

English Language Learners

DEFINITION

English Language Learners is the percentage of all public school children (preschool through grade 12) who are receiving English as a Second Language services or bilingual education services in Rhode Island public schools.

SIGNIFICANCE

English Language Learner (ELL) students are the fastest growing student population in the U.S.¹ Nationally and in Rhode Island, there are large achievement gaps between ELL and non-ELL students, with ELL students having lower rates of math and reading achievement than non-ELL students.² Many children of immigrants face challenges to succeeding in school, including poverty, limited access to health care, and low parental education levels, that may contribute to these achievement gaps.³

ELL students enter school without the English skills necessary for full participation in and access to the education system. They face diverse challenges based on their home language, immigration status, academic background, and socioeconomic status.^{4,5} Successful ELL programs strategically use ongoing assessments of student progress, have highly qualified teachers trained to teach ELL students, address students' learning, language, and cultural needs.^{6,7,8}

Additionally, ELL students and children in immigrant families are more

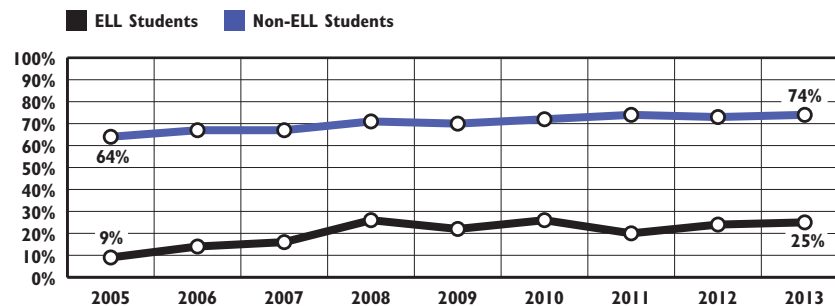
likely to attend schools that are under-resourced, urban, large, serve high proportions of minority students, and located in high-poverty communities.^{9,10} In the 2013-2014 school year in Rhode Island, ELL students were 7% of total students (10,233). Of these, 88% were enrolled in free or reduced-price lunch programs and 76% lived in the four core cities.¹¹

Children of immigrants believe that school prepares them to get ahead and most hope to go to college. Schools that foster relationships and offer personalized instruction by effective teachers can help ELL students succeed.^{12,13}

In the 2013-2014 school year, ELL students in Rhode Island public schools spoke 85 different languages. The majority (77%) spoke Spanish, 7% spoke Asian languages, 6% spoke Creole or Patois, 3% spoke Portuguese, 1% spoke African languages, and 6% spoke other or multiple languages.¹⁴

Bilingual education in early grades can significantly improve English reading proficiency.¹⁵ During the 2013-2014 school year, 14% percent of ELL students were enrolled in a bilingual program and 86% were enrolled in an English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Bilingual programs are offered in the Central Falls and Providence school districts and at the International Charter School.¹⁶

Fourth-Grade Reading Proficiency, English Language Learner Students and Non-ELL Students, 2005-2013



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, *New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)*, October 2005-2013.

◆ In October 2013, 25% of fourth-grade ELL students scored at or above proficiency in reading on the *New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)*, compared to 9% in 2005.¹⁷

◆ While the achievement gap in fourth-grade reading has been reduced from 55% in 2005 to 49% in 2013, ELL students are consistently performing lower than their non-ELL peers.¹⁸

Early English Language Learning

◆ As of September 1, 2014, there were 4,817 children under age five born to a mother who did not speak English in Rhode Island.¹⁹ In the 2013-2014 school year, 49% of all ELL students in Rhode Island were in grades preschool to grade three.²⁰

◆ For young children growing up in homes where English is not the first language, the quality, type, and amount of early childhood education can help boost English language development and kindergarten readiness of ELL students.²¹ A consistent approach to language development, common curriculum, and aligned assessment from preschool to third grade can help young ELL students gain English skills and reading proficiency and set the stage for future academic success.²²

Table 43.

