



English Language Education Department– Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Overview

Christina Manos

Director of the English Language Education Department

Sarah Wilander

English Language Education Coordinator

Key Areas of Budget Responsibility

- I. Ensuring the provision of legally mandated English Language Education (ELE) services to students who qualify per state standards.
- II. Facilitating registration of new students and families; organizing related supports including translation and interpretation services; maintaining student records; ensuring compliance with state and federal educational and civil rights guidelines.
- III. Ensuring instructional leadership and support of strong teaching practices, with primary supervision of 19 professional educators and two tutors.
- IV. Coordinating English Language Education state-mandated ACCESS testing and related progress monitoring responsibilities.
- V. Facilitating district professional development (PD) offerings in English language education, including professional development days and early release days; necessary training for implementation of new curriculum and software (such as ELlevation, a data management platform which streamlines record keeping and data analysis for multilingual learners and meets Department of Elementary and Secondary Education mandates).

Key Budget Investments for Fiscal Year 2027

The English Language Education Department is not requesting any new investments for FY27, except those included in the budget request presented on March 11th by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. These include:

- \$7,000 to renew ELlevation, our information management system specifically for English learner data
- \$15,000 to purchase an online English language assessment tool for biannual progress monitoring
- \$14,000 for curricular resources to support our intermediate English learners

Efficiencies Through Use of Grants or Alternative Funding in Fiscal Year 2026

Grant or alternative funds used for the English language education include:

- Federal entitlement Title III grants for English language education, designed to supplement district funding; \$51,695 was allocated in FY26. We typically use these grant funds to support summer programming for English learners, professional development for the ELE department, and family engagement. Last year, increased funding was utilized to provide 0.5 ESL tutor support at the middle school level, which we were able to continue for FY26. This funding is dependent upon our English learner enrollment and fluctuates from year to year.
- Emergency shelter grant- currently funding 1.0 FTE ELE professional teacher position. \$97,016.
- MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)-sponsored High School Redesign Cohort to examine our high school ELE program of studies and collaborate with consulting experts, enabling us to access professional learning for district leaders and educators at no cost, worth approximately \$15,000.
- **Estimated total use of grants/alternative funds in FY26: \$163,711**

SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Christina M. Manos, Director of English Language Education, Pre K - 12

Sarah Wilander, English Language Education Coordinator, Pre K - 12

To: School Committee

Re: English Language Education Program Needs

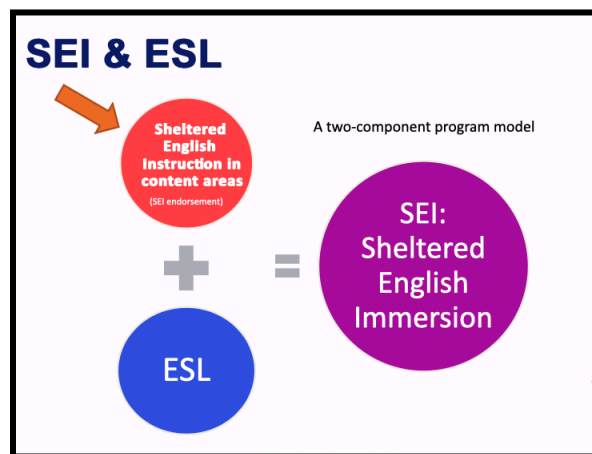
Context

Most Massachusetts public schools saw a dramatic increase in English learner (EL) enrollment in the five years after the pandemic shut-down, and Shrewsbury was no exception. Between October 2020 and October 2024, the population of English learners in grades K - 12 in Shrewsbury schools more than doubled, requiring our district to increase staffing and resources to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population of English learners. This past fall, we experienced our first decrease since prior to the pandemic; our reported EL enrollment in October 2025 reflected a 13.5% decrease from October 2024. In response to this decrease, we have recommended that our English Learner Education (ELE) teaching staff be reduced by 1.0 FTE for the 26-27 school year, a reduction which will be accomplished through attrition due to a retirement. While fewer students may impact our staffing needs, there are other demands that require ongoing investments regardless of our enrollment. Whether we have 50 or 500 English learners, our primary mandate is to improve outcomes for our English learners by aligning our priorities with our district's Strategic Plan, and aligning our program and practices with legal mandates and expectations set forth by the Office of Language Acquisition, the department of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) responsible for oversight of English language education. The budget recommendations detailed in this report (and previously outlined in the budget presentation by the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment) will provide the resources necessary to move that goal forward. The requests for the coming year include funding to renew our annual subscription to ELLevation, the EL-specific data management system we adopted two years ago, and funds to purchase both curricular resources and a standardized interim assessment tool to inform instruction and measure progress toward benchmark targets. These investments will support our efforts to make a difference for our English learners in the coming year.

