



The State of Minnesota Needs ELL Redesign NOW:  
 Making the case for the Need & Urgency behind Systemic Change and Institutional Focus  
 on ELL Student Success

**1. Minnesota needs ELL reform if it is to develop the World's Best Workforce. Successful creation of the World's Best workforce relies upon Minnesota's ability to confront and enhance world languages as an emerging asset in an increasingly globalized world.**

“Improving the academic performance of English language learners is imperative if the state wants to achieve its goal of cutting the achievement gap in half by 2017 — a pledge spelled out in the waiver Minnesota received from the U.S. Department of Education that unshackled it from the mandates of No Child Left Behind.”

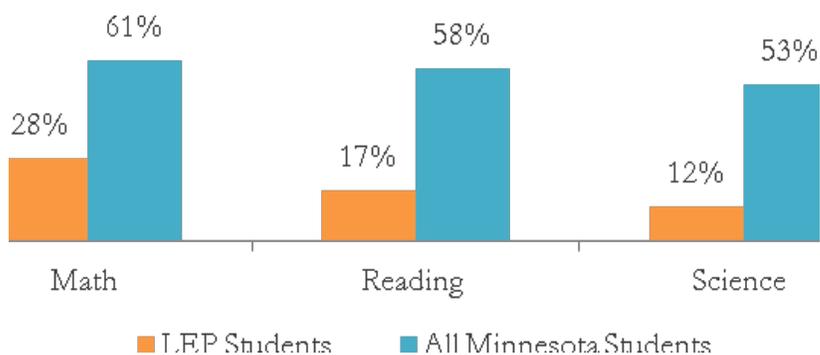
Source: Kim McGuire. (2013) “Minnesota students learning English face an uphill battle, but innovations are helping”. Star Tribune.

“Even in a world where English is often considered the primary lingua franca, speaking another language and understanding the culture that accompanies the study of this language, improves communication and effective working relationships. This is true across disciplines from academia and business to healthcare, intelligence, law enforcement, and the military.”

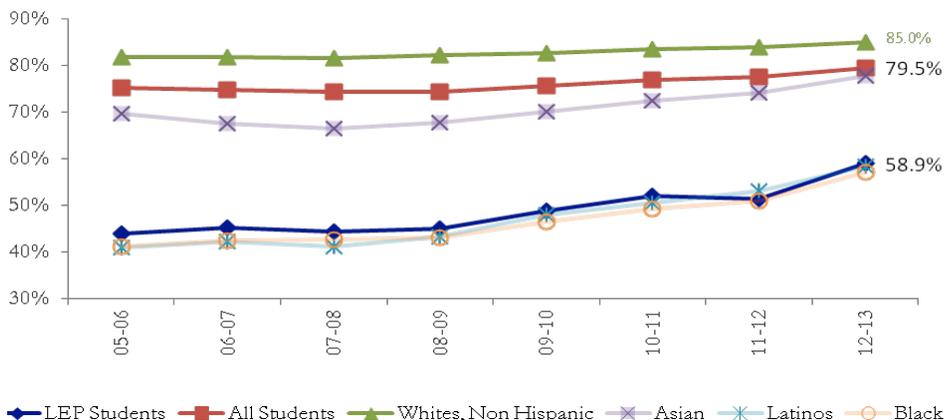
Source: Succeeding Globally Through International Education and Engagement. (2012) U.S. Department of Education International Strategy 2012-16.

**2. Minnesota needs ELL Reform to comprehensively address and close the Opportunity Gap. The current ELL Delivery System is ineffective.**

**Student Performance on MCA's (2013):**



**Graduation Rate:**



Source: Minnesota Department of Education



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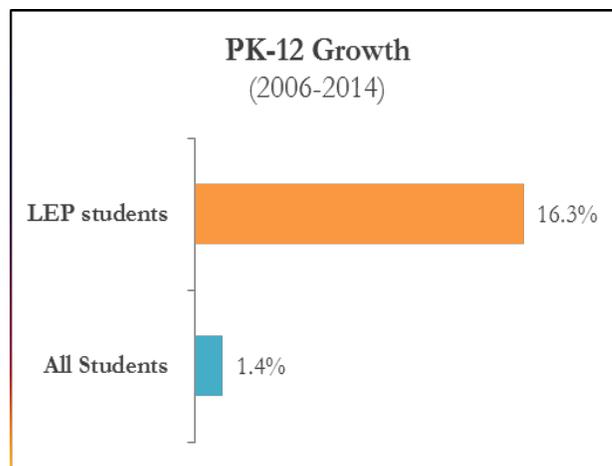
**3. Minnesota needs ELL reform because statewide: ELL students are the most rapidly growing population in our schools. If systemic steps are not taken to address the needs of this student group, Minnesota's competitive workforce & economy will begin to feel the negative effects of student performance.**

Over 65,000 English learner students are enrolled in Minnesota schools.

Over the past 20 years, the number of ELL students has risen by 50,000, a 300% increase in English learners.

Minnesota now ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the nation for the number of languages spoken by students, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Source: Mike Zittlow. (2012) "Ranks of English learners swelling in Minnesota Schools." MPRnews.



Source: CLAC's calculations using MDE data

**4. Minnesota Needs ELL Reform because we currently have archaic and harmful Laws on the books that need to be modernized.**

Under the current system, students who enter the ELL program generate state and federal funding even though there is no uniform or consistent form of assessing their level of English proficiency. We need a comprehensive, reliable system that helps teachers better understand the needs of each individual so that they can develop the skills necessary to successfully participate in the general core curriculum.

Source: Sec. 33. Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 124D.552

Currently, there are needless and discriminatory prohibitions of employing a bilingual or ESL licensed teacher as replacement for a presently employed teacher if that teacher would not be otherwise replaced. Bilingual and ESL licensed teachers can be better equipped to meet the varied needs of English Learners and promote their overall academic success.

Source: Sec. 15 Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 122A.19

**5. Minnesota Needs ELL Reform to reverse the harmful and arbitrary cuts to ELL funding.**

In an attempt to balance the budget in the 2003 special session, Gov. Pawlenty and the State Legislature reached a compromise that included a 10.8 million dollar cut to ELL programs. This cut stemmed from the arbitrary shortening of the length of time in which students generated EL Funding. There is no empirical basis for assuming students are able gain proficiency in English in only 5 years.

Source: 2003, 1st special session, Chapter 9, Article 1, Section 13, Subd 2.