Many educators support English learners (ELs).* Almost 45% of all public school teachers reported teaching ELs in school year (SY) 2020–21. The numbers and the projected need for EL instructors fluctuate from year to year for a variety of reasons. This infographic addresses topics of EL teacher availability, need, and preparation.

### Diversity Among ELs and Educators**

ELs are a very diverse group. ELs in U.S. schools are of many different ethnicities, speak hundreds of languages, and come from many different countries of origin. Nearly 500 languages are spoken by ELs in the U.S.

In SY 2020–21:
- About 80% of all K–12 public school teachers and 77% of principals were white.
- 9% of teachers and principals were Hispanic.
- 6% of teachers and 10% of principals were Black.
- 2% of teachers were Asian and 3% of principals were of another race or ethnicity.

### Teacher Qualifications and Training: SY 2017–18

**Educators Overall**
- About 65% of all teachers had at least one EL in their class.
- About 43% of all teachers took at least one course on teaching ELs.

**Educators of English Learners**
- 2% of all teachers were teachers of ELs (e.g., ESL instructors).

### Projected Need for EL Educators

ESL and bilingual education jobs were among the top three teaching positions with the highest vacancy rate—6%—in recent school years.

**States With Highest Projected Need Counts**
- **Texas** projected the need for the greatest number of EL educators—21,900 in the next five years—a 73% increase.
- Texas was also the state with the biggest increase in the population of ELs from SY 2018–19 to SY 2019–20.
- California, Texas, Florida, and Illinois were among the top five states with the highest number of identified ELs in SY 2019–20.

### EL Students and Teachers

In SY 2019–20 the ratio of EL students to instructors nationwide was 13:1.

- **K–12 Students Identified as ELs**
  - 5,100,000
  - Increase of 131,710 (2.6%)
  - SY2018–19
  - SY2019–20

- **Certified Licensed EL Instructors***
  - 412,407
  - Decrease of 43,000 (~10.4%)
  - SY2018–19
  - SY2019–20

### Notes

*The term English learner(s) refers to the population of students as defined in section 8101(20) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act.

**These data represent all educators; the data are not specific to teachers of ELs.

***The number of certified licensed EL instructors refers to EL instructors working in Title III-Supported Language Instruction Educational Programs.

Note: COVID-19 impacted states’ ability to collect and report data. The Department urges abundant caution when using the data and recommends reviewing the relevant data notes and state comments prior to use and interpretation.
EL Students and Teachers: State-level Data in SY 2019–20

• The number of EL students in California decreased by almost 48,000 (4%).
• The number of EL instructors in California decreased by almost 35,000 educators (17.4%).
• The number of EL students in Texas increased by more than 55,000 (5.5%).
• The number of EL teachers in Texas increased by 1,047 (7%).
• The number of EL students in Maryland increased by over 9,000 (11%).
• The number of EL teachers in Maryland decreased by 110 (3%).

Number of Licensed or Certified Teachers Working in Title III–Supported Language Instruction Educational Programs (LIEPs) in SY 2019–20

Most: CA 165,219
Fewest: VT 36

Comparisons in numbers of EL students and teachers are to SY 2018–19

OELA’s National Professional Development (NPD) Program

The NPD program provides grants for eligible entities to implement in-service and preservice professional development activities intended to improve instruction for ELs and assists education personnel working with ELs to meet high professional standards.

The targets for the 2018 and 2021 NPD cohort are to serve 157 pre-service educators and 971 in-service educators.

Resources for EL Educators

Office of English Language Acquisition produces and publishes a variety of resources for EL educators. A number of resources address EL teacher availability, training, and preparation.

- **Webinar:** Developing Educator Expertise to Work with English Learners. Expert discussion of professional learning that is aligned to strategic goals and results in enhanced professional expertise.
- **Podcast:** EL Teacher Preparation: Zooming In on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Discussion of the TARGET Training and Retraining Grades K–12 Eastern Shore Teachers (NPD grantee).
- **Fact Sheet:** Teacher Projections for English Learners. Five-year projections for teachers of EL reported by states.
- **Fact Sheet:** Educational Staff Working With English Learners. Review of Consolidated State Performance Report data related to teachers in LIEPS in districts that receive Title III funds.

Sources:


