SELA RISING

FIGHTING FOR EDUCATION JUSTICE

FOR LATINO STUDENTS

IN SOUTHEAST LOS ANGELES

Innovate Public Schools

Alliance for A Better Community

USC Price
Sol Price School of Public Policy

> **Prefiero morir de pie que vivir de rodillas.**
>
> - Emiliano Zapata

AN OPEN LETTER FROM SELA PARENT LEADERS

We, parents from cities that comprise Southeast Los Angeles (SELA), have held dozens of meetings with parents, community members and elected officials over the past year to research the current state of SELA schools.

This report confirms what we have learned through that process and experienced first-hand as parents.

Right now, only 12 of 89 schools in SELA reach the state-wide average in English and math. Most Latino students in elementary schools are not on grade level and begin middle school glaringly behind academically. Some high schools are excelling and we must learn from their best practices. But we also know that there is room for improvement for students to succeed in college and beyond.

We have experienced and know that our children are not being academically prepared to excel in their education and future. We continue to see how our children struggle to get into college after high school, then stay in school and graduate.

Through a collaboration with the Univeristy of Southern California, Innovate Public Schools, Alliance for a Better Community (ABC) and parent leaders of SELA, we have taken on the task of collecting and analyzing the current data and statistics showing the deficiency of our schools. We want to understand where the system is failing.

With this report, we want to expose the educational crisis in a more digestible way. We want everyone to understand the indignation that our Latino and African American community is experiencing as we live the reality of a low-performing education system.

This document is for you--the principal, teacher, student, volunteer, mother, father, guardian, grandparent, professional, elected school board member, elected official, and community leader--who worries about the direction of our community, and who has dreams and hopes that SELA students are our future leaders and professionals.

This report is part of a larger movement led by parent leaders. What can you do? This is your opportunity to get involved and participate with us in the fight. We need you! Only together will we achieve a better and equitable education system for our SELA communities. To join us or for more information you can reach us at info@innovateschools.org or 323-364-5420.

Southeast Los Angeles Parent Leadership Team
Innovate Public Schools

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

63,000 students call Southeast Los Angeles home. Whether they will have the opportunity to realize their potential, graduate college, find good jobs, and thrive in the decades to come depends upon what school, city, and community leaders do now to make sure their schools improve quickly.

Southeast Los Angeles (SELA) is a resilient and rapidly growing region made up of several independent cities and unincorporated areas.[1] Only five miles southeast of downtown, SELA has a wealth of cultural, linguistic, and economic assets. SELA residents are relatively young, increasingly educated[2], and nearly 90% of families speak a language other than English at home.[3]

Most kids in SELA are Latino with families who make less than $40,000 a year. More than a quarter are English learners, which is significantly more than other schools statewide.

The 89 public district and charter schools in SELA belong to Board District 5 in Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), which includes two very different regions. The southeast region is largely low income and Latino, and includes the cities and neighborhoods of South Gate, Huntington Park, Maywood, Walnut Park, Florence-Firestone, northern Central Alameda, Bell, and Cudahy.[4] The northeast region includes Silver Lake, Echo Park, and Eagle Rock, and is increasingly affluent and White. More than two-thirds of children in Board District 5 live in SELA, however, most of the voters that decide who represents them on the LAUSD school board live in NELA.[5]
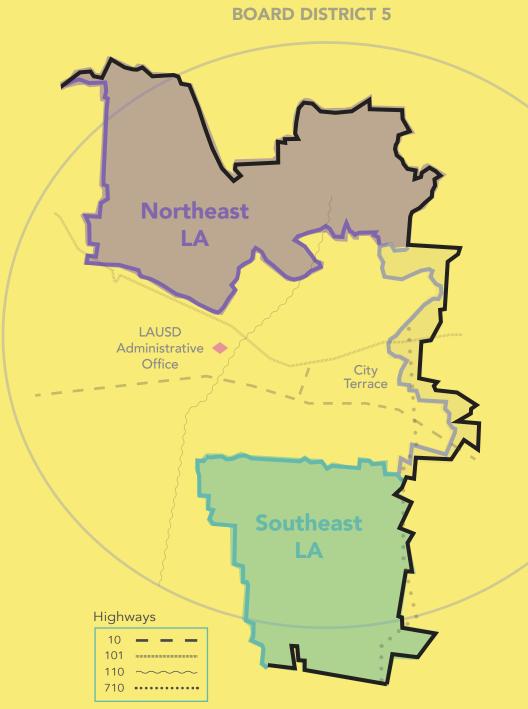
LAUSD headquarters is only five miles away, but it feels much further to most SELA residents. The state funding that goes to the district does not seem to get to the schools and classrooms where students spend their days. It is hard for parents and families working multiple jobs and that rely on public transportation to get to board meetings in downtown. When they do attend meetings, they are not sure if their two minutes at the microphone made an impact.

That mismatch in power, systemically racist policies, a lack of belief in what's possible for Black and Brown students to achieve, and decades of not investing in the schools that SELA students attend have resulted in far too many students not being prepared for success.

Parents and the SELA community are rising to the challenge. In fact, schools across Los Angeles could learn from what SELA high schools are doing successfully in launching first generation students to college.

This report is part of a parent-led movement happening in SELA. It looks at how SELA got to where we are now and how schools are doing so that we can forge an even brighter future for our kids. This report is a tool for parents and the SELA community to provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the quality of schools in the region. It will be followed by a parent-led policy agenda that outlines actionable recommendations for local leaders. We hope this report serves as a call to action to improve schools for SELA kids.

With the growing majority of California's students being Latino, the success of Latino students in communities like SELA is critical to the economic, cultural, and social prosperity of the state.