English Language Education Program Overview

The English Language Education (ELE) program currently serves 295 students in grades K - 12. This represents just over 5% of our total student population in those grades, a relatively low percentage given that almost 40% of our student body has a first language that is not English. Students are identified as English learners (ELs) through the use of the Home Language Survey¹ and a screener assessment tool called the WIDA² Screener. The WIDA Screener assessment is used to determine which multilingual students are identified as English learners and will be enrolled in the English Language Education program.

The ELE program in Shrewsbury is a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) model, which is the one program that the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires all districts offer. An SEI program consists of two components – English language development classes, sometimes called English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Development (ELD), and Sheltered Content Instruction, sometimes abbreviated SCI. Whatever term is used, ESL instruction is delivered by an English language education teacher, often in a pull-out or small group setting. In contrast, SCI is delivered by an SEI-endorsed, content-licensed teacher, typically in a general education classroom. ESL instruction and sheltered content instruction are both integral



elements to develop academic language and English proficiency skills in our English learners.

¹ Last fall DESE introduced a new Language Survey to replace the existing Home Language Survey, which families complete as part of registering at all Massachusetts public schools. The new Language Survey, which is in place for new enrollments for the 26-27 school year, will provide a more comprehensive view of a family's home language.

² WIDA is a group of 42 member states with origins in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which brought English learners into the national spotlight. The name WIDA originally stood for the three original member states: Wisconsin, Delaware and Arkansas. Today the name WIDA has come to represent 42 states, territories, federal agencies and international schools. The WIDA consortium provides language development resources to those who support the academic success of multilingual learners, including language standards, assessments, professional learning and educator support.

The ELE department in Shrewsbury currently employs nineteen ELE teachers, including one long-term substitute (initially hired to cover a family leave; the teacher on leave resigned in the fall). We also have two half-time SEI tutors, one at Floral Street School and one at Sherwood Middle School; the SEI tutor at Sherwood was new last year and funded via Title III grant money. Also new last year was the addition of a second district level administrator for our department. Starting with FY25, Christina Manos, the Director of English Language Education, and Sarah Wilander, the English Language Education Coordinator, share oversight of all aspects of the ELE program, including ensuring district compliance with state and federal mandates. The table below summarizes our current staffing.

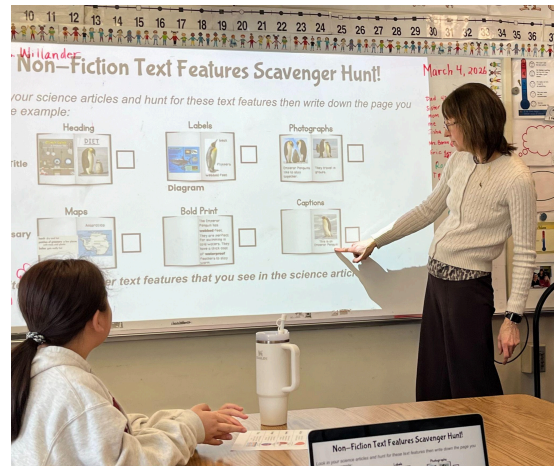
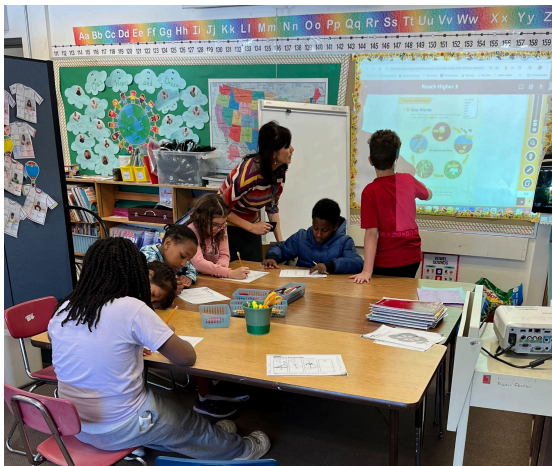
District ELE Staff 2025-26

