



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR EQUITY AND  
EXCELLENCE<sup>IN</sup> EDUCATION

# Evaluation of Arlington Public Schools Programs for English Language Learners

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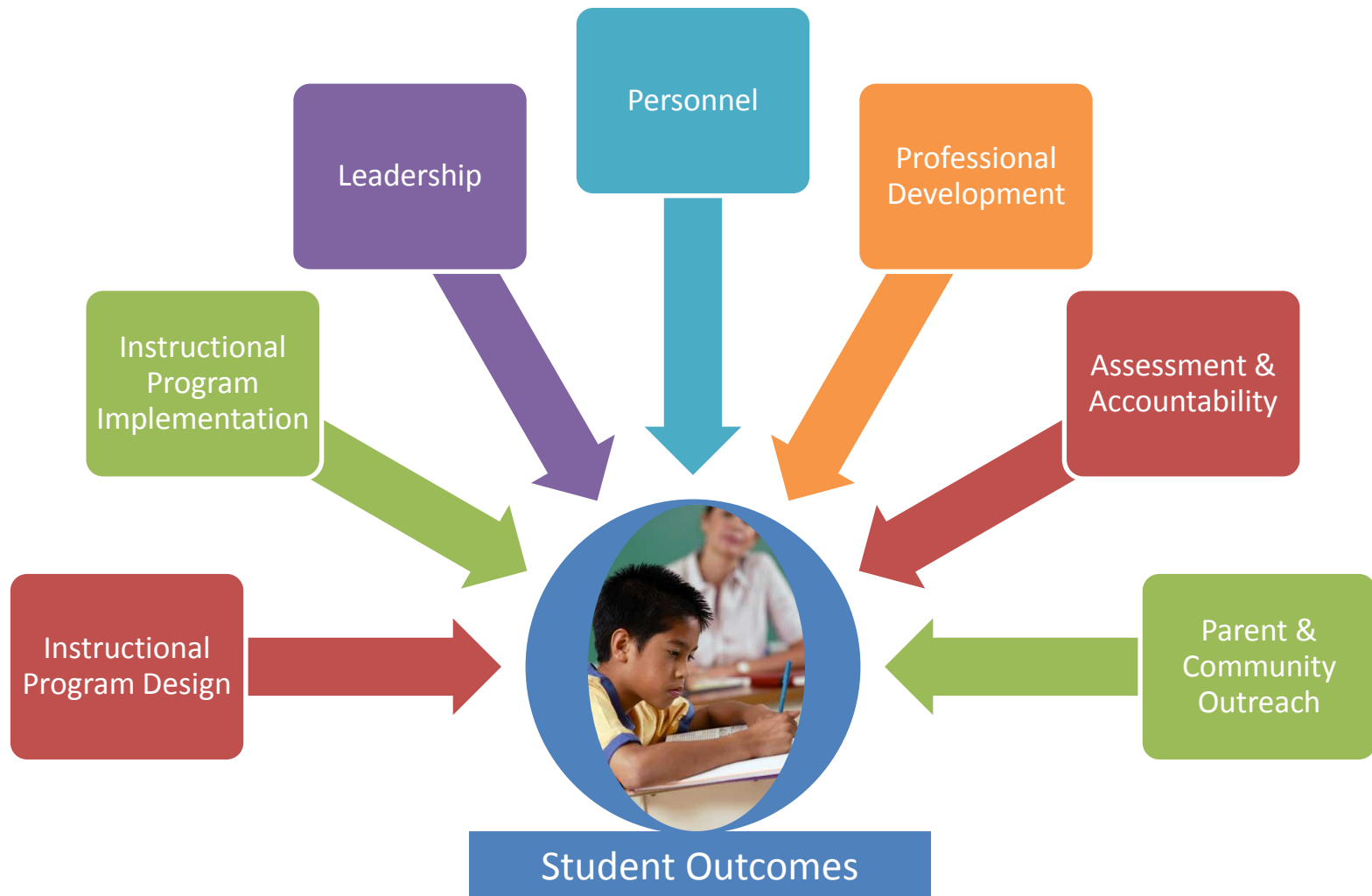
# Purpose of the Evaluation

- To assess the quality of programs and services for ELLs
- To assist Division leaders in making program decisions for ELLs
- *Would not be appropriate to use for purposes of decisions about effectiveness of specific personnel or schools*

# Evaluation Questions

1. What are student outcomes in relation to:
  - Time in LEP status?
  - Achievement gap closure in math and reading?
  - Enrollment and pass rates in advanced coursework?
  - High school completion?
2. To what extent do APS policies, practices, and procedures support ELLs as they:
  - Develop English language proficiency (ELP)?
  - Exit from the program and continue in general education programs?