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED BOARD DISTRICT 5

Northeast LA

LAUSD Administrative Office

City Terrace

Southeast LA

Highways

10	– – –
101	∿∿∿∿∿
110	～～～
710	•••••••••

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1

SCHOOLS IN SELA SERVE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE ENGLISH LEARNERS THAN OTHER CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS. MOST START IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES WITH VARYING LEVELS OF NEED OF LANGUAGE-LEARNING SUPPORT.

Most English learners are not on grade level in English or math, but those who have been reclassified are among the highest performing students in the region. SELA schools must help English learners master English and learn core subject material at the same time. We must ensure that all English learners are reclassified within three to five years and are supported to achieve at high levels.

2

SELA STUDENTS START FALLING BEHIND IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. MOST SELA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ARE NOT GETTING THE MAJORITY OF THEIR LATINO STUDENTS TO GRADE LEVEL.

Currently, only four out of 10 Latino elementary students in SELA are on grade level in English and three out of 10 are on grade level in math. Elementary school grades are critical to the foundation of students' academic success.

3

MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN SELA STRUGGLE TO CATCH STUDENTS UP TO GRADE LEVEL. MANY STUDENTS IN SELA ENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL ALREADY BEHIND.

This means most SELA middle schools must work hard to catch students up and get them to grade level so they are prepared for high school and subsequently college. Right now, only four out of 10 middle school students in SELA are on gradel level in English, and two out of 10 in math.

4

ALTHOUGH ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS ARE STRUGGLING, MOST HIGH SCHOOLS IN SELA ARE EXCELLING IN ENGLISH AND PREPARING MOST OF THEIR LATINO STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE.

More than half of all SELA high schools are producing some of the highest academic results in English language arts for Latino students in the state, and all SELA high schools are preparing more students to apply to four-year state colleges and universities compared to other schools across California. While this is a huge success for the region, graduating from college is the ultimate goal. Latinos still have the lowest proportion of college degree attainment in the state. High schools must ensure that Latino SELA students, who are overwhelmingly living in poverty, are prepared to enter and successfully earn a postsecondary degree or credential, which thereby increases economic opportunity.
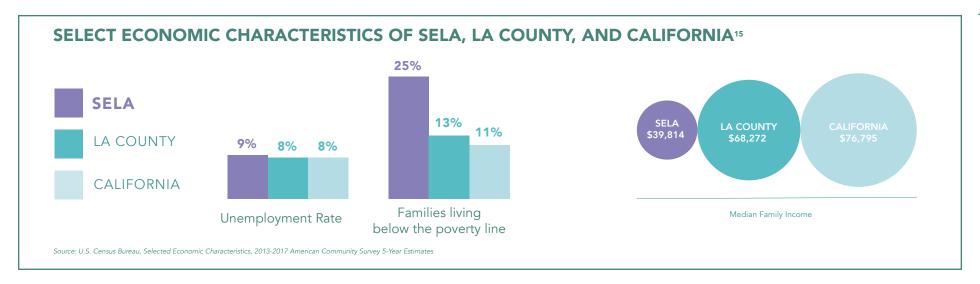
HISTORY AND COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

SELA IN THE PAST

The SELA region includes the cities of Bell, Maywood, Cudahy, South Gate, Huntington Park, Vernon, and the unincorporated area of Walnut Park.

In the early 1900s, the SELA region was home to mostly White blue collar unionized communities. This was intentional and by design. City leaders and developers zoned SELA cities to attract and house White workers and companies, such as automakers, steel plants, and tire factories.[6] They also wrote racially-restrictive covenants that prohibited people of color from buying or renting homes in the region. The former Native American and Mexican residents living in SELA were forcibly removed and displaced[7] because developers envisioned the region being made up of "Anglo-only enclaves." From banks to social clubs to schools, leaders of many institutions worked hard to keep these cities limited to White residents.[8]

SELA changed substantially in the 1970s and 1980s when Latino families moved in as factories and manufacturing plants closed and union jobs disappeared. Following the Watts Riots in 1965, most White residents left SELA, moving to the suburbs or back to their home states (e.g. Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas).[9]

SELECT ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SELA, LA COUNTY, AND CALIFORNIA[15]

SELA

LA COUNTY

CALIFORNIA

25%

13%

11%

9% 8% 8%

Unemployment Rate

Families living
below the poverty line

SELA
$39,814

LA COUNTY
$68,272

CALIFORNIA
$76,795

Median Family Income

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Selected Economic Characteristics, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

During this time, there was a sharp increase in immigration from Mexico and Central America, and Latino families began working in service industry jobs, buying homes and creating small businesses throughout the SELA region. Businesses on Eastern Avenue changed from stores called Dixie Farms and McCoy's to supermarkets and restaurants named El Ranchito and El Pescador.[10]

SELA TODAY

Today, SELA is home to mostly working-class Latino communities and large immigrant populations that bring cultural, linguistic, and economic benefits to the area.[11] Latinos make up 98% of SELA.[12] The region's younger residents are graduating from high school and college at higher rates than their parents, boding well for its future.[13] In addition, the average unemployment rate has decreased by 3.84% over the last decade.[14] Despite these markers of relative progress, significant structural barriers persist in the region that limit opportunities for its students, economy, and democracy to thrive.

The data on the following pages highlights the assets and barriers facing SELA residents, and the need to focus on SELA to improve academic achievement, college attainment, and better prepare the emerging workforce of California.

