



English as a Second Language Program (K-12): *Year-Two Implementation Evaluation Report*

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Introduction

Background of Program

The Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) English as a Second Language (ESL) program’s vision is “to empower English learners to master social and academic English; to achieve academic success; to accomplish personal goals focused on college and career readiness; and to navigate the diverse local and global communities.”¹ The ESL program is based on the premise that success in English language development is critical to success in all other curricular areas as well as future learning. The program’s purpose is to prepare English learners to be college and career ready by developing their conversational and academic English language proficiency through integrated content-based language instruction so that the students will have access to the same educational opportunities as all students. The intent is to accomplish this as quickly as possible so that EL students can participate meaningfully in the division’s educational program within a reasonable amount of time. The ESL program aligns with all four goals of the division’s strategic framework, *Compass to 2020*: (1) High Academic Expectations, (2) Multiple Pathways (Personalized Learning), (3) Social-Emotional Development, and (4) Culture of Growth and Excellence.

Through the ESL program, VBCPS provided ESL services to 1,724 English learner (EL) students in grades K-12 during the 2019-2020 school year. Among them, they speak 71 different languages. The most common home language of these students was Spanish, which was spoken by 51 percent of the EL students. The next most common home languages were Tagalog, spoken by 9 percent of EL students, and Vietnamese, spoken by 6 percent of EL students. Chinese (i.e., Mandarin) was spoken by approximately 5 percent of these EL students. The remaining languages had fewer than 3 percent of EL students speaking each language. In addition, through the ESL program, 666 students were monitored or tracked due to being former EL students and 162 students were monitored; although, they opted out of receiving ESL services.

The specifics of the ESL program in VBCPS are aligned with standards provided by the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium. The WIDA Consortium was originally formed in 2003 and consists of 40 U.S. states, territories, and federal agencies, including Virginia.² Upon joining WIDA in 2008, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) provided guidance that the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL), in conjunction with the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) standards, should guide the development of a school division’s language instruction educational program (LIEP). The five WIDA ELD standards stress the importance of teaching language development within the context of content-area instruction and should “serve as a resource for planning and implementing language instruction and assessment for multilingual learners as they learn academic content.”³ The five WIDA ELD standards encompass the areas of social and instructional language, language of language arts, language of mathematics, language of science, and language of social studies. In addition to the ELD standards, the WIDA Consortium created English language proficiency assessments to screen for EL students and to monitor EL students’ language development.⁴ The WIDA Consortium also offers information regarding English language performance levels based on performance on these assessments as well as descriptions of what EL students should do at each performance level by grade.

The federal government and VDOE have established requirements for ESL programs through EL-related regulations and policies. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, students must be screened as part of initial enrollment in education and those who are identified as potential EL students must be assessed for proficiency in the English language.⁵ Also under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, students must be provided with instruction that is educationally sound and proven successful.⁶ In addition, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) issued guidance in September 2016 that “under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states must annually assess the English language proficiency of ELs.”⁷ For the purpose of annually assessing EL students, VDOE selected the WIDA Consortium’s Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs) test to be used by school divisions.⁸ The VDOE

has also indicated that divisions must use a WIDA screening assessment for screening purposes and has established English proficiency criteria for scores on these various WIDA assessments.⁹ Within the Virginia ESSA State Plan, there were set requirements for EL students' growth in their ELP (as measured by the ACCESS for ELLs) based on their proficiency and grade level.¹⁰ An additional requirement under ESSA includes annual parent notification regarding their child's proficiency and program placement.¹¹

Assistance from the federal government for ESL programs is provided through a federal grant program detailed in Title III of ESSA, known as the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act.¹² The purpose of Title III is to ensure that EL students achieve English proficiency and academic achievement, especially with regards to meeting state academic standards expected of all children.¹³ Funds are provided to individual states and then distributed through subgrants to divisions. Within Virginia, divisions must apply for Title III grant funding annually and funds are awarded based on the previous year's reported number of EL students.¹⁴ To receive funding, states and divisions must comply with requirements set by the EL-related regulations and policies outlined previously. To monitor compliance with requirements of ESSA, divisions upload relevant data to VDOE through the Student Record Collection (SRC) system.¹⁵ VBCPS receives funding through Title III and uploads data for monitoring through this system.

Background and Purpose of Program Evaluation

After being selected for evaluation by the Program Evaluation Committee, the School Board approved the ESL program for an evaluation readiness report on September 6, 2017. During the 2017-2018 school year, the evaluation plan was developed with the program managers, including the goals and objectives that would be assessed. The recommendation from the evaluation readiness report was that the ESL program undergo a three-year evaluation, with a focus on implementation of the program in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 and on student outcomes in 2020-2021. The recommended evaluation plan was presented to the School Board on September 25, 2018 and approved on October 9, 2018. The year-one implementation evaluation was presented to the School Board on February 11, 2020. The recommendations included continuing the program with modifications, with other recommendations such as developing a plan to provide translation and interpretation services, implementing new strategies to improve communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers, enhancing professional learning related to ESL instruction, expanding the availability of ESL instructional materials and resources, and encouraging EL students to participate in a variety of curricular options. The School Board approved these recommendations on February 25, 2020. Less than three weeks after the School Board approved the year-one ESL recommendations, the school closure occurred; therefore, the program managers had limited time to work toward the recommendations from the year-one evaluation.

This year-two implementation evaluation provides the School Board, Superintendent, and program managers with information about the operation of the ESL program during 2019-2020 and progress toward meeting the goals and objectives. The implementation evaluation focused on the operational components of the ESL program, characteristics of the students who participated in the ESL program, progress made toward meeting established goals and objectives, and stakeholder perceptions. The evaluation also included information about actions taken regarding the recommendations from the year-one implementation evaluation. In addition, the year-two evaluation included information about how the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting school closure in March 2020 impacted the program's operation. The additional cost of the program to the division was addressed in the year-one evaluation, but was not addressed again in this evaluation due to the nature of the program (federally required) and competing priorities associated with the school closure and fall 2020 planning efforts.

Program Goals and Objectives

As part of the evaluation readiness process, program goals and objectives were outlined in collaboration with program managers following a review of relevant literature. As a result of the evaluation readiness process, 5 goals and 20 specific objectives were developed. The goals focused on professional learning for staff; choices and opportunities available to EL students; EL students' social and emotional development; EL students' development of English language proficiency; and providing parents of EL students with the supports and services they needed to participate in their child's education. Specific objectives are addressed in the section entitled Progress Toward Meeting Goals and Objectives.

Evaluation Design and Methodology

Evaluation Design and Data Collection

The evaluation included mixed methodologies to address each of the evaluation questions, including the goals and objectives. Qualitative data were collected through discussions with the program managers, document reviews, and open-ended survey questions. Quantitative data were gathered through the VBCPS data warehouse where needed and through closed-ended survey questions. The Office of Research and Evaluation used the following data collection methods:

- Communicated with the ESL coordinator and director of the Office of K-12 and Gifted Programs to gather implementation-related information.
- Reviewed VBCPS ESL program documentation.
- Reviewed federal and state regulations and guidelines related to the ESL program.
- Administered surveys to ESL teachers, building administrators, classroom teachers who taught at least one EL student, EL students in grades 4-12, and parents of EL students in grades K-12.
- Collected student survey data from VBCPS students in grades 5, 8, and 12 through the *Compass to 2020* Navigational Marker survey, which included students who were potential EL students.
- Collected data from the VBCPS data warehouse related to student demographic characteristics, program-related information, and student progress (e.g., attendance, English proficiency).
- Collected data from the Department of Human Resources related to ESL teacher characteristics.

Surveys

The Office of Research and Evaluation invited ESL teachers, building administrators, and classroom teachers who were identified as having taught at least one EL student during 2019-2020 to complete online surveys regarding their perceptions. Classroom teachers were identified through EL students' course enrollment obtained from the VBCPS data warehouse. In addition, EL students in grades 4 through 12 and parents of EL students in kindergarten through grade 12 who were receiving ESL services during 2019-2020 were invited to participate in a survey. *All surveys were conducted during the first two weeks of March 2020 prior to the school closure due to the coronavirus.* The EL students and parents of EL students who opted out of having their child receive ESL services were excluded.

Staff Surveys

All ESL teachers, building administrators, and selected classroom teachers received an email invitation to complete an ESL survey. Overall staff response rates ranged from 30 to 81 percent (see Table 1). Classroom teachers were asked to indicate if they taught an EL student during the 2019-2020 school year. Of those classroom teachers who responded to the survey, 92 percent indicated they had taught an EL student during the 2019-2020 school year. Only teachers who responded "yes" to this item were provided additional

questions about the ESL program. Therefore, unless otherwise noted, classroom teacher perceptions in this report are based on teachers who indicated they taught an EL student during 2019-2020. Response rates by level are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Staff Survey Response Rates by School Level

Group	ES	MS	HS	Total
Administrators	64.0%	59.6%	52.5%	59.9%
ESL Teachers ¹⁶	85.0%	80.0%	71.4%	81.3%
Classroom Teachers	29.9%	31.6%	29.3%	30.1%

EL Student Surveys

For the EL student survey, ESL teachers were asked to administer the survey in March 2020 to their EL students in grades 4 through 12 who were receiving services. The ESL teachers were asked to have students complete either an English version of the student survey online through a website link provided to the ESL teachers or complete a translated printed version of the student survey based on the ESL teacher’s discretion. The translated versions of the student survey were available upon request to ESL teachers in the four most common non-English languages spoken by EL students (Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese, and Vietnamese). Upon students’ completion of the translated printed surveys, ESL teachers returned the surveys to the Office of Research and Evaluation. See Table 2 for student survey response rates. Of the students who completed the survey, 10 percent completed a translated version. The EL students who completed the survey were from 47 schools throughout the division (32 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, 7 high schools). There were 31 schools with at least one EL student at their school (in grades 4 and/or 5) that were not represented in the student survey data (19 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, and 6 high schools).

Table 2: Student Survey Response Rates by School Level

Group	ES	MS	HS	Total
EL Students (4-12)	54.4%	42.1%	46.8%	48.0%

Student Navigational Marker Surveys

All students in grades 5, 8, and 12 completed the *Compass to 2020* Navigational Marker survey in January 2020. As part of this existing survey, students were asked whether their family spoke a language other than English at home. Survey results for students who responded “yes” to this item were identified as potential EL students and were compared to all students who completed the *Compass to 2020* Navigational Marker survey as well as EL students in all grades. This item was previously used on the 2019 VDOE student climate surveys and was used as a proxy to identify students who were potentially EL students. Similarly, potential EL students in VBCPS are initially identified based on whether the student’s primary language in the home, language most often spoken by the student, or language that the student first acquired were languages other than English. A total of 3,455 students responded “yes” to this item and were included in this group of potential EL students.¹⁷

Parent Surveys

Parents of EL students in kindergarten through grade 12 received printed copies of the survey sent to their home mailing address. One survey packet was sent to each family even if there was more than one child who was receiving services. The parent survey was translated into the four most common non-English languages spoken by EL students (Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese, and Vietnamese). Depending on the student's designated home language, parents were sent one of the translated surveys accompanied by an English version or only an English version of the survey if the student’s home language was a language other than the four most common non-English languages. Parents were provided a prestamped envelope to return the completed survey.

Completed parent surveys that were received as of July 22 were included in this report. A total of 1,393 parents of EL students received the ESL survey. See Table 3 for response rates. If parents returned both English and translated versions of the surveys, then the responses were examined for consistency across surveys. If responses across both surveys were the same, then only one record was kept. If responses across both surveys varied, then both responses were counted (n = 9). Of all completed parent surveys, 45 percent were a translated version of the survey.

Table 3: EL Parent Survey Response Rates by School Level

Group	ES	MS	HS	Total
EL Parents (K-12)	17.5%	20.2%	12.9%	17.9%

Note: Parents may have selected more than one school level. Parents were included in all selected levels for response rates by level.

For all stakeholders, survey agreement percentages reported in the evaluation are based on those who answered the survey item (i.e., missing responses were excluded from the percentages). Survey results are generally reported at the division level, but results were also disaggregated and examined by school level (i.e., elementary, middle, high). Results by school level are reported when notable differences or consistent patterns of results were found. Survey results from 2019-2020 were also compared to survey results from 2018-2019, and information about changes is provided where notable (+/- 5%). Open-ended comments were analyzed for common themes. Comments written in a language other than English were translated using Google translate.

EL Student Information From Data Warehouse

To comply with reporting requirements of ESSA as well as for the purposes of monitoring EL students and determining allocations for Title III, Part A funding, divisions must submit EL student information to VDOE through the Student Record Collection (SRC) system. The EL-related data collection for the SRC occurs in the fall, spring, and at the end of the year.¹⁸ After data are collected through the SRC system, VDOE prepares reports that tabulate the information. Within the EL portion of the SRC reports, totals of EL students (in kindergarten through grade 12) within certain categories are reported. The categories include students who are identified as receiving ESL services, identified but opted out of services, and former EL students. For the SRC, students who opted out of services at any point during the year are included in the category of having opted out of services, while former students include students who have reached English proficiency within the past four years.

For this evaluation, the identification of EL students in each of these categories followed the rules used for the end-of-year VDOE SRC in 2019-2020 with slight modifications as described below. The end-of-year VDOE SRC report included only students who were considered active (i.e., enrolled in VBCPS) as of the end of the school year. For the purposes of this evaluation, EL students who were enrolled at any point throughout the school year were included to obtain a cumulative count of students.

As reported in the end-of-year VDOE SRC, 1,631 EL students were identified as receiving ESL services and considered active students (i.e., enrolled in VBCPS) as of the end of the year.¹⁹ An additional 70 students were considered EL students and as having received ESL services in the fall but were not active students as of the spring or end of the year; therefore, these students were included in the category of EL students for this evaluation. An additional 23 students were considered EL students and received ESL services from records pulled from the VBCPS data warehouse, but they were not included in any SRC because their VBCPS enrollment dates did not coincide with the dates for the SRC or did not have a home language.²⁰ According to the end-of-year SRC report, 162 students opted out of services and 642 were former EL students. Similar rules were followed for EL students who opted out of the program and former EL students who were monitored or

tracked after exiting the program. An additional 24 former EL students were included in this evaluation who were not included in the end of year SRC.²¹

As shown in Table 4, in comparison to 2018-2019, there was an increase of 179 EL students who received services during the school year in 2019-2020, which was a 12 percent increase.

Table 4: Numbers of EL Students by Group From 2018-2019 and 2019-2020

Group	2018-2019	2019-2020
Receiving services	1,545	1,724
Opt-out students*	58	162
Former EL students	684	666

Note: *Much of this increase was due to a data coding change.

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions for this report were developed by evaluators in consultation with program managers and based on a Hanover Research report for VBCPS entitled *Best Practices for ESL Program Evaluation*. The evaluation questions established for the year-two implementation evaluation were as follows:

- 1. What are the operational components of the ESL program?**
 - a. What are the criteria for identifying EL students?
 - b. What are the processes for assessing and placing the EL students according to their linguistic, academic, and other needs?
 - c. What are the processes for monitoring the participants' language development and academic progress until they meet program exit criteria and through their period of post-program monitoring?
 - d. What are the instructional models and methods used to deliver language development and academic content to the EL students?
 - e. What is the process of staffing the ESL program, including job responsibilities and staff selection, ESL teacher assignments and caseloads, and staff characteristics?
 - f. What resources and professional learning activities are provided for ESL teachers and content area teachers to assist them in effectively meeting EL students' needs?
 - g. What services and supports were provided to engage and communicate with EL students and their families?
- 2. What steps were taken to support EL students and families during the COVID-19 pandemic?**
- 3. What are the characteristics of the students who participated in the ESL program?**
 - a. What are the demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity) of the EL students?
- 4. What progress is being made toward meeting the ESL program's goals and objectives?**
- 5. What are the stakeholders' perceptions of the ESL program (i.e., EL students, parents of EL students, ESL teachers, content-area teachers, principals, and assistant principals)?**

Evaluation Results and Discussion

Operational Components

The first evaluation question focused on the operational components of the ESL program, which included criteria for identifying EL students, assessment and placement of EL students, monitoring processes, instructional models and methods, process of staffing the ESL program, and resources and professional learning for staff.

Criteria for EL Student Identification

In accordance with requirements from the USED Office for Civil Rights, VBCPS identifies “a potential English learner (EL) as a student whose Home Language Survey has a response *other than English*” for any of the following: primary language used in the home, language most often spoken by the student, and language that the student first acquired.²² This survey is given to every parent enrolling a student in VBCPS. According to the English Learner Team (ELT) Handbook provided by the Department of Teaching and Learning, if a response other than English is provided to any of these questions, a copy of the completed survey is given to the ESL teacher or the assistant principal who serves as an ESL administrative contact at the child’s school.²³ If a student has been identified as a potential EL student, the child must be assessed using an English language proficiency (ELP) test. The two assessments used in VBCPS to identify EL students are the Kindergarten WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (K-WAPT) and the WIDA Screener. According to information obtained from the ESL Teacher SharePoint site, the K-WAPT is the appropriate assessment for students in kindergarten and students in their first semester of first grade.²⁴ The WIDA Screener is the appropriate assessment for students in their second semester of first grade and students in second through twelfth grades. The screening assessments are administered by ESL teachers who complete training to administer these assessments. Consistent with criteria recommended by VDOE, students who score a 6.0 or above on the K-WAPT²⁵ and a 4.5 or above on the WIDA Screener would be considered proficient in English and, therefore, ineligible for services in VBCPS.²⁶

According to instructions provided in the ELT Handbook, prior to assessing a student, ESL teachers must check whether a student previously took an ELP test. If the student was previously identified as not requiring services from a previous assessment, then the student would not be reassessed and would not be eligible for ESL services through VBCPS. If the student was assessed the previous spring (i.e., April, May, or June) using a VDOE approved placement test (e.g., K-WAPT or WIDA Screener) and determined to require services, then the student would not be reassessed. If the previous placement test determined that the student required services and it occurred prior to the previous spring, then the student would need to be reassessed. If the student was assessed the previous spring using the ACCESS for ELLs test, which is used for monitoring EL students’ ELP, then the student’s score on the ACCESS would be used to determine whether the student was eligible for services. In most cases, ESL teachers administered the screening tool. In 2019-2020, a seven-month ESL test examiner position was filled through a Temporary Employment Agreement (TEA) to assist with administering screeners.

