

California's English Learner Students

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English Learners are a big part of California's future

- Nearly 25% of K–12 students (1.4 million)
 - Students who need support to be taught academic subjects in English
- ELs lag behind native-English-speaking peers
 - Some ELs are reclassified quickly (RFEPs)
 - Many long-term ELs have poor academic outcomes
- Graduating more RFEPs and better-prepared EL students is a crucial goal

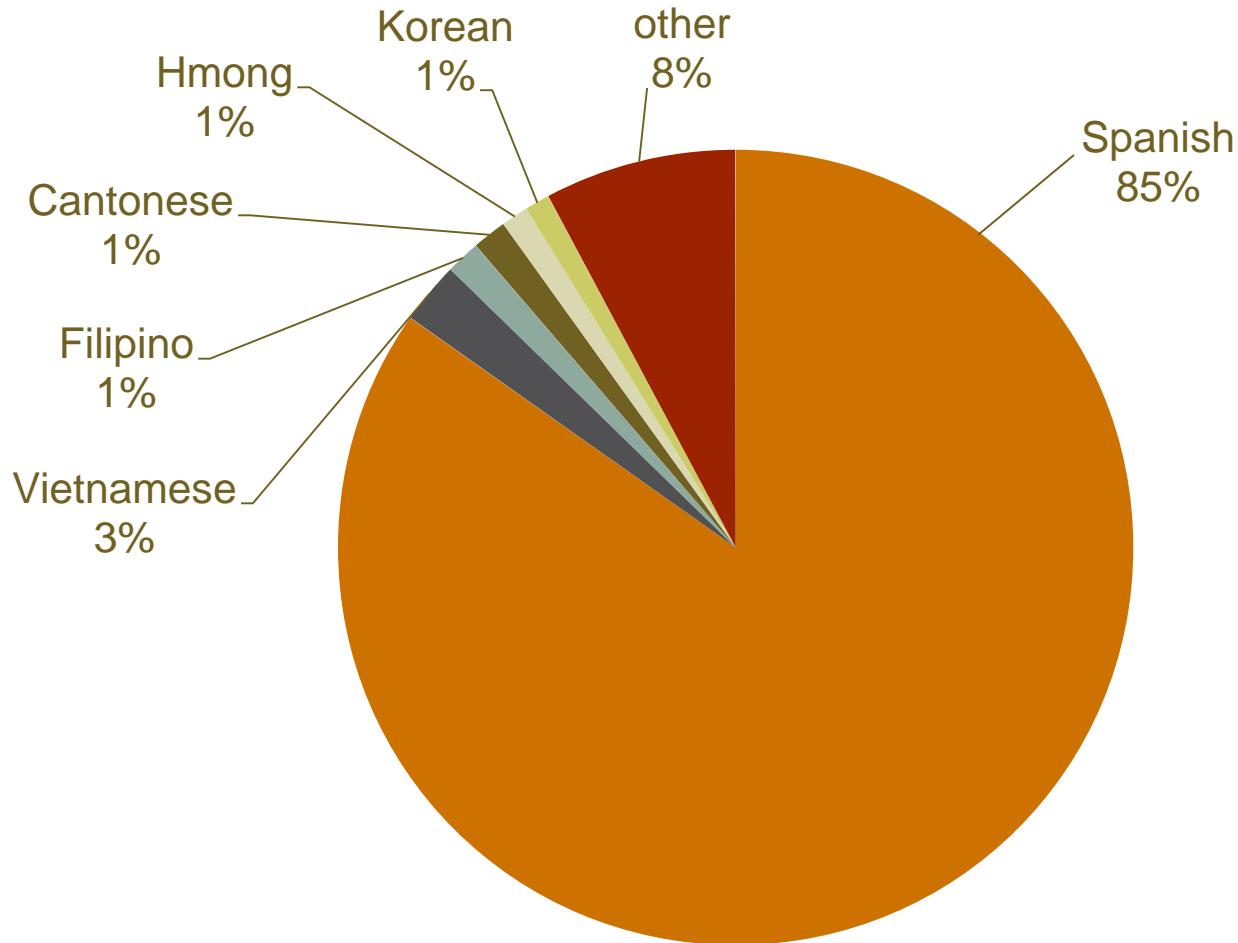


Outline

- **Demographics**
- Academic outcomes
- How can we help?



