



English as a Second Language Program (K-12): *Comprehensive Evaluation Report*

By Allison M. Bock, Ph.D., Program Evaluation Specialist and
Heidi L. Janicki, Ph.D., Director of Research and Evaluation

February 2022



Planning, Innovation, and Accountability
Office of Research and Evaluation
Virginia Beach City Public Schools

Table of Contents	
Introduction	6
Background of Program.....	6
Background and Purpose of Program Evaluation.....	7
Program Goals and Objectives	8
Evaluation Design and Methodology	8
Evaluation Design and Data Collection	8
Surveys.....	8
EL Student Information From Data Warehouse	10
Evaluation Questions.....	11
Evaluation Results and Discussion	12
Operational Components and Related Goals and Objectives	12
Criteria for EL Student Identification	12
Assessment and Placement of Students	14
Monitoring Language Development and Academic Progress	17
Instructional Models and Methods of Delivery for Language Development and Academic Content.....	21
Opportunities Provided to EL Students	25
ESL Staffing Processes and Staff Characteristics	28
Resources and Professional Learning	31
Co-planning and Collaboration.....	37
EL Student and Family Communication and Engagement	40
Characteristics of Students in ESL Program.....	45
Student Demographic Characteristics	46
Special Categories.....	47
Progress Toward Meeting Outcome Goals and Objectives	48
Goal 1: 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.	48
Goal 2: EL students will attain English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing	51
Stakeholder Perceptions.....	54
Overall Perceptions	54
Program Strengths and Areas for Improvement.....	55
Summary.....	56
Recommendations and Rationale	59
Appendices.....	61
Appendix A: Webinars Offered to ESL Teachers During 2020-2021.....	61
Appendix B: Demographics for Categories of EL Students	62
Appendix C: English Learner Progress Targets Accountability Years 2018-2019 through 2024-2025	63
Endnotes	64

Tables

Table 1: Staff Survey Response Rates by School Level	9
Table 2: EL Student Survey Response Rates by School Level.....	9
Table 3: Percentages of EL Students by Reported Instructional Option.....	10
Table 4: EL Parent Survey Response Rates by School Level.....	10
Table 5: Percentages of EL Parents by Instructional Option	10
Table 6: Numbers of EL Students by Group From 2018-2019 to 2020-2021	11
Table 7: WIDA Performance Levels by K-WAPT and WIDA Screener Score.....	15
Table 8: Percentages of Students by WIDA Performance Level Based on 2020-2021 Screening Scores	16
Table 9: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Screening and Placement Processes.....	16
Table 10: WIDA Performance Levels by ACCESS Score.....	18
Table 11: Percentages of Students by WIDA Performance Level Based on ACCESS 2020-2021 Scores.....	18
Table 12: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Assessment Processes.....	19
Table 13: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Using Assessment Results for Monitoring	19
Table 14: Classroom Teacher Agreement Percentages Regarding Assessing EL Students	20
Table 15: Staff Agreement Regarding Effective Clustering Within Teachers' Classrooms by School Level.....	22
Table 16: High School ESL-Related Courses by Eligibility Score and Number of Enrolled Students.....	23
Table 17: Percentages of ESL Teachers Who Reported Using Instructional Models by School Level	23
Table 18: Percentages of ESL Teachers Who Reported That the Instructional Models They Used Were Very or Somewhat Effective.....	24
Table 19: Percentages of Students Who Received Each LIEP	24
Table 20: ESL Teacher Agreement Percentages Regarding Students Receiving Instructional Methods	24
Table 21: Classroom Teacher Agreement Percentages Regarding Students Receiving Instructional Methods ..	25
Table 22: Percentage of Students Enrolled in Rigorous Coursework	26
Table 23: Percentage of Students Enrolled in An Academy.....	27
Table 24: Percentage of Students Enrolled in ATC and TCE.....	27
Table 25: Percentages of Students Who Earned An Industry Certification	28
Table 26: Percentages of Students Who Completed a CTE Program	28
Table 27: ESL Teacher Caseloads and Total Students.....	29
Table 28: ESL Teacher Caseloads and Total Students From June 2019 to June 2021	30
Table 29: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding ESL Teacher Caseload.....	30
Table 30: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Time for Instruction	30
Table 31: Staff Characteristics for ESL Teachers and All Instructional Staff	31
Table 32: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Helpfulness and Clarity of ELT Handbook	32
Table 33: Teacher Agreement Regarding Instructional Materials Being Appropriate	32
Table 34: Percentages of ESL Teachers Who Reported Receiving Professional Learning in Various Areas	34
Table 35: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding ESL Teacher Participating in Professional Learning to Increase Instructional Effectiveness.....	34
Table 36: Percentage of Classroom Teachers Who Participated in EL-Related Professional Learning	35
Table 37: Percentages of Classroom Teachers Who Indicated Participating In Professional Learning.....	36
Table 38: Staff Agreement Regarding Time for Collaboration and Co-Planning.....	39
Table 39: Percentages of Classroom Teachers Who Indicated They Received Information About and Knew Where to Find EL-Related Information.....	40

Table 40: Staff Agreement Regarding Use and Helpfulness of Translation and Interpretation Services	41
Table 41: Staff Agreement Regarding Staff Communicating With EL Students and Families in a Manner They Can Understand	42
Table 42: Student Agreement Percentages Regarding Communicating With Teachers	42
Table 43: EL Parent Agreement Regarding Being Informed About Child's Progress.....	43
Table 44: Staff Agreement Regarding Parents Receiving Information About Child's Progress	44
Table 45: EL Parent Agreement Regarding Understanding Information From Division.....	44
Table 46: Percentage of Parents Who Attended Events or Programs and Satisfaction	45
Table 47: Staff Agreement Regarding Communication With EL Families.....	45
Table 48: Numbers and Percentages of EL Students Who Received Services	46
Table 49: Demographic Characteristics of EL Students Who Received Services.....	47
Table 50: Numbers and Percentages of EL Students Who Opted Out of Services.....	47
Table 51: Numbers and Percentages of Former EL Students.....	48
Table 52: EL Student Agreement Regarding Demonstrating Confidence.....	49
Table 53: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Students Demonstrating Confidence in Class	49
Table 54: Percentages of Students With Attendance Rate over 90 Percent and Fewer than 6 Unexcused Absences.....	50
Table 55: EL Student Agreement Regarding Positive Relationships.....	51
Table 56: EL Student and Parent Agreement Regarding School Providing a Welcoming Place to Learn	51
Table 57: Required Proficiency Level Gains on ACCESS.....	52
Table 58: Numbers and Percentages of Students Demonstrating Required Proficiency Level Gains in 2020-2021	52
Table 59: Percentages of EL Students Considered to Be Long-Term EL Students.....	53
Table 60: VDOE On-Time Graduation Rates.....	53
Table 61: Staff Perceptions Regarding EL Students Receiving Services.....	54
Table 62: Student and Parent Agreement Percentages Regarding Student Receiving Needed Help	55
Table 63: Student and Parent Satisfaction.....	55

Figures

Figure 1: Staff Agreement Regarding PL Increasing ESL Teacher Instructional Effectiveness	35
Figure 2: Classroom Teacher Agreement Regarding PL Increasing Skills.....	37
Figure 3: Staff Agreement Regarding ESL and Classroom Teachers Collaborating to Meet Students' Needs.....	38
Figure 4: Staff Agreement Regarding ESL and Classroom Teachers Effectively Collaborating and Planning	39
Figure 5: Percentages of Students Demonstrating Required Proficiency Level Gains on ACCESS.....	53
Figure 6: Staff Satisfaction	55

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 several goals of the division’s strategic framework, *Compass to 2025*: (1) Educational Excellence, (2) Student Well-being, (3) Student Ownership of Learning, (4) An Exemplary, Diversified Workforce, and (5) Mutually Supportive Partnerships.

Through the ESL program, VBCPS provided ESL services to 1,768 English learner (EL) students in grades K-12 during the 2020-2021 school year. Among them, they speak 70 different languages. The most common home language of these students was Spanish, which was spoken by 52 percent of the EL students. The next most common home languages were Tagalog, spoken by 8 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 4 percent of EL students speaking each language. In addition, through the ESL program, 726 students were monitored due to being former EL students and 157 students were monitored due to opting out of receiving ESL services. Due to difficulties with screening students during the COVID-19 pandemic, ten students were presumed to be an EL student based on their last status during 2020-2021 and were provided with 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 41 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 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. The year-two implementation evaluation was presented to the School Board on October 27, 2020. The recommendations included continuing the program with modifications; continuing to work 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; ensuring EL students are clustered in classrooms at the elementary and middle school levels; and reviewing the high school model. The School Board approved these recommendations on November 10, 2020. It is recognized that the school division continues to experience the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, evaluation recommendations may take multiple years to address.

This comprehensive evaluation provides the School Board, Superintendent, and program managers with information about the operation of the ESL program during 2020-2021. The comprehensive evaluation focused on the extent to which the established goals and objectives were met, and also addressed the operational components of the ESL program, characteristics of the students who participated in the ESL program, and stakeholder perceptions. The evaluation also includes information about actions taken regarding the recommendations from the year-two implementation evaluation, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the program’s operation during 2020-2021. The additional cost of the program to the division was

addressed in the year-one evaluation but was not addressed again in this evaluation because the program is a federal requirement.

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 choices and opportunities available to EL students; providing parents of EL students with the supports and services they needed to participate in their child's education; professional learning for staff; EL students' social and emotional development; and EL students' development of English language proficiency. Specific implementation or operational objectives are addressed in the related sections, and outcome objectives are addressed in the section entitled Progress Toward Meeting Outcome 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 divisionwide student survey data from all VBCPS students in grades 4 through 12 through the *VBCPS Annual Spring Survey* to provide a point of reference for EL student survey data.
- Collected data from the VBCPS data warehouse related to student demographic characteristics, program-related information, and student progress (e.g., attendance, English proficiency).
- Collected long-term EL student data from Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) through the Single Sign-on for Web Systems (SSWS).
- Collected data from the Department of Human Resources related to ESL teacher characteristics.
- Collected divisionwide interpretation and translation usage data from the ESL coordinator.
- Obtained classroom teacher participation data in ESL-related professional learning sessions from the Office of Professional Growth and Innovation.

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 2020-2021 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 2020-2021 were invited to participate in a survey. The EL students and parents of EL students who opted out of having their child receive

ESL services were excluded. Students and parents of students who were identified as being a presumptive EL student previously in the school year were not included in the survey administration.

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 2020-2021 were also compared to survey results from 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, and information about trends over the years is provided where notable. Open-ended comments were analyzed for common themes. Comments written in a language other than English were translated using Google translate.

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 39 percent for classroom teachers to 84 percent for ESL teachers (see Table 1). Response rates by level are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Staff Survey Response Rates by School Level

Group	ES	MS	HS	Total
Administrators	67%	67%	50%	62%
ESL Teachers	88%	78%	89%	84%
Classroom Teachers	38%	44%	37%	39%

Note: One ESL teacher was not designated at a school level; therefore, the teacher is included in the total but not at a school level.

Classroom teachers were asked to indicate if they taught an EL student during the 2020-2021 school year. Of those classroom teachers who responded to the survey, 89 percent indicated they had taught an EL student during the 2020-2021 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 2020-2021.

EL Student Surveys

For the EL student survey, ESL teachers were asked to administer the survey 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). For students who required a translated version and were receiving virtual instruction only, ESL teachers could request to have the printed translated survey sent home to the student. ESL teachers or EL students were asked to return the translated printed surveys to the Office of Research and Evaluation upon students’ completion of the surveys. See Table 2 for student survey response rates. Of the students who completed the survey, 6 percent completed a translated version. The EL students who completed the survey were from 68 schools throughout the division (44 elementary schools, 13 middle schools, 11 high schools).

Table 2: EL Student Survey Response Rates by School Level

Group	ES	MS	HS	Total
EL Students (4-12)	84%	75%	52%	71%

Of the EL students who responded to the survey, the highest percentages of students at all levels indicated they were receiving instruction in person at school (see Table 3).

Table 3: Percentages of EL Students by Reported Instructional Option

Group	In Person			Virtual			Combination		
	ES	MS	HS	ES	MS	HS	ES	MS	HS
Students	71%	39%	43%	28%	30%	36%	1%	31%	20%

Student Annual VBCPS Spring Survey

All students in grades 4 through 12 were invited to complete *Annual VBCPS Spring* survey items in April 2021 based on survey items used to monitor divisionwide progress on the Compass to 2025, the division’s strategic framework. Survey results for all students who completed the survey provided a point of reference for the results from EL students by school level.

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. A total of 1,390 parents of EL students received the ESL survey.¹⁶ See Table 4 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. Of all completed parent surveys, 32 percent were a translated version of the survey.

Table 4: EL Parent Survey Response Rates by School Level

Group	ES	MS	HS	Total
EL Parents (K-12)	20%	19%	16%	19%

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

Of the parents who responded to the survey, the majority of parents had children who received instruction in person at school (see Table 5).

Table 5: Percentages of EL Parents by Instructional Option

Group	In Person	Virtual	Combination
EL Parents (K-12)	65%	32%	3%

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.¹⁷ 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. In addition, in 2020-2021, due to difficulties with screening students in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic, newly enrolled students may have been determined to be “presumptive EL students” based on an interview by ESL teachers until screening in person was possible. The total number of students who were temporarily identified as EL students was included in the SRC report.

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 2020-2021 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, 1,643 EL students were identified as receiving ESL services and considered active students (i.e., enrolled in VBCPS) as of the end of the year.¹⁸ An additional 98 students were considered EL students and as having received ESL services in the fall and/or spring but were not active students as of the end of the year; therefore, these students were included in the category of EL students for this evaluation. An additional 27 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.¹⁹ According to the end-of-year SRC report, 147 students opted out of services and 685 were former EL students. Similar rules were followed for EL students who opted out of the program and former EL students who were monitored after exiting the program. An additional 10 students who opted out of services and 41 former EL students were included in this evaluation who were not included in the end of year SRC.²⁰ An additional six students were considered to be presumptive EL students as of the end of the year SRC.²¹ Four other presumptive EL students were included in this evaluation who were included in the fall but not included in the end of year SRC due to being inactive as of the end of year.

As shown in Table 6, in comparison to 2019-2020, there was an increase of 44 EL students who received services during the school year in 2020-2021.

Table 6: Numbers of EL Students by Group From 2018-2019 to 2020-2021

Group	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Receiving services	1,545	1,724	1,768
Opt-out students*	58	162	157
Former EL students	684	666	726
Presumptive EL students	-	-	10

Note: *Much of the increase from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 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-three comprehensive evaluation were as follows:

1. **What are the operational components of the ESL program and what progress was made toward related goals and objectives?**
 - 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 educational opportunities were provided to EL students?
 - f. What is the process of staffing the ESL program, including job responsibilities and staff selection, ESL teacher assignments and caseloads, and staff characteristics?
 - g. What resources and professional learning activities were provided for ESL teachers and content-area teachers to assist them in effectively meeting EL students' needs?
 - h. What are the processes for collaboration and co-planning between ESL teachers and classroom teachers?
 - i. What services and supports are provided to engage and communicate with EL students and their families?
2. **What were the characteristics of the students who participated in the ESL program?**
 - a. What were the demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity) of the EL students?
 3. **To what extent were the ESL program's outcome goals and objectives met?**
 4. **What were the stakeholders' perceptions of the ESL program (i.e., EL students, parents of EL students, ESL teachers, content-area teachers, and administrators)?**

Evaluation Results and Discussion

Operational Components and Related Goals and Objectives

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, educational opportunities for EL students, process of staffing the ESL program, resources and professional learning for staff, collaboration and co-planning processes, and services and supports to engage and communicate with EL students and their families. Information related to adjustments due to the pandemic, related ESL program goals and objectives, and actions taken regarding recommendations from the year-two evaluation in 2019-2020 are integrated within the operational components where applicable.

