



What's Happening

August 2015

Time to reclassification: How long does it take English learner students in Washington Road Map districts to develop English proficiency?

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Key findings

- English learner students in Washington Road Map Project schools took an average of 3.8 years to achieve reclassification as former English learner students.
- Almost a fifth (18 percent) of English learner students in the study's eight cohorts had not been reclassified by the end of the study.
- English learner students who entered kindergarten with low English proficiency took longer to achieve reclassification than those who entered with high proficiency.
- Unexpectedly, English learner students who entered schools for the first time in grades 2–5 with high English proficiency took longer to achieve reclassification than those who entered with low proficiency.

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Summary

How long does it typically take English learner students to develop English proficiency? This question is important to educators because English proficiency is linked to academic success in the United States. Knowing the typical time it takes English learner students to develop English proficiency provides educators with a measure of expected progress. This knowledge may also help educators identify specific programs and practices that facilitate or delay the development of English proficiency.

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest undertook this study in response to a request from a REL research alliance, the Road Map Project, to better understand how long it takes English learner students in alliance districts to achieve reclassification as former English learner students. Road Map is a cradle-to-career initiative involving seven districts in Washington state (Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle, and Tukwila) with the highest rates of poverty and lowest levels of academic achievement in the Seattle metropolitan area.

This study presents findings on the average time to reclassification, which is the average number of years it took English learner students to develop the English proficiency necessary to reach a grade-specific score on Washington's English language proficiency assessment and be officially reclassified as former English learner students in the seven Road Map districts. Because not all English learner students were reclassified within the time period of the study (2005/06–2012/13), the rate of reclassification (the percentage of students who achieved reclassification by 2012/13) was also examined. The study includes 17,733 English learner students and former English learner students (eight cohorts) who began kindergarten in 2000/01–2007/08 and entered a Road Map district elementary school at any time between the beginning of kindergarten and the end of grade 5.

This study has six primary findings:

- The average time to reclassification from English learner student to former English learner student was 3.8 years.
- The rate of reclassification was 82 percent. Almost a fifth (18 percent) of English learner students in the study's eight cohorts in Road Map elementary schools did not score high enough on a grade-specific assessment to be officially reclassified as former English learner students by 2012/13.
- English learner students who entered a Road Map elementary school in earlier grades took less time to achieve reclassification than students who entered in later grades. English learner students who entered in kindergarten took an average of 3.2 years to be reclassified, students who entered in grade 1 took 3.8 years, and students who entered in grades 2–5 took 4.3 years.
- English learner students who entered in kindergarten with low English proficiency took longer to achieve reclassification than those who entered with high proficiency.
- Unexpectedly, English learner students who entered a Road Map district school for the first time in grades 2–5 with high English proficiency took longer to achieve reclassification than those who entered with low proficiency.
- English learner students took less time to achieve reclassification in schools with high percentages of English learner students, racial/ethnic minority students, and students eligible for federal school lunch programs.

Other findings include:

- Girls took slightly less time than boys to achieve reclassification as former English learner students. On average, girls were reclassified in 3.6 years, compared with 4.0 years for boys.
- Speakers of Arabic, Amharic, and Korean took less time than average to achieve reclassification; speakers of Samoan and Spanish took longer.
- Hispanic students (4.2 years) took slightly longer than students from other racial/ethnic groups to achieve reclassification, while Asian students (3.4 years) took less time than students from other racial/ethnic groups.
- Students eligible for special education took an average of 5.5 years to achieve reclassification, compared with 3.7 years for students in general education.
- English learner students born in the United States (3.3 years) took less time to achieve reclassification than foreign-born students (3.5 years) when they entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten but took longer when they entered in grades 1–5 (for example, 4.8 years for U.S.-born and 3.7 years for foreign-born English learner students entering in grade 5).

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Why this study?

How long does it typically take English learner students to develop proficiency in English? This is an important question for educators working with English learner students, not least because English proficiency is linked to academic success in other content areas (Halle, Hair, Wandner, McNamara, & Chien, 2012; Kieffer, 2011). For most English learner students, the language of instruction is English, regardless of subject area, and therefore students who have not reached proficiency in English struggle to learn grade-level content, take longer to graduate, and graduate at much lower rates than their English-proficient peers (Callahan, 2013; Gwynne, Pareja, Ehrlich, & Allensworth, 2012; Kim, 2011).

Knowing the typical time it takes English learner students to develop English proficiency provides educators with a measure of expected progress and may help districts identify students who are struggling to reach proficiency. This knowledge may also help educators identify programs and practices that facilitate or delay the development of English proficiency.

Addressing proficiency is more complicated than simply counting the number of years it takes a student to reach proficiency. There is ongoing debate about what it means to be proficient in a language (Cummins, 1979; Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000), and there are no established definitions for “proficiency” (Cook & MacDonald, 2014; Linqanti & Cook, 2013). In practice, to define English proficiency, educators and researchers rely on students’ reclassification from English learner student to former English learner student (see box 1 for definitions of key terms). However, rules for reclassification vary from state to state and from district to district (Wolf et al., 2008).

Knowing the typical time it takes English learner students to develop English proficiency provides educators with a measure of expected progress and may help districts identify students who are struggling to reach proficiency

English learner students in Road Map district schools

Washington has seen substantial growth in the number of English learner students. In eight years (2005/06–2012/13), the number of students in the state who spoke a language other than English in the home increased more than 70 percent, from 128,709 to 219,750. Almost half these students (44 percent) did not speak English proficiently and were classified as English learner students.¹

Nearly one quarter (22 percent) of English learner students in Washington attended school in the Road Map districts (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2014). The Road Map Project is a cradle-to-career initiative involving seven school districts in Washington (Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle, and Tukwila) that have the highest rates of poverty and lowest levels of academic achievement in the Seattle metropolitan area. The goal of the project is to double the proportion of students who are college or career ready by 2020.

To achieve this goal, the Road Map districts must address the needs of their English learner students. Current and former English learner students are less likely than their peers to graduate from high school (Callahan, 2013; Gwynne et al., 2012; Kim, 2011). In 2012/13, 54 percent of current English learner students in the Road Map districts failed to graduate on time,² compared with 24 percent of all Washington students and 28 percent of all students in the Road Map districts (Came & Ireland, 2013; Community Center for Education Results, 2013).

Box 1. Key terms

English learner students and former English learner students. The English proficiency level is used in classifying students as English learner students. In Washington all school districts share the same classification criteria. Students who score at the first three levels (beginning through advanced) are classified as English learner students and are eligible for English learner student services. Students are assessed annually until they reach the transitional level, at which point they are officially reclassified as former English learner students and are no longer eligible for services.¹ Some evidence shows that for elementary school students, achieving the transitional level and being reclassified as a result mark the level at which the students are able to perform comparably to non-English learner students on the state math and science assessments (Autio, Deussen & Davis, 2010).

English proficiency level. A student's score on a Washington English proficiency assessment.² These assessments are administered to all students whose parents indicate on the Washington Home Language Survey that the students speak a language other than English at home and to students whom teachers believe may be limited in English proficiency. There are four levels of proficiency:

- Beginning and advanced beginning (level 1).
- Intermediate (level 2).
- Advanced (level 3).
- Transitional (level 4).

Rate of reclassification. The percentage of English learner students who achieved reclassification as former English learner students within the time period of the dataset. The rate of reclassification is calculated as the number of English learner students in the study's eight cohorts who achieved reclassification by 2012/13 divided by the total number of English learner students in the eight cohorts, excluding those who left the Road Map districts, dropped out of school, or graduated before they achieved reclassification. The cumulative rate of reclassification is the total percentage of students who were reclassified up to and including that time period.

Time to reclassification. The average amount of time it takes English learner students to achieve the transitional level on a Washington English proficiency assessment and to be reclassified as former English learner students by the end of the study period. The average time to be reclassified as calculated in this analysis does not include students who continue to attend school as English learner students, who transfer out of districts, who drop out of school, or who graduate without reclassification.

Notes

1. In 2013/14 and 2014/15 the Washington legislature provided funding to support students who had been reclassified within the preceding two years. However, this funding was not available during the period of the dataset (2005/06–2012/13).

2. The Washington Language Proficiency Test II was used in Washington over 2005/06–2011/12, and the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment was used over 2012/13–2013/14.

Growing importance of knowing how long it takes English learner students to be reclassified as former English learner students

The increase in English learner students in Washington state and in the Road Map districts makes knowing how long it takes to gain proficiency in English more important. The Road Map districts do not have the information necessary to answer this question. Most Washington school districts monitor the progress of individual English learner students annually but do not monitor students' progress over the course of their academic careers. This means that each year districts can count how many students are reclassified as former English learner students, but the districts may not be able to determine how many years it takes English learner students to achieve reclassification. It also means that districts cannot reliably predict how many students will continue to need support from year to year, which in turn may make it difficult to allocate resources to meet students' needs over time.

Because little is known about the student and school factors that may affect reclassification rates and times either in the Road Map districts or in the state as a whole, districts are also unable to identify students who are at risk of becoming long-term English learner students. The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's annual report to the Washington State Legislature on English learner students said that in the 2011/12 school year, students across all grades who achieved reclassification as former English learner students received English learner student services for an average of 2.8 years (Malagon, McCold, & Hernandez, 2012). The report indicated that reclassification took longer (an average of 3.9 years) for students who entered the system with a basic knowledge of English, but it did not publish the time needed for students with other proficiency levels to achieve reclassification (Malagon et al., 2012). (See box 2 for previous research on how long it takes to gain English proficiency.)

