

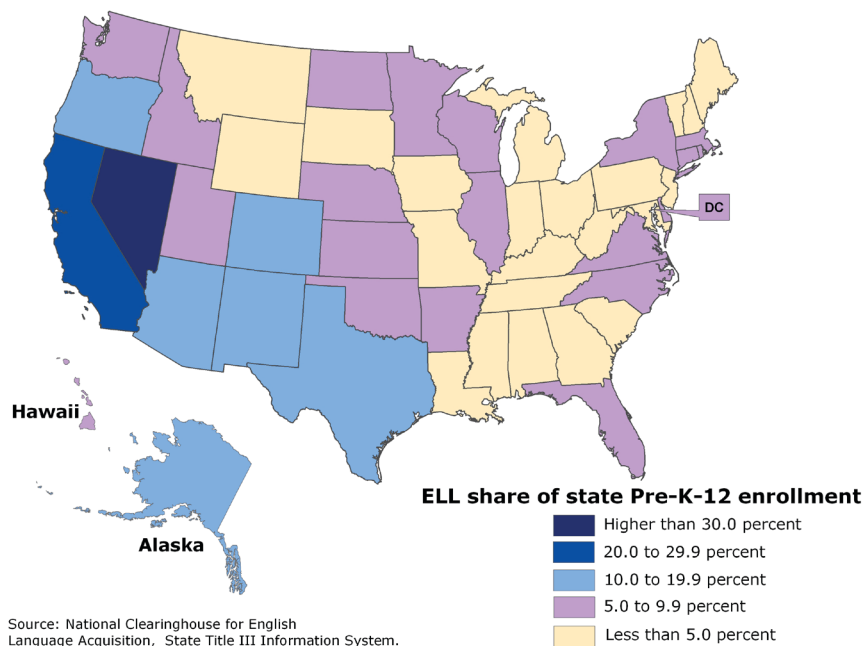


## States and Districts with the Highest Number and Share of English Language Learners

### I. High Density ELL States

Over 5.3 million English language learner (ELL) students were enrolled in public schools during the 2007-2008 academic year, representing about 10.7 percent of the total pre-K-12 population, according to US Department of Education statistics.<sup>1</sup> While ELL students are spread throughout the country, their density or the share they represent of total public school enrollment in a state varies greatly (see Map 1).

Map 1. States with the Highest ELL Student Density, 2007-2008



To download this map in high resolution, click [here](#).

As the map above and the table below demonstrate, Nevada has the highest density of ELL enrollment, at slightly over 31 percent.<sup>2</sup> In California, ELLs account for one in four students and in New Mexico nearly one in five students, or 24.3 and 18.5 percent respectively. Arizona and Texas follow with about 15 percent.

**Table 1. Top 12 States with Highest Share of ELL Student Enrollment, 2007-2008<sup>3</sup>**

State	Total Pre-K-12 Enrollment 2007-2008	ELL Enrollment 2007-2008	% ELLs among all Pre-K-12 Students	ELL Enrollment 1997-1998	% Change in ELL Enrollment from 1997-1998
<b>United States</b>	<b>49,914,453</b>	<b>5,318,164</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>3,470,268</b>	<b>53.2</b>
Nevada	429,362	134,377	31.3	30,425	341.7
California	6,275,445	1,526,036	24.3	1,406,166	8.5
New Mexico	329,459	60,624	18.4	71,429	-15.1
Arizona	1,087,447	166,572	15.3	112,522	48.0
Texas	4,674,832	701,799	15.0	507,262	38.4
Alaska	131,029	17,513	13.4	22,087	-20.7
Oregon	565,586	65,314	11.5	30,768	112.3
Colorado	801,867	82,347	10.3	NA	NA
Hawaii	179,897	17,868	9.9	12,869	38.8
Utah	576,244	52,635	9.1	38,269	37.5
Washington	1,030,247	94,011	9.1	56,921	65.2
Florida	2,666,811	234,934	8.8	243,766	-3.6

Sources: State Title III Directors and 2007-2008 State Consolidated State Performance Reports (CSPR); National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language (NCELA), State Title III Information System, [www.ncele.gwu.edu/t3sis/](http://www.ncele.gwu.edu/t3sis/).