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 are 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 is not reassessed and is not 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 is not 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 is used to determine whether the student is eligible for services. In most cases, ESL teachers have administered the screening tools. In 2020-2021, three ESL test examiners were employed through a Temporary Employment Agreement (TEA) to assist with administering screening and ACCESS testing. During 2020-2021, as needed, the TEAs would ask parents to bring the student to the Plaza Annex to complete the screening.²⁷ According to the coordinator of ESL services, most screening was completed using this process unless the student was attending school in person at the time of screening and could be assessed by the ESL teacher. 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.²⁸ According to the ESL coordinator, although plans for a division Welcome Center have been discussed, it is unclear when it may begin operating.²⁹

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.³⁰ Given the difficulties with screening potential EL students in person during the 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, USED and VDOE acknowledged the inability to screen students in person within this timeframe, although the recommendation was to complete necessary screenings as soon as possible. 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, ESL teachers would conduct an informal interview with the parent/guardian.³¹ During the interview, ESL teachers 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 ESL teachers could make a provisional EL determination that the student was a "presumptive EL student" and provide support to assist the student.³² In total, there were 572 students who were considered a presumptive EL student at one point during the school year. Upon screening, 199 of these students (35%) were determined to not require services, while 359 students (63%) were determined to require services (337 received services and 22 opted out of services). Of the remaining students, 4 were determined to be former EL students and 10 remained as presumptive EL students as their last known status.

According to the WIDA website, the purpose of the K-WAPT is to determine whether incoming students would benefit from English language support services.³³ 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 2020-2021, 321 students completed the K-WAPT. In comparison to 2019-2020 and 2018-2019, there was a decrease in the number of students who were screened on this assessment (from 499 in 2019-2020 and 428 in 2018-2019), which is likely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the 321 students who took the K-WAPT in 2020-2021, 279 were in kindergarten, 40 were in first grade, and 2 were in second grade. Of the 321 students who completed the K-WAPT in 2020-2021, 192 students (60%) received a score that indicated they were eligible to receive services (i.e., score below 6.0), whereas 129

students (40%) received a score that indicated they were not eligible to receive services. The percentage of students who took the K-WAPT and were found eligible in 2020-2021 (60%) was higher than the percentages who took the K-WAPT and were found eligible for services in 2019-2020 (53%) and slightly higher than in 2018-2019 (58%).

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 2020-2021, 328 students completed the WIDA Screener. Similar to the K-WAPT, there was a decrease in the number of students who were screened on this assessment (from 551 in 2019-2020 and 386 in 2018-2019), which is likely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. There were 15 first-grade students and 313 students in grades 2 through 12 who completed the WIDA Screener in 2020-2021. Of the 328 students who completed the WIDA Screener in 2020-2021, 232 students (71%) received a score that indicated they were eligible to receive services (i.e., score below 4.5), whereas 96 students (29%) received a score that indicated they were not eligible to receive services. The percentage of students who took the WIDA Screener and were found eligible in 2020-2021 (71%) was slightly lower compared to 73 percent in 2019-2020 and notably lower than 82 percent in 2018-2019. Overall, of the 649 students who were assessed on the K-WAPT or WIDA Screener in 2020-2021, 424 students (66%) received a score that indicated they were eligible to receive services. This was slightly higher than the percentage in 2019-2020 when 63 percent of students were found eligible to receive services and slightly lower than in 2018-2019 when 70 percent of students were found eligible.

In response to a survey item about the identification process, all ESL teachers (100%) and nearly all administrators (97%) agreed that they understood the steps in the identification process, while 61 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 (61%) and high school levels (53%), while there was little variation by school level for administrators with agreement ranging from 94 to 99 percent depending on level. While the agreement percentages for ESL teachers and administrators have remained stable (at least 93 percent) since 2018-2019, the agreement percentages for classroom teachers were higher in 2020-2021 at 61 percent compared to 55 percent in 2018-2019 and 51 percent in 2019-2020.

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 7 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.³⁴ 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.³⁵ 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 7). 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.³⁶ These resources help ESL teachers understand students' abilities.

Table 7: WIDA Performance Levels by K-WAPT and WIDA Screener Score

Performance Level	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 is held with the ELT regarding the student’s education plan. According to the ESL coordinator, during 2020-2021, ELT meetings could be held virtually.³⁷ The general composition of the ELT includes an ELT facilitator, an administrator or administrator designee, classroom teacher(s), school counselor, and parent or guardian. According to VDOE, a meeting must consist of no less than two stakeholders of an English learner.³⁸ In addition, if a student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan, then the IEP/504 teams and ELT must work in collaboration to determine the assessment participation of these students and the student’s special education teacher must attend the ELT meeting. 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 Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) Plan (previously called Annual Educational Plan English Learner Team [AEPELT] meeting minutes), which includes details regarding any accommodations the student will be provided during instruction and/or assessments (e.g., SOLs, ACCESS). After the meeting, the original LIEP plan is placed in the student’s permanent record and copies of the plan are provided to the meeting attendees, all classroom teachers, and the parents/guardians. 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. Beginning in 2020-2021, based on feedback from ESL teachers, new forms for the LIEP plan were created that differed based on a student’s grade level (i.e., K-2, 3-5, and secondary) and whether the student had an IEP or 504 plan.

A requirement under ESSA includes annual parent notification regarding their child’s proficiency and program placement. Every year, parents are provided with the Annual Parental Notification letter, which includes this information. According to the ELT handbook, the parent/guardian must receive the letter within the first 30 days of school for continuing students or within 14 calendar days for newly identified English learners.³⁹ All parents must sign and return the last page of the letter where they can indicate whether they provide consent for placement in LIEP services. School staff must contact the parent/guardian to discuss the LIEP if the parent does not provide consent (i.e., opting them out of receiving services). ESL teachers must follow up with schools and families to ensure the signature page is returned, with at least three documented attempts. If a parent refuses ESL services, during the ELT meeting, the benefits of the ESL program and the reasons for opting their student out of services must be discussed. If parents decide to opt out of services for their child after the meeting, then they must complete a form that releases VBCPS from responsibility and liability.

Students' performance levels based on the assessments are shown in Table 8. Of the 192 students who completed the K-WAPT during the 2020-2021 school year and scored as being eligible for services, the largest percentage (31%) scored at Level 3. Of the 232 students who completed the WIDA Screener and scored as being eligible for services, the largest percentage (51%) scored at Level 1.

Table 8: Percentages of Students by WIDA Performance Level Based on 2020-2021 Screening Scores

Performance Level	K-WAPT Score	WIDA Screener Score	Total
1 Entering	22 (11%)	119 (51%)	141 (33%)
2 Emerging	24 (13%)	38 (16%)	62 (15%)
3 Developing	59 (31%)	0 (0%)	59 (14%)
4 Expanding	48 (25%)	60 (26%)	108 (25%)
5 Bridging	39 (20%)	15(6%)	54 (13%)
Total	192	232	424

Survey results showed that 97 percent of ESL teachers and 34 percent of classroom teachers worked with students from more than one performance level during 2020-2021. In addition, 37 percent of classroom teachers who responded to the survey indicated they did not know their EL students' performance level. The percentage of classroom teachers who indicated they did not know their EL students' performance level increased steadily in 2020-2021 from 32 percent in 2019-2020 and 26 percent in 2018-2019. Responses by school level in 2020-2021 revealed that a higher percentage of high school classroom teachers (46%) indicated they did not know their EL students' performance level compared to elementary school (36%) and middle school classroom teachers (29%).

Regarding placement of EL students, 86 percent of ESL teachers in 2020-2021 agreed that the WIDA placement leads to accurate placement of EL students with respect to ELP levels, which was an increase from 2018-2019 when 78 percent agreed, although this was a slight decrease from ESL teacher agreement in 2019-2020 when 92 percent agreed. Regarding EL students being assigned their ELD placement in a timely manner, 94 percent of ESL teachers, 98 percent of administrators, and 84 percent of classroom teachers agreed. Since 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, ESL teacher, classroom teacher, and administrator agreement percentages have increased for this item (see Table 9). School level comparisons of 2020-2021 survey data showed that ESL teacher agreement was lowest at the elementary school level regarding both items (81% to 91% at elementary school level compared to 86% to 100% at secondary level). Lowest classroom teacher agreement regarding EL students being assigned their ELD placement in a timely manner was found at the high school level (75% at high school compared to 87% to 89% at elementary school and middle school levels).

Table 9: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Screening and Placement Processes

Item	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
EL students are assigned their English language development placements in a timely manner.*	79%	76%	93%	92%	71%	86%	94%	84%	98%

*In 2020-2021, survey item for ESL teachers was EL students are assigned their English language development placements in a timely manner, including placement of presumptive EL students.

Through an open-ended survey item, staff were provided the opportunity to provide comments on what worked well and the challenges encountered related to English proficiency screening of EL students during the

pandemic. Several ESL teachers commented that having additional staff screen students at the Plaza Annex was beneficial. However, many ESL teachers expressed that scheduling the in-person screenings was challenging due to difficulties planning transportation, parental concerns about safety, and working around parents' and their own schedules. Although a few ESL teachers commented that it was helpful being able to use the presumptive EL status to allow for extra time to screen, some teachers noted that it was challenging to have the delay in testing. Administrators also identified that communication with parents and working to screen the virtual EL students were challenges. Several classroom teachers indicated they had no knowledge of or involvement with the screening process.

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.⁴⁰ Students receive a proficiency score that reflects a composite of students' ACCESS speaking, listening, reading, and writing scores. In Virginia, the ACCESS is generally 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 and 2020-2021, 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 2020-2021, there were several adjustments to ACCESS testing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ACCESS testing window was extended to occur from January through June 2021. For elementary students, ACCESS testing was completed on Tuesdays through Fridays with specific grade levels tested on certain days. For secondary students, ACCESS testing was completed on Mondays during asynchronous instructional days. Elementary schools were assigned a specific week during the testing window to complete all testing and secondary schools were assigned a specific Monday. All ESL teachers were assigned multiple days and multiple schools to assist with completing testing. EL students who were receiving instruction face to face and virtually were assessed on the ACCESS. Virtual EL students and all secondary EL students who were assessed on the ACCESS were provided transportation to the school for testing. Parents had the option of opting their child out of being tested on the ACCESS. Parents were emailed and mailed letters asking them to participate in the survey about whether they would like their child to take the ACCESS. If parents did not complete the survey, they were contacted by ESL teachers or school administrators. According to the ESL coordinator, nearly all parents were reached.⁴¹ According to data provided by the Office of Student Assessment and data from the data warehouse,⁴² of the students who did not have a score on the ACCESS, there were 175 students who did not complete the ACCESS in spring 2021 due to their parents opting them out for COVID-related concerns, 17 students whose parents opted them out for other reasons, and 62 students who were absent during testing. An additional five students did not complete the ACCESS due to student refusal or another reason. According to a testing specialist in the Office of Student Assessment, students were provided additional opportunities to retake the ACCESS during the testing window if they were absent on the designated days of testing at their school.⁴³

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 10).⁴⁴ Students cease to receive ESL services when they have scored 4.4 or higher for the composite proficiency level. Students' performance on

the ACCESS guides the services that will be provided the following school year. If a student was not tested on the ACCESS in 2020-2021, VDOE guidance suggested using ACCESS scores from 2019-2020 or WIDA screener scores from 2020-2021 to inform services for the following year. If neither score was available, VDOE required students to take the WIDA screener during the 2021-2022 school year.

Table 10: 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 spring 2021, 1,521 students who were EL students in 2020-2021 (i.e., received services or opt outs) took the ACCESS test to determine their services for the 2021-2022 school year and received an overall score between 1.0 and 6.0.⁴⁵ This was approximately 79 percent of all students who received services or opted out at any point throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Overall, 245 students (16%) who took the ACCESS test reached English proficiency based on scoring at Level 6 (i.e., a score of at least 4.4). The highest percentage of students (30%) scored at Level 4 (see Table 11).

Table 11: Percentages of Students by WIDA Performance Level Based on ACCESS 2020-2021 Scores

Performance Level	Percentages of Students
1 Entering	234 (15%)
2 Emerging	171 (11%)
3 Developing	145 (10%)
4 Expanding	450 (30%)
5 Bridging	276 (18%)
6 Reaching	245 (16%)
Total	1,521 (100%)

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 are no longer eligible for services and would be monitored for the school year. Students who scored below 4.4 should have an ELT meeting to discuss details regarding the type of ESL services they would be provided during the year.

As shown in Table 12, 69 percent of ESL teachers and most administrators (95%) agreed that assessment results used to make advancement decisions accurately reflected each EL student’s achievement and need. In comparison to previous years’ data, administrators’ agreement percentage increased, but the agreement percentages for ESL teachers have fluctuated, with a decrease from 81 percent to 69 percent from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021. Regarding maintaining instructional continuity for EL students, 57 percent of ESL teachers and most administrators (93%) agreed that the ACCESS testing is conducted in an efficient manner that maintains instructional continuity. Agreement for both groups has increased since 2018-2019, although it has been a slight increase for ESL teachers and the percentage has remained low (see Table 12). Examinations of survey results from 2020-2021 by school level showed that agreement was lowest at the elementary school level regarding accuracy and efficiency for ESL teachers (accuracy: 52% vs. 83% to 100%; efficiency: 38% vs. 67% to 100%) and regarding efficiency for administrators (87% vs. 97% to 100%).

Table 12: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Assessment Processes

Item	2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021	
	ESL Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Admin
Assessment results used to make advancement decisions accurately reflect each EL student’s achievement and need.	59%	82%	81%	85%	69%	95%
The ACCESS testing is conducted in an efficient manner that maintains instructional continuity for EL students.*	50%	87%	54%	82%	57%	93%

*In 2020-2021, survey item was The ACCESS testing is conducted in an efficient manner for EL students that maintains instructional continuity.

Additional survey items about teachers’ use of assessment results showed that high levels of ESL teachers (86%) and administrators (99%) agreed that ESL teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students (see Table 13). While most administrators (91%) agreed that content-area/classroom teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students, lower percentages of the ESL teachers (49%) agreed with this item. In comparison to previous years’ data, there were increases in agreement percentages for administrators for both items. However, there have been notable decreases in the ESL teachers’ agreement that content-area/classroom teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students (from 73% in 2018-2019 to 62% in 2019-2020 to 49% in 2020-2021). Comparisons of 2020-2021 survey results by school level showed that agreement was highest at the high school level regarding ESL teachers using assessment results (100% vs. 81% to 83%), while high school ESL teacher agreement was lowest regarding content-area/classrooms teachers using assessments (25% vs. 52% to 67%).

Table 13: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Using Assessment Results for Monitoring

Item	2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021	
	ESL Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Admin
ESL teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students.	85%	93%	89%	92%	86%	99%
Content-area/classroom teachers use assessment results to monitor the progress of their EL students.	73%	75%	62%	77%	49%	91%

Classroom teachers who taught at least one EL student during the 2020-2021 school year were also asked survey items related to the assessment of EL students’ status throughout the school year. As indicated in Table 14, 81 percent of classroom teachers agreed that EL students were frequently assessed for formative purposes in English during the school year and that EL students took assessments that accurately measure their growth within content areas. Overall, there were increases in agreement percentages in comparison to previous years’ data (see Table 14). Across these items, high school classroom teachers had the lowest agreement percentages (73% to 74%) compared to elementary and middle school (83% to 84%) classroom teachers.

Table 14: Classroom Teacher Agreement Percentages Regarding Assessing EL Students

Item	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
EL students at my school...			
Are frequently assessed formatively for progress in developing their English during the school year.	71%	71%	81%
Take assessments that accurately measure their growth within content areas.	74%	66%	81%

Through an open-ended survey item, staff were provided the opportunity to provide comments on what worked well and the challenges encountered related to ACCESS assessment of EL students during the pandemic. Given the revised ACCESS testing schedule for 2020-2021, most ESL teachers commented about the challenges that students had in completing all testing in one day, including student fatigue or rushing through the testing. ESL teachers noted that it was particularly difficult for the younger EL students. Although some ESL teachers commented that it was nice to complete testing in one day, several teachers also expressed concerns about the accuracy of the testing results this year due to the difficulties students experienced. Overall, administrators commented that the scheduling of testing was efficient and worked well. Most classroom teachers indicated they did not have knowledge of the ACCESS testing procedures, though some classroom teachers commented that ACCESS testing took too much time away from instruction.

