



English Language Education Department– Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Overview

Christina Manos

Director of the English Language Education Department

Key Areas of Budget Responsibility

- I. Ensuring the provision of legally mandated English language education services to students who qualify per state standards
- II. Facilitating registration of new students and families; organizing related supports including translation and interpretation services; maintaining student records; ensuring compliance with state and federal educational and civil rights guidelines
- III. Ensuring instructional leadership and support of strong teaching practices, with primary supervision of 19 professional educators and one tutor.
- IV. Coordinating English Language Education state-mandated ACCESS testing and related progress monitoring responsibilities.
- V. Facilitating district professional development offerings in English language education, including professional development days and early release days; necessary training for implementation of new curriculum and instruction (such as the new ELlevation curriculum used to support newcomer students) etc.

Key Budget Investments for Fiscal Year 2025

English Learner Student Information Software

Key investments of \$ 8,000

Included in this category are:

- \$8,000 to purchase new software for a student information management system to track mandated screenings, assessments, and progress of English Learner students

English Language Education Teacher

Key investment of \$75,000

- 1.0 FTE English Language Education teaching position to be assigned to the high school level to address increased student caseloads, estimated salary of \$75K for experience and level of education and training; this position was added this year for mandated ELE services and was funded from emergency homeless shelter state funding (Note: Another 2.0 FTE ELE teaching positions were added this year and are expected to continue next year at Beal and Floral Street Schools using this same state funding source)

English Language Education Coordinator

Key investment of \$115,000

- 1.0 FTE new English Language Education Coordinator position to address needed capacity for state-mandated screenings, assessments, and program support; this position would also supervise and evaluate ELE teaching staff; estimated salary of \$115,000 for experience and level of education and training, plus coordinator stipend for leadership role including 10 additional work days

Estimated total requested new investments in the appropriated budget in FY25: ~\$198K

Efficiencies Through Use of Grants or Alternative Funding in Fiscal Year 2025

Grant or alternative funds used for the English language education include:

- Federal entitlement Title III grants for English language education, designed to supplement district funding; ~\$38K was allocated in FY24. This grant supports summer programming for English learners, professional development for the ELE department, and family engagement. This funding may increase in future years if English learner student enrollment increases, but is not predictable – at least level funding is presumed
- Emergency shelter grant- currently funding 3.0 FTE ELE professional teacher positions. (Next year we anticipate this grant will continue to fund 2.0 FTE positions at ~\$114K
- MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)-sponsored programs to provide access to consulting experts, which enables us to access consultant support at no cost, worth approximately \$11.5K
- **Estimated total use of grants/alternative funds in FY25: ~\$164K**

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Christina M. Manos

Director of English Language Education, Pre K - 12

To: School Committee

Re: English Language Education Program Needs

Context

In the past ten years, the district's student population has grown increasingly diverse. Similarly, the growth of the ELE population and the changing profile of the English learners arriving in Shrewsbury means that we must improve instructional supports. At the same time, new requirements from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education compel all districts to develop new systems for monitoring student progress. In order to keep up, we require additional resources. For this reason, the budget recommendations detailed in this report include a request for additional personnel and the related software systems that support our English learners, former English learners and the dedicated educators that teach them.

English Language Education Program Overview

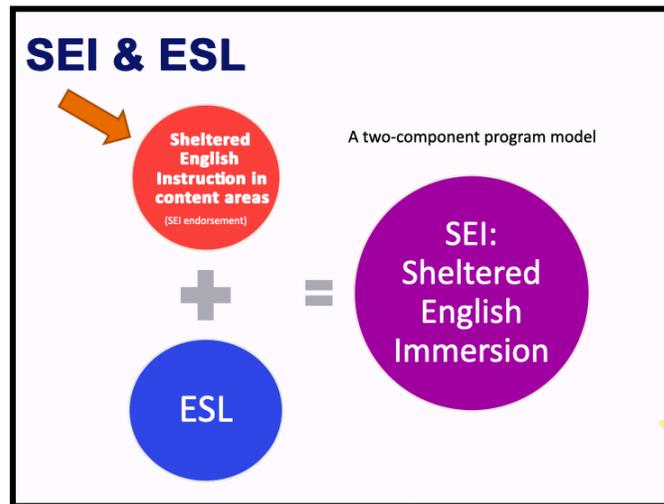
The English Language Education (ELE) program currently serves 316 students in grades K - 12. This represents just about 5% of our total student population in those grades, a relatively low percentage given that over one third of our student body has a first language that is not English. Students are identified as English learners (EL) through the use of the Home Language Survey and a screener assessment tool called the WIDA¹ Screener. The WIDA Screener assessment is used to determine which multilingual students are identified as English learners and will be enrolled in the English Language Education program.



