

April 10, 2007

English Learners and Economic Impact Aid

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Presented To:

Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
On Education Finance





Facts About California's EL Students

- ☑ **25 percent** (1.6 million) of California's K-12 students are ELs.
- ☑ **85 percent** speak Spanish as their primary language.
- ☑ **85 percent** are economically disadvantaged.
- ☑ **11 percent** receive special education services.
- ☑ **8 to 10 percent** are redesignated as being "Fluent English Proficient" each year.
- ☑ **At least 6 percent** have attended California schools less than 12 months.
- ☑ Of all EL students, **61 percent** are in elementary school (grades Kindergarten-5), **20 percent** are in middle school (grades 6-8), and **19 percent** are in high school (grades 9-12).



Many EL Students Concentrated Within a Small Number of Districts

Roughly 40 Percent of State's EL Students Attend Just 20 Districts

District	Number	Percent	
		EL Students In State	District Enrollment
Los Angeles	283,861	18.6%	41%
San Diego	32,674	2.1	27
Santa Ana	32,552	2.1	58
Garden Grove	23,133	1.5	47
Fresno	22,081	1.4	29
Long Beach	21,785	1.4	24
San Bernardino	18,920	1.2	33
Fontana	16,971	1.1	40
Compton	16,338	1.1	54
San Francisco	16,068	1.1	30
Pomona	14,804	1.0	44
Sacramento	13,363	0.9	29
Montebello	13,245	0.9	38
Anaheim	12,255	0.8	59
Ontario-Montclair Elementary	11,956	0.8	47
Oakland	11,348	0.7	27
Moreno Valley	11,110	0.7	30
Sweetwater Union High	10,437	0.7	25
Elk Grove	10,363	0.7	17
Coachella Valley	10,246	0.7	62
Totals	603,510	39.6%	



EL Student Performance



California English Language Development Test (CELDT)

- Majority of EL students score at intermediate or advanced proficiency levels (levels 3 and 4 out of a possible 5).
- Performance levels differ by primary language.
- Our analysis of individual student scores suggests overall EL student progress is slow.



California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)

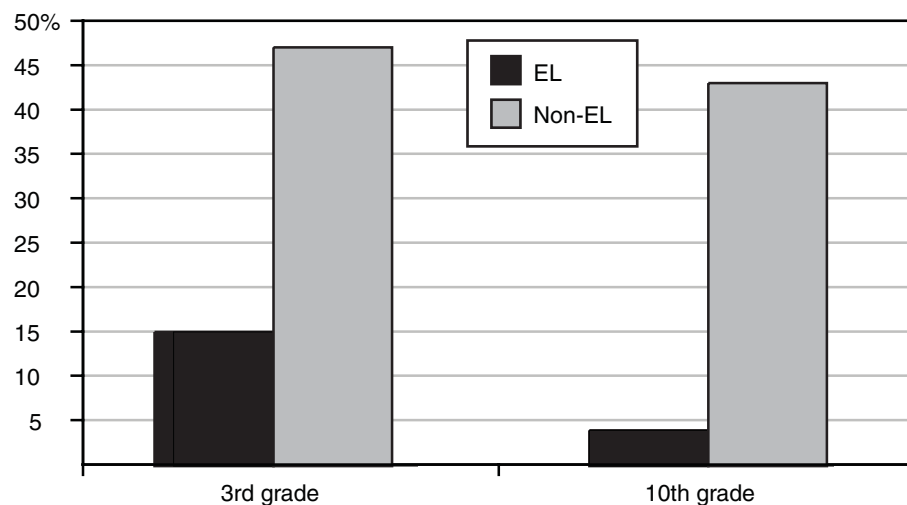
- About 40 percent of EL tenth graders passed the English portion and about half passed the mathematics portion of the exam in 2005-06.



Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Exam

Large Achievement Gap Between EL and Non-EL Students

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient or Above on 2005 STAR English Language Arts Test