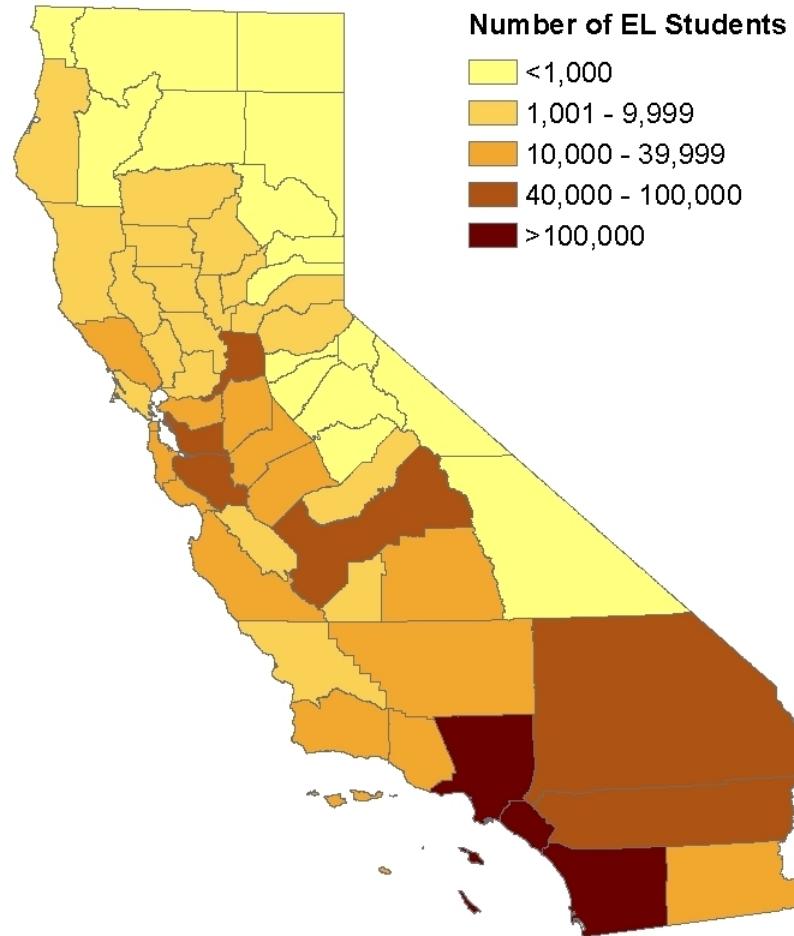
Most of the state's ELs speak Spanish at home



Source: CDE Language Census, 2009–2010.