# The Promoting Excellence Appraisal System (PEAS)

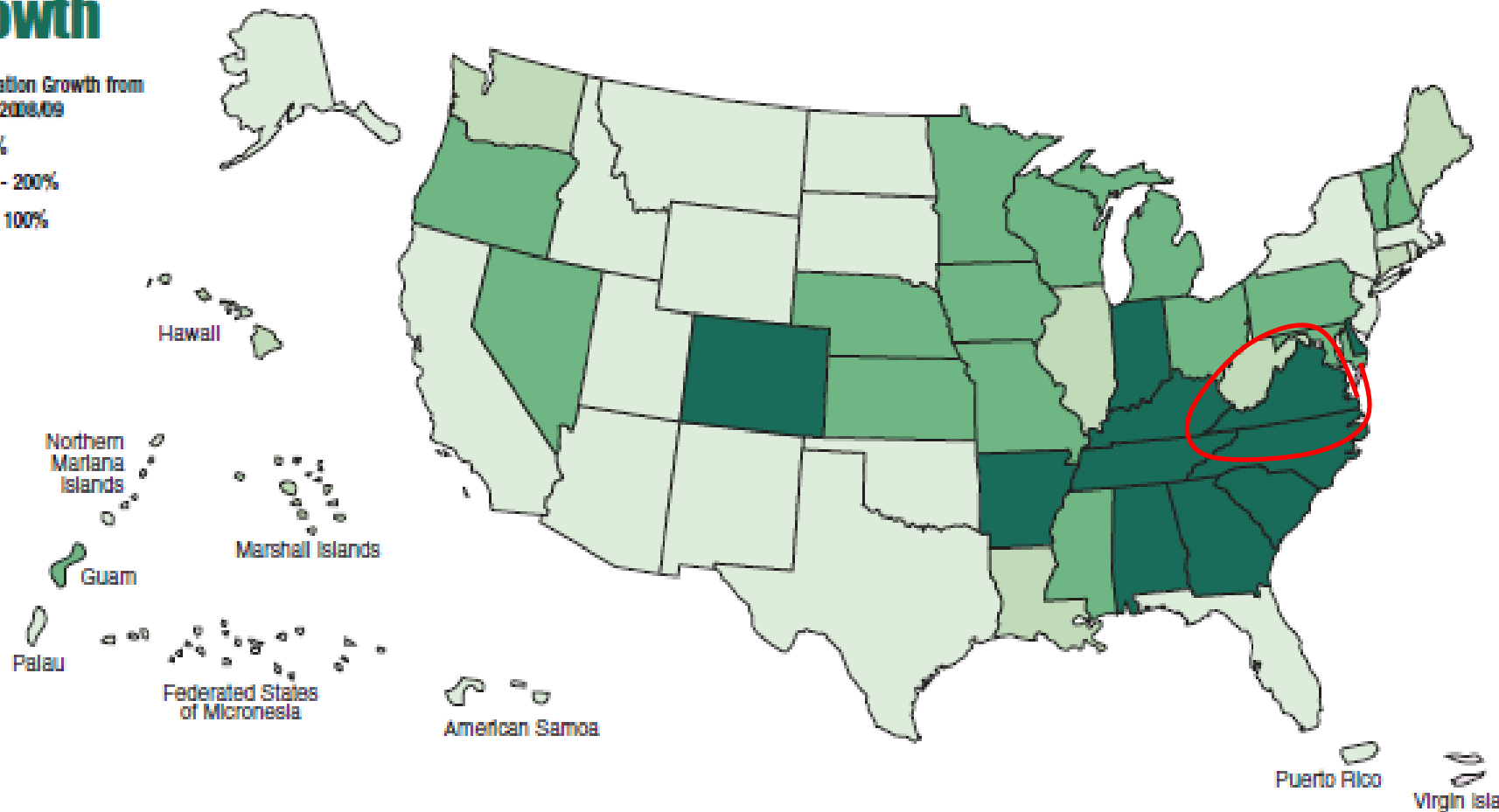


# National/State Context - ELLs

## Growth

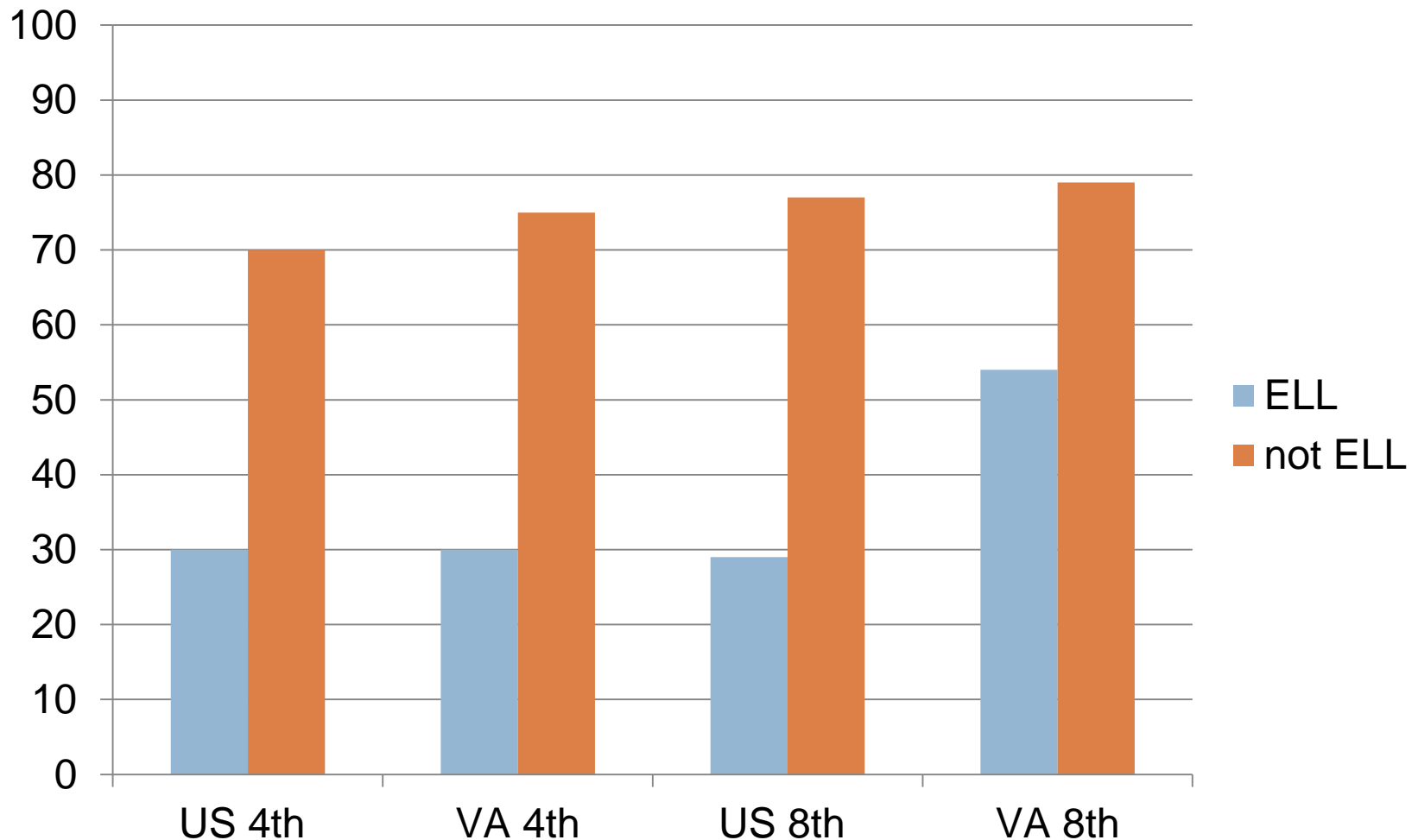