	ELE Teachers FY26 Budget	ELE Teachers FY27 Proposed Budget	Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Tutors FY26 & Proposed FY27	Leadership (Director & Coordinator) FY26 & Proposed FY27
Shrewsbury High School	4.0	4.0		
Oak Middle School	2.0	2.0		
Sherwood Middle School	2.0	2.0	0.5	
Beal School	3.0	3.0		
Coolidge School	3.0	2.0*		
Floral Street School	4.0	4.0	0.5	
Paton School	0.9	0.9		
Spring Street School	0.1	0.1		
Parker Road Preschool				
District				2.0
Totals	19.0	18.0	1.0	2.0

* Based on the drop in our EL enrollment, we will reduce our FTEs by 1.0 at the elementary level for FY27, for a total of 18.0 FTE teachers. We have two teachers retiring (one from Coolidge and one from Oak) at the end of this school year, so the reduction at the elementary level will be accomplished through attrition. We anticipate that we will still need 3.0 FTE at Coolidge; as we develop a better understanding of what caseloads may look like next year, we will adjust teaching assignments across the elementary schools to account for one fewer elementary ELE teacher.

An Overview of the ELE Department work this year by the numbers:

- Provide systemic, explicit, sustained English language instruction to ~290 identified EL students in grades K - 12
- Consult with the Pre-K Director and teachers to monitor the language development of 45 identified EL students enrolled in the district Pre-K program
- Review the Home Language Survey for approximately 250 newly enrolled students
- Request ELE records from past districts for approximately 60 newly enrolled students
- Administer the WIDA Screener Assessment to 173 new students, including 109 who did not qualify for English Language Education (ELE)
- Prepare and send DESE-mandated ELE paperwork for all new and continuing EL students, and for all students who were screened and did not qualify.
- Create EL Success Plans for 41 students who did not meet their progress targets on the 2025 ACCESS test, the state-mandated annual language assessment for EL students.
- Administer the 2026 ACCESS test to over 300 students
- Twice a year, monitor the academic progress of 260 Former English Learners (FELs) and 10 Opt-Out students