¹ WIDA is a group of 42 member states with origins in No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which brought English learners into the national spotlight. The name WIDA originally stood for the three original member states: Wisconsin, Delaware and Arkansas.

Today, the name WIDA has come to represent 42 states, territories, federal agencies and international schools. The WIDA consortium provides language development resources to those who support the academic success of multilingual learners, including language standards, assessments, professional learning and educator support.

The ELE program in Shrewsbury is a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) model, which is the one program that the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires all districts offer. An SEI program consists of two components – English language development classes, sometimes called English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Development (ELD), and Sheltered Content Instruction, sometimes abbreviated SCI. Whatever term is used, ESL instruction is delivered by an English language education teacher, most often in a pull-out or small group setting. In contrast, SCI is delivered by an SEI-endorsed, content-licensed teacher, typically in a general education classroom. ESL instruction and sheltered content instruction are both integral elements to develop academic language and English proficiency skills in our English learners.

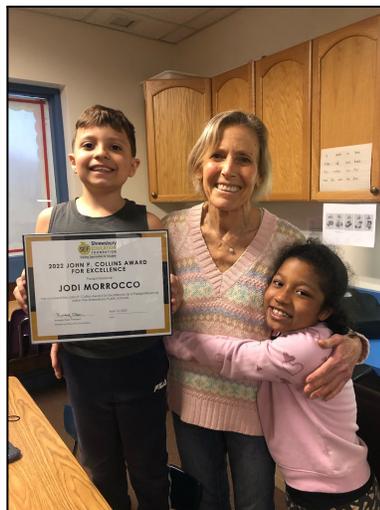


The ELE department in Shrewsbury currently employs nineteen ELE teachers, including three long-term substitutes added since the start of this year to meet mandated service needs (paid for through the emergency homeless shelter state education funding). We also have one half-time SEI tutor, currently working at Floral Street School. One director oversees all aspects of the ELE program, including ensuring district compliance with federal and state mandates.



District ELE Staff

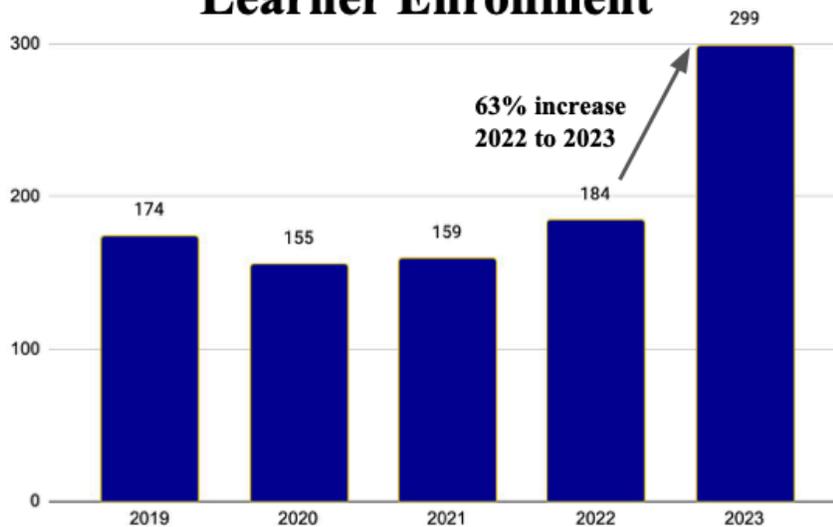
	ELE Teachers	Long-Term Substitute ELE Teachers	Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Tutors	Director
Shrewsbury High School	3.0	1.0		
Oak Middle School	2.0			
Sherwood Middle School	2.0			
Beal School	2.0	1.0		
Coolidge School	3.0			
Floral Street School	3.0	1.0	0.5	
Paton School	0.7			
Spring Street School	0.3			
Parker Road Preschool				
District				1.0
Totals	16.0	3.0	0.5	1.0