To understand more about English learner student populations and their challenges, the Road Map English Language Learner Work Group requested that Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest conduct a study of how long it takes students in Road Map district schools to achieve reclassification as former English learner students. The work group includes federal program directors, English learner student program coordinators, and data analysts from the seven Road Map districts, as well as stakeholders from local education authorities, community-based organizations, and foundations. The work group wanted to understand both how long it takes English learner students in Road Map districts to achieve reclassification as former English learner students and how the amount of time varies by student grade level and English proficiency at entry into the U.S. school system, by student demographics, and by school characteristics. Staff and administrators from other Washington districts and the superintendent's office can compare the results of this study with the rate at which other students achieve reclassification, the time it takes them to do so in their districts, and the time across the state.

Most Washington districts monitor the progress of individual English learner students annually but do not monitor progress over the course of their academic careers. This means that districts may not be able to determine how many years it takes English learner students to achieve reclassification

Box 2. What previous research has reported on the time to gain English proficiency

Studies of how long it takes English learner students to learn English have produced estimates ranging from three to seven years. Most research on time to proficiency has relied on students' reclassification from English learner to former English learner student (Collier, & Thomas, 1989; Conger, Hatch, McKinney, Atwell, & Lamb, 2012; Cook, Boals, Wilmes, & Santos, 2008; Hakuta et al., 2000; Shneyderman & Froman, 2012). Since every state has its own criteria for reclassification, it is difficult to compare results across states. Earlier studies suggest that it takes five to seven years for English learner students to reach grade level in academic English and that older students take longer than younger students to reach proficiency (Cummins, 1981; Collier, 1987; Collier & Thomas, 1989). Recent studies have found that other variables affect the time it takes students to reach proficiency. Initial proficiency level in English has a strong effect on the time it takes students to reach grade-level proficiency, and students with higher initial proficiency in English reach proficiency faster than those with lower initial proficiency (Cook et al., 2008; Shneyderman & Froman, 2012). School-level socioeconomic status is a significant factor: students at schools with a higher percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs appear to take longer than students at schools with a lower rate of eligibility to reach proficiency (Hakuta et al., 2000). School quality and individual student characteristics such as age, time in the United States, and parent education level may also be important variables (Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, & Páez, 2008).

Studies in New York and Miami found that 5- to 10-year-old English learner students took, on average, three years to reach each state's minimum level of English proficiency (Conger, 2009; Conger et al., 2012).¹ These studies also found that time to proficiency varied by age at school entrance and by gender. Thus older students took longer than younger students to reach proficiency, and boys took slightly longer than girls. Time to proficiency also varied by race/ethnicity and home language, with Hispanic and Spanish-speaking students taking longer than English learner students who were not Hispanic or Spanish-speaking to reach proficiency. Finally, time to proficiency varied by whether students participated in special education programs, were eligible for school lunch programs, and were U.S.- or foreign-born (Conger, 2009).

Note

1. The method used by Conger et al. (2012) to calculate average time to be reclassified was similar to the one used in this study.

What the study examined

This study provides a basis for understanding how long it typically takes English learner students in seven Road Map districts to achieve reclassification as former English learner students (see box 3 for a description of participating districts).

English learner students vary by their home language, age of school entry, literacy in their home language, prior education, and other demographic and individual characteristics. In the Road Map districts, students acquire English and learn grade-level content in different programs, in different schools, and with different teachers. Previous studies have found many of these variables to be related to English learner student performance and the time taken to be reclassified (Carhill et al., 2008; Conger, 2009; Hakuta et al., 2000; see box 2).

Based on these previous studies and a request from the Road Map English Language Learner Work Group, a REL research alliance, this study looked at English learner students'

Box 3. Data and methods

Data sources. The study used data from two K–12 datasets from the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction for school years 2005/06 through 2012/13, which included data on student-level demographic and individual characteristics for 2000/01–2012/13, such as classification dates, gender, home language, and race/ethnicity. The first dataset is the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS), a student-level dataset that includes enrollment, demographic characteristics, special program status, and district/school information for all students enrolled in Washington public schools (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2012). The second dataset is the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP) database, which contains information specific to students who were classified as English learner students, such as English language assessment results and information from the Home Language Survey, including the language reported as spoken in a student’s home. Both datasets include a unique student identifier to match students. Data sources and methodology are described in more detail in appendix A.

Participating districts. The study population included students from Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle, and Tukwila school districts, the Road Map districts in South King County, Washington. In 2012/13 these seven districts enrolled 14 percent of Washington’s K–12 students and 22 percent of its English learner students. Student characteristics for each district are summarized in tables A1 and A2 in appendix A.

Population. The study population included 17,733 current and former English learner students who were members of eight cohorts who began kindergarten in 2000/01–2007/08 (table A3 in appendix A) and entered a Road Map district elementary school between kindergarten and grade 5 (2000/01–2012/13). The dataset included at least 6 years and up to 13 years of data, including classification dates and student-level demographic and individual characteristics for each cohort (tables A4 and A5 in appendix A).

Analysis methods. The study calculated the average (mean) number of years it takes English learner students who were members of the eight study cohorts in the Road Map district schools to achieve reclassification as former English learner students and the percentage of cohort members who were reclassified by 2012/13. The time to achieve reclassification was calculated by combining data from the eight cohorts and averaging the number of years between identification as an English learner student and reclassification as a former English learner student. These results were disaggregated by student gender, home language, race/ethnicity, special education status, and country of birth and by school characteristics of size, linguistic and racial/ethnic composition, and economic disadvantage. The rate of reclassification was calculated by dividing the number of English learner student cohort members who achieved reclassification by 2012/13 by the total number of current and former English learner students in the eight cohorts. Additional details about methods are described in appendix A.

grade level and English proficiency at school entry, as well as their gender, home language, race/ethnicity, special education status, and country of birth. It also examined school size, schoolwide percentage of English learner students, racial/ethnic minority students, and students eligible for federal school lunch programs (a proxy for low-income status).

The study analyzed data for English learner students in eight study cohorts who began kindergarten between 2000/01 and 2007/08 and entered a Road Map district elementary

school between kindergarten and grade 5 (2000/01–2012/13; see box 3). The study addresses three research questions:

- What was the average time taken by English learner students in the Road Map districts to achieve reclassification?
- What was the rate of reclassification by 2012/13 among English learner students in the Road Map districts?
- How do time to reclassification and rate of reclassification vary by:
 - Grade level and English proficiency at entry into Road Map district schools?
 - Student characteristics of gender, home language, race/ethnicity, special education status, and country of birth?
 - School characteristics of size, linguistic and racial/ethnic composition, and economic disadvantage?

Not all English learner students were reclassified within the time period of the dataset (2005/06–2012/13). Students who were still enrolled in school and who were classified as English learner students by the final year of the study were included in the study’s analysis. However, students who left the districts, graduated, or dropped out of school without being reclassified were excluded.³ The study did not consider literacy in home language, prior education, or other demographic or individual characteristics.

What the study found

This section presents findings on the average time to reclassification, which is the average number of years it took English learner students in the seven Road Map districts to develop the English proficiency necessary to achieve reclassification as former English learner students. Because some English learner students did not achieve reclassification within the time period of the dataset, this section also examines the rate of reclassification (the percentage of English learner students who were reclassified by 2012/13).

English learner students in the Road Map district elementary school population who achieved reclassification by 2012/13 as former English learner students did so in an average of 3.8 years. They accounted for 82 percent of the population, while 18 percent of the population remained English learner students.

English learner students who entered in kindergarten achieved reclassification in the shortest time and at the highest rate compared with students who entered in grades 1–5. As expected, students who entered in kindergarten with high English proficiency made faster progress than students who entered with low proficiency. But surprisingly, English learner students who entered school in grades 2–5 with high English proficiency took longer to achieve reclassification than those who entered with low proficiency.

Other student characteristics such as home language, gender, race/ethnicity, country of birth, and special education status influenced the time to reclassification and rate of reclassification in various ways alone and in combination with other characteristics.

School characteristics also affected how quickly English learner students achieved reclassification. English learner students achieved reclassification more quickly in larger schools with a higher percentage of English learner students, racial/ethnic minority students, and

Student characteristics such as primary language, gender, race/ethnicity, country of birth, and special education status influenced the time to reclassification and rate of reclassification in various ways alone and in combination with other characteristics

students eligible for federal school lunch programs, but the rate of reclassification was often lower when the time to reclassification was shorter.

It took almost four years for English learner students to achieve reclassification as former English learner students

For the 82 percent of English learner students who were reclassified by 2012/13, it took an average of 3.8 years to achieve reclassification as former English learner students.⁴ Of these, about 8 percent achieved reclassification after one year, 28 percent were cumulatively reclassified after two years, 49 percent after three years, and 62 percent after four years of being identified as an English learner student (figure 1).

