

**ESOL/HILT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
STAFF RESPONSE-Revised 8-15-11**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Arlington School Board
FROM: ESOL/HILT Citizens Advisory Committee
DATE: February 14, 2011
SUBJECT: Recommending Year Report

The ESOL/HILT Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) expanded and welcomed new members committed to our monthly meetings from September through June each year. The committee comprises a diverse group of concerned parents and community members and includes a scientist, civil rights attorney, education policy expert, professional educators, and former teachers. English/Spanish simultaneous interpretation is provided to maximize the meaningful participation of its members. English/Mongolian interpreters have also assisted Mongolian-speaking members and guests.

The ESOL/HILT CAC is very grateful to the staff of the Office of ESOL/HILT. We thank them not only for the time devoted to supporting the work of the CAC but more importantly, for their dedication and commitment to improving educational experiences and outcomes for English Language Learners (ELLs). The CAC would also like to thank APS staff from various offices who took the time to meet with the advisory committee and provided valuable data and information to the committee.

In last year's report, the ESOL/HILT CAC provided an overview of ELL enrollment and achievement across the entire division and several content areas. ELLs make up almost one-third of APS enrollment, so their success depends not only on the direct services they receive through the ESOL/HILT program but on their access to the entire instructional offering and support services of APS. Accordingly, the CAC continued its ELL-focused work that led to overlapping issues with programs beyond the ESOL/HILT program, such as FLES and Special Education.

I. ELL Enrollment

As of September 30, 2010, nearly 6,000 students in Arlington Public Schools (APS) are classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP)—29 percent of the 20,407 K through grade 12 total enrollment (also referred to as English Language Learners in this report). There are an additional 590 ELLs in Pre-K but this figure is not included in the calculation for K-12 membership. The table below provides further disaggregated data related to LEP students or ELLs in APS. ELLs (current and former) comprise over a quarter of the students enrolled in middle and high schools, and 32 percent of elementary K-5 students.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENT ENROLLMENT 2010-2011

	Elementary K-5	Middle School	High School	APS Total
Receiving Direct Services Levels 1-4	2,764	368	611	3,743
Exited from Direct Services Level 5 (Bridging)	379	412	380	1,171
Former LEP within last two years Level 6 (Reaching)	144	280	438	862
LEP not receiving services (opt-out/other)	53	74	63	190
<i>Total LEP Students</i>	<i>3,340</i>	<i>1,134</i>	<i>1,492</i>	<i>5,966</i>
Total APS K-12 Enrollment (not Pre-K)	10,484	4,081	5,842	20,407
<i>LEP as % of K-12 Enrollment</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>28%</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>29%</i>
Pre-K ELL Enrollment	590			

Data from Survey of Limited English Proficient Students, September 30, 2010. Arlington Mill and Langston Continuation, and contract service enrollment are included in the High School figures.

Five Most Prevalent Languages

A total of 5,246 APS students who are learning English (ELL) already speak one of the top five languages—Spanish, Amharic, Arabic, Mongolian, and/or Bengali. These students comprise 80 percent of the total number of ELLs in APS.¹

English Language Learner Enrollment Across Schools

The distribution of ELLs across the elementary schools looks much different than their overall APS average enrollment of 32 percent. At one end of the spectrum there are five schools with ELL enrollments of less than 10 percent. At the other end of the spectrum there are seven APS elementary schools in which ELLs represent between 47 percent and 77 percent of the school's enrollment. Please see Appendices A and B for a listing of ELL enrollment by elementary school.

At the middle and high school levels, the distribution of ELLs across the schools is less skewed. ELLs represent 21 percent of middle school enrollment, 13 percent of comprehensive high school enrollment and 71 percent of students in high school continuation programs.

Achievement Indicators

On a number of indicators, ELLs in APS are scoring below their peers in APS and in some cases below the statewide average for ELLs:

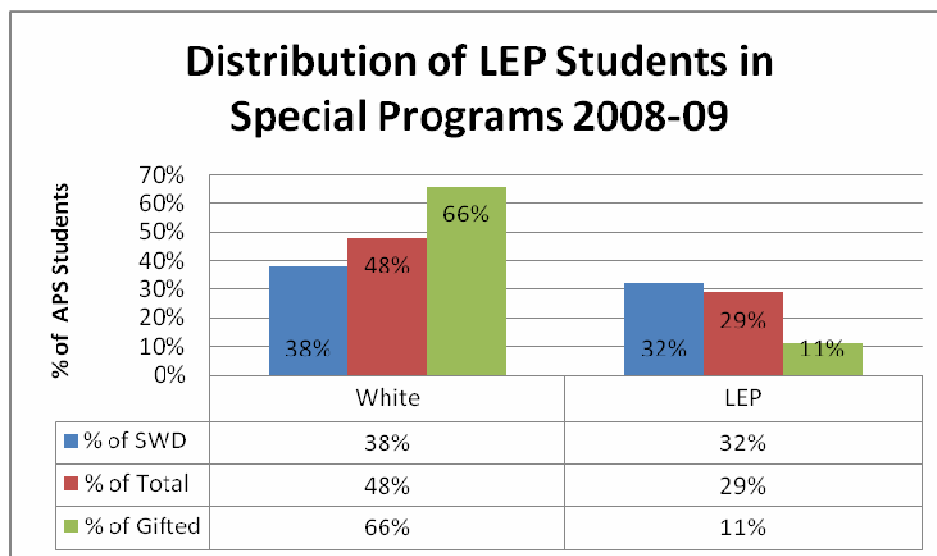
- *Reading and Math.* The table below shows that LEP students in APS increased their passing rates from 76% to 80% on the Standards of Learning (SOLs) state assessments for Reading but this is still below the VA passing rate for ELLs--83 percent in 2009-2010. In Mathematics, LEP students in APS increased their percentage from 74 to 77 percent passing, still below the VA passing rate for ELLs--82 percent for 2009-2010. In contrast, the percentage of APS White students in APS who pass the Reading and Mathematics SOLs has remained around 97 and 95, respectively for the past three years.