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).⁴⁶ 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 school 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 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.⁴⁷ 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).⁴⁸

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

Instructional Models

During the 2020-2021 school year, at the elementary school and middle school levels, services were primarily provided through the push-in model, which involves ESL teachers supporting the classroom teachers' instruction. ESL teachers at both levels provided push-in services for both virtual and in-person students. At the high school level, high school students received services through ESL courses in 2020-2021. Two ESL teachers taught all virtual high school students throughout the division, while in-person students were taught by the ESL teachers at their home school. In 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, the Newcomer Program was also offered at the high school level to 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."⁴⁹ Due to logistics during the pandemic, the ability to offer small high school class sizes in 2020-2021, and few in-person students at the lowest performance level, the Newcomer Program was not offered to high school students during the 2020-2021 school year. However, it will be offered in subsequent school years. Beginning in 2021-2022, there will be an additional ESL course made available to middle school EL students at the lowest proficiency levels.⁵⁰

Push-In Model and Clustering

To help facilitate services offered through the push-in model at the elementary school and middle school levels, over the past few years, it has been recommended to principals that EL students be clustered in classrooms by grade level.⁵¹ Principals have been 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 throughout the school year. In general, 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 content courses 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.⁵² Middle school ESL partnership schools were communicated to principals. This grade-level clustering was intended to allow ESL teachers to work in fewer classrooms per school. Although scheduling was more difficult during the 2020-2021 school year, it was still expected that EL students be clustered within classes at the elementary and middle school levels as possible.

In 2019-2020, when asked on the survey about clustering EL students within classrooms, 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 15). Due to the low agreement percentages found in 2019-2020 regarding effective clustering, one recommendation from the year-two evaluation focused on clustering of EL students. It was recommended to ensure EL students are clustered in classrooms at the elementary and middle school levels to the greatest extent possible. However, it was recognized that scheduling for 2020-2021 classes was a difficult challenge due to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that this recommendation may not be fully feasible until conditions return to normal. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken regarding this recommendation included the director of K-12 and gifted programs communicating with schools about the importance of clustering. In January 2021, the director communicated with middle school ESL administrative contacts and the school counseling coordinator

regarding all EL students receiving services continuing to receive services during term 2 and ensuring that EL students are clustered in content-area classes to the greatest extent possible to allow ESL teachers to push into content classes and maximize instructional time. In addition, in April 2021, principals' packet memos were communicated to elementary school and middle school principals regarding the need to cluster EL students at each grade level for elementary and in content classes at each grade level for middle school.

During 2020-2021, 43 percent of elementary school ESL teachers and 17 percent of middle school ESL teachers agreed that EL students were effectively clustered within teachers' classrooms at each grade level. Although there was an increase in the agreement percentage at the elementary school level (from 35% to 43%), there was a decrease in the agreement percentage at the middle school level (from 38% to 17%). The low ESL teacher agreement percentages may have been related to the challenges related to scheduling for 2020-2021 classes. Agreement percentages regarding this item ranged from 73 to 94 percent for elementary school and middle school classroom teachers and administrators. There were increases in agreement percentages for classroom teachers and administrators at both levels in comparison to 2019-2020 (see Table 15).

Table 15: Staff Agreement Regarding Effective Clustering Within Teachers' Classrooms by School Level

Group	2019-2020		2020-2021	
	ES	MS	ES	MS
ESL Teacher	35%	38%	43%	17%
Classroom Teacher	75%	69%	86%	73%
Administrator	94%	89%	94%	91%

Note: Survey item was not included in 2018-2019.

Pull-Out Model

Since the 2019-2020 school year, the emphasis at the elementary school and middle school levels was to provide services through the “push-in” model, but 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 involved focusing on oral language, survival English vocabulary, basic literacy skills, and/or key academic language. In general, ESL teacher instruction 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. During virtual instruction in 2020-2021, ESL teachers set up small group times with their EL students through virtual meetings.

High School ESL Courses

At the high school level, in 2020-2021, the ESL courses that students could take at their home school included an ESL Effective Reading Skills course and an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course. In previous years, an additional set of courses (i.e., English as a Second Language (ESL) courses) were taught that provided the same content as the EFL courses; however, this was not offered in 2020-2021 due to VDOE requiring that only one option (EFL or ESL courses) be offered.⁵³ Any EL high school student could have enrolled in the ESL Effective Reading Skills course, while students were enrolled in the 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 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 languages requirements, while ESL Effective Reading courses may be taken as elective credits. As shown in Table 16, during 2020-2021, 103 students were enrolled in ESL Effective Reading Skills, 42 students were enrolled in EFL I, and 119 students were enrolled in EFL II.⁵⁴ High school scheduling during the 2020-2021 school year involved taking courses over two terms; however, students were required to enroll in the same ESL course for both semesters.⁵⁵

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	103
English as a Foreign Language I	1.0 – 2.5	42
English as a Foreign Language II*	2.6 – 4.3	119

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

One recommendation from the 2019-2020 evaluation focused on reviewing the high school model due to overall low agreement percentages found for high school staff, decreases in staff satisfaction, and the percentage of eligible EL students opting out of services. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken regarding this recommendation during 2020-2021 included developing curriculum committees for the high school ESL courses. In addition, in spring 2021, through a shared Google document, all teachers were asked to reflect on how the ESL program could better support them and their students. In April 2021, the ESL coordinator and instructional specialist met with high school ESL teachers to gather input regarding course offerings and materials needed for 2021-2022. Revisions were made to the 2021-2022 high school course offerings to include an additional English as a Foreign Language course (EFL III) and a new ESL Effective Reading course. EFL II and EFL III courses will be taught concurrently using the same but differentiated curriculum. The students will be able to take the EFL courses for world languages credit, while the Effective Reading course is an elective. Additional courses were added for the Newcomer Program at Landstown High School, including a Math Skills for ESL HS Newcomer Program course and ESL Accelerating Language Thru Content course, which are elective courses. Additionally, students in the Newcomer Program will be enrolled in EFL I, ESL Effective Reading, Health and PE, Spanish for Fluent Speakers, and two courses that will be co-taught with the ESL teacher: Environmental Science and Economics and Personal Finance.

Perceptions of Instructional Models

When ESL teachers were asked whether they used certain instructional delivery models in their school, 67 percent of elementary school and all middle school ESL teachers reported using the push-in model, while all elementary school and 83 percent of middle school ESL teachers reported using the pull-out model (see Table 17). All high school ESL teachers indicated they used the high school elective, while low percentages indicated they used either the push-in (14%) or pull-out models (29%).

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

Model	ES	MS	HS
Push-in	67%	100%	14%
Pull-out	100%	83%	29%
HS Elective	-	-	100%

Note: Due to the instructional models included on previous surveys having varied, comparison data are not provided.

When ESL teachers who indicated they used the instructional methods were asked about the effectiveness, all elementary school and middle school ESL teachers indicated the pull-out model was either very or somewhat effective (see Table 18). In addition, 88 percent of high school ESL teachers indicated the high school elective

was effective. Lower percentages of ESL teachers indicated the push-in model was 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

Model	ES	MS	HS
Push-in	79%	50%	-
Pull-out	100%	100%	-
HS Elective	-	-	88%

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.⁵⁶ As shown in Table 19, 55 percent of elementary school students and 94 percent of high school students primarily received services through ESL instruction (i.e., pull-out model). At the middle school level, 83 percent of students primarily received services through content classes with integrated ESL support (i.e., push-in model). No students received services through the Newcomer Program during 2020-2021.

Table 19: Percentages of Students Who Received Each LIEP

Instructional Model	ES N = 1,213	MS N = 327	HS N = 227	Total N = 1,767
Content classes with integrated ESL support	45%	83%	6%	47%
English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Development (ELD)	55%	16%	94%	53%

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 = 27). One student did not have any LIEP information.

Instructional Methods

On the survey, ESL teachers were provided with general items regarding the instruction that ESL teachers provided to EL students. As shown in Table 20, 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. There were increases in agreement percentages for these items in comparison to previous years' data, with the exception of ESL teachers adapting their instruction to meet EL students' needs, which has remained high (see Table 20).

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

Item	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
ESL teachers provide instruction to EL students that effectively integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.	88%	89%	97%
ESL teachers provide EL students with frequent opportunities to practice and display their abilities to listen, speak, read, and write in English.	76%	81%	94%
ESL teachers adapt their instruction to meet the needs of individual EL students.	96%	92%	97%

As shown in Table 21, classroom teachers also had high agreement rates regarding the instruction that content-area/classroom teachers provided when teaching EL students at their school. At least 93 percent of classroom teachers agreed that content-area/classroom teachers make use of visual aids during instruction,

appropriately integrate technology within lessons, use graphic organizers to help students understand relationships between concepts, and give students opportunities to engage in academic conversations. The agreement percentages for all items have remained high in comparison to previous years' data (see Table 21).

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

Item	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Make use of visual aids during instruction	92%	90%	93%
Appropriately integrate technology within lessons	95%	93%	97%
Use graphic organizers to help students understand relationships between concepts	90%	88%	94%
Give students opportunities to engage in academic conversations	92%	89%	95%

Through an open-ended survey item, staff were provided the opportunity to provide comments on what worked well and the challenges encountered related to providing instruction to EL students during the pandemic. Overall, a theme that emerged from ESL teachers was the difficulty in providing instruction to EL students both virtually and in person, including having different instructional plans for both groups and lack of time to transition between instruction. Other ESL teachers expressed specific challenges with teaching EL students virtually, including students having technological difficulties or trouble staying on task. Classroom teachers also indicated that technology difficulties for virtual EL students was a challenge as well as ensuring that EL students attended class and participated. In addition, classroom teachers noted that they would have liked to receive support in how to provide instruction to EL students virtually. Administrators also commented that ESL teachers had large caseloads and that there was a need for more ESL teachers.

Opportunities Provided to EL Students

Overall, it is expected that EL students are provided with similar educational opportunities as other students throughout the division. For example, it is expected that EL students be provided with personalized learning opportunities, receive assistance with planning for their academics and career, opportunities to enroll in rigorous coursework and academy programs, and gain skills that prepare them for college and career.

One of the ESL program goals was related to opportunities provided to EL students: **“The ESL program will be student-centered and provide EL students with a variety of choices and opportunities to help students reach their goals.”** Objectives for this goal focused on (1) personalized learning opportunities, (2) academic/career planning process, (3) rigorous coursework, (4) academy program enrollment, and (5) college and career readiness skills. Survey data for this goal are only compared to 2019-2020 due to EL students not being surveyed in 2018-2019. Where appropriate, analyses are examined separately for current and former EL students to examine their participation in various educational opportunities for this program goal.

The personalized learning objective for the opportunity goal is **“EL students report that they were provided with personalized learning opportunities as measured by student survey responses.”** Overall, 92 percent of EL students agreed that they were learning and doing things in school that were matched to their needs and interests in 2020-2021. Comparisons by school level showed high agreement percentages across each school level (94% for elementary school, 91% for middle school, and 88% for high school students). Comparisons from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 by school level showed that agreement increased notably for middle school EL students (from 77% to 91%), while the percentage remained the same for elementary school (94%) and high school EL students (88%).

The academic/career planning process objective for the opportunity goal is **“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, 55 percent of students agreed that their teachers or counselors talked with them about their options after they graduate from high school. This percentage was lower than at the division level, with 67 percent of elementary school students divisionwide agreeing that they received assistance, resources, and information to help them make informed decisions about options after graduation. In addition, the percentage of elementary EL students agreeing with this item decreased slightly from 2019-2020 when 64 percent of elementary EL students agreed.

At the secondary level, 72 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 by school level showed that a lower percentage of middle school EL students (70%) agreed compared to high school EL students (76%). The percentage was lower than at the division level for middle school students (70% vs. 88%), while it was relatively similar for high school students (76% vs. 78%). In comparison to 2019-2020, a relatively similar percentage of secondary EL students agreed overall (72% vs. 74%).

The rigorous coursework objective for the opportunity goal is **“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 in February or earned a final grade in a rigorous course in the first semester.⁵⁷

At the middle school level, 49 percent of current or former EL students were enrolled in an advanced course, while at the high school level, 34 percent of current or former EL students were enrolled in an advanced course. Examining results for current and former EL students separately showed that notably higher percentages of former EL students were enrolled in rigorous coursework than current EL students at both levels (see Table 22). In comparison to the division, the same percentage of middle school former EL students (68%) were enrolled in rigorous coursework during 2020-2021, while the percentage of high school former EL students enrolled in rigorous coursework was relatively similar to the division (59% compared to 61%). In comparison to previous years’ data, the percentage of former EL students at middle school who were enrolled in rigorous coursework has declined since 2018-2019, while the percentage of former EL students at high school has increased slightly since 2018-2019 (see Table 22).

Table 22: Percentage of Students Enrolled in Rigorous Coursework

Group	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	MS	HS	Total	MS	HS	Total	MS	HS	Total
Current and former EL students	56%	39%	49%	51%	34%	45%	49%	34%	43%
Current EL students	31%	21%	27%	25%	20%	23%	29%	17%	24%
Former EL students	76%	57%	69%	75%	52%	67%	68%	59%	65%
Division	70%	59%	64%	68%	60%	63%	68%	61%	64%

The academy program enrollment objective for the opportunity goal is **“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 former EL students at the secondary level, 5 percent were enrolled in an academy during the 2020-2021 school year. Results by level showed that 1 percent of middle school former EL students and 12 percent of high school former EL students were enrolled in an academy (see Table 23). 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 (15%). The percentages of former EL students enrolled in an academy in 2020-2021 remained relatively consistent from previous years’ data.

Table 23: Percentage of Students Enrolled in An Academy

Group	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	MS	HS	Total	MS	HS	Total	MS	HS	Total
Current and former EL students	1%	4%	2%	< 1%	5%	2%	1%	5%	2%
Current EL students	0%	1%	< 1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	< 1%	< 1%
Former EL students	2%	8%	4%	< 1%	12%	4%	1%	12%	5%
Division	2%	15%	10%	3%	16%	11%	2%	15%	9%

As shown in Table 24, during 2020-2021, the percentage of former high school EL students who were enrolled at ATC was 1 percent and the percentage enrolled at TCE was 3 percent. In comparison to the division level, there was a similar percentage of former EL students enrolled at TCE (3%) and a slightly lower percentage of former EL students enrolled at ATC (3% compared to 1%). The percentage of former EL students enrolled at TCE has fluctuated in comparison to previous years’ data with a decrease from 2019-2020 (from 6% to 3%), while the percentage enrolled at ATC has maintained the same.

Table 24: Percentage of Students Enrolled in ATC and TCE

Group	2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021	
	ATC	TCE	ATC	TCE	ATC	TCE
Current and former EL students	1.5%	1.5%	0.6%	2.7%	0.5%	1.9%
Current EL students	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.9%
Former EL students	3.2%	2.2%	1.4%	5.5%	1.3%	3.3%
Division	2%	3%	2.3%	3.4%	2.6%	3.1%

The college and career readiness skills objective for the opportunity goal is **“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 COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, there were fewer opportunities and fewer students who took the SAT; therefore, SAT data for these years will not be reported. Eighteen current or former EL students took the SAT in 2020-2021, whereas 37 students took the SAT in 2018-2019. In addition, industry certification comparison data from 2019-2020 are not provided due to the impact of the pandemic that year.

Overall, the percentage of current or former high school EL students who earned an industry certification in 2020-2021 was 15 percent, which was lower than the percentage of high school students who earned an industry certification at the division level (31%). Examining results for current and former EL students separately showed that notably higher percentages of former EL students earned an industry certification than current EL students. In comparison to the division, a relatively similar percentage of former EL students earned an industry certification (33% compared to 31%). Comparisons by grade level showed that lower percentages of former EL students earned an industry certification than students at the division in grades 9 and 10, while higher percentages of former EL students earned an industry certification than students at the division in grades 11 and 12 (see Table 25). Therefore, former EL students may have been more likely to delay taking industry certifications until the later grades.

Table 25: Percentages of Students Who Earned An Industry Certification

Group	2018-2019					2020-2021				
	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Current and Former EL Students	6%	22%	38%	60%	27%	1%	7%	35%	41%	15%
Current EL Students	3%	10%	15%	58%	14%	0%	1%	10%	14%	3%
Former EL Students	11%	37%	70%	60%	42%	2%	23%	63%	51%	33%
Division	9%	31%	63%	59%	40%	4%	27%	57%	38%	31%

For completion of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program, data for students who graduated in 2020-2021 were examined. Of the 47 current or former EL students who graduated in 2020-2021, 40 percent completed a CTE Program. Examining results for current and former EL students separately showed that 43 percent of the 35 former EL student graduates completed a CTE program and 33 percent of the 12 current EL student graduates completed a CTE program (see Table 26). A relatively similar percentage of former EL student graduates completed a CTE program in comparison to the division level (43% compared to 41%).