Almost a fifth of English learner students did not achieve reclassification within the time period of the dataset (2005/06–2012/13)

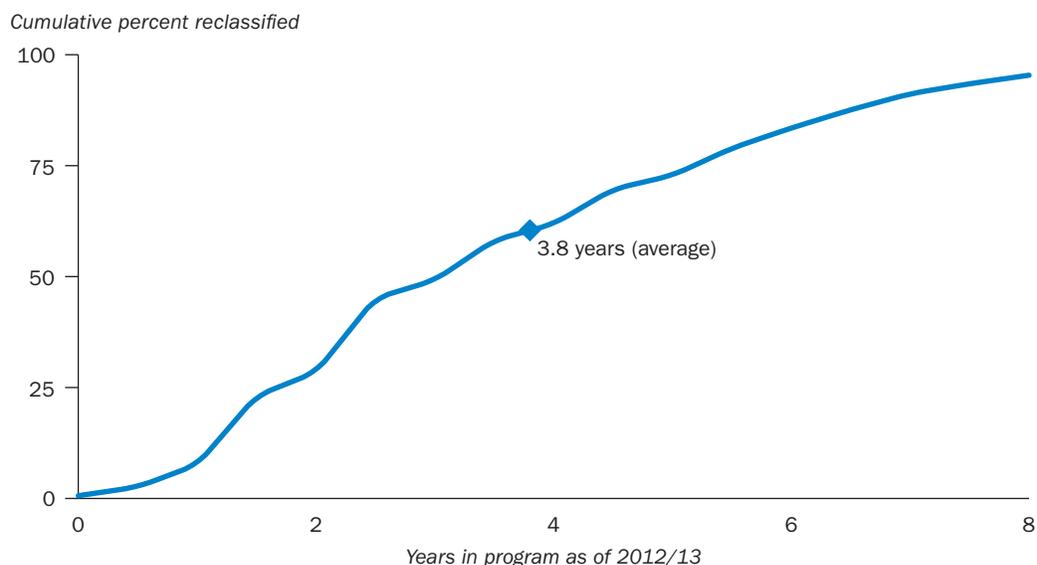
Eighty-two percent of the 17,733 English learner students who attended a Road Map district elementary school and were members of the study's eight cohorts were reclassified as former English learner students by 2012/13 (table A6 in appendix A). The remaining 18 percent were still enrolled in a Road Map district school and were still considered English learner students in 2012/13, the final year of this study.⁵

For the 82 percent of English learner students who were reclassified by 2012/13, it took an average of 3.8 years to achieve reclassification as former English learner students

Students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten achieved reclassification more quickly and at a higher rate than those who entered in later grades

It took an average of 3.2 years to achieve reclassification for English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten. A total of 85 percent achieved

Figure 1. It took almost four years on average for English learner students in Road Map district schools to achieve reclassification as former English learner students



Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grades, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author's analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

Table 1. English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten achieved reclassification as former English learner students in fewer years and at a greater rate than those who entered in grades 1–5

Grade level at entry	Number of English learner students	Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
Kindergarten	6,944	3.2	85
1	2,987	3.8	84
2	2,017	4.4	83
3	2,039	4.5	81
4	1,927	4.2	76
5	1,819	4.0	72
All students	17,733	3.8	82

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grades, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

The rate of reclassification decreased as the grade at which students entered school increased, from 85 percent for kindergarten entry to 72 percent for entry at grade 5

reclassification by 2012/13 (table 1). English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in grade 1 took longer, 3.8 years on average, to achieve reclassification and had a similar reclassification rate (84 percent). Students who entered in grades 2–5 took an average of 4.3 years to achieve reclassification. The rate of reclassification decreased as the grade at which students entered school increased, from 85 percent for kindergarten entry to 72 percent for entry at grade 5.

English learner students who entered kindergarten with advanced English proficiency took less time than students who entered with basic proficiency to achieve reclassification, while those who entered in grades 2–5 with advanced proficiency took longer than those who entered with basic proficiency

English learner students who entered kindergarten with advanced English proficiency took fewer years than their less proficient peers to achieve reclassification. On average, students who entered kindergarten with advanced proficiency and achieved reclassification by 2012/13 did so in 2.5 years, and those who entered with basic English proficiency took 4.5 years to achieve reclassification (table 2). English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in grade 1 with advanced or basic proficiency took a similar number of years to achieve reclassification (3.6 years for those who entered with advanced proficiency and 3.7 years for those with basic English proficiency), while those who entered with intermediate proficiency took longer.

This trend is reversed for students who entered in grades 2–5. English learner students who entered a Road Map district elementary school for the first time in grade 5 with advanced English proficiency achieved reclassification in an average of 4.4 years, compared with 3.1 years for students who entered in grade 5 with basic English proficiency (see table 2). This finding is counterintuitive and contradicts what has been observed by other researchers, who found that a higher initial English proficiency reduces the amount of time it takes students to reach grade-level proficiency (Cook et al., 2008; Shneyderman & Froman, 2012).

Table 2. English learner students with advanced English proficiency took less time to achieve reclassification than those with lower proficiency when they entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten, but took more time when they entered in grades 2–5

Grade level at entry	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry			
	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	All proficiency levels
Kindergarten	4.5	3.7	2.5	3.2
1	3.7	4.2	3.6	3.8
2	3.8	4.7	4.4	4.4
3	3.2	4.3	4.7	4.5
4	3.0	4.0	4.6	4.2
5	3.1	3.6	4.4	4.0
All students	3.6	3.9	3.7	3.8

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grades, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten with advanced English proficiency achieved reclassification in fewer years than those who entered with lower English proficiency. In contrast, English learner students who entered in grades 2–5 with basic English proficiency achieved reclassification in fewer years than those who entered with higher English proficiency

Additional analyses conducted to explore these counterintuitive findings revealed a similar pattern among English learner students who did not achieve reclassification by 2012/13. Regardless of grade level, English learner students who entered a Road Map district school with advanced proficiency remained classified as English learner students longer than those who entered with basic proficiency (see table B1 in appendix B).

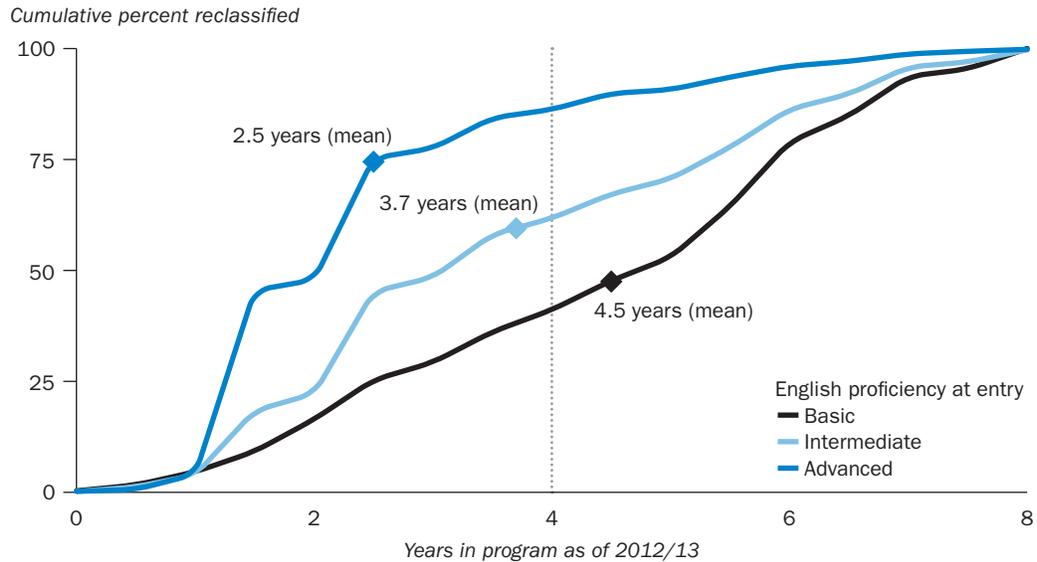
A higher proportion of students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten with advanced English proficiency achieved reclassification, on average, in fewer years than those who entered with basic or intermediate English proficiency. For example, among English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten and achieved reclassification by 2012/13:

- Forty-one percent who entered with basic proficiency achieved reclassification in four years.
- Sixty-two percent who entered with intermediate proficiency achieved reclassification in four years.
- Eighty-six percent who entered with advanced proficiency achieved reclassification in four years (figure 2).

In contrast, a higher proportion of English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in grades 2–5 with basic English proficiency achieved reclassification in fewer years than those who entered with intermediate or advanced English proficiency. For example, among English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in grades 2–5 and achieved reclassification by 2012/13:

- Sixty-nine percent who entered with basic proficiency achieved reclassification in four years.
- Fifty-eight percent who entered with intermediate proficiency achieved reclassification in four years.
- Forty-seven percent who entered with advanced proficiency achieved reclassification in four years (figure 3).

