

# English Language Learners Task Force: Introduction & Planning for SY2019-2020

**September 17, 2019**

## ELLTF Mission

The English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force of the Boston School Committee was created in October 2009 for the following purposes:

- ❖ **Provide guidance** to the School Committee and the Superintendent regarding a vision and a plan of action to respond appropriately to the growth in the numbers of students whose first language is a language other than English.
- ❖ **Identify mechanisms** to address the needs of ELLs.
- ❖ **Monitor** the district's progress in meeting the educational needs of ELLs.

## ELLTF History

The ELLTF was created as part of BPS's response to the public discovery of system challenges in meeting minimal educational requirements for English learners:

- ❖ An 18-month federal investigation into civil rights violations of English language learners at BPS found that ~42% of ELLs were not receiving *any* ELL services.
- ❖ BPS and the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education entered into a 2010 interim and 2012 successor settlement agreement that specified immediate and ongoing steps to ensure that ELL students would receive educational services.
- ❖ Today, BPS's Office of English Learners (OEL) reports quarterly to the DOJ on progress implementing policies and practices to increase access by ELL students to appropriate services. Compliance with these DOJ requirements represents the *minimum* standards for ELL educational services.

## How the ELLTF Works

- ❖ Volunteer ELLTF members, appointed by the School Committee, bring expertise in bilingual education, educational equity, the Boston Public Schools, and Boston's communities.
- ❖ The ELLTF and its subcommittees interact with the BPS Offices of English Learners, Special Education, Engagement, Data and Accountability, Human Capital, as well as with the Chief of Academics, Budget Office, Office of Opportunity Gaps, Department of Strategy, and others.
- ❖ The ELLTF **monitors** district policies, practices, programs and their impact on ELL services and outcomes; **assesses** ELL program quality; and **advocates** to improve ELL family and community engagement, and human capital alignment with ELL needs.
- ❖ For School Years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, the ELLTF was organized into subcommittees:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English Learner Students with Disabilities (ELSWD)</li> <li>• Data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program Quality</li> <li>• Parent Engagement</li> <li>• Human Capital</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ad-hoc Committee on a Multilingual, Multicultural BPS (2018-19 only)</li> </ul>
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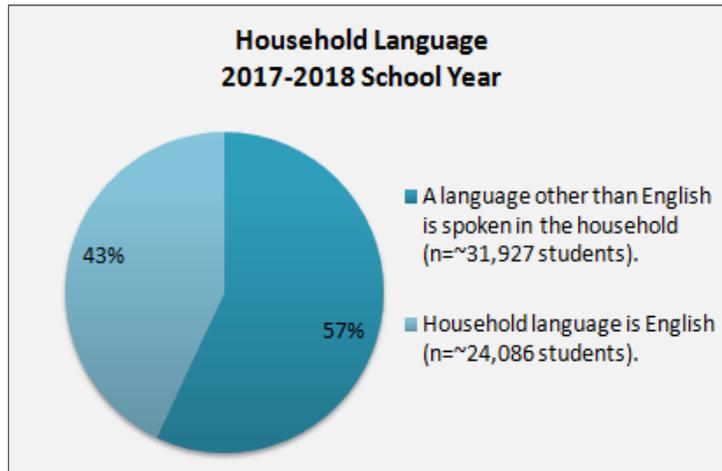
## ELLTF Tentative Member Roster SY2019-20

Returning Members	Proposed New Members	Departing Members
1. Janet Anderson	1. Angelina Camacho	1. Andres Alonso
2. Farah Assiraj	2. Fabian Torres-Ardila	2. Patricia Crain de Galarce
3. Paulo De Barros	3. Rosann Tung	3. Bob Hildreth
4. Geralde Gabeau		4. Ana Solano-Campos
5. Lisette Le		5. Cheng Imm Tan
6. <b>Suzanne Lee, Co-chair</b>		
7. Katie Li		
8. Julia Mejia		
9. John Mudd		
10. <b>Lorna Rivera, Co-chair</b>		
11. Maria Serpa		
12. Marie St. Fleur, J.D.		
13. Alejandra St. Guillen		
14. Miren Uriarte		

**Next steps**

- September 11, 2019: School Committee reviews CVs of proposed new members
- September 25, 2019: School Committee votes on proposed new members