ELs live in all areas



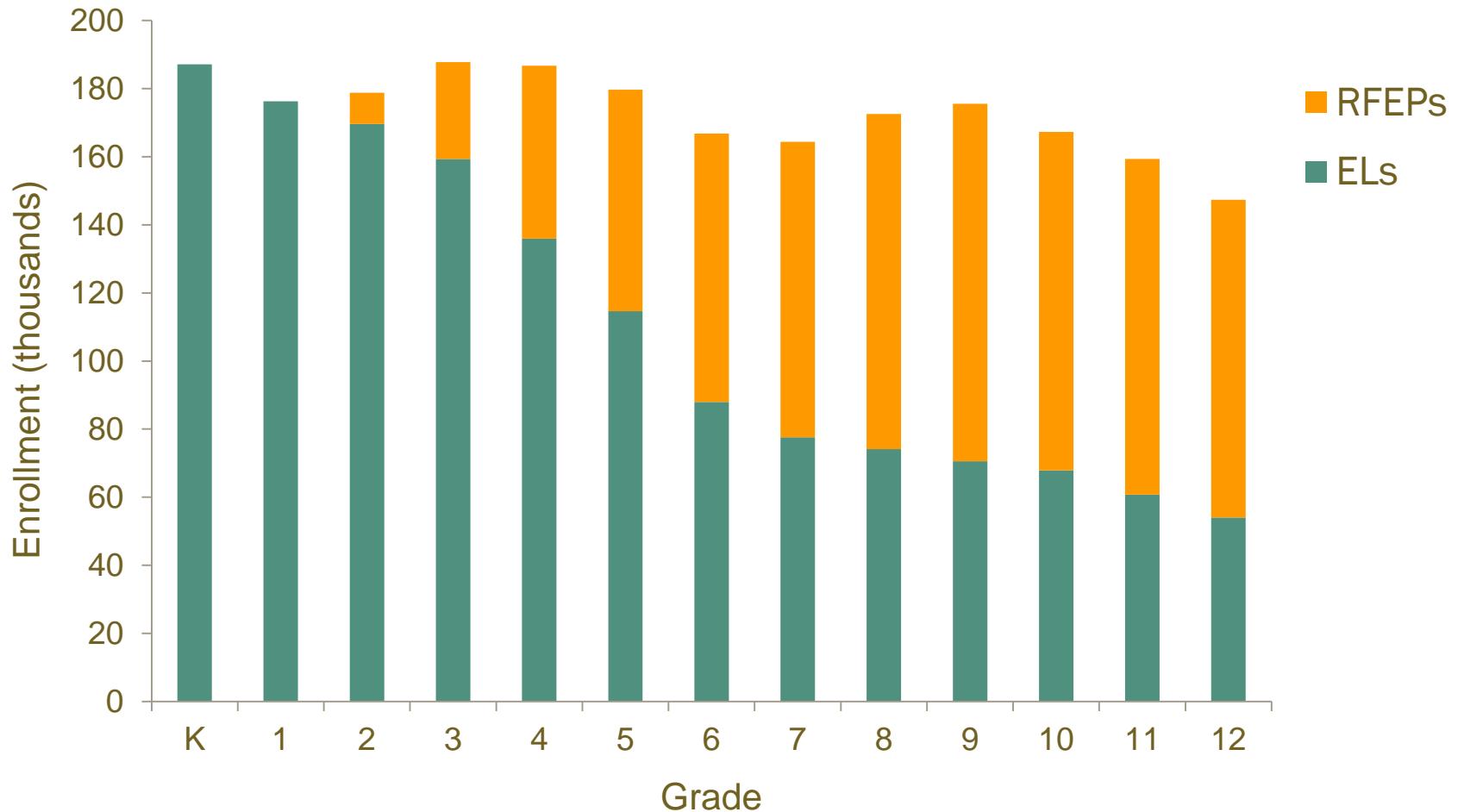
Source: CDE enrollment data 2010–2011.

ELs are not a static group

- Most ELs are U.S.-born
 - 82% in K–5
 - 55% in 6–12
- But new ELs come from abroad in every grade
 - 2% of grade-2 ELs
 - 6% of grade-9 ELs
- More grade level differences
 - One third of kindergartners are ELs
 - Most secondary-school ELs are long-term



Former ELs increase in number by grade



Source: CST takers for grades 1–11, estimates for grades K and 12.