¹ Spanish 64%, Amharic 5%, Arabic 4%, Mongolian 4%, and Bengali 3% of total ELLs in APS.

Percentage of LEP Who Passed SOL Assessments			
Reading	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
APS	76	80	80
State	79	83	83
Math			
APS	74	75	77
State	75	79	82

Source: Virginia Department of Education Division Report Card 2009-10.

- Accelerated math and graduation rates.* From 2007-08 through 2010-11 ELLs in APS enrolled in accelerated math courses in grades 6, 7 and 8 at much lower rates than the APS average, resulting in gaps of 20 and 30 percentage points. Appendix C provides further detail. The 4 year graduation rate for LEP students in APS is 45 percent compared to the 56 percent Virginia average. The 5 year graduation rate for ELLs in APS is 50 percent compared to 64 percent for ELLs overall in Virginia. (VA State Report Card 2009-2010.)
- Special Education and Gifted Education.* The most recent APS Strategic Plan Status Report shows that ELLs, as a group are overrepresented in special education services and significantly underrepresented in gifted education in comparison to the ELL share of total APS enrollment. The report shows that in the SY 2008-09 ELLs were 29 percent of total enrollment, but ELLs represented a larger share (32%) of students receiving special education services. Conversely, ELLs made up only 11 percent of the students in Gifted education.



II. Current Year Activities

By the end of the 2010-2011 school year, the Committee will have met ten times and considered, often with the benefit of guest presenters, a wide array of policies, programs, practices and procedures of particular relevance to ELL students and their families. Following last year's precedent, our committee held joint meetings with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and the World Languages Advisory Committee (WLAC) to discuss concerns and recommendations of mutual interest. The Committee's discussions during the course of the year will have included the following topics: review of the Language Access Policy and its implementation issues, existing APS parent engagement/involvement programs and initiatives including PESA and PARTICIPA, the development and use of the Bridge Manual to improve appropriate identification of ELLs with Special needs, and English and Mathematics pathways.

III. Recommendations

The CAC presents a total of five recommendations for the consideration of the Advisory Council on Instruction. The Committee made a concerted effort to make timely recommendations relevant to important developments underway so that the needs of English Language Learners are duly incorporated and addressed. For example, APS is currently engaged in developing an evaluation of Special Education Services; and the Office of World Languages is engaged in the evaluation efforts of the FLES and the Immersion programs. Our first four recommendations are germane to both of these efforts. The fifth and final recommendation is ELL-focused and extends beyond the ESOL/HILT program. The CAC members came to the realization that the Committee's limited scope of work and voluntary nature is insufficient to conduct the necessary review and development of comprehensive recommendations to address the low achievement of ELLs in APS.

Special Education-Related Recommendations

Both recommendations related to ELLs in Special Education were developed based on the joint meeting with SEAC members during which the committees reviewed and discussed the Special Education identification process that becomes even more complex for students whose first language is not English. At a subsequent SEAC meeting, their members endorsed recommendations numbers one and two. The CAC appreciates the SEAC's interest and concern for ELLs with special needs and its interest in working with the ESOL/HILT CAC. In 2010-2011 SY, fourteen percent of LEP students are identified for special education services and of all students receiving special education services, 27 percent are LEP.² During our joint meeting the committees commended staff for the Bridge Manual--an exemplary work product developed by ESOL/HILT and Special Education staff.

Recommendation # 1

Focus and prioritize professional development based on student needs as evidenced by achievement outcomes. The CAC has, over the years, presented

² October 28, 2010 Board of Education Meeting. ESOL/HILT Program presentation.

several recommendations for improving professional development related to instructional strategies for ELLs. There continues to be a need for such training and in our joint discussion with SEAC we learned that this is also the case related to students receiving special education services. These two groups of learners require heightened understanding of their pedagogical needs and effective instructional strategies and both are currently among the lowest performing. Several important components of this professional development include:

- Cross-training of ELL, Special Education and General Education instructional staff to include Instructional Assistants and tutors especially in schools where the numbers of ELLs and Special Education students warrant such priority training
- Systemic and required training to utilize the Bridge Manual in determining eligibility and provision of services for ELLs who may have special needs or who are being considered for special education services
- Inclusion of necessary pedagogy, strategies, and competencies so that General Education teachers may distinguish between the various educational needs of today's students. Such competencies would allow teachers to differentiate instruction, work with the appropriate specialists and seek the most appropriate instructional support services for the student

The APS achievement data and budget constraints warrant a more targeted and differentiated professional development based on student needs and outcomes to build the capacity of the teaching staff to meet the specific needs of English Language Learners and students in Special Education to improve outcomes. Accordingly, the professional development offered throughout the district should be prioritized and evaluated for its impact on changing instruction and improving achievement and student success. Professional development should be based on an inventory of existing staff qualifications (language skills, certifications, and endorsements) and student achievement data for each school in the district.

Professional development offered through APS should be monitored not only by the number of teachers and assistants trained but also by student achievement outcomes and other indicators (decreased number of referrals, exit rates, etc.). Professional development practices should reflect the district's priorities and Strategic Plan, especially if such experiences result in step increases in salary.

Rationale

- All content area teachers in General Education should be supported in gaining the competencies to distinguish between educational needs that often times look similar. Certain developmental stages of second language acquisition may be confused with signs of speech impairment or a learning disability and/or with signs of struggling students. Similarly, certain signs of struggling students might be confused with a learning disability.
- The Offices of Minority Achievement and ESOL/HILT offer training and professional development related to instruction for ELLs and cultural competence, but teachers are not required to participate. The 2006 ESOL/HILT Program Evaluation found that staff perceived that the school system does not do enough to provide or encourage teachers to attend

professional development activities focusing on cross-cultural communication and the needs of ELLs.³

- The data collected in the professional development operational system (ERO—Electronic Registrar Online) does not currently include a method for easily identifying professional development opportunities that provide strategies for teaching ELLs and students with special needs and the needs related to raising achievement for our lowest-performing subgroups.
- The CAC learned about the ELL-specific professional development offerings provided by the ESOL/HILT Office, but unless the departments are working together, there is no systematic and central way to coordinate training to infuse ELL and special education strategies in content areas. The collaborative work of the ESOL/HILT Office and the Office of Mathematics can serve as a model to foster further collaborative work among other content areas.
- Currently, there are *only ten* teachers in APS who have an endorsement in both ESL and Special Education. This number seems extremely low considering that almost one-third of the students receiving special education are designated as Limited English Proficient.

