



Austin Independent School District

Department of Program Evaluation

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BILINGUAL/ESL PROGRAMS EVALUATION SUMMARY: 2005-2006

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Texas law requires that every student with a primary home language other than English, who is identified as limited English proficient (LEP), be provided with a full opportunity to participate in a bilingual education or English as a second language program. To ensure educational equity, the law also states that districts must seek certified teaching personnel and assess these students' achievement in the state-mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum. Austin Independent School District (AISD) provides two programs to serve LEP students or English language learners (ELLs): Bilingual Education (BE), which provides instruction in English and the native language (e.g., Spanish, Vietnamese, and Korean) in the content areas; and English as a Second Language (ESL), which provides intensive English instruction. ESL is both a component of BE and a stand-alone program. The goal of the BE program is to enable ELLs to become competent in comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing through the development of literacy and academic skills in the students' primary language. The goal of the ESL program is to develop students' literacy through the integrated use of second language instructional methods.

In compliance with state law, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) on each campus makes instructional placement and testing decisions intended to assure that students will be served by the program that best addresses their language needs. At each school, the roles of the LPAC members are to evaluate the academic progress and language of instruction of ELLs, and to determine if ELLs will take the state assessments in English or in Spanish. The program in which a particular student participates depends on the student's home language, grade level, language dominance, and program availability. Parental permission is required for an ELL to participate in either language program. If parental permission for program participation is not granted, the student participates in an all-English classroom without BE or ESL services provided.

EVALUATION MANDATE

In reference to program evaluation, Chapter §89.1256, of the 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC, 1996) states the following:

a) All districts required to conduct a bilingual education or English as a second language program shall conduct periodic assessment and continuous diagnosis in the languages of instruction to determine program impact and student outcomes in all subject areas. b) Annual reports of educational performance shall reflect the academic progress in either language of the limited English proficient students, the extent to which they are becoming proficient in English, the number of students who have been exited from the bilingual education and English as a second language programs. (TEA, 2005c)

The purposes of this report are to provide information to district program decision makers and staff as well as to comply with the legal mandate. This report presents a brief description of the demographics pertaining to AISD's ELLs, and summarizes their academic achievement in English and Spanish on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and their acquisition of English on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). In addition, academic achievement on TAKS is examined for ELLs who have obtained program exit status. ELLs must meet the passing standard on English TAKS reading/English language arts (ELA) and writing (when grade-appropriate) to obtain program exit status. Unless otherwise noted, all student data summarized in this report were obtained from the district's student data systems. The student demographic data

were part of the district's fall report to the state-required Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

DESCRIPTION OF THE AISD ELL POPULATION

During the 2005-2006 school year, program staff identified 19,356 ELLs (23.8% of the AISD student population). The numbers and percentages of ELLs served in each program and the number and percentage of ELLs whose parents did not approve program services were as follows:

- The BE program served 12,256 (63.3%) ELLs.
- The ESL program served 4,869 (25.1%) ELLs, as well as 1,397 (7.2%) ELLs whose parents did not approve of their participation in the BE program, but approved of their participation in the ESL program.
- Parents of 834 (4.3%) ELLs did not approve services by either the BE or ESL program.

The number of ELLs served in the 2005-2006 BE/ESL programs increased from the previous year by 1,187 students. Parents who did not approve of their children's BE/ESL program participation in 2005-2006 increased by 73 students, compared with the prior year.

Of the 18,522 ELLs who participated in the district's BE/ESL programs:

- 14,130 (76.2%) were in grades pre-K through 6 (elementary school);
- 2,328 (12.5%) were in grades 6 through 8 (middle school); and
- 2,064 (11.1%) were in grades 9 through 12 (high school).

The ethnic distribution of all ELLs (n = 19,356) shows that most (93.8%, n = 18,171) were of Hispanic origin and the next largest

group (4.0%, n = 782) was of Asian origin. The ethnicity of the remaining ELLs (2.2%, n = 403) included American Indian, Alaskan Native, African American, and White (not of Hispanic origin) students.

