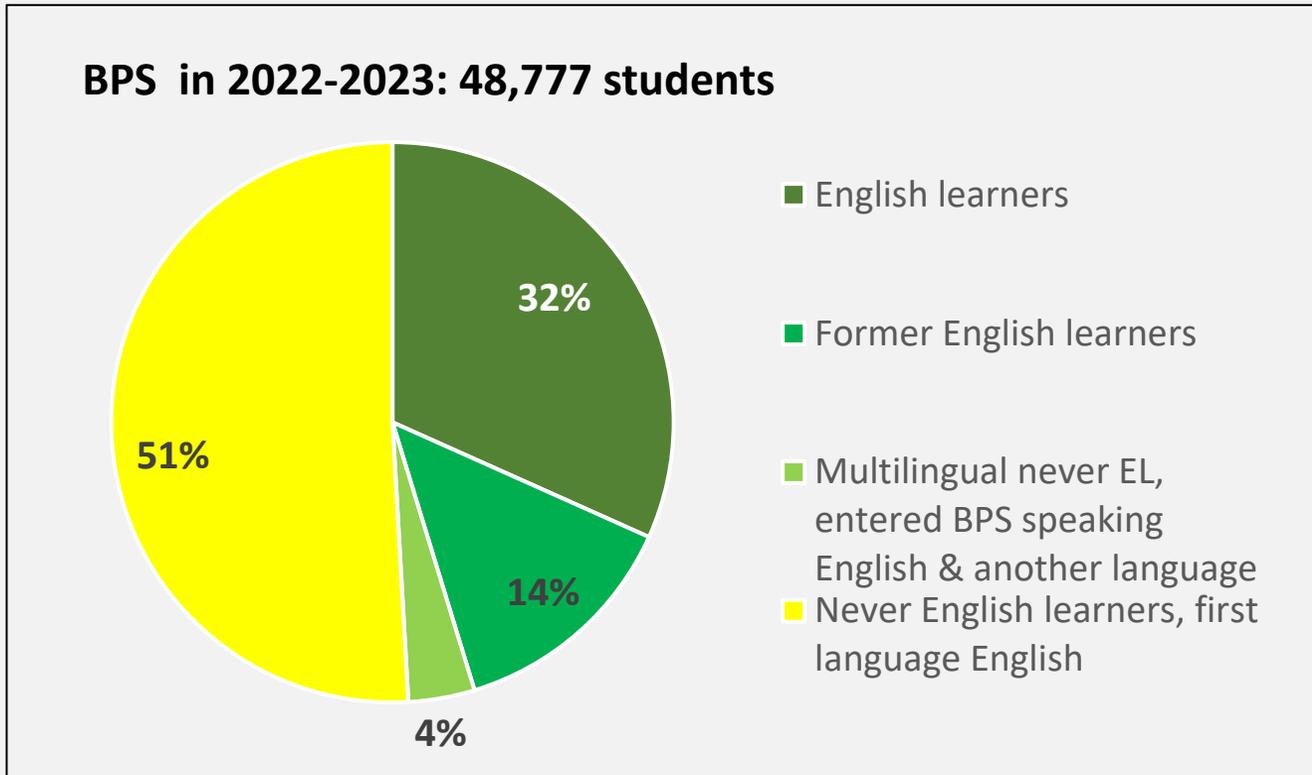


Structural Challenges for Multilingual Learners in BPS

Context for Parents and Caregivers, from the ELL Task Force

May 4, 2023

Who attends the Boston Public Schools?