Budget Implications:

The estimated cost for providing professional development includes \$4,120 for Bridge manual training at 33 schools (2 teachers per school); and the costs associated with paying for substitute teachers and providing Bridge Team professional development to 84 elementary and secondary ESOL/HILT and Special Education teachers (\$9,024). Finally, the cross-training provided to four teachers in each of the 33 schools is estimated to cost \$13,573. **Total initial cost: \$26,717**

Providing professional development to tutors could potentially result in costs to schools. The cost to schools is undetermined and would likely vary by school.

Committee vote: 10/11 (one absence)

ACI Vote:	Yes	No	Abstaining
	25	1	2

STAFF RESPONSE:

Staff believes in the importance of focusing and prioritizing professional development based on the needs of students who are English Language Learners and/or who receive special education services. There is a well established history of collaboration between the offices of ESOL/HILT and Special Education, especially in the area of professional development. In 1984 both offices designated a staff member to serve as a liaison to the other office. The liaisons meet on a regular basis to generate initiatives which will benefit English Language Learners who also have a disability. One of the more recent initiatives has been the establishment of

³ Secondary ESOL/HILT Program Evaluation. October 2006. Executive Summary Page xiii

the Bridge Team with the goal of facilitating communication and improving the delivery of instruction to dually identified students. In addition, the Bridge Team meets the current Strategic Plan Goals of rising achievement, elimination of the gap, responsive education, and effective relationships. The offices of ESOL/HILT and Special Education will continue to provide professional development to school-based staff through the Bridge Team with a focus on using data to address language development in the content areas as was done during the 2010-11 school year with the focus on mathematics instruction.

The time line for ACI committee reports is such that these reports typically precede by at least one year and often longer the deliberative process which includes APS staff review and recommendations, and APS senior staff and School Board review and consideration among competing priorities. For this recommendation, the committee's efforts coincided with school system efforts already underway. As available funding permits, the two offices will consider the following additional professional development opportunities:

- o Continued training in the use of the Bridge Manual
- o Cross-training of mainstream/content teachers, special education teachers, and ESOL/HILT teachers
- o Support for staff to attend regional, state, or national conferences that address the needs of dually identified students
- o University courses that assist teachers in meeting ESL and Special Education endorsement requirements

Recommendation # 2

Streamline and expedite the processes for identification and the provision of special education services for English Language Learners. The CAC recommends that the ESOL/HILT and Special Education Offices work together to develop a systemwide, standard process for the identification and the provision of special education services for ELLs. The work should be based on systemwide, school-by-school data of ELL referrals to Special Education to determine the validity of the identification and assessment process and the appropriateness and adequacy of services provided. The joint committees' discussion highlighted two general areas of inquiry:

- What is the average length of time for the identification of ELLs as requiring special education services and how does this compare for non-ELLs?
- What interventions or special education services are provided to ELLs with the lowest levels of English proficiency (WIDA levels 1 and 2)? How are special education services and ESOL/HILT support provided during the school week? How is this dual service (special education ESOL/HILT) monitored?

Rationale

- Both the ESOL/HILT and Special Education Advisory Committees were concerned about the potential time lag in the identification and provision of special education services for ELLs. The members were also concerned

about potential inaccurate identification and placement of ELL students in special education programs.

- The meetings with APS staff provided general impressions and anecdotal information. The community input to both the Special Education Advisory Committee and ESOL/HILT Committee has also been anecdotal and on a case-by-case basis. There is a need for more systematic data-driven analysis of the intersecting student subgroups.
- Staff indicated that special education services are not provided in Spanish or in any other language other than English even if students are at the lowest levels of proficiency. At the elementary level, providing ESL support when providing special education services varies by school and depends on the level of collaboration. The IEP does not specify the language to be used in the services but it does document the English language levels and the needs of ELLs receiving Special Education services.

Budget Implications:

No additional funds are anticipated to carry out this work.

Committee vote: 10/11 (one absence)

ACI Vote:	Yes	No	Abstaining
	26	0	1

STAFF RESPONSE:

The current special education identification process for Arlington Public Schools is based on federal and state guidelines. Collaboration between the offices of ESOL/HILT and special education has helped to enhance the effectiveness of the process for English Language Learners. *The Educational Checklist and Suggested Adaptations: An Intervention Guide for Elementary Second Language Learners Experiencing Academic Difficulty* (Checklist) was produced by both offices and it is currently used by the Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) at each school. The Checklist was developed to assist teachers of English Language Learners in providing appropriate learning strategies for students who are experiencing educational difficulties.

The use of the Checklist as part of the IAT process provides an opportunity to target specific areas of concern for an English Language Learner who is struggling academically and to select adaptations that could be used to support that student. During the pilot of the Checklist, the offices of ESOL/HILT and Special Education reviewed data that indicated that the use of the Checklist had been successful in reducing the over identification of English Language Learners for special education services.

Staff supports continued collaboration between the two offices to review data regarding the identification of ELLs for special education services. It is important to remember that IDEA guidelines specify that a student’s proficiency in English as a second language must be ruled out as the primary factor for a student’s learning difficulties. Staff also supports joint efforts between the two offices to determine the

interventions and special education services that would be most appropriate for English Language Learners at the beginning levels of language proficiency. Individual student data based on specific models of instruction for dually identified students (i.e. co-teaching) will be beneficial in determining future programs to develop and pilot.

Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES)-related Recommendation

The ESOL/HILT Committee is very supportive of the advances APS has made in providing foreign language instruction at the elementary level through the implementation of the FLES Program. The WLAC has been instrumental in advancing the goal that all APS students have an opportunity to become bilingual or multilingual citizens. In past years, the ESOL/HILT committee has collaborated with the WLAC in supporting recommendations to meet the specific needs of ESOL/HILT students in the FLES programs. The CAC looks forward to seeing the continued work of WLAC and the World Languages Office to address the needs of English Language Learners in its goals, class offerings, and accountability/evaluation systems.

Recommendation # 3

Strengthen the FLES program by ensuring that Spanish-speaking ELLs receive differentiated instruction that, when possible, includes content instruction. The Committee recommends that the Offices of ESOL/HILT and World Languages work together to find effective ways to ensure that Spanish-speaking ELLs are taught to their ability level in the FLES program offered at their schools. The most recent FLES Program Evaluation Report (January 2011) describes the program's main focus in the first years as developing listening and speaking skills with a proficiency goal of Novice/Mid to Novice/High. In later years, the goal is to develop reading and writing skills commensurate with the Novice level. While the spoken language is the highest priority for non-native speaking learners, this prioritization is not appropriate for native Spanish speakers who come into class more proficient in speaking and understanding. Spanish speakers need to develop Spanish literacy. Explicit and measurable proficiency goals specific for native-Spanish speakers would help ensure that these students reap similar benefits from the FLES program as non-Spanish-speaking students.⁴

⁴ The World Languages Office indicates that the proficiency of heritage and native Spanish speakers would need to be established to determine the appropriate proficiency goal, given the heterogeneity of command of Spanish.

APS Elementary Schools with FLES Program	ELLs as a Percentage of K-5 Enrollment Levels	Hispanic as a Percentage of Enrollment
Glebe	16%	17%
Patrick Henry	39% (56% of LEP rcv'g direct services have Spanish as home language)	33%
Barcroft	54% (75% of LEP rcv'g direct services have Spanish as home language)	52%
Ashlawn	24%	15%
Randolph	75% (59% of LEP rcv'g direct services have Spanish as home language)	50%
McKinley	9%	10%
Jamestown	3%	7%

Sources: Tables 5 and 12 of Survey of Limited English Proficient Students 2010-11 and Civil Rights Survey, 2010-2011.

The table above shows that, particularly in three schools, English Language Learners and Hispanic students represent substantial percentages of student enrollment in schools that offer the FLES program. In addition, in these schools a significant majority of the LEP students receiving direct services have Spanish as their home language. The ESOL/HILT CAC was happy to learn from the recent FLES report that the target proficiency levels may be adjusted upward. Within this exercise, making the appropriate adjustments for the native Spanish speakers would be a timely and welcome development. In making such adjustments, it would be important to have pre- and post-proficiency data disaggregated by level of proficiency upon entering the program for native- and non-native Spanish speakers.

The importance of the coordination between the ESOL/HILT and World Languages Offices cannot be overstated with regard to ELLs who are Spanish speakers and who may be underperforming in core subjects. Such students would greatly benefit from receiving content instruction in their native language to accelerate their learning and help APS close the achievement gap. APS has supported such coordination in some of its schools such as the FLES and First Language Support (FLS) model used at Barcroft where instruction in both language and content is provided in Spanish. The CAC strongly encourages more of this type of collaboration, particularly in schools where the FLS program already operates.

Rationale:

- As articulated in the ESOL/HILT CAC recommendations of 2009, when APS began to implement the FLES programs at a greater number of schools, some parents of Spanish-speaking ELLs reported that their children had not been adequately challenged in FLES classes because their children's proficiency in Spanish was more advanced than the instructional level of Spanish in the FLES classes. The high proficiency levels of native Spanish speakers reported in the FLES report suggest that further data collection and analysis is required.

- Participation in the FLES program should result in quantifiable and measurable growth in proficiency for Spanish-speaking students.
- Differentiated FLS/FLES instruction for students with advanced Spanish skills can provide valuable academic support to such students who are also learning content and English as a second language.

Budget Implications:

Continued cost of development and revisions to K-5 Curriculum are estimated to be **\$10,400** without any additional staff.

Committee vote: 10/11 (one absence)

ACI Vote:	Yes	No	Abstaining
	19	3	6

STAFF RESPONSE:

Staff recognizes the importance of providing differentiated language instruction for Spanish-speaking ELLs who participate in the FLES program. Since the fall of 2008, the offices of ESOL/HILT and World Languages have collaborated with staff at Barcroft Elementary School to offer FLS/FLES instruction that is differentiated for students with advanced Spanish skills. FLS curriculum that integrates content instruction with targeted grammar goals has been developed. In addition, writing samples and the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) have been administered. At the request of the School Board, as part of the World Languages Program Evaluation, the Center for Applied Linguistics assisted in testing a sample of fifth grade students who are in the program.

Next year, two additional schools will begin implementing differentiated Spanish language instruction through the FLS and FLES programs. The instructional materials will also be helpful for differentiating instruction for all Spanish-speaking ELLs who participate in the FLES program. The ESOL/HILT and World Languages offices look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that ELLs receive instruction in Spanish at their instructional level.

Recommendation # 4

The ESOL/HILT CAC recommends that APS utilize assessment instruments that provide a more complete and accurate picture of the needs and abilities of English Language Learners. Obtaining a comprehensive picture of the skills, abilities and language capabilities of ELLs when they first enter a school system is a highly complex endeavor. One important part of this picture is knowing the oral and literacy skills in the students’ native language and another is knowing the students’ cognitive abilities and content knowledge. Where instruments are not available in the student’s native language, assessing abilities and skills of ELLs should be done using the least language-dependent measures possible.

The information generated from valid assessments of ELLs in their native language or using least language-dependent instruments can be helpful in--

- determining how best their native language and prior knowledge can support the development of acquiring a second language—English and content knowledge,
- determining the proper instructional level in FLES if the students speak Spanish at home, and
- providing important and relevant information as part of the multiple criteria used in the identification process of ELL students undergoing a Gifted Services eligibility process.

