Profiles of English Learners (ELs)

Data used in this fact sheet cover the EL populations in grades K–12 across the United States. More than 4,850,000 ELs were enrolled in U.S. public schools in SY 2015–16.

Number of ELs, by State, Including DC: SY 2015-16

10%
Overall, ELs represented approximately **10 percent** of the students in U.S. public schools in SY 2015-16.

Fact

- In SY 2015-16, California and Texas each reported more than 500,000 EL students.
- Three other states each reported over 150,000 EL students in SY 2015–16: New York (216,259), Florida (268,109), and Illinois (193,879).
- In SY 2015–16, 21 states reported an EL population of less than 30,000.
- 60 percent of ELs in grades K through 12 in SY 2015 –16 were enrolled in the five states with highest EL populations (CA, TX, FL, NY, and IL).

Fact
• The number of ELs identified increased from 4.3 million in SY 2002–03 to nearly 4.9 million in SY 2015–16.
• The number of ELs served in Title III-funded programs showed a similar upward trend and increased from just over 3.6 million in SY 2002–03 to nearly 4.7 million in SY 2015–16, with a drop reported in SY 2010–11.

Number of K–12 ELs Identified and Served in Title III-Funded Programs, SYs 2002–03 through 2015–16

Three States with Highest Number of EL Students

CA 1,373,724
TX 892,000
FL 268,109

Fact
• During SY 2015–16, California, Texas, and Florida reported the highest number of ELs identified.
• California reported 1,370,724 ELs in SY 2015–16, a decrease of over 67,000 students from SY 2010–11.
• Texas has shown a steady increase each year over the past 5 years from 743,810 in SY 2010–11 to over 892,000 in SY 2015–16.
• Florida has had a slight decline over the last 2 years, reporting 268,109 ELs during SY 2015–16.