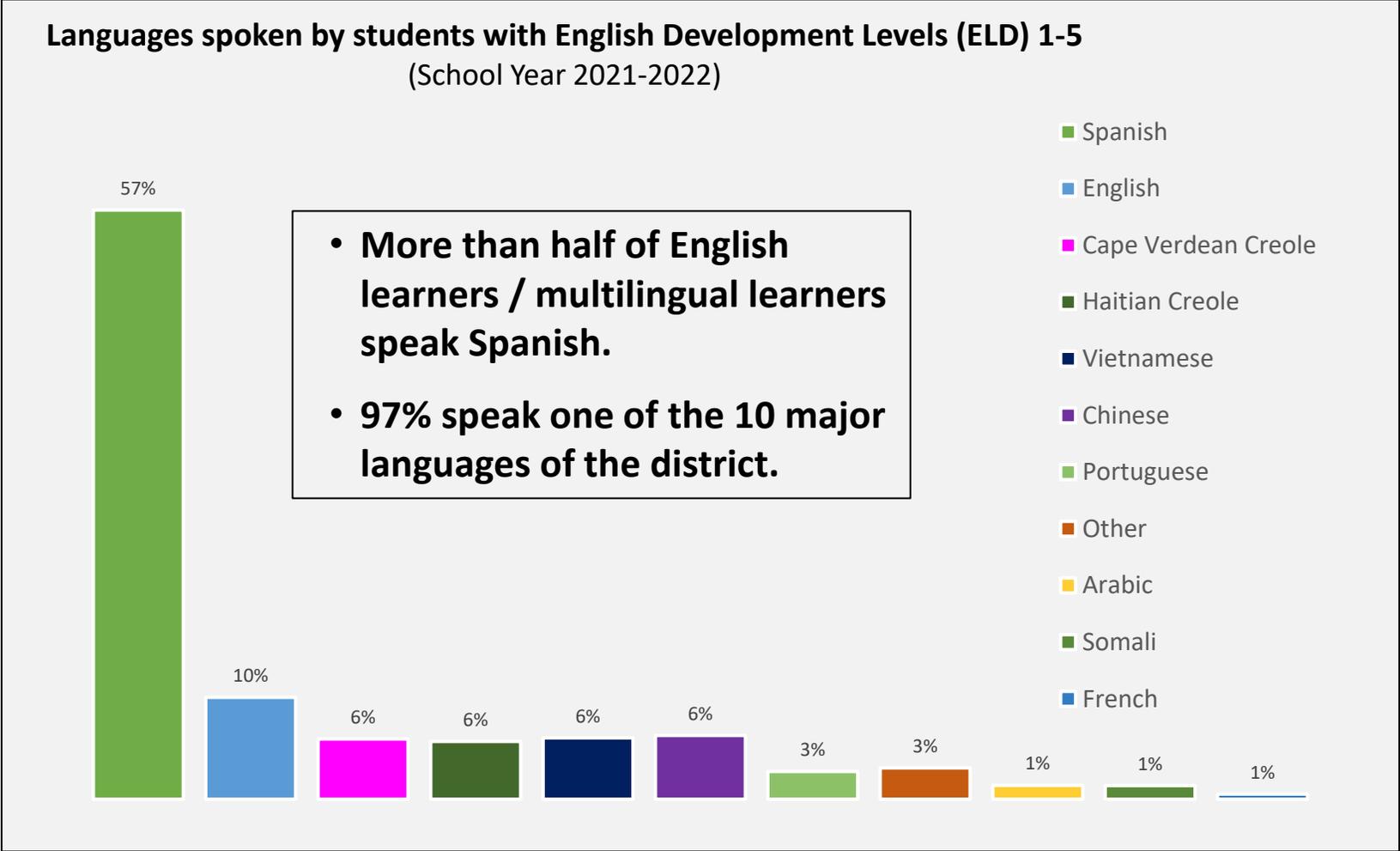


Half of BPS students are multilingual or learning English.

(the green parts of the pie chart at left)

While enrollment for the district as a whole has been declining for the past 5 years, multilingual learner / English learner (ML/EL) enrollment rose slightly in the current year, 2022-2023.

What languages do current BPS English learners / multilingual learners speak?



Data from Budget/Planning presentations to the ELLTF 2/9/23 and March 2022

The first two strategic priorities of the Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education are to

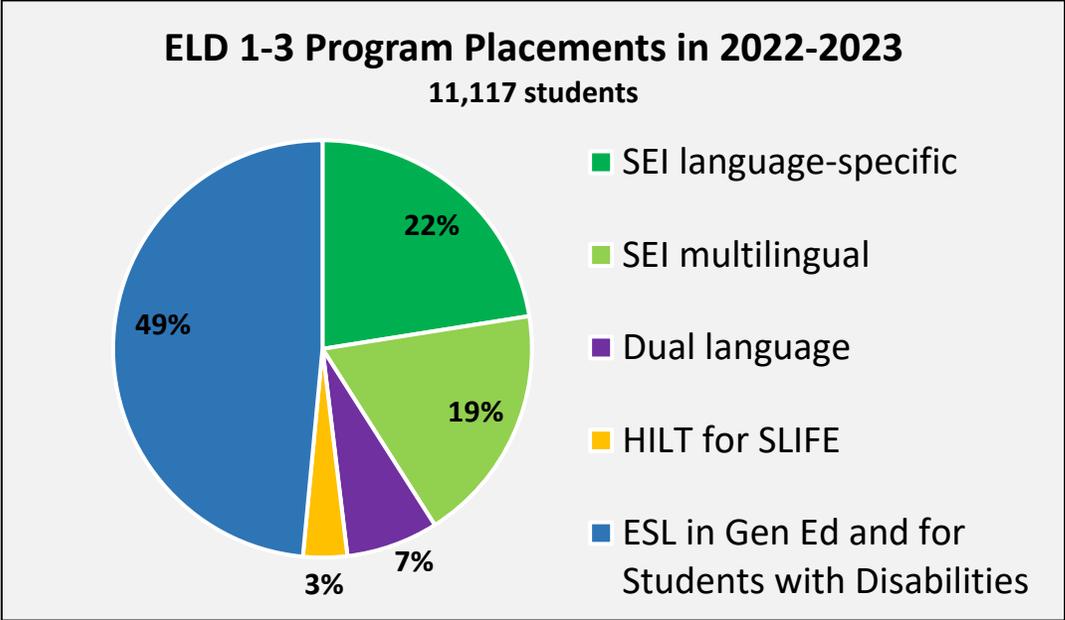
- ❑ **expand bilingual programs** so that students can earn a **State Seal of Biliteracy**, and
- ❑ **expand access to native language services** for EL/ML students with disabilities.