## A Multilingual, Multicultural BPS Community

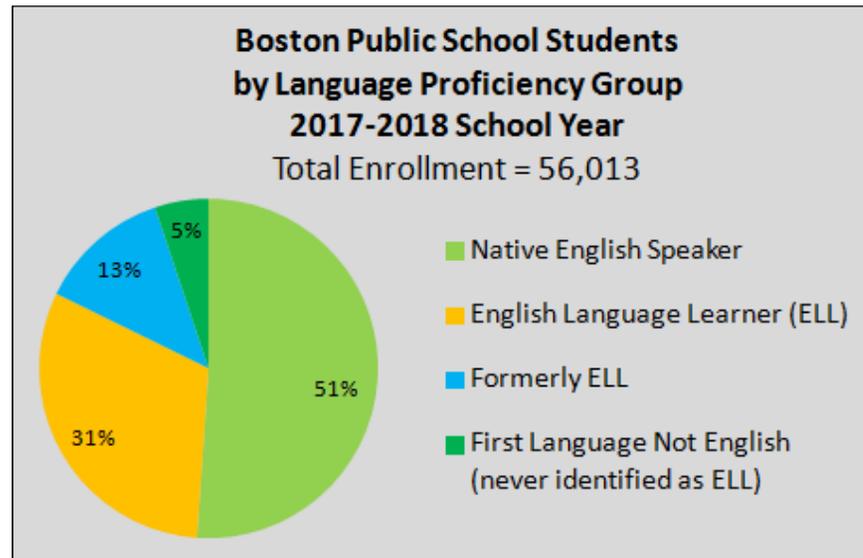


- A majority of BPS students – about **57%** – live in a *household* where a language other than English is spoken.
- Among English Learners in BPS, more than **70** first languages are spoken.

**This multilingual community of learners is served within a policy and legal framework that (until recently) bans most forms of bilingual education, by an educator force that remains predominantly white and monolingual, and with an array of educational programs and services that are centered on learning English and learning in English.**

Source: BPS Office of English Learners, email communication, November 7, 2018.

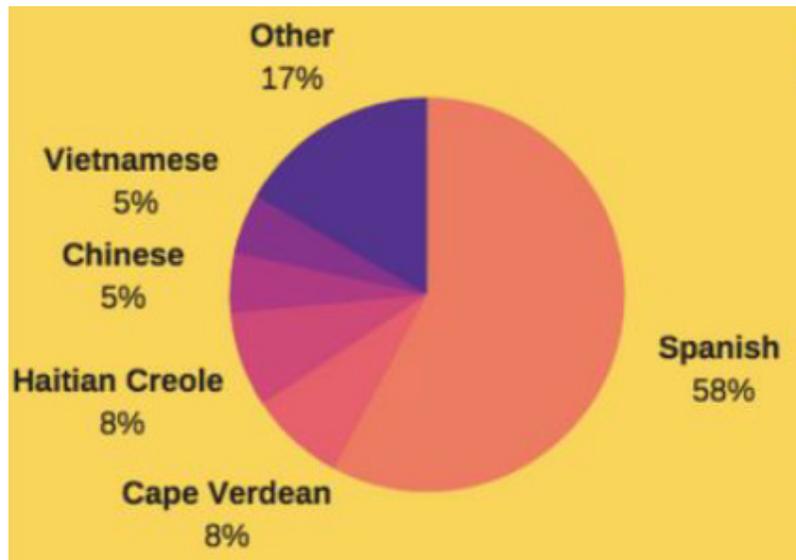
## English Language Learners (ELLs) in BPS



- About half – at least **49%** – of BPS students have a first language that is not English, including:
- **31%** who are ELLs (n=17,442)
  - **13%** who are former ELLs (FELLs) (n=7,080)
  - **5%** who entered the system bilingual in English and another language (n=2,871)

Source: BPS. Data includes active BPS K0-12 students as of April 17, 2018, Aspen SIS (includes in-district Horace Mann charter schools; excludes student outplacements).