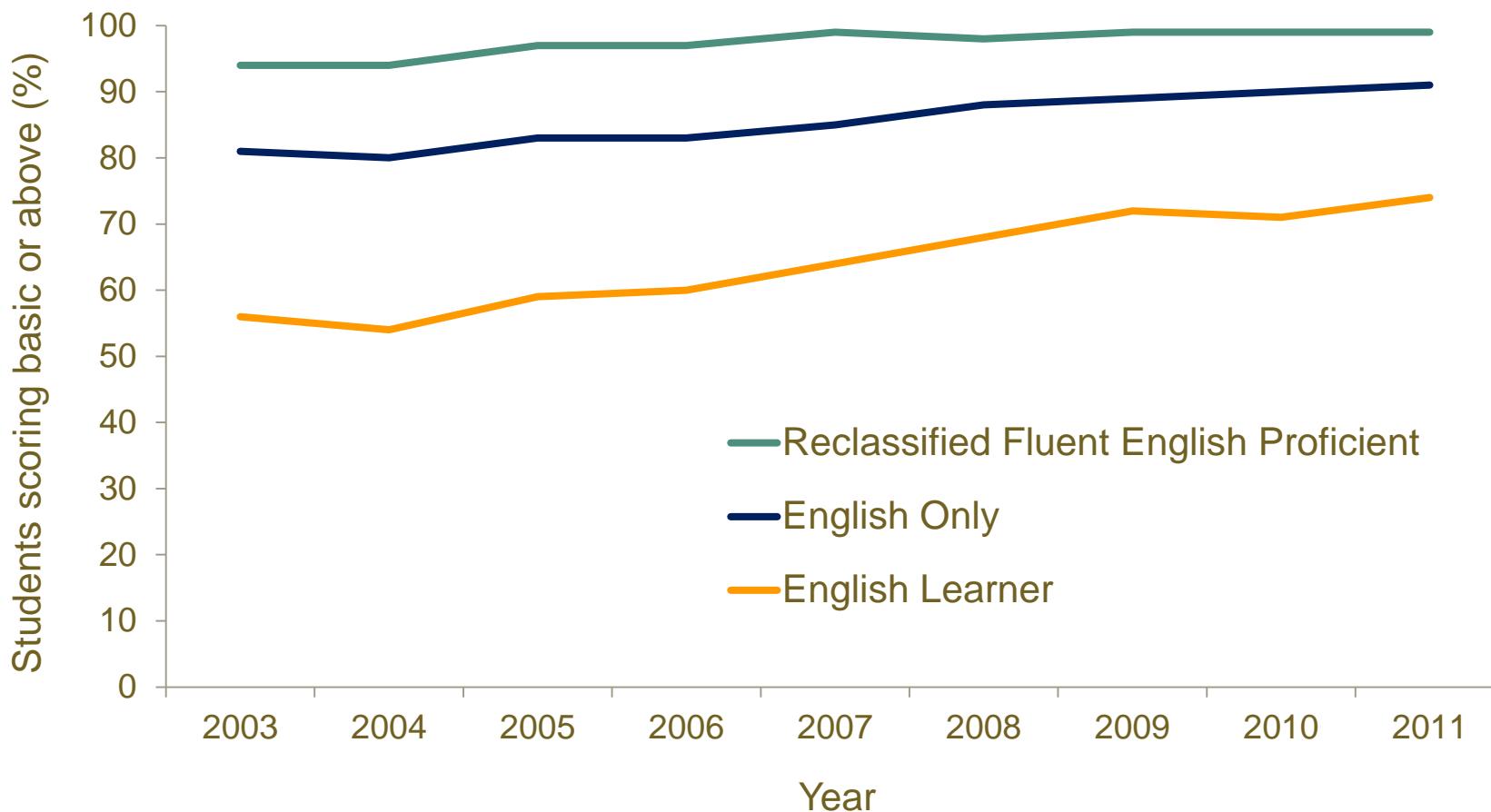
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Former ELs more likely to score basic and above on CST

Grade-4 English Language Arts



Former ELs pass the CAHSEE at high rates

Subject passage rates for grade-10 CAHSEE

	English Language Arts	Math
All students	82	83
RFEP	94	92
English Only	87	85
EL	44	56

Source: CDE CAHSEE results for grade 10, 2010–2011.