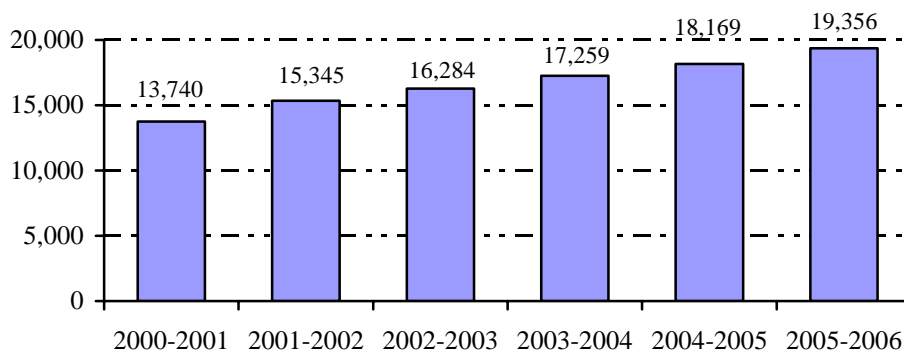
In 2005-2006, most AISD ELLs served were native Spanish speakers (93.8%, n = 17,386). Speakers of Vietnamese comprised the next largest segment of AISD ELLs (1.2%, n = 230), followed by Korean (<1%, n = 174). The remaining ELLs served (5.1%, n = 732) included speakers of other native languages: Arabic, Urdu, French, Farsi (Persian), Hindu, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese, Gujarati, Mandarin, Pilipino/ Tagalog, and Turkish.

Growth in the AISD ELL Population

The AISD ELL population has increased incrementally for the past 18 years (González, 1995, 1999, 2006). Between 2000-2001 and 2005-2006, the population of AISD ELLs increased by 40.8% (n = 5,616) (see Figure 1). The largest year-to-year increase of AISD ELLs occurred from 2000-2001 to 2001-2002 (n = 1,605) and the smallest occurred from 2003-2004 to 2004-2005 (n = 910).

ELLs became an increasingly large percentage of the total AISD student population during this same period. In 2001-2002, ELLs comprised 17.8% of the district's students, and by 2005-2006 the percentage had risen to 23.8% (see Table 1).

Figure 1: Growth of AISD ELL Student Population from 2000-2001 through 2005-2006



Source: AISD PEIMS Student Records, 2000-2001 Through 2005-2006

Table 1: Numbers and Percentages of AISD ELLs Compared with the Total AISD Student Population, 2000-2001 through 2005-2006

School Year	Number of AISD ELLs	Number of AISD Students	Percentage of AISD Students Who Are ELLs
2005-2006	19,356	81,155	23.8%
2004-2005	18,169	79,950	22.7%
2003-2004	17,259	79,007	21.8%
2002-2003	16,284	78,608	20.7%
2001-2002	15,345	77,128	19.9%
2000-2001	13,740	77,362	17.8%

Source: AISD PEIMS Student Records 2003-2004 Through 2005-2006; AISD Student Attendance Records, 1999-2000 Through 2002-2003

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

During the 76th Texas Legislature, Senate Bill 103 mandating a new statewide student assessment program, known as Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills or TAKS, was passed. TAKS has been administered since the 2003-2004 school year and it is anchored in Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills or TEKS, the state-mandated curriculum. The State Board of Education set the TAKS passing standards for each test.

The TAKS tests are administered in reading to students in grades 3 through 9; in writing to students in grades 4 and 7; in ELA to students in grades 10 and 11; in science to students in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11; and in social studies to students in grades 8, 10, and 11. The TAKS are administered in Spanish and English to students in grades 3 through 6. The Spanish TAKS assesses the academic progress of ELLs who receive academic instruction in Spanish while they are learning English.

Satisfactory performance on the TAKS in grade 11 became a prerequisite to earning a high school diploma for students in the class of 2005. Exit level tests for grades 11 and 12 are offered at different times throughout the year for students who have not yet met the standard in one or more subject areas. Students in grades 3 and 5 must pass certain subject areas to be promoted to the next grade as part of the state's Student Success Initiative (SSI) (TEA, 2006f). SSI allows for three administrations of the Spanish or English TAKS in reading for students in grades 3

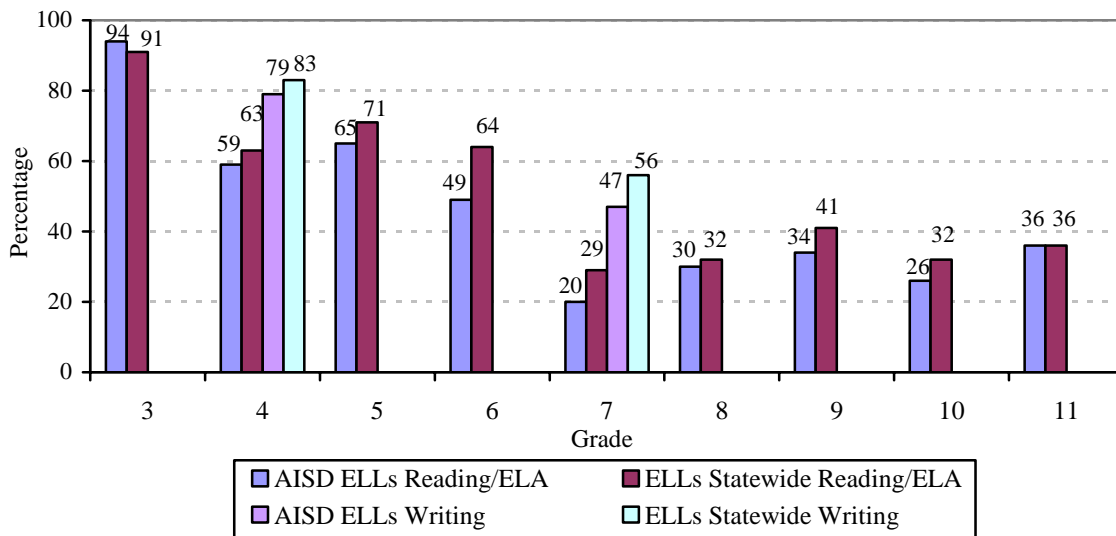
and 5, and in mathematics for students in grade 5.