English Learner Students in Shrewsbury

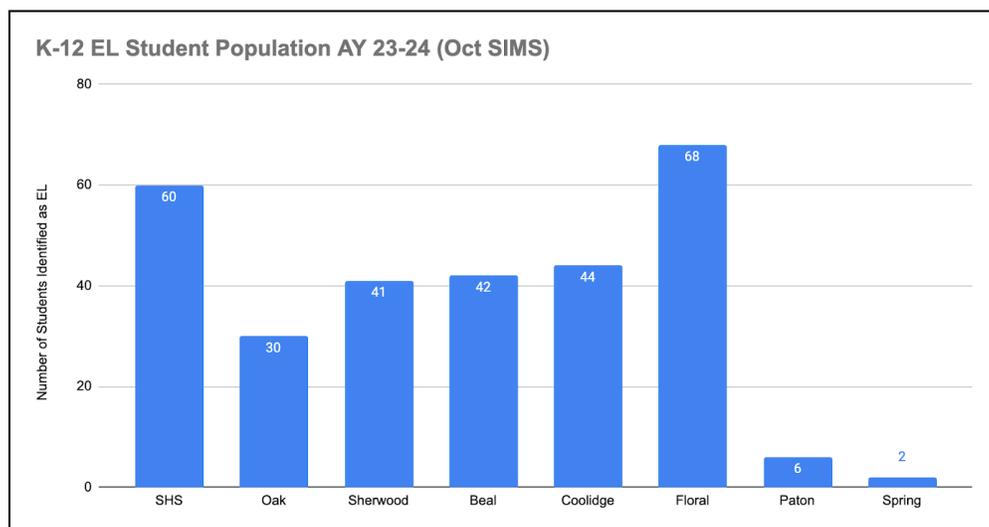
English Learner Enrollment, October 2019 - October 2023

English Language Learner Enrollment



The district is required twice a year to submit information in the state's student information management system (SIMS). At the time of the October 1, 2023 SIMS reporting date, there were 293 English learner students enrolled in our K-12 schools, a marked increase from the previous year as demonstrated in the above graphic from Dr. Sawyer's enrollment presentation last October. The breakdown by school for this year is visible in the chart below.