According to ESSA, school divisions must identify, screen, and place EL students in a program within 30 days of enrollment when students enroll at the beginning of the year and within two weeks when students enroll during the school year.²⁷ Due to the March 2020 school building closure from the COVID-19 pandemic, USED and VDOE acknowledged the inability to screen students in person within this timeframe. VDOE provided guidance that schools should ask parents to complete the Home Language Survey, and if they respond with a language other than English to any question, they would conduct an informal interview with the parent/guardian.²⁸ During the interview, they would determine whether the student may have been screened previously and plan to screen the student as soon as possible if the student had not previously been screened. In addition, VDOE issued guidance that schools may make a provisional EL determination and provide support to assist the student. According to the ESL coordinator, these students were identified as Pending eligibility and will be screened as soon as possible in fall 2020. There were 16 students who were considered to have a pending EL status during the school closure.

According to the WIDA website, the purpose of the K-WAPT is to determine whether incoming students would benefit from English language support services.²⁹ The test is administered by a trained administrator by paper and lasts approximately 30 minutes. Scores are calculated locally by the administrator upon test completion. All students who complete the K-WAPT are assessed on their listening and speaking skills, while students’ reading and writing skills are also assessed for students in their second semester of kindergarten and first

semester of first grade. In 2019-2020, 499 students completed the K-WAPT and received an overall score from 1.0 to 6.0. Although testing may have been impacted by the school closure, there was still an increase in the number of students who completed the assessment throughout the 2019-2020 school year prior to the closure in comparison to 2018-2019 when 428 students were screened on this assessment. Of the 499 students who took the K-WAPT in 2019-2020, 408 were in kindergarten, 88 were in first grade, 1 was in second grade, 1 was in third grade, and 1 was in fifth grade. Of the 499 students who completed the K-WAPT, 264 (53%) percent received a score that indicated they were eligible to receive services (i.e., score below 6.0), whereas 235 (47%) percent received a score that indicated they were not eligible to receive services. A slightly lower percentage of students were found to be eligible for services in 2019-2020 compared to in 2018-2019 when 58 percent of students who took the K-WAPT were eligible for ESL services.

Similar to the K-WAPT, the WIDA Screener is an assessment to help identify English language learners and can be administered either online or by paper and lasts approximately 80 to 85 minutes. Upon test completion, scores are calculated by the computer or locally by the administrator. Students are assessed in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In 2019-2020, 551 students completed the WIDA Screener and received an overall score from 1.0 to 6.0. Similar to the K-WAPT, although testing may have been impacted by the closure, there was an increase in the number of students who completed the assessment during the 2019-2020 school year compared to 2018-2019 when 386 students were assessed on the WIDA Screener. There were 4 first-grade students and 547 grades 2 through 12 students who completed the WIDA Screener in 2019-2020. Of the 551 students who completed the WIDA Screener, 400 (73%) received a score that indicated they were eligible to receive services (i.e., score below 4.5), whereas 151 (27%) received a score that indicated they were not eligible to receive services. A lower percentage of students were found to be eligible for services in 2019-2020 compared to in 2018-2019 when 82 percent of students who took the WIDA Screener were eligible for ESL services. Overall, of the 1,050 students who were assessed on the K-WAPT or WIDA Screener in 2019-2020, 63 percent received a score that indicated they were eligible to receive services.

In response to a survey item about the identification process, most ESL teachers (96%) and administrators (93%) agreed that they understood the steps in the identification process, while 51 percent of classroom teachers who taught at least one EL student agreed that they understood. An examination of survey responses by school level revealed a higher percentage of elementary school classroom teachers (66%) agreed they understood the steps in the identification process than at the middle (49%) and high school levels (34%), while higher percentages of elementary (99%) and middle school administrators (93%) agreed that they understood the steps in the identification process than administrators at the high school level (77%).

Assessment and Placement of Students

After a student completes the initial screening assessment (i.e., K-WAPT or WIDA Screener) and a proficiency score has been provided, the student is placed into one of six WIDA performance levels based on his/her score (see Table 5 for cut scores). The VDOE recommended cut scores for reaching English proficiency (i.e., performance level 6), and VBCPS identified cut scores that correspond to the six WIDA performance levels.³⁰ According to WIDA performance definitions, when students score at Performance Level 1, *Entering*, students can process, understand, produce, or use pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas as well as words, phrases, or chunks of language when presented with simple commands.³¹ Students' skills in understanding the English language as well as the context in which they can understand English become more complex as they move through each performance level (see Table 5). WIDA has also provided "Can Do" descriptions for each performance level by grade level, which detail the types of tasks that EL students should be able to do within the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.³² These resources help ESL teachers understand students' abilities.

Table 5: WIDA Performance Levels by K-WAPT and WIDA Screener Score

Performance Levels	K-WAPT Score	WIDA Screener Score	EL students will process, understand, produce, or use...
1 Entering	1.0 – 1.9	1.0 – 1.9	Pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas
2 Emerging	2.0 – 2.9	2.0 – 2.5	General language related to the content areas
3 Developing	3.0 – 3.9	2.6 – 2.9	General and some specific language of the content areas
4 Expanding	4.0 – 4.9	3.0 – 3.7	Specific and some technical language of the content areas
5 Bridging	5.0 – 5.9	3.8 – 4.4	Specialized or technical language of the content areas
6 Reaching	6.0	4.5 +	Process and use a range of grade-appropriate language for a variety of purposes

Once a student has been deemed eligible for ESL services, a meeting will be held with the ELT regarding the student’s education plan. The general composition of the ELT is to include an ELT facilitator, an administrator or administrator designee, classroom teacher(s), school counselor, and parent or guardian. At the elementary school level, the ELT facilitator is generally the school’s ESL administrator (i.e., the assistant principal), whereas at the secondary level, the ELT facilitator is generally the ESL teacher. At all levels, it is recommended that the parent and ESL teacher attend the meeting, but they are not required. According to the ELT Handbook, meetings for newly enrolled EL students should be held soon after placement testing and a score has been provided.

At the ELT meeting, the ELT facilitator completes the Annual Educational Plan English Learner Team (AEPALT) meeting minutes, which include details regarding any accommodations the student will be provided during instruction and/or assessments (e.g., SOLs, ACCESS). After the meeting, copies of the AEPALT meeting minutes are provided to the ESL administrative contact, school improvement specialist, and classroom teachers as well as sent to the parents. If at any point during the school year a staff member has concerns that an adjustment should be made to the student’s accommodations, a follow up ELT meeting is held. During ELT meetings, parents of students who are eligible for ESL instruction may decide to opt out of having their child receive services. If parents decide to opt out of services for their child, they must complete a form that releases VBCPS from responsibility and liability, which is kept with the student’s AEPALT meeting minutes.

Students’ performance levels based on the assessments are shown in Table 6. Of the 264 students who completed the K-WAPT during the 2019-2020 school year and scored as being eligible for services, the largest percentage (29%) scored at Level 4. Of the 400 students who completed the WIDA Screener and scored as being eligible for services, the largest percentage (50%) scored at Level 1.

Table 6: Percentages of Students by WIDA Performance Level Based on 2018-2019 Screening Scores

Performance Levels	K-WAPT Score	WIDA Screener Score	Total
1 Entering	47 (17.8%)	201 (50.3%)	248 (37.3%)
2 Emerging	32 (12.1%)	80 (20.0%)	112 (16.9%)
3 Developing	60 (22.7%)	0 (0.0%)	60 (9.0%)
4 Expanding	76 (28.8%)	89 (22.3%)	165 (24.8%)
5 Bridging	49 (18.6%)	30 (7.5%)	79 (11.9%)
Total	264	400	664

Survey results showed that 96 percent of ESL teachers and 59 percent of classroom teachers worked with students from multiple performance levels during 2019-2020. In addition, 32 percent of classroom teachers

who responded to the survey indicated they did not know their EL students' performance level. This percentage increased from 26 percent of classroom teachers who indicated they did not know their EL students' performance level in 2018-2019. Responses by school level in 2019-2020 revealed that higher percentages of middle school (35%) and high school classroom teachers (42%) indicated they did not know their EL students' performance level compared to elementary school classroom teachers (21%).

When asked a survey item about the initial assessment and placement processes, 69 percent of ESL teachers and 87 percent of administrators agreed that the initial assessment and placement processes are conducted in an efficient manner. As shown in Table 7, high percentages of ESL teachers in 2019-2020 agreed that the WIDA placement leads to accurate placement of EL students with respect to ELP levels and that EL students were assigned their ELD placements in a timely manner. The ESL teacher agreement percentages for both these items increased notably from 2018-2019 (78% to 92% for accurate placement and from 79% to 92% for placements being assigned in a timely manner).

School level comparisons showed that ESL teacher agreement was lowest at the elementary school level regarding all items (65% to 88% at elementary level compared to 75% to 100% at secondary level). Lowest administrator and classroom teacher agreement regarding EL students being assigned their ELD placement in a timely manner was found at the high school level (from 50% to 56% at high school level compared to 75% to 97% at elementary and middle school levels).

Table 7: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Screening and Placement Processes

Item	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
The initial assessment and placement process are conducted in an efficient manner.	69.2%	NA	87.2%
The WIDA placement leads to accurate placement of EL students with respect to English language proficiency levels.	92.3%	NA	NA
EL students are assigned their English language development placements in a timely manner.	92.3%	71.0%	86.4%

Through an open-ended survey item, staff were provided the opportunity to provide comments on the VBCPS processes for identifying the EDP level, eligibility for ESL services, or the academic needs of an EL student. The ESL teachers predominantly made comments regarding the identification process being lengthy, especially at the beginning of the school year, and the concern that there is a delay in providing services to students who were already receiving services because ESL teachers are providing the screening to students. Administrators also indicated that the paperwork process was lengthy, and that additional staff would be needed to improve the process. A few administrators questioned whether EL students could be screened during the summer before the school year begins. The ESL teachers commented that the process should be more streamlined and that a central location should be created for screening students. Other ESL teachers stressed the importance of other school employees (e.g., registrars and data techs) being aware of the identification process, including that the Home Language Survey must be given to the ESL teacher if there is a response other than English. A few classroom teachers also indicated that the timing of identification and placement into services was an issue, for example, stating that the process took too long, which delayed when students began receiving services. Several classroom teachers indicated they had no knowledge of the screening or eligibility procedures generally as well as that they were not made aware of their EL students' ELP levels. Several classroom teachers also indicated that their EL students were not seen frequently enough by the ESL teacher and that they did not know how to provide support themselves.

Similar comments expressing concern about the length of the process and delay in receiving services were provided in response to an open-ended survey item from 2018-2019. A proposal by the director of K-12 and Gifted Programs detailing suggested adjustments for the ESL program included a proposal for establishing a

Welcome Center where staff would screen students on one of the WIDA screeners in a centralized location as students register.³³ According to the ESL coordinator, the division Welcome Center is scheduled to open during the 2020-2021 school year.³⁴

Monitoring Language Development and Academic Progress

As prescribed by VDOE, the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 (ACCESS) is used to monitor English language development for EL students in the four domains of the English language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All students who are identified as being an EL student are administered this assessment in the spring during a time window established by VDOE.³⁵ Students receive a proficiency score that reflects a composite of students' ACCESS speaking, listening, reading, and writing scores. In Virginia, every year, the ACCESS is administered to EL students from January through March and testing is overseen by the Office of Student Assessment (OSA) in VBCPS. Schools' ESL administrative contacts (assistant principals) are responsible for creating the schedules for testing, which includes identifying all EL students who should be tested. To assist with ACCESS test scheduling in 2019-2020, an additional seven-month position was filled through a Temporary Employment Agreement (TEA) whose title was project support-Title III auditor-/LEP student data analysis. In VBCPS, the ESL teachers are primarily responsible for administering the ACCESS test to EL students. To administer the ACCESS, ESL teachers must participate in annual training.

In 2019-2020, most ACCESS testing was completed prior to the closure of schools on March 13, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the ESL coordinator, there were 22 students who did not complete the ACCESS in spring 2020. Virginia received a waiver for the requirement to assess these students during the 2019-2020 school year; however, the VDOE recommended that school divisions collect data for these students who did not have a score to inform their services for the next school year (i.e., LIEP and eligibility).³⁶ The VDOE offered three options for alternative methods of data collection for these students: use the proficiency level from spring 2019, administer a screener assessment in the fall, or participate in a limited testing window in the fall. The director of K-12 and Gifted Programs and the ESL coordinator decided to utilize the first two options and not pursue testing during a limited testing window in the fall.

The OSA typically receives scores from WIDA in May, and schools must then verify data included in the reports (e.g., correct spelling of school name, students who needed accommodations are noted). Students' scores are provided to students and parents via mail and are made available through Synergy during the summer. Timing of scoring and data verification were delayed due to the closure of schools from the COVID-19 pandemic. All available student ACCESS data as of August 13 were included in this evaluation report.

Students' ACCESS scores are used to make decisions regarding when to exit a student from the ESL program as well as decisions to adjust a student's performance level. Similar to the WIDA screening assessments, VDOE has set the ACCESS cut score for reaching English proficiency (i.e., performance Level 6), and VBCPS identified cut scores that correspond to the six WIDA performance levels (see Table 8).³⁷ Students cease to receive ESL services when they have scored at a 4.4 composite proficiency level or above on the ACCESS. Students' performance on the ACCESS dictate the services that will be provided the following school year.

Table 8: WIDA Performance Levels by ACCESS Score

Performance Level	ACCESS Score
1 Entering	1.0 – 1.9
2 Emerging	2.0 – 2.5
3 Developing	2.6 – 2.9
4 Expanding	3.0 – 3.7
5 Bridging	3.8 – 4.3
6 Reaching	4.4 +

In the spring of 2020, 1,745 students who were EL students in 2019-2020 (i.e., received services or opt outs) took the ACCESS test to determine the services that will be provided for the 2020-2021 school year and received an overall score between 1.0 and 6.0.³⁸ Approximately 278 (16%) students reached English proficiency based on scoring at Level 6. The highest percentage of students (27%) scored at Level 4 (see Table 9).

Table 9: Percentages of Students by WIDA Performance Level Based on ACCESS 2019-2020 Scores

Performance Level	ACCESS Score
1 Entering	286 (16.4%)
2 Emerging	168 (9.6%)
3 Developing	148 (8.4%)
4 Expanding	474 (27.2%)
5 Bridging	391 (22.4%)
6 Reaching	278 (15.9%)
Total	1,745

According to the ELT Handbook, students who completed an ACCESS test the previous spring are expected to have an ELT meeting at the beginning of the school year to discuss the types of services provided for that year. Students who scored a 4.4 or above on the ACCESS the previous spring would no longer be eligible for services and would be monitored for the school year. Students who scored below 4.4 would have an ELT meeting to discuss details regarding the type of ESL services they would be provided during the year.

As shown in Table 10, relatively high percentages of ESL teachers and administrators agreed that assessment results used to make advancement decisions accurately reflected each EL student’s achievement and need, and agreement percentages for ESL teachers increased notably from 2018-2019 (from 59% to 81%). A lower percentage of ESL teachers (54%) agreed that the ACCESS testing is conducted in an efficient manner that maintains instructional continuity for EL students, although the agreement percentage increased slightly for ESL teachers from 2018-2019 (from 50% to 54%). Examinations of survey results from 2019-2020 by school level showed that agreement was highest at the middle school level regarding the accuracy of the ACCESS test items (93% to 100% at middle school level compared to 70% to 87% at elementary and high school levels).

Table 10: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Assessment Processes

Item	ESL Teacher	Admin
Assessment results used to make advancement decisions accurately reflect each EL student’s achievement and need.	80.8%	85.1%
The ACCESS testing is conducted in an efficient manner that maintains instructional continuity for EL students.	53.8%	81.7%

Additional survey items about teachers’ use of assessment results showed that high levels of ESL teachers and administrators agreed that ESL teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students (see Table 11). Lower percentages of the ESL teachers (62%) and administrators (77%) agreed that content-area/classroom teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students. In comparison to 2018-2019 results, ESL teacher agreement increased regarding their own use of assessment results (from 85% to 89%) but decreased regarding classroom teachers’ use of assessment results (from 73% to 62%).

Table 11: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Using Assessment Results for Monitoring

Item	ESL Teacher	Admin
ESL teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students.	88.5%	91.7%

Item	ESL Teacher	Admin
Content-area/classroom teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students.	61.5%	76.9%

Classroom teachers who taught at least one EL student during the 2019-2020 school year were also asked survey items related to the assessment of EL students' status throughout the school year. As indicated in Table 12, 71 percent of classroom teachers agreed that EL students were frequently assessed for formative purposes in English during the school year and 66 percent agreed that EL students took assessments that accurately measure their growth within content areas. Across these items, high school classroom teachers had the lowest agreement percentages (56% to 57%) compared to elementary and middle school (70% to 79%) classroom teachers.

Table 12: Classroom Teacher Agreement Percentages Regarding Assessing EL Students

Item EL students at my school...	Classroom Teacher
Are frequently assessed formatively for progress in developing their English during the school year.	71.0%
Take assessments that accurately measure their growth within content areas.	66.2%

ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators were provided the opportunity to respond to an open-ended survey item on the assessment of EL students in VBCPS. ESL teachers and administrators indicated that ESL teachers administering the ACCESS testing for several weeks disrupts instruction with other EL students. A few administrators noted that other possibilities should be considered (e.g., school improvement specialist or retired ESL teachers); however, other administrators indicated that the ESL teachers are best suited for administering the test. The ESL teachers also most frequently indicated that although there is this concern about the time needed to administer the assessment taking away the opportunity to provide services to other EL students, the ESL teacher would be the best person to administer the ACCESS. A major theme that emerged from classroom teachers was the lack of information they received regarding EL-related assessment processes in general. Although several classroom teachers indicated they were aware EL students were assessed through the ACCESS and that they regularly assess students themselves on content within the classroom, they indicated they did not know about assessments provided by the ESL teachers. A few classroom teachers expressed concern that although EL students are provided accommodations for assessments, not being able to take assessments in their native language leads to inaccurate results. Additionally, a few classroom teachers noted again the concern that when ESL teachers administer ACCESS testing, their time is taken away from providing services.

