Madison Metropolitan School District

Evaluation of the English Language Learner Three-year Plan

July 2019

MMSD's 2015 ELL Three-year Plan

- Reflects MMSD's commitment to promoting effective educational practices that are responsive to the cultural and linguistic assets of all students and equity of access to quality education

- Identified six areas for reform

  1. **ELL Communication and Monitoring Systems**

  2. **Professional Learning and Building System Capacity**

  3. **ELLs: English as a Second Language Services**

  4. **ELLs: Bilingual Education Services**

  5. **Diversity within Bilingual Programs**

  6. **Community Building**

English Language Learner Plan 2015-2018
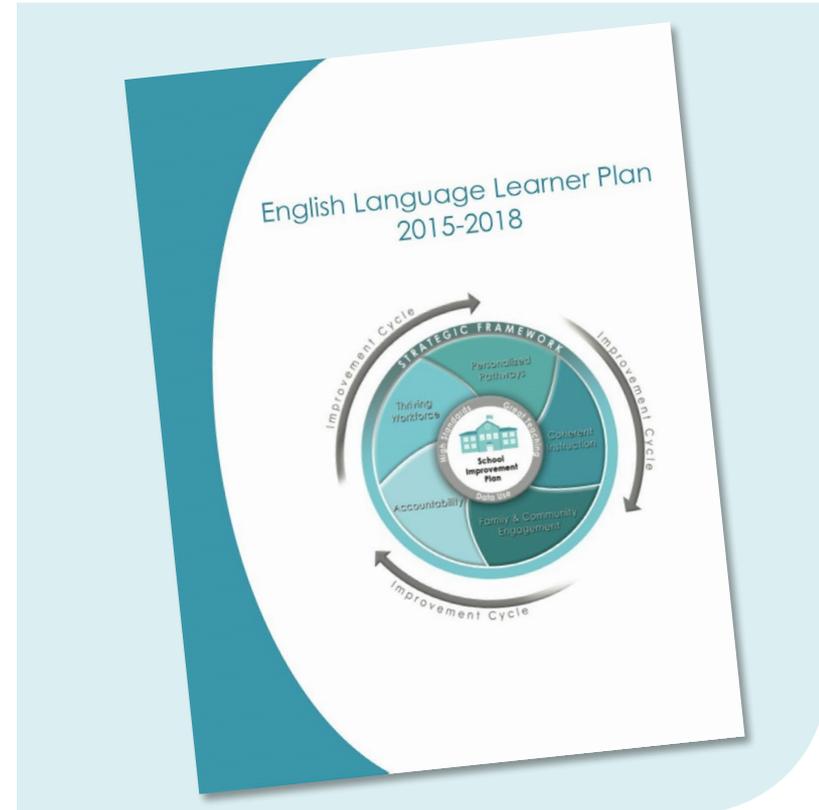
Evaluation Process

- Conducted by the Center for Applied Linguistics in close consultation with MMSD

- Evaluation of services provided and programs implemented in response to the 2015 ELL Plan

- Evaluates implementation, outcomes, and impact using a variety of both quantitative and qualitative data

Sources Informing the Evaluation

1. A culturally and linguistically responsive, equity-focused approach (Gay, 2010)

2. *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (Howard, Lindholm-Leary, Rogers, Olague, Medina, Kennedy, Sugarman, & Christian, 2018)

3. *The Practice Guide for Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School*, from the Institute of Education Sciences (Baker et al., 2014)

4. The *Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol* (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2013), and the Guided Language Acquisition Design (Orange County Department of Education, n.d.)

Evaluation Objectives

1.

To what extent have **strategies** included in the ELL Plan **been implemented**?

2.

To what extent have **indicators** included in the ELL Plan **shown improvement** in the duration of the plan?

3.

To what extent have **stakeholders been satisfied** with the implementation and outcomes of the plan?

Data Sources

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| Document reviews | Secondary analyses of student participation and assessment data | Online survey Distributed to **2,222** school-based staff; **716** responses | Focus groups **179** individuals—district-level and school-based administrators, teachers, parents, and students | Classroom observations **29** bilingual program classrooms; **36** ESL program classrooms |

Key Results and Recommendations
Quantitative Analyses of Student Performance Outcomes

Student Performance Outcomes:

- The External Evaluation disaggregates data by Current ELLs and Former ELLs, Total ELLs and Never ELLs

- The External Evaluation recommends disaggregating ELL data in this manner in the future monitoring reports

Student Performance Outcomes:

Gaps Persist

- The proportion of ELLs performing at "proficient or advanced" or "college-ready" on assessments of academic achievement was far below that of students never classified as ELLs.

