



Boston Public Schools

Enrollment Update to ELL Task Force

Jamie Racanelli, Director of Planning and Analysis

March 3, 2022



Outline

- EL+FEL trends by grade band
- Trends by ELD category
- Changes in EL program enrollment
- Additional questions in data request



English Learner Enrollment Trends by Grade Band



EL+FEL enrollment declined at a slower rate than the district overall

Total October Enrollment: EL+FEL vs. Never EL							3 year change		5 year change	
Category	SY1617	SY1718	SY1819	SY1920	SY2021	SY2122	N	%	N	%
EL + FEL	24,469	24,472	23,880	23,519	22,451	21,686	-2194	-9.2%	-2783	-11.4%
Never EL	31,975	31,388	30,713	30,015	28,808	27,636	-3,077	-10.0%	-4,339	-13.6%
Total	56,444	55,860	54,593	53,534	51,259	49,322	-5,271	-9.7%	-7,122	-12.6%

- The combined number of ELs and FELs declined by 11.4% over the last 5 years, as compared to a 12.6% decline among all students and a 13.6% decline among Never ELs.
- The majority of that decline occurred over the last 3 years. Looking at disaggregated data shows that this is not just a function of the pandemic.
- A breakdown by ELD levels is provided in the appendix.

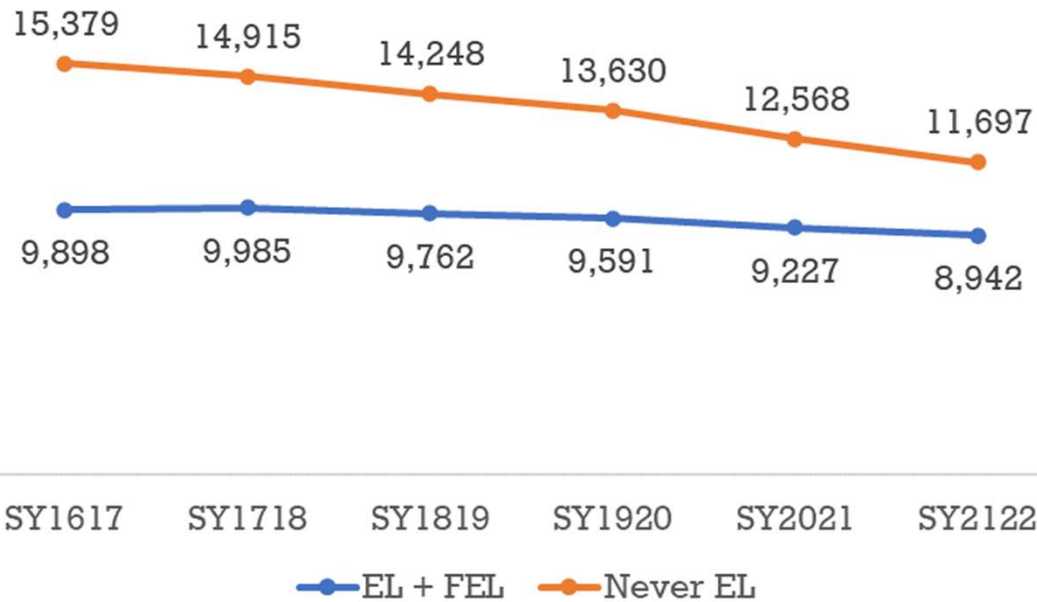
EL and FEL vs. Never EL Enrollment by Grade Band

Grade Band	Category	SY1617	SY1718	SY1819	SY1920	SY2021	SY2122	3 year change		5 year change	
								N	%	N	%
K2 to 5	EL + FEL	9,898	9,985	9,762	9,591	9,227	8,942	-820	-8.4%	-956	-9.7%
	Never EL	15,379	14,915	14,248	13,630	12,568	11,697	-2,551	-17.9%	-3,682	-23.9%
6 to 8	EL + FEL	4,700	4,449	4,564	4,724	4,594	4,417	-147	-3.2%	-283	-6.0%
	Never EL	6,042	6,263	6,369	6,198	6,189	5,712	-657	-10.3%	-330	-5.5%
9 to 12	EL + FEL	8,357	8,428	7,973	7,613	7,185	6,843	-1,130	-14.2%	-1,514	-18.1%
	Never EL	8,974	8,586	8,511	8,547	8,631	8,763	252	3.0%	-211	-2.4%
K2 Only	EL + FEL	1,603	1,663	1,530	1,476	1,490	1,448	-82	-5.4%	-155	-9.7%
	Never EL	2,589	2,473	2,445	2,327	1,928	1,966	-479	-19.6%	-623	-24.1%

- When comparing EL and FEL enrollment to Never EL enrollment, it's clear that enrollment dynamics are different for the two groups over the last 5 years
- The declines among Never ELs and the district as a whole were largest in elementary grades, while the largest decline among ELs was in grades 9 to 12
- Enrollment in grades 6-8 has been relatively stable among all students
- K2 enrollment among ELs did not decline in the first year of the pandemic

