2020-21

DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Evaluation of Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dallas Independent School District (ISD) Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language (BE/ESL) Department mission is to increase student achievement by effectively addressing the academic, linguistic, and social needs of English learners (ELs) through programs that embrace student diversity. The department oversees Dual Language (DL) and ESL programs, sheltered instruction, services for immigrant students, tutoring, and summer programs, and oversees the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), which is responsible for the identification, reclassification, and monitoring of ELs. Finally, the department collaborates with the Special Education Department to provide services for ELs who require special education services (ELSPED; see Voss, 2021 for full ELSPED evaluation). Funding in 2020-21 totaled $10,361,352, an increase from $8,799,285 in 2019-20. For the full evaluation of programs serving ELs and detailed methodology, see Voss and Kim (2021).

PROGRAMS, SERVICES, and STUDENTS

The Dallas ISD offered a wide variety of programs and services for ELs. First, the district provided three DL programs: One-Way DL [OWDL; prekindergarten (PK) to grade 5/6; 131 campuses], Two-Way DL (TWDL; PK to grade 5/6; 67 campuses), and Secondary DL (SECDL; grades 6 to 12; 9 campuses). Second, elementary school ELs for whom Spanish is not the dominant language or who are Spanish speakers at campuses without a DL program participated in ESL. ESL at the secondary level was for students in the first three years in United States (US) schools. Third, secondary grade level students enrolled in US schools more than three years who had not yet been reclassified were enrolled in Reading/Language Arts (R/LA) sheltered classes.

The BE/ESL Department also offered services for student populations with high proportions of ELs. For example, students enrolled in US schools fewer than three years were classified as immigrants. Because a large proportion of immigrants typically are also ELs (91% in 2020-21), the BE/ESL Department played a pivotal role in the integration of immigrant students and their families into the district and community.

The district enrolled 67,206 ELs (46% of district) and 5,699 reclassified ELs (4,706 monitored) in 2020-21. From 2019-20, EL enrollment decreased by 2,798 students, and reclassified EL enrollment decreased by 2,160 students. The highest rates of 2020-21 ELs were enrolled for at least the seventh year (44%). Most reclassified monitored students were in grades 10 and 11 (both 26%). The top language spoken in EL homes was Spanish. Six percent of ELs were parent denials, and one percent were coded as unservable. Table 1 shows the number of students in each program/classification in 2020-21.

Table 1: 2020-21 District Enrollment by Bilingual Education/ESL Program/Classification

Program/Classification	Students *N*	District %
District	145,386	100.0
All EL	67,206	46.2
All NonEL	77,724	53.5
Monitored	4,706	3.2
EL in OWDL	28,576	19.7
EL in TWDL	3,725	2.6
NonEL in TWDL	2,243	1.5
EL in SECDL	418	0.3
NonEL in SECDL	177	0.1
ESL	4,439	3.1
Sheltered	22,485	15.5
Immigrant	8,187	5.6
ELSPED	5,354	3.7
Parent Denials	3,861	2.7
Unservable	940	0.6

Source: District Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) snapshot demographic data file dated 11/04/20.
Note: Students may be included in more than one category.

In an effort to examine equity in TWDL and SECDL programs, the evaluator explored whether the rates of African American and economically disadvantaged opt-in students in TWDL and SECDL programs were representative of the schools they resided in overall. In 2020-21, 64 percent (African American) and 77 percent (economically disadvantaged) of TWDL and SECDL campuses had lower percentages of African American or economically disadvantaged students, respectively, than at the campus overall.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dallas ISD transitioned students to at-home learning on March 23 until the end of the 2019-20 school year. On October 22, the district announced that campuses would provide the choice for in-person and virtual learning throughout the rest of the school year. In-person and virtual instruction included both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

What were the characteristics of BE/ESL teachers?

In 2020-21, the district employed 2,714 DL or ESL teachers in elementary schools and 146 DL or ESL teachers in secondary schools. Most teachers at both the elementary level (41%) and secondary level (51%) had been teaching in the district for between one and five years.

Exceptions/Waivers

State law requires districts unable to provide the required number of DL and ESL teachers to request an exception to offer an alternative program (Bilingual/DL) or a waiver of teacher certification (ESL). The number of bilingual exceptions decreased by 26 percent since 2018-19 (2018-19: 91 exceptions; 2020-21: 67), and the number of requested ESL waivers decreased 42 percent since 2018-19 (2018-19: 241 waivers; 2020-21: 140).

