

English Language Learners Task Force: Report to Boston School Committee

November 7, 2018

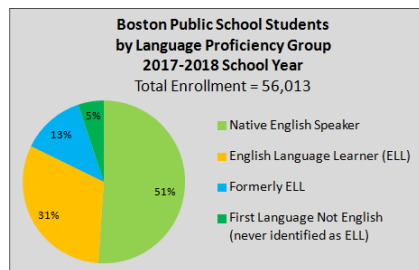
ELLTF Background

The English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force of the Boston School Committee was created in October 2009 for the following purposes:

- ❖ **Provide guidance** to the School Committee and the Superintendent regarding a vision and a plan of action to respond appropriately to the growth in the numbers of students whose first language is a language other than English.
- ❖ **Identify mechanisms** to address the needs of ELLs.
- ❖ **Monitor** the district's progress in meeting the educational needs of ELLs.

ELLs in BPS

At least forty-nine 49% of BPS students have a first language that is not English.

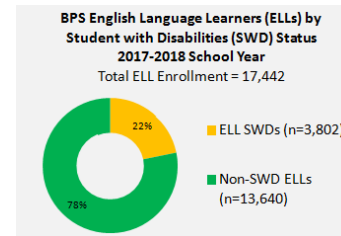


- 31% of BPS students are identified as English learners (17,442 ELLs).
- 74+ first languages are spoken by BPS ELLs.

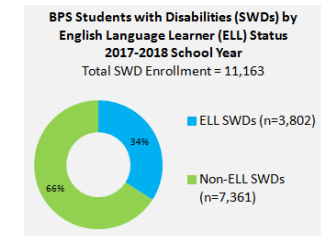
Source: BPS. Data includes active BPS K0-12 students as of April 17, 2018, Aspen SIS (includes in-district Horace Mann charter schools; excludes student outplacements).

ELL-SWDs in BPS

There is substantial overlap between ELLs and students with disabilities (SWDs).



One-fifth (22%) of all English learners are students with disabilities (3,802 students).



One-third (34%) of all students with disabilities are English learners (3,802 students).

Source: BPS. Data includes active BPS K0-12 students as of April 17, 2018, Aspen SIS (includes in-district Horace Mann charter schools; excludes student outplacements).

ELLTF Goals

1. **Recognize and promote BPS as a multilingual, multicultural district**
2. **Promote and monitor progress in distributing responsibility for outcomes of ELL students to all parts of the BPS organization**
3. **Continue to monitor, assess, and advocate to improve:**
 - School district data systems and the use of technology
 - Impacts of student assessment and assignment policies on ELLs
 - ELL program quality
 - Engagement of families of ELLs and linguistic minority communities
 - Services to and outcomes for ELL students with disabilities (ELLSWD)
 - Human capital alignment with ELL needs

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ELLTF Composition / Organization

- ❖ 18 volunteer members (see Appendix 1)
- ❖ Bi-monthly meetings
- ❖ Subcommittees that work in target areas
 - **Data** (SY17-18: Janet Anderson and Miren Uriarte; SY18-19: TBD)
 - **Program Quality** (SY17-18: Diana Lam; SY18-19: Suzanne Lee)
 - **English Learner Students with Disabilities (ELSWD)** (Maria de Lourdes Serpa and John Mudd)
 - **Parent Engagement** (Rev. Cheng Imm Tan)
 - **Human Capital** (Suzanne Lee and John Mudd)

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The ELLTF and its subcommittees. . .

- Interact with the BPS Offices of English Learners, Special Education, Engagement, Data and Accountability, Human Capital, as well as with the Chief of Schools, Budget Office, Office of Opportunity Gaps, Department of Strategy, and others.
- Engage with parents and community-based organizations.

ELLTF Activities 2017-2018

Monitor	Assess	Advocate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School district data systems and use of technology related to ELLs • ELL impacts of student assignment and assessment • Services and outcomes for ELL students with disabilities (ELSWDs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELL program quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve ELL family and community engagement • To improve human capital alignment with ELL needs

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See Appendices 2A-2E for detailed activity reports by subcommittee area.