Former EL Student Monitoring

Federal guidance states that school districts must monitor the academic progress of former EL students for at least two years “to ensure that students have not been prematurely exited; any *academic* deficits incurred as a result of participating in the EL program have been remedied; and they are meaningfully participating in the standard program of instruction comparable to their never-EL peers” (i.e., peers who were never identified as EL students).³⁹ After exiting the program (i.e., scoring a 4.4 or above on the ACCESS), VBCPS students are monitored for two years and the number of former EL students are reported to the federal government for two additional years through data loaded in the SRC. Throughout the two years of monitoring following the students' exit from the ESL program, ESL teachers complete a biannual review of these students' academic performance. The biannual reports include a review of students' grades, SOL performance, and end-of-course test scores. At each biannual review, the ESL teacher completes a progress report regarding whether the student is passing or failing, identifies whether the student has any areas of concern (e.g., attendance, participation, behavior), and makes a recommendation as needed. Recommendations may include the

following: consult with general education teacher, consult with guidance counselor, refer to Student Response Team (SRT), or hold a follow-up SRT meeting if the student is already receiving an intervention. In addition, ELT meetings are held for these monitoring students at the beginning of the school year. Although these students no longer receive instructional accommodations or instruction with the ESL teacher, they may still receive accommodations for testing (e.g., during SOLs) for the two years of monitoring, which is discussed at the ELT meetings.

Opt-Out EL Student Monitoring

Students whose parents opted out their children out of ESL services are also monitored by the ESL program, as required by federal regulation. Federal guidance states that a school district must still take steps to provide opted-out EL students with access to its educational programs, monitor their progress, and offer EL services again if a student is struggling.⁴⁰ Students' classroom teachers are asked to complete a form four times a year that includes details about the students' academic progress. Included in the form are notes of the quality of the student's work, grade to date, and missing assignments across subject areas. Teachers are also provided a space to select additional comments from a list provided on the form, such as completes work on time, does not work to potential, listens attentively, and not progressing. The ESL teacher who is assigned to the student's school is expected to review the form every quarter and provide follow-up as needed. The forms are included in the student's cumulative file every quarter. In addition, the ESL teacher must also administer the WIDA ACCESS test to opt-out students. Although students have been opted out of ESL services, the opt-out students must be offered alternative services (e.g., PALS, study blocks supporting ELs in the content areas, READ 180, System 44, Effective Reading Skills, services with a reading/math specialist).⁴¹

Instructional Models and Methods of Delivery for Language Development and Academic Content

Instructional Models

Similar to the 2018-2019 school year, at the elementary school level, services were primarily provided through the push-in model in 2019-2020. The push-in model involves ESL teachers supporting the classroom teachers' instruction within the classroom. It was recommended that elementary school ESL teachers provide push-in instruction to students during language arts in particular; however, according to the ESL coordinator, at times this may not have been possible due to the high caseloads and working with students at multiple schools and grade levels.⁴² At the middle school level, instruction was also primarily provided as push-in services with a focus on students' English courses, consistent with 2018-2019. When providing push-in services, it was ideal for ESL teachers to also use a co-teaching model, which involves co-planning with the language arts or English classroom teachers; however, time was a constraining factor for ESL teachers according to the ESL coordinator. At the high school level, similar to 2018-2019, high school students received services at their home schools through ESL courses in 2019-2020. Also, at the high school level, a Newcomer Program at Landstown High School, which was opened in 2018-2019, was used for high school students at the lowest performance level and who met criteria for being a Student with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE). A SLIFE is defined by VBCPS as "a student in grade 2 or higher who has cumulatively but not necessarily consecutively missed two or more years of school (formal education) anywhere, anytime."⁴³

Push-In Model and Clustering

To help facilitate services offered through the push-in model at the elementary school and middle school levels, it was recommended to principals that EL students be clustered in classrooms by grade level.⁴⁴ Principals were instructed to consider both EL students who were receiving services and students whose parents opted them out of receiving services. Principals were also directed to consider reserving seats for new enrollees through the school year. At elementary schools, EL students were expected to be in one teacher's

classroom in each grade level, while at middle schools, EL students were expected to be in the same English course at each grade level. In addition, middle schools with A/B day schedules were expected to coordinate which day would be designated for ESL services with their ESL partner school to avoid a scheduling conflict for the ESL teacher.⁴⁵ Middle school ESL partnership schools were communicated to principals.⁴⁶ This grade-level clustering was intended to allow ESL teachers to work in fewer classrooms per school.

When asked about clustering EL students within classrooms on the survey, low percentages of elementary school and middle school ESL teachers agreed that EL students were effectively clustered within teachers' classrooms at each grade level (35% to 38% as shown in Table 13).

Table 13: Staff Agreement Regarding Effective Clustering Within Teachers' Classrooms by School Level

Item	ES	MS
ESL Teacher	35.3%	37.5%
Classroom Teacher	74.9%	68.9%
Administrator	94.0%	89.3%

Note: *Percentages for high school ESL teachers are based on responses from five teachers.

When asked about having time to co-plan with classroom teachers, no ESL teachers agreed that there was enough time for ESL teachers to collaborate and/or co-plan with classroom teachers and that ESL teachers were able to co-plan with classroom teachers frequently enough for instruction to be effective. From 17 to 21 percent of classroom teachers agreed with these items and 19 percent of administrators agreed that there was enough time for collaboration and/or co-planning (see Table 14).

Table 14: Staff Agreement Regarding Time for Collaboration and Co-Planning

Item	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
There is enough time for ESL teachers to collaborate and/or co-plan with classroom teachers.	0.0%	16.5%	19.3%
ESL teachers are able to co-plan with classroom teachers frequently enough for instruction to be effective.	0.0%	21.3%	NA

The ESL teachers were also surveyed about the information they communicated with classroom teachers, while classroom teachers were asked about the types of ESL-related information they received and whether they knew where to find this information. All ESL teachers indicated they provided communication about EL students' English performance/proficiency levels and most ESL teachers (81%) indicated they provided information about the instructional services they provided, whereas 62 percent of ESL teachers indicated they provided communication about screening practices and assessment practices.

Approximately half (56%) of classroom teachers who taught at least one EL student indicated they received information about their EL students' English performance/proficiency levels, while 41 percent indicated they knew where to find this information. Overall, 40 percent of classroom teachers or fewer indicated they received communication about or knew where to find information about instructional services provided, screening, or assessments practices (see Table 15). Overall, 34 percent of classroom teachers indicated they did not receive any of this information and approximately half (55%) indicated they did not know where to find the information.

Table 15: Percentages of Classroom Teachers Who Indicated They Received Information About and Knew Where to Find EL-Related Information

Item	Receive information about	Know where to find information about
EL students' English performance/proficiency levels	55.5%	41.3%
Instructional services provided to EL students	40.3%	29.1%
Screening practices	24.1%	16.4%
Assessment practices	26.8%	17.2%
None of the above	34.2%	54.5%

Through an open-ended survey item, ESL teachers and classroom teachers were also provided the opportunity to provide comments about collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers. Confirming the findings from the previous survey items, ESL teachers and classroom teachers predominantly commented that there was no time for collaboration or co-planning with classroom teachers, especially because of conflicting schedules. The ESL teachers also noted that there are too many classroom teachers to connect with, while classroom teachers noted that the ESL teachers have too large of a caseload. The ESL teachers also noted that the most common form of communication is through email and that some classroom teachers will make them aware of the unit or lesson ahead of time so that they can prepare resources. However, a few ESL teachers commented that they often do not know what to anticipate when they go into the classroom when providing push-in services.

Pull-Out Model

Although in 2019-2020 the emphasis at the elementary and middle school levels was to provide services through the “push-in” model, it was recommended that ESL teachers also use a “pull-out” model as necessary based on students’ needs. The “pull-out” model involves working with students outside of class to provide personalized instruction individually or with a small group of students. Students who were at lower performance levels (e.g., levels 1 and 2) may have required more services that could be provided through this model. Elementary school ESL teachers were advised that they could group students who were within three grade levels (i.e., K-2, 3-5). According to the ESL coordinator and instructional specialist, pull-out services generally involved focusing on oral language, survival English vocabulary, basic literacy skills, and/or key academic language. Generally, instruction provided by ESL teachers is provided in English; however, ESL teachers utilize bilingual dictionaries to support instruction. Additionally, ESL teachers may utilize pictures, flash cards, manipulatives, graphic organizers, sentence frames, and leveled readers to support instruction.

High School ESL Courses

At the high school level, in 2019-2020, the ESL courses that students could take at their home school included an ESL Effective Reading Skills course and an ESL or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course. Any EL high school student could have enrolled in the ESL Effective Reading Skills course, while students were enrolled in the ESL or EFL course based on their ACCESS or WIDA Screener score (see Table 16). The ESL Effective Reading Skills course is focused on English language vocabulary development, comprehension, reading, and writing through guided and independent reading and writing activities. The ESL/EFL courses are focused on acquiring communication skills and academic language necessary to participate in the general classroom. Students who enroll in EFL courses can use these credits toward world language requirements, while ESL and ESL Effective Reading courses may be taken as elective credits. As shown in Table 16, during 2019-2020, 118 students were enrolled in ESL Effective Reading Skills and 123 students were enrolled in either ESL or EFL I or II. In comparison to 2018-2019, there were increases in enrollment numbers for all courses in 2019-2020 with the largest increase of 32 students in the ESL Effective Reading Skills course.

Table 16: High School ESL-Related Courses by Eligibility Score and Number of Enrolled Students

Course Name	Eligible ACCESS or WIDA Screener Score	Number of Students Enrolled
ESL Effective Reading Skills	1.0 – 4.3	118
English as a Second Language I	1.0 – 2.5	25
English as a Second Language II	2.6 – 4.3	25
English as a Foreign Language I	1.0 – 2.5	56
English as a Foreign Language II*	2.6 – 4.3	17

Note: *To take EFL II, students must have taken and passed EFL I and met the ACCESS score criteria for both courses.

Newcomer Program

To receive instruction through the Newcomer Program at the high school level, students must be evaluated for eligibility. Eligibility for the program included having an ACCESS or WIDA Screener score of 1.0 to 1.5 and meeting the criteria for being a SLIFE. A total of 15 students were enrolled in the Newcomer Program during 2019-2020, most of which (93%) were identified as SLIFE. To be accepted into the program, ESL teachers must refer the student and the application is reviewed by the program committee. The purpose of the program is to provide assistance to newcomer ELs as they acclimate to American schooling and with acculturation into American society.⁴⁷ Students in the program received intensive ESL instruction daily from two ESL teachers and were able to take courses with other students enrolled at Landstown High School for courses such as physical education or art. It is anticipated that students would attend the program for the entire year, but students may return to their home school after the first semester if they meet criteria for exiting the program. Students throughout the division were eligible to enroll in the program. If students did not live in the Landstown High School zone, they could utilize an academy bus for transport.

A fall 2019 proposal by the director of K-12 and Gifted Programs detailing suggested adjustments for the ESL program included making a structural change at the middle school level.⁴⁸ It was recommended that a Newcomer Program be added at the middle school level, which would serve up to 60 EL students. This would allow students who meet the newcomer student criteria to receive specialized instruction and lower the caseloads of the ESL teachers at the middle school level, which would allow more time for co-planning and collaboration with cluster classroom teachers.

Perceptions of Instructional Models

When ESL teachers were asked whether they used certain instructional delivery models in their school, all elementary school ESL teachers reported using both push-in and pull-out models (see Table 17). In addition, all middle school ESL teachers reported using the push-in model and all high school ESL teachers reported using the pull-out model. Low percentages of ESL teachers reported using co-teaching (19% - 25%) at the elementary and high school levels, but a majority reported co-teaching at the middle school level (63%).

Table 17: Percentages of ESL Teachers Who Reported Using Instructional Models by School Level

Model	ES	MS	HS*	Total
Push-in	100%	100%	50.0%	92.0%
Pull-out	100%	75.0%	100%	92.0%
Co-teaching	18.8%	62.5%	25.0%	33.3%
Newcomer Program	NA	NA	40.0%	NA

Note: *Percentages for high school ESL teachers are based on responses from four teachers.

When ESL teachers who indicated they used the instructional method were asked about the effectiveness, high percentages of ESL teachers indicated the pull-out model was either very or somewhat effective (see Table 18). In addition, all high school ESL teachers who indicated having used the Newcomer Program also indicated it was either very or somewhat effective. Lower percentages of ESL teachers indicated the push-in and co-teaching models were very or somewhat effective (see Table 18).

Table 18: Percentages of ESL Teachers Who Reported That the Instructional Models They Used Were Very or Somewhat Effective

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
Push-in	76.5%	75.0%	50.0%	78.3%
Pull-out	94.1%	100%	100%	95.7%
Co-teaching	66.7%	40.0%	NA	62.5%
Newcomer Program	NA	NA	100%	NA

Note: Percentage excluded if only one ESL teacher responded.

For the VDOE SRC, ESL teachers were asked to enter the primary mode of ESL service delivery (i.e., the LIEP in which the student receives the most ESL instructional minutes) although students may receive more than one method of instruction.⁴⁹ As shown in Table 19, 70 percent of elementary school students and 96 percent of middle school students primarily received services through content classes with integrated ESL support (i.e., push-in model). At the high school level, 90 percent of students primarily received services through ESL instruction (i.e., pull-out model), 3 percent received services through content classes with integrated ESL support (i.e., push-in model), and 8 percent received services through the Newcomer Program. All students whose LIEP was indicated as the Newcomer Program were enrolled at Landstown High School at one point during 2019-2020.

Table 19: Percentages of Students Who Received Each LIEP

Instructional Models	ES N = 1,235	MS N = 297	HS N = 192	Total N = 1,724
Content classes with integrated ESL support	70.4%	95.6%	2.6%	32.0%
English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Development (ELD)	29.6%	4.4%	89.6%	67.2%
Newcomer Program	0.0%	0.0%	7.8%	0.9%

Note: Students' LIEP from the SRC data were used. If students' LIEP from the SRC was missing, data from the data warehouse were used (n = 23).

Instructional Methods

On the survey, ESL teachers were provided with general items regarding the instruction that ESL teachers provide to EL students. As shown in Table 20, relatively high percentages of ESL teachers agreed that ESL teachers adapt their instruction to meet the needs of individual EL students; provide instruction to EL students that effectively integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English; and provide EL students with opportunities to practice and display abilities to listen, speak, read, and write in English.

Table 20: ESL Teacher Agreement Percentages Regarding Students Receiving Instructional Methods

Item	ESL Teacher
ESL teachers provide instruction to EL students that effectively integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.	88.5%
ESL teachers provide EL students with frequent opportunities to practice and display their abilities to listen, speak, read, and write in English.	80.8%
ESL teachers adapt their instruction to meet the needs of individual EL students.	92.3%

As shown in Table 21, classroom teachers also had high agreement rates regarding the instruction that content-area/classroom teachers provide when teaching EL students at their school. At least 88 percent of classroom teachers agreed that content-area/classroom teachers appropriately integrate technology within lessons, make use of visual aids during instruction, give students opportunities to engage in academic conversations, and use graphic organizers to help students understand relationships between concepts.

Table 21: Classroom Teacher Agreement Percentages Regarding Students Receiving Instructional Methods

Item	Classroom Teacher
Make use of visual aids during instruction	90.2%
Appropriately integrate technology within lessons	93.3%
Use graphic organizers to help students understand relationships between concepts	88.1%
Give students opportunities to engage in academic conversations	89.0%

The ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators provided comments on the instructional delivery methods provided to EL students. Overall, a theme that emerged from all stakeholders was that the instructional services provided are limited due to the large caseloads for the ESL teachers. The ESL teachers indicated that they do not have time to co-plan with classroom teachers due to scheduling differences and their large caseloads, which was also a theme that emerged from the classroom teacher responses. The ESL teachers also noted that push-in instruction would be more effective if they were able to plan with the classroom teacher and that students with a lower English proficiency do not benefit from push-in instruction. A few ESL teachers expressed concerns that clustering was not utilized at some schools, which led to several challenges when instructing students. A few ESL teachers also noted that there is currently not an ESL curriculum to utilize when working with students outside of their general education classes and that they have created their own. Additionally, several administrators referenced that the services provided to their EL students have been impacted by their ESL teacher working at more than one school. Some classroom teachers also indicated they did not know what the ESL teachers worked on with their students, that they were often not provided support/resources, and that there was not time to communicate or co-plan.

ESL Staffing Processes and Staff Characteristics

Responsibilities and Staff Selection

According to the ESL teacher job description from the Department of Human Resources, ESL teachers must possess a Virginia teaching license with an endorsement in ESL. They are expected “to provide instruction to English learners (ELs) at different grade levels with varying levels of English proficiency.” The ESL teachers are also expected to collaborate with classroom teachers of students with limited English proficiency and conduct staff development activities for individual teachers, grade levels, departments, and for staff at-large. Job responsibilities include the following: assessment and appropriate placement of English learner students; intensive English language instruction for individual students, small groups, large groups, and whole classes; assessment of communicative skills relative to English language acquisition; administration of the annual federal English language proficiency assessment; and input and maintenance of English learner student data in the school division database.