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The median family income of SELA is lower than LA County and almost half California's median (see graph above). More than a quarter of SELA families live below the poverty line, a striking comparison close to double that of California and LA County. While unemployment has decreased over the last ten years, SELA still has a higher unemployment rate than LA County.
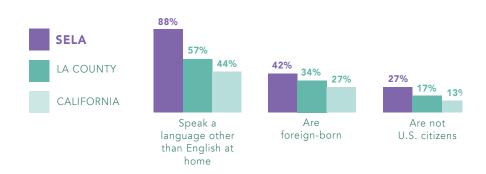
VOTER TURNOUT

SELA residents have largely felt marginalized and disconnected from decision-making in the district. This was heard loud and clear by the Southeast Los Angeles Collaborative in a recent listening tour aimed at better understanding how civic engagement could be stimulated and supported through community-driven advocacy.[16] Many SELA residents expressed their discontent with participating in the political process because of a lack of real, material change in their communities.[17] In addition, in a recent survey conducted among Board District 5 parents, 84% reported it is important that their school board member speak Spanish.

Moreover, voter turnout in school board elections is typically low and even lower for Latino voters. The last two elections for the Board District 5 seat were largely determined by voters in the more affluent and increasingly White Northeast region of Board District 5. For example, in the 2015 Board District 5 run-off election, only 8% of registered voters cast ballots.[18] The northeast region had 13% of registered voters casting ballots, compared to 6% in the southeast.[19] Turnout has historically been highest in the more affluent and increasingly White neighborhoods of NELA, despite the fact that two-thirds of students in Board District 5 attend schools in SELA.

CITIZENSHIP AND LANGUAGE

The changing demographics in SELA have transformed a historically White-only region into an increasingly diverse community of immigrants and bilingual and bicultural youth. Nearly 90% of SELA families speak a language other than English at home, compared to 57% and 44% of L.A. County and California residents, respectively. Forty-two percent of SELA residents are foreign-born and more than a quarter are not U.S. citizens, compared to 17% and 13% of L.A. County and California residents, respectively.[20]

Citizenship and Language of SELA, LA County and California[21]

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Nativity and Citizenship in the United States," 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; "Place of Birth by Nativity and Citizenship Status," 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, accessed September 2019, https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/guided_search.xhtml.

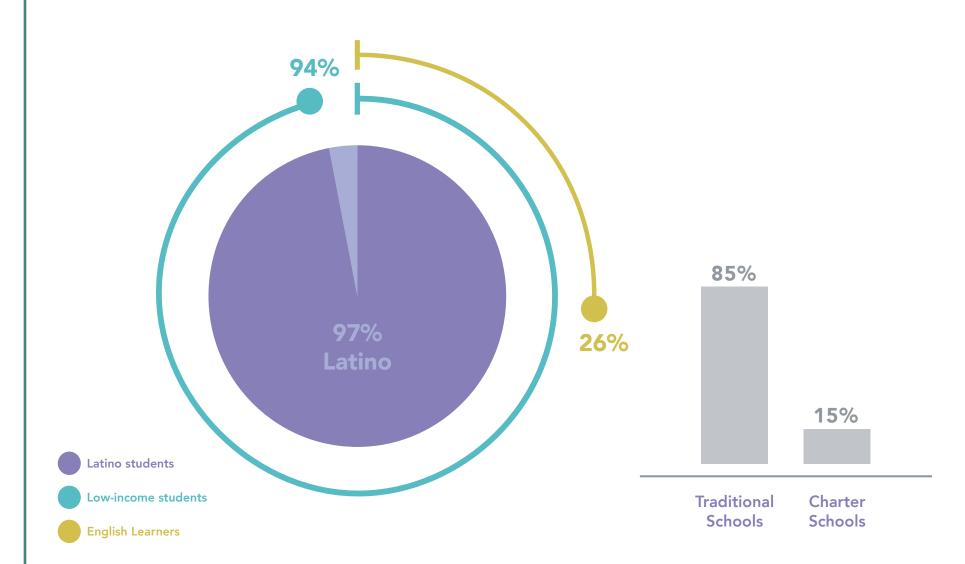*Slauson Station of the Metro Blue Line*

OVERVIEW OF SOUTHEAST LOS ANGELES SCHOOLS

Board District 5 has the second highest concentration of Latino students among Los Angeles Unified's seven board districts, with Latinos making up over 90% of students enrolled. Southeast Board District 5 includes South Gate, Huntington Park, Maywood, Walnut Park, Florence-Firestone, northern Central Alameda, Bell, and Cudahy.[22]

The 89 public schools in Southeast Board District 5 serve 62,537 students.[23] The majority of students are low-income (94%) and Latino (97%), and more than a quarter (26%) are English learners. SELA has a significantly higher proportion of low-income and Latino students than other LAUSD schools. Most students attend traditional district schools (85%). Fifteen percent attend charter schools.

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SELA SCHOOLS

Student Demographics, Southeast Board District 5, 2018-19

94%

97%
Latino

26%

85%

15%

- Latino students
- Low-income students
- English Learners

Traditional Schools

Charter Schools

Source: California Department of Education, student enrollment files, 2018-19
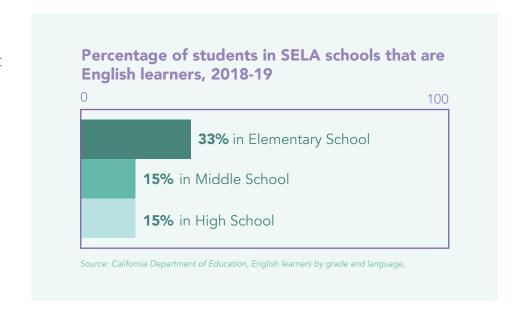
ENGLISH LEARNERS IN SELA

Schools in SELA serve a large proportion of English learners, most of whom enter school in the elementary grades. Schools in SELA have significantly more English learners enrolled compared to other schools in the district and statewide. One third of elementary students (33%) are English learners. This percentage drops by half in middle and high schools as most students are reclassified as Fluent English Proficient within 3-5 years.

These students bring a wealth of cultural, linguistic, and social assets to their schools. Given the high proportion of English learners, elementary schools face unique demands in supporting these students who have concurrent learning needs: developing English fluency and learning core subject material.

