion programs served about 11 percent of ELs, and bilingual programs served about 6 percent of ELs, nearly all of them elementary students. Newcomer programs were very rare; only 167 students in the state took part in them (Table 8).

Box 1. Program Models for ELs

Newcomer programs are for newly arrived immigrant students and are designed to meet their academic, linguistic and transitional needs on a short-term basis (usually not longer than about two years). Students move from newcomer to other program models when this period of time is complete.

Two-way immersion programs (sometimes called “dual language immersion programs”) aim to develop full bilingualism and biliteracy in English and a partner language. These programs enroll both native English speakers and native speakers of the partner language.

Bilingual programs develop skills in both students’ primary language and in English. Some bilingual programs, known as “transitional bilingual, aim to transition ELs into English-only instruction, most often by mid- to late elementary school. Other programs, known as “developmental bilingual,” continue through elementary school or beyond and, like two-way immersion programs, have the goal of developing full bilingualism and biliteracy. Both types of bilingual programs serve only ELs, not native English speakers.

Sheltered instruction programs provide instruction in English only, but use specialized techniques to accommodate the linguistic needs of ELs. Some sheltered instruction classes are only for ELs, while others may include a mix of ELs, former ELs, and/or never ELs.

Source: ESEA Title III Collection Variables, Definitions & Submission Rules

Table 8. Number of current ELs served in different language models, 2018-19¹⁰

Language Model	Elementary ELs	Secondary ELs	Total K-12
Sheltered Instruction	25,887	13,654	39,541
Two-Way Immersion	4,941	1,004	5,945
Bilingual ¹¹	2,951	93	3,044
Newcomer	38	129	167
Not Participating ¹²	707	1,718	2,425
Total	34,524	16,598	51,122

Note that there are limitations to these data on program models; some schools offer more than one program model, but data may not always reflect more than one model per school. This is an area in which ODE is continuing to improve statewide data collection.

¹⁰ Counts are based on enrollments as of May 1, 2019.

¹¹ This category includes both transitional and developmental bilingual programs. Current data do not allow for accurate counts of the number of students in each type of bilingual program.

¹² “Not participating” in this case includes ELs whose parents declined EL services for them and/or ELs who did not participate in the ELP assessment.

Section 6: State Revenues and Expenditures for English Learners

Each year, Oregon's State School Fund provides funding to districts through General Purpose Grants. The amount of the grants are based on a formula that considers the number of students in the district (referred to as average daily membership weighted, or ADMw). On average the per-pupil funding amount in 2018-19 was \$7,984.¹³

In addition to this basic funding, districts receive additional state funds for each student enrolled in an English language learner program. This amount is weighted at 0.5 of the \$7,984 average, meaning that districts received on average, \$3,974 per EL student. Altogether the state allocated \$190,183,009 for these additional EL funds in 2018-19.

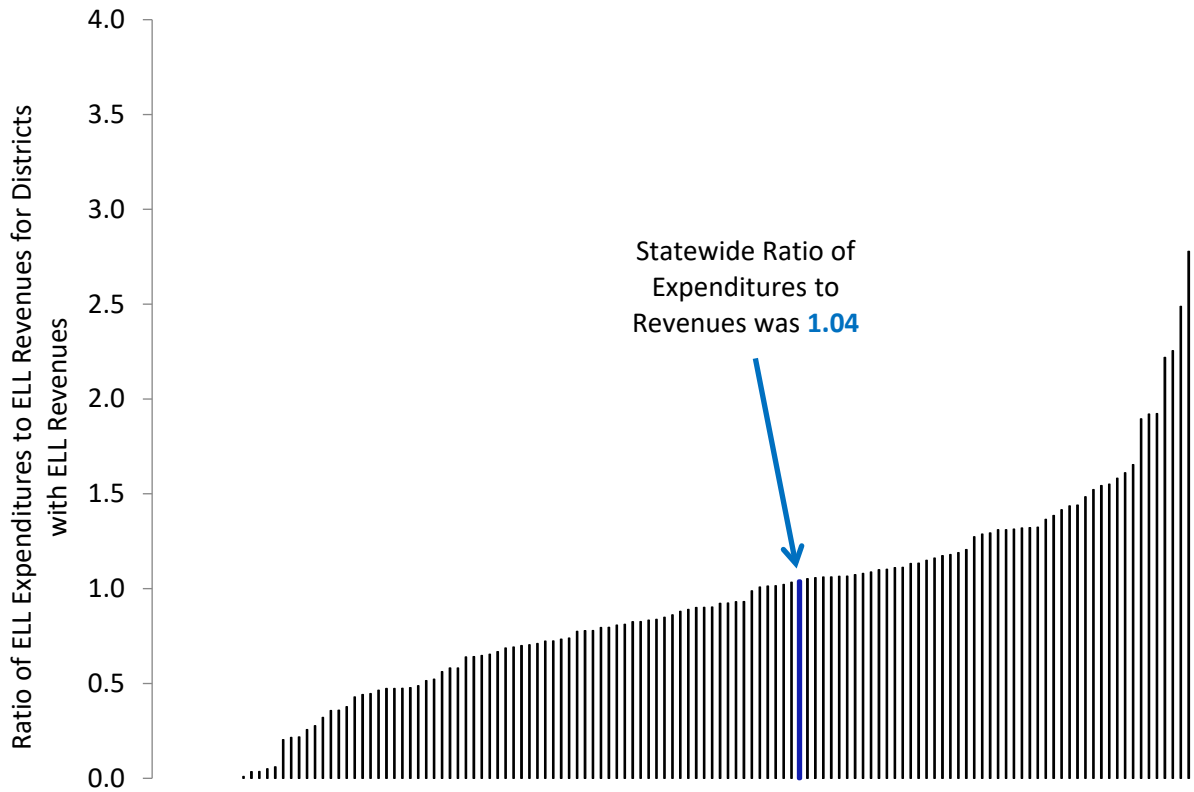
Figure 22 depicts the relationship between ELL revenues allocated to districts via the State School Fund Formula and the total ELL expenditures from the General Fund in districts' accounting financial reports, expressed as a ratio.