What were the perceptions of BE/ESL staff members?

DL/ESL Survey

Key findings from the 2020-21 DL (*N* = 85; 62% response rate) and ESL (*N* = 103; 49% response rate) staff member survey include 1) DL and ESL staff members who worked with an instructional specialist in 2020-21 generally said they were provided with beneficial supports (range: 63% to 89%), PD (range: 72% to 84%), and resources (range: 62% to 90%), 2) aggregate teacher ratings of resource/material benefit in 2019-20 were 72 percent very or extremely beneficial, and 77 percent in 2020-21, meaning the department saw improvement but did not meet their goal of a 10 percentage point increase, and 3) 77% of ESL teachers rated PD, in-class support, and provided resources/materials as very or extremely beneficial, which exceeded the department's goal of 75%.

Sheltered Survey

Of the 333 surveyed R/LA teachers (37% response rate) who had at least one sheltered student in their classroom(s) in 2020-21, six percent reported having no sheltered students in their classrooms (an improvement from 17% in 2019-20; Voss, 2020). Of those who indicated that they implemented sheltered instruction, the highest percentages of respondents indicated implementing it daily (61%) or weekly (29%), and most indicated that they used visuals to deepen comprehension (81%) or included targeted vocabulary introduction (70%).

What activities did the BE/ESL Department implement to reach yearly goals?

The BE/ESL Department aimed to reach two primary goals for 2020-21. The first goal was to not see an increase in the percentage of ELs who regressed on their *Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System* (*TELPAS*) composite from 2021 compared to the percentage of ELs that regressed in 2019. The second goal was to at least maintain the percentage of ELs meeting the Approaches Grade Level or Above (Approaches+) performance standard on *State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness* (*STAAR*) in 2020-21 as compared to the rate of ELs meeting Approaches+ in 2018-19.[1] In order to reach these two primary goals, the BE/ESL Department planned to implement seven activities. Activities included 1) supplemental professional development, 2) supplemental tutoring, 3) summer enrichment programs, 4) engagement in parent workshops and trainings, 5) supplemental resources, 6) the Dual Language Cadre and ESL Leadership Cohort, and 7) the Student Intake Center.

Key 2020-21 findings regarding the activities include 1) 9,886 teachers attended PD (DL: 3,548 ESL: 6,338) and 251 administrators attended PD (DL: 132; ESL: 119); 2) 338 students were tutored in 2020-21 through Title III tutoring efforts; 3) 157 students attended the PK/Bilingual Program, 103 attended the Teaching and Coaching for Accelerated Language Learning program, 302 attended the Newcomers' Program, and 130 attended the Refugee Program; 4) 97 percent of parents indicated that attending workshops made them want to be more involved in their children's education, exceeding the BE/ESL Department's goal of 90 percent; 5) the BE/ESL Department distributed resources such as books, parent guides, dictionaries, and manipulatives; 6) no teachers were added to the DL CADRE (68 total) and five teachers were added to the ESL Leadership Cohort (9 total); and 7) 89 percent of parents agreed that the services they received through the Student Intake Center were excellent, which did not meet the department's goal of 95 percent.

What were the academic outcomes for ELs during 2020-21?

General assessment results and patterns are provided below. For specific program/classification results, see the full evaluation (Voss & Kim, 2021).

TELPAS[2]

For 2021 *TELPAS* composite rates, immigrant students clustered in the beginning and intermediate levels; ESL students clustered in the intermediate level; all ELs, OWDL, TWDL, and sheltered students clustered in the intermediate and advanced levels; and SECDL clustered in the advanced high level.

One- and two-year composite progression rate trends are shown in Table 2. With the exception of OWDL and TWDL ELs, progression rate trends for all programs/classifications either saw very minimal change or increased over two years. The largest two-year progression rate increase was for SECDL (43 percentage point increase).

[1] No 2019-20 *STAAR* data were available after the assessments were canceled as a result of COVID-19 in spring 2020.

[2] For information about domain proficiency rates and level movement, see the full evaluation report (Voss & Kim, 2021).