AISD ELLs' English TAKS Results

Figures 2, 3, and 4 present the English TAKS results for AISD ELLs and ELLs statewide, for students in grades 3 through 11, by subject area, for the 2005-2006 school year (AISD, 2006b; AISD, 2006c; TEA, 2006g; TEA, 2006h). In general, in all five TAKS subject areas, greater percentages of ELLs in the elementary grades met the standard than did ELLs in the middle or high school grades. With respect to TAKS reading for students in grade 3, a greater percentage of AISD ELLs (94%) met the passing standard than did ELLs statewide (91%). For students in grade 11, the same percentage of ELLs in AISD and in the state (36%) met the standard on TAKS reading/ELA. With respect to TAKS mathematics for students in grade 3, the same percentage of each group (75%) met the standard. However, at all other grade levels, across all subject areas, lesser percentages of AISD ELLs met the standards on TAKS, compared with percentages for ELLs statewide.

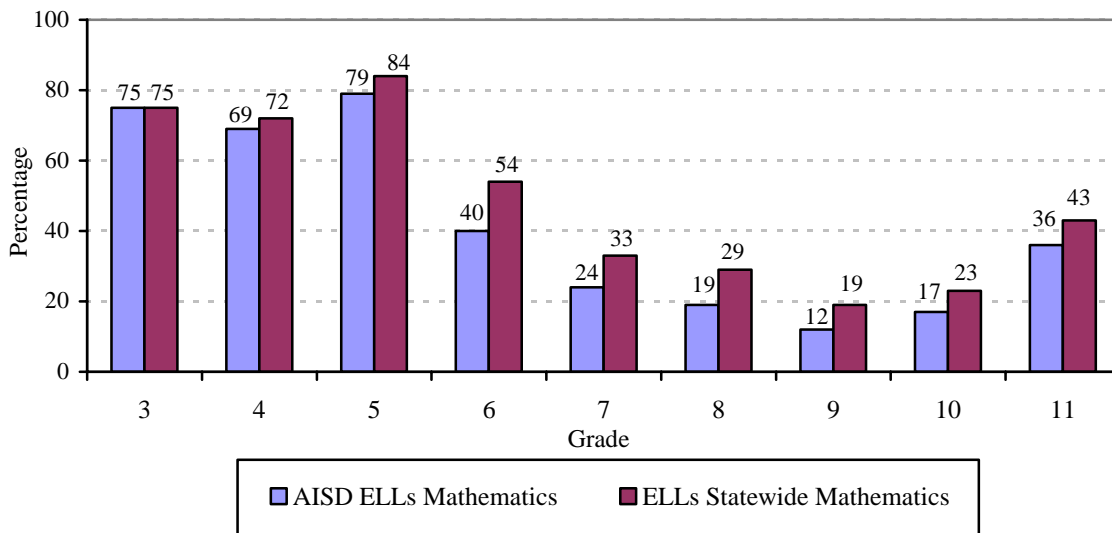
The greatest disparities for TAKS reading/ELA occurred in grade 6, where passing percentages of AISD ELLs and ELLs statewide differed by 15 percentage points. With respect to TAKS mathematics, the greatest difference was in grade 6, where 40% of AISD ELLs passed, compared with 54% of ELLs statewide. The largest difference with respect to TAKS social studies occurred in grade 10, with 28% of AISD ELLs meeting the standard, compared with 41% of ELLs statewide. With respect to TAKS science, the greatest difference was in grade 5, where 34% of AISD ELLs met the standard, compared with 46% of ELLs statewide.