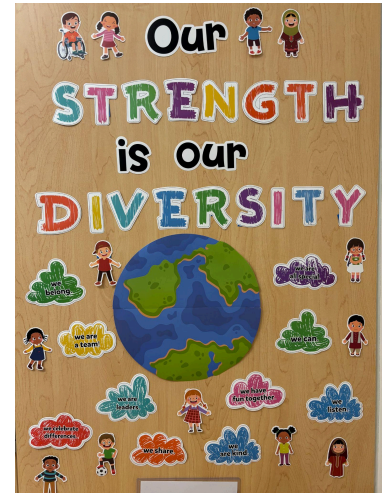


English Learner Students in Shrewsbury

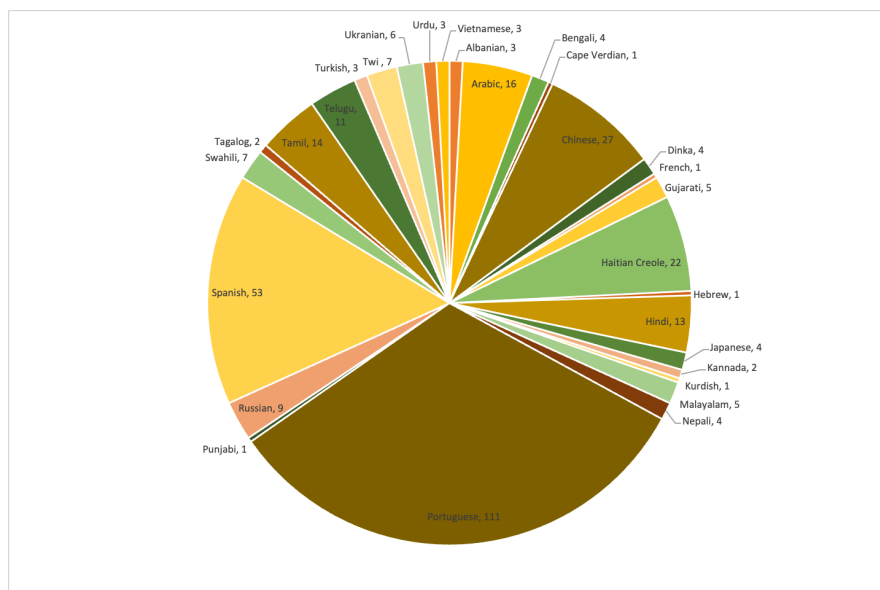


Our English learner student population, like our student body as a whole, is incredibly diverse. As of March 1, 2026:

- There are 343 identified English learners in our district.
- 108 English learners - more than 30% - are new to SPS this year.
- 24% of our Pre-K students - 46 in all - are identified as English learners.
- 18.5% of our English learners district-wide are **dual identified**, meaning they also have an Individualized Educational Program (IEP).
 - In our Pre-K program, about 35% of EL students are dual-identified.
 - In Grades K-12, about 15% of EL students are dual-identified.
- Our EL students come from 35 different countries.
 - Top five countries of origin for our ELs not born in the USA:
 - Brazil (22%)
 - India (8%)
 - China (3.5%)
 - Guatemala (3.5%)
 - Haiti (3%)
- Collectively, our ELs speak 30 different languages in addition to English.
 - Top five languages spoken by our EL students and families:
 - Portuguese (32%)
 - Spanish (15%)
 - Chinese (8%)
 - Haitian Creole (6%)
 - Arabic (4.5%)
 - The chart on the following page shows the breakdown of all 30 languages reported as the home language of our EL students districtwide.



Languages Spoken by SPS Students Identified as English Learners



Former English Learners (FEL)

In addition to almost 300 identified EL students in grades K - 12, we currently have 260 students who are identified as former English learners, or FEL students. The FEL designation indicates that a student was previously identified as an English learner, and is now in the required monitoring period after re-classification. Students are reclassified from English learner to former English learner once they achieve a certain minimum score on the WIDA ACCESS assessment, given annually to all English learners. ELE educators monitor FEL students twice each school year to ensure they retain their English proficiency skills and continue to successfully engage with academic content. After the four-year monitoring period concludes, FELs are no longer classified as such.



WIDA ACCESS Annual Assessment

The WIDA ACCESS test is an annual, secure English language proficiency assessment for K-12 English learners in WIDA Consortium member states. It measures academic English proficiency across four domains—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—to monitor student progress and determine English language support needs. In Massachusetts, the testing window is typically early January through late February. School districts are responsible for testing all identified EL students; there is no option to opt-out of the test.

For Massachusetts public school students, the ACCESS test provides the only path to reclassification as a former English learner (FEL). Once a student achieves a minimum composite score of 4.2 and a literacy score of 3.9 on ACCESS, they are exited from ELE and reclassified as a former English learner (FEL). ACCESS scores are also used to establish benchmark targets for English learners and measure progress against them from year to year. ACCESS test scores range from 1.0 to 6.0; a score of 6.0 represents a level of proficiency equivalent to native-speaking peers.

In addition to providing the necessary data to support reclassifying English learners, the scores from the ACCESS test also help us understand a student's language development. Guidance from the Office of Language Acquisition (the DESE department which oversees both ELE and World Languages) recommends that students at the Entering level (composite score between 1.0 - 1.9) and the Emerging level (composite score between 2.0 - 2.9) have two-to-three periods of English language development class each day. One period of ELD is recommended for students at the Developing and Expanding levels (composite score above 3.0). This in turn informs teacher schedules and may impact our staffing needs.