Table 2: 2019 to 2021 *TELPAS* English Proficiency Progression Rate Trends by Program/Classification

Program/ Classification	2021 %	1 Yr Δ %pts	2 Yr Δ %pts
All ELs	33.4	-4.2	3.3
OWDL	35.1	-7.3	-4.4
TWDL	38.1	-4.5	-2.2
SECDL	69.9	32.9	43.2
ESL	36.7	-2.8	9.2
Sheltered	23.4	-1.7	6.4
Immigrants	34.7	-5.9	-0.2
Parent Denials	28.0	-7.5	1.0

Source: District *TELPAS* data files dated 05/24/19, 07/19/20, and 07/20/21. PEIMS demographic data files dated 02/26/19, 11/01/19, and 11/04/20.
Note: Ns are available in the full report. 2021 level movement data include students who earned a *TELPAS* proficiency rating in both 2020 and 2021. Progression = Student moved up at least one level of English proficiency from the previous year or scored Advanced High both years. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding. 1 Yr Δ %pts = percentage point change from 2020 to 2021. 2 Yr Δ %pts = percentage point change from 2019 to 2021.

For all grade levels overall, all EL groupings except for sheltered students progressed at least one *TELPAS* proficiency level from 2019 to 2021 at higher rates than they regressed.

ELs overall, as well as DL students in TWDL and SECDL, ESL students overall, sheltered students overall, and immigrant students overall exceeded the BE/ESL Department goal to at least maintain the percentage of ELs who regressed on *TELPAS* composite from 2019 to 2021.

Measures of Academic Progress Growth (MAP)

For 2021 *MAP* mathematics beginning-of-year (BOY) to end-of-year (EOY) growth quintiles, all classifications had the highest percentage of scores in the High (80th percentile and above) quintile. Groupings across programs/classifications, test language, and grade levels ranged from 24 (parent denials, grades 2 to 5, English) to 78 (ESL, grades 6 to 8, Spanish). For reading, with few exceptions, most classifications had the highest percentage of scores in the Low (up to the 20th percentile) quintile. Rates of students at the Low quintile across programs/classifications and grade levels ranged from 11 (all ELs, grades 6 to 8, Spanish) to 48 (parent denials, grades 6 to 8, English) percent.

STAAR/End-Of-Course (EOC)

Fewer students tested in 2021 than in 2019 as a result of lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; results and comparisons should be reviewed with caution.

2021 STAAR rates in each grouping for grades three to five and six to eight at the Approaches+ performance standard ranged from 18 (reading, grades 6 to 8 ESL) to 89 (reading, grades 6 to 8 SECDL EL) percent, and rates at the Meets Grade Level or Above (Meets+) performance standard ranged from eight (reading, grades 6 to 8 ESL) to 65 (reading, grades 6 to 8 SECDL EL) percent. For 2021 EOCs, rates at the Approaches+ performance standard ranged from 15 (English I, ESL) to 91 (English II, SECDL NonEL) percent and rates at the Meets+ performance standard ranged from five (English I, SECDL EL) to 82 (English II, SECDL NonEL) percent.

With a few exceptions, all two-year trends in Approaches+ and Meets+ attainment rates on the mathematics and reading *STAAR* and *EOC* subtests for all grade levels were negative.

Grades Three to Five DL STAAR Reading Outcomes by Testing Language

Rates of grade three to five Approaches+ and Meets+ attainment rates were higher for NonELs than ELs in both OWDL and TWDL, regardless of test language. Rates of grade three to five OWDL students at the Approaches+ and Meets+ performance standard were higher for students who took the subtest in Spanish than in English for both ELs and NonELs. Rates of TWDL students at the Approaches+ and Meets+ performance standard were lower for students who took the subtest in Spanish than in English for both ELs and NonELs. Over two years, Approaches+ and Meets+ rates decreased for all groups.

What were the 2021 *STAAR* outcomes for reclassified monitored ELs?

Monitored reclassified students as a group performed notably well at the Approaches+ and Meets+ performance standard overall on *STAAR* and *EOC* subtests. Overall, monitored students consistently attained the Approaches+ and Meets+ *STAAR* and *EOC* performance standards at higher rates than other NonELs and all ELs, regardless of the subject. With a few exceptions, 2021 rates on *STAAR* and *EOCs* were lower than 2019 rates for all groupings on all subjects.

What were the 2021 academic outcomes for long-term ELs?