## Languages Spoken by BPS English Learners



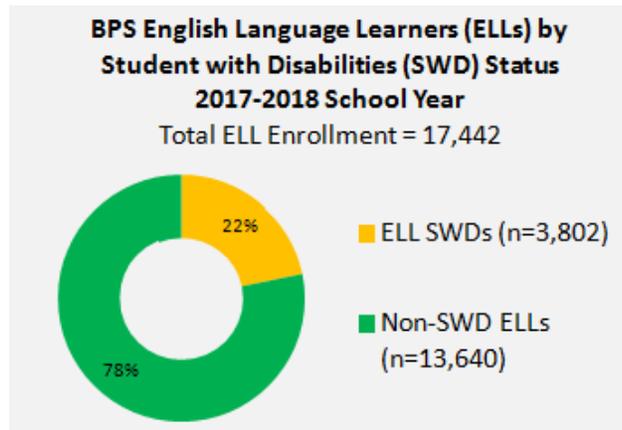
➤ Among BPS English Learners, the most common languages spoken are:

- Spanish (58%)
- Cape Verdean (8%)
- Haitian Creole (5%)
- Chinese (5%)
- Vietnamese (5%)

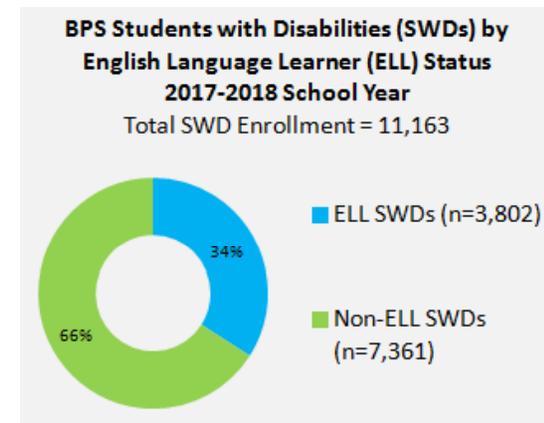
➤ 17% of ELs speak one of 65+ other languages.

Source: BPS Office of English Learners, Presentation to Boston City Council, May 2018, p. 2.

## Substantial Overlap between English Learners and Students with Disabilities (SWDs)



**One-fifth (22%)** of all English learners are students with disabilities (3,802 students).



**One-third (34%)** of all students with disabilities are English learners (3,802 students).

**Many ELSWDs have *no* access to instruction or assistance in their native language.**

Source: BPS. Data includes active BPS K0-12 students as of April 17, 2018, Aspen SIS (includes in-district Horace Mann charter schools; excludes student outplacements).

## The ELLTF's Vision for BPS

**Acknowledge that one-half of BPS students are bilingual and one-third are ELLs.**

**Take ELLs into account in all BPS decision-making — from data, to academics, to SELWell, to staffing, and so on.**

**Recognize and promote BPS as a multilingual, multicultural district.**

**Take students' language into account consistently — in all areas, but especially in assessment, placement and service delivery for ELLs.**

**Engage cultural and linguistic minority communities in decision-making regarding BPS policy.**

## **ELLTF Goals – as articulated for SY2018-19**

- 1. Recognize and promote BPS as a multilingual, multicultural district**
- 2. Promote and monitor progress in distributing responsibility for outcomes of ELL students to all parts of the BPS organization**
- 3. Continue to monitor, assess, and advocate to improve:**
  - School district data systems and the use of technology
  - Impacts of student assessment and assignment policies on ELLs
  - ELL program quality
  - Engagement of families of ELLs and linguistic minority communities
  - Services to and outcomes for ELL students with disabilities (ELLSWD)
  - Human capital alignment with ELL needs

## Structure and Operations

Counting ELLTF Meetings -- SY 2018-19								
	Full ELLTF	Subcommittees**						ALL
		ELSWD	Engage	HC	PQ	Multi	All Sub	
September	1		1				1	2
October	1	1		1			2	3
November*	1	1		1			2	3
December	1	1	1			1	3	4
January		1		1			2	2
February	1				1		1	2
March		1	1			1	3	3
April	1	1			1		2	3
May	1	1		1		1	3	4
June		1	1			1	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Monthly Average</b>								<b>2.9</b>

\* The ELLTF's annual presentation to the School Committee occurred on 11/7/18.

\*\* Subcommittees were. . .

ELSWD: English Learner Students with Disabilities

Engage: Family and Community Engagement

HC: Human Capital

PQ: Program Quality

Multi: Ad-hoc Committee on a Multilingual, Multicultural BPS

As we plan the ELLTF's structure in SY2019-20. . .

