

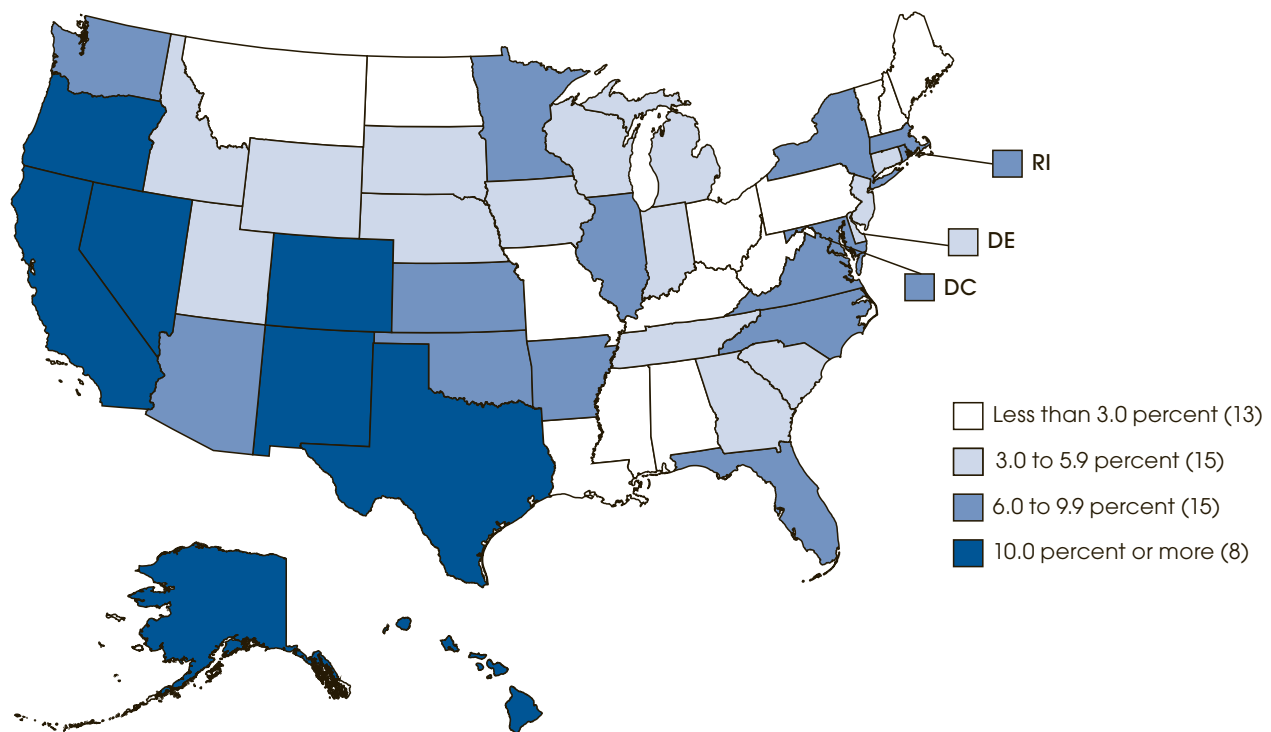
English Language Learners

The percentage of public school students in the United States who were English language learners (ELL) was higher in school year 2011–12 (9.1 percent) than in 2002–03 (8.7 percent). Seven of the eight states with the highest percentages of ELL students in their public schools were located in the West.

Students who are English language learners (ELL) participate in appropriate programs of language assistance, such as English as a Second Language, High Intensity Language Training, and bilingual education. The percentage of public school students in the United States who were English language learners was higher in school year 2011–12 (9.1 percent, or an estimated 4.4

million students) than in 2002–03 (8.7 percent, or an estimated 4.1 million students). In contrast, during the latter part of this period, between 2009–10 and 2011–12, the overall percentage of ELL students remained about the same (9.1 percent or an estimated 4.4 million students).

Figure 1. Percentage of public school students who are English language learners (ELL), by state: School year 2011–12



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Local Education Agency Universe Survey," 2011–12. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 204.20.

In 2011–12, seven of the eight states with the highest percentages of ELL students in their public schools were in the West. In eight states, Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Texas, 10.0 percent or more of public school students were English language learners, with ELL students constituting 23.2 percent of public school enrollment in California. Fourteen states and the District of Columbia had percentages of ELL public school enrollment between 6.0 and 9.9 percent.