Continuing Challenges: The Details

Data and information gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent analysis of district data by ELL/FELL, by ELD level, and by language group • Remaining questions about Opportunity Index and immigrant students
Student assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the ELL overlay to understand impact on EL students and programs • Concern about balance between “choice” and program fidelity
ELL parent engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of comprehensive school-level engagement strategy • Limited effective methods for evaluating the quality of parent engagement — inadequate data at district and school levels • Need for ongoing observation of implementation of training on Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices (CLSP)

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Continuing Challenges: The Details

Program quality

- Need to develop further a clear strategic vision for growth of ELL program and implementation of high-quality programs allowed by the LOOK Act

Gaps in appropriate staffing

- Incomplete data on staff members' language skills
- Barriers to deployment of staff with specific language skills to meet students' language needs
- Limited accountability for hiring of culturally and linguistically appropriate staff as a requirement for proficiency in the evaluation of principals
- Inadequate comprehensive professional development that enhances culturally and linguistically sustaining practices across the district

ELL students with disabilities

- Lack of systems for understanding student language and learning needs
- Absence of systems to meet those needs with adequate bilingual staffing

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Continuing Challenges: Findings on ELSWDs

TEACHER/STUDENT LANGUAGE MATCH

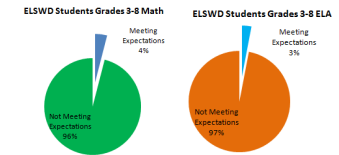
ELSWD Students in BPS	3,802
In 64 reporting schools	
# of Bilingual Special Ed Teachers	16
# of Bilingual Speech & Language Therapists	26
# of Bilingual Paraprofessionals	58

Summary of findings:

- teacher/student language match in a minority of schools
- no systems to track data on language match
- no planning systems for linguistic staffing needs

ACHIEVEMENT

ELSWD students are the lowest-achieving subgroup.



INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPs)

In a review of 26 IEPs for ELLs, *none* included mention of access to native language, adapting to students' cultural needs, or second language learning objectives.

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Continuing Challenges: The Big Picture

Acknowledge that one-half of BPS students are bilingual and one-third are ELLs.

Take ELLs into account in all BPS decision-making — from data, to academics, to SELWELL, to staffing, and so on.

Recognize and promote BPS as a multilingual, multicultural district.

Take students' language into account consistently — in all areas, but especially in assessment, placement and service delivery for ELLs.

Engage cultural and linguistic minority communities in decision-making regarding BPS policy.

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Request to Boston School Committee

- ❖ Reauthorize the ELLTF for School Year 2018-2019
- ❖ Appoint new members (replace departing members):
 - Lisette Le
 - Julia Mejia
 - Marie St. Fleur
 - Dr. Ana Solano-Campos

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List of Appendices

Appendix 1: List of Task Force Members

Appendix 2: Subcommittee Activities and Progress for 2017-2018

Appendix 2A: Data Subcommittee

Appendix 2B: Program Quality Subcommittee

Appendix 2C: ELLSWD Subcommittee

Appendix 2D: Parent Engagement Subcommittee

Appendix 2E: Human Capital Subcommittee

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Appendix 1: ELL Task Force Members

- **Dr. Andres Alonso**, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- **Janet Anderson**, EdVestors
- **Farah Assiraj**, Founder & Executive Director, Peregrinum
- **Paulo de Barros**, Catholic Charities Teen Center and CVC-Unido
- **Dr. Patricia Crain de Galarce**, Lesley College
- **Geralde Gabeau**, Immigrant Family Services Institute
- **Robert Hildreth**, Families United in Educational Leadership
- **Suzanne Lee, Co-Chair**
- **John Mudd**, Advocate
- **Alejandra St. Guillen**, City of Boston, Office for Immigrant Advancement
- **Dr. Maria de Lourdes Serpa**, Lesley College
- **Cheng Imm Tan**, Parent and Educational Consultant
- **Dr. Miren Uriarte, Co-Chair**
- *Nominating* **Lisette Le**, Executive Director, VietAID
- *Nominating* **Julia Mejia**, Founder/Executive Director, Collaborative Parent Leadership Action Network (CPLAN)
- *Nominating* **Marie St. Fleur, J.D.**, St. Fleur Communications; Former State Representative
- *Nominating* **Dr. Ana Solano-Campos**, Professor of Education, UMass Boston