According to the ESL coordinator, the staff selection process begins with a review of applications by the coordinator. When potential ESL teachers are identified, they are invited to interview with the ESL coordinator, instructional specialist for the ESL program, and a fluctuating third individual whose position is either a coordinator or instructional specialist in the Department of Teaching and Learning. After potential ESL teacher candidates have been approved by these individuals, they are entered into a pool of candidates that is provided to building principals whose school needs an ESL teacher. Principals conduct interviews and hire staff

from this pool of candidates. According to the ESL coordinator, the process of interviewing potential ESL candidates for the following year typically begins around April and continues throughout the summer.

A fall 2019 proposal by the director of K-12 and Gifted Programs detailing suggested adjustments for the ESL program included a suggestion for the Department of Teaching and Learning to work with the Department of School Leadership, Office of Professional Growth and Innovation, and the Department of Human Resources for recruitment and retention of high quality staff.⁵⁰ Regarding recruitment and retention, working with Human Resources would include maintaining a social media presence throughout the year in which ESL positions are advertised. Other proposed ideas included employing a targeted campaign toward those teachers in the school division who already have their ESL endorsement; securing funding to offer to pay for current teachers interested in taking the ESL Praxis with a commitment of at least three years as an ESL teacher; working with the Office of Professional Growth and Innovation to secure funding for establishment of a cohort at Regent University in which teachers will complete the program with their ESL endorsements and commit to at least three years as a VBCPS ESL teacher; and at the spring job fair, conducting on-site interviews to add applicants to the application pool earlier in the year than has typically occurred in the past.

ESL Teacher Assignments and Caseloads

During the 2019-2020 school year, the ESL program was staffed with 32 full-time and 4 part-time ESL teachers. The four part-time employees were on Temporary Employment Agreements. There were 16 full-time and 2 part-time ESL teachers who taught exclusively at the elementary school level, 5 full-time and 1 part-time ESL teachers who taught exclusively at the middle school level, and 6 ESL teachers who taught at the high school level. An additional four full-time and one part-time ESL teachers taught at both the elementary and middle school levels and one full-time ESL teacher taught at both the middle and high school levels. At the elementary and middle school levels, most ESL teachers traveled between two or more schools. At the elementary school level, ESL teachers were assigned between two and four schools with the exception of one ESL teacher who taught at one school. At the middle school level, ESL teachers were assigned two schools, which they alternated visiting depending on whether it was an A or B day. At the high school level, ESL teachers taught sections of ESL courses to students. Four teachers traveled between two high schools alternating based on whether it was an A or B day and one teacher alternated between three high schools. The two additional high school ESL teachers taught at the Newcomer Program at Landstown High School.

For the 2019-2020 school year, state legislation offered a guideline for staffing ESL teachers at a ratio of 17 teachers for every 1,000 students, which equates to a maximum of 59 students for one teacher.⁵¹ On October 17, 2019, the Virginia Board of Education prescribed new SOQ guidelines for ESL teacher student ratios, which was voted on by the General Assembly in 2020.⁵² The recommended guidelines included ESL teacher ratios based on students' English proficiency level (i.e., one teacher per 25 EL students at Level 1, one teacher per 30 EL students at Level 2, one teacher per 40 EL students at Level 3, and one teacher per 58 students for all other EL students). During the 2020 General Assembly, the governor approved an adjustment to the SOQ guidelines to 18.5 ESL teachers for every 1,000 students for the 2020-2021 school year and to 20 ESL teachers for every 1,000 students for the 2021-2022 school year.⁵³ These guidelines equate to a maximum of 54 students for one teacher in 2020-2021 and 50 students per teacher in 2021-2022. To help meet these guidelines, the VBCPS budget for 2020-2021 includes 12 additional ESL teacher allocations including 6 at the elementary level, 3 at the middle school level, and 3 at the high school level.⁵⁴

The ESL teacher caseloads were examined at three time points during the 2019-2020 school year (October, February, and June) through Web-Reporting Services (WRS) reports run by the Department of Teaching and Learning. Caseloads for teachers at the Newcomer Program were examined separately due to the small number of students in this program. In October 2019, a total of 35 ESL teachers (31 full-time and 4 part-time temporary) taught 1,584 students. The average caseload per teacher was 45 EL students, with a range of

caseloads from 16 students to 85 students across the ESL teachers. As shown in Table 22, the number of EL students, average caseload, and range of caseloads increased from October to February. By June 2020, an additional ESL teacher was added resulting in 36 ESL teachers teaching 1,607 students. As a result of this additional teacher, the average caseload and range of caseloads decreased from February to June. In comparison to the recommended maximum caseload for ESL staffing (one teacher per 59 students), five ESL teachers taught more than 59 students in October, six ESL teachers in February, and five ESL teachers in June, all of which taught at the elementary school or elementary and middle school levels. The two ESL teachers who taught students at the Newcomer Program had a caseload of seven students on average at all points throughout the year.

Table 22: ESL Teacher Caseloads and Total Students

Caseloads	October 2019	February 2020	June 2020
Average Caseload	45	46	45
Range of Caseloads	16 to 85	21 to 91	20 to 69
Total Students	1,584	1,599	1,607

Based on the WRS reports, the group of students who opted out of services and were monitored quarterly included an additional 75 students in October, 157 students in February, and 162 students in June. The numbers of former EL students who were no longer eligible for services but were monitored biannually were 340 students in October, 343 students in February, and 350 students in June.

The ESL teachers and administrators were asked their agreement regarding whether ESL teachers' caseloads allowed them to teach EL students effectively. In 2019-2020, 12 percent of ESL teachers agreed, which was a notable decline in agreement from 35 percent of ESL teachers in 2018-2019. Additionally, 59 percent of administrators agreed that the size of the ESL teachers' caseloads allowed them to teach EL student effectively, which was also a decrease from 64 percent in 2018-2019. Comparisons by school level showed that a higher percentage of high school ESL teachers agreed that the caseload size allowed them to teach effectively (40%) compared to elementary school (6%) and middle school (0%) levels in 2019-2020.

Additionally, 19 percent of ESL teachers, 41 percent of classroom teachers, and 52 percent of administrators agreed that the ESL teacher is able to teach EL students frequently enough for instruction to be effective (see Table 23). There were also decreases in agreement percentages from 2018-2019 for this item for ESL teachers (from 35% to 19%), classroom teachers (48% to 41%), and administrators (59% to 52%). Comparisons by school level showed that elementary school ESL teacher agreement was lowest (6%) compared to the secondary level (from 38% to 40%) in 2019-2020.

Table 23: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding ESL Teacher Caseload and Time for Instruction

Item	ESL Teacher*	Classroom Teacher	Admin
The size of the caseload allows the ESL teacher at my school to teach the EL students effectively.	11.5%	NA	58.5%
The ESL teacher is able to teach EL students frequently enough for the instruction to be effective.	19.2%	40.7%	51.7%

Note: *ESL teachers were asked their agreement regarding the size of their caseload allowed them to teach their EL students effectively and they were able to teach their EL students frequently enough for the instruction to be effective.

In addition, overall, 45 percent of classroom teachers agreed that the ESL teacher(s) was available when needed. Agreement varied by school level ranging from 38 percent at high school, 44 percent at middle school, and 51 percent at elementary school.

Staff Characteristics

Demographic characteristics were examined for full-time ESL teachers in comparison to the division.⁵⁵ In comparison to all instructional staff throughout the division, there were higher percentages of female ESL teachers as well as ESL teachers who were Hispanic and Asian, while there were lower percentages of male ESL teachers as well as ESL teachers who were Caucasian (see Table 24). The average number of years teaching was slightly higher for ESL teachers in comparison to instructional staff throughout the division, while there was a smaller percentage of ESL teachers who were new to the division in comparison to instructional staff throughout the division.

Table 24: Staff Characteristics for ESL Teachers and All Instructional Staff

Staff Characteristics	ESL Teachers	Division Instructional Staff
Female	94.3%	82.4%
Male	5.7%	17.6%
African American	11.4%	10.8%
Asian	5.7%	2.3%
Caucasian	68.6%	81.7%
Hispanic	11.4%	3.6%
Two or more ethnicities	2.9%	1.1%
Other	0.0%	0.4%
Percentage New to the Division	11.4%	17.6%
Average Years' Experience	16.7	14.2

Resources and Professional Learning

ELT Handbook

A primary resource provided to ESL teachers by the Department of Teaching and Learning is the ELT Handbook. In 2019-2020, there was one handbook for all ESL teachers, while previous years had separate handbooks for the elementary and secondary levels. The handbook provides steps for EL student identification and the eligibility process as well as a review of the ELT process, forms to complete, and the necessary information to complete in Synergy for EL students. As shown in Table 25, ESL teachers and administrators had very positive perceptions of the handbook with at least 89 percent agreement. The agreement percentages regarding the helpfulness and clarity of the ELT Handbook increased notably for ESL teachers (from +9% to +18%) and administrators (+7% to +13%) in comparison to 2018-2019.

Table 25: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Helpfulness and Clarity of ELT Handbook

Item	ESL Teacher	Admin
The English Learner Team Handbook is a helpful resource.	96.0%	90.7%
The English Learner Team Handbook clearly articulates the procedures I must follow and the deadlines I must meet.	88.5%	90.0%

Instructional Materials

While most staff perceived that the ELT Handbook was helpful and clear, lower percentages of ESL teachers and classroom teachers agreed that available instructional materials were appropriate. In 2018-2019, 36 percent of ESL teachers and 58 percent of classroom teachers agreed that the instructional materials available to them were appropriate for the EL students that they taught. One recommendation from the 2018-2019 evaluation was to expand the availability of ESL instructional materials and resources. A proposal by the director of K-12 and Gifted Programs detailing suggested adjustments for the ESL program included

providing resources specifically for newcomer students (i.e., students with a language proficiency between 1.0 and 2.0).⁵⁶ In addition, it was noted that a committee of teachers was formed to review possible resources and to make a recommendation for resources at each school level. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken regarding this recommendation included holding regular ESL advisory committee meetings (i.e., on five occasions from December through June) to review materials and resources. The advisory committee included eight ESL teachers from all school levels.⁵⁷ Ideas generated by the committee were shared with all ESL staff for feedback.⁵⁸ Instructional materials purchased included learning A-Z resources and picture flashcards with words in multiple languages. In addition, other materials/resources were planned to be purchased for the 2020-2021 school year.

In comparison to 2018-2019, agreement percentages in 2019-2020 about available instructional materials being appropriate decreased somewhat for ESL teachers (from 36% to 31%) and classroom teachers (from 58% to 56%) (see Table 26). Comparisons of results by school level in 2019-2020 showed that elementary school classroom teachers had a higher agreement percentage (68%) compared to middle school (53%) and high school (41%) classroom teachers, while high school ESL teachers had a higher agreement percentage (40%) compared to elementary school (35%) and middle school (13%) ESL teachers. With the actions that were taken regarding instructional materials beginning during the 2019-2020 school year, the availability of additional instructional materials and the work to secure those materials prior to the March 2020 school closure may have been impacted. Perceptions of this recommendation area will continue to be monitored in the year-three evaluation.

Table 26: Teacher Agreement Regarding Instructional Materials Being Appropriate

Group	2018-2019	2019-2020
ESL Teacher	36.0%	30.8%
Classroom Teacher	57.5%	55.5%

In 2019-2020, ESL teachers and classroom teachers were asked to provide comments regarding instructional materials. The ESL teachers commented that the current curriculum is outdated and used inconsistently across teachers. A few ESL teachers noted that they have needed to create their own resources. Several ESL teachers noted that there is a need for additional resources for younger EL students and those at a lower English proficiency level. A few ESL teachers stated that they needed resources during push-in and pull-out instruction. Most classroom teachers noted that they were not provided nor were aware of any ESL-related instructional materials that are provided to content-area or classroom teachers. Some classroom teachers noted that the only instructional material they use is Google translate. A few classroom teachers indicated that they sought their own materials to support EL students.

Professional Learning

During 2019-2020, ten professional learning sessions were offered to ESL teachers and covered topics related to ESL program processes/procedures, program updates, screening and assessment information, instructional norms and practices to advance English language proficiency, and facilitating literacy with Newcomers.⁵⁹ These sessions were offered to all ESL teachers as a group. Two of the ten sessions were required for all ESL teachers.⁶⁰ Middle school ESL teachers were also provided a session with English core teachers regarding maximizing co-teaching partnerships. All first- and second-year ESL teachers were provided sustained staff development, which included weekly meetings with the ESL instructional specialist. In response to a survey item, 77 percent of ESL teachers agreed that ESL teachers participated with their ESL counterparts at other schools in EL-related professional learning, which increased from 71 percent in 2018-2019. In addition, according to the ESL coordinator, several ESL teachers and the ESL coordinator presented and/or attended the Virginia Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (VATESOL) conference in September 2019. Moreover, all ESL teachers had the opportunity to attend the 2019-2020 Virginia English learners' Supervisors'

Association (VESA) Conference in January 2020; funding was provided through the Title III grant. Additionally, some ESL teachers as well as the ESL coordinator were planning to attend and present at the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) conference; however, the conference was cancelled due to the pandemic.⁶¹

When asked which topics were provided for professional learning over the last three years, the highest percentages of ESL teachers indicated they received professional learning related to instructional models and methods (89%) as well as regulations, documentation procedures/guidelines, and required VBCPS procedures (85%) (see Table 27). In comparison to results from 2018-2019, there were notable increases in the percentages of ESL teachers who indicated they received professional learning on instructional models and methods and assessment techniques in 2019-2020, while there were notable decreases in the percentages of ESL teachers who indicated they received professional learning on data interpretation and use as well as using technology, software, and internet resources for EL students.

Table 27: Percentages of ESL Teachers Who Reported Receiving Professional Learning in Various Areas

Item	2018-2019	2019-2020
Instructional models and methods	76.0%	88.5%
Regulations, documentation procedures/guidelines, and required VBCPS procedures	88.0%	84.6%
Cultural awareness	68.0%	65.4%
Assessment techniques	48.0%	61.5%
Data interpretation and use	72.0%	46.2%
Learning progressions for EL students	40.0%	42.3%
Using technology, software, and internet resources for EL students	64.0%	42.3%
Developing curricular and instructional materials	28.0%	26.9%
Peer coaching	12.0%	3.3%

During 2019-2020, professional learning sessions provided to classroom teachers was provided by the ESL coordinator, ESL teachers, and the ESL instructional specialist. Six topics were covered during the professional learning sessions and most were offered at least twice throughout the year. Topics included English learner SOL accommodations, supporting EL students in the content areas, differences about teaching reading to English learners, facilitating literacy with English learner newcomers, Model Performance Indicators (MPIs) of ESL, and instructional norms and key practices to advance English language proficiency. When asked about the professional learning they participated in during 2019-2020, from 39 to 46 percent of classroom teachers indicated they participated in EL-related professional learning in the areas of instructional effectiveness with EL students, assessment skills, cultural awareness, and knowledge of ESL program procedures/guidelines and regulations (see Table 28).

Table 28: Percentage of Classroom Teachers Who Participated in EL-Related Professional Learning

Item	Classroom Teacher
Instructional effectiveness with EL students	39.2%
Assessment skills	40.4%
Cultural awareness	45.5%
Knowledge of ESL program procedures/guidelines and regulations	41.9%

Every school's ESL administrative contact (i.e., an assistant principal) was also provided professional learning due to their involvement with assessments and ELT meetings. Professional learning for ESL administrative contacts included an essential professional learning session. These sessions focused on program updates and important information regarding Title III legislation as well as new ESL program guidelines, procedures, and

federal information impacting schools and the division. During 2019-2020, returning ESL administrative contacts had the opportunity to complete the training through a webinar, while new ESL administrative contracts completed the training in person.

Professional Learning Effectiveness

The ESL teachers and classroom teachers who received professional learning were also surveyed about the effectiveness of EL-related professional learning during 2019-2020. Overall, 77 percent of ESL teachers agreed that the EL-related professional learning they received enabled them to meet the needs of their EL students, and agreement increased from 2018-2019 when 68 percent of ESL teachers agreed. A lower percentage of classroom teachers (54%) agreed with the survey item. Regarding professional learning within specific areas, all ESL teachers agreed that the professional learning increased their knowledge of ESL program procedures/guidelines and regulations, and from 79 to 89 percent of ESL teachers agreed that professional learning during 2019-2020 increased their instructional effectiveness, assessment skills, and cultural awareness (see Table 29). Overall, lower percentages of classroom teachers agreed, but results varied by level. In comparison across levels, higher percentages of elementary school classroom teachers agreed that the professional learning during 2019-2020 increased their skills across these three areas (from 70% to 78%) than middle school (from 58% to 67%) and high school classroom teachers (from 44% to 71%).

Table 29: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Professional Learning Increasing Skills in Various Areas

Professional Learning during 2019-2020 has increased my...	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher
Instructional effectiveness with EL students	88.5%	61.3%
Assessment skills	79.2%	59.3%
Cultural awareness	87.5%	72.3%
Knowledge of ESL program procedures/guidelines and regulations	100%	64.2%

Note: Survey results exclude teachers who indicated they did not receive professional learning for the purpose.

In response to an open-ended survey item, ESL teachers and classroom teachers commented on additional EL-related professional learning topics that would be helpful. The main theme reported by ESL teachers was related to curriculum and instruction, including developing materials or aids, strategies for helping struggling readers, and methods to use during push-in instruction. A major theme from classroom teacher responses was that they were unaware of any EL-related professional learning opportunities and that any topic would be helpful. Several classroom teachers noted that general ESL program information or processes would be helpful as well as information specific to teaching EL students within the content areas.

A recommendation area from the 2018-2019 evaluation focused on professional learning related to ESL instruction. It was recommended that professional learning related to ESL instruction be enhanced by providing expanded professional learning opportunities for ESL teachers and encouraging classroom teachers to participate in ESL-related professional learning. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken regarding this recommendation included providing ESL teachers the opportunity to submit proposals in March for presenting professional learning opportunities in ESL-related areas.⁶² There are currently 12 professional learning sessions, open to both ESL and classroom teachers, scheduled for the 2020-2021 school year.