In what program settings do students learn?

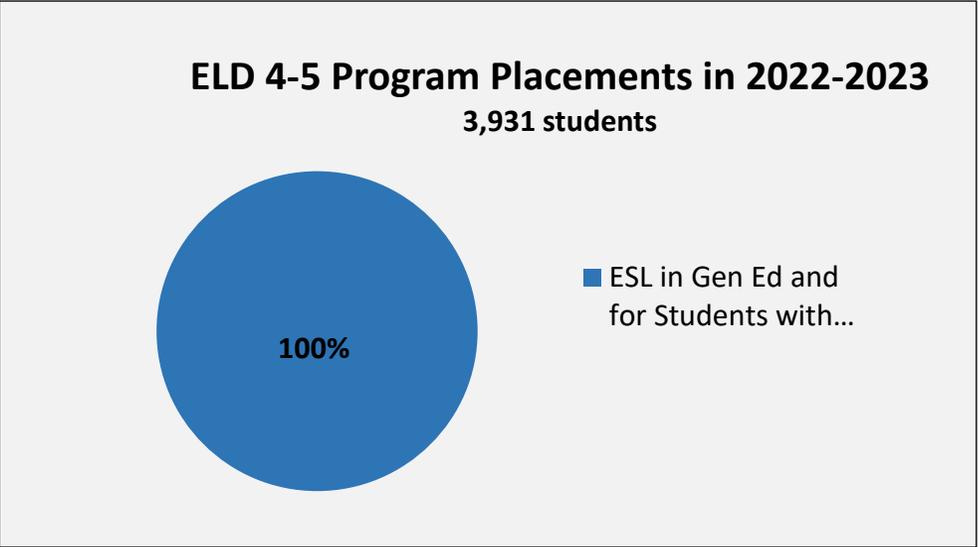
ELD1-3s

For students with English Language Development levels 1-3 (ELD 1-3s), **about half are in programs for English learners / multilingual learners.** The other half are in General Education.



ELD 4-5 Program Placements in 2022-2023

3,931 students



ELD4-5s

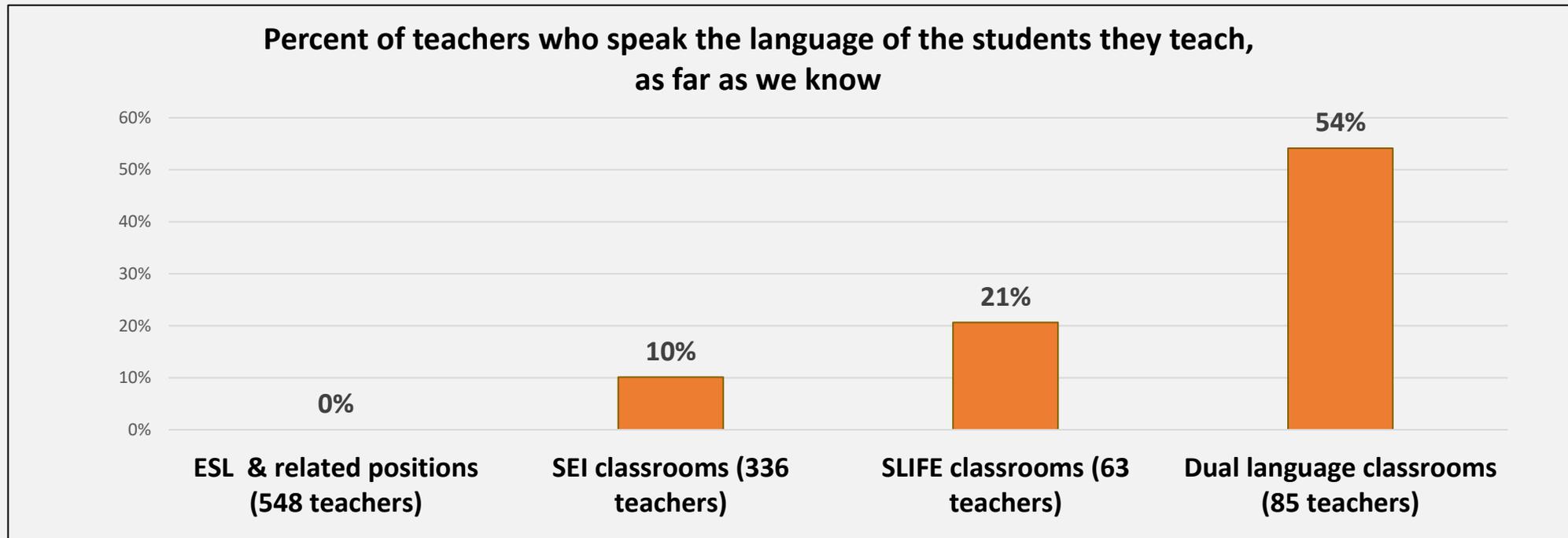
For students with English Language Development levels 4-5 (ELD 4-5s), all are in Gen Ed (except 4 students).