A nationally-normed assessment for Spanish could be used for the initial literacy assessment of ELLs who speak Spanish and for those students participating in the Spanish Immersion Programs K-12.⁵ An assessment for Spanish language skills would cover approximately 64 percent of APS' English Language Learners.⁶ Revising and updating the native language assessments for ELLs who speak other languages would also be important.

A non-verbal or less language-dependent assessment should be available for purposes of assessing aptitude and reasoning of ELLs who have limited English proficiency that hinders them from meaningful participation in assessments administered only in English. The non-verbal instrument could also be administered to ELLs who have limited literacy in their home languages or to students with special needs for whom a particular disability may be an impediment to taking a written assessment. For example, the Test of Nonverbal Intelligence (TONI Test), now in its 4th edition, is a language-free measure of intelligence, aptitude and reasoning. This non-verbal assessment uses a language-free administration and response format that can be used to assess the intellectual capacity of subjects who have been difficult to evaluate.”⁷ The information obtained from the non-verbal assessment would be helpful in making grade-level placements and in the identification process for ELLs with gifted aptitudes.

The CAC recommendation is not to simply add another assessment for ELLs who already undergo a multitude of assessments. Rather, we recommend that the ESOL/HILT Office lead the work with other content areas to determine the overall set of assessments to be available for use with ELLs to minimize redundancy and maximize valid and accurate information about their competencies.

⁵ For example, *Aprenda: La prueba de logros en español, Tercera Edición* (Stanford-10 Spanish version)

⁶ Table 13. Native Languages of Limited English Proficient Students ..Sorted by Language in Numerical Order. Survey of Limited English Proficient Students 2010-2011

⁷ This would include people who are bilingual or non-English speaking; speech or language impaired; deaf; learning disabled; have disorders of communication or thinking such as aphasia, dyslexia, language disabilities, learning disabilities, speech problems, specific academic deficits, and similar conditions that may be the result of mental retardation, deafness, developmental disabilities, autism, cerebral palsy, stroke, disease, head injury, or other neurological impairment, mentally retarded; or victims of stroke or brain injury.

<http://www.pearsonassessments.com/HAIWEB/Cultures/en-us/Productdetail.htm?Pid=PAa19100&Mode=summary>. Accessed 1/12/11

Rationale

- APS needs valid and reliable assessments to measure the success of its nationally recognized dual immersion programs, the FLES program, and World Languages offerings at the secondary level. As APS considers adopting assessments to measure the effectiveness of its World Languages programs, the ESOL/HILT CAC considers it of critical importance to include the accurate assessment of the language skills of English Language Learners.
- The CAC was glad to learn that the screening activities conducted by Resource Teachers for the Gifted include efforts to refer English Language Learners. Specifically, the activities include "examining performance of students recently exited from ESOL/HILT services" and "meet[ing] annually with the ESOL/HILT and Minority Achievement staff to discuss the unique characteristics of these underrepresented populations and to solicit referrals from these staff members." Similarly, the CAC was pleased to see that the Local Plan states that the identification/placement committee includes an appropriate specialist who knows the child as special education or LEP.
- The list of multiple criteria used for the Gifted Services eligibility process includes assessments that are only administered in English (SOLs, Stanford 10, DRP, PALS, DRA).⁸ By making a non-verbal ability test available, APS could obtain important information to help staff recognize the talents and aptitudes of students who are acquiring English and those with special needs.

Budget Implications:

The total cost of assessment administration would depend on the number of students tested and the instruments used. A preliminary estimate based on the number of English Language Learners with beginning levels of English proficiency indicates an annual cost of \$ 7,750 for administering native language assessments and \$6,200 for administering non-verbal assessment. Total annual cost of **\$13,950.**

Committee vote: 10/11 (one absence)

ACI Vote:	Yes	No	Abstaining
	27	0	1

STAFF RESPONSE:

The language proficiency of English Language Learners (ELLs) entering Arlington Public Schools is assessed at the Language Services Registration Center (formerly the Intake Center). As new screening tools are considered for use at the Language Services and Registration Center, it is important to consider that APS must be in compliance with the VDOE requirements under ESEA for determining the English language proficiency of incoming ELLs. Other considerations include the cost of adding any additional assessments, as well as the amount of time new students will need to spend taking tests at the Language Services and Registration Center. A new English language proficiency assessment (W-APT) is currently used as the

⁸ APS 2006-2011 Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted.

screening instrument for potential ELLs in grades K-12. The W-APT was adopted in July 2010 to comply with VDOE requirements under ESEA. The W-APT provides a complete and accurate assessment of the English language proficiency of entering ELLs.

Staff recognizes and appreciates the fundamental value of native language skills and abilities as the basis of past and future learning. Accordingly, the Language Services and Registration Center administers native language reading (K-5), writing (6-12), and mathematics (K-12) assessments to potential English Language Learners in Arabic, Amharic, Bengali, Mongolian, Spanish and Vietnamese. In addition, oral Spanish tests are administered to students in grades PK-1. Implementing a new assessment for Spanish speakers across all grades would require consideration of the impact of more extensive testing for ELLs upon entry, as well as the additional cost to purchase the tests each year. Staff will consider this during the development of the Superintendent's proposed FY13 budget.

There may be other opportunities afforded for using assessment tools for providing a more thorough measure of the needs and abilities of ELLs. As shown below, these opportunities include, but are not limited to, assessments administered through the World Languages Program and the upcoming revisions to the Five-Year Gifted Services Plan.

The World Language Office, through program evaluation, administered the APRENDA3 ©, a nationally-normed assessment for Spanish in Spring 2011 to a sample of Immersion students in grades 5 and 8 and to all students in level III of Spanish for Fluent Speakers. The purpose of administering this assessment was two-fold. First, APRENDA results may help us understand how well our students perform in comparison to a national norm. Second, APRENDA results may help our district establish a baseline against which future results on this test will be measured.