Additionally, a proposal by the director of K-12 and Gifted Programs detailing proposed adjustments for the ESL program included a suggestion regarding professional learning.⁶³ For ESL teachers, it was suggested that professional learning should shift from two-hour monthly recommended sessions to three-hour monthly mandatory sessions. The suggested focus of professional learning was language acquisition, comprehensible input, curriculum and instruction, and co-teaching strategies. Within the proposal, it was suggested that for first-year ESL teachers, a mentor model should be used. This would involve the Department of Teaching and Learning establishing a cohort mentoring model in which year 1, 2, and 3 teachers have bimonthly dedicated

professional learning in their respective cohorts and are assigned an ESL mentor with whom they will work throughout the first three years. The proposed professional learning specific to classroom teachers at the elementary and middle school levels designated as ESL cluster teachers included attending essential ESL professional learning sessions during the summer of 2020, which would include information about language acquisition and co-teaching strategies. Due to scheduling difficulties, ESL cluster teacher training was not offered during the summer; however, various professional learning topics will be offered to classroom teachers throughout the next school year.⁶⁴ Additional follow-up professional learning during the year was proposed that included the ESL teacher providing online discussions and site-based professional learning during staff PL days for the schools in which they are assigned. The central office ESL staff would also develop an ESL co-teaching Look-for document that teachers and administrators could use to help grow their capacity in meeting the needs of their students. Given that many of these activities were proposed and in process when the school closure occurred, this recommendation area will continue to be monitored during the year-three evaluation.

EL Student and Family Communication and Engagement

According to the Office for Civil Rights in the US Education Department, divisions must provide information to parents in a language they can understand, including information related to registration and enrollment, report cards, and parent handbooks. During the 2018-2019 school year and the fall of the 2019-2020 school year, VBCPS distributed division-level communications in English only, while providing any non-English communications was at the discretion of individual schools.⁶⁵ A recommendation area from the 2018-2019 evaluation focused on developing a plan to provide translation and interpretation services when needed to communicate with parents and families of EL students.

Translation and interpretation services were first offered February 6, 2020.⁶⁶ The translated services included translated documents, while interpretation services included access to a phone interpretation service called Voiance. Translated ESL documents, registration documents, and applications (e.g., gifted application) for parents were provided to staff through SharePoint sites in the four most frequent non-English languages, including Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Traditional Chinese. Additionally, a cover letter that detailed how parents could request interpretation services was provided for school use in the ten most frequently used non-English languages, including Arabic, French, Italian, Japanese, Traditional Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Principals were instructed that the cover letter could be used to accompany any information sent home to families and that parents could complete the document to request an appointment to use phone interpretation services to explain the information received from the school. The phone interpretation services through Voiance could be utilized for any school-related purpose except special education or 504 meetings. Each schools' administrative contact received their individual school codes for the phone interpretation services. The ESL coordinator indicated communication was issued through a principals' packet memo on February 6, 2020 to principals and ESL administrative contacts with information regarding the availability of translated documents and phone interpretation services (through Voiance) in February.⁶⁷

On the survey, parents of EL students were asked whether they needed an interpreter or translator to communicate with staff at their child's school. Overall, 58 percent of parents indicated they did not, while 18 percent indicated they needed an interpreter or translator all or most of the time and 24 percent indicated they needed assistance to communicate some of the time.

Although at the time of the survey the translation and interpretation services had only been made available for approximately a month, ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators were asked their perceptions of the translation and interpretation services offered by VBCPS. Overall, from 58 to 77 percent of ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators indicated they had used the services (see Table 30). Of those who indicated they used translation and interpretation services, all ESL teachers, 69 percent of classroom teachers,

and 84 percent of administrators agreed that the services offered to assist communication with EL students and their families were helpful resources.

Table 30: Staff Agreement Regarding Use and Helpfulness of Translation and Interpretation Services

Item	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
Used translation and interpretation services.	57.7%	60.9%	77.2%
Translation and interpretation services offered to assist communication with EL students and their families are helpful resources.	100%	68.7%	84.1%

When asked whether school staff can communicate with EL students and their families in a manner they can understand, from 65 to 68 percent of ESL and classroom teachers agreed (see Table 31). When asked about effectively communicating, 42 percent of ESL teachers and 66 percent of classroom teachers agreed that staff communicate effectively with EL student family members, while at least 76 percent agreed that staff communicate effectively with EL students. Administrators were more likely to agree with all items (see Table 31).

Table 31: Staff Agreement Regarding Staff Communicating With EL Students and Families in a Manner They Can Understand

Item	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
School staff can communicate with EL students and family members in a manner they can understand (e.g., through interpretation or translation services).	65.4%	68.3%	83.2%
School staff communicate effectively with the family members of EL students.	42.3%	65.6%	77.7%
School staff communicate effectively with EL students.	80.0%	76.3%	92.9%

From the EL parents' perspective, overall, 96 percent of parents of EL students agreed that they could communicate with the staff at their child's school when needed. When students were surveyed, overall, 92 percent of EL students agreed that they can communicate with their ESL teachers and 88 percent agreed that they can communicate with their classroom teachers (see Table 32).

Table 32: Student Agreement Percentages Regarding Communicating With Teachers

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
I can communicate with my ESL teacher.	98.2%	92.0%	85.1%	92.4%
I can communicate with my classroom teachers.	95.7%	84.4%	81.0%	88.0%

Another area addressed through the surveys was related to establishing a welcoming environment for EL students and their families. Although 99 percent of EL parents agreed that they feel welcome at their child's school, lower percentages of ESL teachers and classroom teachers agreed that school staff have established practices for welcoming and integrating EL students into the school community (see Table 33).

Table 33: Staff Agreement Regarding Communication With EL Families

Item	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
School staff have established practices for welcoming and integrating EL students into the school community.	53.8%	71.8%	91.2%

Item	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
School staff have established practices for welcoming and integrating the families of EL students into the school community.	53.9%	66.5%	85.8%

Actions Taken During the COVID-19 Pandemic to Support EL Students

The second evaluation question focused on the actions taken to support EL students and their families during the school closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first phase of support provided for instruction for all VBCPS students was the Continuity of Learning Plan, which was established to ensure learning experiences continued during the school closure.⁶⁸ Within the Continuity of Learning Plan, explicit instructions were provided for how content would be delivered for EL students. This included that the division would work to translate learning activities for elementary school EL students, and that middle and high school EL students would use Schoology to access instructional materials. In particular, elementary level paper/pencil packets were translated into Spanish. Also, on the Continuity of Learning Plan website, instructional resources for ESL families were provided.

The second phase of support provided for instruction for all VBCPS students was the Emergency Learning Plan.⁶⁹ Separate plans were provided for each school level. All Emergency Learning Plans detailed that teachers should be mindful of providing their EL students with necessary supports so that they may access instruction, activities, and resources. Within these plans, elementary and middle school ESL teachers were directed to co-plan and co-teach during asynchronous instruction and/or provide individual instruction and differentiated learning activities to their EL students. They were also directed to track their communication with and differentiated support for each student. According to the ESL coordinator, during remote learning, ESL teachers tracked students' participation weekly on a spreadsheet.⁷⁰ According to the ESL coordinator, ESL teachers connected with families using the Voiance phone interpretation services as well as a free translation app for teachers, Talking Points. Within the Emergency Learning Plans, specific responsibilities for ESL teachers included supporting their co-teacher with lesson planning as needed; providing students additional direct instruction and support for language acquisition as needed; having direct contact with all students on their caseload who receive services; continuing to monitor opt-out and former EL students; communicating with parents regarding support for ESL; and at the high school level, launching activities for their own classes. According to the ESL coordinator, during remote learning, elementary and middle school ESL teachers created lessons and activities differentiated for newcomers and intermediate-level English learners. These activities were posted in an ESL teachers' Schoology group to allow ESL teachers to share with each other and with classroom teachers as needed. High school ESL teachers shared resources both within the ESL teacher Schoology group and in a shared Google drive folder.

In preparation for the school closure, on March 10, 2020, the ESL coordinator directed ESL teachers to provide all classroom teachers with an electronic copy of their EL students' classroom accommodations. Elementary and middle school ESL teachers were also directed to request to be added as a co-administrator with the classroom teachers for all English/language arts courses in which their EL students were enrolled.⁷¹ Throughout the school closure, email communications sent regularly from the Superintendent to VBCPS families included a link to read the full communication in Spanish, which was made available on the VBCPS website.⁷²

According to the ESL coordinator, during the summer of 2020, more than 300 EL students were provided supports through either the secondary summer school program or the Virtual Summer Learning Camp.⁷³ Both programs offered daily intensive, small-group virtual English instruction during the summer. The secondary summer school program, which is offered every summer, offered EL-related courses to students who had a

lower English proficiency level score (i.e., 1.0 – 2.5 on the ACCESS or WIDA Screener). Seven ESL teachers virtually taught approximately 140 secondary EL students through this program during the summer. The Virtual Summer Learning Camp was established for students who needed additional support after the school closure. The ESL program worked with English/Language Arts staff in the Department of Teaching and Learning to offer support to EL students through this program. More than 160 elementary school EL students were provided support through this program. The teachers included six non-Title I ESL teachers (one assigned to each grade level) and three Title I ESL teachers (assigned to two grade levels). In addition, one ESL teacher provided support through the push-in model for secondary EL students who were enrolled to retake an English course during the summer. Lastly, the Summer Learning Boost program provided elementary school students additional learning opportunities for families over the summer. The Summer Learning Boost program provided families with videos for each grade level that reviewed previous year’s material in the areas of literacy and math. On the Summer Learning Boost website, parent videos were offered in Spanish, including a video with instructions about how to access the website and videos.

Characteristics of Students in ESL Program

The third evaluation question addressed the characteristics of students in the ESL program, including students who received services, students who opted out of receiving services, and students who were monitored or tracked throughout the four years after exiting the program. As detailed in the Evaluation Design and Data Collection section of the report, students who received services during 2019-2020 were identified as those who received services as reported to VDOE through the SRC at the end of the year. In addition, using those rules, students who would have been identified as receiving services at other points in the year were also included even though they were not enrolled at the end of the school year.

Student Demographic Characteristics

A total of 1,724 students were identified as having received ESL services during the 2019-2020 school year. Comparisons across school levels showed that 72 percent of EL students who received services were in elementary school, while 17 percent of students were in middle school and 11 percent of students were in high school (see Table 34). The EL students made up approximately 4 percent of all elementary school students, 2 percent of all middle school students, and 1 percent of all high school students. Similar trends were found during 2018-2019.

Table 34: Numbers and Percentages of EL Students Who Received Services

School Level	Students Receiving Services	Percent of All ELs	EL Students Percent of All VBCPS	VBCPS Student Total*
Elementary	1,235	71.6%	3.9%	31,835
Middle	297	17.2%	1.8%	16,300
High	192	11.1%	0.9%	21,126
Total	1,724	100%	2.5%	69,261

Note: *VBCPS student information included all students enrolled at any point during 2019-2020 obtained from the data warehouse.

Demographic characteristics of EL students who received services during 2019-2020 are shown in Table 35. At each school level, the highest percentages of EL students who received services were Hispanic and Asian. Additionally, depending on level, from 48 to 59 percent of EL students were economically disadvantaged. Similar findings were seen during 2018-2019. Compared to the division, there was a higher percentage of EL students who were economically disadvantaged (57% compared to 41%) and lower percentages of EL students who were identified as special education (7% compared to 11%) and gifted students (5% compared to 18%).

Table 35: Demographic Characteristics of EL Students Who Received Services

Student Characteristic	ES	MS	HS	Total
Female	44.4%	47.8%	37.0%	44.1%
Male	55.6%	52.2%	63.0%	55.9%
African American	2.3%	3.0%	2.1%	2.4%
American Indian	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Asian	28.3%	21.9%	24.0%	26.7%
Caucasian	16.7%	14.8%	9.4%	15.5%
Hispanic	49.3%	58.6%	64.6%	52.6%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%
Two or More Races	3.0%	1.3%	0.0%	2.4%
Economically Disadvantaged	58.1%	58.6%	48.4%	57.1%
Special Education	8.6%	5.4%	2.6%	7.4%
Gifted	6.7%	1.3%	0.0%	5.0%
Military/Government Connected	19.8%	20.5%	9.9%	18.8%

Special Categories

Opt-Out Students

As previously mentioned, another category of EL students consists of students who are eligible for ESL services but whose parents opted out. There was a total of 162 students who opted out of receiving services during 2019-2020, which was an increase compared to 58 students whose parents opted them out of receiving services in 2018-2019. Consistent with 2018-2019, most students whose parents opted out of receiving services were at the high school level in 2019-2020. As shown in Table 36, 39 percent of all eligible students at the high school level opted out of receiving services, whereas the percentages were 2 percent at the elementary school level and 5 percent at the middle school level. At the high school level, there was an increase in the percentage of eligible EL students who were opted out of services (from 16% to 39%). This increase was most likely due to a change in data coding from 2018-2019. Students are no longer coded as receiving services through the ELT when they were not directly receiving instructional services.⁷⁴ A potential reason for a parent to opt out of services, particularly at the high school level, may be related to parents wanting their children to graduate on time by accruing course credits in academic classes essential for high school graduation that could not be accrued while taking the ESL-related courses.⁷⁵

Table 36: Numbers and Percentages of EL Students Who Opted Out of Services

School Level	Number of Opt-Out Students	Percent of Eligible ELs	Number of Eligible ELs (Opt-Out and Served)
Elementary	23	1.8%	1,258
Middle	14	4.5%	311
High	125	39.4%	317
Total	162	8.6%	1,886

Former EL Students and Students in Monitoring

Another category of EL students includes former EL students who have been classified as having attained or exceeded the proficient level for English language development according to their score on the WIDA ACCESS test. The total number of former EL students was 666 students (see Table 37). Approximately half (53%) of these students were being monitored (i.e., one to two years since attaining English proficiency) and half (47%) were being tracked (i.e., three to four years since attaining English proficiency). These former EL students

made up approximately 1 percent of all elementary school students, 2 percent of all middle school students, and approximately 1 percent of all high school students. Similar results were found in 2018-2019.

Table 37: Numbers and Percentages of Former EL Students

School Level	Number of Monitoring Students (Post Program Years 1-2)	Number of Tracked Students (Post Program Years 3-4)	Number of Total Former EL Students (Post Program Years 1-4)	Total Former Students Percent of All VBCPS	VBCPS Student Total
Elementary	171	38	209	0.7%	31,835
Middle	126	186	312	1.9%	16,300
High	59	86	145	0.7%	21,126
Total	356	310	666	1.0%	69,261

Demographics for these categories of EL students are shown in Appendix A. Findings showed that higher percentages of former students were gifted and Asian compared to current EL students.

Students With Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

A final category of students includes students whose experiences before entering a Virginia Beach school have a potential impact on their English learning ability. English learners who enter school with little to no formal schooling are known as SLIFE. They must not only learn English and adapt to local culture but also catch up as quickly as possible with respect to acclimating to school culture and to acquiring academic content. Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, ESL teachers were required to identify whether a student was considered as being SLIFE. However, data were only entered for new students who entered the school system in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. There were 19 students (12 in high school, 6 in elementary school, 1 in middle school) who were identified as being SLIFE during the 2018-2019 school year and 25 students (18 in high school, 7 in elementary school) identified during 2019-2020. Of the 18 high school students who were identified as being SLIFE in 2019-2020, 13 students (72%) were enrolled in the Newcomer Program at Landstown High School.

Progress Toward Meeting Goals and Objectives

The third evaluation question focused on progress made toward meeting the program’s goals and objectives. The focus of the current evaluation was on implementation processes, which includes the goals related to professional learning and the program’s focus on students. If available, additional data are provided for the outcome goals, which focused on the following areas: students’ social and emotional development, students’ attainment of English proficiency, and parent involvement. Data collection impacted by the March 2020 school closure will be noted where applicable. Where possible, data for the division as a whole are represented as a reference point. As the evaluation progresses to next year when the focus will be on student outcomes, a matched group of similar non-EL students will serve as a comparison group where possible.

Implementation Goals

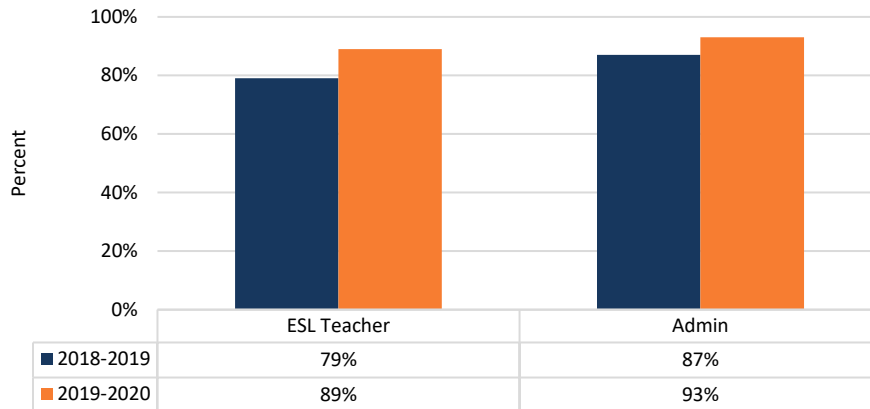
Goal 1: ESL teachers and classroom teachers participate in professional learning to understand the needs of English learners and collaborate to seek ways to best serve their EL students.

Objective 1: ESL teachers participate in professional learning to increase their instructional effectiveness with EL students and report that it was effective as measured by ESL teacher and administrator survey responses.