Most English learners reclassify as Fluent English Proficient within three to five years. Those that remain English learners for six years or more are considered long-term English Learners (LTELs). These students have been failed by schools that didn't provide them with the language development support necessary to meet their needs. In SELA, nearly eight out of 10 English learners (79%) in grades 6-12 are long-term English Learners (LTELs).

Reclassified English Proficient (RFEP) students excel in English and math, but large gaps persist for current English learners, including long-term English learners (LTELs).

English learners across grades K-12 in SELA have significantly lower test scores in English and math compared to English learners in other schools in LAUSD and statewide.

The consequences of these gaps are severe and long-lasting. Students that remain designated as English learners in middle and high school are less likely to have access to core content instruction and many are placed in lower level classes that do not prepare them for college.[24] They often get "stuck" at intermediate levels of English proficiency.[25] **Most English learners in SELA middle and high schools are LTELs.**

Percentage of students in SELA schools that are English learners, 2018-19

0   100

33% in Elementary School

15% in Middle School

15% in High School

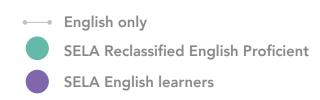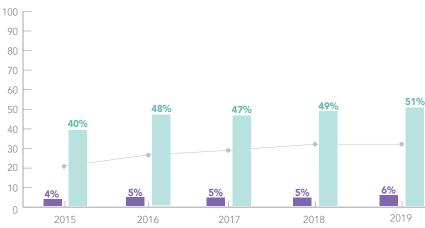*Source: California Department of Education, English learners by grade and language,*

1 OUT OF 3

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS IN SELA ARE ENGLISH LEARNERS

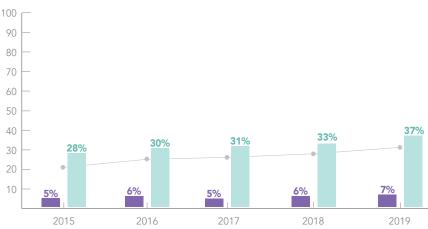**79% OF ENGLISH LEARNERS IN GRADES 6-12 ARE LONG TERM ENGLISH LEARNERS**

About two out of 10 English learners in SELA middle and high schools are newcomers. These newcomers who recently arrived in the United States must also be considered as they have unique and acute needs compared to other English learners. Newcomers tend to enter U.S. schools academically behind and with far lower English proficiency levels compared to U.S.-born English learners. They also have other severe socioemotional and economic needs because many arrive having fled war, violence, and other hardships.[26] We must ensure that all English learners have equitable access to rigorous learning opportunities and are supported to achieve at high levels.

VERY FEW ENGLISH LEARNERS IN SELA ARE ON GRADE LEVEL IN ENGLISH AND MATH, BUT RECLASSIFIED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS OUTPERFORM ENGLISH ONLY STUDENTS.

Legend:
- English only
- SELA Reclassified English Proficient
- SELA English learners

Percent of students on grade level in ENGLISH

Year	SELA English learners	SELA Reclassified English Proficient
2015	4%	40%
2016	5%	48%
2017	5%	47%
2018	5%	49%
2019	6%	51%

Percent of students on grade level in MATH

Year	SELA English learners	SELA Reclassified English Proficient
2015	5%	28%
2016	6%	30%
2017	5%	31%
2018	6%	33%
2019	7%	37%

DEFINITIONS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY GROUPS

English learner (EL)

A student who speaks a primary language other than English, has been identified as needing extra support to learn English, and has not yet been reclassified as fully English proficient.

Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)

A student who was previously an English learner but who has demonstrated English proficiency. Reclassification criteria currently vary by district.

Long-term English learner (LTEL)

A student who has been an English learner for six years or more.

Newcomer

A student who has recently arrived in the U.S., from another country within 1-3 years.

SELA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

All kids can learn at high levels, but most elementary schools in SELA aren't getting the majority of their Latino students to grade level. Since 2015, Latino students in SELA have made marginal gains but large gaps remain between Latino students in SELA and other Latino students across the state. Only half of elementary students statewide are on grade level in English, and four out of 10 are on grade level in math. Even fewer Latino students in SELA elementary schools are on grade level.

> **Out of 52 elementary schools in the region, only five reach the statewide average in English and math for Latino students.**
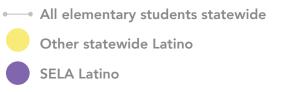
Elementary schools in SELA face several demands and challenges. One challenge is ensuring English learners are developing English fluency while they are learning core academic content. As described in the previous section, one third of elementary students in SELA are English learners. Because English learners score significantly lower on the Smarter Balanced assessment[27], the high proportion of English learners may contribute to lower overall rates of proficiency in SELA elementary schools.
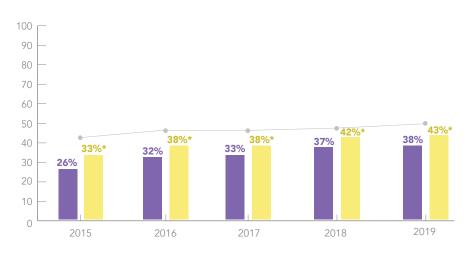
Another challenge SELA elementary schools face is limited and inequitable resources. Students in low-income communities like SELA attend schools with lower expectations, fewer resources, weaker instruction, and less rigorous coursework.[28] Furthermore, because of the ways elementary schools in LAUSD have been funded, they have the least capacity to meet their students' needs. Many lack essential resources for high-need populations (e.g. a nurse, psychologist, counselor, or instructional coach), receive little discretionary funding, and have the least amount of discretion over their broader budgets.[29] The result is elementary schools that lack the critical support needed for their students to thrive during their formative years.
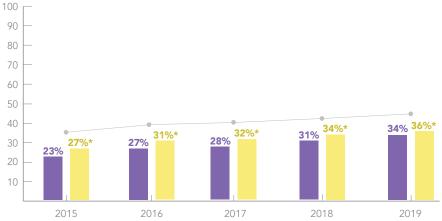
Elementary school grades build students' educational foundation and determines their long-term academic success. Students that are reading on grade level by the end of third grade are more successful in high school and less likely to drop out.[30] We must act urgently to ensure all elementary school students in SELA are on track so that they can succeed.