Boston Public Schools

October K2-5 Enrollment: EL+FEL vs. Never EL

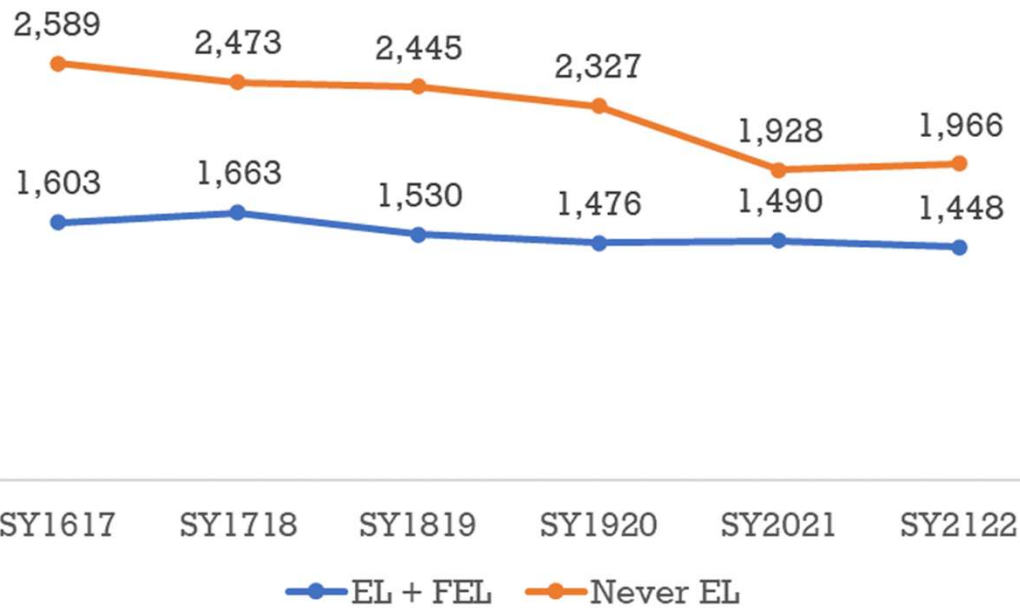


- EL+FEL enrollment in grades K2-5 declined by 10% over 5 years, as compared to 24% for Never ELs and 18% for the district as a whole
- The decline among ELs was fairly consistent over the last 3 years, while the decline among Never ELs accelerated during the pandemic

Elementary declines were smaller among ELs than Never ELs

Boston Public Schools

October K2 Enrollment: EL+FEL vs. Never EL



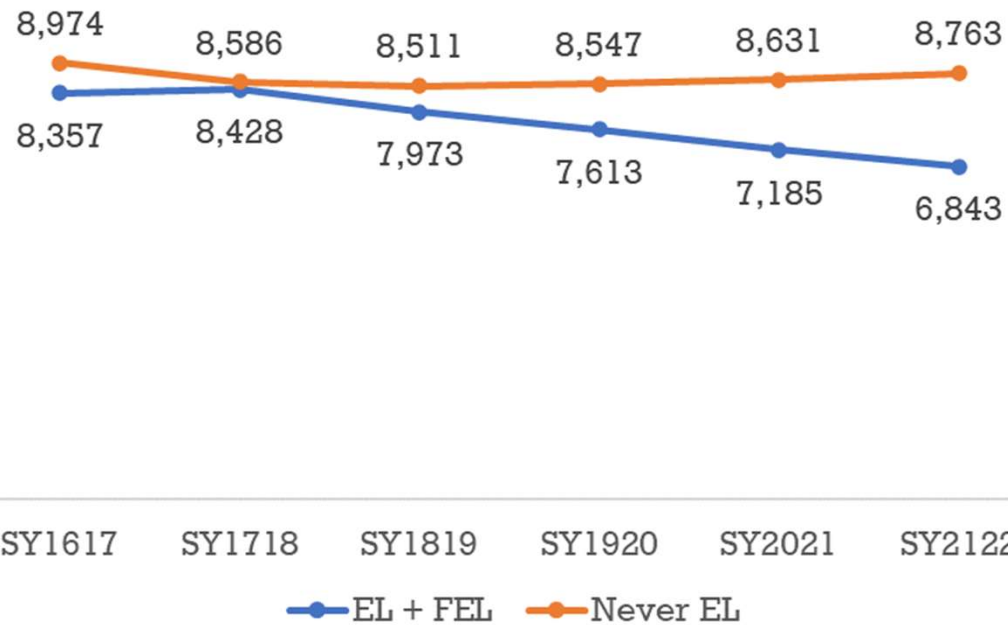
- The decline in EL+FEL enrollment in elementary grades is driven by smaller K2 cohorts moving through the system
- For ELs, the K2 decline began in SY1819 and was not more pronounced during the pandemic
- For Never ELs, K2 enrollment was already declining prior to but saw particularly steep declines during the pandemic