All ESL teachers agreed that they participated in professional learning during 2019-2020 to increase their instructional effectiveness with EL students. In addition, 93 percent of administrators agreed that ESL teachers participated in professional learning during 2019-2020 for this purpose. When asked about the effectiveness of

the professional learning, 89 percent of ESL teachers and 93 percent of administrators agreed that the professional learning to increase instructional effectiveness with EL students was effective. In comparison to results from 2018-2019, there were increases in the percentages of ESL teachers (from 96% to 100%) and administrators (from 89% to 93%) who indicated that ESL teachers participated in professional learning for instructional effectiveness with EL students. Additionally, there were increases in the percentages of ESL teachers and administrators who agreed that the professional learning was effective (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Staff Agreement Regarding PL Increasing ESL Teacher Instructional Effectiveness



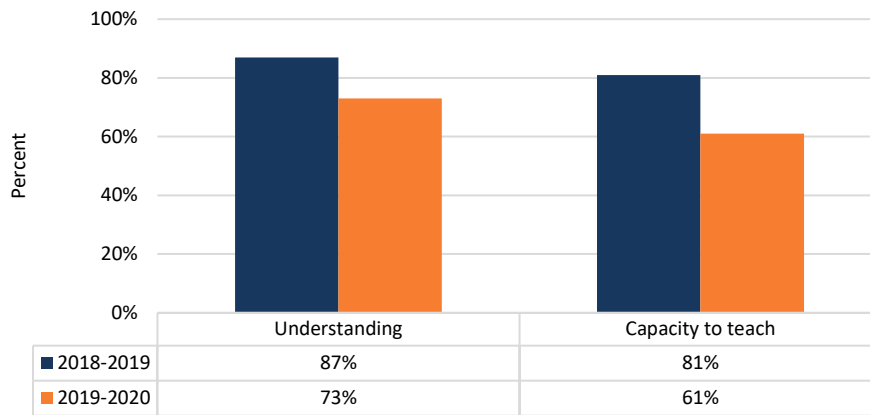
Objective 2: Classroom teachers participate in professional learning to increase their understanding of and capacity to teach EL students and report that it was effective as measured by teacher and administrator survey responses.

Low percentages of classroom teachers who taught at least one EL student agreed that they participated in professional learning during 2019-2020 to increase their understanding of (42%) or capacity to teach EL students (40%). Of those classroom teachers who indicated they participated in professional learning in 2019-2020 for these purposes, 73 percent agreed that the professional learning increased their understanding of EL students and 61 percent agreed that the professional learning increased their capacity to teach EL students. Results by school level showed that lower percentages of high school classroom teachers agreed that professional learning increased their capacity to teach EL students and their understanding of EL students (from 42% to 61%) compared to elementary school (from 77% to 80%) and middle school classroom teachers (from 60% to 79%).

In addition, from 50 to 60 percent of administrators agreed that classroom teachers participated in professional learning in 2019-2020 for these purposes. Eighty percent (80%) of administrators agreed that professional learning for classroom teachers increased teachers’ understanding of EL students, and 72 percent agreed it increased teachers’ capacity to teach EL students.

The agreement percentages regarding classroom teachers having participated in professional learning increased from 2018-2019, when 22 percent of classroom teachers and 34 percent of administrators agreed that classroom teachers participated in professional learning. Although there were increases in agreement percentages regarding participation, the percentages who agreed that professional learning increased classroom teachers’ skills in these two areas decreased notably from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 for both classroom teachers and administrators (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Classroom Teacher Agreement Regarding PL Increasing Skills



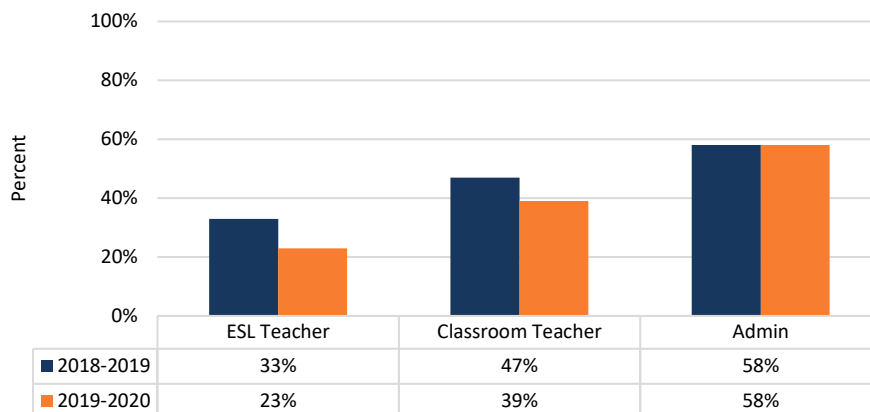
Objective 3: *ESL teachers and classroom teachers collaborate to meet the needs of EL students as measured by staff survey responses.*

Low percentages of ESL teachers agreed that ESL teachers and content-area/classroom teachers collaborate with each other to meet the needs of EL students (23%) and that ESL teachers effectively collaborate and plan with content-area/classroom teachers to teach lessons (15%). Results by school level showed that a *higher* percentage of high school ESL teachers agreed with these items (40%) compared to elementary school (from 12% to 18%) and middle school ESL teachers (from 0% to 13%).

Additionally, from 36 to 39 percent of classroom teachers and 47 to 58 percent of administrators agreed that ESL teachers and classroom teachers collaborate to meet EL students’ needs and effectively collaborate and plan. Contrary to the ESL teacher results by school level, results for classroom teachers showed that a *lower* percentage of high school classroom teachers agreed (from 25% to 28%) with these items compared to elementary school (from 45% to 47%) and middle school classroom teachers (from 36% to 41%).

In comparison to results from 2018-2019, agreement percentages of ESL teachers and classroom teachers regarding ESL teachers and content-area/classroom teachers collaborating with each other to meet the needs of EL students decreased in 2019-2020, while administrator agreement remained the same (see Figure 3).

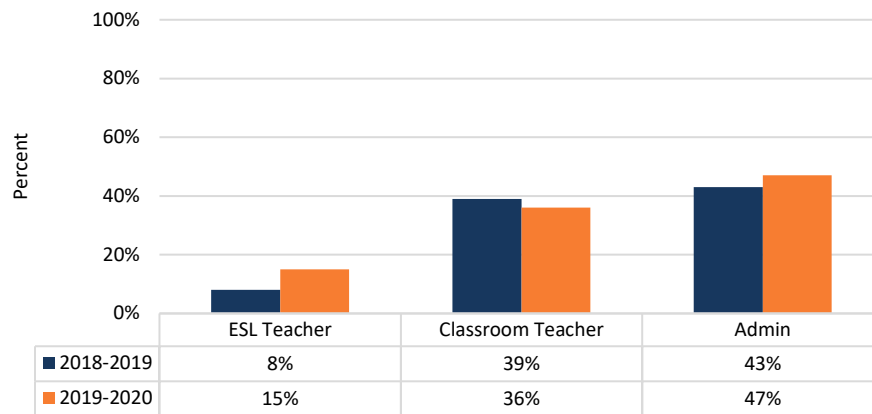
Figure 3: Staff Agreement Regarding ESL and Classroom Teachers Collaborating to Meet Students' Needs



Regarding ESL teachers effectively collaborating and planning with content-area/classroom teachers, the percentage of ESL teachers and administrators who agreed with this item increased from 2018-2019 to

2019-2020, although it remained very low for ESL teachers (see Figure 4). Classroom teacher agreement regarding this item decreased slightly.

Figure 4: Staff Agreement Regarding ESL and Classroom Teachers Effectively Collaborating and Planning



Due to the low agreement percentages found in 2018-2019 regarding staff collaboration, one recommendation from the 2018-2019 evaluation focused on communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers. It was recommended that new strategies to improve communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers be implemented. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken regarding this recommendation included meeting with the chief academic officer to discuss implementation of the Ellevation data platform.⁷⁶ This platform will allow ESL and classroom teachers to access EL student data and collaborate virtually. As of August 2020, the ESL coordinator was working with staff in various departments (i.e., Purchasing, Legal, and Technology) regarding moving forward with the product. Given that many of these activities were proposed and in process when the school closure occurred, this recommendation area will continue to be monitored during the year-three evaluation.

Goal 2: The ESL program will be student-centered and provide EL students with a variety of choices and opportunities to help students reach their goals.

Due to low percentages of EL students participating in a variety of educational opportunities in 2018-2019, a recommendation from the 2018-2019 evaluation focused on curricular options for EL students. It was recommended that EL students be encouraged to participate in a variety of curricular options to help them reach their goals. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken regarding this recommendation included meeting with the school counseling coordinator to discuss pathways to graduation and course options for EL students in December 2019.⁷⁷ As of June 2020, the ESL coordinator was reviewing the ESL high school course options to ensure the EL students have solid pathways to graduation. Where appropriate, analyses are examined separately for current and former EL students to examine their participation in various educational opportunities for this program goal.

Objective 1: *EL students report that they were provided with personalized learning opportunities as measured by student survey responses.*

Overall, 88 percent of EL students agreed that they were learning and doing things in school that were matched to their needs and interests. Comparisons by school level showed that agreement was highest for elementary school EL students (94%), followed by high school EL students (88%), and middle school EL students (77%). Navigational Marker data showed that overall, 79 percent of students divisionwide agreed that they were learning and doing things in school that were matched to their needs and interests, which was lower than the potential EL student agreement percentage (82%).

Objective 2: *EL students report that the academic/career planning process helped them to make informed decisions about college, employment, or military service as measured by student survey responses.*

At the elementary school level, 64 percent of EL students agreed that their teachers or counselors talked with them about their options after they graduate from high school. Navigational Marker data showed that 67 percent of elementary school students divisionwide agreed that their teachers or counselors talked with them about their options after they graduate from high school, which was the same as the potential EL student agreement percentage (67%).

At the secondary level, 74 percent of EL students agreed that they received assistance, resources, and information at their school to help them make informed decisions about their options after they graduate from high school. Comparisons across school level showed that a lower percentage of middle school EL students (71%) agreed compared to high school EL students (77%). Navigational Marker data showed that overall, 79 percent of division secondary students agreed that they received assistance, resources, and information at their school to help them make informed decisions about their options after they graduate from high school, which was slightly lower than the potential EL student agreement percentage (80%).

Objective 3: *EL students in middle school and high school enroll in rigorous coursework as measured by the percentage of students enrolled in advanced or honors courses.*

Data for this objective followed rules established for students enrolled in rigorous coursework for the *Compass to 2020* Navigational Markers, which included students who were enrolled in an advanced course on February 10, 2020 or earned a final grade in a rigorous course in the first semester. At the middle school level, 39 percent of current or former EL students were enrolled in an advanced course, while at the high school level, 35 percent of current or former EL students were enrolled in an advanced course (see Table 38). Examining results for current and former students separately showed that notably higher percentages of former EL students were enrolled in rigorous coursework than current EL students at both levels. In comparison to the division, a slightly higher percentage of middle school former EL students were enrolled in rigorous coursework (62% compared to 60%), while the percentage of high school former EL students enrolled in rigorous coursework was lower compared to the division (52% compared to 60%).

Table 38: Percentage of Students Enrolled in Rigorous Coursework

Group	MS	HS	Total
Current and former EL students	39.0%	34.5%	37.4%
Current EL students	14.6%	19.9%	16.7%
Former EL students	61.6%	52.4%	58.7%
Division	60.1%	59.7%	59.9%

Objective 4: *EL students have opportunities to enroll in academy programs, the Advanced Technology Center, and the Technical and Career Education Center as measured by the percentage of EL students enrolled in each of these programs.*

Of the 946 current or former EL students at the secondary level, 2 percent were enrolled in an academy during the 2019-2020 school year. Examining results for current and former EL students separately showed that no current EL students were enrolled in an academy, while 1 percent of middle school former EL students and 12 percent of high school former EL students were enrolled in an academy (see Table 39). At high school where nearly all academy programs operate, there was a somewhat lower percentage of former EL students enrolled (12%) compared to the division's students (16%).

Table 39: Percentage of Students Enrolled in An Academy

Group	MS	HS	Total
Current and former EL students	0.3%	5.0%	2.0%
Current EL students	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Former EL students	0.6%	11.7%	4.2%
Division	2.8%	16.4%	10.5%

As shown in Table 40, the percentage of current or former high school EL students who were enrolled at ATC was 1 percent during 2019-2020 and the percentage enrolled at TCE was 3 percent. Examining results for current and former EL students separately showed that 1 percent of former EL students was enrolled at ATC and 6 percent were enrolled at TCE, while no current EL students were enrolled. In comparison to the division level, there was a relatively similar percentage of former EL students enrolled at ATC (1% compared to 2%) and a higher percentage of former EL students enrolled at TCE (6% compared to 3%).

Table 40: Percentage of Students Enrolled in ATC and TCE

Group	ATC	TCE
Current and former EL students	0.6%	2.7%
Current EL students	0.0%	0.5%
Former EL students	1.4%	5.5%
Division	2.3%	3.4%

Objective 5: *EL students will demonstrate college- and career-readiness skills as measured by the percentage of students who earn industry certification, the percentage who complete a technical and career education program, and the percentage meeting college-readiness benchmarks on the SAT.*

Data collection for this objective was impacted by the school closure in March 2020. In particular, there were fewer opportunities for students to complete industry certification tests and take the SAT after the school closure. Consistent with reporting of the Navigational Marker 2019-2020 data, SAT and certification data for the 2019-2020 school year will not be reported due to this impact.

The percentage of graduates who completed a Career and Technical Education Program was examined. Of the 45 current or former EL students who graduated in 2019-2020, 38 percent completed a Career and Technical Education Program. Examining results for current and former EL students separately showed that 43 percent of the 37 former EL student graduates completed a CTE program.⁷⁸ A similar percentage of former EL student graduates completed a CTE program in comparison to the division level (43% compared to 44%).

Student and Parent Outcome Goals

The current evaluation report focused on the implementation of the ESL program during 2019-2020. In addition, data were collected and analyzed for the outcome goals to provide initial results. The following data included perception data from EL students, parents of EL students, ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators. Additional outcome data included absence rates, enrollment data, ACCESS scores, and VDOE on-time graduation rates. Data collection impacted by the March 2020 school closure will be noted where applicable.

Goal 3: The ESL program will foster EL students’ social and emotional development to support students as they become confident learners who feel part of their school community.

Goal 3 focused on the ESL program fostering EL students’ confidence in class, collaboration with peers, participation in extracurricular activities, attendance, development of positive relationships, sense of belongingness, and feeling welcomed.

Objective 1: *EL students demonstrate confidence by participating in class and collaborating during group work as measured by student and staff survey responses.*

Overall, 72 percent of EL students agreed that they participated in class by sharing their thoughts and 88 percent of EL students agreed that they collaborated with other students during group work. Comparisons by school level showed that highest student agreement regarding demonstrating confidence was at the elementary school level (from 85% to 93%), while lowest agreement was at the middle school level (from 55% to 82%) (see Table 41).

Table 41: EL Student Agreement Regarding Demonstrating Confidence

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
EL students demonstrate confidence by participating in class	84.5%	54.5%	69.9%	71.6%
EL students demonstrate confidence by collaborating with other students during group work	93.1%	82.1%	87.5%	88.2%

Navigational Marker survey data showed that overall, the same percentage of students divisionwide (72%) agreed that they participated by sharing their thoughts in class as the percentage of potential EL students (72%), and the same percentage agreed that they collaborated with other students during group work (90%).

Teachers and administrators were also surveyed about whether EL students demonstrated confidence in the classroom by participating in class and collaborating with other students during group work. From 69 to 85 percent of ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators agreed that EL students demonstrated confidence by participating in class and from 75 to 87 percent agreed that EL students demonstrated confidence by collaborating during group work (see Table 42). Overall, comparisons by school level showed that highest agreement percentages for all staff groups were at the elementary school level (from 77% to 92% compared to at the secondary level from 50% to 85%).

Table 42: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Students Demonstrating Confidence in Class

Item	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
EL students demonstrate confidence by participating in class	72.0%	69.0%	84.8%
EL students demonstrate confidence by collaborating with other students during group work	76.9%	75.4%	86.5%

Objective 2: *EL students participate in athletics, clubs, and other extracurricular activities as measured by student survey responses.*

The EL students were surveyed about their participation in athletics, clubs, and other extracurricular activities at their school during the school year. Overall, 43 percent of EL students indicated they had participated in extracurricular activities, clubs, or athletics through their school. Comparisons by school level showed that

approximately half (52%) of elementary school EL students indicated they had participated, while 39 percent of middle school students and 34 percent of high school EL students indicated they had participated.

Navigational Marker data showed that overall 63 percent of students divisionwide indicated that they participated in extracurricular activities, clubs, or athletics through their school, which was similar to the potential EL student agreement percentage (64%).

Objective 3: *EL students consistently attend school as measured by the percentage of students who are absent less than 10 percent of the school year (i.e., not chronically absent) and by the percentage who have fewer than six unexcused/unverified absences.*

The percentages of EL students receiving services who consistently attended school up to the date of the school closure (i.e., attended more than 90 percent of the school year up to March 13) and had few unexcused absences (i.e., fewer than six) were also examined. Analyses were limited to students who were enrolled for at least seven days during 2019-2020 up to March 13 (n = 1,720). During 2019-2020, 85 percent of EL students had an attendance rate of over 90 percent of the school year, which was slightly lower than the percentage of all VBCPS students who had an attendance rate of over 90 percent of the school year (89%). The percentage of EL students who had fewer than six unexcused absences was 89 percent, which was relatively similar to the percentage at the division level (90%).

Objective 4: *EL students report positive relationships with peers, teachers, and administrators as measured by student survey responses.*

The EL students were surveyed about having positive relationships with peers, teachers, and administrators. Overall, 88 percent of EL students agreed they had positive relationships with other students, 85 percent agreed they had positive relationships with teachers, and 76 percent agreed they had positive relationships with principals or assistant principals. Comparisons by school level showed that elementary school EL students had the highest agreement percentages (from 86% to 91%) (see Table 43).

Table 43: EL Student Agreement Regarding Positive Relationships

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
Positive relationships with peers	90.7%	85.6%	86.0%	87.8%
Positive relationships with teachers	92.6%	78.2%	80.7%	84.9%
Positive relationships with administrators	86.1%	68.5%	69.7%	76.0%

Navigational Marker data showed that overall, similar percentages of students divisionwide agreed that they had positive relationships with peers, teachers, and administrators as potential EL student agreement percentage (see Table 44).