Do students' teachers speak their languages?

No. Most English learners / multilingual learners do not have a teacher who speaks their language.

The district does not have comprehensive language information for all teachers, nor a standard process for assessing fluency.



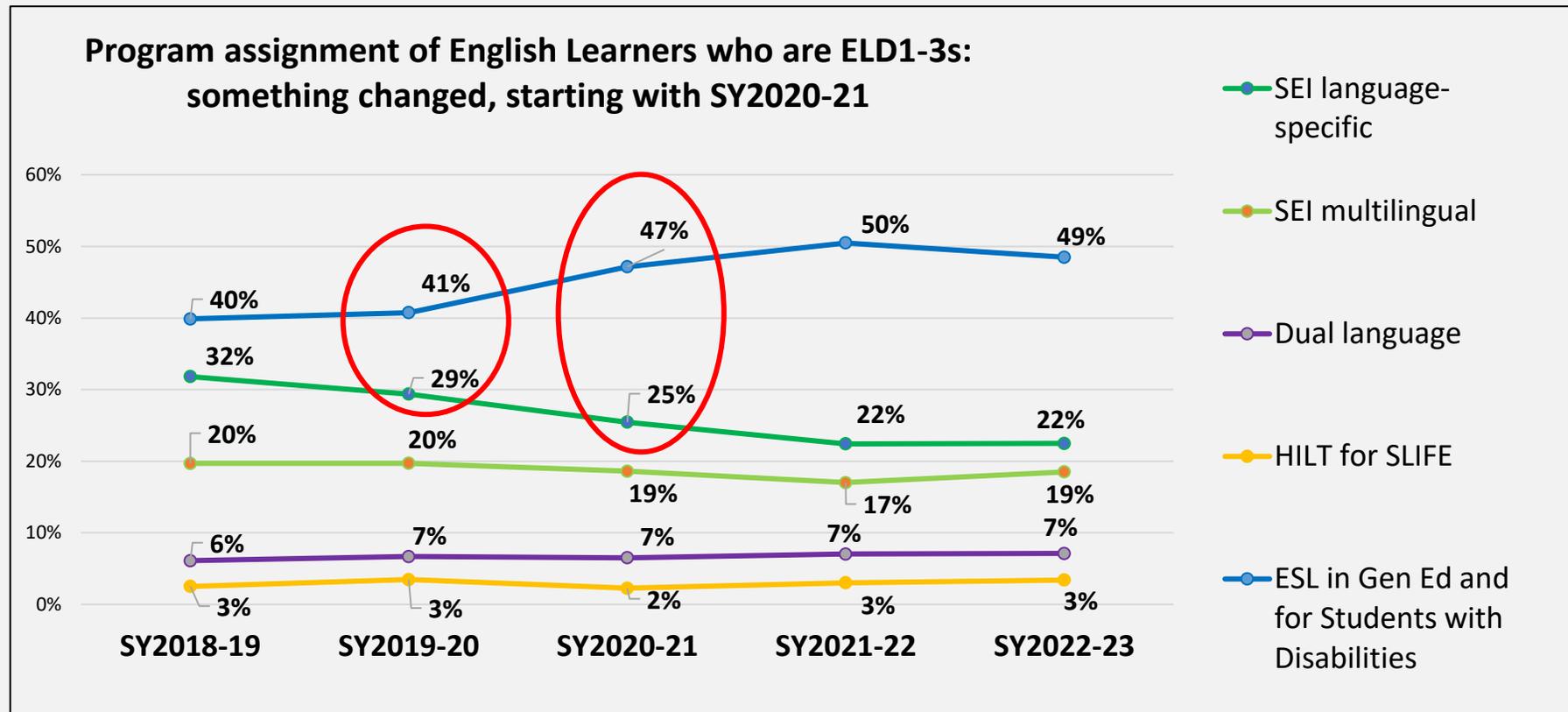
↑
Half of ELD1-3s and 100% of ELD4-5s study under these teachers