EL Population Growth from 1998/99-2008/09

- >200%
- 100% - 200%
- 50% - 100%
- <50%



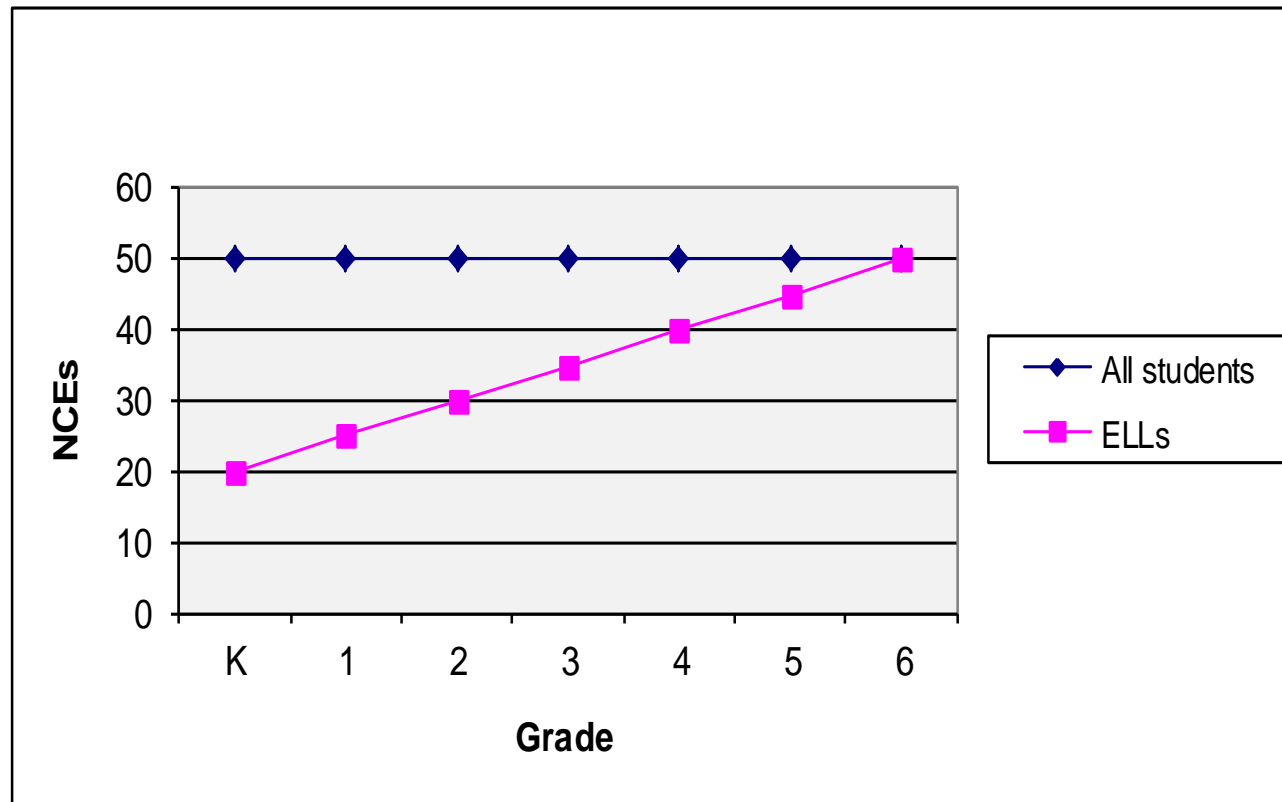
# Reading Achievement (Nation and State)

