

Partnering on a Five-Year Strategic Action Plan to Strengthen Services and Supports for APS English Learners

What is the goal of the project?

This project is designed to support the work of the Arlington Public Schools (APS) Office of English Learners (OEL) **to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of English Learners (ELs)**. [American Institutes for Research \(AIR\)](#) has partnered with APS to develop, implement, and then monitor a 5-year EL strategic action plan.

While the project builds on prior district activities like the [2019 QTEL evaluation](#) and APS’s response to the 2019 Department of Justice Settlement agreement, *there is no evaluative component to the work AIR is conducting*. Rather, the intent of the project is to listen, understand, and collaborate in the development of a 5-year strategic action plan.

What does the project involve?

AIR worked with APS to identify key members of the APS community from whom to gather data to inform the development of the 5-year strategic action plan. The approach to data collection captured multiple perspectives on EL services in the district. From September through November 2022, AIR completed data collection and analysis activities described below.



Data source	Who is involved	Details
District data	Not applicable (extant data)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzed received data sets.
Interviews	District stakeholders (district leaders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed four district stakeholder interviews. Completed 11 district leader interviews.
Online survey	A sample of school-based staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administered survey to 323 teachers (survey closed on 10/14/22).
Focus groups	Parents and families of ELs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted and analyzed two focus groups with Spanish-speaking families. Conducted and analyzed one focus group with Mongolian-speaking families. Conducted and analyzed one focus group with refugee families. Conducted and analyzed one focus group with parents of dually identified students.
	School principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted and analyzed four focus groups and two completed interviews with school principals.

How was the 5-Year Strategic Action Plan developed?

The draft 5-year strategic action plan reflects the synthesis of data gathered from the fall 2022 data collection outlined above as well as insights from research and national-level guidance. The draft plan includes goals, strategies, key performance indicators (KPIs), and who is involved/responsible. As of this draft of the plan, the KPIs are conceptualized as 5-year targets—that is, targets for performance to be met and measured at the end of the 5-year strategic action plan’s implementation. The review and revisions of the 5-year strategic action plan takes place from January to March 2023 and involves multiple opportunities for district and community input, feedback, and additions. Specifically, AIR spoke with various staff in Educator Work Groups and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee about how they saw their roles in the action steps for implementing the plan. AIR revised the plan in late January based on input from OEL, Educator Work Groups, and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee. In February, all community members are invited to review the plan and provide input via an online platform. AIR will gather and synthesize the input to develop a final 5-year strategic action plan that will be presented to the APS school board in March 2023.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact project leads Patricia Garcia-Arena and Rebecca Bergey at APS-EL-plan@air.org.