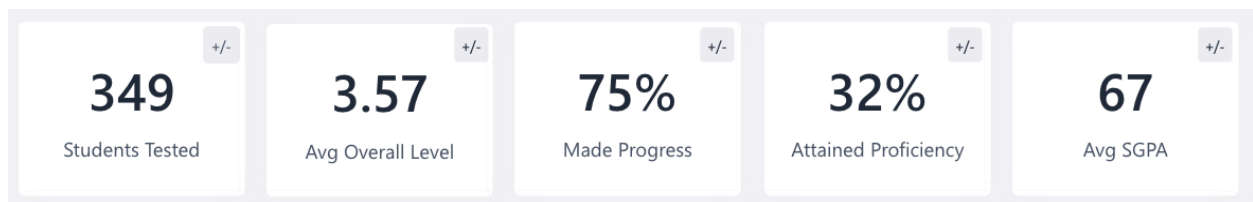
ACCESS test results also provide benchmark and student growth data for those students who have taken ACCESS at least twice. DESE sets ACCESS test benchmarks by calculating personalized, yearly growth-to-proficiency targets for English learners, aiming for proficiency within six years of enrollment

in a US school. After the first year of ACCESS testing, score data demonstrates if a student has met their test benchmark as well as providing a Student Growth Percentile (SGPA). This information guides ELE instruction for the following school year and also informs our department’s creation of English Learner Success Plans (ELSP) for students who failed to meet their benchmark.

While ACCESS testing typically takes place in the winter, we receive initial district score data in April, followed by individual score reports in May. We send ACCESS score reports home to families near the end of the school year, along with a formal notification of reclassification for students who qualify. DESE typically releases finalized scores and benchmark data in August, which means that ELSPs are created at the start of the school year, more than six months after students were assessed.

2025 ACCESS results for Shrewsbury EL Students

The graphic below gives a quick overview of our 2025 ACCESS results, as reported in *Open Architects*, a portal the district uses to analyze student data.



Source: <https://app.openarchitectsk12.com/portal/dashboards/reports/student/shrewsbury-public-schools-access/overview>

- In 2025, 349 SPS students participated in ACCESS testing.
- The average composite score for all SPS who participated in the test was 3.57, which is in the middle range of WIDA’s Developing level.
- 182 students - 75% of those with defined progress targets - met or exceeded their benchmark target (students taking ACCESS for the first time do not have a benchmark target).
- 111 students - 32% of those tested - achieved scores that qualified them for reclassification.
- The average student growth percentile was 67%.

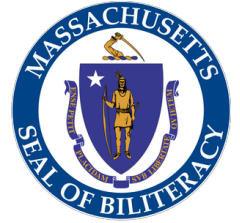
The following table illustrates how our 2025 ACCESS results compare to Massachusetts state averages:

	% Made Progress	% Attained Exiting Scores	Avg Overall Level
Shrewsbury	75%	32%	3.57
State Averages	44%	5%	3.0

Source: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/accessreportingelements.aspx>