Table 26: Percentages of Students Who Completed a CTE Program

Group	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Current and former EL students	34%	38%	40%
Current EL students ⁵⁸	36%	-	33%
Former EL students	33%	43%	43%
Division	41%	44%	41%

Note: In 2019-2020, less than 10 current EL students were graduates.

In summary, data related to the program’s goal of providing opportunities for EL students to reach their goals showed that once EL students gain English proficiency and exit from the ESL program, EL students were provided with similar opportunities to non-EL students. In particular, similar percentages of former EL students were enrolled in rigorous courses and TCE as well as earned industry certifications and completed a CTE program. Slightly lower percentages of former EL students were enrolled in an academy (4 percentage point difference) and ATC (1 percentage point difference).

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.”⁵⁹ 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; ongoing evaluation of receptive and expressive 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’s student information system, Synergy.”⁶⁰

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.

ESL Teacher Assignments and Caseloads

During the 2020-2021 school year, the ESL program was staffed with 44 full-time ESL teachers.⁶¹ This total includes one Title I ESL teacher who provided supplemental services to ESL students at three Title I schools; however, this ESL teacher does not have a caseload of students. This was an increase of 12 ESL teacher allocations compared to the 2019-2020 school year. There were 26 full-time ESL teachers who taught exclusively at the elementary school level, 9 full-time ESL teachers who taught exclusively at the middle school level, and 9 ESL teachers who taught at the high school level. All elementary school and middle school ESL teachers were required to teach ESL students who were attending school in person and virtually. Two high school ESL teachers were designated as teaching virtual students only and the remaining ESL teachers taught the in-person students at their schools. At the elementary school level, most ESL teachers were assigned between two and four schools with the exception of four ESL teachers who taught at one school. At the middle school level, three ESL teachers were assigned one school, while six ESL teachers were assigned two schools. At the high school level, ESL teachers taught sections of ESL courses to students. Three teachers worked with students at one high school, while four teachers worked with students at two or three high schools. The two additional high school ESL teachers taught students exclusively online.

During the 2020 General Assembly, the governor approved an adjustment to the SOQ guidelines from 17 ESL teachers for every 1,000 students 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.⁶² These guidelines equate to a maximum of 54 students for one teacher in 2020-2021 and 50 students per teacher in 2021-2022.

The ESL teacher caseloads were examined at three time points during the 2020-2021 school year (October, February, and June) through Web-Reporting Services (WRS) reports run by the Department of Teaching and Learning. Caseloads for teachers who taught only the virtual high school students were included in the analysis. In October 2020, a total of 43 ESL teachers taught 1,620 students. The average caseload per teacher was 38 EL students, with a range of caseloads from 8 students to 62 students across the ESL teachers. As shown in Table 27, the number of EL students, average caseload, and range of caseloads decreased from October to February. By June 2021, there were 1,643 students resulting in a similar average caseload and range of caseloads to October.

Table 27: ESL Teacher Caseloads and Total Students

Caseload Measure	October 2020	February 2021	June 2021
Average Caseload	38	37	38
Range of Caseloads	8 to 62	6 to 59	3 to 62
Total Students	1,620	1,611	1,643

Based on the WRS reports, the group of students who opted out of services and were monitored quarterly included an additional 98 students in October, 130 students in February, and 140 students in June. The numbers of former EL students who were no longer eligible for services but were monitored biannually were 457 students in October, 437 students in February, and 438 students in June.

In comparison to the previous years, the average caseload and range of caseloads have decreased, while the total number of students have increased (see Table 28).

Table 28: ESL Teacher Caseloads and Total Students From June 2019 to June 2021

Caseload Measure	June 2019	June 2020	June 2021
Average Caseload	43	45	38
Range of Caseloads	13 to 65	20 to 69	3 to 62
Total Students	1,251	1,607	1,643

The ESL teachers and administrators were asked their agreement regarding whether ESL teachers' caseloads allowed them to teach EL students effectively. In 2020-2021, 51 percent of ESL teachers agreed, which was a notable increase in agreement from 12 percent of ESL teachers in 2019-2020 and 35 percent in 2018-2019 (see Table 29). In addition, 80 percent of administrators agreed that the size of the ESL teachers' caseloads allowed them to teach EL student effectively, which was also an increase from 59 percent in 2019-2020 and 64 percent in 2018-2019. Comparisons by school level showed that a higher percentage of high school ESL teachers agreed that their caseload size allowed them to teach effectively (63%) compared to elementary school (48%) and middle school (50%) levels in 2020-2021.

Table 29: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding ESL Teacher Caseload

Item	2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021	
	ESL Teacher*	Admin	ESL Teacher*	Admin	ESL Teacher*	Admin
The size of the caseload allows the ESL teacher at my school to teach the EL students effectively.	35%	64%	12%	59%	51%	80%

Note: *ESL teachers were asked their agreement regarding the size of their caseload allowing them to teach their EL students effectively.

Additionally, 46 percent of ESL teachers, 62 percent of classroom teachers, and 72 percent of administrators agreed that the ESL teacher is able to teach EL students frequently enough for instruction to be effective. There were also increases in agreement percentages from 2019-2020 and 2018-2019 for this item for all groups (see Table 30). Comparisons by school level showed that a higher percentage of high school ESL teachers (75%) agreed than elementary school (38%) and middle school (33%) ESL teachers in 2020-2021.

Table 30: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Time for Instruction

Item	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher*	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher*	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher*	Classroom Teacher	Admin
The ESL teacher is able to teach EL students frequently enough for the instruction to be effective.	35%	48%	59%	19%	41%	52%	46%	62%	72%

Note: *ESL teachers were asked their agreement regarding being able to teach their EL students frequently enough for the instruction to be effective.

In addition, overall, 73 percent of classroom teachers agreed that the ESL teacher(s) was available when needed which was a notable increase from 2019-2020 when 45 percent of classroom teachers agreed. Agreement varied minimally by school level in 2020-2021 with agreement ranging from 70 to 75 percent.

Staff Characteristics

Demographic characteristics were examined for full-time ESL teachers in comparison to the division.⁶³ In 2020-2021, in comparison to all division instructional staff, there were higher percentages of female ESL teachers and ESL teachers who were Hispanic, while there were lower percentages of male ESL teachers and ESL teachers who were Caucasian (see Table 31). The average number of years teaching was slightly higher for ESL teachers in comparison to instructional staff throughout the division, while there was a higher percentage of ESL teachers who were new to the division in comparison to instructional staff throughout the division. These findings were consistent with comparisons in 2019-2020 and 2018-2019.

Table 31: Staff Characteristics for ESL Teachers and All Instructional Staff

Staff Characteristic	ESL Teachers	Division Instructional Staff
Female	93%	82%
Male	7%	18%
African American	9%	10%
Asian	4%	3%
Caucasian	78%	82%
Hispanic	7%	4%
Two or More Ethnicities	2%	1%
Other	0%	< 1%
Percentage New to the Division	13%	7%
Average Years' Experience	17	14

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 2020-2021, one handbook was provided for all ESL teachers that was expanded from the previous year to include more details regarding relevant state and federal laws and regulations and revisions to details about the ELT meetings and LIEP plans, including posted deadlines. 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 32, ESL teachers and administrators had positive perceptions of the handbook with at least 85 percent agreement on items regarding the helpfulness and clarity of the handbook. Agreement percentages for both items and both groups have increased since 2018-2019 (see Table 32).

Table 32: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Helpfulness and Clarity of ELT Handbook

Item	2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021	
	ESL Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Admin
The English Learner Team Handbook is a helpful resource.	88%	78%	96%	91%	91%	98%
The English Learner Team Handbook clearly articulates the procedures I must follow and the deadlines I must meet.	71%	83%	89%	90%	85%	98%

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 2019-2020 and 2018-2019, from 31 to 36 percent of ESL teachers and from 56 to 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 and 2019-2020 evaluations was to expand the availability of ESL instructional materials and resources. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken regarding this recommendation during the 2019-2020 school year included forming a committee of ESL teachers to review possible resources and to make a recommendation for resources at each school level.⁶⁴ Instructional materials purchased included Learning A-Z resources and picture flashcards with words in multiple languages. During the 2020-2021 school year, all ESL teachers continued to have access to Learning A-Z Raz-Plus ELL Edition and Science A-Z.⁶⁵ In addition, the following instructional resources were purchased in November and December 2020: Lakeshore Vocab Dev Photo Card Libraries – Complete Set (Around our Community, Foods, School, All About Me, Animals), Desktop Stand with flip magnetic board/storage pockets, E-Z Read Plastic magnetic letters kit, Ballard & Tighe Theme Picture (sets one and two), Okiocam S USB (2-in-1 webcam and document camera), English for Everyone Teacher’s Guide and Student Workbooks, Continental Press TEAM Toolkit: Levels AA-B Kit (grades K-2), Continental Press TEAM Toolkit: Levels C-E (grades 3-5), Continental Press Picture Dictionaries, and Dry Erase Lapboards. Additionally, in April 2021, Saddle e-book versions of Teen Literacy Library and Welcome Newcomers were purchased. In May and June 2021, the following resources were purchased: Saddleback Teen Emergent Reader Library Phonics: Decode, Ballard & Tighe Carousel of Ideas Set 1, Continental Press Team Toolkit for Newcomers (secondary), and Continental Press On our Way kits (elementary).

In 2020-2021, 79 percent of ESL teachers and 69 percent of classroom teachers agreed that the available instructional materials were appropriate for their EL students. As shown in Table 33, in comparison to previous years, agreement percentages about instructional materials being appropriate increased notably for both groups (from 36% and 31% to 79% for ESL teachers; from 58% and 56% to 69% for classroom teachers). Comparisons of results by school level in 2020-2021 showed that middle school ESL teachers (33%) had a lower agreement percentage than elementary school (90%) or high school ESL teachers (88%). High school classroom teachers (61%) had a lower agreement percentage than elementary school (74%) and middle school classroom teachers (70%).

Table 33: Teacher Agreement Regarding Instructional Materials Being Appropriate

Group	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
ESL Teacher	36%	31%	79%
Classroom Teacher	58%	56%	69%

In 2020-2021, ESL teachers and classroom teachers were asked to provide comments regarding instructional materials. Most ESL teachers commented about how helpful the new instructional materials were, especially Learning A-Z. A few ESL teachers commented that a more structured curriculum would be more helpful than a variety of resources. Middle school ESL teachers commented that there was a need for more resources for newcomer and lower level EL students that were appropriate for a middle school maturity level. 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 they sought out or created their own materials to support EL students.

Professional Learning

Professional Learning for ESL Teachers

During 2020-2021 in-service week, several professional learning sessions were offered to ESL teachers. Mandatory professional learning sessions covered topics related to using the Reading A-Z ELL edition resource and updates to ESL instruction and materials for all ESL teachers, including virtual learning expectations and resources to support remote learning. Additional mandatory sessions covered Seesaw features for elementary ESL teachers, Schoology features for elementary and middle school ESL teachers, and middle school ESL curriculum updates for middle school ESL teachers. Optional sessions for ESL teachers included: best practices for teaching EL students in the virtual environment as well as tips and strategies for communicating the ESL teacher's role with others. In addition, links for various webinars were provided to ESL teachers that covered best practices for virtual learning for EL students (see Appendix A for full list of webinars). Additionally, in 2020-2021, monthly mandatory three-hour professional learning sessions were provided to ESL teachers from October through May. This was a shift proposed by the director of K-12 and Gifted Programs from two-hour monthly sessions with only two sessions that were mandatory in 2019-2020. In addition, first-year teachers were provided with a mentor and additional time was allotted before each monthly meeting for first-year ESL teachers and their mentors. ESL teachers were also able to collaborate amongst each other through a group in Schoology where they could share materials and resources with one another. In response to a survey item, 80 percent of ESL teachers agreed that ESL teachers participated with their ESL counterparts at other schools in EL-related professional learning, which increased slightly from 77 percent in 2019-2020 and 71 percent in 2018-2019. In addition, 83 percent of ESL teachers agreed that the professional learning they received enabled them to meet the needs of their EL students, which improved from 77 percent in 2019-2020 and 68 percent in 2018-2019.

When asked which topics were provided for professional learning over the last three years, as shown in Table 34, the highest percentages of ESL teachers indicated they received professional learning related to regulations, documentation procedures/guidelines, and required VBCPS procedures (91%) as well as instructional models and methods (80%), and using technology, software, and internet resources for EL students (80%). In comparison to results from 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, there were increases in the percentages of ESL teachers who reported receiving professional learning in seven of the nine EL-related topic areas, especially assessment techniques; developing curricular and instructional materials; and technology, software, and internet resources (see Table 34).

Table 34: Percentages of ESL Teachers Who Reported Receiving Professional Learning in Various Areas

Item	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Regulations, documentation procedures/guidelines, and required VBCPS procedures	88%	85%	91%
Instructional models and methods	76%	89%	80%
Using technology, software, and internet resources for EL students	64%	42%	80%
Assessment techniques	48%	62%	71%
Cultural awareness	68%	65%	60%
Data interpretation and use	72%	46%	57%
Learning progressions for EL students	40%	42%	54%
Developing curricular and instructional materials	28%	27%	51%
Peer coaching	12%	3%	20%

The goal related to ESL teacher and classroom teacher professional learning and collaboration is **“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.”** Objectives for this goal focused on (1) ESL teacher professional learning, (2) classroom teacher professional learning, and (3) ESL teacher and classroom teacher collaboration.

The ESL teacher professional learning objective for the ESL teacher and classroom teacher professional learning and collaboration goal is **“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.”**

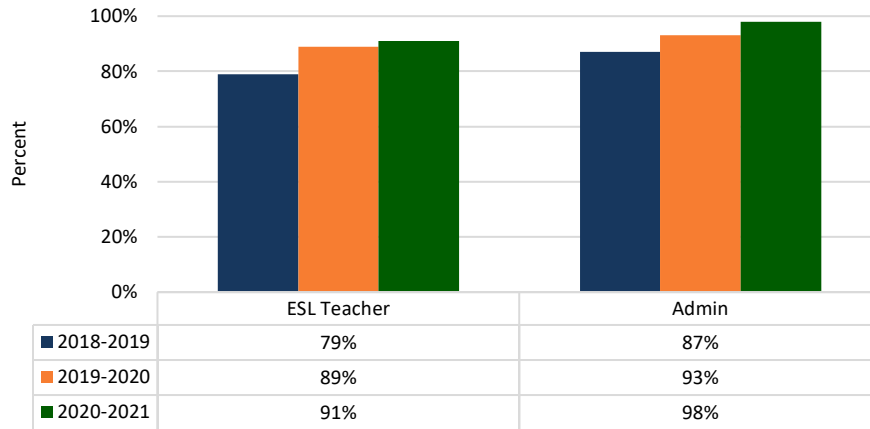
Nearly all ESL teachers (97%) agreed that they participated in professional learning during 2020-2021 to increase their instructional effectiveness with EL students. In addition, 89 percent of administrators agreed that ESL teachers participated in professional learning during 2020-2021 for this purpose. Agreement percentages for both groups have been relatively consistent since 2018-2019 (see Table 35).

Table 35: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding ESL Teacher Participating in Professional Learning to Increase Instructional Effectiveness

Item	2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021	
	ESL Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Admin
ESL teacher participated in professional learning to increase instructional effectiveness.	96%	89%	100%	93%	97%	89%

When asked about the effectiveness of the professional learning, 91 percent of ESL teachers and 98 percent of administrators agreed that the ESL teacher professional learning to increase instructional effectiveness with EL students was effective. In comparison to results from previous years, the percentages have increased (from 79% in 2018-2019 to 91% in 2020-2021) and increased for administrators (from 87% in 2018-2019 to 98% in 2020-2021) (see Figure 1).

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



In response to an open-ended survey item, ESL teachers commented on additional EL-related professional learning topics that would be helpful. Themes reported by ESL teachers were related to providing instruction and support to dually identified students (i.e., special education and EL students); providing services more generally, including how to provide services while following the specified curriculum, techniques for small groups, and teaching writing; and working with classroom teachers, including assisting them with modifying instruction and how to provide them professional learning.