SELA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS UNDERPERFORM FOR THEIR LATINO STUDENTS COMPARED TO OTHER SCHOOLS STATEWIDE.

Only four out of 10 Latino elementary students in SELA are on grade level in English and only three out of 10 are on grade level in math

Legend:
- All elementary students statewide
- Other statewide Latino
- SELA Latino

Percent of students on grade level in ENGLISH

Year	SELA Latino	Other statewide Latino
2015	26%	33%*
2016	32%	38%*
2017	33%	38%*
2018	37%	42%*
2019	38%	43%*

Percent of students on grade level in MATH

Year	SELA Latino	Other statewide Latino
2015	23%	27%*
2016	27%	31%*
2017	28%	32%*
2018	31%	34%*
2019	34%	36%*

*Differences in the percentage of Latino elementary students on grade level in English and math between SELA schools and schools across the state were statistically significant.
Source: California Department of Education, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).

SELA MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Middle schools in SELA struggle to catch students up to grade level. Right now, very few succeed in getting students ready for high school. Many students in SELA enter middle school already behind. Only 38% of SELA fifth graders are on grade level in English and 27% are on grade level in math, which is significantly lower than other fifth graders in the district and statewide. Proficiency rates remain stagnant or decrease in the middle school grades. By the end of middle school, only 37% of 8th graders are on grade level in English and 22% are on grade level in math.
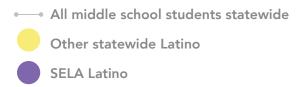
Middle schools in SELA must work hard to catch students up, but few are succeeding in getting them to grade level so that they are prepared for high school and college. Middle school is a pivotal time period for students, as their preparation in these grades largely determines how ready they will be to succeed in high school, thereby impacting their chances of attending college.[31] Students who fail math or English courses in middle school are more likely to drop out of high school.[32]

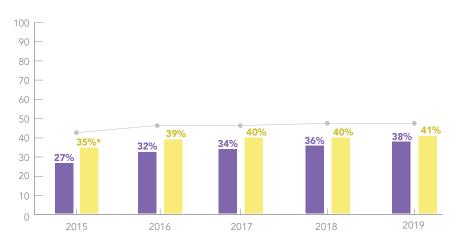Right now, only four out of 10 middle school students in SELA are on grade level in English and two out of 10 are on grade level in math. SELA middle schools perform about the same as other schools in the district but have been significantly underperforming compared to other schools statewide since 2015.
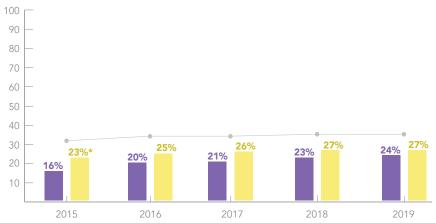
Out of 21 middle schools in SELA, only two reach the statewide average in English and math for Latino students.

MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN SELA STRUGGLE TO CATCH STUDENTS UP TO GRADE LEVEL.

Only four out of 10 Latino middle school students are on grade level in English and only two out of 10 are on grade level in math.

Legend:
- All middle school students statewide
- Other statewide Latino
- SELA Latino

Percent of students on grade level in ENGLISH

Year	SELA Latino	Other statewide Latino
2015	27%	35%*
2016	32%	39%
2017	34%	40%
2018	36%	40%
2019	38%	41%

Percent of students on grade level in MATH

Year	SELA Latino	Other statewide Latino
2015	16%	23%*
2016	20%	25%
2017	21%	26%
2018	23%	27%
2019	24%	27%

*Differences in the percentage of Latino middle school students on grade level in English and math between SELA schools and schools across the state were statistically significant.
Source: California Department of Education, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).

SELA HIGH SCHOOLS

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS FACE, HIGH SCHOOLS IN SELA ARE DOING SOMETHING SPECIAL.

SELA high schools not only catch students up, they help their students make significant gains in English. Most SELA high schools have some of the highest academic results in English for Latino students in the state. Proficiency rates in English markedly increase from 37% in 8th grade to 60% in 11th grade. Latino and low-income high school students in SELA outperform other Latino and low-income high school students in the state and district in English. Six out of 10 Latino high school students in SELA are on grade level in English compared to five out of 10 Latino high school students in LAUSD and statewide. Out of 21 SELA high schools, 11 exceed the state average in English for their Latino students. More than half of all high school students (54%) in SELA attend these 11 schools.

However, SELA high schools are underperforming in preparing students in math. Only three out of 10 high schoolers in SELA are on grade level in math. Out of 21 high schools, seven reach the state average for their Latino students.

All 21 SELA high schools are preparing more students to apply to four-year state colleges and universities compared to other high schools across the state.

