

# WHEN ENGLISH LEARNERS SUCCEED, WE ALL SUCCEED

## EL DATA AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE COVID-19 ERA

### The Growing Demand \*

- Latino students make up the vast majority of English Learners (ELs) in the US and are the **fastest growing student population in the nation**.
- In the US, the number of children from immigrant families under the age of 18 is expected to **grow to 34.2** by 2050, up from 17.3 million in 2009.
- This will account for **33.6 percent** of the US child population under age 18.

### Now More Than Ever \*\*

- 80 percent** of Latino households nationally report feeling worried their children are falling behind due to school closures.
- Less than half** of Latino households nationally report an ability or attempt to act as the home-school teacher to their children as schools have gone online.
- Nearly 1/3** of Latino households nationally report having online schooling technical problems and **30 percent** report not having enough computer equipment.

## The Facts

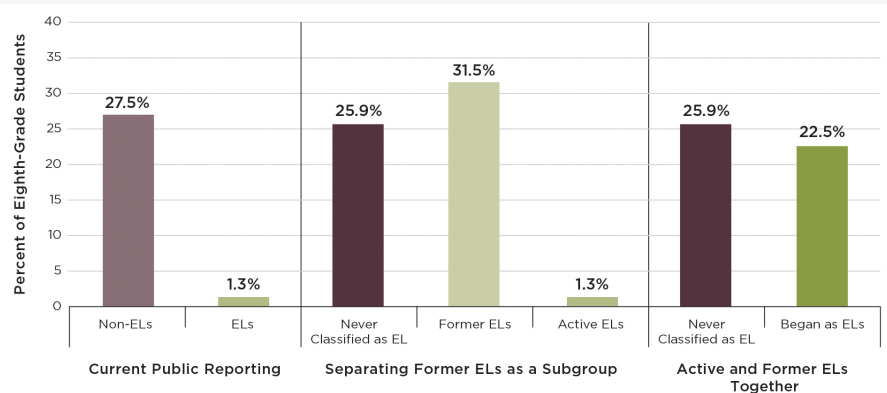
The success of this growing EL student population strengthens our society and the economic health in the US.

**Data shows**, with the right resources, these students are equally **or even more** successful academically, over time than their native English-speaking peers.\*\*\*

Recent research conducted by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research shows:

- With proper support, ELs can ultimately perform better academically than current standards suggest, and in fact **outperform** their native English-speaking peers.
- ELs go on to be **academically successful** and have better attendance and grades in core subject areas than native English speakers.
- The performance of former ELs on several academic indicators, including the ELA PARCC Exam, is **better** than students who were never classified as ELs.
- 80 percent** of students who began as ELs in kindergarten reached English proficiency levels by the end of fifth grade.
- The **nearly one-quarter** of ELs who did not attain English proficiency by the end of fifth grade were unlikely to reach proficiency before high school, typically struggling with attendance, grades, standardized achievement, and ninth grade OnTrack metrics.

### Reporting Only Active ELs Misses How Well Most ELs Perform



Longitudinal data showing former EL students (ELs who began as English Learners but reached English proficiency by eighth grade) outperformed native-English speakers on the ELA PARCC Exam when tracked through 8th grade and provided necessary English language resources. \*\*\*\*

By solely focusing on active ELs, accountability systems have unfairly depicted these students' performance, especially in schools with large numbers of ELs, diminishing the recognition and resources these students and institutions deserve.

## Recommendations include:

- 1** Federal ESSA guidelines for state accountability plans and local school district data analysis **must include the collection of longitudinal data through high school of English Learners even after they are English proficient and no longer receiving services.**
- 2** Federal ESSA guidelines for state accountability, state departments of education, and local school leaders **must include monitoring the progress of children's English language proficiency in the early years,** to facilitate a greater chance for long-term success.
- 3** State departments of education **must provide adequate and consistent financial investment** in English Learner programming – with Illinois' longstanding EL investments proving as a proxy for the success of these investments.
- 4** As Illinois' commitment to bilingual language instruction shows, state departments of education must increase investments in building pipelines of **qualified bilingual educators.**



## Sources

\* Vonderlack-Navarro, R., Garibay-Mulattieri, K. (2020) "Illinois English Learner Handbook," Latino Policy Forum. Accessed August 21, 2020: <https://elhandbook.org/>

\*\* SOMOS UNIDOSUS National Latino Survey May 10-16, 2020 (N=1,829) MoE +/- 2.3%, (Illinois N=250) MoE +/- 6.2%

\*\*\* De la Torre, M., A. Blanchard, E. Allensworth, S. Freire (2019) "English Learners in Chicago Public Schools," University of Chicago Consortium on School Research. Accessed July 2, 2020: <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/English-learners-in-Chicago-public-schools>

\*\*\*\* This longitudinal study conducted a retrospective data analysis of more than 18,000 English Learners (90 percent of whom were Latino students) from kindergarten through eighth grade, in three nine-year cohorts of students.