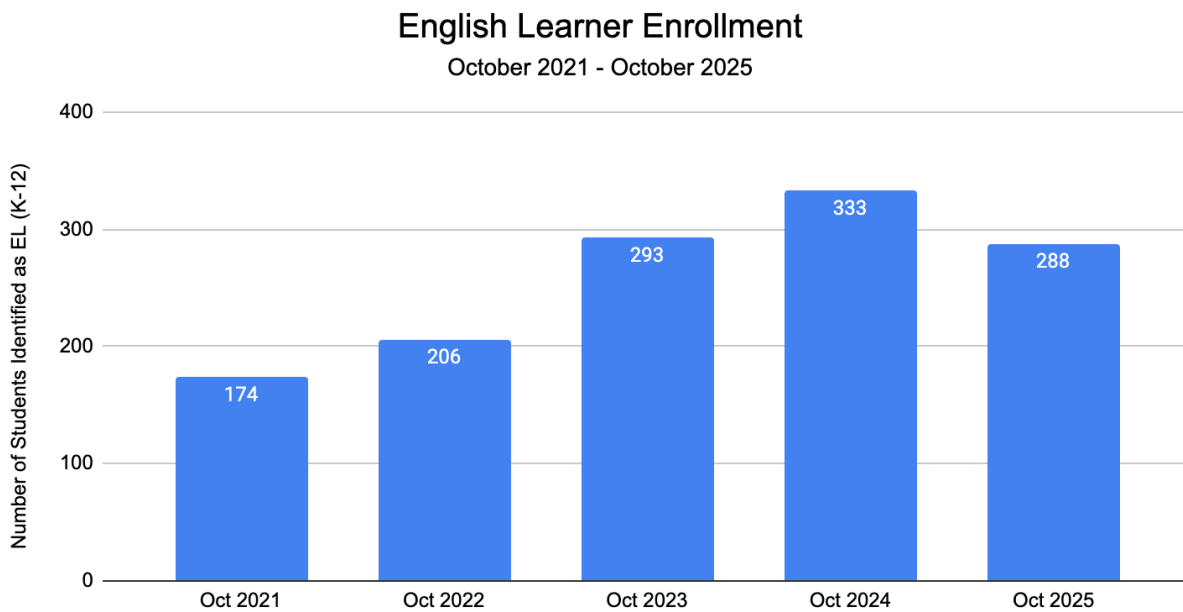
State Seal of Biliteracy

Eight-seven members of the Class of 2025 earned the *Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy* (SSOB)³. Seventeen of these students – 20% of those who earned the SSOB - were Former English Learners (FELs), many of whom came through our district’s ELE program. Most achieved exiting scores while still in elementary school. Five of these students, however, were enrolled in the ELE program during the majority of their high school years; two exited ELE at the end of 11th grade and the other three at the end of 12th grade. We share the World Language Department’s pride in how many SHS students earn the SSOB, and we are especially proud of those students who earn it while still actively developing their academic English as identified English learners.



English Learner Enrollment Grades K-12, October 2021 - October 2025

As previously mentioned, this past fall saw Shrewsbury’s first decrease in English learner enrollment numbers since before the pandemic. Our enrollment information comes directly from the data the district is required to submit twice a year via the state's student information management system (SIMS). The chart below illustrates the English learner enrollment as of October 1st for the last five years, based on the reported SIMS data.

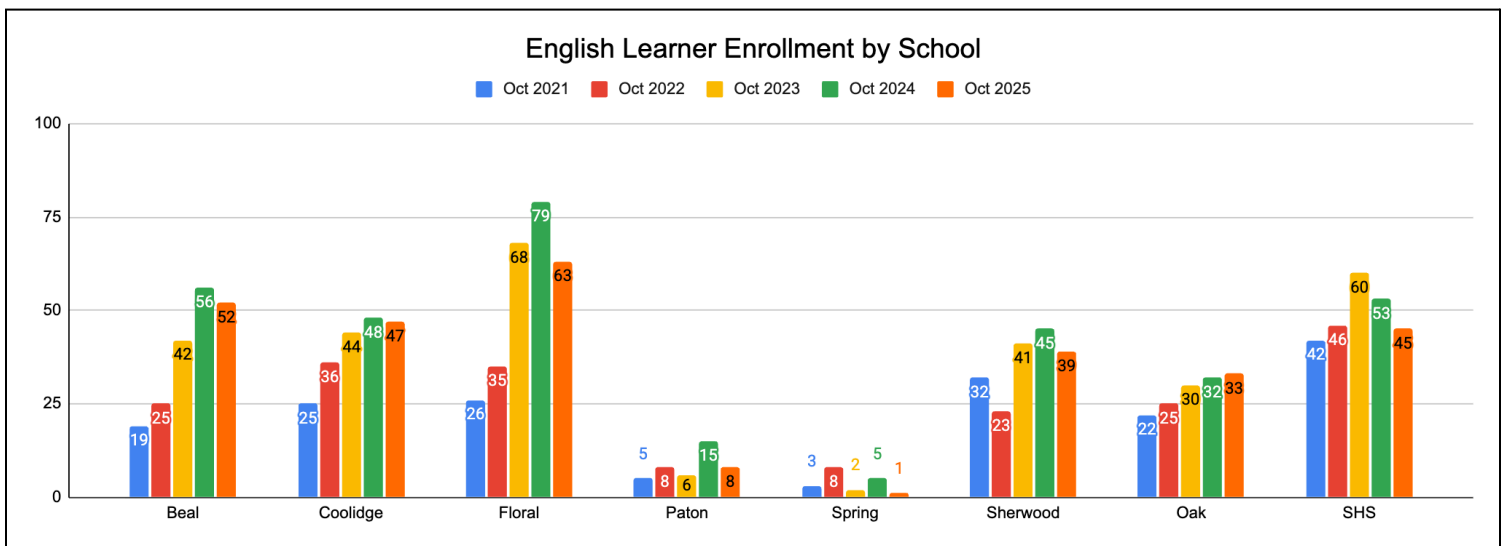


³ The State Seal of Biliteracy is an award provided by state approved districts that recognizes high school graduates who attain high functional and academic levels of proficiency in English and a world language in recognition of having studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. (Source: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/scholarships/biliteracy>)