**Elementary declines
are driven primarily
by smaller K2
Cohorts**

Boston Public Schools

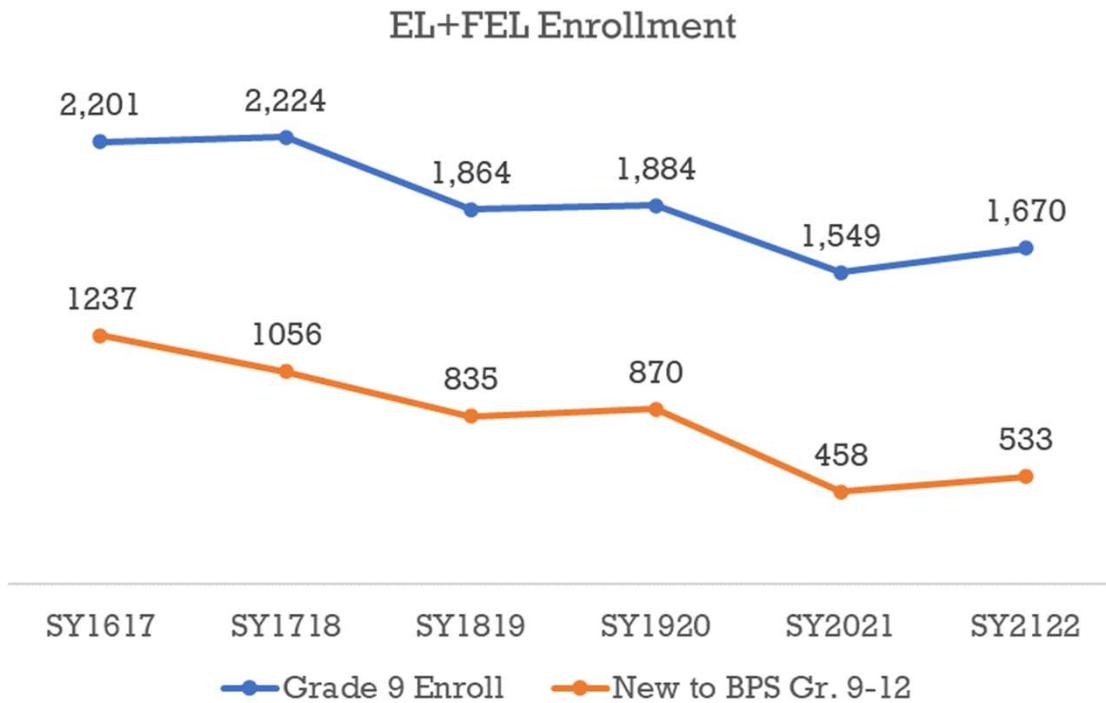
October 9-12 Enrollment: EL+FEL vs. Never EL



- EL+FEL enrollment in grades 9-12 declined by 18% over 5 years, as compared to 2% for Never ELs and 10% for the district as a whole
- Grade 9-12 enrollment among ELs has declined consistently for the last 4 years

**HS declines were
larger for ELs than
Never ELs**

Boston Public Schools

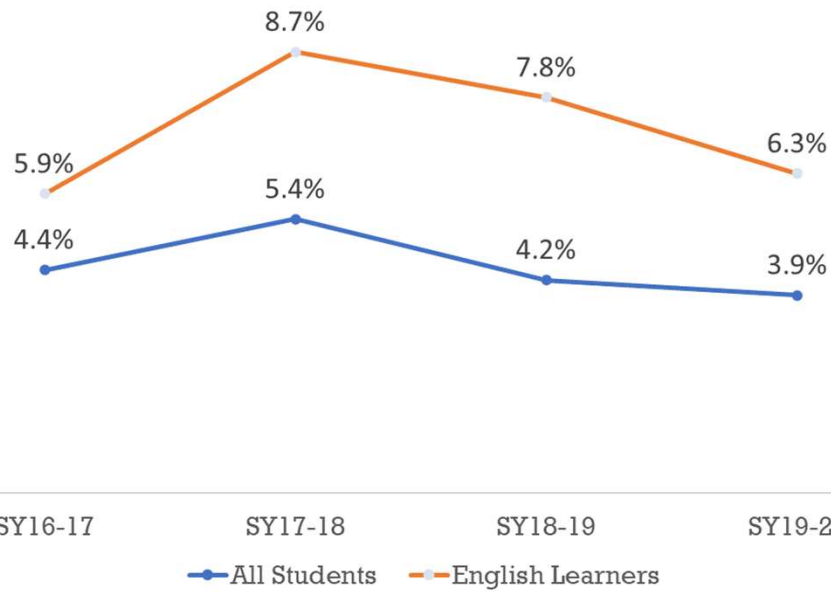


- The last 4 grade 9 EL+FEL cohorts have been smaller than in prior years, leading to HS declines as those smaller cohorts aged up through the system
- The smaller cohorts are a function of smaller 8th grade cohorts moving up as well as of fewer new students entering in grade 9.
- There has been an overall decline in the number of new EL+FELs entering HS grades over the last 5 years, with the largest drop occurring in the first year of the pandemic