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Appendix 2A: Data Subcommittee

Goal: Improve district capacity to produce accurate information about ELLs

Priorities for 2017-18	Activities	Progress
Monitor the improvement of capacity to produce accurate information about placement and services for ELL students that meets the requirements of USDOJ/USDOE reporting and identifies the accurate number of ELLs in the district and the distribution of ELLs in different types of schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed USDOJ/USDOE reports. Reviewed data provided by ODA and OELL on the number of ELLs in the district and the distribution of students by schools. Reviewed ELL enrollment projections Reviewed and sought changes in the way the Opportunity Index handled data on immigrant students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved quality and accuracy of USDOJ/USDOE report. Notable improvement in data collection from schools. Changes are being made to indicators used in construction of the Opportunity Index
Utilize the ELLTF's calendar of data requests and reports for the academic year to obtain data in a timely way on student assignment, budget, personnel hiring and teacher retention, and student achievement. Centralize data requests to minimize staff burden.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data reviewed included: MCAS/PARCC, ELL Enrollment, ELL budget, personnel (level of staffing need, capacity of current staff, and recruiting progress), number and distribution of Cape Verdean ELLs across the district. Helped establish that there was minimal relationship between student immigrant status and revised school poverty level. Review of charter school data on ELL enrollment and outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved flow of data for ELLTF's monitoring of ELL student outcomes by ELD levels. Improved ongoing collaboration on data-related issues regarding ELLs. Limited progress on joint development of consistent set of indicators for review. No progress on consistent review of selected indicators
Jointly develop and consistently review a set of indicators of appropriate program placement and achievement of ELLs along numerous characteristics including program type, school type, language group, and national group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed BARI student assignment analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student assignment analysis included no ELL overlay analysis.
Assess the impact of home-based student assignment plan on access, placement, programs and outcomes of ELLs.		

Appendix 2B. Program Quality Subcommittee

Goal: Expand Program Quantity and Quality

Priorities for 2017-18	Activities	Progress
Develop a shared understanding of big-picture problems, theory of action, and system coherence in action between ELLTF subcommittee members and BPS staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subcommittee produced one-page document with key questions for answering "How does the district define quality instruction for ELL students? How does it guide, support and understand what is happening?" Subcommittee requested and received detailed understanding of OEL's work on instruction and curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee learned about OEL's curricular plans, its articulated instructional vision, and activities and outcomes for disparate initiatives to address ELL needs in a variety of areas.
Determine if current distribution of programs responds to the distribution of linguistic groups in neighborhoods.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pending further analysis of student assignment ELL overlays

Appendix 2C: ELSWD Subcommittee (1)

Goal: To advance equity in Special Education for ELL-SWDs		
Priorities for 2017-18	Activities	Progress
Monitor the IEP Design Process and the implementation of IEPs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piloted Study of IEPs, using a sample selected to include a variety of grades, disabilities, and languages (n=26). Examined whether current IEPs are designed for meeting the different needs of ELSWD students, and whether the IEP includes access to native language in instruction and other related services. Devised IEP Design Checklist to include consideration of the need for native language and cultural responsiveness for instruction/services in the development of IEPs for ELSWD students. Develop proposal to test access to native language in instruction/services in IEPs in selected schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learned that none of the IEPs studied included information regarding access to native language, adapting to cultural needs, or second language learning objectives. The IEP Design Checklist is now available to use as a tool in the development of IEPs. A draft proposal called "Restructuring SEI," to include access to native language in the development of IEPs in 4 schools, is ready for review and then incorporation into an implementation plan.