**% at or above *basic* on 2011 NAEP**



NCES, 2012

# Achievement Gap Closure



To close achievement gaps, ELLs must make more than one year's progress each and every year for 5 – 6 years.

# Arlington ELLs Grades K-12

WIDA Level	N	%	
1-Entering	3,689	58%	} Receive direct services
2-Beginning			
3-Developing			
4-Expanding			
5-Bridging	928	15%	} Exited direct services
6-Reaching	1,628	26%	
TOTAL	6,328		

123 native countries, 97 native languages



# APS' ELLs are diverse



## U.S.-born students

- making good progress
- struggling and/or long-term English language learners

## Newcomer students

- on grade level in their native language and/or in English
- with interrupted or limited formal schooling

# STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. Growth over time on Math and Reading SOLs
2. Time in LEP status
3. Participation in advanced coursework
4. High school completion rates

# Summary of Findings for Student Outcomes

## Doing well

### *Most ELLs:*

- Progress toward closing achievement gaps on SOLs

### *Secondary newcomers at advanced ELP levels:*

- Higher rates of enrollment in advanced coursework

## Needs improvement

### *ELLs/former ELLs (overall)*

- Lower rates of high school completion

### *ELLs currently in middle school*

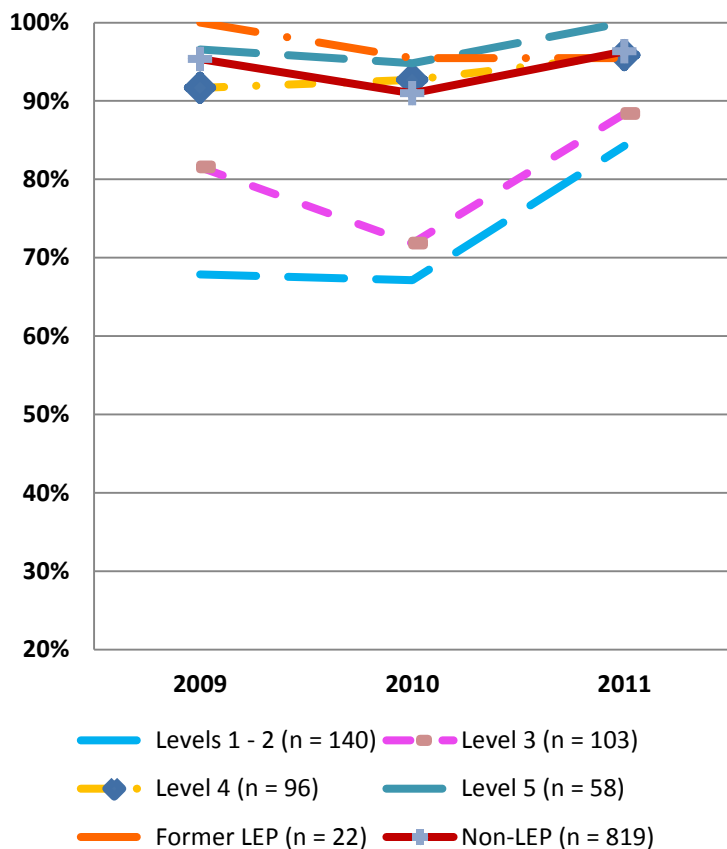
- 49% are long-term (>6 yrs LEP)
- Level 3: stalled in reading

### *Students who entered APS as LEP in elementary grades*

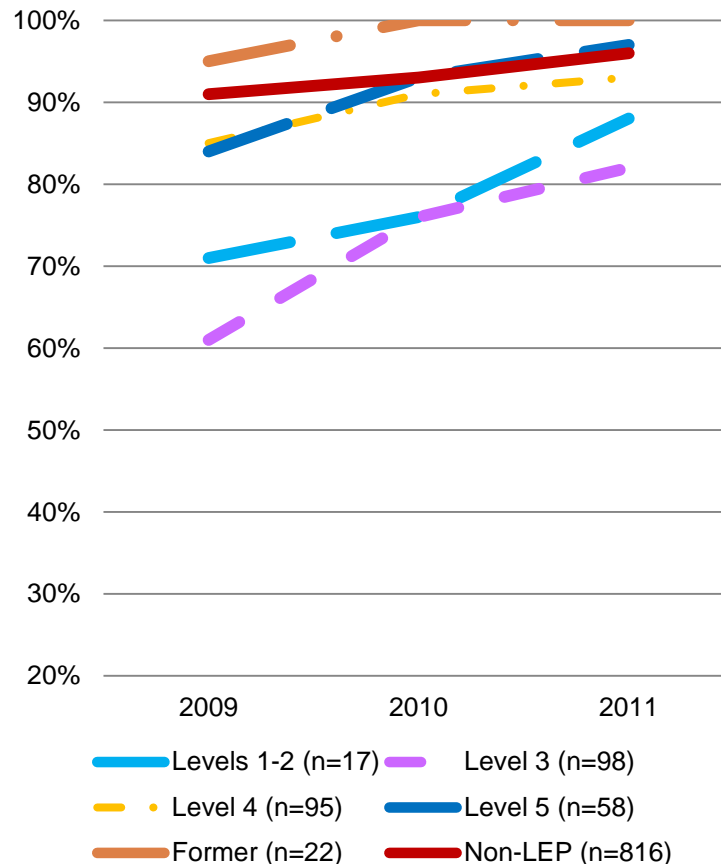
- Lower rates of enrollment in advanced coursework