**HS Decline is driven
by fewer new
students**

Boston Public Schools

Dropout Rates, Grades 9 - 12



- The dropout rate of ELs is higher than that of all students
- Following a peak in SY17-18, dropout rates have declined for both groups, though the EL dropout rate has fallen 2.4% compared to the 1.5% of all students



Dropout Data

4-year Change in Total Enrollment: SY1617 to SY2021

Neighborhood	All School Types*	Total BPS	EL+FEL
ALLSTON-BRIGHTON	-4%	-6%	1%
BACK BAY/FENWAY/SOUTH END	-7%	-9%	-17%
CHARLESTOWN/DOWNTOWN	6%	7%	-3%
DORCHESTER	-9%	-11%	-3%
EAST BOSTON	-11%	-14%	-15%
HYDE PARK	-7%	-13%	-15%
JAMAICA PLAIN	-4%	-5%	-9%
MATTAPAN	-7%	-12%	-4%
ROSLINDALE	-8%	-8%	-16%
ROXBURY	-8%	-9%	-4%
SOUTH BOSTON	-10%	-16%	-26%
WEST ROXBURY	-5%	-4%	-9%
District	-7%	-9%	-9%

**Includes BPS, Charter, Private and METCO enrollment*

- There is a correlation between the total BPS decline and the decline across all school-aged children in most parts of the city. This suggests that the BPS decline is driven in part by a decline in the total school-aged population.
- The EL decline diverges from the city-wide and BPS stories in most neighborhoods.
- We suspect the reason varies by neighborhood, and would need to dig in deeper to better understand.
- Note: These are 4 year trends as we do not yet have SY2122 data for non-BPS students.

English Learner Category

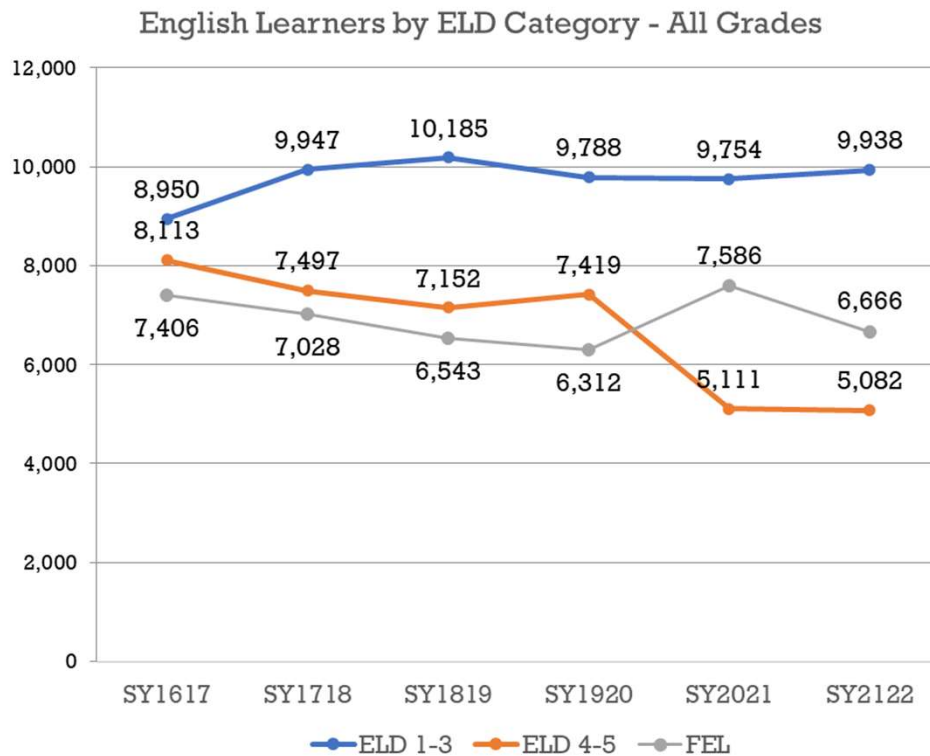


English Learner Enrollment by EL Category

Enrollment by EL Category - All Grades										
							3 year change		5 year change	
Category	SY1617	SY1718	SY1819	SY1920	SY2021	SY2122	N	%	N	%
ELD 1-3	8,950	9,947	10,185	9,788	9,754	9,938	-247	-2.4%	988	11.0%
ELD 4-5	8,113	7,497	7,152	7,419	5,111	5,082	-2,070	-28.9%	-3,031	-37.4%
FEL	7,406	7,028	6,543	6,312	7,586	6,666	123	1.9%	-740	-10.0%
ELD 1-3	36.6%	40.6%	42.7%	41.6%	43.4%	45.8%	3.2%	7.4%	9.2%	25.3%
ELD 4-5	33.2%	30.6%	29.9%	31.5%	22.8%	23.4%	-6.5%	-21.8%	-9.7%	-29.3%
FEL	30.3%	28.7%	27.4%	26.8%	33.8%	30.7%	3.3%	12.2%	0.5%	1.6%

- While the total number of ELs+FELs has declined, the number of ELD 1-3s is 2% lower than 3 years ago but is up 11% compared to 5 years ago; it has been relatively stable for the last 4 years.
- In SY2021, there was a decline in ELD 4-5s and an increase in FELs. In the following year the ELD 4-5s continued to decline but FELs approached prior levels.
- The changes in ELD 1-5s is relatively consistent across grade bands, but the FEL growth was concentrated in K2-5 and happened to an extent in grades 6-8.
- ELD 1-3s now make up 45.8% of all ELs+FELs, as compared to 36.6% 5 years ago.