Professional Learning for Classroom Teachers

During 2020-2021, professional learning sessions offered to content-area/classroom teachers were provided by the ESL coordinator, ESL teachers, and the ESL instructional specialist. Ten topics were covered during the professional learning sessions and were offered twice throughout the year. Topics included English learner SOL accommodations, supporting EL students in the content areas, differentiating language arts for EL newcomers, using technology to access EL students’ knowledge, differences about teaching reading to English learners, academic vocabulary strategies for EL students, engaging EL students through interactive notebooks, facilitating literacy with English learner newcomers, and Model Performance Indicators (MPIs) of ESL. When asked about the professional learning they participated in during 2020-2021, from 33 to 40 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 36). There were decreases in the percentages of classroom teachers who indicated they participated in professional learning in each of these areas in comparison to 2019-2020 (see Table 36). These decreases may have been impacted by the operations during the pandemic and the focus of professional learning in other areas.

Table 36: Percentage of Classroom Teachers Who Participated in EL-Related Professional Learning

Item	2019-2020	2020-2021
Instructional effectiveness with EL students	39%	33%
Assessment skills	40%	34%
Cultural awareness	46%	40%
Knowledge of ESL program procedures/guidelines and regulations	42%	36%

Note: Classroom teachers were not provided this survey item in 2018-2019.

The classroom teacher professional learning objective for the ESL teacher and classroom teacher professional learning and collaboration goal is **“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.”

Due to low percentages of classroom teachers indicating they participated in EL-related professional learning to improve their understanding of or capacity to teach EL students in 2019-2020 (from 40% to 42%) and 2018-2019 (22%), a recommendation area from the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 evaluations focused on professional learning related to ESL instruction for classroom teachers of EL students. The recommendation focused on encouraging classroom teachers to participate in ESL-related professional learning. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken regarding this recommendation during 2019-2020 included providing ESL teachers the opportunity to submit proposals in March for presenting professional learning opportunities in ESL-related areas.⁶⁶ In addition, as mentioned, there were a variety of sessions on ESL-related topics that were offered to classroom teachers and publicized through a principals’ packet memo. 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.⁶⁷ 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, which would include information about language acquisition and co-teaching strategies. Due to scheduling difficulties and the impact of the pandemic, training has not been offered specifically to ESL cluster teachers; however, various professional learning topics were offered to classroom teachers throughout the school year.⁶⁸

Classroom teacher participation data obtained from the Office of Professional Growth and Innovation showed that a total of 34 classroom teachers participated in one of 14 EL-related professional learning sessions offered during the 2020-2021 school year.⁶⁹ Data showed that 11 classroom teachers participated in professional learning focused on academic vocabulary strategies, while 7 teachers participated in sessions focused the areas of: supporting EL students in the content areas and teaching reading to EL students. Four or fewer classroom teachers participated in professional learning in the areas of: differentiating language arts for EL newcomers, using technology to access EL student knowledge, engaging EL students through interactive notebooks, and literacy with EL newcomers. In comparison to classroom teacher participation data from 2019-2020, the number of classroom teachers who participated in an EL-related professional learning session decreased in 2020-2021 (from 51 to 34 total classroom teachers), although there were 16 EL-related professional learning sessions offered in 2019-2020. However, there was an increase from 2018-2019 when 16 total classroom teachers participated in one of four professional learning sessions.

Overall, 36 percent of classroom teachers indicated they participated in any EL-related professional learning, which decreased from 43 percent in 2019-2020. During 2020-2021, low percentages of classroom teachers who taught at least one EL student agreed that they participated in professional learning to increase their understanding of (35%) or capacity to teach EL students (34%) (see Table 37).

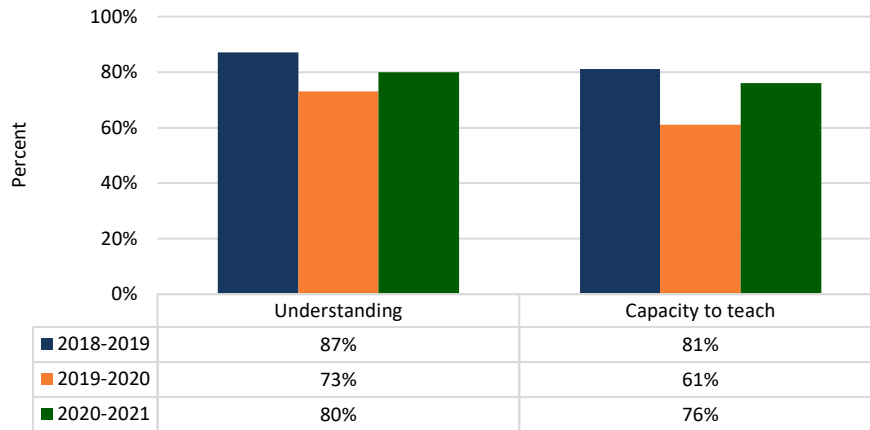
Table 37: Percentages of Classroom Teachers Who Indicated Participating In Professional Learning

Item	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Understanding of EL Students	22%	42%	35%
Capacity to teach	22%	40%	34%

Of those who did participate in any EL-related professional learning, 74 percent agreed that the professional learning they received enabled them to meet the needs of their EL students, which increased from 54 percent in 2019-2020. In addition, of those classroom teachers who indicated they participated in professional learning in 2020-2021, 80 percent agreed that the professional learning increased their understanding of EL students and 76 percent agreed that the professional learning increased their capacity to teach EL students. Although the agreement percentages have fluctuated since 2018-2019, there were increases in the percentages who indicated the professional learning was effective from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 (see Figure 2). Results in

2020-2021 by school level showed that higher percentages of elementary school classroom teachers agreed that professional learning increased their capacity to teach EL students and their understanding of EL students (from 82% to 87%) compared to middle school (from 71% to 78%) and high school classroom teachers (73%).

Figure 2: Classroom Teacher Agreement Regarding PL Increasing Skills



In response to an open-ended survey item, classroom teachers commented on additional EL-related professional learning topics that would be helpful. A major theme reported by classroom teachers 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.

Professional Learning for Administrative Contacts

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. Each year, returning ESL administrative contacts can complete the training through a webinar, while new ESL administrative contracts were required to sign up for a professional learning session. During 2020-2021, new ESL administrative contacts were required to sign up for a synchronous virtual learning session.⁷⁰

Co-planning and Collaboration

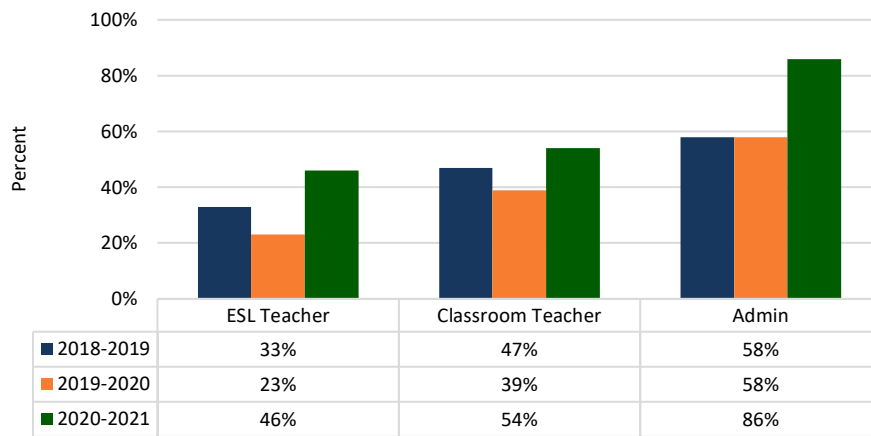
A key component of providing instruction to EL students is collaborating with content-area/classroom teachers. The collaboration objective for the ESL teacher and classroom teacher professional learning and collaboration goal is **“ESL teachers and classroom teachers collaborate to meet the needs of EL students as measured by staff survey responses.”**

In 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, low percentages of ESL teachers (from 23% to 33%) and classroom teachers (from 39% to 47%) agreed that ESL teachers and content-area/classroom teachers collaborate with each other to meet the needs of EL students. Due to the low agreement percentages, one recommendation from the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 evaluation focused on communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers. The recommendation focused on implementing new strategies to improve communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers. The ESL coordinator indicated that actions taken during 2019-2020 regarding this recommendation included meeting with the chief academic officer to discuss implementation of the Ellevation data platform.⁷¹ This platform allows ESL and classroom teachers to access EL

student data and collaborate virtually. During 2020-2021, the implementation of the Ellevation data platform began.⁷² During the school year, students' English language proficiency scores and other test data were uploaded. In addition, trainings for ESL teachers were held in February, March, and August 2021. In the 2021-2022 school year, general education teachers and administrators will have access to Ellevation and will be able to collaborate with ESL teachers regarding various EL student data, including student test scores and accommodations.

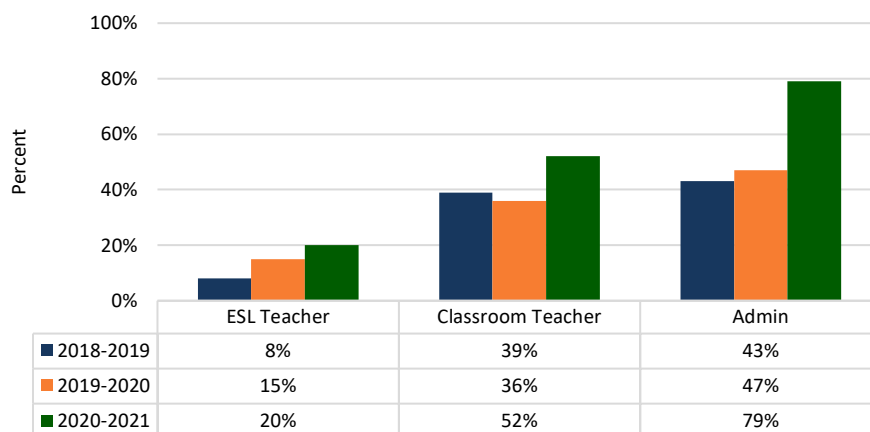
When asked about ESL and content-area/classroom teachers collaborating with each other to meet the needs of EL students, agreement percentages of ESL teachers (46%), classroom teachers (54%), and administrators (86%) increased in 2020-2021, although agreement remained relatively low for ESL teachers and classroom teachers (see Figure 3). Results for 2020-2021 by school level showed that a lower percentage of high school ESL teachers (25%) and classroom teachers (44%) agreed compared to elementary school and middle school ESL teachers (48% to 67%) and classroom teachers (56% to 58%).

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, 20 percent of ESL teachers and 52 percent of classroom teachers agreed, while 79 percent of administrators agreed. In comparison to results from 2019-2020, the percentages of ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators who agreed with this item increased in 2020-2021, although it remained very low for ESL teachers (see Figure 4). Results for 2020-2021 by school level showed that a *higher* percentage of high school ESL teachers agreed (25%) compared to elementary school (19%) and middle school ESL teachers (17%), while a *lower* percentage of high school classroom teachers agreed (46%) compared to elementary school (53%) and middle school (55%) classroom teachers.

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



When asked about having time to collaborate and/or co-plan with classroom teachers, 23 percent of ESL teachers agreed that there was enough time for ESL teachers to collaborate and/or co-plan with classroom teachers and 20 percent agreed that ESL teachers were able to co-plan with classroom teachers frequently enough for instruction to be effective. From 38 to 39 percent of classroom teachers agreed with these items and 48 percent of administrators agreed that there was enough time for collaboration and/or co-planning (see Table 38). While there were increases in agreement percentages for all groups for these items in comparison to 2019-2020, the agreement percentages remained low.

Table 38: Staff Agreement Regarding Time for Collaboration and Co-Planning

Item	2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
There is enough time for ESL teachers to collaborate and/or co-plan with classroom teachers.	0%	17%	19%	23%	39%	48%
ESL teachers are able to co-plan with classroom teachers frequently enough for instruction to be effective.	0%	21%	N/A	20%	38%	N/A

Note: Staff were not provided these survey items in 2018-2019.

The ESL teachers were also surveyed about the information they communicated to 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. Nearly all ESL teachers (97%) indicated they provided communication to classroom teachers about EL students' English performance/proficiency levels in 2020-2021 and that they provided information about the instructional services they provided, whereas 69 percent indicated they provided communication about assessment practices and 66 percent of ESL teachers indicated they provided communication about screening practices. There were increases from 2019-2020 in the percentages of ESL teachers who indicated they provided communication about instructional services (from 81% to 97%) as well as assessment practices (from 62% to 68%) and screening practices (from 62% to 69%).

Approximately 61 percent of classroom teachers who taught at least one EL student indicated they received information about their EL students' English performance/proficiency levels, while half (52%) indicated they knew where to find this information. Overall, half of classroom teachers or fewer indicated they received communication about or knew where to find information about instructional services provided, screening, or

assessment practices (see Table 39). Overall, 27 percent of classroom teachers indicated they did not receive any of this information and 41 percent indicated they did not know where to find any of the information. In comparison to 2019-2020, there were increases in the percentages of classroom teachers who indicated they received information about or knew where to find information about all of these areas (see Table 39).

Table 39: Percentages of Classroom Teachers Who Indicated They Received Information About and Knew Where to Find EL-Related Information

Item	2019-2020		2020-2021	
	Receive information about	Know where to find information about	Receive information about	Know where to find information about
EL students' English performance/proficiency levels	56%	41%	61%	52%
Instructional services provided to EL students	40%	29%	50%	40%
Screening practices	24%	16%	29%	24%
Assessment practices	27%	17%	28%	25%
None of the above	34%	55%	27%	41%

Note: Staff were not provided this survey item in 2018-2019.

Through an open-ended survey item, ESL teachers and classroom teachers were also provided the opportunity to provide comments about what worked well and challenges encountered related to communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers during the pandemic. Many ESL teachers and classroom teachers commented that there was not enough time to communicate and/or plan, especially because the ESL teachers work with multiple schools and teachers. While some ESL teachers commented that virtual instruction made collaborating more difficult due to the inability to see teachers in person, other teachers commented that they were able to collaborate more with classroom teachers this year due to planning time on Mondays. Some classroom teachers commented that there was little communication between them and the ESL teacher over the school year.

EL Student and Family Communication and Engagement

According to the Office for Civil Rights in the USED, divisions must provide information to parents in a language they can understand, including information related to registration and enrollment, report cards, and parent handbooks. 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, 57 percent of parents indicated they did not, while 19 percent indicated they needed an interpreter or translator all or most of the time and 25 percent indicated they needed assistance to communicate some of the time. These percentages were consistent with findings from 2019-2020. 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 due to division level communications being provided in English only at that time and any non-English communications being at the discretion of individual schools.

Beginning in spring 2020, translation and interpretation services were offered to VBCPS staff to use for communication with parents.⁷³ The translation services included translating 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, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Traditional Chinese, Turkish, 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. In addition, according to the ESL coordinator, the Talking Point phone application was used by ESL teachers during the 2020-2021 school year. The application allowed teachers to send text messages to parents that were translated into their home language.

Voiance translation and interpretation usage data were obtained for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Overall, there were 22 projects that involved translating documents, which had a total cost of \$13,628. Projects included translating documents with information about summer school, ACCESS testing, EL parent communications (e.g., notification regarding child being a presumptive EL student), and winter break meals. Voiance phone interpretation usage data showed that overall, 82 percent of schools across the division used Voiance for at least one phone call during the 2020-2021 school year. Comparisons by level showed that 84 percent of elementary schools, 80 percent of middle schools, and 77 percent of high schools used Voiance at least once. Of the schools that used Voiance, there was a minimum of one phone call at the elementary and middle school levels and six phone calls at the high school level. There were maximums of 197 phone calls at the elementary school level, 120 at the middle school level, and 71 at the high school level during 2020-2021. In addition, Voiance was used for phone calls by four central office departments, including Title I, K-12 and Gifted Programs, Student Leadership, and the Department of Technology service desk. From July 2020 through June 2021, the cost of Voiance for phone interpretation by schools and the four departments included \$14,597. In addition, Voiance was used for interpreting in 29 different languages during these phone calls.

ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators were asked their perceptions of the translation and interpretation services offered by VBCPS. Overall, nearly all ESL teachers (97%) and from 65 to 87 percent of classroom teachers and administrators indicated they had used the services (see Table 40). Of those who indicated they used translation and interpretation services, all ESL teachers, 75 percent of classroom teachers, and 98 percent of administrators agreed that the services to assist communication with EL students and their families were helpful resources. In comparison to 2019-2020, there were increases in the percentages of staff who used these services and agreement regarding finding the resources helpful for all staff groups (see Table 40).