# Longitudinal Student Achievement: Grades 3 - 5

## Math

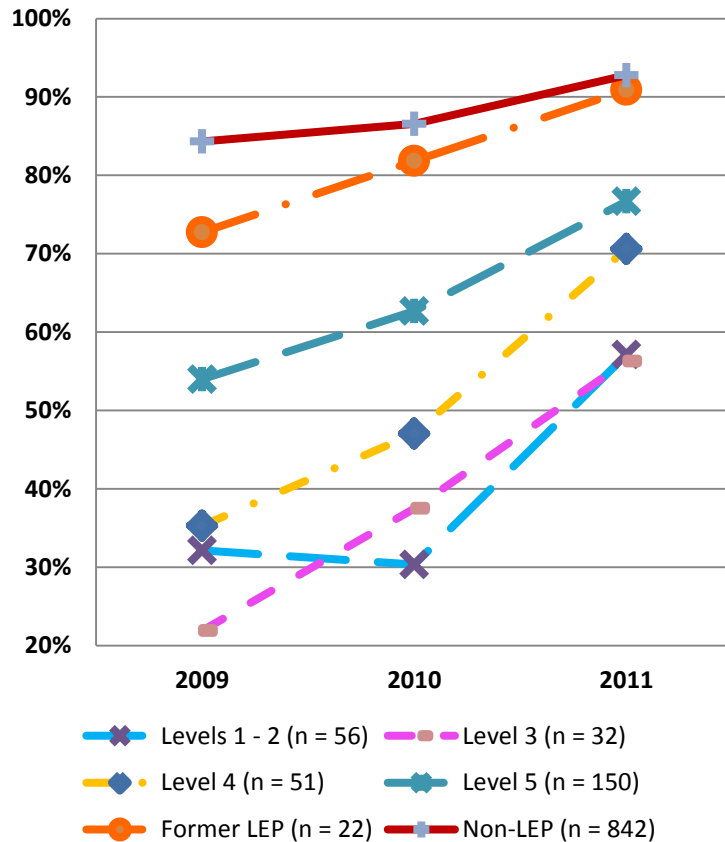


## Reading

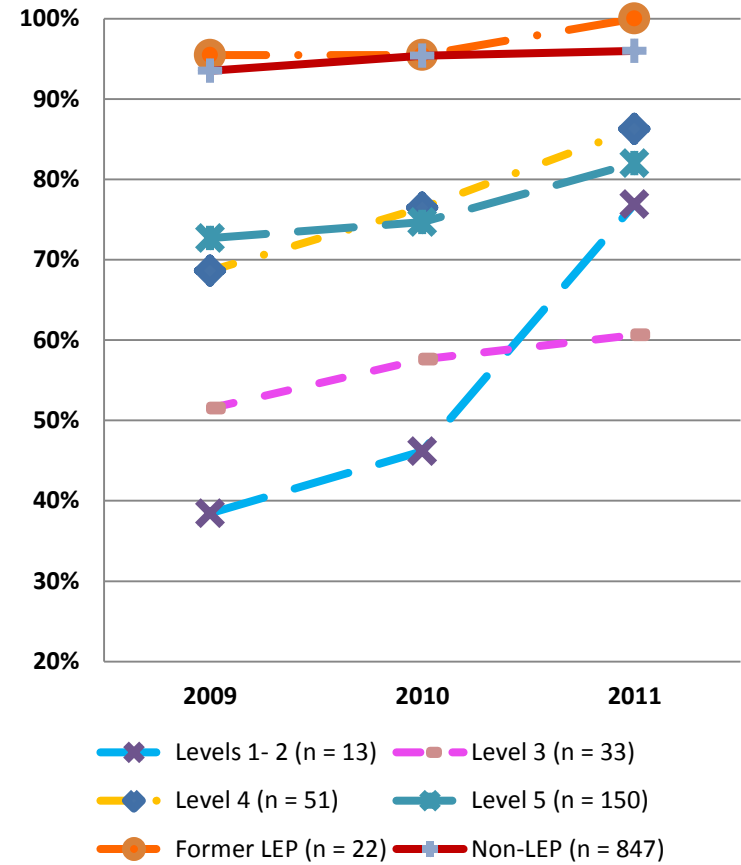


# Longitudinal Student Achievement: Grades 6 - 8

## Math

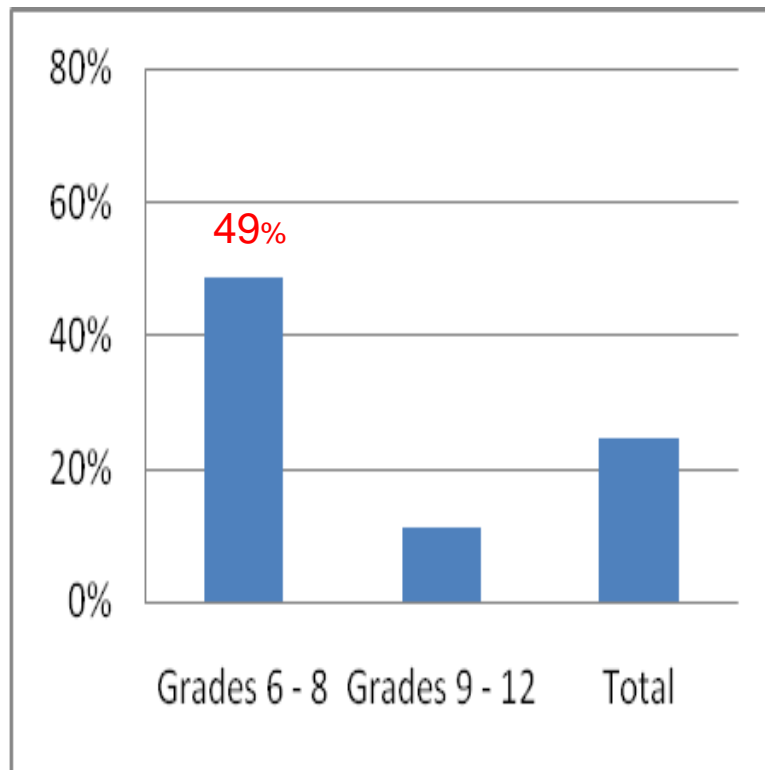


## Reading



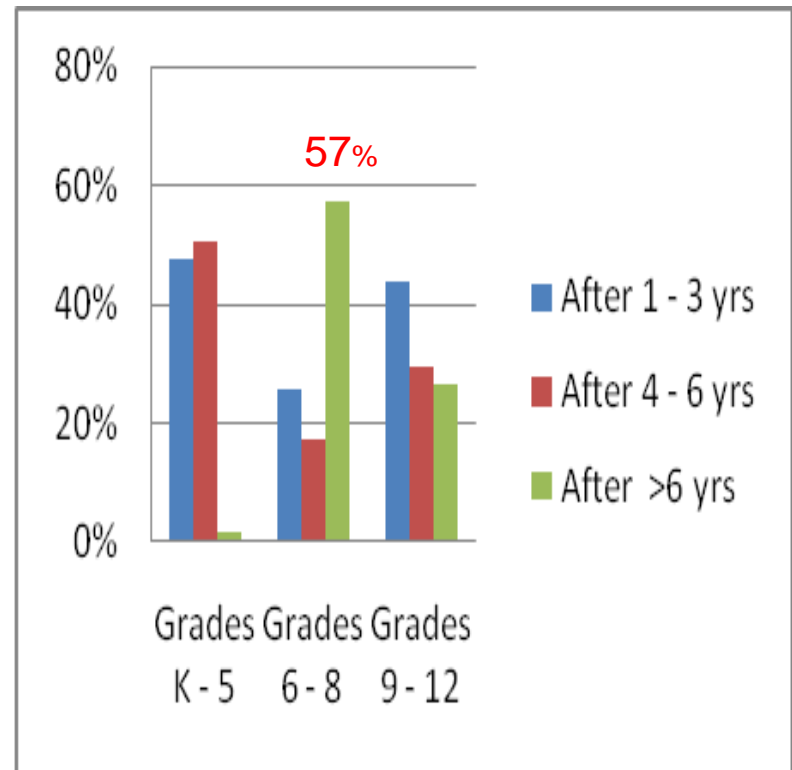
# Time in LEP status

Students in LEP Status > 6 yrs



N=1,839

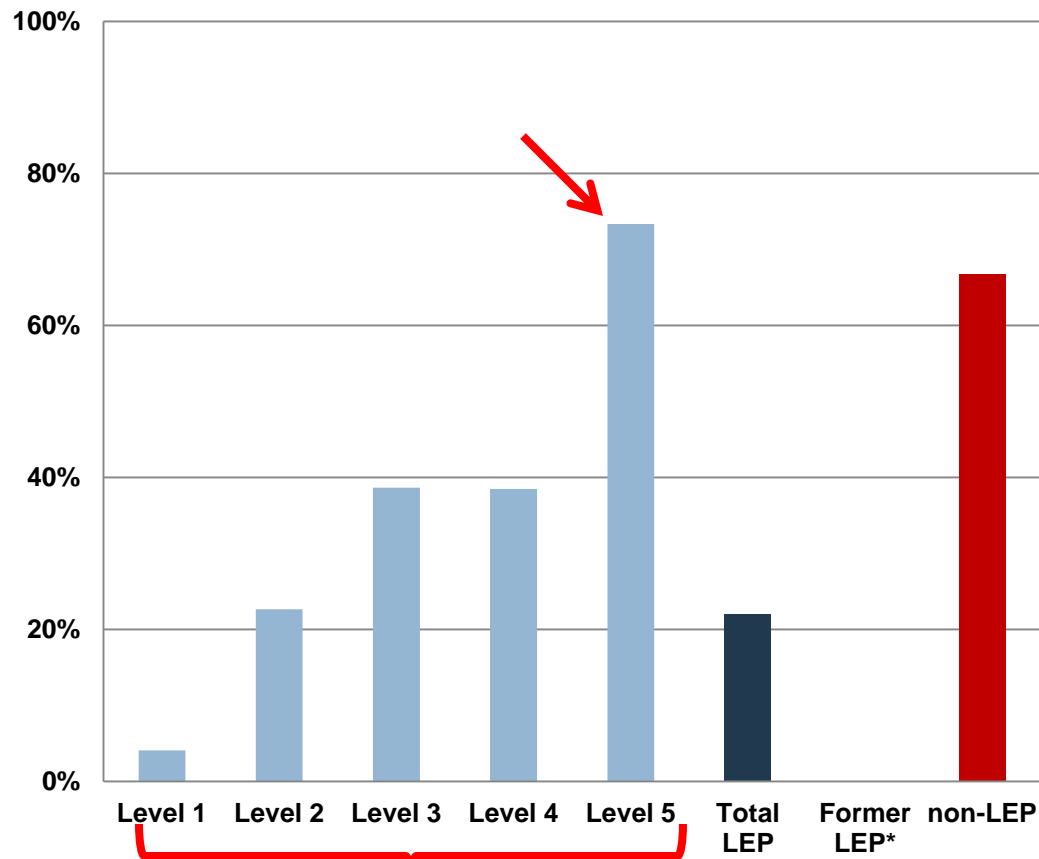
Years to attainment of state exit criteria