Latino high school students in SELA outperform all students in other schools statewide, including their White and Latino counterparts, in A-G completion
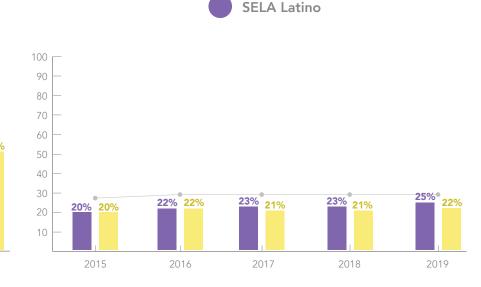
Seventy percent of Latino high school graduates in SELA have successfully completed their A-G course requirements with a C or better, making them eligible to apply to a University of California/California State University (UC/CSU) school. English learners in SELA are also significantly more likely to graduate eligible to apply to UC/CSU compared to other English learners statewide. More than half of all SELA English learners graduate having successfully completed the A-G course sequence, while only 24% of English learners in other schools in the state have done so. This may be largely due to the work LAUSD has done to create and implement A-G approved courses for long-term English learner (LTEL) students.[33]

Most students from underserved communities graduate not having successfully completed the A-G course requirements, meaning they are not eligible to apply to a four-year state college or university (UC/CSU) directly after graduation. Schools in SELA are beating the odds for these students by preparing them to enter college. Ensuring more high school students have access to California's public universities is a huge success for the region.

Despite this progress, one third of SELA's Latino student population still cannot access California's public colleges and universities. Outperforming other high schools across the state in UC/CSU eligibility rates falls short of ensuring that Latino SELA students will earn a college degree or credential. Studies show that graduating from college leads to better-paying jobs, increased economic security, and improved health outcomes.

Despite being the largest and growing racial/ethnic group, Latinos still have the lowest proportion of college degree attainment in the state. The success of Latino students is critical to the success of California's economy, which must produce 1.65 million more college degrees and credentials by 2030 to continue to prosper.[34] In order to achieve this goal, the state must close educational attainment gaps between Latino and other racial/ethnic groups.

LATINO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SELA ARE OUTPERFORMING OTHER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS STATEWIDE IN ENGLISH BUT ARE UNDERPERFORMING IN MATH.

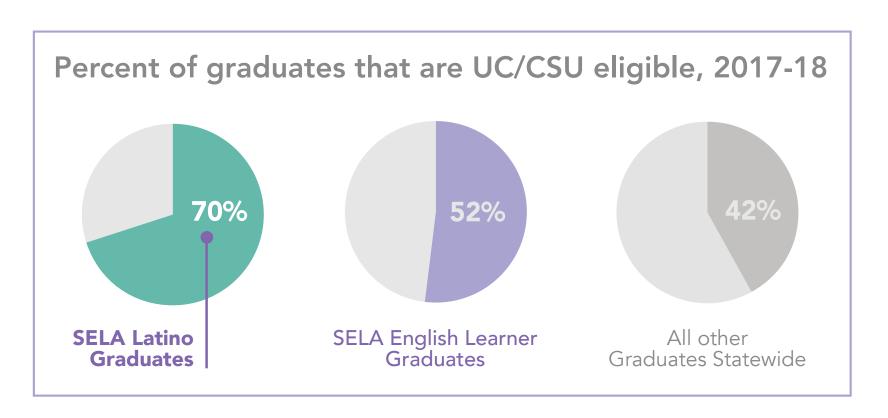Legend:
- All high school students statewide
- Other statewide Latino
- SELA Latino

English chart data (Percent of students on grade level in ENGLISH)

Year	SELA Latino	Other statewide Latino	All high school students statewide
2015	55%	49%	49%
2016	59%	52%	
2017	62%	53%	
2018	60%	49%*	
2019	57%	51%	

Percent of students on grade level in **ENGLISH**

Math chart data (Percent of students on grade level in MATH)

Year	SELA Latino	Other statewide Latino	All high school students statewide
2015	20%	20%	
2016	22%	22%	
2017	23%	21%	
2018	23%	21%	
2019	25%	22%	

Percent of students on grade level in **MATH**

*Differences in the percentage of Latino high school students on grade level in English and math between SELA schools and schools across the state were statistically significant.
Source: California Department of Education, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP).

**7 OUT OF 10 SELA LATINO GRADUATES AND
5 OUT OF 10 ENGLISH LEARNER GRADUATES ARE UC/CSU ELIGIBLE
COMPARED TO ONLY 4 OUT OF 10 OF ALL STUDENTS STATEWIDE.**

Percent of graduates that are UC/CSU eligible, 2017-18

70%

52%

42%

SELA Latino Graduates

SELA English Learner Graduates

All other Graduates Statewide

Source: California Department of Education, four-year cohort graduation rates and University of California/California State University (UC/CSU) eligibility requirements, 2017-18.

"

Celebrating successes is key at South Gate High School. One of the things I am most proud of is when teachers and students realize what they were able to achieve. That is what closing the achievement gap looks like — having high expectations for all kids and celebrating their accomplishments.

- Leo Gonzalez, Principal
  South Gate High School

CLOSING NOTES

As the largest and fastest-growing student group in California, Latino and English learner student success is necessary for the success of the SELA region and LAUSD. Despite the cultural, linguistic, and economic assets the Latino, bilingual, and immigrant community has brought to SELA, Latino and English learner students still face structural barriers in SELA schools. While high schools and reclassified students have shown notable academic improvement, opportunity gaps in elementary, middle grades, and college attainment persist. Moreover, an asset-based approach to educating English learners in which the home language is developed and embraced would catalyze academic achievement for English learners and non-English learners, and promote a more inclusive, tolerant, and diverse society.

As the SELA population grows, we must consider the following: how can LAUSD better utilize and embrace the educational, linguistic, cultural, and economic contributions of Latino and English learner students, whose treatment and education will transform schools, states, and the nation?