Table 44: Division and Potential EL Student Agreement Regarding Positive Relationships

Item	Potential EL Students	Division
Positive relationships with peers	88.0%	88.9%
Positive relationships with teachers	90.1%	89.7%
Positive relationships with administrators	77.6%	75.4%

Objective 5: *EL students report a sense of belonging to their school as measured by student survey responses.*

The EL students were surveyed about having a sense of belonging to their school. Overall, 83 percent of EL students agreed that they felt a sense of belonging at their school. Comparisons by school level showed that elementary school EL students had the highest agreement regarding having a sense of belonging at their school (88%), followed by high school (83%) and then middle school EL students (77%).

Navigational Marker data showed that overall, 77 percent of students divisionwide indicated that they felt a sense of belonging at their school, which was the same as the potential EL student agreement percentage (77%).

Objective 6: *EL students and their parents report that their school is a welcoming place to learn as measured by student and parent survey responses.*

The EL students and parents of EL students were surveyed about feeling their school was a welcoming place to learn. Overall, 92 percent of EL students agreed that their school is a welcoming place to learn (see Table 45). Consistent with previous survey results, elementary school EL students had the highest agreement percentage (96%) and middle school students had the lowest agreement percentage (87%). Overall, 98 percent of parents of EL students agreed that their child’s school provided a welcoming place to learn.

Table 45: EL Student and Parent Agreement Regarding School Providing a Welcoming Place to Learn

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
Student - School is a welcoming place to learn	96.3%	87.4%	89.2%	91.6%
Parent – My child’s school provides a welcoming place to learn	98.3%	96.4%	97.0%	98.0%

Navigational Marker data showed that overall, 84 percent of students divisionwide agreed that their school is a welcoming place to learn, which was the same as the potential EL student agreement percentage (84%).

Goal 4: EL students will attain English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Objective 1: *EL students will make adequate progress in English language development as measured by the percentage of students who demonstrate the required composite proficiency level gains on the ACCESS test as defined by the VDOE depending on the students’ previous year’s proficiency level and current grade level.*

When EL students were asked to rate their progress learning English in the ESL program, 87 percent rated their progress as either excellent or good, while 13 percent rated their progress as either fair or poor. In addition, 85 percent of parents rated their child’s progress learning English as being either excellent or good, while 15 percent rated their progress as either fair or poor.

As part of Goal 4, students’ progression in English language development was examined based on students’ scores on the ACCESS test. As part of Virginia’s ESSA State Plan, VDOE provided required proficiency level gains on the ACCESS test depending on students’ previous year’s ACCESS proficiency level and current grade level (see Table 46).⁷⁹

Table 46: Required Proficiency Level Gains on ACCESS

Proficiency Level (Previous ACCESS Score)	Required Proficiency Level Gains		
	Grades K – 2	Grades 3 – 5	Grades 6 – 12
1.0 – 2.4	1.0	0.7	0.4
2.5 – 3.4	0.4	0.4	0.2
3.5 – 4.4	0.2	0.2	0.1

The EL students who received services and had an ACCESS score from both 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 were included in this analysis (n = 901). As a reminder, ACCESS data for the 2019-2020 school year as of August 13 are included in the analysis. The percentage of students who demonstrated the required proficiency level gains on the ACCESS test are shown in Table 47. In grades 3-5, from 66 to 75 percent of students at each proficiency level showed the required improvement, while approximately half of students in grades K-2 and in grades 6-12 showed the required improvement (from 49% to 56%).

Table 47: Numbers and Percentages of Students Demonstrating Required Proficiency Level Gains

Proficiency Level (ACCESS Score) in 2018-2019	Grades K – 2		Grades 3 – 5		Grades 6 – 12	
	N	% Meeting Level Gains	N	% Meeting Level Gains	N	% Meeting Level Gains
1.0 – 2.4	123	52.8%	44	65.9%	82	52.4%
2.5 – 3.4	125	56.0%	113	70.8%	59	49.2%
3.5 – 4.4	78	52.6%	179	74.9%	98	53.1%

In comparison to results from 2018-2019, there was an increase in 2019-2020 in the percentage of K-2 students who showed the required improvements at the highest proficiency level (from 36% to 53%). However, there were decreases in 2019-2020 in the percentages of K-2 students who showed the required improvements at the lowest (from 77% to 53%) and middle (from 67% to 56%) proficiency levels and also for grades 6-12 students at the middle proficiency level (from 69% to 49%). All other groups had similar percentages of students with required improvements the previous year.

Objective 2: *EL students achieve English proficiency within five years, as measured by the percentage of students attaining an ACCESS composite score of 4.4 or higher.*

As the ESL program evaluation progresses, an additional objective for this goal will focus on EL students achieving English proficiency within five years.⁸⁰ A longitudinal analysis of data over multiple years will be needed to address this objective. It is uncertain at this time how the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020-2021 school operating plan, including testing, will impact the assessment of this objective.

Objective 3: *EL students will graduate from high school on time as measured by the VDOE on-time graduation rate.*

The percentage of students who graduated from high school on time as measured by the VDOE on-time graduation rate was examined. Of the students who were identified as EL in 2019-2020 through the VDOE report, approximately 90 percent graduated on time, which was slightly lower than the division percentage (94%). These results were consistent with findings from 2018-2019.

Table 48: VDOE On-Time Graduation Rates

Student Group	2018-2019	2019-2020
EL Student in Current Year	89.9%	90.2%

Student Group	2018-2019	2019-2020
EL Student Anytime in HS	85.0%	87.4%
Division	93.9%	94.3%

Goal 5: The parents of EL students will be provided with supports and services to enable them to support and participate in their child’s education.

Objective 1: *The parents of EL students receive timely notice of their child’s English language and academic progress and status in a form and manner that they can understand as measured by parent and staff survey responses.*

Parents of EL students were surveyed about whether they received timely notice of their child’s English language and academic progress and status in a manner they could understand. Overall, 92 percent of parents of EL students agreed their child’s school keeps them informed about their child’s progress in learning English, and 95 percent agreed their child’s school keeps them informed about their child’s academic progress in his/her courses (see Table 49). At least 90 percent of parents of EL students at each school level agreed with these items. When parents were asked whether they were able to understand the information the school provided about their child’s progress, 72 percent indicated they understood all or most of the time, while 26 percent indicated they understood some of the time and 2 percent indicated they did not understand the information. The percentage of parents who indicated they understood the information all or most of the time was highest at the elementary school level (74%) and lowest at the high school level (61%).

Table 49: EL Parent Agreement Regarding Being Informed About Child's Progress

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
My child’s school keeps me informed about my child’s progress in learning English.	90.4%	92.6%	97.0%	91.5%
My child’s school keeps me informed about my child’s academic progress in his/her courses.	96.1%	92.5%	93.9%	95.1%
Yes, I am able to understand the information the school provides about my child’s progress all or most of the time.	74.1%	70.4%	60.6%	72.1 %

In addition, ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators were surveyed about parents of EL students receiving timely notice of their child’s progress. As shown in Table 50, high percentages of ESL teachers and administrators agreed that parents of EL students received timely notice of their child’s English language performance/progress and academic progress (92% to 96%). A low percentage of ESL teachers agreed that parents received their child’s academic information in a manner they could understand (23%), but 70 to 79 percent of classroom teachers and administrators agreed parents received academic progress information in a manner they could understand.

Results by school level showed that a lower percentage of high school ESL and classroom teachers agreed that parents of EL students received English language and academic performance information in a timely manner (from 59% to 80%) compared to elementary (from 87% to 100%) and middle school (from 74% to 100%) ESL and classroom teachers.

Table 50: Staff Agreement Regarding Parents Receiving Information About Child's Progress

Item	2018-2019			2019-2020		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
Parents of EL students receive timely notice of their child's English language performance/progress.	70.8%	82.1%	99.0%	92.3%	75.4%	92.9%
Parents of EL students receive timely notice of their child's academic performance/progress.	91.7%	88.3%	97.0%	96.0%	81.8%	95.6%
Parents of EL students receive information about their child's academic performance/progress in a manner they can understand.	29.2%	76.3%	77.2%	23.1%	70.1%	78.8%

In comparison to results from 2018-2019, ESL teacher agreement percentages increased notably regarding parents receiving timely notice of their child's English language performance/progress (from 70% to 92%). There was a decrease in agreement percentage regarding parents receiving the information in a manner they could understand (from 29% to 23%).

Objective 2: *Parents of EL students attend and express satisfaction with events, programs, and resources provided for parents to support students as measured by parent survey responses.*

Parents of EL students were surveyed about whether they attended division-sponsored events or programs to support students and their satisfaction with events, programs, and resources provided by VBCPS. As shown in Table 51, overall, 49 percent of parents of EL students indicated they attended an event or program this year with the highest reported attendance at elementary school and the lowest at high school. This was slightly lower than the percentage of parents who indicated they attended an event or program at the division level (57%) as reported in the 2019-2020 Navigational Marker data. Overall, 96 percent of parents of EL students were satisfied with events, programs, or resources provided by VBCPS, with high satisfaction at each school level, which was higher than the percentage at the division level (91%).

Table 51: Percentage of Parents Who Attended Events or Programs and Satisfaction

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
Attended any school division-sponsored family events or programs this year.	53.5%	47.2%	30.3%	48.8%
Satisfied with events, programs, or resources provided by VBCPS	96.9%	93.9%	96.9%	96.1%

Note: Responses exclude parents who indicated they did not attend events or programs or use resources.

Objective 3: *Parents of EL students receive school division communications in a form and manner that they can understand as measured by parent survey responses.*

Overall, 97 percent of parents of EL students agreed that they can understand the information they receive from the school division, with high agreement at each school level (see Table 52).

Table 52: EL Parent Agreement Regarding Understanding Information From Division

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
I can understand the information I receive from the school division.	96.6%	96.4%	97.0%	96.8%

Stakeholder Perceptions

Overall Perceptions

Staff were asked additional survey items related to the program's overall effectiveness. In particular, staff were asked whether EL students received all the services they needed and whether they received services for as long as they needed. Less than one half of ESL teachers and classroom teachers, along with 63 percent of administrators, indicated that EL students received all the services they needed (see Table 53). Higher percentages of staff indicated that EL students received services for *as long* as they needed. Staff were also asked their agreement regarding whether the ESL program provided students with continuity of instructional services throughout the year, with agreement at 31 percent for ESL teachers and from 57 to 67 percent for classroom teachers and administrators.

Results by school level showed that lower percentages of high school classroom teachers (39%) and administrators (45%) agreed that students received all the services they needed compared to elementary and middle school classroom teachers (from 53% to 56%) and administrators (from 61% to 69%).

In comparison to results from 2018-2019, most agreement percentages regarding these program items decreased for each staff group. Notably, ESL teacher agreement regarding the program providing EL students with continuity of instructional services decreased 23 percentage points from 54 percent in 2018-2019 to 31 percent in 2019-2020. In addition, classroom teacher agreement regarding EL students receiving *all needed* services and services for *as long as needed* decreased 14 and 15 percentage points respectively (see Table 53).

Table 53: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding EL Students Receiving Services

Item	2018-2019			2019-2020		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
EL students receive all needed services.	39.1%	63.5%	67.0%	38.5%	49.7%	62.5%
EL students receive services for as long as needed.	73.9%	86.7%	87.4%	65.4%	71.7%	89.2%
The ESL program provides EL students with continuity of instructional services through the school year.	53.8%	61.6%	75.5%	30.8%	56.7%	67.0%

Staff who responded that students did not receive all the services they needed or did not receive services for as long as they needed were also provided the opportunity to explain their response. Many ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators again responded that the frequency of and length of instruction are too limited and that ESL teachers' caseloads and limited time impact students' ability to receive services, especially students with lower English proficiencies who require more support. Classroom teachers again noted that they were unaware of what supports their EL students should receive because of lack of information or that their EL students are not provided enough time with and support from their ESL teacher.

When EL students and parents of EL students were asked a survey item about general program effectiveness, overall, 85 percent of students agreed that they received the help they needed to understand information presented in class, and 94 percent of parents of EL students agreed that their child received the help he/she needed to understand information presented in class. As shown in Table 54, agreement for middle school students was somewhat lower than other school levels, but parent agreement was at least 90 percent for each school level.

Table 54: Student and Parent Agreement Percentages Regarding Student Receiving Needed Help

Item	ES	MS	HS	Total
Student - I receive the help I need to understand information presented in class.	89.5%	76.4%	86.8%	85.0%
Parent - My child receives the help he/she needs to understand information presented in class.	95.5%	90.7%	97.0%	94.4%

Staff, students, and parents were also asked to indicate their overall level of satisfaction with the ESL program. Overall, 50 percent of ESL teachers, 50 percent of classroom teachers, and 77 percent of administrators were satisfied with the program, but satisfaction varied by school level (see Table 55). Compared to 2018-2019, ESL program satisfaction decreased for ESL teachers and classroom teachers at each school level and for secondary level administrators. Notable decreases in satisfaction were found for classroom teachers and administrators at the high school level (decreases of 32% and 36%).

Table 55: Staff Satisfaction

School Level	2018-2019			2019-2020		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
Elementary	57.1%	76.4%	75.0%	47.1%	60.6%	87.5%
Middle	50.0%	60.7%	84.0%	37.5%	55.1%	71.4%
High	66.7%	65.9%	78.9%	60.0%	30.5%	47.4%
Total	63.6%	68.3%	78.0%	50.0%	49.7%	76.6%

In contrast to staff satisfaction levels with the ESL program, overall, 94 percent of students and 91 percent of parents of EL students indicated they were satisfied with the ESL program. Examination by school level showed that at least 93 percent of students and 84 percent of parents at each school level were satisfied with the program (see Table 56).

Table 56: Student and Parent Satisfaction

School Level	Student	Parent
Elementary	94.3%	93.6%
Middle	94.4%	83.6%
High	92.5%	93.5%
Total	93.8%	91.3%

Program Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Open-ended survey items provided the opportunity for staff to comment about the program's strengths and areas for improvement. Several themes emerged from responses about the strengths of the ESL program. For all staff groups, themes of the program's strengths focused on characteristics of the ESL teachers, including their dedication, support they provide to students, and their knowledge. In addition, the ESL teachers identified the leadership in the ESL program as a strength. A few ESL teachers identified the monthly meetings as a strength of the program. A few administrators identified the structure or model of support provided during 2019-2020 as a program strength, such as the push-in model or having students clustered in classrooms. A few administrators also indicated the training, particularly for assistant principals was a strength.

Regarding areas for improvements, across staff groups, frequently identified areas for improvement included the need for smaller caseloads, more time allotted for collaboration or co-planning between ESL and classroom teachers, and providing additional professional learning, especially for classroom teachers who teach EL

students. Some ESL teachers also identified the need for more and updated materials and a curriculum as being important for improvement. Classroom teachers also indicated the desire for more communication with the ESL teacher.

EL students and parents of EL students were also provided the opportunity to include comments about the ESL program on the surveys. Themes that emerged from the student comments included that the program has been helpful, good overall, and that it has helped them learn English. Some students specifically mentioned they liked their ESL teacher. Themes from the parent comments included feeling satisfied with the program and thankful to the program or teachers. Some parents commented that they would like more information about the program in general or work that their child completes.

Summary

The purpose of the VBCPS ESL program is to prepare EL students to be college and career ready by developing their conversational and academic English language proficiency through integrated content-based language instruction so that the students will have access to the same educational opportunities as all students. The program is aligned with standards provided by the WIDA Consortium and follows EL-related federal and state regulations and policies. The plan for the ESL program evaluation included a three-year process with a focus on implementation for the first two years (2018-2019 and 2019-2020) and student outcomes for the final year (2020-2021). Following the year-one implementation evaluation focused on 2018-2019, this year-two evaluation focused on implementation of the program during 2019-2020.

Overall, 32 full-time and 4 part-time ESL teachers provided services to 1,724 EL students in kindergarten through grade 12 and monitored an additional 666 former EL students (i.e., having received services within the past four years) as well as 162 students whose parents opted them out of EL services. At the high school level, 39 percent of eligible EL students opted out of receiving services. The largest increase in students who received services was at the elementary school level, while the largest increase in students who opted out of services was at the high school level. Examination of ESL teacher caseload reports showed that in June 2020, the average caseload for one ESL teacher was 45 students, while ESL teachers' caseloads ranged from 20 to 69 students. When ESL teachers were surveyed about their caseloads and time, 12 percent agreed that the size of their caseload allowed them to teach EL students effectively and that they were able to teach EL students frequently enough for instruction to be effective.

At the elementary and middle school levels, ESL teachers predominantly provided ESL services through a "push-in" model, which involved supporting instruction provided by classroom teachers. To facilitate push-in services, it was recommended that EL students be clustered within classrooms by grade level. However, 35 percent of elementary school ESL teachers and 38 percent of middle school ESL teachers agreed that EL students were effectively clustered within classrooms. When deemed appropriate, ESL teachers were expected to also use a "pull-out" model to provide individualized instruction to a small group of students at the elementary and middle school levels. At the high school level, EL students either received instruction through ESL-related courses at their home school or through the Newcomer Program at Landstown High School if they met criteria (i.e., low English proficiency score and having cumulatively missed two or more years of schooling). One recommendation from the year-one evaluation focused on expanding appropriate EL instructional materials for ESL teachers and classroom teachers. Although steps were taken to begin to address the availability of materials, in 2019-2020, 31 percent of ESL teachers and 56 percent of classroom teachers agreed that the available materials were appropriate for the EL students they taught.

The ESL program implementation goals focused on professional learning for ESL teachers and classroom teachers, staff collaboration, and the program's focus on students. Three recommendations from the year-one

evaluation focused on these implementation goal areas: enhancing professional learning, improving strategies of staff collaboration, and encouraging a variety of curricular options to EL students.