↑
SEI programs educate 41% of all ELD 1-3s

↑
SLIFE programs educate 3% of all ELD1-3s

↑
Dual language programs educate 7% of all ELD1-3s

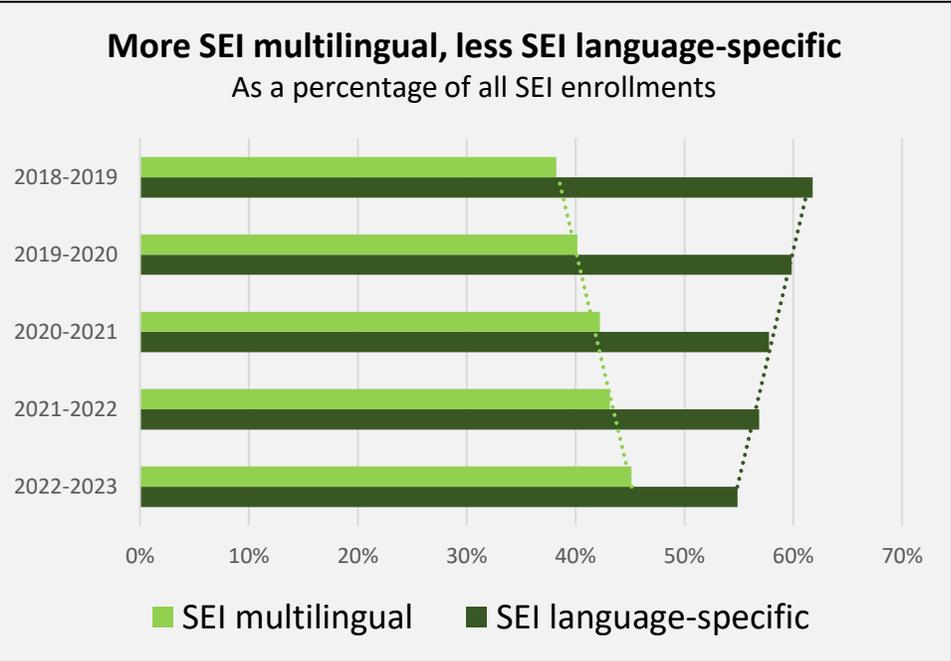
Over the past 3 years, English learners / multilingual learners at English Language Development levels 1-3 (ELD1-3s) have been shifted out of SEI language-specific and into General Education classrooms.



We estimate that about 1,000 ELD1-3 students are now in Gen Ed who would have been in SEI if student assignment was similar to that in 2019-2020.

Students in SEI increasingly are not grouped with other students who speak their language.

Of students who are in SEI, the trend is that **more of them are being assigned to “SEI multilingual”** (classes where more than one student language is grouped together) instead of attending class with other students who speak their language.



Data received from Budget/Planning March 2023

Languages spoken by students enrolled in SEI multilingual in 2022-2023		
BPS offers SEI language-specific programs in these languages	Cabo Verdean Creole	5%
	Chinese	2%
	Haitian Creole	7%
	Spanish	53%
	Vietnamese	4%
	71%	
BPS does not offer SEI language-specific programs in these languages	Arabic	3%
	English	5%
	French	1%
	Portuguese	13%
	Somali	1%
	Other	5%
	29%	

In SEI multilingual, speakers of various languages are mixed in classrooms together.

71% of students in the program are eligible for a language-specific placement in a classroom with others who speak their language.