Table 40: Staff Agreement Regarding Use and Helpfulness of Translation and Interpretation Services

Item	2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
Used translation and interpretation services.	58%	61%	77%	97%	65%	87%
Translation and interpretation services offered to assist communication with EL students and their families are helpful resources.	100%	69%	84%	100%	75%	98%

Note: Staff were not provided this survey item in 2018-2019.

When asked whether school staff can communicate with EL students and their families in a manner they can understand, from 84 to 85 percent of ESL and classroom teachers agreed (see Table 41). When asked about effectively communicating, 56 percent of ESL teachers and 82 percent of classroom teachers agreed that staff communicate effectively with EL students' family members, while from 87 to 88 percent agreed that staff communicate effectively with EL students. At least 90 percent of administrators agreed with these items. In

comparison to 2019-2020, there were increases in the agreement percentages for all items for all staff groups (see Table 41).

Table 41: Staff Agreement Regarding Staff Communicating With EL Students and Families in a Manner They Can Understand

Item	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	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).*	N/A	N/A	N/A	65%	68%	83%	85%	84%	97%
School staff communicate effectively with the family members of EL students.	54%	75%	85%	42%	66%	78%	56%	82%	90%
School staff communicate effectively with EL students.	80%	83%	91%	80%	76%	93%	88%	87%	97%

Note: *Staff were not provided this survey item in 2018-2019.

From the EL parents’ perspective, overall, 97 percent of parents of EL students who responded to the parent survey agreed that they could communicate with the staff at their child’s school when needed, which remained consistent with the percentage in 2019-2020. When students were surveyed, overall, 97 percent of EL students agreed that they can communicate with their ESL teachers and 95 percent agreed that they can communicate with their classroom teachers (see Table 42). In comparison to 2019-2020, the overall agreement percentages of EL students at each school level either increased or remained relatively consistent (see Table 42). There were notable increases at the high school level regarding communication with their ESL teacher (from 85% to 95%) and at the middle school and high school levels regarding communication with their classroom teacher (from 84% to 94% at middle school; from 81% to 93% at high school).

Table 42: Student Agreement Percentages Regarding Communicating With Teachers

Item	2019-2020				2020-2021			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
I can communicate with my ESL teacher.	98%	92%	85%	92%	97%	97%	95%	97%
I can communicate with my classroom teachers.	96%	84%	81%	88%	96%	94%	93%	95%

The goal related to EL parent support is **“The parents of EL students will be provided with supports and services to enable them to support and participate in their child’s education.”** Objectives for this goal focused on (1) notice of student progress, (2) division communication, and (3) division event, program, and resource involvement and satisfaction.

The notice of student progress objective for the EL parent support goal is **“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, 88 percent of parents

of EL students agreed their child’s school keeps them informed about their child’s progress in learning English, and 94 percent agreed their child’s school keeps them informed about their child’s academic progress in his/her courses (see Table 43). At least 80 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, 73 percent indicated they understood all or most of the time, while 24 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 relatively consistent across the school levels (from 74% to 76%). In comparison to 2019-2020, there was a decrease in the agreement percentages regarding being kept informed about their child’s progress in learning English for middle school (from 93% to 80%) and high school parents (from 97% to 88%). There were increases in the percentages of middle school (from 70% to 75%) and high school parents (from 61% to 74%) who indicated they were able to understand the information the school provided all or most of the time.

Table 43: EL Parent Agreement Regarding Being Informed About Child's Progress

Item	2019-2020				2020-2021			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
My child’s school keeps me informed about my child’s progress in learning English.	90%	93%	97%	92%	91%	80%	88%	88%
My child’s school keeps me informed about my child’s academic progress in his/her courses.	96%	93%	94%	95%	93%	95%	95%	94%
Yes, I am able to understand the information the school provides about my child’s progress all or most of the time.	74%	70%	61%	72%	76%	75%	74%	73%

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 44, at least 88 percent of classroom teachers and nearly all administrators (at least 98%) agreed that parents of EL students received timely notice of their child’s English language performance/progress and academic progress, while 76 percent of ESL teachers agreed regarding their English language performance/progress and 91 percent agreed regarding their academic progress. While 86 percent of classroom teachers and 96 percent of administrators agreed that parents received their child’s academic information in a manner they could understand, 44 percent of ESL teachers agreed. In comparison to results from previous years, there were increases in agreement percentages for classroom teachers and administrators for all items and for ESL teachers regarding receiving information in a manner they could understand, while agreement percentages regarding receiving timely notice of progress for ESL teachers have been more variable (see Table 44).

Table 44: Staff Agreement Regarding Parents Receiving Information About Child's Progress

Item Parents of EL students receive...	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
Timely notice of their child's English language performance/progress.	71%	82%	99%	92%	75%	93%	76%	88%	98%
Timely notice of their child's academic performance/progress.	92%	88%	97%	96%	82%	96%	91%	91%	99%
Information about their child's academic performance/progress in a manner they can understand.	29%	76%	77%	23%	70%	79%	44%	86%	96%

The division communication objective for the EL parent support goal is **“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 at least 93 percent agreeing at each school level (see Table 45). The overall agreement percentage remained consistent with results from 2019-2020.

Table 45: EL Parent Agreement Regarding Understanding Information From Division

Item	2019-2020				2020-2021			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
I can understand the information I receive from the school division.	97%	96%	97%	97%	98%	98%	93%	97%

The objective for the EL parent support goal focused on division event, program, and resource involvement and satisfaction is **“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 46, overall, 11 percent of parents of EL students indicated they attended an event or program in 2020-2021 with the highest reported attendance at middle school and the lowest at high school. This was a decrease from results in 2019-2020; however, this was likely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, 96 percent of parents of EL students were satisfied with events, programs, or resources provided by VBCPS, with at least 90 percent of parents indicating they were satisfied at each school level, which was consistent with or higher than the percentage at the division level (90%).

Table 46: Percentage of Parents Who Attended Events or Programs and Satisfaction

Item	2019-2020				2020-2021			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Attended any school division-sponsored family events or programs this year.	54%	47%	30%	49%	12%	19%	5%	11%
Satisfied with events, programs, or resources provided by VBCPS*	97%	94%	97%	96%	98%	90%	92%	96%

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

Another area addressed through the surveys was related to establishing a welcoming environment for EL students and their families. Although 97 percent of EL parents agreed that they felt welcome at their child’s school, lower percentages of ESL teachers (from 53% to 59%) agreed that school staff have established practices for welcoming and integrating EL students and their families into the school community (see Table 47). From 79 to 83 percent of classroom teachers and 90 to 96 percent of administrators agreed that there were practices for welcoming and integrating EL students and their families. Agreement percentages for all groups have increased somewhat since 2018-2019 (see Table 47).

Table 47: Staff Agreement Regarding Communication With EL Families

Item	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
School staff have established practices for welcoming and integrating EL students into the school community.	56%	75%	91%	54%	72%	91%	59%	83%	96%
School staff have established practices for welcoming and integrating the families of EL students into the school community.	46%	70%	81%	54%	67%	86%	53%	79%	90%

Through an open-ended survey item, ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators were also provided the opportunity to comment about what worked well and challenges encountered related to communicating with EL students and their families during the pandemic. Most ESL teachers and some administrators and classroom teachers commented about how helpful the translation and interpretation services were for communicating with parents of EL students. In addition, although ESL teachers identified these services as a major benefit, some expressed that other staff were not aware of these platforms and they should be utilized by other staff more frequently. A few ESL teachers noted that it was difficult to communicate with parents because many EL families do not have email addresses. Some classroom teachers and administrators also commented in general about the difficulty communicating with students and families when they were virtual due to not seeing them in person.

Characteristics of Students in ESL Program

The second 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 2020-2021 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 1,768 students were identified as having received ESL services during the 2020-2021 school year, which was an increase of 44 students from 2019-2020 when 1,724 received ESL services. Comparisons across school levels showed that 69 percent of EL students who received services were in elementary school, while 19 percent of students were in middle school and 13 percent of students were in high school (see Table 48). 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 2019-2020 and 2018-2019.

Table 48: 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	1,213	69%	4%	29,730
Middle	328	19%	2%	15,734
High	227	13%	1%	20,985
Total	1,768	100%	3%	66,449

Note: *VBCPS student information included all students enrolled at any point during 2020-2021 obtained from the data warehouse.

Demographic characteristics of EL students who received services during 2020-2021 are shown in Table 49. At each school level, the highest percentage of EL students who received services were Hispanic, followed by Asian at the elementary school and high school levels. Additionally, depending on level, from 40 to 47 percent of EL students were economically disadvantaged. Overall, two-thirds (66%) of EL students were attending school in person, while one-third (34%) of EL students were attending school virtually during 2020-2021. Compared to the division, there was a higher percentage of EL students who were economically disadvantaged (46% compared to 38%) and lower percentages of EL students who were identified as special education (7% compared to 11%) and gifted students (5% compared to 18%). Regarding instructional setting, in comparison to the division, a similar percentage of elementary school students were attending school in person (67% vs. 65%), while higher percentages of middle school and high school EL students were attending school in person compared to the division (66% vs. 53%; 61% vs. 46%).

Table 49: Demographic Characteristics of EL Students Who Received Services

Student Characteristic	ES	MS	HS	Total
Female	44%	45%	46%	44%
Male	56%	55%	54%	56%
African American	2%	2%	4%	3%
American Indian	< 1%	0%	0%	< 1%
Asian	27%	20%	26%	25%
Caucasian	17%	20%	7%	16%
Hispanic	50%	55%	63%	53%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	< 1%	0%	< 1%	< 1%
Two or More Races	3%	2%	< 1%	2%
Economically Disadvantaged	47%	40%	43%	46%
Special Education	8%	10%	3%	7%
Gifted	6%	2%	0%	5%
Military/Government Connected	21%	23%	7%	20%
In Person	67%	66%	61%	66%
Virtual	33%	34%	39%	34%

Note: Ten presumptive EL students are not included in demographic characteristics.

Special Categories

Opt-Out Students

As previously mentioned, another category of EL students consisted of students who were eligible for ESL services but whose parents opted them out. There was a total of 157 students who opted out of receiving services during 2020-2021, which is relatively similar to the number from 2019-2020 when 162 students' parents opted them out of receiving services. Consistent with 2019-2020 and 2018-2019, most students whose parents opted them out of receiving services were at the high school level in 2020-2021. As shown in Table 50, 32 percent of all eligible students at the high school level opted out of receiving services, whereas the percentages were 3 percent at the elementary school level and 4 percent at the middle school level. At the high school level, there was a slight decrease in the percentage of eligible EL students who were opted out of services in comparison to 39 percent in 2019-2020. A potential reason for a parent to opt their child out of services, particularly at the high school level, may be related to parents wanting their children to accrue course credits in academic classes essential for high school graduation that could not be accrued while taking the ESL-related courses due to some ESL courses counting as electives.⁷⁴

Table 50: 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	35	3%	1,248
Middle	13	4%	341
High	109	32%	336
Total	157	8%	1,925

Former EL Students and Students in Monitoring

Another category of EL students included former EL students who were 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 726 students, which was an increase from 666 students in

2019-2020 (see Table 51). Approximately 64 percent of these students were being monitored (i.e., one to two years since attaining English proficiency) and 36 percent 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. In comparison to 2019-2020, there was an increase in the percentage of former EL students who were being monitored (from 53% to 64%).

Table 51: Numbers and Percentages of Former EL Students

School Level	Number of Monitored 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	236	32	268	1%	29,730
Middle	162	146	308	2%	15,734
High	68	82	150	1%	20,985
Total	466	260	726	1%	66,449

Demographics for these categories of EL students are shown in Appendix B. Findings showed that higher percentages of former students were gifted and Asian compared to current EL students, while there was a lower percentage of former students who were Hispanic. There was a higher percentage of opt out students who were identified as special education students compared to current EL students.

Students With Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

A final category of students included students whose experiences before entering a Virginia Beach school had a potential impact on their English learning experience. 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, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021. Overall, there were 19 students who were identified as being SLIFE during the 2018-2019 school year, 25 students identified during 2019-2020, and 9 students identified during 2020-2021. Across the three years, a total of 53 students were identified as SLIFE (33 in high school, 14 in elementary school, and 6 in middle school). There were 38 students who had been identified as SLIFE at any point enrolled during the 2020-2021 school year. Of these 38 students, the majority (95%) were receiving services during the 2020-2021 school year.

Progress Toward Meeting Outcome Goals and Objectives

The third evaluation question focused on progress made toward meeting the program’s outcome goals and objectives. 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.

Goal 1: 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 1 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, 75 percent of EL students agreed that they participated in class by sharing their thoughts and 82 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 by participating in class was at the elementary school and high school levels (79%), while highest agreement regarding demonstrating confidence by collaborating with other students was at the elementary school level (88%).

The agreement percentages of EL students overall were similar to those at the division-level with 77 percent of all students agreeing that they participated in class by sharing their thoughts and 83 percent of all students agreeing that they collaborate with other students during group work.

In comparison to 2019-2020, there was a slight increase in the percentage of EL students who agreed that they participated in class (from 72% to 75%), while there was a decrease in the percentage of EL students who agreed that they collaborated with other students during group work (from 88% to 82%), which could have been related to instructional adjustments due to the COVID-19 pandemic (see Table 52).

Table 52: EL Student Agreement Regarding Demonstrating Confidence

Item	2019-2020				2020-2021			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
EL students demonstrate confidence by participating in class.	85%	55%	70%	72%	79%	68%	79%	75%
EL students demonstrate confidence by collaborating with other students during group work.	93%	82%	88%	88%	88%	78%	77%	82%

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 78 to 89 percent of ESL teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators agreed that EL students demonstrated confidence by participating in class and from 74 to 92 percent agreed that EL students demonstrated confidence by collaborating during group work (see Table 53). Overall, comparisons by school level showed that highest agreement percentages for all staff groups were at the elementary school level (from 85% to 100%) compared to the middle school (from 67% to 84%) and high school levels (from 29% to 82%).

Table 53: Staff Agreement Percentages Regarding Students Demonstrating Confidence in Class

Item	2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
EL students demonstrate confidence by participating in class.	72%	69%	85%	88%	78%	89%
EL students demonstrate confidence by collaborating with other students during group work.	77%	75%	87%	74%	77%	92%

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, 20 percent of EL students indicated they participated in extracurricular activities, clubs, or athletics through their school in 2020-2021. There was little variation by school level with percentages ranging from 18 percent at high school to 20 percent at elementary school and middle school. A lower percentage of EL students agreed that they participated in comparison to the students in the division (34%). In comparison to 2019-2020, there was a decrease in the percentages of students who indicated they participated (from 43% to 20%), which was likely due to impacts of the pandemic.

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 (i.e., attended more than 90 percent of the school year) 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 2020-2021 (n = 1,765). During 2020-2021, 80 percent of EL students had an attendance rate of over 90 percent of the school year, which was lower than the percentage of all VBCPS students who had an attendance rate over 90 percent of the school year (88%). The percentage of EL students who had fewer than six unexcused absences was 66 percent, which was lower than the percentage at the division level (77%). In comparison to previous years' data, there were decreases in the percentages of EL students who had an attendance rate over 90 percent and who had fewer than six unexcused absences (see Table 54).

Table 54: Percentages of Students With Attendance Rate over 90 Percent and Fewer than 6 Unexcused Absences

Attendance Measure	2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021	
	EL Students	Division	EL Students	Division	EL Students	Division
Attendance Rate over 90%	87%	90%	85%	89%	80%	88%
Fewer than 6 Unexcused Absences	84%	85%	89%	90%	66%	77%

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, 87 percent of EL students agreed they had positive relationships with other students, 94 percent agreed they had positive relationships with teachers, and 85 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 90% to 97%) (see Table 55). Similar percentages of students at the division level agreed with these items (peers: 88%; teachers: 94%; administrators: 85%). Agreement percentages regarding having positive relationships with teachers and administrators increased in comparison to 2019-2020, while agreement regarding positive relationships with peers remained the same (see Table 55).

Table 55: EL Student Agreement Regarding Positive Relationships

Item	2019-2020				2020-2021			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Positive relationships with peers	91%	86%	86%	88%	92%	84%	84%	87%
Positive relationships with teachers	93%	78%	81%	85%	97%	94%	90%	94%
Positive relationships with administrators	86%	69%	70%	76%	90%	85%	75%	85%

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, 89 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 (91%), followed by middle school (88%) and then high school EL students (84%). EL students' agreement was higher than the percentage of students divisionwide who agreed that they felt a sense of belonging at their school (81%). There was also an increase in the percentage of EL students who agreed with this item in comparison to 2019-2020 when 83 percent of EL students agreed.