- Where are the opportunities to monitor, assess, and advocate for changes that better serve ELs and lead to a more EL-centering system?
- How can we have more effective collaborations with BPS staff?
- How can ELLTF advocacy create opportunities for BPS staff advocacy in service of ELLs?
- How can we effectively leverage the power of the subcommittees to connect the ELLTF with departments in addition to OEL?
- How can we reduce the number of subcommittee meetings?

## Priorities: Overview

- Ten years into DOJ oversight, the district has made enormous strides in meeting its obligation to provide adequate educational services to English learners, but compliance is only a starting place.
- The ELLTF has identified many priorities for change. The summaries of those priorities on the following pages are distilled from:
  - Subcommittee priorities as stated for SY2018-19
  - The running list of “follow-up items” from the SY2018-19 full ELLTF meetings

# ELLTF Priorities: Preview of Areas

## **Program Planning and Implementation**

### The LOOK Act

Overview

Challenges

Work underway

Priorities and concerns to carry forward

### ELSWDs

Problems

Priorities

### Other Issues

Priorities and structures

Budget

## **Family and Community Engagement**

Challenges

Addressing the data problem

## **Human Capital**

Challenges

Progress

## **Data**

Challenges

## **A Multilingual, Multicultural BPS**

Challenges

## **Program Planning and Implementation: The LOOK Act**

### **➤ Overview**

- **The LOOK Act needs to be a central focus of our work. There is a need for BPS to develop further a clear strategic vision for the growth of ELL programs and implementation of high-quality programs allowed by the LOOK Act.**
  - How do we take advantage of the LOOK Act to really implement programs for ELs?
  - How can we identify and advance achievable LOOK Act-enabled programs in a way that is linked to a bigger vision of a BPS that centers and serves multilingual students?

## Program Planning and Implementation: The LOOK Act

### ➤ Challenges

- Student assignment
- Teacher assignment
- Budget
- Accountability and school autonomy

### ➤ Work underway

- Need for Developmental Bilingual pilot programs for Haitian and Cape Verdean students.
- Initial pilot programs (OEL can provide #s of students impacted after beg. of this year)

### ➤ Priorities and concerns to carry forward as new bilingual programs are developed

- Authentic materials
- Authentic assessments
- Culture, not just language
- Being mindful of confusion for families
- Particular concerns of Cape Verdeans, who don't have a strand
- Rigorous materials into the upper grades
- Racial equity in access to bilingual programs
- Costs over time (beyond start-up costs), especially school costs

## Program Planning and Implementation: ELSWDs

### ➤ Problems

- ELSWDs have the lowest academic achievement and highest off-track percentage of any subgroup
- Lack of systems for understanding student language and learning needs
- Absence of systems to meet those needs with adequate bilingual staffing

### ➤ Priorities

- Access to native language – native language needs included in IEPs; recruit, hire, and develop bilingual ELSWD teachers, paras, etc.
- Pilot test, then implement district-wide, a checklist that includes Language Access and Cultural Responsiveness in the development and implementation of IEPs
- Complete, test and disseminate an ELSWD Guidance document

## Program Planning and Implementation: Other Issues

### ➤ Priorities and structures

- Move toward action recommendations about the relationship between autonomy of schools and centralized accountability.
  - How to take on the issue of whether language clustering contributes to re-segregation of the schools?
  - Maybe take one example, perhaps the Cape Verdean programming and student needs, and follow it through.
- Appropriate goals for native language — academic use? home and community use?

### ➤ Budget

- Weighted Student Funding (WSF)
  - questions raised, including whether there is need for more nuanced weights for ELs and for ELSWDs.
- Need for stronger guardrails in the budget process to understand and evaluate the importance principals place on bilingual educators and parent engagement (now negotiated between principals and Budget staff without many guidelines).

## Family and Community Engagement

### ➤ Challenges

- Schools too often function at a distance from the communities they serve, with only four of Boston's 125 schools satisfying the district's model family engagement standards.
- Lack of comprehensive school-level engagement strategy
- Unclear whether / to what extent family engagement is part of the metrics on which principals are evaluated
- Need for ongoing observation of implementation of training on Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices (CLSP)
- Need for family engagement around the LOOK Act

### ➤ Addressing the data problem

- Information was gathered by the Engagement subcommittee through four school site visits during SY2018-2019
- Possible data source considered: exit interviews of EL students' parents about why they are leaving BPS.