English Language Learner Students, Rhode Island, 2013-2014

SCHOOL DISTRICT	NUMBER OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER STUDENTS				TOTAL # OF ELL STUDENTS	% OF TOTAL DISTRICT
	TOTAL # OF STUDENTS	ELEMENTARY (GRADES PRE-K-5)	MIDDLE (GRADES 6-8)	HIGH (GRADES 9-12)		
Barrington	3,237	38	*	*	44	1%
Bristol Warren	3,395	77	17	*	96	3%
Burrillville	2,379	0	*	*	*	<1%
Central Falls	2,692	399	114	228	741	28%
Charlho	3,383	*	*	*	10	<1%
Coventry	4,769	*	*	*	14	<1%
Cranston	10,177	397	118	81	596	6%
Cumberland	4,490	67	19	*	95	2%
East Greenwich	2,360	*	*	*	10	<1%
East Providence	5,265	140	31	26	197	4%
Exeter-West Greenwich	1,582	*	*	*	13	1%
Foster	284	0	NA	NA	0	0%
Foster-Glocester	1,148	NA	0	0	0	0%
Glocester	499	0	NA	NA	0	0%
Jamestown	492	*	*	0	*	1%
Johnston	2,991	77	12	*	98	3%
Lincoln	3,095	17	*	*	24	1%
Little Compton	257	0	0	0	0	0%
Middletown	2,267	46	20	16	82	4%
Narragansett	1,366	*	0	*	*	<1%
New Shoreham	117	*	*	*	10	9%
Newport	1,994	56	15	32	103	5%
North Kingstown	3,948	39	*	13	59	1%
North Providence	3,459	55	11	13	79	2%
North Smithfield	1,724	*	0	*	*	<1%
Pawtucket	8,750	638	174	252	1,064	12%
Portsmouth	2,628	*	*	*	*	<1%
Providence	23,799	3,448	921	1,087	5,456	23%
Scituate	1,403	0	0	0	0	0%
Smithfield	2,343	10	*	0	11	<1%
South Kingstown	3,333	29	0	*	31	1%
Tiverton	1,796	*	*	*	10	1%
Warwick	9,061	78	11	13	102	1%
West Warwick	3,348	56	*	12	77	2%
Westerly	3,010	33	*	*	48	2%
Woonsocket	5,649	286	106	95	487	9%
Charter Schools	4,952	481	108	41	630	13%
State-Operated Schools	1,773	0	0	20	20	1%
UCAP	138	NA	0	0	0	0%
Four Core Cities	40,889	4,771	1,315	1,662	7,748	19%
Remainder of State	91,600	1,273	304	258	1,835	2%
Rhode Island	139,353	6,525	1,727	1,981	10,233	7%

Sources of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department Education, 2013-2014 school year. Total number of English Language Learner students is the number of students in each district who were actively enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual education programs in the 2013-2014 school year. Students who are not yet fully English proficient but have exited ESL or bilingual education programs to regular education are not included in these numbers.

*Fewer than 10 students are in this category. Actual numbers are not shown to protect student confidentiality. These students are still counted in district totals and in the four core cities, remainder of the state, and state totals.

NA indicates that the school district does not serve students at that grade level or that no data are available.

Due to a change in methodology, the percentage of English Language Learner students by district cannot be compared with percentages before the 2004 Factbook. The “% of Total District” is based on the total number of English Language Learners divided by the “Total # of Students,” which is the average daily membership in the districts of instruction. The charter schools that reported ELL students are Achievement First Rhode Island, Blackstone Academy, Blackstone Valley Prep, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, The Learning Community, Segue Institute for Learning, Sheila C. “Skip” Nowell Leadership Academy, and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts. State-operated schools with ELL students are William M. Davies Career & Technical High School and DCYF Schools. UCAP is the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

- ¹ Calderón, M., Slavin, R. & Sánchez, M. (2011). Effective instruction for English learners. *The Future of Children*, 21(1), 103-119.
- ^{2,13} Huguley, J. (2013). *Latino students in Rhode Island: A review of local and national performances*. Providence, RI: The Latino Policy Institute at Roger Williams University.

(continued on page 183)

(continued from page 131)

References for Children Receiving Preschool Special Education Services

- ³ National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities. (2012). *Overview of Early Intervention*. Retrieved February 21, 2013, from www.nichcy.org
- ⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (n.d.). *Developmental screening fact sheet*. Retrieved January 9, 2014, from www.cdc.gov
- ^{7,11,13,14,15} Rhode Island Department of Education, June 2014 special education census.
- ⁸ National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (n.d.). *Early identification: Public awareness*. Retrieved February 21, 2013, from www.ectacenter.org
- ⁹ Meisels, S. J. & Atkins-Burnett, S. (2005). *Developmental screening in early childhood: A guide*. (5th edition). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- ¹⁰ *Child Outreach screening guidelines*. (2009). Providence, RI: Rhode Island Department of Education.
- ¹² Boyle, C. A. et al. (2011). Trends in the prevalence of developmental disabilities in U.S. children, 1997-2008. *Pediatrics*, 127(6), 1034-1042.
- ¹⁶ Buisse, V. (2012). Access, participation, and supports: A framework for improving inclusive early education opportunities for children with disabilities. In C. Pianta, W. S. Barnett, L. M. Justice., & S. M. Sheridan, (Eds.), *Handbook of early childhood education* (pp. 480-506). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

(continued from page 133)

References for Public School Enrollment and Demographics

- ^{2,3,5,7} Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2004 and October 1, 2014.
- ^{4,6} Rhode Island Department of Education, 2013-2014 school year.
- ⁸ Hussar, W. J. & Bailey, T. M. (2011). *Projections of education statistics to 2020*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- ^{9,10} *Public Schoolhouse Assessment*. (2013). Providence, RI: Rhode Island Department of Education.