A decision about using the APRENDA results as a screening instrument for entering either the Immersion or the Fluent Speakers Program will be made after careful analysis of program evaluation findings. One caveat about using these results for placement purposes is that the APRENDA presumes literacy instruction in Spanish. As a result, heritage speakers of Spanish with conversational fluency but no schooling in Spanish as a first language may not perform well on this high stakes test. The offices of ESOL/HILT and World Languages will collaboratively review program evaluation results and determine the most appropriate tools for assessing native language fluency for ELLs.

Gifted Services staff is in the process of developing the 2012-2017 APS Gifted Services Plan for the Education of Gifted Students. The new plan is in response to changes in the Virginia Regulations that Govern the Education of Gifted Students. Within the new five-year plan, staff has been researching ways that the gifted services identification process can meet changes in regulations as well as improve the representation of populations that are under-served by gifted services.

Over the course of the 2010-11 school year, the Gifted Services 5-Year Plan Development Committee investigated new testing materials, especially a variety of non-verbal tests that could be administered to students who are referred to the identification process. It is premature to provide details of the changes as they are not yet final.

The development time line on the new five year plan allows staff to complete the writing of the plan over the summer, 2011. At the start of the 2011-12 school year, the Gifted Services Office will work with the Gifted Services Advisory Committee and other APS staff to review the draft. There will be opportunities for public review of the document and public feedback. In the spring of 2012, the plan will go to the School Board for approval and implementation of the new identification procedures will occur in the 2012-13 school year.

Staff acknowledges the importance and value of recognizing English Language Learners' abilities, achievement, and skills through the use of less language dependent assessments. Staff also recognizes the importance of consistency of use of instruments in making determinations about provision of gifted services. For equity purposes, any instruments identified for use for such purposes would have to be available to all students, not just ELLs. Staff suggests that the potential merits of assessments and the inherent potential value for students should be considered in terms of:

- the value that these assessments would add to student achievement and opportunities
- the value that these assessments would add to informing and improving current instructional programs
- the most appropriate time to administer these tests to students
- the number of assessments administered and their impact

Recommendation # 5

Conduct a comprehensive review of the instructional services provided to English Language Learners across the entire curriculum and offerings in APS.

An in-depth, independent, and comprehensive review would look at how ELLs are served throughout APS and would not be limited to the ESOL/HILT programs and staff. The CAC recognizes and appreciates the incremental improvements made by the dedicated ESOL/HILT staff and other selected staff and offices. Moving one-third of the division's students to higher levels of achievement requires work from all departments and a sense of shared responsibility for the achievement of ELLs. The improvements, therefore, must come from more than the ESOL/HILT staff.

The CAC recommends expanding the regularly scheduled evaluation for the ESOL/HILT program to a comprehensive, in-depth review. A comprehensive review

would look at APS policies and practices affecting ELL instruction at both the elementary and secondary levels and across the entire instructional program (all departments).

The CAC looks forward to continuing to work with APS staff to determine the most effective and efficient way to conduct the recommended review. As a starting point we have included a list of suggested key areas to review which can be found in the Appendix D.

Rationale:

- The performance of LEPs in all content areas has been stagnant in APS for over three years resulting in little progress in closing the achievement gap. LEP achievement levels for APS are below the statewide LEP performance levels.
- Many of the findings generated by both ESOL/HILT program evaluations are still of concern today and have been the basis for subsequent CAC recommendations made in 2007 and 2009.⁹
- APS needs comprehensive and incisive information gleaned from both qualitative information and quantitative data about the schooling experience of ELLs. A review should provide short and longer-term actionable recommendations that can serve as the foundation for APS to develop its action plan for accelerated learning to improve achievement of ELLs.

Budget Implications:

The APS budget has a budgeted amount dedicated to regularly conducted program evaluations. The recommended review would be conducted with these same dedicated funds. Program Evaluation staff estimate that no additional funding would be required if the data collection for the evaluation begins with SY 2012-13 funds. Work on the evaluation design could begin during SY 2011-2012.

Committee vote: 10/11 (one absence)

ACI Vote:	Yes	No	Abstaining
	27	1	0

STAFF RESPONSE:

⁹ The 2006 program evaluation identified issues and findings that required additional analysis: HILT A had the lowest number of students passing to the next level and represented half of the dropouts; a higher number of high school students exited in less than five years compared to middle school students; clarification why LEP students do not do as well compared to non-LEP students; and little difference between HILTEX A and HILTEX B students in performance on the English proficiency test used at that time (SELP).

The time line for ACI committee reports is such that these reports typically precede by at least one year and often longer the deliberative process which includes APS staff review and recommendations, and APS senior staff and School Board review and consideration among competing priorities. For this recommendation, the committee's efforts coincided with school system efforts already underway. The ESOL/HILT Office is scheduled to begin the Program Evaluation process during the 2011-2012 school year. Planning and Evaluation has advised that the design process could begin next school year with the data collection taking place during the 2012-2013 school year in order to accommodate the request for a comprehensive review of instructional services for ELLs across all departments. This schedule will allow the ESOL/HILT Program Evaluation to be conducted using funds already allocated in Planning and Evaluation to support program evaluation and also will take into account other evaluation commitments such as the Special Education evaluation, the design for which is being finalized with data collection to occur in 2011-12.

The ESOL/HILT Office recognizes that despite progress that has been made in some areas for Limited English Proficient students in APS, additional effort is needed in order to ensure rising achievement and the elimination of the gap for English Language Learners. It will be important to identify successful practices, to build upon these, and to identify adjustments that will need to be made for future success. Staff looks forward to working with Planning and Evaluation, as well as other departments in APS to conduct a more comprehensive Program Evaluation. The input of the ESOL/HILT CAC is welcomed and will be extremely beneficial during this process.

ESOL/HILT Citizens Advisory Committee Members 2010-2011

Cervantes, David
Cocuesta-Cuttier, Cynthia
Figueredo, Shirley (Co-Chair)
Gurney, Wren
Huynh, Hope
Kaufhold, John
Lyons, James
Montaño, Roxana
Stroh, Luz
Uro, Gabriela (Co-Chair)
Vallejos, Gilda

Felipe, Donna, ACI Liaison
Faith Tabatabai, Staff Liaison

APPENDIX A.