Figure 2: Percentages of AISD ELLs and ELLs Statewide Who Met the Passing Standard on English TAKS Reading/ELA and Writing, by Grade Level, 2005-2006



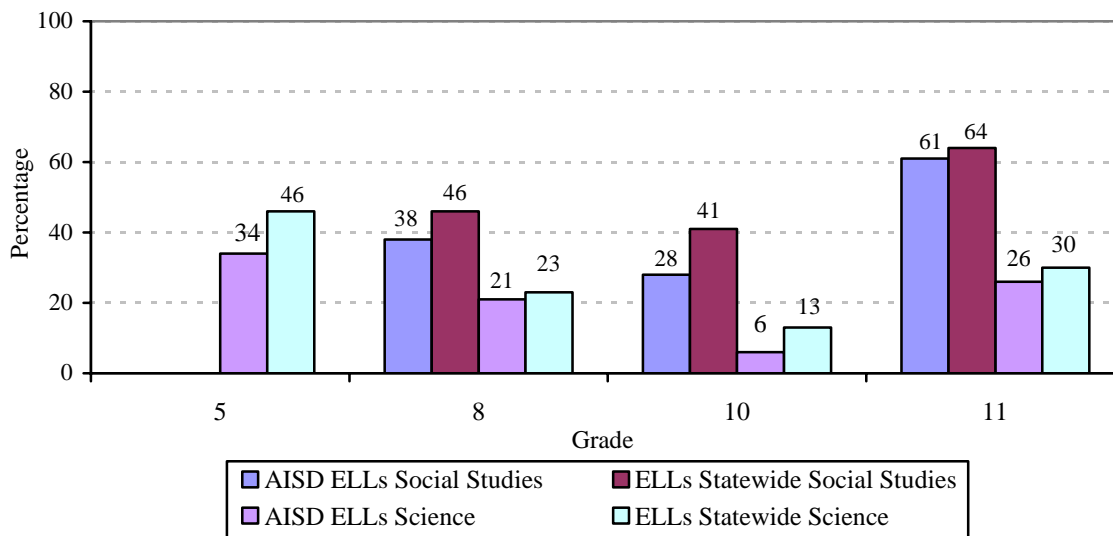
Sources: AISD TAKS District Summary Reports, May 2006; AISD TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grades 3 and 5, June 2006; TEA TAKS Statewide Summary Reports, May 2006; and TEA TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grades 3 and 5, July 2006

Figure 3: Percentages of AISD ELLs and ELLs Statewide Who Met the Passing Standard on English TAKS Mathematics, by Grade Level, 2005-2006



Sources: AISD TAKS District Summary Reports, May 2006; AISD TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grade 5, June 2006; TEA TAKS Statewide Summary Reports, May 2006; and TEA TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grades 3 and 5, July 2006

Figure 4: Percentages of AISD ELLs and ELLs Statewide Who Met the Passing Standard on English TAKS Social Studies and Science, by Grade Level, 2005-2006



Sources: AISD TAKS District Summary Reports, May 2006, and TEA TAKS Statewide Summary Reports, May 2006

The percentages of AISD ELLs who met the standard on English TAKS in all subject areas in school years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 are presented in Tables 2 and 3 (AISD, 2006b). A comparison of the percentages passing by grade level shows that, out of 26 possible comparisons, the numbers of gains and losses with respect to

percentages passing were equal. The largest gain from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006 was on TAKS reading/ELA in grade 10, while the largest loss during that same period was on TAKS science in grade 11. All gains in percentages passing from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006 are in bold text in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: Differences in Percentages of AISD ELLs Who Met the Passing Standard on English TAKS Reading/ELA and Mathematics, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006

Grade	Reading/ELA			Mathematics		
	2005	2006	Difference	2005	2006	Difference
3	95	94	-1	76	75	-1
4	54	59	+2	65	69	+4
5	67	65	-2	80	79	-1
6	44	49	+5	35	40	+5
7	25	20	-5	19	24	+5
8	21	30	+9	16	19	+3
9	27	34	+7	14	12	-2
10	11	26	+15	11	17	+6
11	43	36	-7	45	36	-9

Sources: AISD Management Information Systems; TAKS contractor's electronic files, 2005; 2006; and AISD TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grades 3 and 5, June 2006

Table 3: Differences in Percentages of AISD ELLs Who Met the Passing Standard on English TAKS Writing, Social Studies, and Science, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006

Grade	Writing			Social Studies			Science		
	2005	2006	Difference	2005	2006	Difference	2005	2006	Difference
4	82	79	-3						
5							27	34	+7
7	43	47	+4						
8				39	38	-1		21	*
10				33	28	-5	7	6	-1
11				57	61	+4	41	26	-15

Sources: AISD Management Information Systems; TAKS contractor's electronic files, 2005, 2006; and AISD TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grades 3 and 5, June 2006

*Note: The first administration of the TAKS science in grade 8 was in 2006.