Current Programs for EL Students

Program	2007-08 (Proposed)	Description
Discretionary Funds <i>(In Millions)</i>		
Economic Impact Aid	\$1,012.7	Funds districts to provide supplementary services to EL and economically disadvantaged students.
Title III Limited-English Proficient	158.6 ^a	Funds districts to provide supplementary services to EL students.
English Language Acquisition Program	63.4	Funds districts to provide supplementary services to EL students in grades 4-8.
Professional Development		
Mathematics and Reading Professional Development Program—EL component	\$25.0	Funds districts to provide teachers of EL students with professional development in reading and mathematics.
Bilingual Teacher Training Program	2.1	Funds county offices of education to assist K-12 teachers in attaining the training and authorizations necessary to teach EL students.
Assessment/Accountability		
CELD ^b	\$9.7 11.9 ^a	Funds state-level contract and administration costs. Also provides \$5 per EL to assist districts with local administration.
Parent Outreach		
Community-Based English Tutoring program	\$50.0	Funds schools to provide free or subsidized English language instruction to parents or other adult members of the community who pledge to tutor EL students.
Clearinghouse for Multi-Lingual Documents (CMD)	0.3 ^a	Funds the California Department of Education (CDE) to develop an electronic clearinghouse for districts to access and share translated documents.
Totals	\$1,333.7	
One-Time Funds 2006-07 Budget		
EL instructional materials	\$30.0	Funds districts to purchase materials for EL students to supplement the core instructional program.
Best practices pilot project	20.0	Provides three-year competitive grants to schools to support or expand successful programs for EL students. Corresponding evaluation (unfunded) is intended to identify best practices for the state.
Document translation	0.5 ^a	Funds CDE to translate commonly used documents into multiple languages and post them on its CMD Web site.
^a Federal funds. ^b California English Language Development Test.		



Findings

- ☑ **Data.** State lacks adequate data to make informed decisions about programs designed to improve EL student outcomes.
- ☑ **Funding.** State funds EL students at implicit weight of 1.13.
 - State funds economically disadvantaged students at implicit weight of between 1.11 and 1.26.
- ☑ **Instructional Approach.** Research suggests instructional setting is not the most important factor in EL student success. Little data on what approaches are effective.
- ☑ **Instructional Materials.** EL students must use core instructional materials for reading and language arts.
 - Districts may select additional materials to supplement core curriculum.
- ☑ **Teacher Quality.** Teachers report they do not feel sufficiently prepared to support EL students.
- ☑ **Assessment and Accountability.** In current system, individual EL student progress is not measured.
 - This is especially problematic because EL group is always changing.
 - This means existing system does poor job of holding schools/districts accountable for improving EL student outcomes.



Recommendations



Adopt a more strategic approach to funding EL students.

- Determine explicit target weight to guide annual budget decisions.



Fund evaluation of EL “best practices” pilot project.

- Provide between \$500,000 and \$800,000 in one-time monies for evaluation of effective instructional approaches, instructional materials, and professional development programs designed to enhance EL student achievement.



Fund evaluation of teacher preparation programs.

- Provide between \$250,000 and \$500,000 in one-time monies to evaluate effectiveness of teacher preparation programs at improving EL student achievement.



Modify state assessments to measure student progress.

- Require California Department of Education to contract for a report on the feasibility of vertically scaling the state’s assessment system and report back by April 1, 2008.



Economic Impact Aid (EIA)



Background

- Program provides districts with funding to offer supplemental services for economically disadvantaged and English learner (EL) students.
- Big changes in 2006-07: new formula for distributing funds and \$350 million augmentation.
- In 2007-08, Governor's budget proposes \$1.0 billion for EIA.



Previous Distribution Formula Was Outdated and Problematic

- District allocations appeared arbitrary and were unpredictable.
- Poverty was most important factor in formula, so districts with large numbers of poor students received far more funding than those with large numbers of EL students.
- Questions arose over suitability and availability of CalWORKs data (which was used as a proxy for poverty).



New Distribution Formula Improves Transparency and Predictability

- Provides same amount of funding for EL and economically disadvantaged students.
- Provides additional funding to districts with high concentrations (more than 50 percent) of EIA eligible students.
- Changes measure of poverty from CalWORKs counts to federal Title I student counts.
- Holds districts harmless—in transition year, all districts receive at least as much funding as they would have under old formula.



EIA

(Continued)



Advantages of EIA Program

- New formula improved predictability and transparency of program funding.
- The EIA program provides districts with resources based on *student* characteristics, regardless of school performance.



Issues to Consider

- Large disparities in per-pupil funding levels remain across districts.
- While funding formula is student-based, monies do not follow students to school-site level. Districts have discretion for allocating funds (same as virtually all state categorical programs).
- Technical change needed to expedite fund release. (EIA funding for charter schools should be included in charter school categorical block grant item of the budget bill.)
- Governor's budget does not provide growth funding for EIA program even though underlying population may be growing. Absent additional funds, growth could "eat into" funds provided for COLA.