- Both subgroups peak at around Grade 4 and then the percentage of proficient or advanced decreases through Grade 8.


Figure 6: 2017–18 MAP Reading and Math: Total ELL and never ELL students at proficient or advanced.

Student Performance Outcomes:

Current and Former ELLs

- Former ELLs outperformed never ELLs on the mandatory grades 3–8 assessments; this effect narrowed around eighth grade.
- ELL performance decreased from grades 3 to 8.

Recommendation: Disaggregate current ELL and former ELL academic outcomes so as to better evaluate the performance of each of these two subgroups.
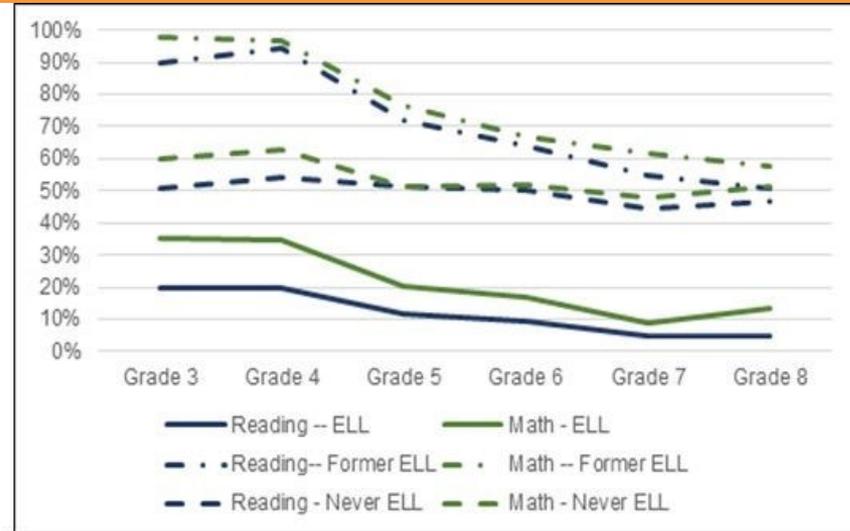
Figure 8: 2017–18 Spring MAP Reading and Math: ELL, former ELL, and never ELL students at proficient or advanced.

Reclassification Rates and Long-term ELLs

- Year-to-year fluctuations in reclassification rates, with a drop in 2017–18, likely due to changes in the classification criteria

- Subgroups of ELLs taking longer to reach English language proficiency:
  - Low-income students: ~1.5 years longer to exit ELL services
  - Hispanic students: ~1 year longer to exit ELL services

- Long-term ELLs
  - Half to 3/4 of ELLs in each grade 6-12 have been classified as ELLs for more than 5 years
  - Long-term ELLs are 1.5 times more likely to receive special education services

Spanish Language Data

There is limited data available with regards to partner-language assessment data (Spanish only) for students in bilingual programs.

Available data indicated that:

- a large percentage of students in K-2 were meeting grade-level benchmarks for literacy
(with a larger proportion of native English speakers than Spanish speakers meeting these benchmarks)
- The literacy skills of middle school students in Spanish were extremely low (minimal).

Recommendation: Consistently utilize Spanish language assessments to be able to better understand students' Spanish language outcomes in bilingual programs.

Key Results and Recommendations

Qualitative Review of ELL Plan Implementation

Key Results

Successes

- MMSD's response to the need for a web-based data system for the collection, management, and communication of data related to ELLs

- The adopted system (Oasys®) has been generally well received and is being utilized by staff.

- Due to Oasys® limitations, MMSD has adopted a better aligned system, eduCLIMBER, which will produce the reports needed to monitor district wide compliance activities

Challenges

- System for distributing the ELL Individual Student Plan (IPS) to parents

- Limited awareness and use of the ELL STAT data dashboard

- Oasys® had limitations to produce reports to better monitor compliance needs

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Key Recommendations

- Form a committee of staff made up of OMGE and school-based representatives to reflect on the **IPS form distribution and collection process** to discuss ways to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the process.

- Make staff more aware of and train them in the use of the **ELL STAT data dashboard**.

- Continue to encourage and support the **advisory/case management process** in the high schools as a mechanism for ensuring that every ELL's needs are being met and challenges and successes are shared with families.

- Provide **more Bilingual Resource Specialists (BRSs)** in the schools to perform the important function of communicating with and engaging the families of ELLs.

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Key Results

Successes

- OMGE provided many learning opportunities for teachers of ELLs. These included professional development in GLAD, Q-TEL, ESL Redesign, and Special Education services related to the needs of ELLs.

- OMGE provided tuition assistance for teachers to obtain ESL and bilingual certification.