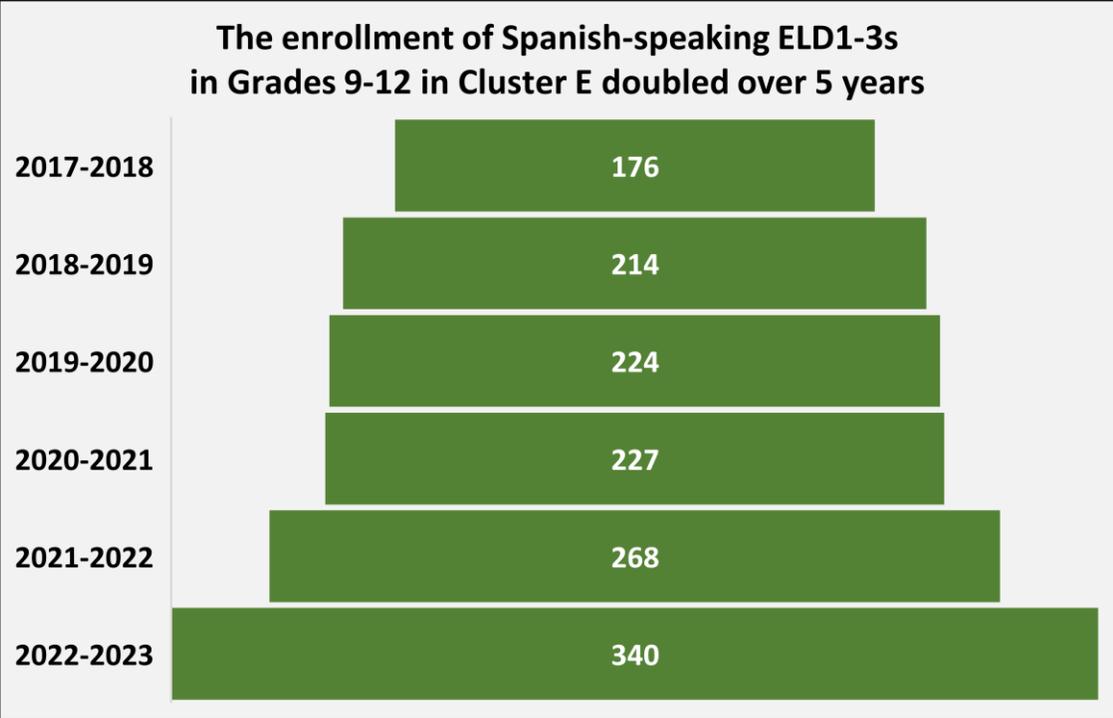
53% of SEI multilingual enrollments are Spanish speakers. The number of Spanish-speaking ELD1-3 students grew 19% over the past 5 years, but Spanish-speaking enrollment in language-specific SEI (and dual language) decreased by 2% over that same period.

Data received from Budget/Planning March 30, 2023

There is currently no plan to ensure that EL/ML programs are placed near where students live, nor to ensure that students can access those programs even if they are not in their Home Based Assignment zone.

For example, over the last five years, enrollment doubled for Spanish-speaking ELD1-3s in grades 9-12 in Cluster E – a BPS district straddling parts of Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan.

This part of the city has no language-specific classrooms for Spanish speakers. Those students were placed in multilingual program settings.



Data received from Budget/Planning, 3/30/23

Why does it matter if fewer English learners / multilingual learners are placed in SEI language-specific programs?

Isn't SEI a "subtractive" program, meaning that students lose skill with native language as they are learning English? **Yes, it is.**

Nonetheless, for now SEI language-specific programs are important in BPS.



1. Students in a language-specific classroom will have **peers who speak their language**, even if their teacher does not.

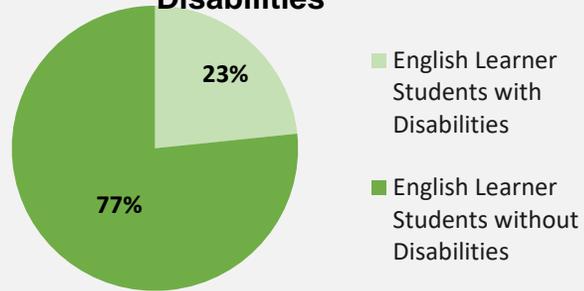


2. SEI language-specific programs group students by language, which is **a key part of the district infrastructure that is necessary for increasing access to native language** and moving toward programs that support learning and literacy in two languages.

Many English learners / multilingual learners are also students with disabilities.

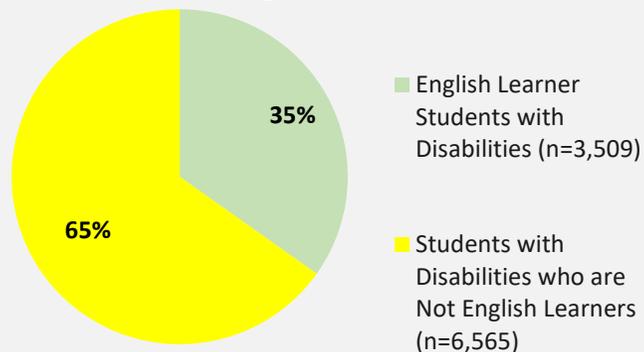
All English learners / multilingual learners