K-12 English Learner Student Population October, 2023

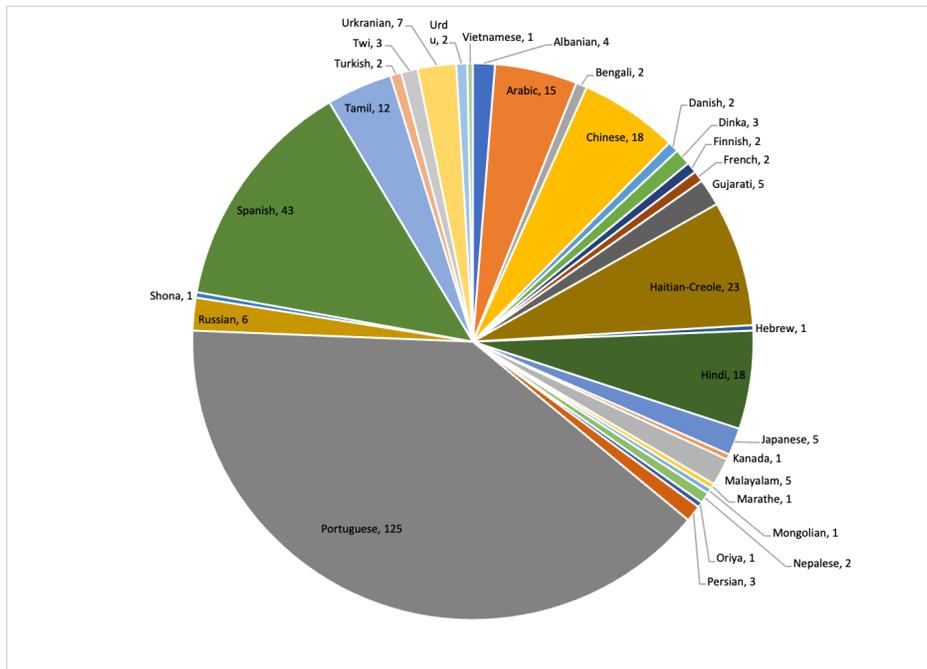


The wide disparity in EL population across the elementary schools is largely due to the demographics of the region served by each individual school. Beal, Coolidge and Floral each have one or more large apartment complexes in their district, and are also positioned closer to amenities that are accessible to families without a vehicle. Newly arrived immigrant families are more apt to rent apartments than buy single family homes. 152 families, comprising approximately 50% of our EL students, live in large apartment complexes like Shrewsbury Green and the Commons.



Our English learner student population, like our student body as a whole, is incredibly diverse. Our students come from around the globe and represent 31 different native languages. The top five native languages are Portuguese (40% of our EL population), Spanish (14%), Haitian Creole (7%), Chinese and Hindi (both about 5.5%); collectively, 72% of our English learners speak one of these five languages. The chart below shows the breakdown of all 31 languages spoken by our current EL students.

Languages Spoken by SPS EL Students, K-12



In addition to being an incredibly diverse group, EL students and families are more transient than most SPS families. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) uses a District Analysis and Review Tool (DART) to compare districts with similar demographics. 2023 DART data shows that EL students are more apt to transfer in or out of district during the school year, and on average, EL students have a lower stability rate than any other subgroup reported for our district.

Shrewsbury
2023 Mobility Rates

Student Group	Churn/Intake Enroll	% Churn	% Intake	Stability Enroll	% Stability
All Students	6,127	6.0	4.4	5,925	97.3
High Needs	2,125	10.7	8.0	1,983	95.9
LEP English language learner	252	31.7	27.4	194	89.7
Low Income	1,183	13.4	10.0	1,081	95.1
Students with disabilities	946	6.0	4.5	913	97.6
African American/Black	246	13.4	11.8	227	93.8
American Indian or Alaskan Native	41	9.8	4.9	39	94.9
Asian	2,097	5.5	3.9	2,043	97.0
Hispanic or Latino	641	12.6	8.6	591	95.3
Multi-race, non-Hispanic or Latino	327	7.0	6.4	307	99.0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-	-
White	2,774	3.9	2.8	2,718	98.1

This is important to remember when we analyze data for the English learner subgroup. More than any other subgroup, from year to year and even from term to term, the individual students who make up this subgroup are changing. This higher level of mobility makes it more challenging to draw conclusions from trends in data such as standardized test results, benchmarks, and course enrollment information.

Former English Learners (FEL)

In addition to our 293 identified EL students, we currently have 186 students who are identified as former English learners, or FEL students. The FEL designation indicates that a student was previously identified as an English learner, and is now in the required monitoring period after re-classification. Students are reclassified from English learner to former English learner once they achieve a certain minimum score on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs assessment, given annually to all English learners. Students need to achieve a composite score of 4.2 and a literacy score of 3.9 in order to be reclassified as a former English learner (FEL). ELE educators monitor FEL students at least twice each school year to ensure they retain their English proficiency skills and continue to successfully engage with academic content. After the four-year monitoring period concludes, FELs are no longer classified as such.

Rationale for Increased Resources

It's expected that the overall budget for the English Language Education department next year will reflect the small increases factored in for all departments to offset the rising cost of contracted services

and materials and supplies. In addition, an approximately \$10,000 portion of the district's overall curriculum budget will be used to supply new curriculum materials for intermediate English Learners as recommended by a recent program review. Given that the biggest unmet need is personnel, the English Language Education program is requesting additional staff and resources for the coming year in order to meet the growing needs of our department.

In addition to carrying forward two long-term sub positions into the 2024-2025 academic year using emergency shelter grant funds, we are respectfully requesting to shift a long-term substitute teaching position at Shrewsbury High School to the appropriated budget, and to add a second district-wide administrative leadership position, an English Language Education Coordinator. The new compliance mandates coming from the federal government are simply too large in number and scope for one director to successfully manage in conjunction with the other responsibilities for managing the day-to-day needs of the English Language Education Department.