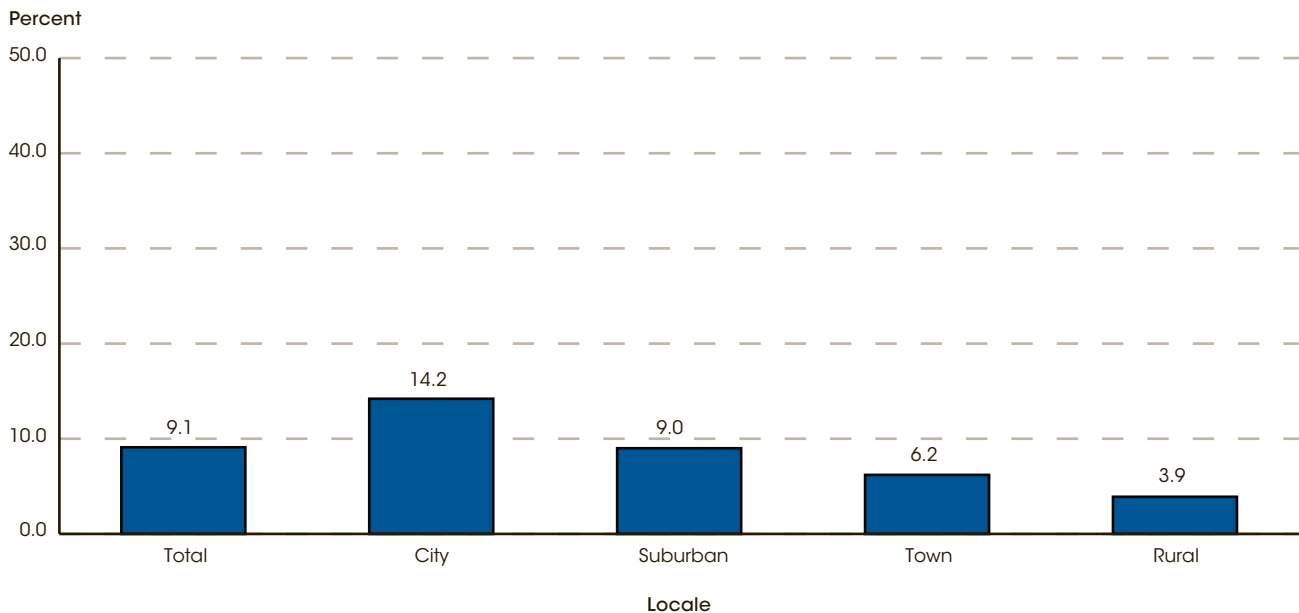
In addition to the District of Columbia, these states were Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington. The percentage of ELL students in public schools was between 3.0 and 5.9 percent in 15 states and was less than 3.0 percent in 13 states, with West Virginia having the lowest percentage (0.7 percent).

For more information, see the Reader's Guide and the Guide to Sources.

The percentage of ELL students in public schools increased between 2002–03 and 2011–12 in all but 10 states, with the largest percentage-point increase occurring in Hawaii (6.6 percentage points) and the largest percentage-point decrease occurring in Arizona (8.4 percentage points). Although there was no percentage change nationally in the two most recent years,

percentages for many states did change. The percentage of ELL students in public schools decreased in 12 states and the District of Columbia, with the largest decrease occurring in Utah (1.8 percentage points). However, six states experienced an increase of more than 0.5 percentage points, with the largest increase occurring in Hawaii (2.9 percentage points).

Figure 2. Percentage of public school students who are English language learners (ELL), by locale: School year 2011–12



NOTE: Data are based on locales of school districts, rather than locales of schools.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 2011–12; and "Local Education Agency Universe Survey," 2011–12. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, table 214.40.

In 2011–12, ELL students in cities made up an average of 14.2 percent of total public school enrollment, ranging from 10.9 percent in small cities to 16.7 percent in large cities. In suburban areas, ELL students constituted an average of 9.0 percent of public school enrollment, ranging from 6.4 percent in midsize suburban areas to 9.4 percent in large suburban areas. Towns and rural areas are subdivided into fringe, distant, and remote areas according to their proximity to urban centers, with fringe

being the closest to an urban center and remote being the farthest from one. In towns, ELL students made up an average of 6.2 percent of public school enrollment, ranging from 5.7 percent in distant areas to 8.4 percent in fringe areas. In rural areas, ELL students made up an average of 3.9 percent of public student enrollment, ranging from 2.5 percent in distant areas to 4.7 percent in fringe areas.

Reference table: *Digest of Education Statistics 2013*, tables 204.20 and 214.40

Glossary: Achievement gap, English language learner (ELL), Public school or institution