LIST OF SCHOOLS REACHING THE STATE AVERAGE

Reached or exceeded the state average for all students in English or math

NAME OF SCHOOL	% Latino on grade level in ELA	% Latino on grade level in math	% Latino UC/CSU eligible
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			
Bryson Avenue Elementary (magnet)	70%	75%	
KIPP Comienza Community Prep	60%	56%	
KIPP Corazon Academy (charter)	54%	48%	
Maywood Elementary	54%	44%	
Aspire Gateway Academy (charter)	53%	47%	
MIDDLE SCHOOLS			
KIPP Comienza Community Prep (charter)	63%	53%	
Maywood Center for Enriched Studies	57%	43%	
HIGH SCHOOLS			
Alliance Margaret M. Bloomfield Technology Academy High (charter)	80%	37%	100%
Alliance Collins Family College-Ready High (charter)	77%	39%	98%
Linda Esperanza Marquez High A Huntington Park Institute of Applied Medicine	74%	35%	62%
International Studies Learning Center at Legacy High School Complex	73%	52%	76%
Linda Esperanza Marquez High B LIBRA Academy	64%	39%	70%

LIST OF SCHOOLS WITH HIGH STUDENT ACADEMIC GROWTH

When trying to assess school quality, it's important to know not just where students are now, but how much the school helped them progress from where they started.

Proficiency data shows how many students are on grade level at that point in time. "Growth" data tells us how much progress the school helped them make. For instance, if a student starts sixth grade at a second grade reading level and their school supports them to get to fifth grade level in just one year, that school helped the student improve by three grade levels in just one year.

Unfortunately, California is one of only two states that do not measure and report student growth.[35] That means parents do not know how schools are helping each student progress year over year.

LAUSD has been working through CORE Districts to collect and report growth data for all schools. This has not yet been released, but CORE has released data for schools with high growth.

Below we highlight all SELA schools that received [CORE's 2019 Academic Growth Award](#)[36] along with the current percentage of Latino students that are on grade level in English and math. Out of 89 schools in SELA, 34 received an award for growth. These schools are having a significant impact on student achievement and growth year over year. Schools were awarded on whether they had one or three consecutive years of high academic growth in English and/or math.

To find out how your school is performing on the Smarter Balanced Assessments in English and math, visit https://caaspp-elpac.cde.ca.gov/caaspp/ and go to test results for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics. You can type in the name of your school to see its tests results.

Elementary schools recognized for high academic growth, 2017-18

Reached or exceeded the state average for all students in English or math

Reached or exceeded the state average for Latino students in English or math

▲ Number of years of high impact growth

NAME OF SCHOOL	% Latino on grade level in ELA	% Latino on grade level in math	Subject Awarded	Years of High Impact Growth
Bryson Avenue Elementary (magnet)	60%	56%	Math	▲
Maywood Elementary	54%	44%	English + Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Aspire Gateway Academy (charter)	53%	47%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Victoria Avenue Elementary	48%	51%	English + Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Madison Elementary	46%	40%	English + Math	▲
Willow Elementary	42%	41%	English + Math	▲
Teresa Hughes Elementary	39%	30%	English	▲ ▲ ▲
Jaime Escalante Elementary	39%	30%	English + Math	▲
San Antonio Elementary (magnet)	39%	33%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Lucille Roybal-Allard Elementary	38%	29%	English	▲
Pacific Boulevard	37%	31%	English + Math	▲
Heliotrope Avenue Elementary	36%	27%	English	▲
Middleton Street Elementary	34%	28%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Independence Elementary (magnet)	33%	30%	Math	▲
Ascot Avenue Elementary	32%	27%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Walnut Park Elementary	31%	17%	English + Math	▲
Liberty Boulevard Elementary	29%	30%	Math	▲
Elizabeth Learning Center	28%	21%	English + Math	▲
Hooper Avenue Elementary	25%	22%	Math	▲
Wadsworth Avenue Elementary	23%	22%	English + Math	▲

Middle schools recognized for high academic growth, 2017-18

■ Reached or exceeded the state average for all students in English or math

■ Reached or exceeded the state average for Latino students in English or math

▲ Number of years of high impact growth

NAME OF SCHOOL	% Latino on grade level in ELA	% Latino on grade level in math	Subject Awarded	Years of High Impact Growth
Maywood Center for Enriched Studies (magnet)	56%	40%	English + Math	▲
Aspire Centennial College Preparatory Academy (charter)	56%	36%	English	▲ ▲ ▲
Aspire Pacific Academy (charter)	51%	33%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲
International Studies Learning Center at Legacy High School Complex	45%	25%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Orchard Academies 2B	29%	27%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Elizabeth Learning Center	26%	12%	English + Math	▲

High schools recognized for high academic growth, 2017-18

■ Reached or exceeded the state average for all students in English or math

■ Reached or exceeded the state average for Latino students in English or math

▲ Number of years of high impact growth

NAME OF SCHOOL	% Latino UC/CSU eligible	% Latino on grade level in ELA	% Latino on grade level in math	Subject Awarded	Years of High Impact Growth
Alliance Margaret M. Bloomfield Technology Academy High (charter)	100%	84%	24%	English + Math	▲
Aspire Ollin University Preparatory Academy (charter)	100%	73%	48%	English + Math	▲
Alliance Collins Family College-Ready High (charter)	98%	69%	34%	English + Math	▲
Linda Esperanza Marquez High A Huntington Park Institute of Applied Medicine	62%	68%	30%	English	▲
Linda Esperanza Marquez High C School of Social Justice	59%	68%	22%	English	▲
South East High (magnet)	62%	67%	26%	English	▲ ▲ ▲
Linda Esperanza Marquez High B LIBRA Academy	70%	66%	30%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲
Aspire Pacific Academy (charter)	No Data*	61%	21%	Math	▲ ▲ ▲

* Data for this school is not made available by the California Department of Education because selected student population is 10 or fewer.