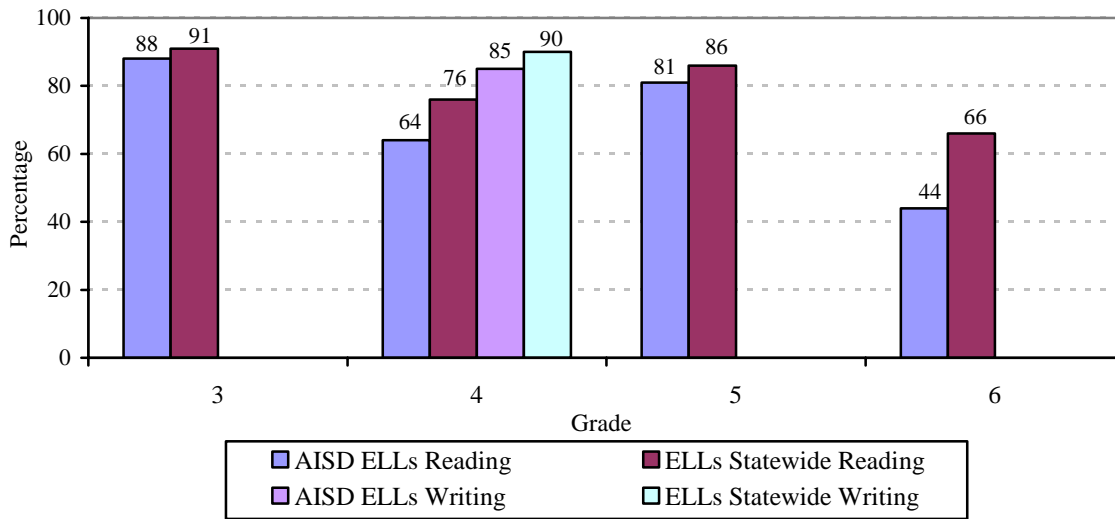
AISD ELLs' Spanish TAKS Results

The Spanish TAKS, also based on the TEKS, is available in grades 3 through 6 for measuring student knowledge and skills in reading, mathematics, writing, and science, among ELLs for whom the Spanish test is appropriate. The LPAC determines whether the English or Spanish TAKS would more appropriately measure the academic knowledge of individual ELLs, based on their native/primary language development, instructional program, and immigrant status.

Figures 5 and 6 present the results of the 2006 Spanish TAKS in reading, writing, mathematics, and science for AISD ELLs

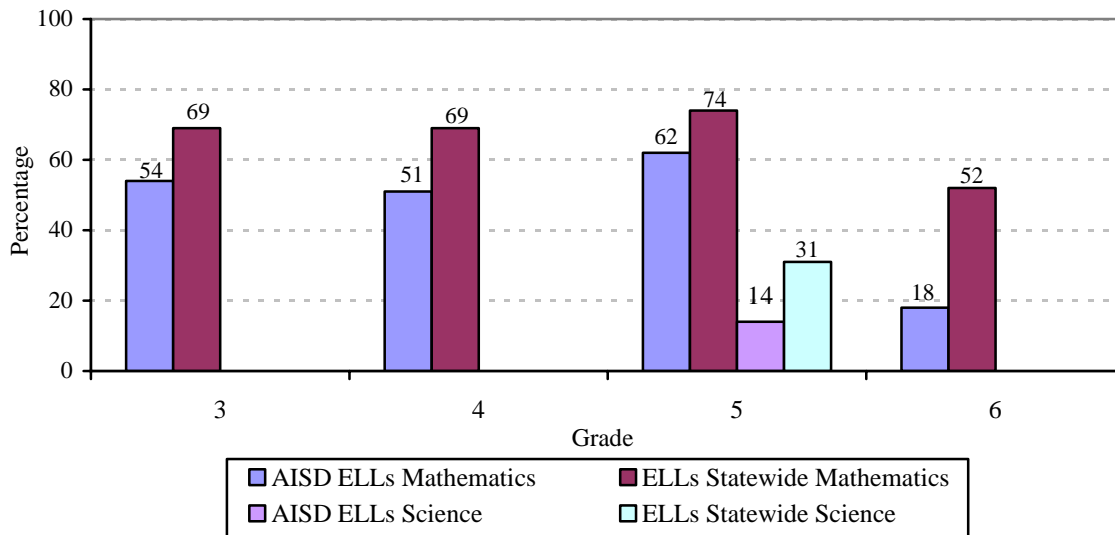
and ELLs statewide (AISD 2006b; AISD, 2006c; TEA, 2006g; TEA, 2006h). The percentages of AISD ELLs who met the passing standard were greater than 80% for students in grades 3 and 5 in reading, and for students in grade 4 in writing. However, for all other grades, lesser percentages of AISD ELLs met the standard in all four subjects on the Spanish TAKS, compared with percentages for ELLs statewide. The greatest disparities in percentages passing between AISD ELLs and ELLs statewide occurred in grade 6 for reading and mathematics. The differences for reading and mathematics were 22 and 34 percentage points, respectively.