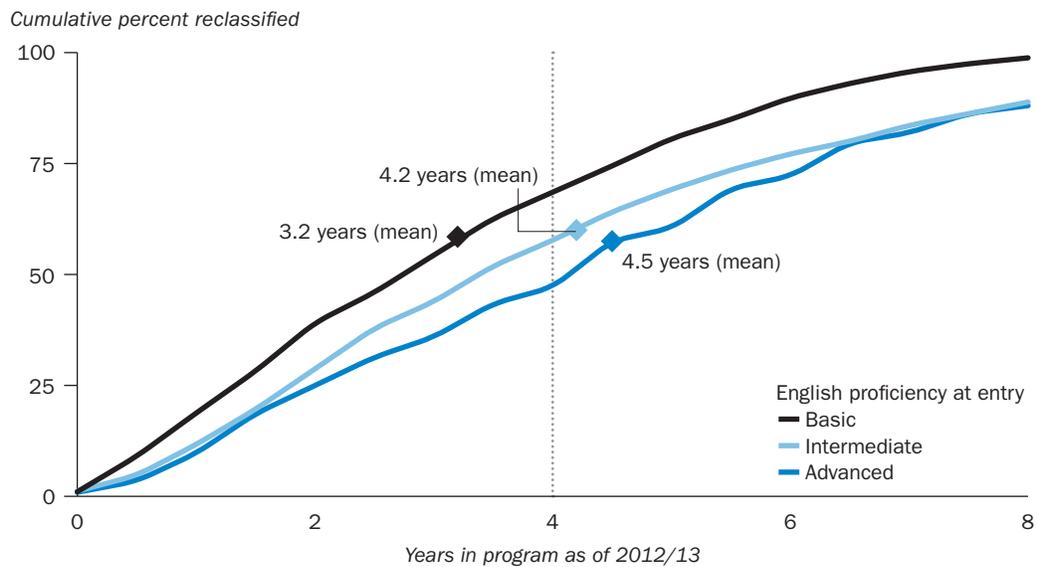
Figure 2. English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten with low English proficiency took longer to achieve reclassification than those who entered with high proficiency



Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grades, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

Figure 3. English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in grades 2–5 with high English proficiency took longer to achieve reclassification than those who entered with low proficiency



Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grade level, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

English learner students who entered school with advanced English proficiency had a higher rate of reclassification than those who entered with basic or intermediate proficiency, regardless of the grade level at entry

In contrast to the amount of time it took to achieve reclassification, the rate of reclassification was higher for English learner students who entered a Road Map district school with advanced English proficiency than for those who entered with basic or intermediate proficiency, regardless of their grade level at entry (table 3). For example, although students who entered a Road Map district school in grades 2–5 with advanced English proficiency took longer to be reclassified than their peers who entered with lower English proficiency, a higher percentage of the students who entered with advanced proficiency achieved reclassification. However, the rate of reclassification across grade levels varied less among English learner students who entered with basic proficiency than among those who entered with intermediate or advanced proficiency.

English learner students who entered school with advanced English proficiency had a higher rate of reclassification than those who entered with basic or intermediate proficiency

Girls achieved reclassification faster than boys

Girls shared similar initial English proficiency levels, entered at similar grade levels, and achieved reclassification at a rate (82 percent) similar to that of boys. On average, girls who achieved reclassification did so in 3.6 years, while boys did so in 4.0 years (figure 4 and table B2 in appendix B).

Speakers of Arabic, Amharic, and Korean took less time to achieve reclassification than the group average, while speakers of Samoan and Spanish took longer; however, time to achieve reclassification did not appear to be related to the rate of reclassification

Students in Road Map district schools spoke a total of 167 languages. However, 79 percent of the English learner students spoke a total of 13 languages, and each of those languages was spoken by at least 1 percent of all English learner students (table 4; see also table A2 in appendix A). Speakers of Arabic, Amharic, and Korean took less time to achieve reclassification than their peers, and speakers of Samoan and Spanish took longer.

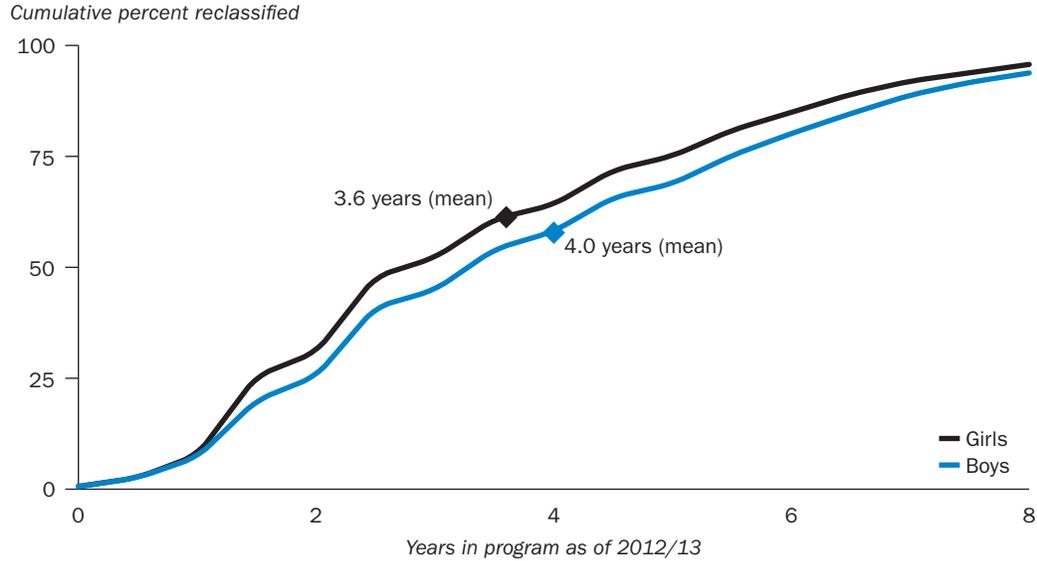
Table 3. English learner students who entered a Road Map district school with advanced English proficiency had higher rates of reclassification by 2012/13 than those who entered with basic or intermediate proficiency (percent)

Grade level at entry	Rate of reclassification by English proficiency level at entry			All proficiency levels
	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	
Kindergarten	75	81	92	85
1	71	76	90	84
2	73	77	87	83
3	73	74	84	81
4	76	72	77	76
5	72	66	76	72
All students	73	78	86	82

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grade level, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

Figure 4. On average, girls in Road map schools achieved reclassification in fewer years than boys



Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student gender, years in program and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

Table 4. Speakers of Arabic, Amharic, and Korean in Road Map district schools achieved reclassification in fewer years than speakers of other languages

Home language	English learner students		Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
	Number	Percent		
Spanish	7,148	40	4.2	83
Vietnamese	1,780	10	3.4	84
Somali	1,552	9	3.9	73
Ukrainian	672	4	3.9	95
Tagalog	531	3	3.4	77
Cantonese	517	3	3.3	82
Russian	436	2	3.7	91
Punjabi	429	2	3.7	94
Cambodian	325	2	3.9	79
Amharic	218	1	3.1	70
Arabic	184	1	3.2	88
Samoan	131	1	4.0	84
Korean	103	1	2.3	90
Other	3,707	21	3.6	80
All languages	17,733	100	3.8	82

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student home language, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

However, time to achieve reclassification did not appear to be related to the rate of reclassification in any language group. For example, Amharic speakers achieved reclassification more quickly than the average, in 3.1 years compared with the mean of 3.8 years, but a smaller percentage of Amharic speakers (70 percent) achieved reclassification compared with all English learner students (82 percent). This means that Amharic speakers who achieved reclassification did so faster than speakers of other languages, but some Amharic speakers were not reclassified at all. Conversely, Ukrainian speakers took slightly longer than average to achieve reclassification (3.9 years), but a larger percentage (95 percent) achieved reclassification during the study years (see table 4 and table B3 in appendix B).

Hispanic students took longer to achieve reclassification than students of other races/ethnicities, and Pacific Islander and Black students had lower rates of reclassification than other English learner students

On average, Hispanic students (4.2 years) took longer to achieve reclassification than the group average (3.8 years), while Asian students (3.4 years) achieved reclassification more quickly than average (table 5). A higher percentage of White students (91 percent) than Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian (77 percent) and Black (74 percent) students achieved reclassification during the study years (see table B4 in appendix B for a breakdown by race/ethnicity, grade level at entry, and English proficiency at entry).

English learner students eligible for special education services took longer to achieve reclassification and had lower rates of reclassification than English learner students in general education

English learner students eligible for special education services made up 7 percent of the K–5 English learner student population in Road Map district schools and took an average of 5.5 years to achieve reclassification as former English learner students, compared with 3.7 years for other students (figure 5 and table B5 in appendix B). English learner students eligible for special education also had a lower rate of reclassification than their peers: 64 percent compared with 83 percent of the general English learner student population.