Appendix

1. Description of Methodology

2. Demographic Data Tables

Methodology

Using public available data (sources are listed on the next page), we compared the performance of schools by grades served (elementary, middle, and high) in SELA, LAUSD, and California during the school years 2014-15 through 2018-19. Some schools included in the sample serve a band of grades that do not align to the CDE's typical grade-band breakdown (see grade band table below for more information on grade bands by school type). For schools in that category, data is separated into multiple grade bands. For example, a K-8 school's data would be included in the elementary school sample for their lower grades (K-5) and separately, in the middle school sample for their upper grades (6-8). Below are the grade span cut points applied to determine school type.

SCHOOL TYPE BY GRADE LEVELS

School Type	Included Grades
Elementary	K-5, K-6 (and no higher grade)
Middle	6-8, 5-8 (and no lower grade) 5-9 (no lower or higher grade) 6-9 (no higher grade)
High	9-12, 8-12 (no lower grade) 9-12, 8-12 (no lower grade)

To compare schools in SELA to other schools in LAUSD and other schools in California, we ran means and t-tests to determine statistically significant differences in outcomes between students in SELA, students outside of SELA in LAUSD, and students outside of LAUSD in California. Results were considered to be statistically significant at any p-value less than 0.05. We generated these comparisons for all students together, Hispanic/Latino students, and English learners. The following analyses were calculated and included in the report:

* Percentage of low-income, Latino, and English learners enrolled in SELA, non-SELA LAUSD, and non-LAUSD California schools (2014-15 through 2018-19)

* Performance on the CAASPP in English and math for SELA Latino students, non-LAUSD California Latino students, and all students statewide (2014-15 through 2018-19)

* Performance on the CAASPP in English and math for SELA English learners, SELA Reclassified English Proficient (RFEP), and English only students (2014-15 through 2018-19)

* Percentage of graduates that are UC/CSU eligible for SELA Latino graduates, SELA English learner graduates, and all other graduates statewide (2018-19)

DATA SOURCES

■ California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) English language arts/literacy (English) and mathematics results 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19

■ California Department of Education (CDE) Public School Directory database

■ California Department of Education (CDE) Student Enrollment in school years: 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19

■ California Department of Education (CDE) 2017-18 Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) and Outcome Data

SCHOOL SAMPLE

The school sample includes traditional public district, charter schools, and alternative schools of choice at the elementary, middle, and high school levels in Southeast Los Angeles Board District 5, Los Angeles Unified, and California. The sample does not include juvenile court schools or schools considered by the CDE to offer non-traditional education (e.g., county community schools, continuation schools, youth authority schools, special education schools, etc.).

Southeast Board District 5

The school sample in Southeast Board District 5 includes all public traditional and charter schools in the southeast region of Board District 5. We used the following zip codes to define the southeast region: 90001, 90011, 90255, 90280, 90201, 90270, and 90058.

Demographic Data Tables

Percentage of Latino students enrolled in K-12 schools, SELA compared to LAUSD and California

YEAR	SELA	NELA	NON-SELA LAUSD	NON-LAUSD CA
2015	97%	77%*	71%**	50%***
2016	96%	77%*	71%**	50%***
2017	96%	76%*	72%**	51%***
2018	97%	77%*	72%**	51%***
2019	97%	76%*	72%**	51%***

Percentage of low-income students enrolled in K-12 schools, SELA compared to LAUSD and California

YEAR	SELA	NELA	NON-SELA LAUSD	NON-LAUSD CA
2015	93%	77%*	78%**	59%***
2016	93%	79%*	81%**	60%***
2017	91%	78%*	80%**	60%***
2018	94%	79%*	82%**	61%***

Percentage of English learners enrolled in K-12 schools, SELA compared to LAUSD and California

YEAR	SELA	NELA	NON-SELA LAUSD	NON-LAUSD CA
2015	33%	26%*	25%**	22%***
2016	34%	26%*	28%**	24%***
2017	32%	24%*	27%**	23%***
2018	29%	22%*	25%**	22%***
2019	26%	19%*	23%**	21%***

*Differences in the percentage of students enrolled between SELA schools and NELA schools were statistically significant (p>0.05).
**Differences in the percentage of students enrolled between SELA schools and schools in the district were statistically significant (p>0.05).
***Differences in the percentage of students enrolled between SELA schools and non-LAUSD schools in the state were statistically significant (p>0.05).
Note: Low-income enrollment data by school is only available by special request from the CDE. We did not receive 2019 low-income enrollment from the CDE in time for the release of this report.

Endnotes

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22. These cities and neighborhoods are within the boundaries of Southeast Board District 5, all of which are in Southeast Los Angeles and a few in South Los Angeles (Florence-Firestone and northern Central Alameda).

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36. CORE's growth measure looks at the extent to which schools have helped students move from point A to point B relative to students who started the school year in a similar place (e.g. in terms of prior achievement and observable demographics like English learner status or socioeconomic status). This measure tells us the impact of a school on student achievement.

*The photos on pages III, 5, and 8 were taken by the Southeast Los Angeles Collaborative.

ABOUT ALLIANCE FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY

The Alliance for a Better Community (ABC) promotes the economic prosperity of the Latino community and the Los Angeles region, inclusive of an improved quality of life for Latinos in education, health and civic participation. ABC believes in the transformative power of education that remains the greatest hope for sowing the seeds of prosperity for all Angelenos. We aim to ensure that all students, regardless of their zip code, have access to high quality educational opportunities from cradle to career so that they fully participate in the civic, economic and cultural life of their communities.

ABOUT INNOVATE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Innovate Public Schools is a nonprofit organization working to make sure that all students — especially low-income students and students of color — receive a world-class public education that prepares them for success in college, careers and beyond. We're building a movement of families, educators, and business and elected leaders who together will make this vision a reality. We build the capacity of parents and educators to innovate and act together to create world-class public schools, and we publish easy-to-understand school quality data and research that highlights both problems and solutions.

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