English Learner Enrollment by EL Category



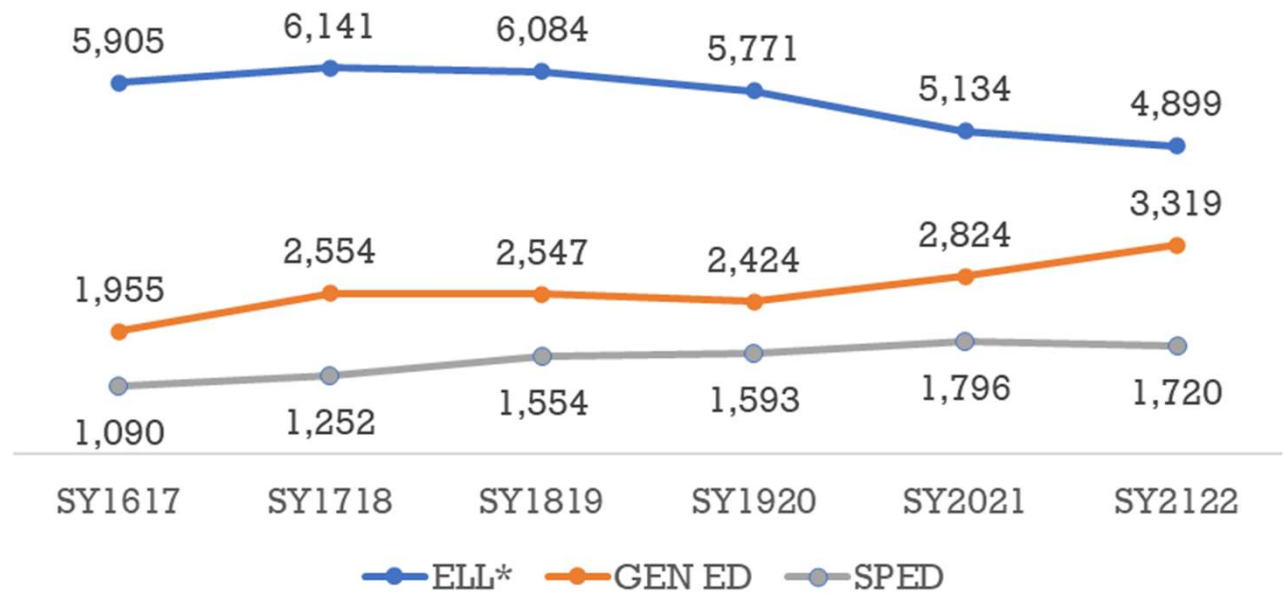
- While the total number of ELs+FELs has declined, the number of ELD 1-3s is 2% lower than 3 years ago but is up 11% compared to 5 years ago; it has been relatively stable for the last 4 years.
- In SY2021, there was a decline in ELD 4-5s and an increase in FELs. In the following year the ELD 4-5s continued to decline but FELs approached prior levels.
- The changes in ELD 1-5s is relatively consistent across grade bands, but the FEL growth was concentrated in K2-5 and happened to an extent in grades 6-8.
- ELD 1-3s now make up 45.8% of all ELs+FELs, as compared to 36.6% 5 years ago.