On average, Hispanic students took longer (4.2 years) to achieve reclassification than the group average (3.8 years), while Asian students (3.4 years) achieved reclassification more quickly than average

Table 5. Hispanic English learner students in Road Map district schools took slightly longer to achieve reclassification than students in other racial/ethnic groups

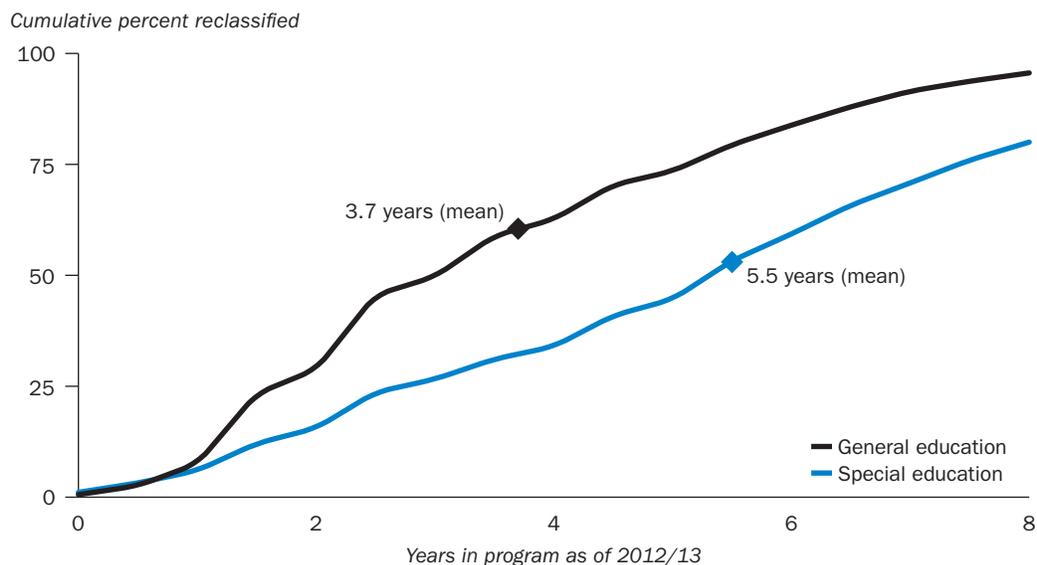
Race/ethnicity	English learner students		Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
	Number	Percent		
Hispanic	7,723	45	4.2	81
Asian	5,035	29	3.4	83
Black	2,120	12	3.7	74
White	1,993	12	3.6	91
Pacific Islander/ Native Hawaiian	352	2	3.7	77
Total/average	17,223	100	3.8	82

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student race/ethnicity, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Analysis excludes two federal categories of race/ethnicity, American Indian/Alaskan Native and Two or more races, to protect student confidentiality because there were fewer than 10 individuals in those categories.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

Figure 5. Students eligible for special education services in Road Map district schools took longer to achieve reclassification than students in general education



Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student eligibility for special education, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

English learner students born in the United States achieved reclassification faster than foreign-born students when they entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten, but took longer when they entered in grades 1–5

English learner students born in the United States achieved reclassification faster than foreign-born students when they entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten, but took longer when they entered in grades 1–5

More than half (55 percent) of English learner students in Road Map district schools were born in the United States. English learner students born abroad came from 140 countries. Of these students, 55 percent were born in one of nine countries, each of which made up at least 1 percent of the total English learner student population in Road Map district schools. There was large variation in how long it took students born in different countries to achieve reclassification (table 6). For example, students born in Mexico took an average of 4.5 years to achieve reclassification. However, the rate of reclassification for students born in Mexico was the same as the average for all English learner students (82 percent). Conversely, students born in China had a lower rate of reclassification (76 percent) than average for all English learner students, but those who achieved reclassification did so quickly (2.9 years on average).

Time to reclassification differed by grade level for U.S.-born and foreign-born English learner students. English learner students born in the United States achieved reclassification faster than foreign-born students when they entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten, but took longer when they entered in grades 1–5 (table 7). A U.S.-born student who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten took an average of 3.3 years to achieve reclassification, while a foreign-born English learner student took 3.5 years. In the other elementary school grades, this pattern was reversed. In grade 4 it took almost a year and a half longer for U.S.-born English learner students than foreign-born English learner students who entered a Road Map district school to achieve reclassification.

Table 6. More than half of English learner students in Road Map district schools were born in the United States

Country of birth	English learner students		Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
	Number	Percent		
United States	9,450	55	3.9	80
Mexico	1,866	11	4.5	82
Somalia	420	2	3.8	61
Ukraine	402	2	3.3	93
Vietnam	382	2	3.9	81
Philippines	345	2	3.1	74
Kenya	219	1	2.9	82
Russia	217	1	4.1	90
Ethiopia	215	1	4.3	67
China	214	1	2.9	76
Other countries	3,560	21	3.3	88
All countries	17,290	100	3.8	82

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student place of birth, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Analysis excludes students for whom information on birth country was missing. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

Table 7. English learner students born in the United States achieved reclassification more quickly than foreign-born students when they entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten

Grade level at entry	Place of birth	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry			All proficiency levels
		Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	
Kindergarten	Foreign born	4.6	3.7	2.5	3.5
	U.S. born	4.7	3.7	2.5	3.3
1	Foreign born	3.4	4.2	3.6	3.8
	U.S. born	4.3	4.7	3.8	4.0
2	Foreign born	3.9	4.4	4.3	4.3
	U.S. born	3.9	5.6	4.6	4.7
3	Foreign born	3.3	4.2	4.1	4.0
	U.S. born	3.4	5.4	5.2	5.2
4	Foreign born	3.1	3.9	4.0	3.8
	U.S. born	3.0	5.3	5.3	5.2
5	Foreign born	3.2	3.4	4.0	3.7
	U.S. born	2.6	4.5	4.9	4.8
All students	Foreign born	3.5	3.9	3.8	3.8
	U.S. born	4.3	4.0	3.8	3.9

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grade level, English proficiency level, place of birth, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A for details.

Additional investigations of these findings revealed a similar pattern among English learner students who did not achieve reclassification by 2012/13. Foreign-born English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in grades 1–5 remained classified as English learner students fewer years on average than U.S.-born English learner students (see table B6 in appendix B).

English learner students achieved reclassification slightly faster in schools with high percentages of English learner students, racial/ethnic minority students, and economically disadvantaged students, but these schools had lower rates of reclassification

All Road Map district schools were placed into quartiles representing the average number of students per school and schoolwide percentages of English learner students, racial/ethnic minority students, and students eligible for school lunch programs in 2000/01–2012/13. Students were linked to the school that they attended for the longest duration of time.

School size did not appear to be related to the amount of time it took English learner students to achieve reclassification, and there were only slight differences in the average number of years needed to achieve reclassification among schools of different sizes. However, larger schools had higher rates of reclassification. The average rate of reclassification was 87 percent for large schools of 480 or more students (quartiles 3 and 4), and 73 percent for the smallest schools (419 students or fewer, quartile 1; table 8).

English learner students who entered Road Map district schools in K–2 achieved reclassification more quickly in smaller schools, while students who entered in grade 5 achieved reclassification more quickly in large schools (see table B7 in appendix B). No clear relationship was found between English proficiency at entry and average time to achieve reclassification by school size (see table B8 in appendix B).

Larger schools had higher rates of reclassification: the average rate of reclassification was 87 percent for large schools of 480 or more students and 73 percent for the smallest schools (419 students or fewer)

Table 8. In Road Map districts larger schools had higher rates of reclassification of students as former English learner students than smaller schools

School size quartile	Number of English learner students	Number of students per school			Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
		Mean	Minimum	Maximum		
1, smallest	5,862	351	57	419	3.8	73
2	4,184	450	420	479	3.7	84
3	3,922	512	480	548	3.8	87
4, largest	3,744	604	549	832	3.9	87

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school size, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Analysis excludes students for whom school codes were missing.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files); see appendix A for details.

Table 9. English learner students in Road Map district schools with the highest percentages of English learner students achieved reclassification in less time than English learner students in schools with lower percentages, but schools with the highest percentages had a lower rate of reclassification

School quartile for percentage of English learner students	Number of English learner students	Percent of English learner students			Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
		Mean	Minimum	Maximum		
1, lowest	4,788	14	0	19	3.8	82
2	4,591	24	20	28	3.9	84
3	4,358	32	29	35	3.8	83
4, highest	3,943	42	36	62	3.6	75

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school percentage of English learner students, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Analysis excludes students for whom school codes were missing.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files); see appendix A for details.

English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten and grades 2–5 achieved reclassification faster at schools with the highest percentage of racial/ethnic minority students

English learner students who attended Road Map district schools with the highest percentage of English learner students achieved reclassification in less time than those who attended schools with a lower percentage of English learner students

The average number of years taken to achieve reclassification was 3.6 years for schools with more than 36 percent of English learner students (the highest quartile) and 3.8 years for schools with less than 20 percent (the lowest quartile; table 9). However, schools with the highest percentage of English learner students had lower rates of reclassification. English learner students who attended schools in the first three quartiles, where English learner students accounted for 0–35 percent of the school population, achieved reclassification at a higher rate than students at schools in the fourth quartile, with the highest percent of English learner students.

Regardless of English proficiency at entry and at most grade levels, English learner students at schools with a high percentage of English learner students achieved reclassification faster, on average, than those at other schools (see tables B9 and B10 in appendix B).

English learner students who attended a Road Map district school in the highest quartile of racial/ethnic minority students had a lower rate of reclassification than those who attended other schools

The average number of years to reclassification was 3.9 years for schools in the first quartile (low percentage) of racial/ethnic minority students, 3.6 years for schools in the third quartile, and 3.7 years for schools in the fourth quartile (table 10). However, schools in the fourth quartile had the lowest rate of reclassification.

English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in kindergarten and grades 2–5 achieved reclassification faster at schools with the highest percentage of racial/ethnic minority students (see table B11 in appendix B). Similarly, English learner students at schools with a high percentage of racial/ethnic minority students achieved reclassification faster than those at other schools regardless of English proficiency at entry (see table B12 in appendix B).

Table 10. English learner students in Road Map district schools in the fourth quartile of percentage of racial/ethnic minority students had a lower rate of reclassification than students in other schools

School racial/ethnic minority quartile	Number of English learner students	Percent of racial/ethnic minority students			Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
		Mean	Minimum	Maximum		
1, lowest	5,306	46	10	56	3.9	86
2	4,626	66	57	73	3.8	86
3	3,869	79	74	84	3.6	81
4, highest	3,914	91	85	100	3.7	70

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 on student school, school percentage of racial/ethnic minority students, years in program, and reclassification and include information for 2000/01–2012/13. Analysis excludes students for whom school codes were missing.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files); see appendix A for details.