Challenges

- Limited professional learning time to support learning about ELL needs

- Substitute shortage to fill in for teachers during training

- Need for training in particular regarding ELLs and special education

Professional Learning and Building System Capacity:

Key Recommendations

- **Provide PD** to teachers of ELLs, including training on programming and instructional guidance.
- Ensure that offices across the MMSD district administration include **ELL-related perspectives in all district initiatives and PD provided**.
- Continue and expand **GLAD training**.
- Continue **QTEL training** and evaluate the degree of implementation and buy-in after it has been used in the district for a longer period of time.

Professional Learning and Building System Capacity:

Key Results

Successes	Challenges

Successes

- Array of curricular guidance documents developed by OMGE providing standards-based instruction that integrates the development of academic language with content instruction

- Classroom observations showed the use of many successful practices

- Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) was observed in many secondary classrooms

Challenges

- Many teachers were unaware and/or not using the materials developed by OMGE.

- Classroom observations showed gaps in the use of effective methods, despite use of some successful practices.

- Need greater supports for students with limited formal education (SLIFE) and long-term ELLs.

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Key Recommendations

- Give teachers **more training and curricular guidance** on expectations and instructional requirements for ELLs.
- Provide **content and English language development (ELD)-aligned materials** that will meet their students' needs.
- Target programmatic improvements for **long-term**

ELLs and newcomer SLIFE students at the secondary level.

- Improve counseling and other supports for the

socioemotional well-being of the students and their families.

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Key Recommendations (continued)

- Provide professional development to target instructional practices for the **development of *academic language***. This will benefit *all* students.

- Reconsider adjusting the **staffing ratio of ELL teachers to students**. In fact, more supplemental staff members are needed, rather than less, to meet increased need and increased enrollment.

- Require that classroom teachers of ELLs become **dually-certified**.

- Hire **bilingual human resources staff** for recruitment and processing purposes.

- Evaluate the extent to which all **offices in the central administration support ELLs**.

Key Results

Successes

- Enthusiasm around and commitment to DLI and DBE programs from the various MMSD stakeholders.

- OMGE developed outreach resources for current and prospective DLI/DBE parents and myriad curricular and administrative guidance documents.

- Classroom observations showed some implementation of model practices.

Challenges

- Classroom observations showed the need for continued instructional support.

- Shortage of qualified bilingual staff, although this has been ameliorated by the transition from 90:10 programs to 50:50 programs.

- Need for administrators and educators new to bilingual programming to receive professional development on the basic tenets of dual language education.

Key Recommendations

- Prioritize hiring **bilingual certified** teachers and support staff.

- Provide systematic **professional development and coaching** for administrators and educators new to bilingual programming. ●Continue to provide **training on the differences between the 90/10 and 50/50** dual language education models for educators, administrators, students, and parents.

- Provide **professional development to teachers on biliteracy strategies** that promote the development of metalinguistic awareness in their students.

Diversity in Bilingual Programs:

Key Results

Successes	Challenges

Successes

- MMSD's efforts to increase diversity in its bilingual programs are commendable.

- The need for greater diversity in the bilingual programs appears to be embraced by stakeholders from the various demographic groups themselves.

Challenges

- Need to cast a wide net and reach out to the community at large, where individuals may know less about bilingual programs districtwide.

- The current lottery system is not seen as fair by certain segments of the MMSD community.

- Consider a whole-school design and/or one-way immersion options.

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Key Recommendations

- Convene a **committee of school staff and community members** committed to bilingual programs and reflect on what has worked and has not worked so far. Develop a **continuation plan**.

- **Involve all stakeholders** in efforts, ensuring that all demographic backgrounds are included and have a voice.

- Focus staff recruitment efforts on **hiring DLI staff from diverse backgrounds**, including African Americans.

- Revisit the **lottery system** to ensure that the system promotes equity of participation.

Key Results

Successes

- ELL Parent Advisory Group appeared to be very active and to embrace the role as advocates of their children's education.

- Some schools were engaged in efforts to promote equity and increased collaboration between strands within schools by having periodic joint activities around culture with a focus on the cultures represented in the school.

Challenges

- In other schools, this type of community building activity was not observed.

- Although some inroads have been made, community has not yet been built in all schools with both bilingual and nonbilingual programs.

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Community Building:

Key Recommendations

Continue the use of school community-building practices while adopting a **more active role in implementing intentionally inclusive policies, practices, and outreach** aimed at increasing collaboration between strands within schools and making all members of the community feel valued, honored, and included in the school community.

Next Steps

- Full report will be available in late September

- Dissemination activities will take place from September through December 2019

- New 5-year plan will be developed in Spring of 2020 and presented to the BOE in September 2020