Figure 5: Percentages of AISD ELLs and ELLs Statewide Who Met the Passing Standard on Spanish TAKS Reading and Writing, by Grade Level, 2006



Sources: AISD TAKS District Summary Reports, May 2006; AISD TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grades 3 and 5, June 2006; TEA TAKS Statewide Summary Reports, May 2006; and TEA TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grades 3 and 5, July 2006

Figure 6: Percentages of AISD ELLs and ELLs Statewide Who Met the Passing Standard on Spanish TAKS Mathematics and Science, by Grade Level, 2006



Sources: AISD TAKS District Summary Reports, May 2006; AISD TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grade 5, June 2006; TEA TAKS Statewide Summary Reports, May 2006; and TEA TAKS Cumulative Summary Reports for Grades 3 and 5, July 2006

Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 has very specific requirements and objectives that pertain to all states receiving federal funds for LEP students as part of the Title III, Part A grant. TELPAS was developed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to address some of these requirements, known as annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAOs), mandated by Title III, Part A. These objectives address English language proficiency and the progress ELLs are making toward meeting state academic standards. The first federal AMAO is based on the percentage of *ELLs who are making progress in attaining English language proficiency*, as measured by annual gains. The second AMAO is based on *the percentage of ELLs who attain English language proficiency* each year. The third AMAO measures the academic performance of ELLs relative to the academic standards defined by the state for compliance with federal accountability provisions, often referred to as adequately yearly progress (AYP). Since the passing of NCLB (2001), all public school districts, campuses, and states have been evaluated annually for AYP. NCLB identified the following student groups for comparison purposes: all students, African American, Hispanic, White, economically disadvantaged, special education, and LEP students. Because ELLs have been included in the AYP rating system since 2002-2003, the third AMAO was the first to be addressed by the state. Preliminary AYP results from TEA indicate

that AISD met AYP standards for 2005-2006.

In 2005-2006, TEA set targets for the AMAOs and used them to address the progress ELLs were making toward meeting the first and second AMAOs. The targets for ELLs who were making progress in attaining English language proficiency (AMAO No.1) were set at 15% for grades K through 2 and 42% for grades 3 through 12. The targets for ELLs who met the percentages for students attaining English language proficiency (AMAO No. 2) were set at 2.0% for grades K through 2 and 25.5% for grades 3 through 12. AISD ELLs met the TEA targets for both AMAOs, as follows:

- AMAO No. 1 (progress)—35% of ELLs in grades K through 2 and 55% of ELLs in grades 3 through 12 improved their proficiency levels.
- AMAO No. 2 (percent proficient)—7% of ELLs in grades K through 2 and 27% of ELLs in grades 3 through 12 (AISD, 2006a) scored at Advanced High levels.

Title III, Part A grant of NCLB requires states to assess the progress of ELLs in the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while they are learning English. The TELPAS measures progress in the four domains and consists of two major components: the Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE), and the Texas Observation Protocols (TOP). These assessments are administered annually to students in grades K through 12 who have been identified as ELLs, including students who may not be participating in a BE or ESL program. ELLs are administered the TOP in grades K through 2 to assess all four language domains and in grades 3 through 12 to assess listening, speaking, and writing. ELLs in grades 3

through 12 are administered the RPTE to assess reading (TEA, 2006d).

The teachers who administer the TOP must hold teaching credentials and be knowledgeable about the student’s ability to use English in an instructional setting. In fall 2005, teachers were required to participate in one to two days of professional development sessions to “ensure that raters are firmly grounded in the holistic rating rubric. As with all of our state assessments, it is important that this assessment provide a valid and reliable measure of student performance” (TEA, 2005b).

In spring 2005, TEA fully implemented the TOP and adopted the TELPAS composite ratings by assigning weights to the language domains. The weights used in spring 2006 were 5% each for listening and speaking, 75% for reading, and 15% for writing. The language proficiency ratings were Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced High. The composite score was obtained by multiplying each language proficiency rating by the appropriate weight and taking the sum. The composite score became a composite rating according to the values in Table 4 (TEA, 2005a).