At the time of the October 1, 2025 SIMS reporting date, there were 288 English learner students enrolled in our K-12 schools, a 13.5% decrease from the previous year. This is the first decrease in EL student enrollment since October, 2020, when schools reopened after the pandemic closure. This decrease is not unique to Shrewsbury Public Schools; the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) reports that statewide, there are about 7,000 fewer English learners enrolled in public schools in the state. Most sources attribute this decrease to the current political climate of increased federal immigration enforcement.

While a one-year decrease of almost 14% is not insignificant, the decrease has had a varying impact on individual schools. As you can see in the chart below, which shows a side-by-side comparison of English learner enrollment by school for the same five-year period as above, some schools had little-to-no change in their EL population since last year while others saw a more significant decrease in their numbers. The nature of these shifts along with the transient nature of immigrant families make it challenging to anticipate where the numbers may be when school opens next August; we will continue to monitor enrollment trends for the remainder of this year and through the summer.

K-12 English Learner Student Population by School, October 2021 - October 2025



New Investments in the ELE Department

The budget for the English Language Education Department overlaps with other SPS budgets, such as the budget for the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. For FY27, our requests for new and ongoing investments have been included in the budget presented earlier this month by Ms. Amy Clouter, the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. These requests are:

- \$7,000 to renew our annual subscription for ELLevation, the student information management system we have been using for two years to track data for English learners (ELs) and former English learners (FELs). We are now in our second year of full implementation of ELLevation, and it's proven an effective tool not only for ELE educators but also for Student Wellness Teams and building administrators.
- \$15,000 to subscribe to an online English language assessment tool to provide biannual progress monitoring of English learners. Just as general education educators utilize data from the STAR Assessments to monitor the progress of individual learners and inform instruction, our department needs a standardized tool to measure student growth at intervals during the school year and to provide additional data to the once-a-year data point provided by the ACCESS test.
- \$14,000 to purchase English language education curriculum to ensure that our intermediate students have access to high-quality instructional materials. Our department is mid-way through our first year of professional development work to ensure alignment with the 2020 WIDA Standards, as required by DESE/OLA. In order to implement our new curriculum, we need to ensure our ELE teachers have access to the necessary curricular resources for the grade levels they teach.

The first two items represent recurring annual expenses. If, at any point, the CIA budget is unable to provide necessary funding, our department's discretionary budget would not be able to absorb these expenses, and we would likely need to request additional funding. The final item is a one-time expenditure.

We respectfully request your consideration of these budget items to further our program goals and benefit our students. Thank you for your consideration.



Glossary of Related Terms

Dual identified Student - a student with an Individualized Education Program who is also identified as an English learner

English learner (EL) - a student who does not speak English or whose native language is not English, and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English

Former English Learner (FEL) - a student who was an identified English learner and who has achieved an English proficiency score high enough to exit the ELE program and who is in their four-year monitoring program

Multilingual learner (ML) - a student who is or has been consistently exposed to more than one language (includes ELs, FELs, world language learners, heritage language learners, etc)

Newcomer - recently arrived immigrant English learner (EL) at the earliest levels of English proficiency. Typically used to describe students within their first 12 months of US education, although the time period may vary based on source

SLIFE - Students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) are English learners (ELs) with little or, in some cases, no formal education, or whose education has been significantly interrupted

Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) - An English language acquisition program model in which students receive English language development in both an ESL class and in their content classes. In ESL (also called ELE) classes, students receive systematic, explicit and sustained English language instruction. In content classes, SEI-endorsed content-licensed educators shelter academic instruction and help ELs develop academic language and learn grade-level content along with their proficient English-speaking peers.



ELlevation provides software customized to the needs of English language education programs and is aligned with the majority Massachusetts' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requirements for reporting, monitoring and communicating with families. ELlevation streamlines many of the administrative tasks required, provides improved access to EL student data for all SPS educators, informs instructional planning, and allows for more robust progress monitoring. Additional information is available [here](#).