Nearly 1/4 are Students with Disabilities

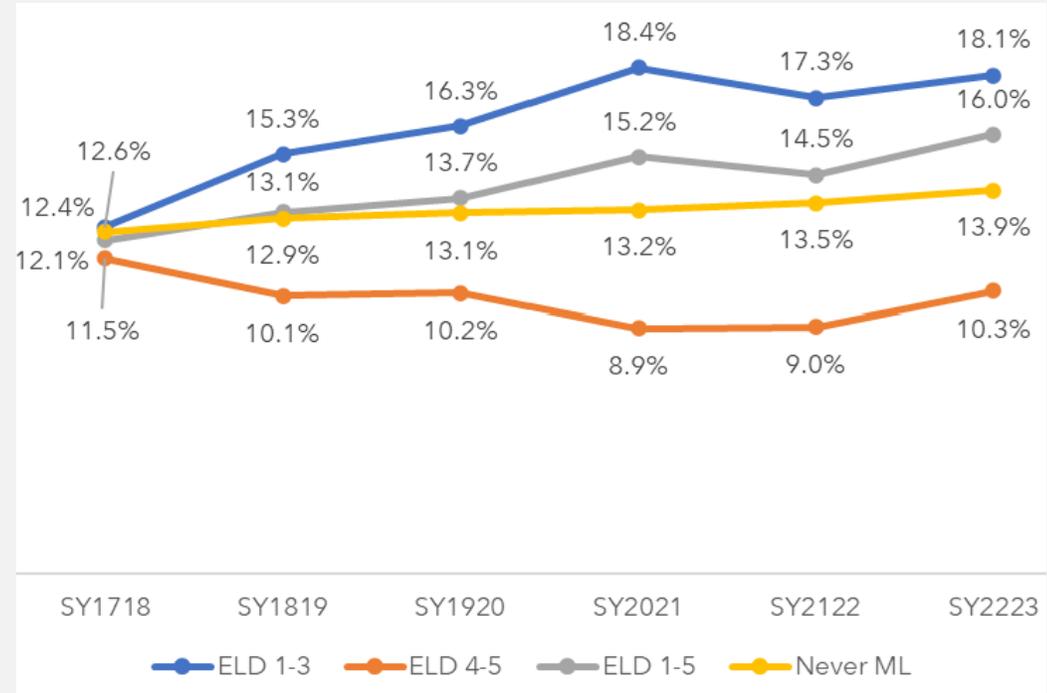


All Students with Disabilities

More than 1/3 are English learners / multilingual learners



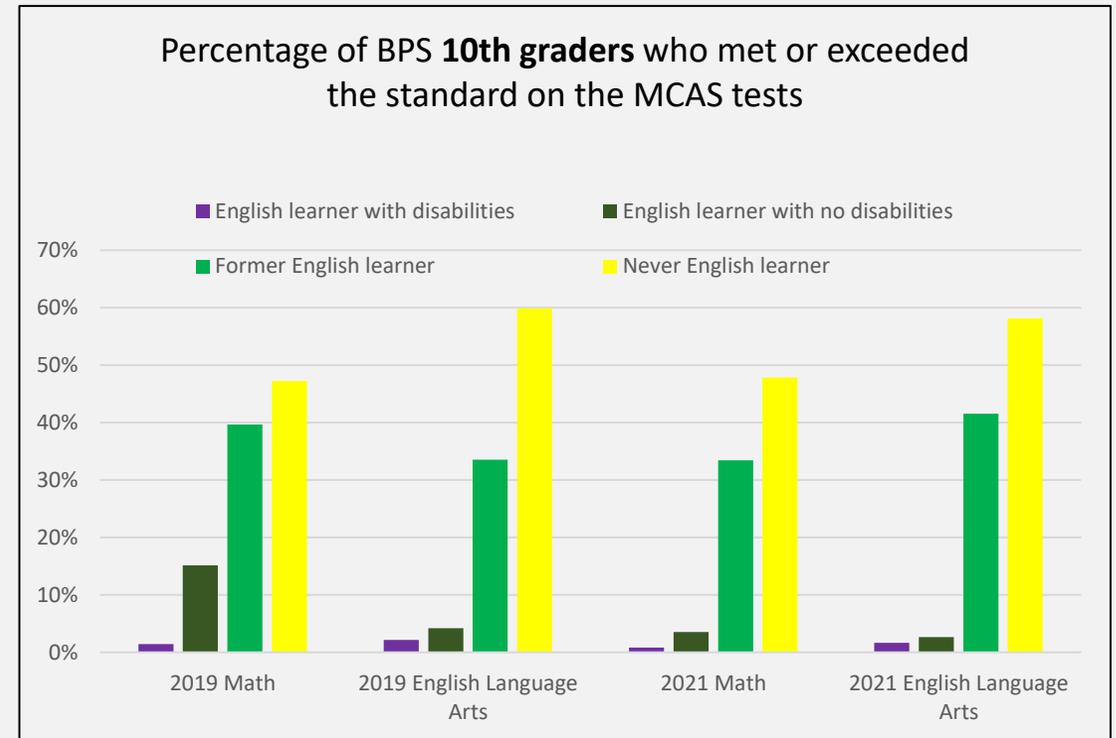
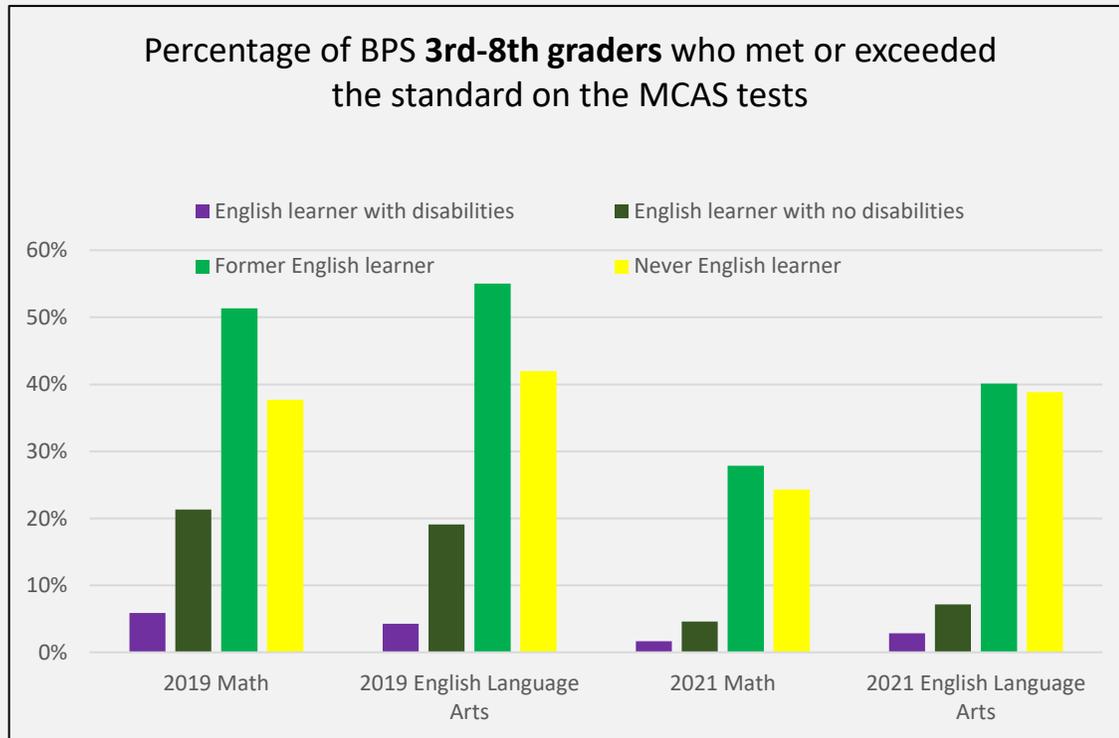
English learners with disabilities are a growing population.



Data received from Budget/Planning, 3/30/23

No access to native language -- English learners with disabilities have no guarantee that their teachers and providers will speak their language.

English learners / multilingual learners have low scores on the MCAS, especially EL/ML students with disabilities.



New budget allocations for 2023-2024 will do little to expand students' access to native language supports.

There is not an existing district plan to expand access to native language for the approximately 15,600 ML/ELs not enrolled in dual language programs.

The 2023-2024 budget includes **new resources for long-term planning for dual language programs**. Only 7% of multilingual learners / English learners are in those programs.

It will be many years before substantial numbers of BPS students could be served with dual language programs.

The 2023-2024 budget funds **38 new ESL teacher positions**.

It will expand staffing in program areas where students typically have limited access to native language support.

We need a vision to enable all students to receive the Seal of Biliteracy.

Parents and Caregivers: What is your experience?

1. What English learner program is your child in?

- a. How and what did you learn about effective **programs** available for a child who does not yet speak English?
- b. How **accessible** to your home is your child's school?
- c. How well can you **communicate** with your child's teacher and other staff members?

2. How is your child doing at school?

- a. What has been your child's experience learning English? Successes, challenges?
- b. How is your child doing with maintaining your home language? Successes, challenges?

3. If your child receives special education services, how well can you and your child communicate with the staff who teach and support your child?