English learner students who attended a Road Map district school in the highest quartile of students eligible for school lunch programs achieved reclassification in less time than those attending other schools but had a lower rate of reclassification

English learner students in schools with more than 77 percent of students eligible for a school lunch program achieved reclassification in an average of 3.6 years, while those in schools with 77 percent or fewer students eligible for a school lunch program achieved reclassification in 3.8 years. However, schools with the highest percentage of students eligible for a school lunch program had the lowest rate of reclassification (table 11).

In grades 1–5 students who entered a Road Map district school in the quartile with the highest percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs achieved reclassification

Table 11. English learner students in Road Map district schools with the highest percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs achieved reclassification in less time than those in schools with fewer eligible students but had a lower rate of reclassification

School quartile for school lunch program eligibility	Number of English learner students	Percent of students eligible for school lunch programs			Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
		Mean	Minimum	Maximum		
1, lowest	5,194	36	0	49	3.8	85
2	4,625	59	50	67	3.9	86
3	4,110	72	68	77	3.8	82
4, highest	3,786	84	78	95	3.6	72

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Analysis excludes students for whom school codes were missing.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files); see appendix A for details.

in fewer years than those who entered a school in a quartile with lower percentages of eligible students (see table B13 in appendix B). The same is true for students who entered with basic or intermediate English proficiency compared with those who entered with advanced proficiency (see table B14 in appendix B). Students entering schools with the lowest percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs either in kindergarten or with advanced English proficiency at entry achieved reclassification in the fewest years (see tables B13 and B14 in appendix B).

Implications of the study findings

Many of the findings in this study corroborate the findings in the literature. The results of this study support the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's published findings regarding state and district average number of years to reclassification (Malagon, McCold, & Nelson, 2013). The results also agree with research that found that younger students gain English proficiency faster than older students (Conger, 2009; Conger et al., 2012), girls achieve reclassification more quickly than boys, and Spanish speakers may take longer to achieve reclassification than speakers of other languages (Conger, 2009).

Two of the findings are counter to what has been reported by other researchers. In previous studies, students who entered a school with high English proficiency achieved reclassification in less time than those who entered with lower proficiency (Cook et al., 2008; Shneyderman & Froman, 2012). In this study, English learner students who entered a Road Map district school in grades 2–5 with basic English proficiency took fewer years to achieve reclassification than those who entered with advanced proficiency. Similarly, other studies reported that it took longer for English learner students to achieve reclassification at schools with higher percentages of students eligible for school lunch programs than at schools with lower percentages (Hakuta et al., 2000; Conger, 2009). In the Road Map districts English learner students achieved reclassification in less time in schools with a higher percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs.

Road Map district administrators were asked why they thought English learner students with basic English proficiency who entered their schools in grades 2–5 achieved reclassification faster than those who entered with advanced proficiency. These administrators suggested only one explanation, which is plausible though unverified: More advanced English learner students in grades 2–5 receive much less instructional support than English learner students in kindergarten and less advanced English learner students in grades 2–5.

Typically, in all schools, both English learner students and native English-speaking kindergarten students receive a great deal of direct instruction in English grammar and phonics, and English learner students often receive additional English language development instructional support. Similarly, older English learner students with little to no knowledge of English often enter newcomer programs and receive direct English language development instruction. However, older English learner students with intermediate or advanced English proficiency may not receive direct English language development instructional support. Therefore, a new student with intermediate or advanced English proficiency entering a Road Map district elementary school in grades 2–5 will not receive as much direct English language development instructional support as a student entering in kindergarten or with a basic knowledge of English. This lack of direct support and knowledge of English

A student with intermediate or advanced English proficiency entering a Road Map district elementary school in grades 2–5 will not receive as much direct English language development instructional support as a student entering in kindergarten or with a basic knowledge of English, which may explain why older students with intermediate and advanced English proficiency take so long to be reclassified

grammar and phonics may explain why older students with intermediate and advanced English proficiency take so long to be reclassified. Similarly, schools with high percentages of English learner students and students eligible for school lunch programs may be able to offer support to English learner students that schools with lower percentages of such students cannot. English learner students who attend these schools may receive more support through Title I or Title III funding.

Follow-up on this study is necessary to understand why these findings are counter to those of other studies and to identify instructional supports needed to improve outcomes among English learner students entering in grades 2–5 with intermediate or advanced English proficiency. Road Map district staff members have requested that REL Northwest conduct a follow-up study to determine whether the findings hold among secondary students and for students who have yet to achieve reclassification. If so, the next step may be to examine programmatic differences among schools and districts, identifying the factors that appear to be associated with improved outcomes among English learner students entering with intermediate or advanced English proficiency.

It is also important to know whether these findings hold for English learner student populations outside of this region, because it may affect how other districts approach their support for English learner students with advanced English proficiency. Additionally, stakeholders outside the Road Map districts have begun investigating the relationship between English proficiency at entry and the time needed to achieve reclassification among their own students. A full examination of the relationship between English proficiency at entry and time to reclassification may require a method such as survival analysis, which is a form of logistic regression. By creating a model of time to reclassification, this method is able to isolate the effects of student characteristics.

In addition, creating a model of time to reclassification using survival analysis will allow exploration of the often contradictory relationship between time to reclassification and rate of reclassification. For example, in contrast to the amount of time it took to achieve reclassification, the rate of reclassification was higher among English learner students entering Road Map district schools with advanced English proficiency than among those entering with basic or intermediate proficiency, regardless of their grade level at entry.

Finally, districts may wish to use the findings from this report to examine the different levels of support that English learner students receive. One of the Road Map districts is currently planning to evaluate the support that English learner students who entered their schools with intermediate and advanced English proficiency receive, ensuring that it meets their needs and provides them with the academic support to gain English proficiency as quickly as their peers.

Limitations of the study

This study has several limitations. It does not estimate the effect of district, school, or student characteristics on how long it takes students to achieve reclassification or on their rate of reclassification. The study also does not describe or estimate the effect of English learner student programs and practices on times and rates of reclassification. Therefore, the time to reclassification and rate of reclassification should not be interpreted as the result of the efficacy of any district or school program or policy. Variations could be the result

The time to reclassification and rate of reclassification should not be interpreted as the result of the efficacy of any district or school program or policy. Variations could be the result of many other factors

of many other factors, including aspects of student demographics not examined, such as students' home language literacy and education background and parent education levels.

The time-to-reclassification analysis does not include English learner students who did not achieve reclassification within the time period of the dataset. These include long-term English learner students and students who entered a Road Map district school after grade 5. Removing these students from the database certainly affected the mean number of years it takes students to achieve reclassification. The study found that students who had not yet been reclassified exhibited similar counterintuitive characteristics to those who had been reclassified, such as English learner students with advanced English proficiency taking longer to achieve reclassification than their peers with basic proficiency. A thorough investigation of these findings may require other forms of statistical analysis, such as using a discrete-time survival analysis to model how students develop English proficiency. The Road Map English Language Learner Work Group has requested that REL Northwest conduct this additional analysis.

The time-to-reclassification analysis does not include English learner students who did not achieve reclassification within the time period

The study is also limited by problems with the accuracy and completeness of the data for the 2000/01–2012/13 school years. There were many instances of missing, incomplete, or incorrect data, particularly from the early years of the dataset. Specifically, data around English proficiency levels often appeared to be incorrect, and program exit dates were often missing. However, assessment scores and dates appeared to be consistently accurate, and REL Northwest used these to calculate English proficiency levels and reclassification dates.

Finally, the districts participating in the study were not selected randomly from the population of Washington districts. Consequently, the results should not be generalized beyond the districts in the study. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was to describe time to reclassification. The study did not test theories about the factors that may affect time to reclassification.

Appendix A. Data and methodology

This appendix describes the data, the participating districts, and the study population and explains how the data were analyzed.

Description of data

The data for this study were obtained through a data-sharing agreement with the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). This study used data from two OSPI K–12 datasets. The Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) is a student-level data collection that includes enrollment, demographic characteristics, special program status, and district and school information for all students enrolled in Washington public schools from the 2009/10 school year onward. These data were matched with earlier data from a second dataset using a unique student identifier.

The second dataset was the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP), which contains information specific to English learner students, including results from the Washington Language Proficiency Test II (WLPT-II), the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment (WELPA), and the Home Language Survey. The TBIP dataset, while collected over eight school years (2005/06–2012/13), included up to 13 years of data, which is why the study includes data from 2000/01 through 2012/13. All English learner students and former English learner students in the dataset had a date of classification—the date at which they were first assessed—and some students had records of up to 13 years.

Participating districts

Data were analyzed for the seven Road Map districts (Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle, and Tukwila), which are located in South King County, Washington. In 2012/13, the final year of this study, the seven districts enrolled approximately 151,000 students, accounting for 14 percent of all K–12 students in Washington and 22 percent of the state’s English learner students (table A1).

A total of 167 languages were spoken by the English learner students in the participating districts in the 2012/13 school year. Nearly half the English learner students were Spanish speakers (47 percent), followed by Somali (9 percent) and Vietnamese (8 percent, table A2).