LEP Enrollment in APS Schools 2010-2011

	Total	Rcv'g Dir.	Exited	Pre-K &	LEP 1-5	LEP as %	<u>Exited LEP Status</u>	
	Enrollment	Services	Dir.Svcs.	Not Served	Total	of Schl	#	Rvs'd %
Abingdon	464	200	22	31	253	48%		
Arlington Science	529	107	20	19	146	25%		
Arlington Traditional	430	67	5	9	81	17%		
Ashlawn	397	78	8	12	98	24%		
Barcroft	356	176	14	47	237	54%		
Barrett	485	216	12	42	270	47%		
Campbell	333	144	11	46	201	47%		
Carlin Springs	518	357	39	69	465	77%		
Claremont	460	137	21	41	199	34%		
Drew	447	126	27	52	205	35%		
Glebe	453	63	6	16	85	16%		
Henry	362	117	24	20	161	39%		
Hoffman-Boston	265	145	25	82	252	65%		
Jamestown	551	10	4	6	20	3%		
Key	593	191	36	43	270	39%		
Long Branch	487	106	19	22	147	26%		
McKinley	485	30	15	1	46	9%		
Nottingham	576	4	2	1	7	1%		
Oakridge	602	187	35	20	242	37%		
Randolph	369	249	24	56	329	75%		
Taylor	659	23	4	1	28	4%		
Tuckahoe	619	18	6	2	26	4%		
Stratford Prog. & Reed	44	13		5	18	41%		
Total Elementary	10484	2764	379	643	3786	30%	144	32%

	Total Enrollment	Rcv'g Dir. Services	Exited Dir.Svcs.	Pre-K & Not Served	LEP 1-5 Total	LEP as % of Schl	<u>Exited LEP Status</u>	
							#	Rvs'd %
<i>Middle School</i>								
Gunston	721	100	98	14	212	29%		
Jefferson	594	59	105	21	185	31%		
Kenmore	704	132	97	21	250	36%		
Swanson	892	48	58	4	110	12%		
Williamsburg	948	26	48	14	88	9%		
H-B Woodlawn (1)	222	3	6		9	4%		
Total Middle	4081	368	412	74	854	21%	280	28%
<i>High School</i>								
Wakefield	1344	119	134	20	273	20%		
Washington-Lee	1914	113	104	25	242	13%		
Yorktown	1723	66	49	10	125	7%		
H-B Woodlawn	384	53	21		74	19%		
*Total High School	5365	351	308	55	714	13%	419	21%
<i>Other programs</i>								
Arlington Mill	382	244	65	8	317	83%		
Langston Cont.	95	16	7		23	24%		
Total Other	477	260	72		340	71%	19	75%

Source: Survey of LEP Students 2010-2011 Tables 1, 7, 12.

LEP Percentage calculation does not include Pre-K Enrollment figures (i.e. Includes only K-12 enrollment)

*Total HS includes 1 student receiving contract services

APPENDIX B.

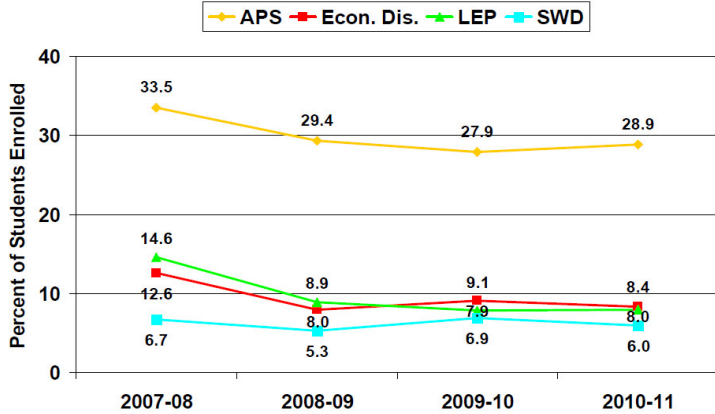
APS Elementary Schools Ranked by ELL Enrollment as a Percentage of Total Enrollment SY 2010-2011

Elementary	LEP as % of Total	Total LEP	
Carlin Springs	465	77%	In 7 schools ELLs represent between 47% and 77% of total enrollment.
Randolph	329	75%	
Hoffman-Boston	252	65%	
Barcroft	237	54%	
Abingdon	253	48%	
Barrett	270	47%	
Campbell	201	47%	
<hr/>			
Henry	161	39%	In 7 schools ELLs represent between 26% and 39% of total enrollment.
Key	270	39%	
Oakridge	242	37%	
Stratford Program	16	36%	
Drew	205	35%	
Claremont	199	34%	
Long Branch	147	26%	
<hr/>			
Arlington Science	146	25%	In 4 schools ELLs make up between 16% and 25%
Ashlawn	98	24%	
Arlington Traditional	81	17%	
Glebe	85	16%	
<hr/>			
McKinley	46	9%	In 5 schools ELLs represent between 1% and 9%
Taylor	28	4%	
Tuckahoe	25	4%	
Jamestown	20	3%	
Nottingham	7	1%	

*Note: The Total LEP includes those currently receiving direct services, and those who exited from direct services in the past two years. It also includes ELLs who opted out or are enrolled in Pre-K. (State ESL Codes 1 and 2). Table 12 of LEP Survey 2010-2011.

APPENDIX C.