## Human Capital

### ➤ Challenges

- There is no centralized district data on teacher/staff language skills, and there are no plans currently in place to align staff qualifications with students' linguistic needs.
- Barriers to deployment of staff with specific language skills to meet students' language needs
- Limited accountability for hiring of culturally and linguistically appropriate staff as a proficiency requirement in principal evaluations
- Inadequate comprehensive professional development that enhances culturally and linguistically sustaining practices across the district
- Unclear/no language capacity goals for hiring teachers and other (para)professional staff
- Need to address issue of staff language capacity with the union

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### ➤ Progress

- Data on linguistic skills is now collected for new hires

## Data

### ➤ Challenges

- **Monitoring:** Ongoing need for monitoring the consistency of analysis of district data by ELL/FELL, by ELD level, and by language group
- **Student Assignment:** still need an evaluation of the ELL overlay in the Home-Based Student Assignment process; ongoing concerns about the balance between “choice” and program fidelity
- **BuildBPS:** Track displacement/gentrification and impact on programming, specifically whether EL decline in East Boston (or South Boston or Columbia Point, etc.) reflects moves to other parts of the city or not. [Likely other priorities exist in this area too.]

## A Multilingual, Multicultural BPS

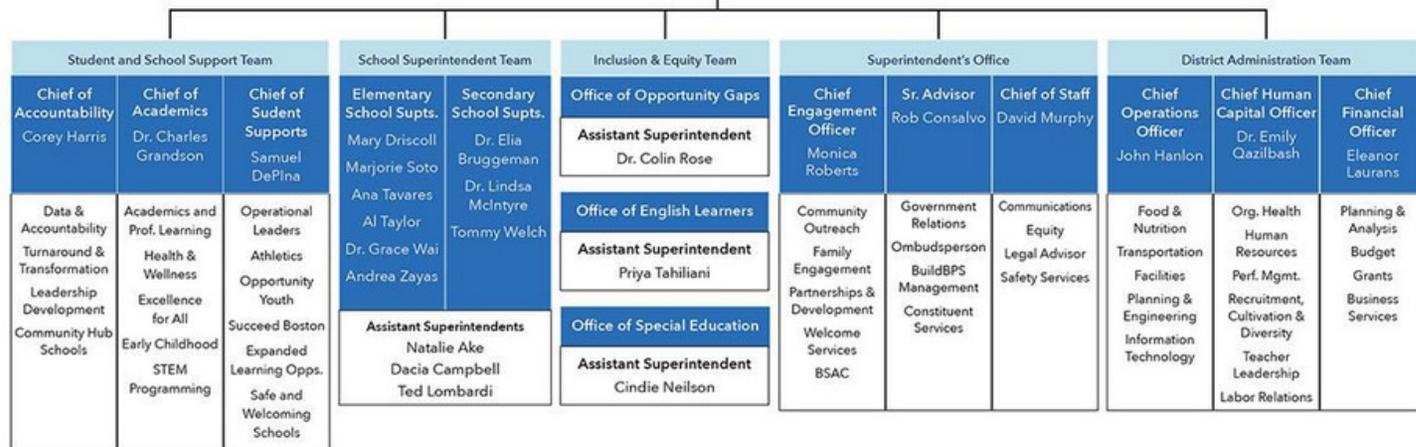
### ➤ Challenges

- Coming out of an SY2018-19 four-meeting series with senior BPS staff and an ad hoc group of ELLTF members, we learned that there is not a currently vision within BPS for advancing the goal of recognizing and promoting BPS as a multilingual, multicultural district.
  - There are the pilot efforts led by OEL under the LOOK Act, that introduce new bilingual education and heritage language programs.
  - There had been a Global Language Task Force and some effort to create more robust global language education objectives for native English speakers, but those were never finalized.
- Where is the momentum, and what are the strategies, for moving toward a system that centers multilingualism and engages multicultural Boston? Educational services to ELs have improved since 2009, but the major thrust of work is still around pressing multilingual students into an English-centering framework — learning English and learning in English.

**SY2020**  
**BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



**Boston School Committee**  
**Superintendent**  
**Dr. Brenda Cassellius**



# SY2019 BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

September 26, 2018