N=558

# Students who entered APS in high school

## Percent Gr 6-12 Who Enrolled in Advanced Coursework



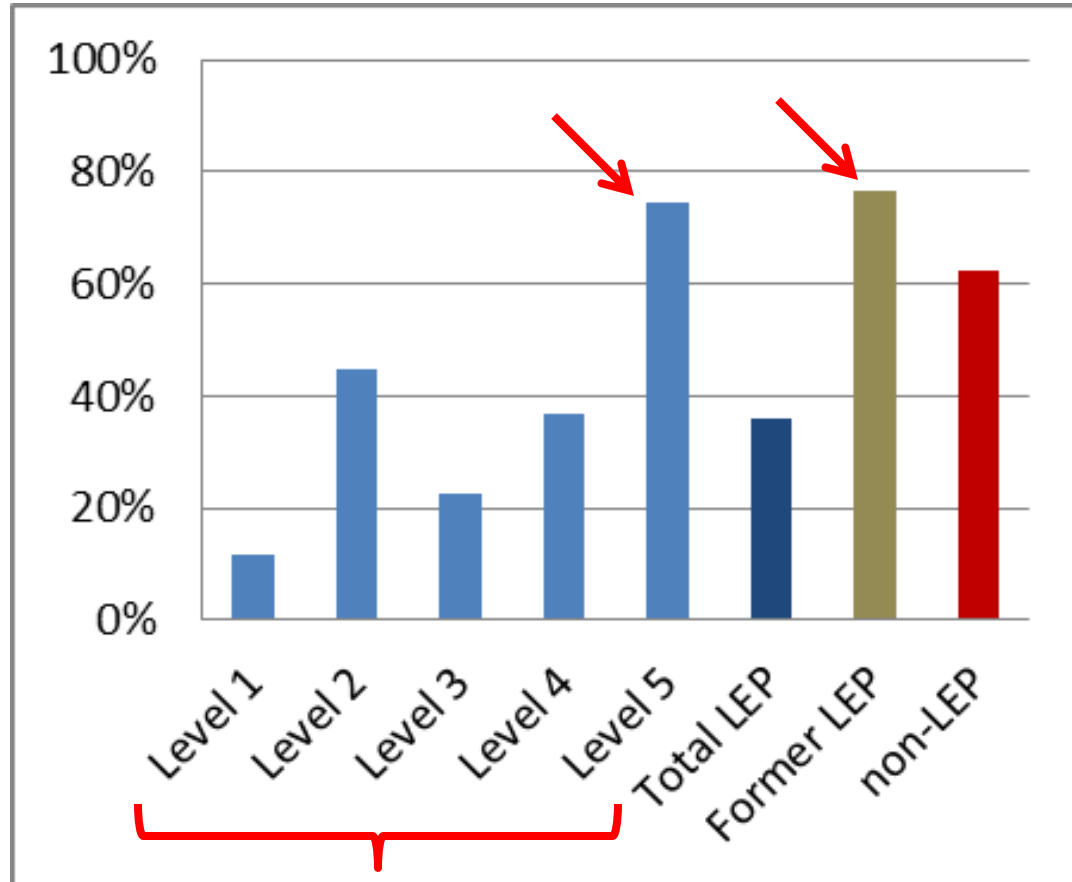
N=585

2008 ELP Level



# Students who entered APS in middle school

Percent Gr 6-12 Who Enrolled in Advanced Coursework



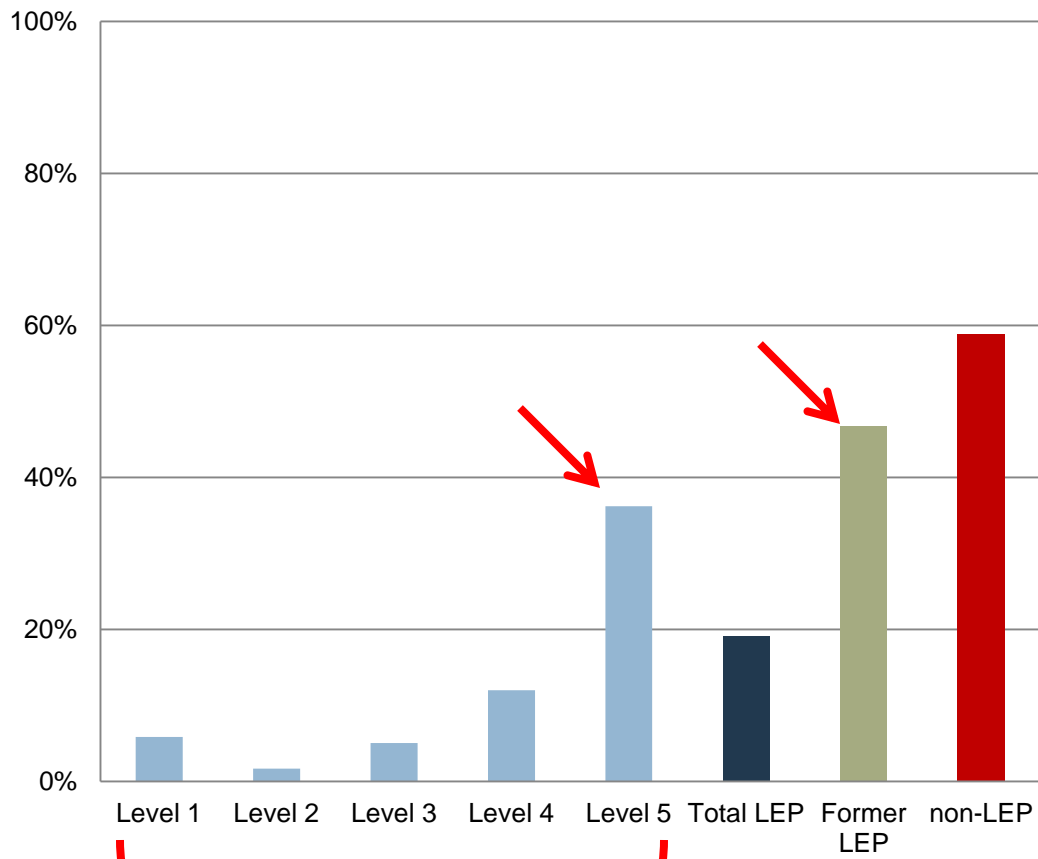
N=792

2008 ELP Level



# Students who entered APS in elementary school

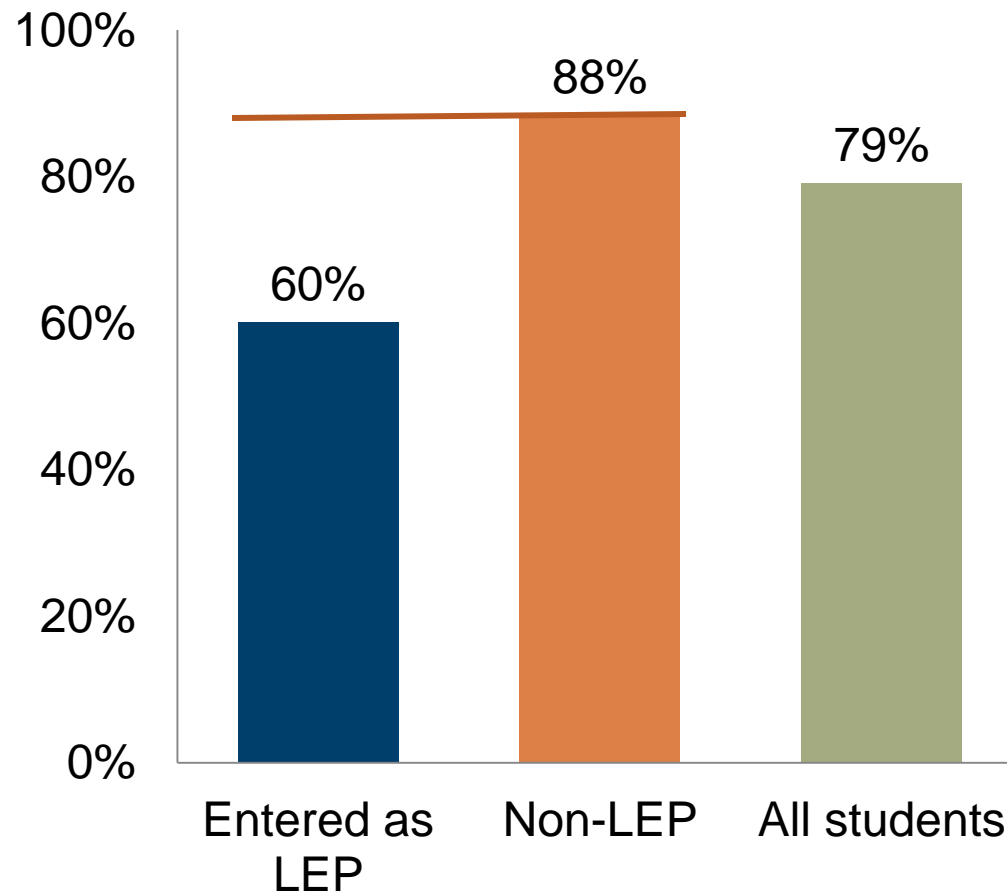
Percent Gr 6-12 Who Enrolled in Advanced Coursework)