Grade 6 Enrollment in Accelerated Math Courses by Special Service Populations



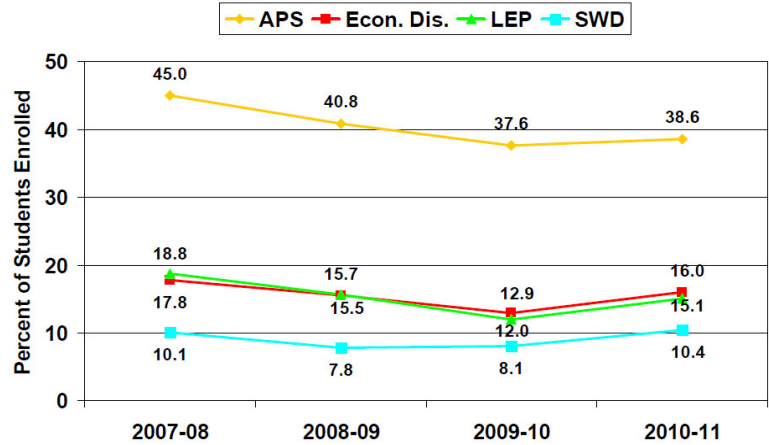
Source: Math course enrollment extracted from esch+, 11/12/10

Grade 6 2007-08 through 2010-11

In 2007-08, 15% of LEP students enrolled in accelerated math and by 2010-11 this percentage dropped by 47% to only 8% of ELLs.

For APS overall in 2007-08, 34% of students enrolled in accelerated math dropping to 29% in 2010-2011 (14% decrease)

Grade 7 Enrollment in Accelerated Math Courses by Special Service Populations



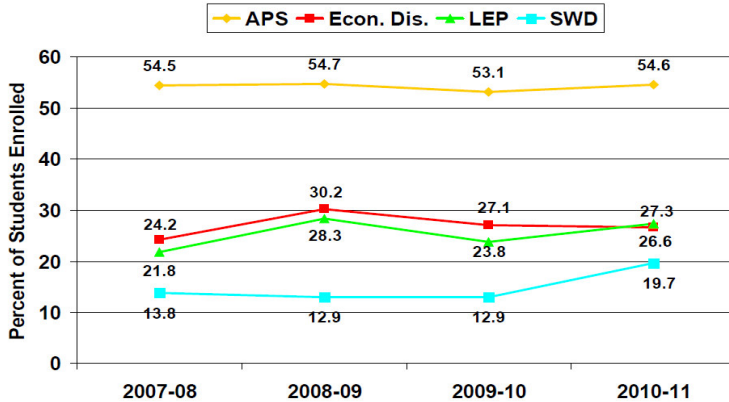
Source: Math course enrollment extracted from esch+, 11/12/10

Grade 7 2007-08 through 2010-11

In 2007-08, 19% of LEP students enrolled in accelerated math but by 2010-11 this percentage drops to 15% (21% decrease).

For APS overall in 2007-08, 45% of students enrolled in accelerated math dropping to 39% in 2010-2011 (13% decrease)

Grade 8 Enrollment in Accelerated Math Courses by Special Service Populations



Source: Math course enrollment extracted from esch+, 11/12/10

Grade 8 2007-08 through 2010-11

In 2007-08, 22% of LEP students enrolled in accelerated math and by 2010-11 this percentage is 27% (23% increase).

For APS overall from 2007-08 through 2010-11, the percentage of students enrolled in accelerated math stays at around 55%

APPENDIX D. *Example of Key Areas to Include in Comprehensive Review of APS services for ELLs*

Policy and Approach—what is the APS’ explicit and non-explicit policy towards instruction for English Language Learners? Is the goal to move them as quickly as possible into English or to maintain and develop proficiency in their native language(s)? What is the role of the first language in supporting development and accelerate learning in content areas and English as a second language? What research-based models are used and supported in APS? Do programs and district policies hinder or promote ELLs access to APS programs such as Gifted and Talented and other enrichment programs? Do they promote student graduation and success in higher education?

Curriculum Support—is the instructional program for ELLs a separate, parallel program or is it integrated into the general education curriculum? Is the rigor in ESOL/HILT equal to that of general education? [Do the achievement scores of ELLs confirm this rigor alignment?] Do general education textbook adoption procedures address ELL needs at the outset? Are supplemental materials for ELLs aligned to the general education curriculum and materials? How does each content area support the instruction for ELLs and monitor their achievement?

Assessment and Achievement—what is the division’s policy and practices with regard to assessments for ELLs in all content areas, native language and English language acquisition? How are assessments selected for ELLs and the general student population? How are assessment results used to inform instruction for ELLs? Who reviews the data and makes determinations and how does Central Office support this work? Do any of the current assessments unintentionally create barriers for ELLs to access APS programs and opportunities? Who in Central Office and at the school level looks at ELL achievement data and is responsible for developing any plans of action to improve achievement? How does the division determine the year to year achievement goals for ELLs?

Shared Responsibility—which departments and staff are perceived to be responsible for the success of ELLs? Who in central office and who in schools? Do teacher and administrator evaluations include indicators relative to the success of ELLs? Does the APS accountability system recognize the progress made with ELLs in acquiring English and content skills and knowledge or does the system solely rely on the limited NCLB accountability measures for ELLs?

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development—what are the staffing ratios and formulas for ELL instructional programs? Are these state imposed or district policy? What is the underlying instructional model of the staffing ratio for ELLs? How does APS prioritize recruitment, hiring and retention of qualified staff to serve ELLs? Does professional development incorporate strategies for instructing ELLs in the general instructional programming for all teachers or is it limited to ESOL/HILT instructional staff? Are educational leaders and school administrators provided professional development regarding second language acquisition and instructional programs for ELLs?

Support and Monitoring for program success and ELL achievement. What systems are in place to ensure schools are adopting and implementing sound research-based instructional approaches for ELLs? Are concrete models in place for schools to use sample schedules and staffing arrangements to create their own programs for ELLs? Is the central office adequately staffed to support schools in providing quality instruction for ELLs? Is there support for ELL data analysis for teachers, administrators and content area specialists?

ELL parent engagement and education based on identified needs of ELL parents. Does APS have a comprehensive plan for parental engagement that is responsible for also including ELL parent needs into its programming? What does APS see as the most pressing needs of the ELL parent community (language, navigating APS school system, literacy, etc.)? How do various dedicated funding streams support parent engagement and education for ELL parents? Which office is responsible for overseeing the implementation of system wide and school based parent engagement/education efforts and how is quality monitored?