(continued from page 135)

References for Children Enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten

- ¹⁰ Bassok, D. & Rorem, A. (2014). Is kindergarten the new first grade?: The changing nature of kindergarten in the age of accountability. *EdPolicyWorks Working Paper Series*, No. 20. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia.
- ¹¹ Chetty, R., Friedman, J. N., Hilger, N., Saez, E., Schanzenbach, D. W. & Yagan, D. (2010). \$320,000 kindergarten teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(3), 22-25.
- ^{12,13,14,16} Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2014.
- ¹⁵ Rhode Island Department of Education, June 2014.
- ^{17,18} Walston, J. & West, J. (2004). *Full-day and half-day kindergarten in the United States: Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, kindergarten class of 1998-99*. (NCES 2004-078). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics.

(continued from page 137)

References for Out-of-School Time

- ⁹ *21st Century Community Learning Centers providing afterschool and summer learning supports to communities nationwide*. (2012). Washington, DC: Afterschool Alliance. Retrieved January 31, 2013, from www.afterschoolalliance.org
- ¹⁰ Rhode Island Department of Education, 21st Century Community Learning Center programs, 2013 summer and 2013-2014 school year.
- ¹¹ Vinson, M., Marchand, J., Sparr, M. & Moroney, D. (2013). *Rhode Island 21st Century Community Learning Center program evaluation: Evaluation report 2011-12*. Chicago, IL: American Institutes for Research.
- ¹² Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, licensed school-age child care programs and slots, January 2015.
- ¹³ Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children, programs participating in BrightStars, January 2015.

(continued from page 139)

References for English Language Learners

- ³ Mather, M. (2009). *Reports on America: Children in immigrant families chart new path*. Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau.
- ^{4,8,9} *Educating English language learners*. (2013). Portland, OR: Grantmakers for Education.
- ^{5,7,15} Russakoff, D. (2011). *PreK-3rd: Raising the educational performance of English language learners*. New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development.
- ⁶ Horwitz, A. R., et al. (2009). *Succeeding with English language learners: Lessons learned from the Great City Schools*. Washington, DC: The Council of the Great City Schools.
- ^{11,14,16,20} Rhode Island Department of Education, 2013-2014 school year.
- ^{10,12} Suárez-Orozco, C., Suárez-Orozco, M. M. & Todorova, I. (2008). *Learning a new land: Immigrant students in American society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- ^{17,18} Rhode Island Department of Education, *New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)*, October 2008-2013.
- ¹⁹ Rhode Island Department of Health, KIDSNET, 2014.
- ²¹ Espinosa, L. M. (2013). *Early education for dual language learners: Promoting school readiness and early school success*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- ²² Espinosa, L. M. (2013). *PreK-3rd: Challenging common myths about dual language learners: An update to the Seminal 2008 Report*. New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development.

(continued from page 141)

References for K-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services

- ^{1,3} *Caught in the crisis: Students with disabilities in U.S. high schools*. (2011). Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.
- ² O'Day, B. & Stapleton, D. (2009). *Transforming disability policy for youth and young adults with disabilities*. Washington, DC: Center for Studying Disability Policy.

⁴ U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *Building the legacy: IDEA 2004*. Retrieved February 11, 2015, from www.idea.ed.gov

- ⁵ U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. (2006). *IDEA reauthorized statute: Changes in initial evaluation and reevaluation*. Retrieved December 23, 2012, from www.idea.ed.gov
- ⁶ *Twenty-five years of educating children with disabilities: The good news and the work ahead*. (2002). Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum & Center on Education Policy.
- ⁷ National Center for Learning Disabilities. (n.d.). *Section 504 and IDEA comparison chart*. Retrieved February 11, 2015, from www.nclld.org
- ⁸ Boyle, C. A. et al. (2011). Trends in the prevalence of developmental disabilities in U.S. children, 1997-2008. *Pediatrics*, 127(6), 1034-1042.
- ⁹ Cortiella, C. (2006). *NCLB and IDEA: What parents of students with disabilities need to know and do*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.
- ¹⁰ U.S. Department of Education. (2014). *New accountability framework raises the bar for state special education programs*. Retrieved February 16, 2015, from www.ed.gov
- ¹¹ Rhode Island Department of Education, *New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP)*, October 2013.
- ¹² Rhode Island Department of Education, Class of 2014 four-year graduation rates.
- ^{13,14,15} Rhode Island Department of Education, Office for Diverse Learners, June 30, 2014 Special Education Census.

(continued from page 143)

References for Student Mobility

- ¹³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-2013. Table B07012.
- ^{14,19,20,21,22} Rhode Island Department of Education, 2013-2014 school year.
- ¹⁵ Rhode Island Department of Education, 2012-2013 school year.