EL dropout rates are high

	Dropout Rates
ELs*	25%
Latino	18%
White	9%
Asian American	6%
African America	25%

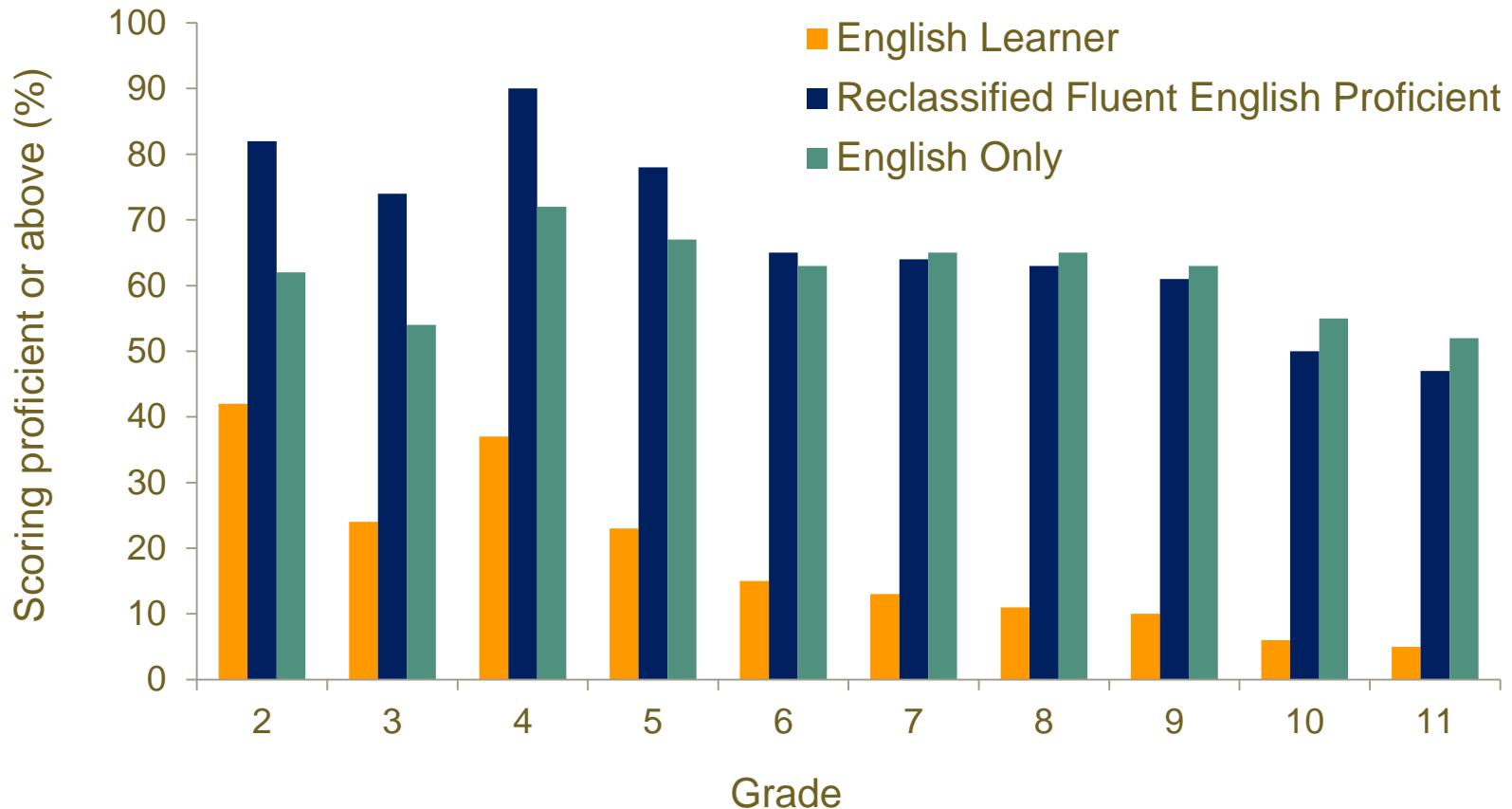
Source: 2010–2011 CALPADs cohort dropout rates.

*Includes any ELs who became RFEPs during high school.



Until grade 7, former ELs more likely to score of proficient or above

English Language Arts CST



Source: CDE CST ELA scores, 2010–2011.



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Reclassification policies should lead to long-term success

- Because reclassified students do better, policymakers want to reclassify more ELs more quickly
 - Do these outcomes persist over time?
- Districts and schools vary in EL programs and implementation
- State establishes minimum reclassification criteria
 - Will reclassified students do as well if the bar is lower?



How will we know what the best reclassification policy is?

- Use variation across districts and time to understand link between reclassification policies and academic outcomes
- Important considerations
 - EL instruction
 - Post-reclassification support
 - Access to academic content while ELs
- Is the minimum enough?
- Are some districts waiting too long?



Common Core State Standards are an opportunity

- New Common Core State Standards may add to EL challenges
 - English a more important component of every academic subject
- An opportunity to align revised English Language Development standards with CCSS standards



Link funding to outcomes

- It costs more to educate ELs, but how much?
- Is current EL funding effective?
 - Does it reach ELs?
 - Is it well spent?
- Does it create disincentives for reclassification?
- Consider support for former ELs?
- Potential new funding formulas an opportunity to align spending more closely with outcomes



Conclusions

- ELs are large and important student population
 - We have had some successes but need to do more
- Policy considerations
 - Identify reclassification policy that produces the best outcomes for the most students
 - Use new Common Core State Standards to link EL and academic course instruction
 - Ensure additional EL funding reaches ELs



Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.