Appendix 2C: ELLSWD Subcommittee (2)

Priorities for 2017-18	Activities	Progress
Update the Achievement Performance Data for ELSWD students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BPS Office of Data and Accountability disaggregated achievement performance data to break out ELSWDs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Found that ELSWD students are the lowest achieving sub-group with 3% of ELSWD students in Grades 3-8 Meeting Expectations in ELA and 4% in Math.
Monitor the completion of Special Education Guidance Document for ELL-SWDs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A consolidated ELSWD Guidance Document has gone through multiple drafts with the support of the ELSWD subcommittee and is close to completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELSWD Guidance Document is ready to be piloted/field tested with a group of potential users, to ensure that the final draft is clear and useful in promoting necessary changes for ELSWD students and their families.
Understand staff language skills and BPS capacity to meet student native language learning needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with staff on an analysis of teacher/student language match. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Found teacher/student language match in a minority of schools, no systems to track this data, and no planning systems to understand needs and match them to human capital objectives.

Appendix 2D: Parent Engagement Subcommittee (1)		
Goal: Improve Family and Community Engagement		
Priorities for 2017-18	Activities	Progress
District-wide recommendation to better train, support, resource and hold school leaders and educators accountable for family engagement for all students, including ELLs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collected data on the number of trainings to school leaders and educators as well as support and resources provided by OELL and OE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are several programs launched by OE that have successfully engaged parents, though these are small with little prospect of bringing them to scale.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Got missing language on family engagement into the SIP. Advocated to hold principals accountable in family engagement and cultural competence by asking the district to require that these two areas of principal evaluation must be deemed "proficient" before principals are evaluated as "proficient". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remains a work-in-progress Remains a work-in-progress
Build Culturally and Linguistically welcoming school environments and culturally relevant curricula that affirm our diverse student body and families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced our commitment to better train, resource and hold school leaders and educators accountable to this recommendation. Had a good meeting with Colin Rose to understand his work with schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All principals have been trained on CLSP and schools are required to submit their CLSP plans as a part of their School Quality Plan.

Appendix 2D: Parent Engagement Subcommittee (2)		
Priorities for 2017-18	Activities	Progress
Build language capacity at the district and school levels, both oral and written to communicate with parents in schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitored school requests for interpretation for IEP and outreach purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IEP interpretation was the most encouraging area of progress. A report from the Office of Translation and Interpretation indicates that schools seem to be making the appropriate number of requests for IEP purposes (91% of requests), but there are not many requests for outreach purposes.
Ensure adequate information and outreach to familiarize new immigrant parents with the school registration process (including the registration timing and schedule) and help parents understand how to pick schools that best meet their child/ren's needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looked at the number of new ELL students enrolled and the programs students ended up in, as compared to the programs they were recommended to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Found low attendance by families at outreach events. Re-examined data points in all data collected to ensure that they are effective indicators of progress.

Appendix 2E: Human Capital Subcommittee

Goal: Improve human capital alignment with ELL needs		
Priorities for 2017-18	Activities	Progress
<p>Work with appropriate departments on an action plan to recruit, hire, develop and retain a diverse pool of teachers and school staff that has the language capacity to provide services to ELLs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established the Human Capital Subcommittee Requested data about staff language capacity, extent of student/teacher match, planning processes to align human capital resources with student needs, and monitoring systems to track progress toward goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learned that there is little data on teacher language skills, little planning to align teacher skills and student needs, and no monitoring of progress in this area. Office of Human Capital is taking steps to systematize information gathering about teacher language capacities, and is producing draft data to allow analysis of the match between teacher language skills and ELL needs.
<p>Monitor the hiring of Highly-Qualified Personnel to provide appropriate services to ELL-SWDs.</p> <p>NOTE: This work was performed by the ELLSWD Subcommittee and is being transferred to the Human Capital Subcommittee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Director of OEL and SWD completed a second manual analysis of teacher/student language match. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Found that there are 16 bilingual Special Education teachers in 9 of the 64 reporting schools (out of a total of 133 schools), and 58 bilingual paraprofessionals whose assignments match the language needs of students in only 13 of the 64 schools. Found no automated system in the Office of Human Capital to report this data on an on-going basis, nor a system to estimate the need for ELLSWD teachers/paras/service staff or to prepare a plan for their recruitment, hiring, and development.