Table 4: Conversion Table for TELPAS Composite Scores, 2006

TELPAS Composite Scores	TELPAS Composite Rating
1.0 – 1.5	Beginning
1.6 – 2.5	Intermediate
2.6 – 3.5	Advanced
3.5 – 4.0	Advanced High

Source: TEA correspondence, April 29, 2005

Of the 17,128 AISD TELPAS documents submitted to TEA in 2006, 16,503 (96.3%) included ratings in all four language domains. The Admissions, Review

and Dismissal Committees (ARDs) exempted 166 students (<1.0%) because data were not available in at least one language domain, and 459 (2.6%) students were not rated.

An analysis of AISD TELPAS results for the 2005-2006 school year showed that most bilingual ELLs in grades K (97%), 1 (94%), and 2 (77%) achieved Beginning and Intermediate proficiency ratings. In grade 3, percentages of bilingual ELLs were more evenly dispersed across the proficiency ratings: 22% Beginning, 29% Intermediate, 25% Advanced, and 23% Advanced High. In grades 4, 5, and 6, more than half of the ELLs achieved Advanced or Advanced High proficiency ratings. Thus, as grade level increased, the percentages of bilingual students at the Beginning proficiency level decreased, while the percentages of these students achieving the Advanced proficiency level increased. The average composite ratings for bilingual ELLs by grade level were as follows:

- Beginning in grades K and 1;
- Intermediate in grades 2 and 3; and
- Advanced in grades 4, 5, and 6.

These results reflect the fact that, in the early grades (K through 2), bilingual ELLs are developing their first language and learning content in their first language, while they are receiving some instruction in English. In the upper elementary grades (3 through 5), more of the content instruction is delivered in English, and students are beginning to make the transition into all-English instruction.

The TELPAS data for ESL students indicated that 69% of students in grade K and 50% of students in grade 1 achieved Beginning or Intermediate proficiency ratings. More than 75% of ELLs in grades 3 through 8 and 10 through 12 achieved Advanced or Advanced

High proficiency ratings. ELLs in ESL programs receive their instruction primarily in English using ESL methodology, thus their Advanced and Advanced High proficiency ratings reflect the use of English at all grade levels.

Finally, a comparison of the TELPAS data for AISD ELLs and ELLs statewide revealed some similarities between students. In grade K, 91% of AISD ELLs and 82% of ELLs statewide in BE programs achieved Beginning proficiency levels. In grade 1, 74% of AISD ELLs and 58% of ELLs statewide in BE programs achieved Beginning proficiency levels. By grade 2, 77% of AISD ELLs and 67% of ELLs statewide in BE programs achieved Beginning and Intermediate proficiency levels. Most AISD ELLs and ELLs statewide in ESL programs achieved Intermediate, Advanced, or Advanced High proficiency levels at all grade levels. The largest percentages of AISD ELLs in ESL programs who obtained these proficiency levels (95%) were in grades 5 and 11, and the smallest percentage (74%) was in grade K. The largest percentage of ELLs statewide in ESL programs who obtained these proficiency levels (96%) was in grade 12, and the smallest percentage (63%) was in grade K.

English Proficiency

ELLs must become proficient in English to meet the state's academic performance standards for all students. State law determines the criteria ELLs must meet to exit BE/ESL programs. The exit criteria for AISD ELLs are aligned with those of the state. For ELLs to exit the BE/ESL programs, they must:

- meet the state performance standards for the English criterion-referenced assessment instrument (TAKS) for reading and writing (when available) at grade level, as required in the Texas Education Code 39.023; or
- score at or above the 40th percentile on both the English reading and the ELA sections of a TEA-approved norm-referenced assessment instrument.

Campus LPACs decide whether or not to exit an ELL from BE/ESL program service, based upon student performance on standardized tests that determine English proficiency. When the committees deliberate, they review students' performance on English TAKS, TELPAS results, and any other data pertinent to students' success in an all-English classroom. All students who are exited from the BE/ESL programs are monitored for two years to ensure they continue to be successful in an all-English program.

Exited Students in 2005-2006

To obtain exit status in 2005-2006, ELLs had to meet the standard in fall 2005 or spring 2006 English TAKS in the following areas: reading in grades 3 through 9, or ELA in grades 10 and 11; writing in grades 4 and 7 or have scored Advanced High on TELPAS writing in grades 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 12; and scored Fluent-speaker on a state-approved English oral language proficiency assessment instrument. To meet state reporting criteria, exited ELLs must receive a PEIMS LEP exit code in the district's Texas LEP student file prior to the start of the next school year. The district's LEP data specialist monitors exit data for all AISD students.