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, 96 percent of EL students agreed that their school is a welcoming place to learn (see Table 56). EL students' agreement was slightly higher than the division percentage of 93 percent of students who agreed that their school provides a welcoming place for them to learn. In comparison to 2019-2020, there were increases in EL student agreement percentages at the secondary levels (see Table 56). Overall, 98 percent of parents of EL students agreed that their child's school provided a welcoming place to learn, which was similar to the percentage of parents divisionwide (96%). In addition, the overall parent agreement percentage remained consistent in comparison to 2019-2020.

Table 56: EL Student and Parent Agreement Regarding School Providing a Welcoming Place to Learn

Item	2019-2020				2020-2021			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Student - School is a welcoming place to learn.	96%	87%	89%	92%	96%	95%	96%	96%
Parent – My child's school provides a welcoming place to learn.	98%	96%	97%	98%	99%	95%	93%	98%

Goal 2: EL students will attain English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Goal 2 focused on the progress of EL students in attaining English proficiency, including EL student progress on the ACCESS, reaching proficiency within five years, and high school graduation rates.

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, 89 percent rated their progress as either excellent or good, while 11 percent rated their progress as either fair or poor. In addition, 84

percent of parents rated their child’s progress learning English as being either excellent or good, while 16 percent rated their progress as either fair or poor. These percentages were consistent with percentages from the 2019-2020 school year.

As part of Goal 2, 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 57).⁷⁵ Within the plan, VDOE provided targets for the percentages of EL students who should meet the required proficiency level gains by school year (see Appendix C).⁷⁶

Table 57: 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

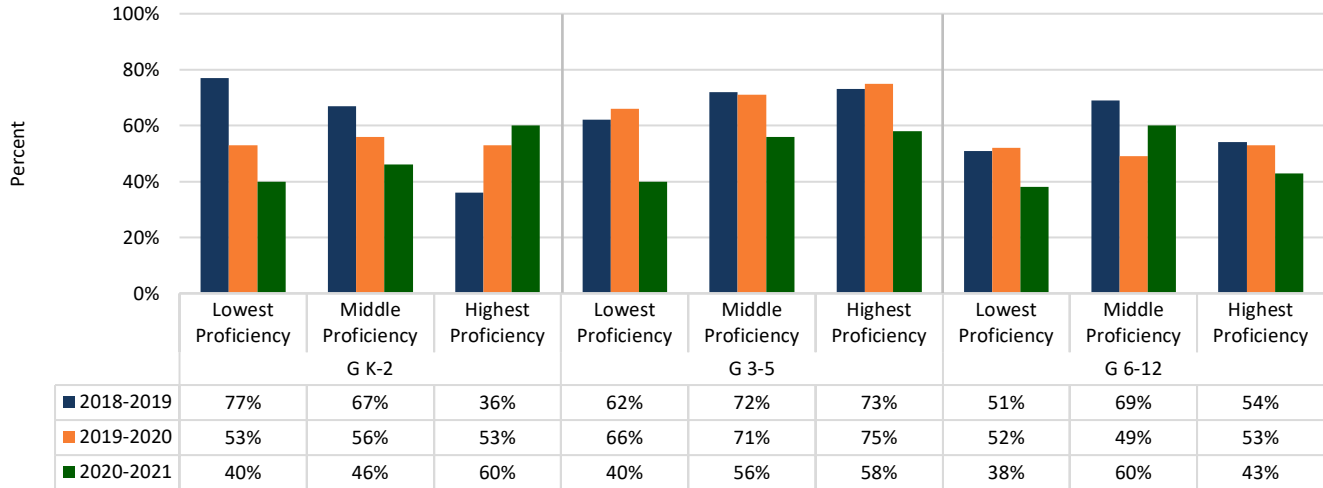
The EL students who received services and had an ACCESS score from both 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 were included in this analysis (n = 966). Overall, 50 percent of EL students who received services met the required proficiency level gains in 2020-2021 across all grade levels and proficiency levels. This nearly met the target set by VDOE for the 2020-2021 school year, which was 52 percent. The percentage of students who demonstrated the required proficiency level gains on the ACCESS test by grade level and prior proficiency level are shown in Table 58. In grades K-2 and 3-5 at the highest proficiency level and grades 3-5 and 6-12 at the middle proficiency level, from 56 to 60 percent of students showed the required improvement. From 38 to 46 percent of students in the other grades and other proficiency levels showed improvement (see Table 58).

Table 58: Numbers and Percentages of Students Demonstrating Required Proficiency Level Gains in 2020-2021

Proficiency Level (ACCESS Score) in 2019-2020	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	134	40%	55	40%	104	38%
2.5 – 3.4	108	46%	115	56%	89	60%
3.5 – 4.4	52	60%	212	58%	97	43%

There were decreases in the percentages of all students who met the required proficiency level gains across grade levels and proficiency levels in comparison to 2019-2020 (60%) and 2018-2019 (66%). Results by grade and proficiency level group showed an increase in the percentage of students in grades K-2 at the highest proficiency level who showed improvement (from 36% in 2018-2019 and 53% in 2019-2020 to 60% in 2020-2021). There was also an increase in the percentage of students in grades 6-12 at the middle proficiency level in comparison to 2019-2020 (from 49% to 60%). There were decreases in the percentages of students in the other grade and proficiency levels who showed gains in comparison to 2019-2020 and 2018-2019, especially students who were in the lowest proficiency level groups (see Figure 5). The decreases were likely due to the impact of the pandemic resulting in remote instruction as well as potentially being impacted by the testing method during 2020-2021. Reflective of the challenges experienced during the pandemic, the USED waived the ESSA accountability of meeting the targets set by VDOE.⁷⁷ A comparison of student growth by instructional setting showed that 51 percent of EL students who received instruction in person in 2020-2021 showed the required gains, while 46 percent of EL students who received instruction virtually in 2020-2021 showed the required gains.

Figure 5: Percentages of Students Demonstrating Required Proficiency Level Gains on ACCESS



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.

The percentage of students considered to be long-term EL students as calculated by VDOE was examined.⁷⁸ Long-term EL students are defined as those students receiving services for at least five years. In 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, 3 percent of EL students were considered to be long-term EL students, which was notably lower than the state level for both years (12% and 13%) (see Table 59). Although anticipated in January 2022, the percentage for 2020-2021 was not available from the VDOE as of the time this report was finalized. The percentage was not calculated by VDOE for the 2019-2020 school year.

Table 59: Percentages of EL Students Considered to Be Long-Term EL Students

Student Group	2017-2018	2018-2019	2020-2021
VBCPS	3%	3%	Not available as of Feb 7
Virginia	12%	13%	Not available as of Feb 7

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 2020-2021 through the VDOE report, approximately 91 percent graduated on time, which was lower than the division percentage (95%). These results were consistent with findings from the previous two years. Of the students who were identified as EL at any time during high school, 92 percent graduated on time, which is an increase in comparison to 2019-2020 and 2018-2019 (see Table 60).

Table 60: VDOE On-Time Graduation Rates

Student Group	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
EL Student in Current Year	90%	90%	91%
EL Student Anytime in HS	85%	87%	92%
Division	94%	94%	95%

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. While 72 percent of classroom teachers and 83 percent of administrators indicated that EL students received all the services they needed, 39 percent of ESL teachers responded yes to this statement (see Table 61). Higher percentages of staff indicated that EL students received services for as long as they needed with from 76 to 95 percent of staff agreeing. In comparison to 2019-2020, percentages of all staff groups indicating yes increased regarding EL students receiving services for as long as they needed. In addition, percentages of classroom teachers and administrators who indicated EL students received all the services they needed increased; however, the percentages of ESL teachers who responded yes to this item has remained the same since 2018-2019. Results by school level showed that lower percentages of high school ESL teachers (17%), classroom teachers (65%), and administrators (78%) agreed that students received all the services they needed compared to elementary school and middle school ESL teachers (from 33% to 48%), classroom teachers (74%) and administrators (from 82% to 88%).

Table 61: Staff Perceptions Regarding EL Students Receiving Services

Item	2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021		
	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin	ESL Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Admin
EL students receive all needed services.	39%	64%	67%	39%	50%	63%	39%	72%	83%
EL students receive services for as long as needed.	74%	87%	87%	65%	72%	89%	76%	84%	95%

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 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.

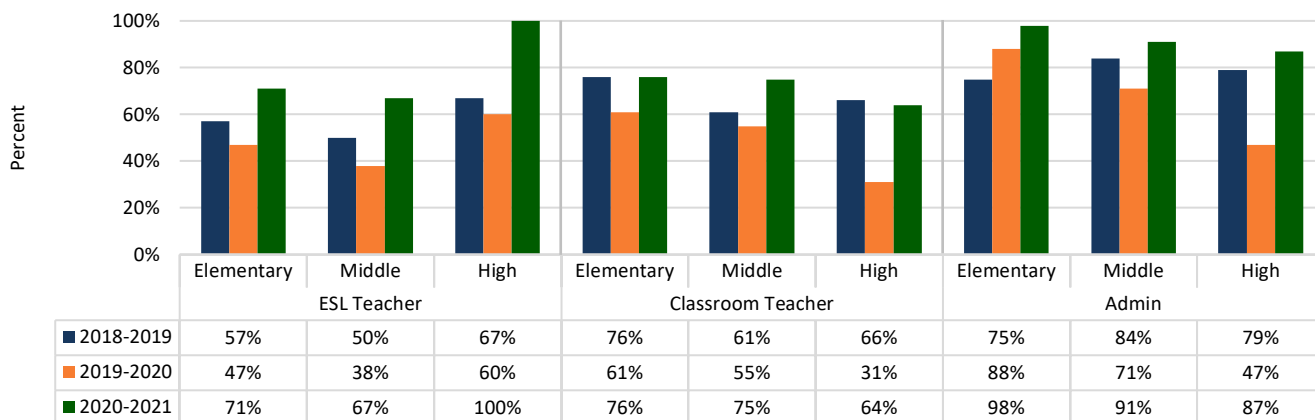
When EL students and parents of EL students were asked a survey item about general program effectiveness, overall, 93 percent of students agreed that they received the help they needed to understand information presented in class, and 94 percent of parents of EL students agreed that their child received the help he/she needed to understand information presented in class. At least 86 percent of students and parents at each school level agreed with these items (see Table 62). In comparison to 2019-2020, student agreement percentages at all levels increased, while parent agreement percentages remained relatively consistent for elementary school and high school parents, but decreased for middle school parents (from 91% to 86%).

Table 62: Student and Parent Agreement Percentages Regarding Student Receiving Needed Help

Item	2019-2020				2020-2021			
	ES	MS	HS	Total	ES	MS	HS	Total
Student - I receive the help I need to understand information presented in class.	90%	76%	87%	85%	94%	93%	93%	93%
Parent - My child receives the help he/she needs to understand information presented in class.	96%	91%	97%	94%	96%	86%	95%	94%

Staff, students, and parents were also asked to indicate their overall level of satisfaction with the ESL program. Overall, 75 percent of ESL teachers, 73 percent of classroom teachers, and 94 percent of administrators were satisfied with the program (see Figure 6). Compared to 2019-2020, there were large increases in staff satisfaction for all levels and all staff groups (increases of 10 to 40 percentage points). Most notably, satisfaction increased by 40 percentage points for high school ESL teachers and administrators and by 33 percentage points for high school classroom teachers.

Figure 6: Staff Satisfaction



Overall, 96 percent of students and 89 percent of parents of EL students indicated they were satisfied with the ESL program. Examination by school level showed that at least 94 percent of students and 80 percent of parents at each school level were satisfied with the program (see Table 63).

Table 63: Student and Parent Satisfaction

School Level	2019-2020		2020-2021	
	Student	Parent	Student	Parent
Elementary	94%	94%	96%	91%
Middle	94%	84%	94%	80%
High	93%	94%	97%	88%
Total	94%	91%	96%	89%

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, a major theme of the program’s strength focused on characteristics of the ESL teachers, including their dedication, support they provide to students, and their knowledge. In addition, the ESL teachers

identified support from central office and the collaboration amongst the ESL staff during 2020-2021 as strengths. Some ESL teachers noted that the additional instructional resources and the new ESL staffing positions were strengths.

Regarding areas for improvements, across staff groups, a frequently identified area for improvement included the need for more ESL teachers and providing professional learning, particularly for classroom teachers. Some ESL teachers also identified the need for more efficient clustering of students in classrooms, including at the high school level. Administrators and classroom teachers commented on the need for more time for planning and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers. 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. Some students commented that they felt that they needed more help or more time working on ESL. 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 better communication regarding the program and their child's progress.

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).

Overall, 44 full-time ESL teachers provided services to 1,768 EL students in kindergarten through grade 12 and monitored an additional 726 former EL students (i.e., having received services within the past four years) as well as 157 students whose parents opted them out of EL services. At the high school level, 32 percent of eligible EL students opted out of receiving services. In comparison to 2019-2020, there was an increase of 12 ESL teacher allocations. Examination of ESL teacher caseload reports showed that in June 2021, the average caseload for one ESL teacher was 38 students, while ESL teachers' caseloads ranged from 3 to 62 students. In comparison to the previous two years, the average caseload and range of caseloads have decreased, while the total number of students receiving services have increased. When ESL teachers were surveyed about their caseloads and time, 51 percent agreed that the size of their caseload allowed them to teach EL students effectively and 46 percent agreed that they were able to teach EL students frequently enough for instruction to be effective. In comparison to 2019-2020 survey data, the agreement percentages increased notably for both survey items (from 12% to 51% regarding caseloads allowing effective teaching; from 19% to 46% regarding frequency of instruction).

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, EL students should be clustered within classrooms by grade level. One recommendation from the year-two evaluation was to ensure EL students are clustered in classrooms at the elementary school and middle school levels, although scheduling and clustering options were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the virtual learning option. In 2020-2021, 43 percent of elementary school ESL teachers and 17 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 school and middle school levels. During virtual instruction in 2020-2021, ESL teachers set up small group times with their EL students through virtual meetings. When ESL teachers were asked about the effectiveness of instructional methods, all elementary school and middle school ESL teachers indicated the pull-out model was either very or somewhat effective, while 79 percent of elementary school and 50 percent of middle school ESL teachers indicated the push-in model was very or somewhat effective. At the high school level, students received services through ESL courses in 2020-2021. Two ESL teachers taught all virtual high school students throughout the division, while in-person students were taught by the ESL teachers at their home school. When surveyed about the effectiveness of the high school level, 88 percent of high school ESL teachers indicated it was very or somewhat effective. Another recommendation from the year-two evaluation was to continue to expand appropriate EL instructional materials for ESL teachers and classroom teachers. In 2020-2021, 79 percent of ESL teachers and 69 percent of classroom teachers agreed that the available materials were appropriate for the EL students they taught. In comparison to 2019-2020, agreement percentages about instructional materials being appropriate increased notably for both groups (from 31% to 79% for ESL teachers; 56% to 69% for classroom teachers).

ESL program goals focused on the program’s opportunities for students, professional learning for ESL teachers and classroom teachers, staff collaboration, and parent involvement. Two related recommendations from the year-two evaluation focused on classroom teacher professional learning and staff collaboration and communication.

Data were examined for opportunities provided to students, 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 (65% vs. 64%), enrolled in TCE in high school (1% vs. 3%), earned an industry certification in high school (33% vs. 31%), and graduated in 2020-2021 with completion of a CTE program (43% vs. 41%). There were somewhat lower percentages of former EL high school students enrolled in an academy compared to the division (12% vs. 15%) and enrolled at ATC (1% vs. 3%).

Regarding professional learning, 91 percent of ESL teachers who participated in professional learning on instructional effectiveness agreed that it was effective, and 83 percent agreed that professional learning enabled them to meet the needs of their EL students. The percentage of ESL teachers who agreed that professional learning on instructional effectiveness was effective remained relatively consistent (from 89% to 91%) in comparison to 2019-2020, while the percentage who agreed that professional learning enabled them to meet their EL students’ needs increased (from 77% to 83%). In addition, although steps were taken to provide professional learning for classroom teachers, in 2020-2021, low percentages of classroom teachers indicated they participated in professional learning to increase their understanding of (33%) or capacity to teach EL students (34%). However, 76 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 2020-2021, 46 percent of ESL teachers and 54 percent of classroom teachers agreed the ESL teachers and content-area/classroom teachers collaborate to meet the needs of EL students.