N=8,732

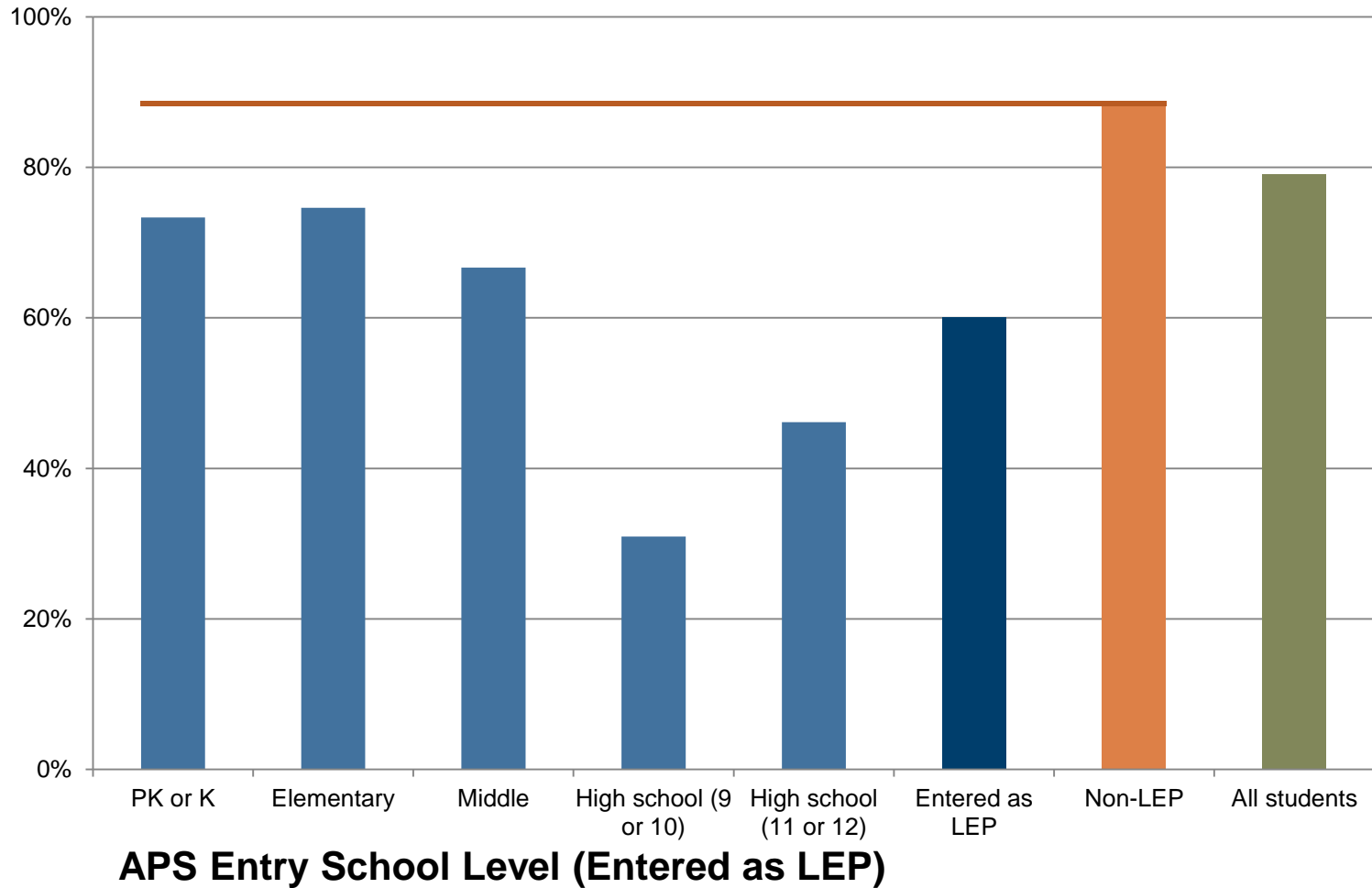
2008 ELP Level

# 4-Year High School Completion Rates (Comprehensive High Schools)

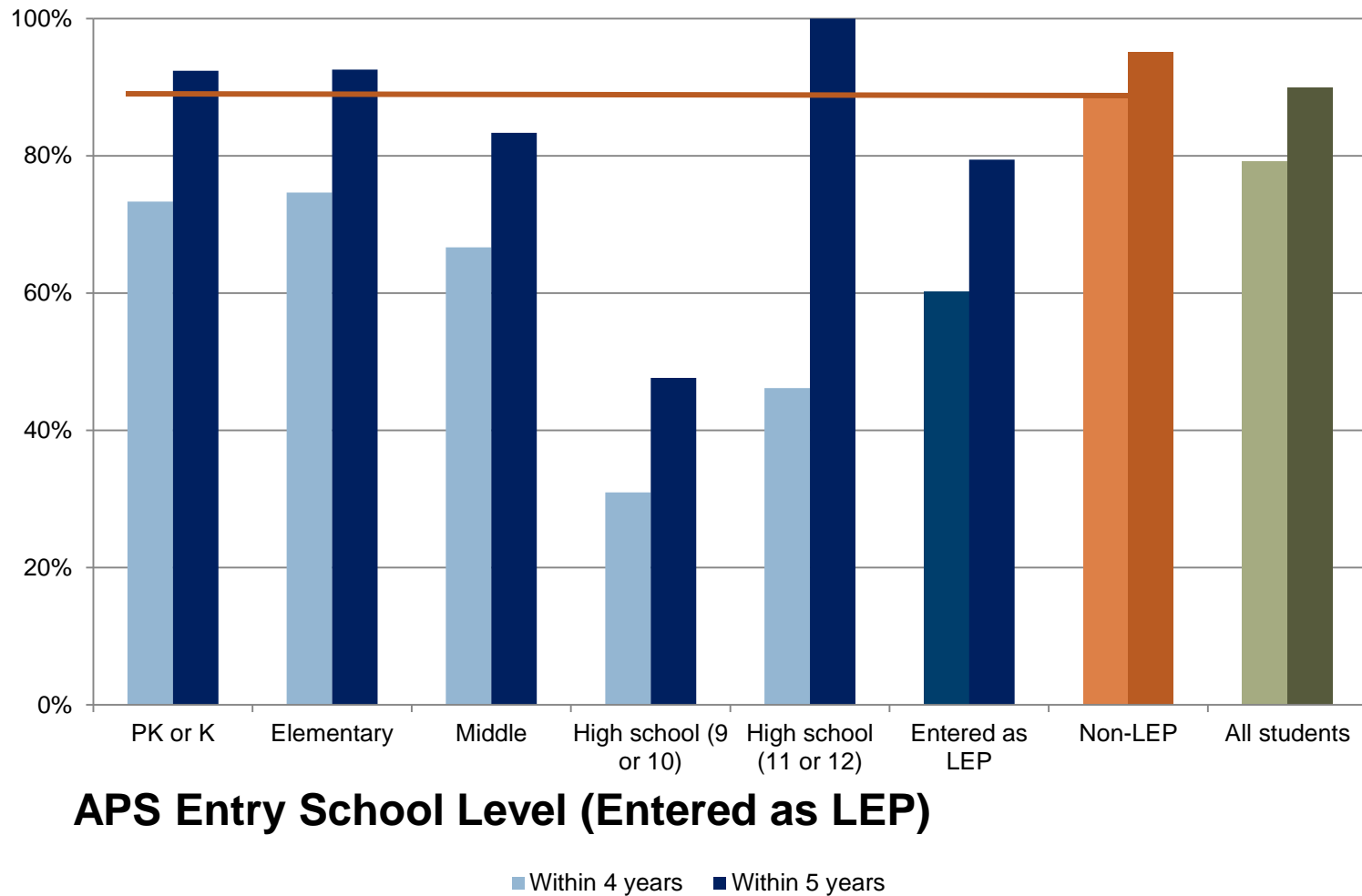


# 4-Year High School Completion Rates

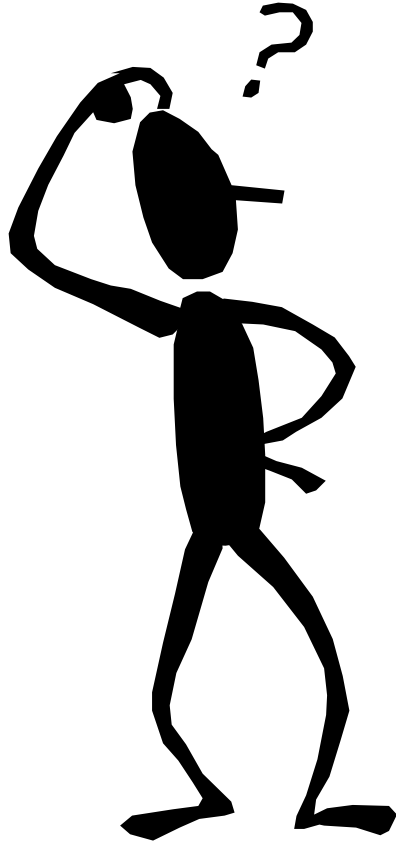
## by entry school level



# 4- and 5-Year Rates



# Questions?





# FINDINGS FOR PEAS DIMENSIONS

# FINDINGS: Overall Strengths

## Division

- Inclusive vision, mission, and goals
- Shared responsibility
- Positive climate
- Dropout prevention initiative
- Continuous improvement

## ESOL/HILT Program

- Research-based
- High quality curriculum
- Extending PD to broader audience of educators
- Key support positions
- Parent and community outreach

# FINDINGS: Areas for Improvement

## Leadership

- High expectations
  - Shared responsibility
  - Clear guidance
  - Positive climate
- The work of educating ELLs is not always focused, sustained, & coordinated within & across schools.