In addition, we are requesting about \$8,000 of new funding to provide ongoing access to an online tool called ELlevation, a data management system designed to provide tools to facilitate compliance notices sent to families, progress monitoring, and data reporting. While an added expense, having a digital data management system will ensure efficiency in meeting increased needs. Our needs are increasing as a direct result of three factors:

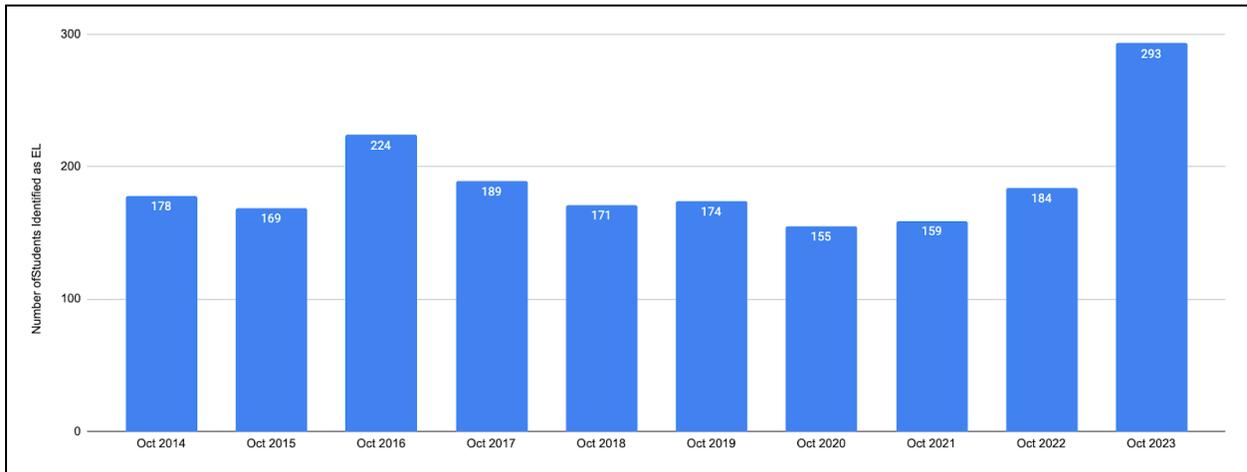
1. Increasing student population
2. Changing learning profile of the EL population
3. New and enhanced mandates from DESE

More details will be provided in the subsections that follow.

Increasing EL Population

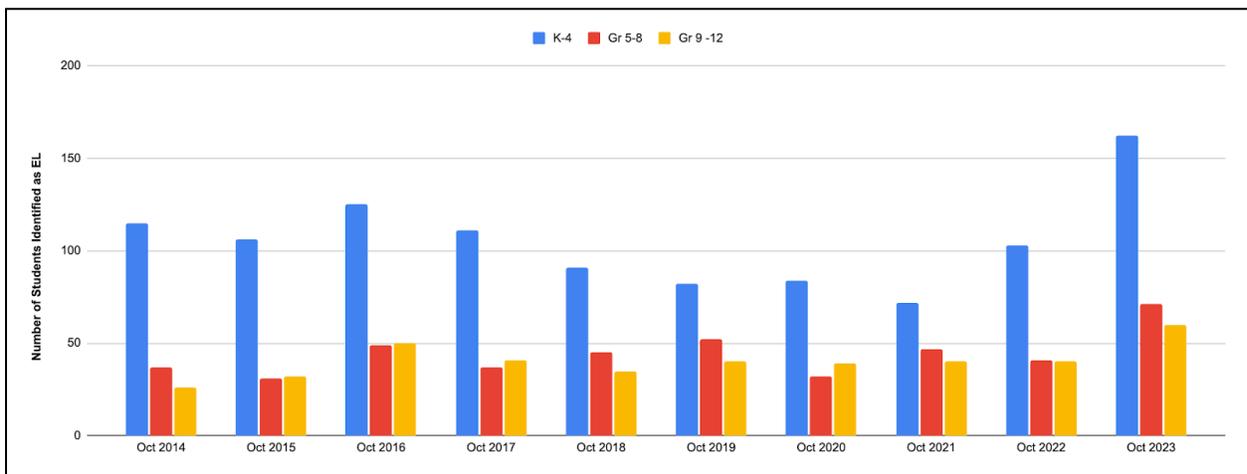
The number of students identified as English learners who attend Shrewsbury Public Schools has increased significantly. Looking at data over the last ten years, you can see that our student population has fluctuated a bit over this period, with notable dips in the fall of 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. Last year, we saw a post-pandemic rebound, and this year, we experienced a surge. From October 2022 to October 2023, our EL population increased by just over 60%, in part because of the emergency shelter located in the district this year. However, even if you control for the EL students residing at the shelter by not including them in the total, our EL population in grades K-12 would have increased by about 35%, which in itself would have been the largest increase we've experienced over the last ten years.