Regarding parent involvement, high percentages of parents agreed that their child’s school kept them informed about their child’s progress in English (88%) and academic progress (94%) as well as that they understood the information they received from the school division (98%). Since 2019-2020, translation and interpretation services have been offered for staff to use when communicating with families. Analyses of Voiance phone interpretation usage data showed that 82 percent of schools throughout the division used Voiance for at least one phone call during the 2020-2021 school year for interpretation in 29 different languages. In addition, when surveyed about their perceptions of the translation and interpretation services

offered by VBCPS, nearly all ESL teachers (97%) and from 65 to 87 percent of classroom teachers and administrators indicated they had used the services. Of those who indicated they used translation and interpretation services, all ESL teachers, 75 percent of classroom teachers, and 84 percent of administrators agreed that the services to assist communication with EL students and their families were helpful resources.

Two ESL program outcome goals focused on students' social and emotional development and students' attainment of English proficiency. Data related to the social-emotional goal showed relatively high percentages of EL students agreed that they demonstrated confidence by participating in class (75%) or working in a group (82%); had positive relationships with peers (87%), teachers (94%), and administrators (85%); had a sense of belonging to their school (89%); and that their school is a welcoming place to learn (96%). Examining students' progression in the English language showed that, in comparison to 2019-2020 and 2018-2019, there was a decrease in the overall percentage of EL students who met the required proficiency level gains as defined by VDOE (from 66% in 2018-2019 and 60% in 2019-2020 to 50% in 2020-2021). The decreases were likely due to the impact of the pandemic resulting in remote instruction as well as potentially being impacted by the testing method during 2020-2021. In addition, a low percentage of ESL teachers (39%) indicated that the EL students received all needed services, which could contribute to the percentages of students meeting the required gains.

Overall, high percentages of EL students (96%) and parents of EL students (89%) indicated they were satisfied with the ESL program. In addition, 75 percent of ESL teachers, 73 percent of classroom teachers, and 94 percent of administrators indicated they were satisfied with the program. In comparison to 2019-2020, there were notable increases in staff satisfaction for all levels and all staff groups.

Recommendations and Rationale

Recommendation #1: Continue the ESL program with modifications noted in recommendations 2 and 3. (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 federally required, 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-two evaluation focused on clustering EL students in classrooms at the elementary school and middle school levels, communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers, and professional learning for classroom teachers of EL students. (Responsible Group: Department of Teaching and Learning)

Rationale: Recognizing that the school division continues to experience the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, evaluation recommendations may take multiple years to address. Therefore, the second recommendation is to continue working on specific areas within recommendations from the year-two evaluation based on data from the current evaluation. One recommendation from the year-two evaluation included ensuring EL students are clustered in classrooms at the elementary school and middle school levels. Overall, 43 percent of elementary school ESL teachers and 17 percent of middle school ESL teachers agreed that EL students were effectively clustered within teachers' classrooms at each grade level. Clustering EL students helps to reduce the number of 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 2020-2021, 20 percent of ESL teachers and 52 percent of classroom teachers agreed that ESL teachers effectively collaborate and plan with content-area/classroom teachers to teach lessons. Another recommendation from the year-two evaluation included continuing to work on communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers and professional learning for classroom teachers of EL students. Regarding communication and collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers, 46 percent of ESL teachers and 54 percent of classroom teachers agreed ESL teachers and content-area/classroom teachers collaborated with each other to meet the needs of EL students. In addition, from 40 to 61 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. Additional collaboration between ESL and classroom teachers could provide opportunities for EL students to receive more targeted assistance and support to enable students to meet standards for proficiency gains. Regarding professional learning, 36 percent of classroom teachers indicated they participated in EL-related professional learning, which was a decrease from 43 percent in 2019-2020. Increasing the percentage of classroom teachers who participate in ESL professional learning could support students in providing them with needed strategies and services to meet standards for proficiency gains.

Recommendation #3: Conduct an evaluation update during 2021-2022 focused on progress of EL student English language development, academic performance of former EL students compared to non-EL peers, and progress related to the comprehensive evaluation recommendations. (Responsible Group: Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability – Office of Research and Evaluation)

Rationale: The final recommendation is to conduct an evaluation update during 2021-2022 focused on progress of EL student English language development, academic performance of former EL students compared to non-EL peers, and progress related to the comprehensive evaluation recommendations. Overall, half of EL students (50%) who received services during 2020-2021 showed the required proficiency level gains as established by VDOE. In comparison to results from 2019-2020 and 2018-2019, there was a decrease in the percentage of all students who met the required proficiency level gains across grade levels and proficiency levels in comparison to 2019-2020 (60%) and 2018-2019 (66%). The decrease was likely due to the impact of the pandemic resulting in remote instruction as well as potentially being impacted by the testing method during 2020-2021. In addition, the division nearly met the VDOE established target for 2020-2021 for ESSA accountability, which was set at 52 percent. Reflective of the challenges experienced during the pandemic, the USED waived the ESSA accountability of meeting the targets set by VDOE.⁷⁹ It is recommended to continue to monitor the progress of EL students' English language development during the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, in the ESL evaluation readiness plan, a proposed evaluation question focused on how former EL students performed academically when compared with their non-EL peers, which will be addressed during 2021-2022. In addition, the evaluation update will monitor the progress related to the recommendation areas, including clustering EL students in classrooms at the elementary school and middle school levels, communication and collaboration between ESL teachers, and professional learning for classroom teachers of EL students. Progress toward the recommendations will be evaluated through ESL teacher and classroom teacher perceptions.

Appendices

Appendix A: Webinars Offered to ESL Teachers During 2020-2021

- *Distance Learning for Multilingual Learners*
- *Ellevation-Lessons on Remote Learning*
- *Ellevation-Online Instruction Tips for Els*
- *SupportEd (Multiple webinars) –*
 - *Supporting Els in 2020-21: Looking Back and Looking Ahead*
 - *Practical Strategies & Resources for EL Distance Learning*
 - *Making Text Accessible for Els*
 - *The Best Collaborative and Instructional Strategies for Supporting Our Els*
 - *How Teachers Can Advocate for Els*
 - *The Five Pillars of Equitably Grading Els*
 - *Effectively Supporting Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) in your Schools*
 - *Embedding Academic Language for English Learners*

Appendix B: Demographics for Categories of EL Students

Characteristic	Current EL Students Receiving Services	Opt-Outs Total	Monitored 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%	43%	50%	47%	49%	49%
Male	56%	57%	50%	53%	51%	51%
African American	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%	23%
American Indian/Alaska Native	< 1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	< 1%
Asian	25%	27%	32%	50%	38%	6%
Caucasian	16%	20%	26%	13%	21%	46%
Hispanic	53%	46%	35%	31%	33%	13%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	< 1%	1%	1%	0%	< 1%	< 1%
Two or More Races	2%	1%	4%	3%	4%	10%
Economically Disadvantaged	46%	43%	46%	55%	49%	38%
Special Education	7%	15%	2%	3%	3%	11%
Gifted	5%	3%	18%	20%	18%	18%
Military/Government Connected	20%	24%	28%	10%	22%	21%
In Person	66%	52%	53%	38%	48%	56%
Virtual	34%	48%	47%	62%	52%	44%

Appendix C: English Learner Progress Targets Accountability Years 2018-2019 through 2024-2025

Category	Baseline	Year 1 Targets	Year 2 Targets	Year 3 Targets	Year 4 Targets – Current Year	Year 5 Targets	Year 6 Targets	Year 7 Targets – Long Term Goal
Assessment Year	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Accountability Year	-	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
English Learner Progress Target	44	46	48	50	52	54	56	58

Endnotes

- ¹ English as a Second Language Virginia Beach City Public Schools SharePoint 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 <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 Nineteen envelopes were returned due to not being deliverable as addressed.
- ¹⁷ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/title3/index.shtml
- ¹⁸ Three students who were included in the EOY SRC count for EL students receiving services were not included in this evaluation report due to not being included in the data from the data warehouse.
- ¹⁹ Four of these 27 students were identified in the Fall SRC as presumptive EL students.
- ²⁰ 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.
- ²¹ Data available from the VBCPS data warehouse showed that two of these six students were determined to not be eligible for services upon screening.
- 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 VBCPS Home Language Survey.
- ²⁴ K-WAPT Scoring. August 31, 2018. Information distributed to ESL teachers via VBCPS 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 Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, November 16, 2021.
- ²⁸ Source: Continued Restructuring of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Model. Memorandum, November 15, 2019.
- ²⁹ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, November 16, 2021.
- ³⁰ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2017/194-17.shtml
- ³¹ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, August 19, 2020.
- ³² Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, December 10, 2020.

-
- ³³ <https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/kwapt>
- ³⁴ English Learner Team Handbook for Elementary Schools (August 16, 2018).
- ³⁵ The full descriptions of the WIDA proficiency levels were obtained from <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/early>.
- ³⁶ <https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/can-do/descriptors>
- ³⁷ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, November 16, 2021.
- ³⁸ English Learner Team Handbook for Elementary and Secondary Schools. August 2020.
- ³⁹ English Learner Team Handbook for Elementary and Secondary Schools. August 2020.
- ⁴⁰ <https://wida.wisc.edu/memberships/consortium/va>
- ⁴¹ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, November 16, 2021.
- ⁴² Twenty-two students who had a reason for not completing the ACCESS had an ACCESS score from the data warehouse. Therefore, their refusal reason data were not included.
- ⁴³ Source: D. Bradshaw, personal communication, December 8, 2021.
- ⁴⁴ http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2017/168-17.shtml and English Learner Team Handbook for Elementary Schools (August 16, 2018).
- ⁴⁵ Twelve students who completed the ACCESS had a score that suggested a data entry error (i.e., their score included a letter) or their score was unavailable. These students were not included in the analyses provided here.
- ⁴⁶ <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/chap8.pdf>
- ⁴⁷ <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-factsheet-el-students-201501.pdf>
- ⁴⁸ 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.
- ⁴⁹ R. Collier, Communication to ESL teachers, October 16, 2018.
- ⁵⁰ 2021-2022 Scheduling Considerations for English Learners (EL). April 29, 2021. Principals' Packet Memo. Middle School Principals.
- ⁵¹ 2020-2021 Elementary Grade Level Clustering of English Learners (ELs). VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. April 30, 2020. 2020-2021 Middle Grade Level Clustering of English Learners (ELs). VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. April 30, 2020.
- ⁵² 2020-2021 Elementary Grade Level Clustering of English Learners (ELs). VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. April 30, 2020. 2020-2021 Middle Grade Level Clustering of English Learners (ELs). VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. April 30, 2020.
- ⁵³ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, December 14, 2021.
- ⁵⁴ An additional 19 EL students were enrolled in at least one ESL high school course in term 1 but opted out of receiving services during term 2; therefore, they are not included in the totals presented here.
- ⁵⁵ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, January 28, 2022.
- ⁵⁶ R. Collier, ESL Program Update, March 22, 2019.
- ⁵⁷ Data for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 were reanalyzed to include four middle school advanced courses that had not previously been included (i.e., Advanced Math 6, Advanced Math 7, Advanced Math 8, and Algebra I in middle school). Advanced courses included a course that had been designated as advanced for a given grade level within the four core subject areas and world languages.
- ⁵⁸ In 2019-2020, there were fewer than 10 current EL student graduates; therefore, they were not examined.
- ⁵⁹ Source: 2021-2022 General Posting – English as a Second Language Teacher, Virginia Beach City Public Schools.
- ⁶⁰ Source: 2021-2022 General Posting – English as a Second Language Teacher, Virginia Beach City Public Schools.
- ⁶¹ The total number of ESL teachers excludes one teacher who was on leave from the division.
- ⁶² 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>
- ⁶³ Four part-time temporary ESL teachers were excluded.
- ⁶⁴ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, June 25, 2020. Actions taken regarding recommendations.
- ⁶⁵ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, June 11, 2021. Actions taken regarding recommendations.
- ⁶⁶ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, June 25, 2020. Actions taken regarding recommendations.
- ⁶⁷ Continued Restructuring of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Model. Memorandum, November 15, 2019.
- ⁶⁸ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, September 8, 2020 and December 14, 2021.
- ⁶⁹ The total was calculated based on the numbers of classroom teachers who participated in each session. Therefore, it is possible that this total may include a duplicated count of teachers who participated in more than one session.

⁷⁰ Essential Federal Professional Learning for English as a Second Language (ESL) Administrative Contacts. August 13, 2020. Principals Packet Memo.

⁷¹ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, June 25, 2020. Actions taken regarding recommendations.

⁷² Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, June 11, 2021. Actions taken regarding recommendations.

⁷³ Translation and Interpretation Services. VBCPS Principals Packet Memo. February 2, 2020.

⁷⁴ Source: R. Collier, personal communication, September 13, 2018.

⁷⁵ 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.

⁷⁶ The data provided here do not reflect data used by VDOE for ESSA accountability calculations due to sample restrictions, such as only including EL students who received services.

⁷⁷ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, December 14, 2021.

⁷⁸ 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.

⁷⁹ Source: K. Cahoon-Newchok, personal communication, December 14, 2021.

Aaron C. Spence, Ed.D., Superintendent
Virginia Beach City Public Schools
2512 George Mason Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23456-0038

Produced by the Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability
For further information, please call (757) 263-1199

Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy

Virginia Beach City Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation/gender identity, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, disability, marital status, age, genetic information or veteran status in its programs, activities, employment, or enrollment, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. School Board policies and regulations (including, but not limited to, Policies 2-33, 4-4, 5-7, 5-19, 5-20, 5-44, 6-33, 6-7, 7-48, 7-49, 7-57 and Regulations 4-4.1, 4-4.2, 5-44.1, 7-11.1, 7-17.1 and 7-57.1) provide equal access to courses, programs, enrollment, counseling services, physical education and athletic, vocational education, instructional materials, extracurricular activities and employment.

Title IX Notice: Complaints or concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of sex or sexual harassment should be addressed to the Title IX Coordinator, at the VBCPS Office of Student Leadership, 641 Carriage Hill Road, Suite 200, Virginia Beach, 23452, (757) 263-2020, Mary.Dees@vbschools.com (student complaints) or the VBCPS Department of School Leadership, 2512 George Mason Drive, Municipal Center, Building 6, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 23456 (757) 263-1088, Elizabeth.Bryant@vbschools.com (employee complaints). Additional information regarding Virginia Beach City Public Schools' policies regarding discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual harassment, as well as the procedures for filing a formal complaint and related grievance processes, can be found in School Board Policy 5-44 and School Board Regulations 5-44.1 (students), School Board Policy 4-4 and School Board Regulation 4-4.3 (employees), and on the School Division's website at [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion/Title IX](#). Concerns about the application of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act should be addressed to the Section 504 Coordinator/Executive Director of Student Support Services at (757) 263-1980, 2512 George Mason Drive, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 23456 or the Section 504 Coordinator at the student's school. For students who are eligible or suspected of being eligible for special education or related services under IDEA, please contact the Office of Programs for Exceptional Children at (757) 263-2400, Plaza Annex/Family and Community Engagement Center, 641 Carriage Hill Road, Suite 200, Virginia Beach, VA 23452.

The School Division is committed to providing educational environments that are free of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. Students, staff, parents/guardians who have concerns about discrimination, harassment, or bullying should contact the school administration at their school. Promptly reporting concerns will allow the school to take appropriate actions to investigate and resolve issues. School Board Policy 5-7 addresses non-discrimination and anti-harassment, Policy 5-44 addresses sexual harassment and discrimination based on sex or gender. Policy 5-36 and its supporting regulations address other forms of harassment.

Alternative formats of this publication which may include taped, Braille, or large print materials are available upon request for individuals with disabilities. Call or write Nikki Garmer, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, 2512 George Mason Drive, P.O. Box 6038, Virginia Beach, VA 23456-0038. Telephone 263-1199 (voice); fax 263-1131; 263-1240 (TDD) or email her at anna.garmer@vbschools.com.

vbschools.com
your virtual link to Hampton Roads' largest school system



No part of this publication may be produced or shared in any form without giving specific credit to Virginia Beach City Public Schools.

February 2022