EL Program Participation



Changes in EL program enrollment

ELD 1-3 Enrollment by Program Type - All Grades

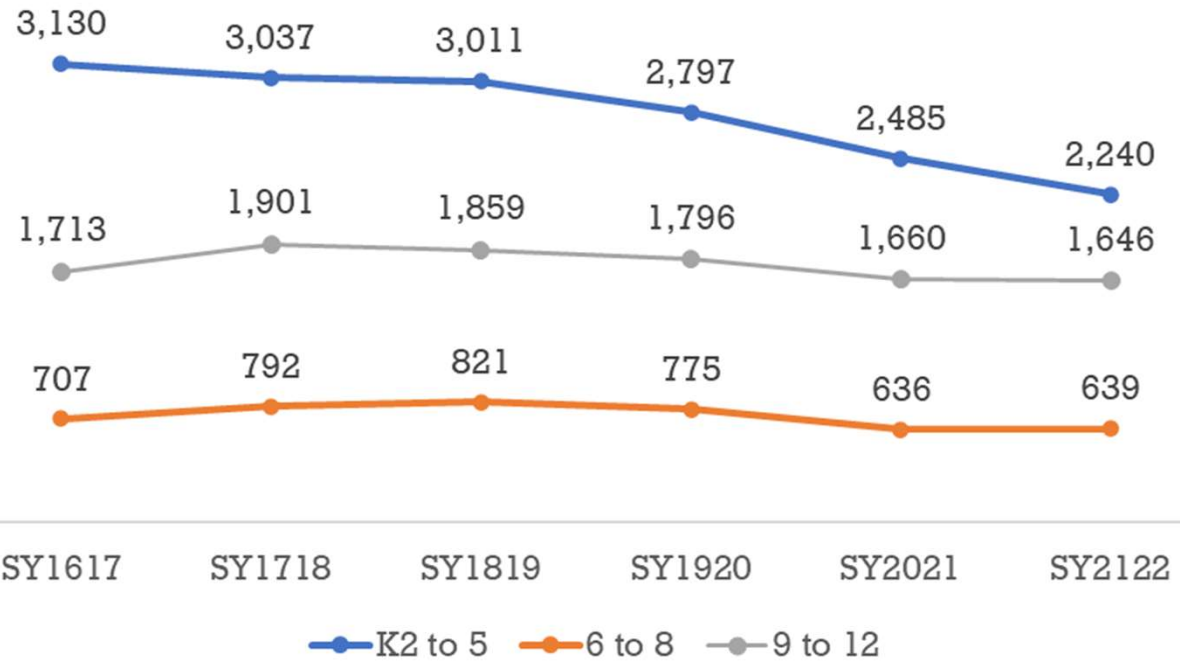


**Includes SEI, Dual-Language, and SLIFE*

- Enrollment in EL programs has declined by 19.5% over the last 3 years and 17% over the last 5 years.
- The number of ELD1-3s in general education and special education programs has increased over the last 5 years. In each case, the trend began before, but continued through, the pandemic.
- The total number of ELD 1-3s grew by 1,000 students 5 years ago and has been relatively stable since.

Changes in EL program enrollment by Grade Band

October EL* Program Enrollment by Grade Band

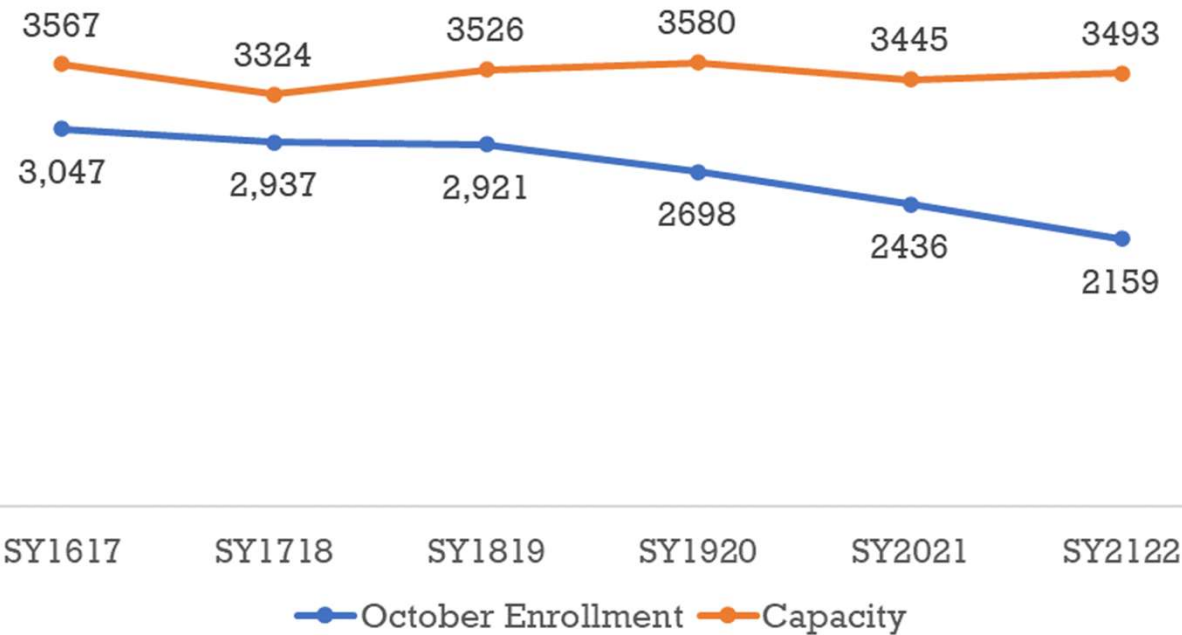


*Includes SEI, Dual-Language, and SLIFE

- The decline in EL program enrollment was concentrated in the elementary grades, which declined by 25.6% over 3 years and 28.4% over 5 years
- In each grade band, the decline began before the pandemic but the largest single year decline was in the first year of the pandemic