TELPAS

Composite ratings for long-term ELs at all grade levels tended to cluster in the intermediate and advanced level of English proficiency, with higher rates of students proficient at the advanced level in grades six to eight (48%) than those in the lower (43%) and higher grades (38%).

STAAR/EOCs

Rates of long-term ELs at the Approaches+ standard ranged from 47 percent on the English I *EOC* to 75 on *STAAR* reading grades in three to five. Rates of long-term ELs at the Meets+ standard ranged from 25 percent on *STAAR* mathematics and reading in grades six to eight to 49 percent on *STAAR* reading in grades three to five. Generally, long-term ELs performed similarly on the mathematics and reading *STAAR* subtests within the same standard, whereas results were mixed for *EOCs*.

TELPAS by *STAAR/EOCs*

For all *STAAR* and *EOC* subjects, the rates of long-term ELs attaining both Approaches+ and Meets+ increased as *TELPAS* English proficiency rating increased.

How did EL and monitored student participation in magnet programs compare to NonEL peers?

Qualified ELs were accepted to at least one magnet program at higher rates (71%) than NonELs (67%) and at lower rates than monitored students (74%) and participated in magnet programs at lower rates (25%) than NonELs (42%) and monitored students (80%). Over one year, although the percentage of students who were accepted to at least one magnet program increased for all groups (range: +3 percentage points, NonELs to +16 percentage points, ELs), the percentage that participated decreased for ELs (-31 percentage points) and NonELs (-21 percentage points).

How did Dallas ISD outcomes for ELs compare to other Texas large, urban districts and the state on select TEA accountability measures in 2020-21?

District rates of ELs performing at the higher English proficiency levels on the 2021 *TELPAS* were generally comparable to or lower than state and other Texas large, urban district rates. District performance level rates of ELs on *STAAR* and *EOCs* were generally comparable to or higher than state and other Texas large, urban district rates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the key findings, the following recommendations are offered for stakeholders.

Continue to examine African American and economically disadvantaged opt-in student participation in TWDL programs. In 2020-21, 64 percent (African American) and 77 percent (economically disadvantaged) of TWDL campuses had lower percentages of African American or economically disadvantaged students, than at the campus overall. Efforts should continue to educate more NonEL parents about the benefits of TWDL program participation to bring the participation percentages more in line with that of the campus overall.

Explore reasons for lower EL participation in magnet programs. ELs (25%) participated in magnet programs at lower rates than NonELs (42%) and monitored students (80%). Program leadership and evaluators should explore reasons for these findings and plan to appropriately bolster EL participation.

Continue focusing on increasing EL achievement on the *STAAR* performance standards. With a few exceptions, two-year trends in Approaches+ and Meets+ attainment rates on *STAAR* and *EOCs* were negative. Although COVID-19 had an impact on *STAAR* achievement throughout the district, increasing EL achievement on *STAAR* was a BE/ESL Department goal prior to COVID-19. Thus, the department should continue to focus on providing academic support to ELs in order to improve attainment rates.

Continue efforts to increase EL progression and reduce EL regression on *TELPAS*. ELs overall, as well as DL students in TWDL and SECDL, ESL students overall, sheltered students overall, and immigrant students overall, exceeded the BE/ESL Department goal to at least maintain the percentage of ELs who regressed on *TELPAS* composite from 2019 to 2021. That said sheltered students overall regressed at higher rates than they progressed in 2021. The BE/ESL Department should continue efforts to increase progression rates and reduce regression rates to ensure students are gaining English proficiency.

REFERENCES

Palladino, D., Mickelson, R., Hinkley, S., & Voss, S. (2019) 2018-19 Evaluation of the Bilingual and English as a Second Language Programs. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

Voss, S. (2020) 2019-20 Evaluation of Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

Voss, S. (2021) 2020-21 Evaluation of the Special Education for English Learners Program. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

Voss, S. & Kim, J. (2021) 2020-21 Evaluation of Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language Programs. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

EA21-126-4

Sydney Voss, Ph.D., Evaluation Analyst II **Joohee G. Kim, M.A., Evaluation Analyst II**

©2021 Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD)
Mail a written request for permission to use or reproduce any part of this document to:
Dallas ISD Department of Evaluation and Assessment; H. B. Bell School Support Center; 2909 Buckner Blvd.; Box10; Dallas, TX 75228

An electronic version of this report and the full 2020-21 report can be found at www.dallasisd.org/Page/888.
For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.