An analysis of AISD ELLs' 2006 TAKS performance indicates that 1,250 students were eligible to be exited from LEP status, based on

successfully meeting the 2006 TAKS passing standards. Among the ELLs who exited the BE/ESL program were 695 (55.6%) students in grades 3 through 5, 290 (23.2%) students in grades 6 through 8, and 265 (21.2%) students in grades 9 through 12.

Because ELLs are expected to meet the TAKS passing standards in all content areas, further analyses were conducted to summarize their achievement on each TAKS subject test. Exited ELLs' performance on

TAKS is summarized in Table 5. The greatest percentages passing were for TAKS reading/ELA (97.1%) and writing (96.0%), followed by social studies (79.7%) and mathematics (72.8%). In 2005-2006, TAKS science for grade 8 was added to the state assessment system. The State Board of Education mandated a three-year phase-in process for all the previous TAKS assessments that were used to determine the final passing standard. The TAKS science for grade 8 is in the first phase of this process.

Table 5: AISD ELLs with Exited Status Who Met the Passing Standards on English TAKS Reading/ELA, Mathematics, Writing, Social Studies, and Science, 2005-2006

Subject	Number of Students Tested	Number of Students Who Passed	Percentage of Students Who Passed
Reading/ELA	1,193	1,159	97.1%
Mathematics	1,160	845	72.8%
Writing	251	241	96.0%
Social Studies	242	193	79.7%
Science	413	227	54.9%

Source: AISD 2006 TAKS records, as of September 2006, Department of Program Evaluation

TELPAS for ELLs Exiting LEP Status

The current state and federal academic expectations for ELLs are that these students will demonstrate annual growth in English language proficiency, as measured on TELPAS. When ELLs assessed in English receive a TELPAS rating of Advanced High, [the] students are able to use academic English in classroom activities with little English language support from others, even when learning unfamiliar material. Students at this level have a large enough vocabulary in English to communicate clearly and fluently in most situations. (TEA, 2006e)

When ELL students earn a TELPAS rating of Advanced, they are capable of using academic English. Although they may

need English-language support to manage unfamiliar grammar and vocabulary, they can communicate clearly and fluently in most situations. Most of the ELLs who successfully met the passing standard on the 2006 English TAKS reading/ELA and writing also obtained 2006 TELPAS proficiency ratings of Advanced (27.1%) or Advanced High (69.8%).

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Both BE and ESL programs emphasize the mastery of English language skills, as well as the mastery of skills in mathematics, science, and social studies, as critical parts of the academic goals for all students to achieve in school. Through the years, an increasing number of ELLs have participated in the state's student assessment system because the state's

rules guiding student exemptions have become more rigorous. NCLB requires ELLs to be one of the groups examined for AYP measures and has very specific requirements that pertain to ELLs who participate in programs funded by Title III, Part A. Academic performance standards for ELLs are the same as they are for all students. While they are becoming academically proficient in English, ELLs must participate in the state's assessment program. Thus, in some situations, their academic performance can affect school and district accountability ratings. As the number of ELLs continues to increase in schools, their English language acquisition and general academic success in the state's assessment programs have become an important concern for all educators and administrators.

In recent years, the academic performance of AISD ELLs on TAKS has improved at certain grade levels and in some subject areas, but a persistent achievement gap remains between AISD ELLs and ELLs statewide, especially beyond grade 5. Therefore, the following recommendations are offered to AISD decision makers. District and campus staff should provide more comprehensive academic support to AISD ELLs at middle and high schools where the TAKS passing rates have been low. Along with English language development for ELLs, instruction in all academic subjects must be explicit and concentrate on subject-specific vocabulary as well as broad literacy skills. ELLs should be taught how to assess their own academic progress so that they can recognize when additional academic support is needed. ELLs

must have opportunities to participate in any program or service on campus that supports students who are struggling academically. LPACs are very important for ELLs, especially in their role of monitoring the academic achievement of ELLs. This role allows LPACs to assess the progress ELLs are making toward English language acquisition and academic achievement in general. When necessary, LPACs can intervene on behalf of ELLs by being their advocates. For instance, if the LPAC members determine from their work with ELLs that teachers at a campus are not familiar with ESL methodology or sheltered instruction, the LPAC members can recommend that campus professional development sessions address such topics. Finally, district and campus staff must carefully monitor ELLs who have exited LEP status to ensure they are passing all their courses and are working toward meeting graduation requirements. District and campus staff should give recently-exited ELLs information regarding any TAKS readiness or accelerated instruction programs occurring on or off campus, that provide students with additional academic support to assure their academic success.

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