EL program capacity vs. enrollment: K2 to 5

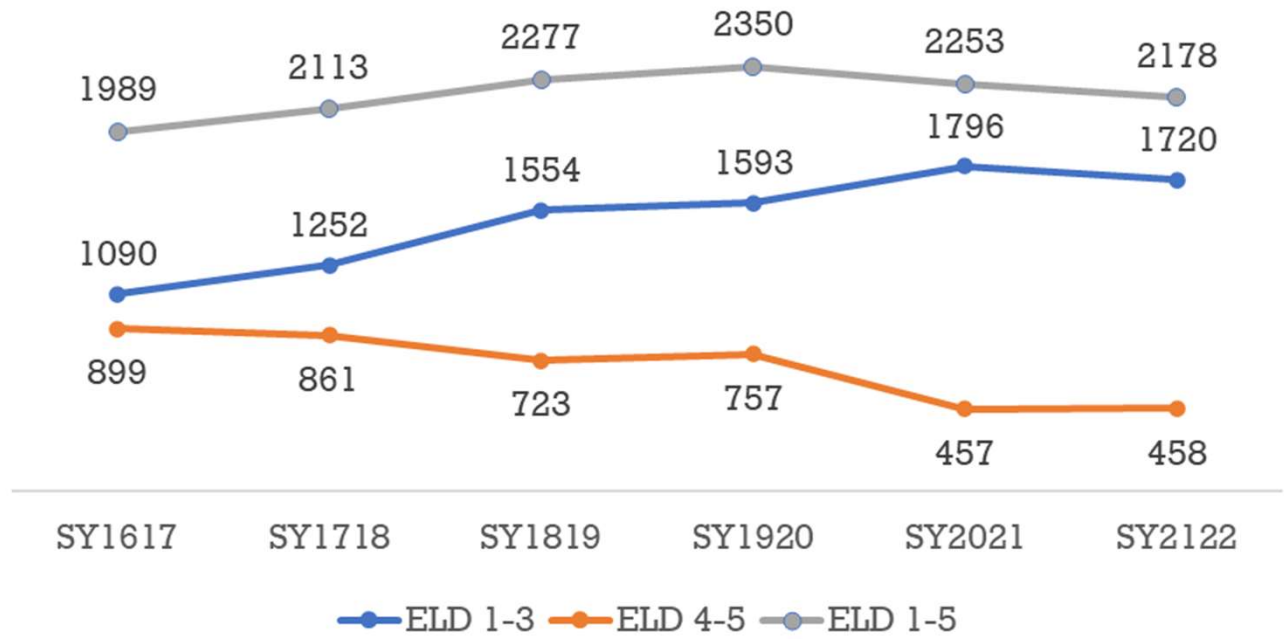
SEI/Dual-Language Enrollment and Capacity - K2 to 5



- Elementary EL program capacity has only reduced slightly over the last 5 years, during the time period in which EL program enrollment declined by 28%
- This chart focuses on non-SLIFE EL programs in grades K2-5

ELs in Special Education Programs

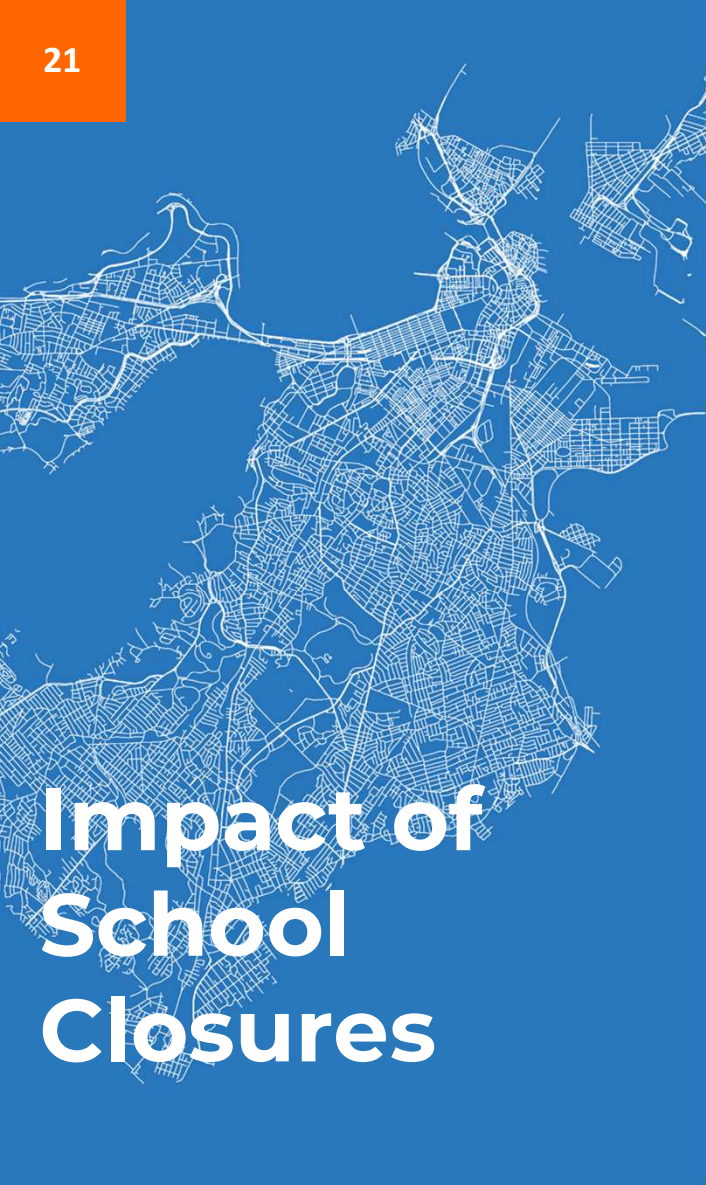
ELD 1-5s in Special Education Programs - All Grades