Study population

The study’s eight cohorts included a total of 20,632 English learner students and former English learner students. Of these, 2,899 students (14 percent) left the districts, dropped out of school, graduated, or were lost to the dataset before reclassification and were excluded from this analysis. This left 17,733 English learner students and former English learner students in the study population (table A3).

This study used data for eight cohorts of English learner students who began kindergarten in 2000/01–2007/08. Each cohort was followed prospectively for at least six years, from kindergarten to at least the end of grade 5 (tables A4 and A5). Data from all eight cohorts were combined to address each of the research questions.

Table A1. Characteristics of participating Road Map districts, 2012/13

School district	Total enrollment	Percent of students		
		With a home language other than English	Met criteria as English learner student	Eligible for school lunch programs
Auburn	14,789	30	13	56
Federal Way	22,107	31	14	57
Highline	18,293	40	22	70
Kent	27,529	36	17	53
Renton	14,898	39	15	55
Seattle	50,623	24	8	42
Tukwila	2,956	68	39	78
All Washington public schools	1,047,061	21	9	46

Note: Datasets are for school year 2012/13 and include information on student enrollment, home language, and eligibility for English language services and school lunch program.

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table A2. Home languages of English learner students and number of speakers in participating Road Map district schools, 2012/13

Home language	Auburn	Federal Way	Highline	Kent	Renton	Seattle	Tukwila	Total	Percent of Road Map English learner students
Spanish	1,131	1,879	2,495	1,837	985	1,179	346	9,852	46.8
Somali	49	18	259	391	219	749	135	1,820	8.6
Vietnamese	46	85	354	295	311	514	69	1,674	7.9
Ukrainian	176	156	2	258	65	1	1	659	3.1
Russian	87	205	4	147	91	12	11	557	2.6
Punjabi	39	41	80	315	39	6	10	530	2.5
Tagalog	30	44	49	111	95	155	30	514	2.4
Arabic	17	39	89	177	18	49	13	402	1.9
Nepali	0	3	75	94	1	19	145	337	1.6
Chinese-Cantonese	0	12	6	23	81	211	0	333	1.6
Amharic	1	8	96	34	20	146	23	328	1.6
Samoan	44	87	71	49	11	11	25	298	1.4
Marshallese	191	52	2	34	0	0	0	279	1.3
Cambodian	12	14	77	63	22	62	20	270	1.3
Korean	23	136	5	12	7	19	0	202	1.0
Tigrinya	3	5	21	11	2	136	12	190	0.9
Other languages	134	281	410	788	247	664	302	2,826	13.4
All English learner students	1,983	3,065	4,095	4,639	2,214	3,933	1,142	21,071	100.0

Note: Datasets are for school year 2012/13 and include information on student enrollment and home language. This table shows the total school population for 2012/13 and includes members of cohorts that were not included in the study. It does not include students who have been reclassified. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table A3. Study population size, by grade at entry and English proficiency at entry

Grade level at entry	Number of English learner students and former English learner students by English proficiency at entry			
	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	All proficiency levels
Kindergarten	412	4072	2,460	6,944
1	201	1,058	1,728	2,987
2	192	550	1,275	2,017
3	214	496	1,329	2,039
4	247	535	1,145	1,927
5	292	555	972	1,819
All students	1,558	7,266	8,909	17,733

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student enrollment, grade level, and English proficiency level for 2000/01–2012/13.

Source: Author's analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13.

Table A4. Number of English learner students in each cohort and maximum number of years in dataset

Cohort	Kindergarten year	Number of English learner students or former English learner students	Number of years in dataset
1	2000/01	699	13
2	2001/02	1,087	12
3	2002/03	1,446	11
4	2003/04	1,750	10
5	2004/05	2,544	9
6	2005/06	3,134	8
7	2006/07	3,544	7
8	2007/08	3,529	6
All cohorts	2000/01–2007/08	17,733	na

na is not applicable.

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grade level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13.

Source: Author's analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13.

Table A5. Grade level of English learner students in each cohort by school year

Cohort	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
1	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
3			K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4				K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5					K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6						K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7							K	1	2	3	4	5	6
8								K	1	2	3	4	5

Source: Author's analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13.

Table A6. Mean years to reclassification and rate of reclassification for English learner students in each cohort

Cohort	Mean years to reclassification ^a	Rate of reclassification (percent)
1	5.8	72
2	5.4	76
3	5.1	83
4	4.6	83
5	4.0	84
6	3.5	87
7	3.0	81
8	2.8	78
All cohorts	3.8	82

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grade level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13.

a. Includes only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13.

Protection of personally identifiable information

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations protecting the privacy of study participants, including the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. All parties to this project agreed that all personally identifiable information exchanged would be protected, securely stored and disposed of, and otherwise kept confidential, as required by applicable state and federal law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

All personally identifiable data were encrypted during transfer from OSPI to REL Northwest. Encrypted data transfer is ensured by using REL Northwest’s secure file server. Data were placed in password-protected network folders for use by researchers, research assistants, and IT staff assigned to this study who were trained on use and protection of personally identifiable information before being given access to study data. Per OSPI requirements, researchers using OSPI data read and signed OSPI’s individual nondisclosure form.

Data analyses

This study calculated the mean number of years for English learner students in Road Map district schools to achieve reclassification as former English learner students if they achieved reclassification by 2012/13 and the percentage of English learner students who achieved reclassification by 2012/13.

The time to reclassification for each student in the dataset was calculated by subtracting the number of months between each English learner student’s program enrollment (classification as English learner student) and exit (reclassification as former English learner student) based on assessment dates and scores and then computing an average number of years for all students in the study’s eight cohorts. Each student’s initial and annual proficiency levels were calculated from his or her scores on the Washington Language Proficiency Test II (WLPT II) or the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment

(WELPA) using the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment Concordance Study (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2012). The concordance study provided the cutscores and allowed data from the two tests to be combined. For students identified as having reached transitional status (level 4; see box 1 in main report) on the assessment, the end of that school year was used for their reclassification date. This is consistent with OSPI and school practice.

The rate of reclassification was calculated by dividing the number of English learner students in the study's eight cohorts who achieved reclassification (achieved transitional status on the state English proficiency test) by 2012/13 by the total number of English learner students in the eight cohorts.

The results were disaggregated by the following student variables available in the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System dataset:

- Grade level at entry to Road Map district schools.
- English proficiency level at entry to Road Map district schools.
- Student gender.
- Student home language.
- Student race/ethnicity.
- Student special education status.
- Student country of birth.

Results were also disaggregated by school-level characteristics. School-level data from the period 2005/06–2012/13 for all Road Map elementary schools were downloaded from the OSPI K–12 Data and Reports website (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2014) on the following school characteristics:

- School size (number of students).
- Percentage of English learner students.
- Percentage of racial/ethnic minority students.
- Percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs.

The study team linked these school-level averages to individual student records. This was not simple, since many of the students had transferred to different schools multiple times. The data for the school that each student attended for the longest time was linked to the student. To facilitate analysis, school-level averages were broken into quartiles for number of students, percentage of English learner students, percentage of racial/ethnic minority students, and percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs.

Appendix B. Supplemental data tables

This appendix contains tables detailing how the time to achieve reclassification varied by student characteristics such as grade level at school entry, level of English proficiency at entry, gender, home language, race/ethnicity, special education status, and country of birth (tables B1–B6) and by school characteristics such as school size, percentage of English learner students, percentage of racial/ethnic minority students, and percentage of students eligible for federal school lunch programs, compared with various individual characteristics (tables B7–B14).

Table B1. How did time in an English learner program vary by grade level and English proficiency at entry for English learner students in Road Map district schools who did not achieve reclassification by 2012/13?

Grade level at entry	Mean years in program by English proficiency at entry			
	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	All proficiency levels
Kindergarten	6.0	6.4	6.6	6.4
1	5.5	6.5	7.6	6.8
2	5.0	6.4	7.2	6.6
3	4.1	5.5	7.4	6.3
4	3.9	5.0	8.3	6.6
5	3.8	4.6	7.8	6.0
All students	4.8	6.0	7.5	6.4

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student grade level, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who remained classified as English learner students as of 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A.

Table B2. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by grade level at entry, gender, and English proficiency at entry?

Grade level at entry	Gender	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry			
		Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	All proficiency levels
Kindergarten	Girls	4.1	3.5	2.3	3.0
	Boys	4.7	3.8	2.6	3.5
1	Girls	3.5	3.8	3.5	3.6
	Boys	3.8	4.6	3.7	4.0
2	Girls	3.8	4.3	4.3	4.3
	Boys	3.7	5.1	4.4	4.5
3	Girls	3.3	4.3	4.5	4.3
	Boys	3.2	4.3	4.8	4.6
4	Girls	2.9	3.9	4.4	4.1
	Boys	3.1	4.2	4.7	4.4
5	Girls	3.2	3.5	4.2	3.9
	Boys	3.0	3.7	4.5	4.0
All students	Girls	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.6
	Boys	3.7	4.1	3.9	4.0

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student gender, grade level, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author's analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A.

Table B3. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by home language, grade level at entry, and English proficiency at entry?