**For more detailed data for the nation and by state, click [here](#).**

## II. Top 25 ELL School Districts

According to the most recent district-level data available, 25 school districts accounted for nearly one-fourth of total ELL enrollment in the United States in the 2004-2005 academic year. California has the largest ELL student population in the country, and not surprisingly, more than half of the country's largest ELL population districts (13 districts) can be found in California (see Table 2). Together they accounted for almost 12 percent of national ELL student enrollment in 2004-2005. With roughly 330,000 ELLs enrolled, the Los Angeles Unified School District had the largest number of ELL students; This was more than the enrollment of the 12 other California school districts combined.

The second largest ELL enrollment district is New York City, with almost 123,000 ELL students. Chicago ranked third with 82,500 ELLs, followed by Miami-Dade and Houston. Three other schools districts in Florida made the top 25 list as did three others in Texas. And Nevada's Clark County district, which includes Las Vegas, ranked sixth with roughly 53,000 ELL students.

In many of these districts ELL students represent a large share of the overall student population. In two California districts (Santa Ana and Compton) ELLs account for more than half of all students, and a total of five California districts have an ELL enrollment share greater than 40 percent. Overall, 17 of the top 25 districts have an ELL enrollment share of 25 percent or greater.

**Table 2. Top 25 School Districts by ELL Enrollment, 2004-2005**

District	ELL Enrollment	Total Enrollment	% ELLs
<b>United States</b>	<b>5,119,561</b>	<b>48,982,898</b>	<b>10.5</b>
Los Angeles, CA	328,684	747,009	44.0
New York City, NY	122,840	1,023,674	12.0
Chicago, IL	82,540	434,419	19.0
Miami-Dade, FL	62,767	369,223	17.0
Houston, TX	61,319	211,444	29.0
Clark County, NV	53,517	267,585	20.0
Dallas, TX	51,328	160,400	32.0
San Diego, CA	38,629	137,960	28.0
Santa Ana, CA	36,807	59,312	62.1
Broward County, FL	29,909	271,900	11.0
Fresno, CA	25,233	81,396	31.0
Long Beach, CA	24,601	93,589	26.3
Garden Grove, CA	23,698	49,574	47.8
Fort Worth, TX	21,690	80,335	27.0
Denver, CO	21,630	72,100	30.0
Palm Beach, FL	20,326	169,381	12.0
Hillsborough, FL	18,129	181,298	10.0
San Bernardino, CA	17,913	58,661	30.5
Compton, CA	17,496	30,233	57.9
Austin, TX	17,337	78,807	22.0
Fontana, CA	16,587	41,930	39.6
San Francisco, CA	16,326	56,297	29.0
Pomona, CA	15,826	33,294	47.5
Sacramento, CA	15,382	51,273	30.0
Oakland, CA	15,010	50,034	30.0

Source: NCELA.

The National Center for Education Statistics offers an alternative list of the number and percentage of public elementary and secondary migrant students<sup>4</sup> and students served in ELL programs in the 100 largest school districts in the United States and jurisdictions, by school district: [Characteristics of the 100 Largest Public Elementary and Secondary School Districts in the United States: 2005–06](#).

## Endnotes

- 1 All the data presented in this fact sheet are from the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language (NCELA), [www.ncela.gwu.edu/t3sis/](http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/t3sis/).
- 2 NCELA-reported ELL data are sometimes different from data reported by individual states. Visit the US Department of Education's Consolidated State Performance Reports page at [www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.html) for the state-reported numbers of ELL students.
- 3 Definitions of ELLs vary by state. The US pre-K-12 total and ELL enrollment numbers include estimates from Puerto Rico and other outlying territories such as Guam, American Samoa, and the Marshall Islands.
- 4 Migrant students are those defined as agricultural migrant workers or the children of agricultural migrant workers, and thus are more likely to move than average student populations. For a complete definition of migrant students, see the National Center on Education Statistics glossary at [http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/100\\_largest/glossary.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/100_largest/glossary.asp).

This Fact Sheet was written by Jeanne Batalova and Margie McHugh as part of the ELL Information Center Fact Sheet series. The ELL Information Center, a project of MPI's National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy, was launched in 2010 to provide a wide range of easily accessible national and state-level information regarding English Language Learners for educators, policymakers, and others. The ELL Information Center can be found at <http://migrationpolicy.org/programs/ell-information-center>

For questions or to arrange an interview, please contact Michelle Mittelstadt at 202-266-1910 or [mmittelstadt@migrationpolicy.org](mailto:mmittelstadt@migrationpolicy.org).

Suggested citation: Batalova, Jeanne and Margie McHugh. 2010. *States and Districts with the Highest Number and Share of English Language Learners*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.

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