# FINDINGS: Areas for Improvement

## Instructional Implementation

- Access to challenging academic content
  - Language development
  - Collaboration
- Making instruction comprehensible to ELLs.
  - High expectations
  - Explicit instruction of the academic language of grade-level content.
  - Elementary reading instruction for ELLs
  - ESOL/HILT and general ed teacher collaboration

# FINDINGS: Areas for Improvement

## Assessment and Accountability

- Identification and placement
  - Use of data
  - Continuous improvement
- The Division lacks an effective system that holds school administrators accountable for the quality of instructional programs for ELLs.
  - The current student data system does not have the capacity to monitor ELL students' progress in meaningful ways.

# FINDINGS: Areas for Improvement

## Personnel

- Expert Teachers
    - prepared to address the academic, linguistic, and cultural needs of ELLs
  - Teacher Certification
  - Program Staffing
- Schools lack adequate numbers of instructional staff to meet the needs of all groups of ELLs.
  - Some mainstream teachers who serve ELLs do not have the expertise to address their needs.
  - Some ESOL/HILT teachers do not have expertise in the content areas they teach.

# FINDINGS: Areas for Improvement

## Parent and Community Outreach

- Family and Community Partnerships
  - Supporting Parent Involvement
  - Communication
- Not all parents are aware of and can take advantage of opportunities for training and support.

# Key Recommendations

1. Foster school-level accountability for the quality of instructional programs for ELLs.

2. Enhance program design to ensure the needs of all groups of ELLs are addressed.

3. Support implementation of ELL-responsive instructional practices through ongoing, job-embedded professional development for all educators of ELLs.

4. Improve the availability of meaningful data that can support instructional and programmatic decisions for ELLs.

# Recommendations

1. Foster school-level accountability for the quality of instructional programs for ELLs.

Hold school leaders accountable for the quality of instructional programs for ELLs.

Plan each school's service delivery tailored to the needs of diverse groups of ELLs.

Strengthen collaboration among ESOL/HILT/HILTEX and general education teachers.

# Recommendations

2. Enhance program design to ensure the needs of all groups of ELLs are addressed.

Ensure **Pre-K** is designed to support the needs of ELLs.

Allocate staff responsible for monitoring and supporting ELLs at ELP **Level 5**.

Strengthen guidance and expectations of teachers to explicitly teach **academic English**.

Revitalize the concept-based **reading** instructional approach for ELLs.

Pursue policies and practices that support secondary ELLs to enroll in and succeed in **advanced coursework**.

# Recommendations

3. Support implementation of ELL-responsive instructional practices through ongoing, job-embedded professional development for all educators of ELLs.

Ensure professional development for all educators of ELLs is sustained and leads to desired improvements.

Enhance the system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of professional development.



# Recommendations

4. Improve the availability of meaningful data that can support instructional and programmatic decisions for ELLs.

Continue efforts to improve the student data system so it can be used by educators to make data-based instructional decisions for ELLs.

Make demographic, English language proficiency, and achievement data on ELLs readily available.

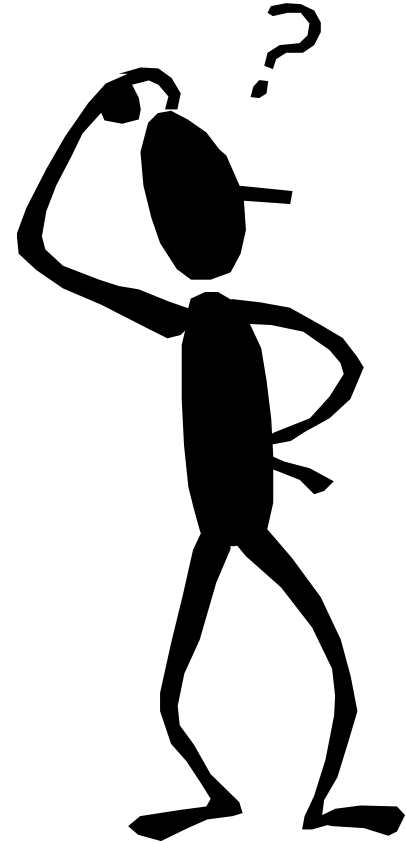
# Questions?

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# *What is academic language?*

- Different from 'everyday' language
- Specialized registers; specialized knowledge
- Students need explicit instruction in how language works to construct knowledge in school subjects

# What would be difficult for ELLs?

**Food Chains** The energy stored by producers can be passed through an ecosystem along a food chain, a series of steps in which organisms transfer energy by eating and being eaten. For example, in a prairie ecosystem, a food chain might consist of a producer, such as grass, that is fed upon by an herbivore, such as a grazing antelope. The herbivore is in turn fed upon by a carnivore, such as a coyote. (Miller & Levine, 2008, p. 69)

# Academic Language Examples

Long noun phrases

**Food Chains** The energy stored by producers

Embedded  
clause

can be passed through an ecosystem along a food chain, a series of steps in which organisms transfer energy by eating and being eaten. For example, in a prairie ecosystem, a food chain might consist of a producer, such as grass, that is fed upon by an herbivore, such as a grazing antelope. The herbivore is in turn fed upon by a carnivore, such as a coyote. (Miller & Levine, 2008, p. 69)

Passive voice

# Finding: Elementary Reading Instruction does not consistently address the needs of ELLs.



# Elementary Reading Instructional Considerations for ELLs



Components of literacy instruction linked in cohesive units



Explicit connections to content



Academic language (more than just vocabulary)

# Academic Language in Elementary Reading

Sylvester Duncan lived with his mother and father at Acorn Road in Oatsdale. One of his hobbies was collecting pebbles of unusual shape and color.

On a rainy Saturday during vacation, he found a quite extraordinary one. It was flaming red, shiny, and perfectly round, like a marble. As he was studying this remarkable pebble, he began to shiver, probably from excitement, and the rain felt cold on his back. “I wish it would stop raining,” he said.





**Finding: APS does not have strategies to ensure collaborative teaching follows best practices for inclusive classrooms.**

# What is effective collaboration?

- Voluntary
- Equal status
- Teachers plan, implement, and reflect together
- Both teachers share
  - goals
  - resources
  - responsibility
  - accountability

## Requires:

- Time
- Space
- Classroom placement
- Resources
- Professional development

(Dufour, 2003; Friend & Cook, 2003)