Home language	Grade level at entry	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry			All proficiency levels
		Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	
Spanish	Kindergarten	4.7	4.1	2.9	3.8
	Grades 1–5	4.0	4.9	4.7	4.7
Vietnamese	Kindergarten	3.7	3.3	2.1	2.8
	Grades 1–5	3.4	3.9	4.5	4.2
Somali	Kindergarten	5.4	4.0	2.9	3.8
	Grades 1–5	3.3	4.2	4.0	4.0
Ukrainian	Kindergarten	5.2	3.6	2.1	3.4
	Grades 1–5	3.6	4.9	4.1	4.2
Punjabi	Kindergarten	^a	3.6	2.1	3.0
	Grades 1–5	3.9	4.8	3.8	4.1
Russian	Kindergarten	^a	3.6	2.2	3.3
	Grades 1–5	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.0
Cantonese	Kindergarten	^a	3.1	2.3	2.6
	Grades 1–5	2.4	4.2	4.2	4.1
Tagalog	Kindergarten	^a	3.7	2.5	3.0
	Grades 1–5	^a	3.9	3.5	3.6
Arabic	Kindergarten	^a	3.7	3.0	3.6
	Grades 1–5	2.2	3.3	3.6	3.1
Cambodian	Kindergarten	^a	3.3	2.4	3.0
	Grades 1–5	3.9	4.2	4.8	4.6
Amharic	Kindergarten	^a	3.3	2.5	2.9
	Grades 1–5	2.2	3.0	3.6	3.2
Samoan	Kindergarten	^a	4.2	^a	4.2
	Grades 1–5	^a	3.3	4.3	4.0
Korean	Kindergarten	^a	2.7	^a	2.6
	Grades 1–5	1.5	1.6	2.9	2.3
Other	Kindergarten	4.5	3.7	2.3	3.1
	Grades 1–5	2.8	3.9	4.2	3.9

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student home language, grade level, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

a. Value suppressed to protect student confidentiality because there were fewer than 10 individuals in the category.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A.

Table B4. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by race/ethnicity, grade level at entry, and English proficiency at entry?

Race/ethnicity	Grade level at entry	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry			
		Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	All proficiency levels
Asian	Kindergarten	3.9	3.3	2.2	2.8
	Grades 1–5	3.0	3.8	4.1	3.9
Black	Kindergarten	4.7	3.8	2.6	3.3
	Grades 1–5	3.3	3.9	4.0	3.9
Hispanic	Kindergarten	4.6	3.9	2.8	3.6
	Grades 1–5	3.9	4.8	4.6	4.6
White	Kindergarten	4.8	3.4	2.3	3.1
	Grades 1–5	3.4	4.1	4.0	4.0
Pacific Islander/ Native Hawaiian	Kindergarten	4.2	4.7	3.1	4.2
	Grades 1–5	3.9	3.4	3.3	3.4

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student race/ethnicity, grade level, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A.

Table B5. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by grade level at entry, special education status, and English proficiency at entry?

Grade level at entry	Special education status	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry			
		Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	All proficiency levels
Kindergarten	Not eligible	4.5	3.6	2.4	3.2
	Eligible	4.8	4.7	3.2	4.4
1	Not eligible	3.6	4.1	3.6	3.7
	Eligible	4.3	6.0	4.4	5.1
2	Not eligible	3.7	4.5	4.3	4.3
	Eligible	4.7	6.7	5.4	5.8
3	Not eligible	3.2	4.1	4.6	4.3
	Eligible	^a	6.6	5.9	6.1
4	Not eligible	3.0	3.7	4.4	4.0
	Eligible	4.6	6.7	6.3	6.3
5	Not eligible	3.1	3.3	4.2	3.8
	Eligible	2.5	6.4	6.4	6.2
All students	Girls	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.7
	Boys	4.4	5.7	5.5	5.5

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student eligibility for special education, grade level, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

a. Value suppressed to protect student confidentiality because there were fewer than 10 individuals in the category.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A.

Table B6. How did time in an English learner program vary by grade level at entry, place of birth, and English proficiency at entry for English learner students in Road Map district schools who did not achieve reclassification by 2012/13?

Grade level at entry	Place of birth	Mean years in program by English proficiency at entry			All proficiency levels
		Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	
Kindergarten	Foreign born	5.8	6.5	6.5	6.4
	U.S. born	6.2	6.5	6.6	6.5
1	Foreign born	5.5	6.3	7.7	6.9
	U.S. born	5.6	7.0	7.9	7.6
2	Foreign born	5.2	6.1	8.0	7.1
	U.S. born	5.6	7.3	8.3	8.0
3	Foreign born	4.5	5.4	7.5	6.5
	U.S. born	^a	7.3	9.0	8.8
4	Foreign born	4.2	5.2	8.2	6.7
	U.S. born	^a	6.9	9.2	8.8
5	Foreign born	4.3	5.0	8.2	6.6
	U.S. born	2.2	5.9	8.9	8.2
All students	Foreign born	4.9	5.9	7.7	6.7
	U.S. born	5.6	6.6	7.7	7.2

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student place of birth, grade level, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who remained classified as English learner students as of 2012/13.

a. Value suppressed to protect student confidentiality because there were fewer than 10 individuals in the category.

Source: Author's analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13; see appendix A.

Table B7. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by school size and grade level at entry?

School size quartile	Mean years to reclassification by grade level at entry					
	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
1, smallest	3.2	3.8	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.2
2	3.1	3.6	4.4	4.5	4.0	4.0
3	3.3	3.9	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.1
4, largest	3.4	4.0	4.6	4.4	4.2	3.5

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information for on student school, school size, grade level, years in program, and reclassification 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author's analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table B8. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by school size quartile and English proficiency at entry?

School size quartile	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry		
	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
1, smallest	3.5	3.7	3.8
2	4.0	3.8	3.5
3	3.5	4.1	3.7
4, largest	3.4	4.0	3.8

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school size, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table B9. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by school quartile for percentage of English learner students and by grade level at entry?

School quartile for percentage of English learner students	Mean years to reclassification by grade level at entry					
	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
1, lowest	3.2	3.7	4.3	4.7	4.3	4.3
2	3.3	3.9	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.2
3	3.3	3.9	4.5	4.5	4.1	3.9
4, highest	3.1	3.8	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.4

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school percentage of English learner students, grade level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table B10. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by school quartile for percentage of English learner students and by English proficiency at entry?

School quartile for percentage of English learner students	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry		
	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
1, lowest	3.6	3.9	3.7
2	4.0	4.0	3.8
3	3.8	4.0	3.7
4, highest	3.1	3.6	3.6

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school percentage of English learner students, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table B11. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by school quartile for percentage of racial/ethnic minority students and by grade level?

School quartile for percentage of racial/ethnic minority students	Mean years to reclassification by grade level at entry					
	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
1, lowest	3.3	3.8	4.5	4.8	4.5	4.2
2	3.4	3.9	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.0
3	3.2	3.8	4.2	4.3	4.0	3.5
4, highest	3.0	3.8	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.1

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school percentage of racial/ethnic minority students, grade level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table B12. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by school quartile for percentage of racial/ethnic minority students and by English proficiency at entrance?

School quartile for percentage of racial/ethnic minority students	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry		
	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
1, lowest	4.1	4.0	3.7
2	3.7	4.1	3.7
3	3.4	3.7	3.6
4, highest	2.9	3.6	3.8

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school percentage of racial/ethnic minority students, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table B13. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by school quartile for percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs and by grade level at entry?

School quartile for percentage of students eligible for school lunch program	Mean years to reclassification by grade level at entry					
	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
1, lowest	3.1	3.7	4.4	4.7	4.4	4.2
2	3.3	4.0	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.3
3	3.3	3.8	4.3	4.3	4.2	3.9
4, highest	3.2	3.6	4.3	4.2	3.7	3.4

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs, grade level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Table B14. How did time to achieve reclassification for English learner students in Road Map district schools vary by school quartile for percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs and by English proficiency at entry?

School quartile for percentage of students eligible for school lunch program	Mean years to reclassification by English proficiency at entry		
	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
1, lowest	3.8	3.9	3.6
2	4.1	4.1	3.8
3	3.6	3.9	3.7
4, highest	3.0	3.5	3.8

Note: Datasets are for school years 2005/06–2012/13 and include information on student school, school percentage of students eligible for school lunch programs, English proficiency level, years in program, and reclassification for 2000/01–2012/13. Data include only students who were reclassified by 2012/13.

Source: Author’s analysis based on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data for 2005/06–2012/13 and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction K–12 Data and Reports website (ELL enrollment download files).

Notes

1. The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction provides funding, guidance, and oversight for all district English learner student programs through the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program. Eligibility for these services in all Washington schools within the time period of the dataset (2005/06–2012/13) was determined solely by student results on a Washington English proficiency assessment.
2. This percentage refers to English learner students who are not reclassified, which is a small proportion of all students who are ever classified as an English learner student.
3. Of English learner students in this dataset, 14 percent left Washington schools, dropped out, or graduated before they achieved reclassification. This is consistent with findings from the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, which indicate that up to 15 percent of students across the state transferred out of the state, dropped out of school, or graduated before reclassification (Malagon et al., 2012).
4. English learner students are assessed every spring until they achieve reclassification. Therefore, the number of years it takes individual students to transition is a whole year, not a fraction. Although an average time to exit English learner status may be 2.7 years, students exit after two years, three years, or four years, not midway through a school year. The timing of the testing would not influence the results by more than a month.
5. The students who were still considered as English learner students in the 2012/13 school year had been in the program for an average of 6.4 years (see table B1 in appendix B).

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