K-12 EL Population District-Wide, October 2014 - 2023:

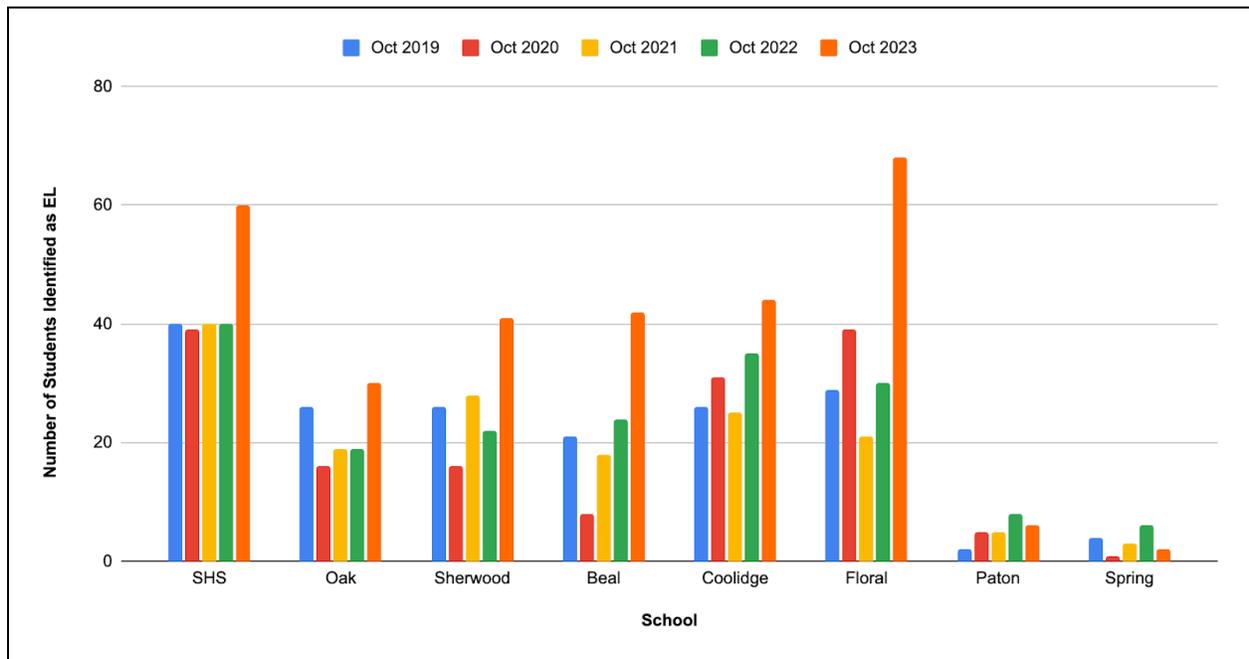


This chart illustrates the fluctuations across grade spans over the past decade. Our EL population is typically higher in the elementary school grades, although all three grade spans have grown over the past decade.

K-12 EL Population by Grade Spans October 2019 - 2023



K-12 EL Population by School October 2019 - 2023



Increasing Space Constraints

Although our newer schools have been designed for small group instructional spaces, it's important to note that increased numbers of English learners and the staff that serve them means that there are increasing demands for instructional space across almost all of our schools. In the past, when faced with space limitations our educators have creatively repurposed various spaces. As this population grows, repurposing spaces for ELE services will also need to increase; as is the case for students with disabilities, by law English learners must have equitable access to adequate instructional spaces. In the past Shrewsbury has been cited by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for failing to consistently provide such space.

