

Overview of Paragraph 96: ELL Longitudinal Study

This document responds to the following April 2016 request from the ELL Task Force:

There has been a lot of interest in the longitudinal evaluation of ELLs in the district that is being conducted internally this time around. Specifically, we are hoping to get some information on the (i) Research Questions; (ii) the methods being used, and (iii) how the evaluation relates to the DOJ reporting.

How the evaluation relates to DOJ reporting:

The study corresponds to Paragraph 96 of the Successor Agreement between the Boston Public Schools (BPS) and the United States of America as well as additional requests from the US Department of Justice (DOJ) and Office of Civil Rights (OCR) team over the course of multiple meetings this school year. The purpose of the study under Paragraph 96 is to inform ELL program decisions and improve the effectiveness of ELL programs in BPS.

In basic terms, Paragraph 96 requires the district to evaluate the effectiveness of its ELL program to determine whether its language services are overcoming language barriers within a reasonable period of time and enabling students to participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs.

Research Questions & Methods:

We aim to address the following two overarching research questions:

1. What is the progress and achievement of English Language Learner (ELL) students (overall and by specific language program) and Former ELL students over time as compared to “Never LEP”¹ students?
2. Are ELL and Former ELL students able to meaningfully and equally participate in BPS education programs as compared to Never LEP students?

These research questions are further operationalized as follows (subject to ongoing discussions with DOJ/OCR):

¹ Never LEP is a term used in Boston Public Schools to denote English proficient students who have never been identified as an ELL while in BPS.



Research Question 1A: What is the progress and achievement of ELLs overall and by specific language program over time, with respect to the following cohorts of students, and how does that compare to Never LEP peers:

- ELLs in K2
- ELLs in Upper Elementary (Gr. 3-5)
- ELLs in Middle School (Gr. 6-8)
- ELLs in Early High School (Gr. 9-10)

Key Outcomes	Methods
<i>Language Acquisition*</i>	
Language acquisition as measured by growth on MEPA/ACCESS	Linear regression
Progression through ELD levels/reclassification	Descriptive/summary statistics
Likelihood of timely reclassification/becoming a long-term ELL	Logistic regression
<i>Academic Achievement</i>	
MCAS ELA Achievement/Growth	Linear Regression
MCAS Math Achievement/Growth	Linear Regression
MCAS Science Achievement	Linear Regression
Likelihood of in-grade retention	Logistic regression
Likelihood of dropping out	Logistic regression



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Likelihood of timely graduation	Logistic regression
<i>*Never LEP comparison not applicable for Language Acquisition measures.</i>	

Research Question 1B: What is the progress and achievement of ELD 3 students grouped for ESL with ELD 1 and/or 2 students, overall and by specific language program over time, and how does that compare to ELD 3 students grouped for ESL only with other ELD 3 students?	
Key Outcomes	Methods
<i>Language Acquisition</i>	
Language acquisition as measured by growth on MEPA/ACCESS	Linear regression
Progression through ELD levels/reclassification	Descriptive/summary statistics
Likelihood of timely reclassification/becoming a long-term ELL	Logistic regression
<i>Academic Achievement</i>	
MCAS ELA Achievement/Growth	Linear Regression
MCAS Math Achievement/Growth	Linear Regression
MCAS Science Achievement	Linear Regression
Likelihood of in-grade retention	Logistic regression
Likelihood of dropping out	Logistic regression



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Likelihood of timely graduation	Logistic regression
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Research Question 1C: What is the progress and achievement of ELL students identified as part of the Compensatory Services Group and how does that compare to ELL peers not in the Compensatory Services Group?	
Key Outcomes	Methods
<i>Language Acquisition</i>	
Language acquisition as measured by growth on MEPA/ACCESS	Linear regression
Progression through ELD levels/reclassification	Descriptive/summary statistics
Likelihood of timely reclassification/becoming a long-term ELL	Logistic regression
<i>Academic Achievement</i>	
MCAS ELA Achievement/Growth	Linear Regression
MCAS Math Achievement/Growth	Linear Regression
MCAS Science Achievement	Linear Regression
Likelihood of in-grade retention	Logistic regression



Research Question 1D: What is the academic achievement and participation of Former ELL students, during the 2-year monitoring period as well as 1 year after the monitoring period has ended, and how does this compare to that of Never LEP peers?

Key Outcomes	Methods
MCAS ELA Achievement/Growth	Linear Regression
MCAS Math Achievement/Growth	Linear Regression
Likelihood of in-grade retention	Logistic regression

Research Question 2A: Are the following cohorts of ELL students, overall and by specific language program, able to meaningfully and equally participate in BPS education programs, as compared to Never LEP peers:

- ELLs in K2
- ELLs in Upper Elementary (Gr. 3-5)
- ELLs in Middle School (Gr. 6-8)
- ELLs in Early High School (Gr. 9-10)

Key Outcomes	Methods
Likelihood of being identified for special education services	Logistic regression
Preparedness for AWC as measured by	Logistic regression



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TerraNova/Supera	
Likelihood of taking honors courses	Logistic regression
Likelihood of taking AP courses	Logistic regression

Research Question 2B: Are ELD 3 students grouped for ESL with ELD 1 and/or 2 students, overall and by specific language program, able to meaningfully and equally participate in BPS education programs, as compared to ELD 3 students grouped only with other ELD 3 students?	
Key Outcomes	Methods
Likelihood of being identified for special education services	Logistic regression
Preparedness for AWC as measured by TerraNova/Sipera	Logistic regression
Likelihood of taking honors courses	Logistic regression
Likelihood of taking AP courses	Logistic regression

Research Question 2C: Are ELL students identified in the Compensatory Services Group able to



meaningfully and equally participate in BPS education programs, as compared to ELL peers not in the Compensatory Services Group?	
Key Outcomes	Methods
Likelihood of being identified for special education services	Logistic regression
Preparedness for AWC as measured by TerraNova/Supera	Logistic regression
Likelihood of taking honors courses	Logistic regression
Likelihood of taking AP courses	Logistic regression

Research Question 2D: Are Former ELL students, during the 2-year monitoring period as well as 1 year after the monitoring period has ended, able to meaningfully and equally participate in BPS education programs, and how does this compare to that of Never LEP peers?	
Key Outcomes	Methods
Likelihood of timely graduation	Logistic regression
Likelihood of being identified as special needs	Logistic regression
Likelihood of taking honors and/or AP courses	Logistic regression