Statewide, the ratio of expenditures to revenues in 2018-19 was 1.04, meaning that district expenditures on ELs, overall, total 104 percent of the funds allocated to districts via the State School Fund Formula. Some districts spent more than this percentage (up to 373%), while others spent less (as little as 1%).

The figures on the more extreme ends of the range, however, may reflect variations in the way that some districts report data. Some districts with small EL populations, for example, report revenue received from the state, but do not identify expenditures specific to ELs, even though they may expend funds for EL services. Other districts on the high end of the spending ratio may include expenses for dual language programs that also educate never ELs, rather than calculating the percentage spent solely on ELs.

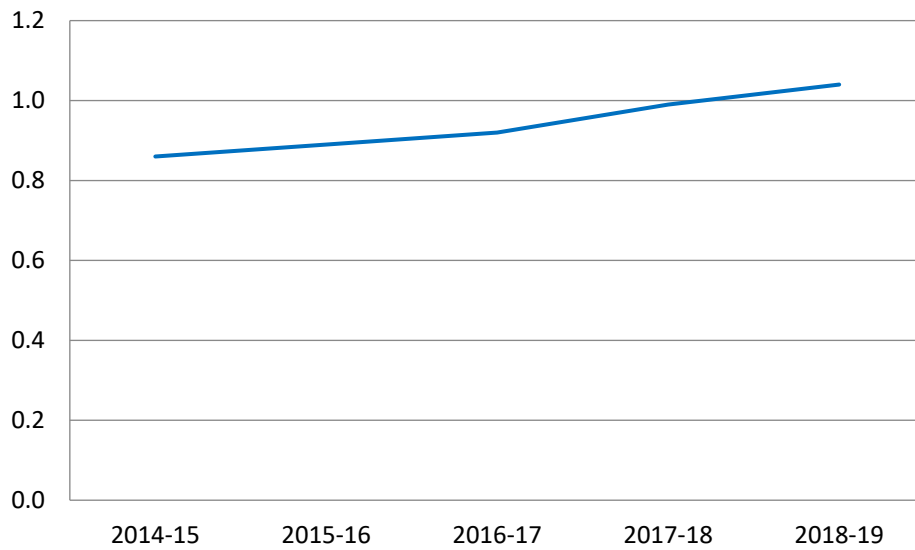
¹³ While \$7984 is the average amount, the grant amount can vary a bit for different districts because of the way the formula is set up.

Figure 24. Ratio of EL expenditures to revenues across Oregon districts, 2018-2019



As Figure 25 illustrates, this statewide ratio has increased steadily since reporting began in 2014-15.

Figure 25. Ratio of statewide expenditures on ELs to revenues, 2014-15 to 2018-19



Expenditures from the General Fund on ELs are either associated with Function 1291 (covering expenditures for instruction and interventions to help ELs learn English) or Area of Responsibility 280 (other supports for ELs, such as interpretation services or transportation).¹⁴

EL expenditures for 2018-19 totaled \$198,536,954. About 77 percent of the expenditures were accounted for using Function 1291 (\$153,405,712), while the remaining 23 percent (\$35,131,242) were accounted for in Area of Responsibility 280.

In addition to this state funding, districts with at least 69 ELs may access federal Title III grants, which in 2018-19 provided an additional \$146.20 per student for supplemental EL services. Districts with fewer than 69 students could join other districts in a consortium to access these grants. These federal funds are not described in this report but information on the grant amounts are available on the [ODE website under Title III Allocations](#).

¹⁴ For a more detailed description of the accounting system categories, see [Oregon's Program Budgeting and Accounting Manual](#).

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