Changing learning profile of EL Students

Increasing numbers is only one part of the story. In the past decade, the profile of new English learners has changed as well. The WIDA proficiency scale uses number ratings between 1-6 to describe a student's level of language proficiency, with Level 1 learners considered beginners and Level 6 students comparable to native speakers. About ten years ago, the profile of a typical newly identified EL student was a student coming to us with some English, either from a country with a strong tradition of English education, or the child of multilingual parents who spoke English along with their native language(s) in the home. About ten years ago, somewhere between 20 - 30% of our newly identified/enrolled English learners were newcomers, with an English proficiency level of 1 or 2. This year, approximately 60% of our newly enrolled EL students in grades 1 - 12 have an English proficiency level of 1 or 2, and over 75% of our new Kindergarten EL students have an English proficiency level of 1 or 2. DESE guidance is for students at this level to receive two or three periods of English language development class each

day. An increase in students who enter our program at a level 1 or 2 means more instructional hours, which requires more licensed ESL teachers.

In addition to more students who come in at the entering and emerging levels of English proficiency, we have also seen an increase in English learners identified as having limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). SLIFE students may be from an area of the world where access to education is limited due to geography, socio-economic status, or political situation. Some areas in the world are still struggling to fully reopen schools after the pandemic shut-down, so while students may be completing schoolwork, direct instruction and accountability are lacking. In addition to English language instruction, SLIFE students may need explicit literacy instruction, math intervention, school readiness skills, and access to counseling services; in addition, SLIFE students often experience a longer and more challenging acclimation period to US schools and English education, and ultimately may spend more time identified as an English learner.

New and Enhanced Mandates

Even if we were not seeing an increase in the numbers and the needs of our EL population, the demands on ELE educators would still be increasing due to enhanced and new mandates required by the state and federal government. In recent years, DESE's Office of Language Acquisition (OLA) has added new mandates and tightened the requirements of others, in order to better comply with federal law. These new and enhanced mandates have increased the number of newly enrolled students that must be screened for English language learner eligibility. They have also added new requirements for progress monitoring for students who are not meeting their benchmark on the annual language proficiency test. In the next school year, we will also have a new timeline for screening preschool students, increased expectations for progress monitoring of former English learners (FEL) and opt-out students, and guidance requiring regularly scheduled consultation between ELE educators and general education teachers in preschool and kindergarten. While these mandates are well-intentioned and help ensure equity of access for English learners, they also increase the workload for both ELE teachers and administrators.

To summarize, our growing ELE population and the changing profile of new EL students means that we have more students who need more instructional support. At the same time, DESE is requiring that we do more for English learners, SLIFE students, and former English learners. The demands on ELE educators have and will continue to increase. In order to keep up, we require additional resources.

Thank you for your consideration.

Glossary of Related Terms

English learner (EL) - a student who does not speak English or whose native language is not English, and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English

Former English learner (FEL) - a student who was an identified English learner and who has achieved an English proficiency score high enough to exit the ELE program and who is in their four-year monitoring program

Multilingual learner (ML) - a student who is or has been consistently exposed to more than one language (includes ELs, FELs, world language learners, heritage language learners, etc)

Newcomer - recently arrived immigrant English learner (EL) at the earliest levels of English proficiency. Typically used to describe students within their first 12 months of US education, although the time period may vary based on source.

SLIFE - Students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) are English learners (ELs) with little or, in some cases, no formal education, or whose education has been significantly interrupted.

Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) - An English language acquisition program model in which students receive English language development in both an ESL class and in their content classes. In ESL (also called ELE) classes, students receive systematic, explicit and sustained English language instruction. In content classes, SEI-endorsed content-licensed educators shelter academic instruction and help ELs develop academic language and learn grade-level content along with their proficient English-speaking peers.



ELlevation provides software customized to the needs of English language education programs and is aligned with the majority Massachusetts' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requirements for reporting, monitoring and communicating with families. Adopting ELlevation will streamline many of the administrative tasks required, provide improved access to EL student data for all SPS educators, inform instructional planning, and allow for more robust progress monitoring. Additional information is available [here](#).