- While the number of ELD 1-3s in special education programs increased over the last 5 years, there was a similar decline in the number of ELD 4-5s in special education programs over the same period.
- As a result, the number of ELD 1-5s in special education programs increased by 189 students over the last 5 years.
- The divergent trends among 1-3s and 4-5s may be connected to the increase in the proportion of ELs that are 1-3 during the same period.

Additional Questions from Data Request





Impact of School Closures

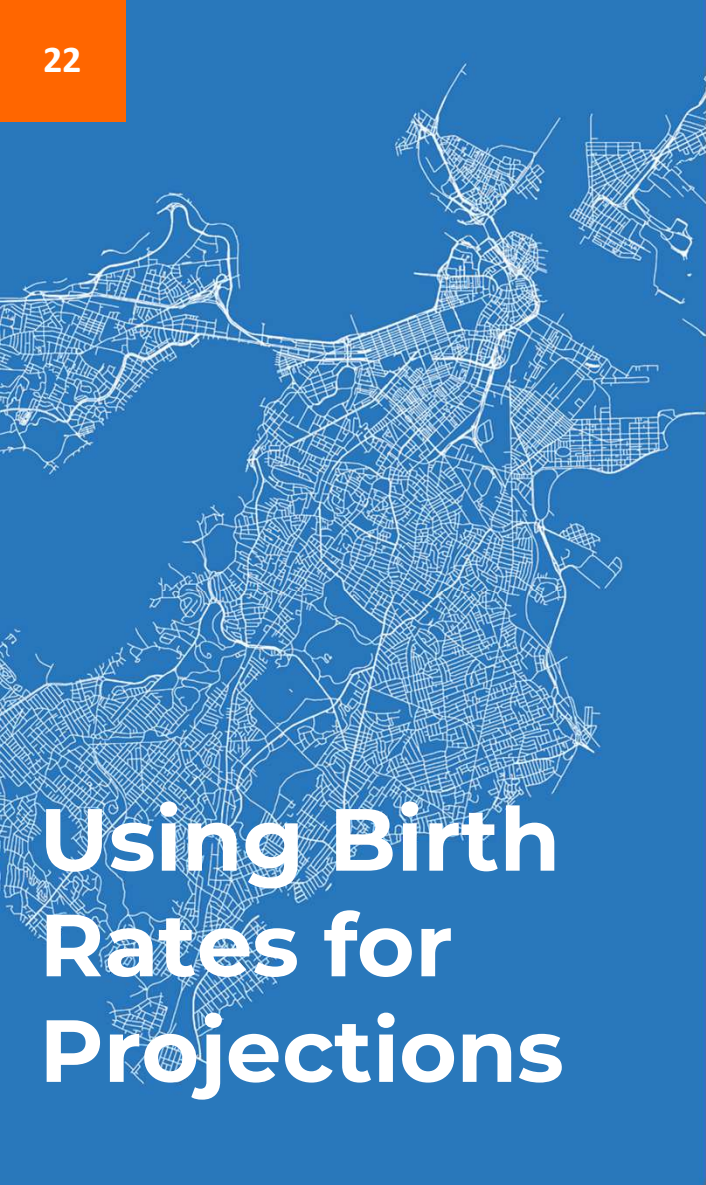
The impact of upcoming school closures on EL programming is modest

Irving and Timilty

- Both schools have under-enrolled SEI programs
- There are available seats at BCLA/McCormack and Brighton HS will be adding a Multilingual program in the middle grades

Jackson-Mann

- The Jackson-Mann has a Multilingual program in grades K1 to 5
- For past few years, grade K2 - 2 have been mostly full, while grades 3 - 5 were less than half full.
- We expect to be able to serve ELs in Allston-Brighton between the programs at the Edison and the Baldwin



Using Birth Rates for Projections

BPS does not rely on birth rate data to produce annual projections that inform school budgets

- Kindergarten projections are based on prior year's actual enrollment
 - The relationship between Boston resident births and K2 classes 5 years later is not consistent enough to produce reliable, annual projections
 - The birth data is not granular enough to inform school based projections
 - Because both birth rates and K2 enrollment have been declining, this method tends to over-project K2 enrollment slightly each year
- However, trends in Boston resident births are helpful for high-level, long-term planning
 - The declining birth rate, consistent with the national trend, tells us that we should continue to expect declining total K2 numbers
 - The trend does not inform us about which sub-populations might grow