Data related to professional learning showed improvement in ESL teacher perceptions of professional learning effectiveness in 2019-2020. Overall, 89 percent of ESL teachers who participated in professional learning on instructional effectiveness agreed that it was effective, which improved from 79 percent in 2018-2019, and 77 percent agreed that professional learning enabled them to meet the needs of their EL students, which improved from 68 percent. Though steps were taken to begin to address enhancing EL-related professional learning for classroom teachers, in 2019-2020, low percentages of classroom teachers indicated they participated in professional learning to increase their understanding of (42%) or capacity to teach EL students (40%) and 61 to 73 percent of those who participated viewed this professional learning as effective. In addition, although steps were taken to begin to address improving strategies for collaboration between ESL teachers and classroom teachers, in 2019-2020, 23 percent of ESL teachers and 39 percent of classroom teachers agreed the ESL teachers and content-area/classroom teachers collaborate to meet the needs of EL students.

When examining data for the implementation goal about the program's focus on students and offering a variety of curricular options, progress was seen, particularly for former EL students. In comparison to the division, similar percentages of former EL students were enrolled in rigorous coursework at the secondary level (59% vs. 60%), enrolled in ATC in high school (1% vs. 2%), and graduated in 2019-2020 with completing a CTE program (43% vs. 44%). Although there was a lower percentage of former EL high school students enrolled in an academy compared to the division (12% vs. 16%), there was a higher percentage of former EL high school students enrolled at TCE (6% vs. 3%).

The ESL program outcome goals focused on students' social and emotional development, students' attainment of English proficiency, and parent involvement. Data related to the social-emotional goal showed relatively high percentages of EL students agreed that they demonstrated confidence by participating in class (72%) or working in a group (88%); had positive relationships with peers (88%), teachers (85%), and administrators (76%); had a sense of belonging to their school (83%); and that their school is a welcoming place to learn (92%). Examining students' progression in the English language showed that, in comparison to 2018-2019, there was an increase in the percentage of K-2 students at the highest proficiency level showing the required gains (from 36% to 53%), while there were decreases in the percentage of K-2 students at the lowest (from 77% to 53%) and middle proficiency levels (from 67% to 56%). Regarding the last outcome goal related to parent involvement, high percentages of parents agreed that their child's school kept them informed about their child's progress in English (92%) and academic progress (95%) as well as that they understood the information they received from the school division (97%). One related recommendation from the year-one evaluation focused on providing translation and interpretation services for staff to use as needed when communicating with parents of EL students. Progress on this recommendation was made when midway through the year translation and interpretation services were offered as needed for staff.

Overall, high percentages of EL students (94%) and parents of EL students (91%) indicated they were satisfied with the ESL program. Lower percentages of ESL teachers (50%), classroom teachers (50%), and administrators (77%) indicated they were satisfied with the program. In addition, in comparison to 2018-2019, notable decreases in satisfaction were found for classroom teachers (from 66% to 31%) and administrators (from 79% to 47%) at the high school level.

Recommendations and Rationale

Recommendation #1: Continue the ESL program with modifications noted in recommendations 2 through 4. (Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)

Rationale: The first recommendation is to continue the ESL program with modifications noted in the recommendations below. Based on School Board Policy 6-26, following an evaluation, a recommendation must be made to continue the program without modifications, continue the program with modifications, expand the program, or discontinue the program. Because the ESL program is already intended to be an essential program for EL students, the recommendation to continue the program with modifications is made to enhance continuous improvement efforts toward meeting standards for ESL programs.

Recommendation #2: Continue working on recommendations from the year-one evaluation focused on communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers, professional learning for classroom teachers of EL students, and availability of ESL instructional materials. (Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)

Rationale: Recognizing that the school division is currently in unprecedented times due to the COVID-19 pandemic, evaluation recommendations may take multiple years to address. In addition, with the school closure occurring less than three weeks after the School Board approved the year-one ESL recommendations, the program managers had limited time to work toward the recommendations from the year-one evaluation. Therefore, the second recommendation is to continue working on recommendations 3, 4, and 5 from the year-one evaluation. These recommendations included implementing new strategies to improve communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers, enhancing professional learning related to ESL instruction by encouraging classroom teachers to participate in ESL-related professional learning, and expanding the availability of ESL instructional materials and resources. This recommendation focuses on specific areas based on data from the current evaluation. Regarding communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers, 23 percent of ESL teachers and 39 percent of classroom teachers agreed ESL teachers and content-area/classroom teachers collaborate with each other to meet the needs of EL students. In addition, from 29 to 56 percent of classroom teachers indicated they either received information about or knew where to find information about their EL students' performance/proficiency levels or the instructional services they are provided. Regarding professional learning, 43 percent of classroom teachers indicated they participated in EL-related professional learning, but of those who participated in professional learning, 54 percent of classroom teachers agreed that the EL-related professional learning they received enabled them to meet the needs of their EL students. Regarding instructional materials, 31 percent of ESL teachers and 56 percent of classroom teachers agreed that the instructional materials available to them were appropriate for the EL students they taught. Due to progress made on recommendations 2 and 6 regarding providing translation and interpretation services and encouraging EL students to participate in a variety of curricular options, these recommendations were not included for continuation through the upcoming school year. In addition, the ESL teacher portion of Recommendation 4 was not a focus of the recommendation due to improvements on ESL teacher perceptions regarding effectiveness of professional learning. There was an increase from 68 to 77 percent agreement that EL-related professional learning enabled them to meet the needs of their EL students.

Recommendation #3: Ensure EL students are clustered in classrooms at the elementary and middle school levels to the greatest extent possible. (Responsible Groups: Department of Teaching and Learning, Department of School Leadership)

Rationale: The third recommendation is to ensure EL students are clustered in classrooms at the elementary and middle school levels to the greatest extent possible. It is recognized that scheduling for 2020-2021 classes was a difficult challenge due to the fall reopening plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that this recommendation may not be fully feasible until conditions return to normal. Clustering EL students by grade level helps facilitate push-in model services by allowing ESL teachers to work in fewer classrooms per school. Clustering EL students within classrooms was first suggested at the elementary school level in 2017-2018 and at the middle school level in 2018-2019. When asked about clustering within classrooms, 35 percent of elementary school ESL teachers and 38 percent of middle school ESL teachers agreed that EL students were effectively clustered within teachers' classrooms at each grade level. Additionally, in response to an open-ended item about the instructional delivery method provided to EL students, a few ESL teachers expressed concerns that clustering was not utilized at some schools, which led to several challenges when instructing students. The more schools are able to cluster EL students, the fewer classrooms the ESL teacher has to work between, which could in turn support communication, co-teaching, and collaboration between ESL teachers and classroom teachers. In the current evaluation, 15 percent of ESL teachers, 36 percent of classroom teachers, and 47 percent of administrators agreed that ESL teachers effectively collaborate and plan with content-area/classroom teachers to teach lessons. In response to an open-ended item about collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers, ESL teachers noted that there are too many classroom teachers to collaborate with given their schedules and caseloads.

Recommendation #4: Review the high school model due to lower staff agreement percentages, decreases in staff satisfaction, and the percentage of eligible EL students opting out of services. (Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)

Rationale: The fourth recommendation is to review the ESL program model at the high school level due to lower staff agreement percentages, decreases in staff satisfaction from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020, and the relatively high percentage of eligible EL students opting out of services. Throughout various sections in the report, when examining staff survey results by school level, agreement percentages were repeatedly lowest at the high school level for classroom teachers and administrators. This pattern was found for perceptions of instructional materials, professional learning effectiveness, collaboration between ESL teachers and classroom teachers, and overall perceptions of the program. In particular, regarding instructional materials, a lower percentage of high school classroom teachers (41%) agreed that the instructional materials available to them were appropriate for the EL students they taught compared to elementary school (68%) and middle school (53%) classroom teachers. Regarding professional learning effectiveness, lower percentages of high school classroom teachers agreed that professional learning increased their capacity to teach EL students and their understanding of EL students (from 42% to 61%) compared to elementary (from 77% to 80%) and middle school classroom teachers (from 60% to 79%). Regarding teacher collaboration, a lower percentage of high school classroom teachers (from 25% to 28%) and administrators (from 38% to 43%) agreed that ESL teachers and content-area/classroom teachers collaborated with each other to meet the needs of EL students and that ESL teacher effectively collaborate and plan to teach lessons compared to elementary and middle school classroom teachers (from 36% to 47%) and administrators (from 48% to 62%). Perceptions of the overall effectiveness of the program showed that lower percentages of high school classroom teachers (39%) and administrators (45%) agreed that EL students receive all services they need compared to elementary and middle school classroom teachers (from 53% to 56%) and administrators (from 61% to 69%). Satisfaction percentages were also lowest at high school for classroom teachers (31% vs. 55% - 61%) and administrators (47% vs. 71% - 88%) with notable decreases from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020. In particular, high school classroom teacher satisfaction decreased from 66 to 31 percent and administrator satisfaction decreased from 79 to 47 percent. Also, over a third (39%) of eligible EL students opted out of services at the high school level, while the percentages were 2 percent at the elementary school level and 5 percent at the middle school level.

Appendix

Demographics for Categories of EL Students

Characteristic	Current EL Students Receiving Services	Opt-Outs Total	Monitoring Students (Years Post Program 1 – 2)	Tracked Students (Years Post Program 3 - 4)	Former EL (Years Post Program 1 – 4) Total	VBCPS Total
Female	44.1%	46.3%	45.8%	48.7%	47.1%	48.7%
Male	55.9%	53.7%	54.2%	51.3%	52.9%	51.3%
African American	2.4%	4.3%	2.8%	3.9%	3.3%	23.3%
American Indian Alaskan Native	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Asian	26.7%	27.8%	35.4%	46.1%	40.4%	6.1%
Caucasian	15.5%	15.4%	26.7%	13.2%	20.4%	47.3%
Hispanic	52.6%	49.4%	30.3%	32.6%	31.4%	12.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%
Two or More Races	2.4%	3.1%	4.2%	3.9%	4.1%	10.1%
Economically Disadvantaged	57.1%	59.3%	50.0%	55.2%	52.4%	40.5%
Special Education	7.4%	11.1%	2.2%	2.6%	2.4%	11.0%
Gifted	5.0%	2.5%	15.4%	19.0%	17.1%	18.0%
Military/Government Connected	18.8%	21.6%	25.3%	11.0%	18.6%	20.7%

Endnotes

¹ Virginia Beach City Public Schools Intranet site

² <https://wida.wisc.edu/memberships/consortium>

³ <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards/eld>

⁴ <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess>

⁵ Virginia Compliance with Title III Requirements document. Obtained from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title3/index.shtml

⁶ Virginia Compliance with Title III Requirements document. Obtained from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title3/index.shtml

⁷ Source: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiiienglishlearners92016.pdf> (See p. 30).

⁸ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/english_language_proficiency_assessments/index.shtml

⁹ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2017/168-17.shtml and http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2017/194-17.shtml

¹⁰ Virginia Department of Education (April 24, 2018). Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act. Richmond, VA; p. 19.

¹¹ Virginia Compliance with Title III Requirements document. Obtained from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title3/index.shtml

¹² http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title3/index.shtml

¹³ <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/essa-act-of-1965.pdf>

¹⁴ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2018/215-18.shtml

¹⁵ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title3/index.shtml

¹⁶ Four ESL teachers were assigned to the elementary and middle school levels and one ESL teacher was assigned to the middle school and high school levels; therefore, they were included at both levels for response rates.

¹⁷ Comparatively, there were 489 students who were identified as being EL students (current, former, or opt outs) in grades 5,8, and 12 based on data in the VBCPS data warehouse.

¹⁸ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title3/index.shtml

¹⁹ Five students who were identified as having received services through the SRC report did not have a record of receiving services through data obtained from the data warehouse (i.e., either opted out of services or were former students).

²⁰ One student who was identified in the Fall SRC as receiving services was not included in this report due to his/her records from the data warehouse indicating that he/she was not eligible for ESL services.

²¹ Twelve students who were included in the Fall SRC as former EL students were not included in this report due to their records from the data warehouse indicating that they were not considered former EL students in 2019-2020. An additional student who was identified in the Fall SRC as an opt-out student was not included in this report due to his/her records from the data warehouse indicated that he/she was not eligible for ESL services.

²² http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2017/194-17.shtml and English Learner Team Handbook for Elementary Schools (August 16, 2018).

²³ Home Language Survey.

²⁴ K-WAPT Scoring. August 31, 2018. Information distributed to ESL teachers via a SharePoint site.

²⁵ For the K-WAPT, VDOE recommends using raw scores to determine English proficiency due to the K-WAPT raw scores not being mapped to a specific proficiency level. The Department of Teaching and Learning provides ESL teachers with a conversion chart to convert students' raw scores to performance levels, which are consistent with the raw score criteria recommended by VDOE. For kindergarten students in their first semester, an oral raw score of 28 is equivalent to proficiency. For kindergarten students in their second semester and first-grade students in their first semester, raw scores of 28 on the oral portion, 14 on the reading portion, and 17 on the writing portion are equivalent to proficiency.

²⁶ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2017/194-17.shtml

²⁷ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2017/194-17.shtml

²⁸ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.

²⁹ <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/kwapt>

³⁰ English Learner Team Handbook for Elementary Schools (August 16, 2018).

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- ³¹ The full descriptions of the WIDA proficiency levels were obtained from <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/early/elds>.
- ³² <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/can-do/descriptors>
- ³³ Continued Restructuring of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Model. Memorandum, November 15, 2019.
- ³⁴ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.
- ³⁵ <https://wida.wisc.edu/memberships/consortium/va>
- ³⁶ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.
- ³⁷ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2017/168-17.shtml and English Learner Team Handbook for Elementary Schools (August 16, 2018).
- ³⁸ Five students who completed ACCESS had a score that suggested a data entry error (i.e., their score was beyond the range of 1.0 to 6.0). These students were not included in the analyses provided here.
- ³⁹ <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/chap8.pdf>
- ⁴⁰ <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-factsheet-el-students-201501.pdf>
- ⁴¹ English as a Second Language (ESL) Changes Regarding the Joint Guidance From the Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice. Virginia Beach City Public Schools. Principals' Packet Memo, July 23, 2015.
- ⁴² K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, January 30, 2020.
- ⁴³ R. Collier, Communication to ESL teachers, October 16, 2018.
- ⁴⁴ 2019-2020 Grade Level Clustering of English Learners (ELs). VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. May 2, 2019.
- ⁴⁵ 2019-2020 Grade Level Clustering of English Learners (ELs). VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. May 2, 2019.
- ⁴⁶ 2019-2020 English as a Second Language (ESL) Teacher School Assignments. VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. June 13, 2010.
- ⁴⁷ K. Cahoon-Newchok, Title III Compliance and ESL Program Workshop, September 2019.
- ⁴⁸ Continued Restructuring of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Model. Memorandum, November 15, 2019.
- ⁴⁹ R. Collier, ESL Program Update, March 22, 2019.
- ⁵⁰ Continued Restructuring of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Model. Memorandum, November 15, 2019.
- ⁵¹ <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter13.2/section22.1-253.13:2/>
- ⁵² Standards of Quality As Prescribed by Resolution of the Board of Education on October 17, 2019 retrieved from <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/quality/>
- ⁵³ HB 975 – Standards of Quality; state funding; ratios of teachers to English language learners. <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?201+cab+SC10305HB0975+RCHB3>
- ⁵⁴ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.
- ⁵⁵ Four part-time temporary ESL teachers were excluded.
- ⁵⁶ Continued Restructuring of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Model. Memorandum, November 15, 2019.
- ⁵⁷ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.
- ⁵⁸ K. Cahoon-Newchok. June 25, 2020. Actions taken regarding recommendations.
- ⁵⁹ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.
- ⁶⁰ English as a Second Language (ESL) 2019-2020 Professional Learning. VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. July 11, 2019.
- ⁶¹ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.
- ⁶² K. Cahoon-Newchok. June 25, 2020. Actions taken regarding recommendations.
- ⁶³ Continued Restructuring of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Model. Memorandum, November 15, 2019.
- ⁶⁴ K. Cahoon-Newchok. Personal communication, September 8, 2020.
- ⁶⁵ R. Gladden and R. Collier, personal communication, January 17, 2019.
- ⁶⁶ Translation and Interpretation Services. VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. February 2, 2020.
- ⁶⁷ K. Cahoon-Newchok. June 25, 2020. Actions taken regarding recommendations.
- ⁶⁸ VBCPS Continuity of Learning Plan.
- ⁶⁹ VBCPS Emergency Learning Plan. <https://www.vbschools.com/cms/one.aspx?portalId=78094&pageId=26633784>
- ⁷⁰ K. Cahoon-Newchok. August 19, 2020, Personal communication.
- ⁷¹ Student Accommodations and Schoology. English as a Second Language Important Announcement. March 10, 2020.
- ⁷² https://www.vbschools.com/students/health_and_guidance_services/health_services_for_students/coronavirus/espanol
- ⁷³ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.

⁷⁴ K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, September 8, 2020. Last year, students who received services through the ELT were coded as “O,” receiving services through an other personnel. However, this was no longer used during 2019-2020 following feedback from VDOE.

⁷⁵ R. Collier, personal communication, September 13, 2018.

⁷⁶ K. Cahoon-Newchok. June 25, 2020. Actions taken regarding recommendations.

⁷⁷ K. Cahoon-Newchok. June 25, 2020. Actions taken regarding recommendations.

⁷⁸ There were fewer than 10 current EL student graduates, therefore, CTE program completion data were not included for these students.

⁷⁹ Virginia Department of Education (April 24, 2018). Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act. Richmond, VA; p. 19.

⁸⁰ Both the U.S. Department of Education and the Virginia Department of Education require local school divisions that are receiving Title III subgrants to biannually report the number and percentage of ELs who have not yet attained English proficiency within five years of initial classification as an EL and first enrollment in the LEA. Sources: U.S. Department of Education: Non-Regulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds ACT (ESSA). Washington, DC, September 23, 2016 and Virginia Department of Education: Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015: Title III Changes and Additions. Richmond, VA.

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