

High School Math Attainment and Standardized Test Performance by English Proficiency

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This report provides data on students' highest level of math completed and test score performance by English proficiency category. Data that include English proficiency category for the Alpha Unified High School District (AUHSD) are currently available only from 2004-2005 for students in grades 9 through 11. Future reports will have access to greater time spans that will allow for tracking of these students to higher education.

Table 1 shows that about 20% of AUHSD students have languages other than English spoken at home with about half of those students yet to attain higher levels of English proficiency as determined by the CELDT test. The majority of students who speak a language other than English at home have parents who did not attend college compared to about a quarter of English only students. It should be noted that in this cohort, the number of Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (R-FEP) students who are Juniors is lower than expected relative to the rest of the data. The reason for this is unknown but does suggest caution in interpreted data derived from this subgroup due to their small number.

Table 1. Alpha Unified High School District students by grade and English proficiency.

Grade	ELL	R-FEP	I-FEP	English Only	Total
9	527	368	239	4,158	5,292
10	517	198	305	3,917	4,937
11	400	45	423	3,771	4,639
Total	1,444	611	967	11,846	14,868
Percent	10%	4%	7%	80%	100%
Parents without college	67%	53%	49%	26%	

ELL = English Language Learners, R-FEP = Redesignated Fluent English Proficient, I-FEP = Initially Fluent English Proficient, English only = native English speakers without a second language

English Language Learner (ELL) students are twice as likely as English only students to have completed only Basic Math by the 11th grade (Figure 1). These students are unlikely to complete the C or math component of the A-G requirements for UC/CSU attendance and would most likely further their math training at a community college if they continued. Two-thirds of English only and I-FEP students have completed intermediate algebra or above and so are more likely to complete the math portion of the A-G requirements (Figure 2). In contrast, only 56% of ELL students have progressed this far in math.

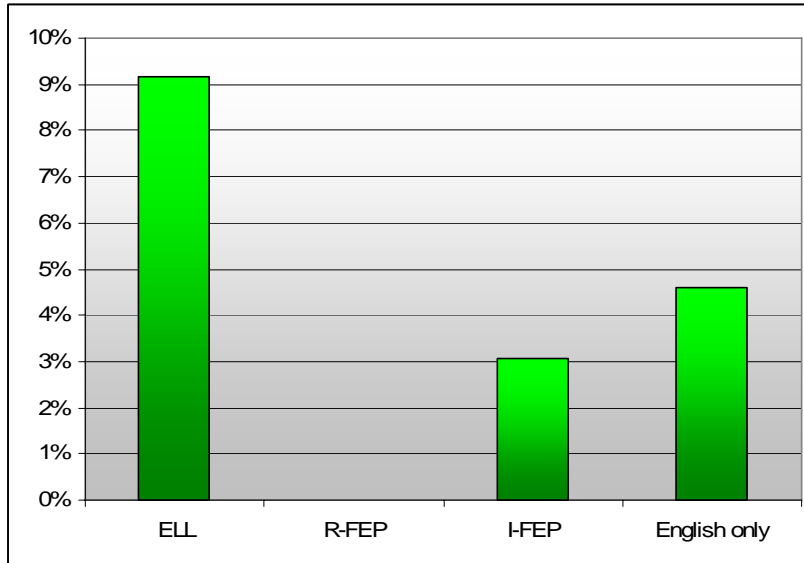


Figure 1. Percent of 11th graders completing Basic Math as their highest math.

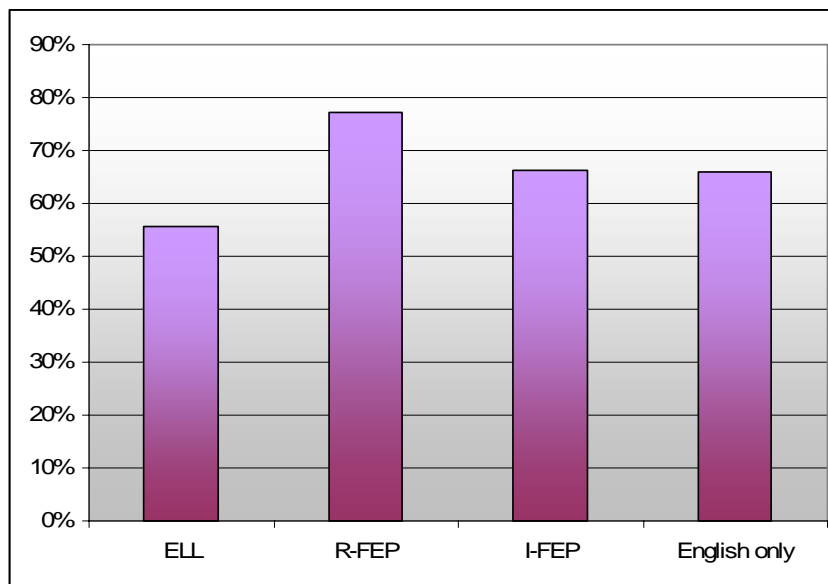


Figure 2. Percent of 11th graders completing Intermediate Algebra or higher as their highest math.
 ELL = English Language Learners, R-FEP = Redesignated Fluent English Proficient, I-FEP = Initially Fluent English Proficient, English only = native English speakers without a second language

ELL students scored significantly lower on the English and the Algebra I California Standards Tests than other groups (Table 2). The scores of R-FEP, I-FEP, and English only students are statistically equal. This suggests that proficiency in English is related to greater performance on these CST's. In a similar fashion, when looking at pass rates for students attempting the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) in 11th grade, ELL students are far less likely to have passed than other groups (Figure 3). It could be that ELL students will have overall CAHSEE pass rates lower than other groups.

Table 2. Scores on English and Algebra I CST's by English Proficiency.

	English CST Score			Algebra I CST Score		
	Mean	sd	N	Mean	sd	N
ELL	281a	47	1,406	289c	40	766
R-FEP	343b	50	603	316d	47	310
I-FEP	335b	54	945	312d	43	351
English Only	337b	66	11,558	309d	47	4,335

Note: For each test, means with different letters are significantly different.

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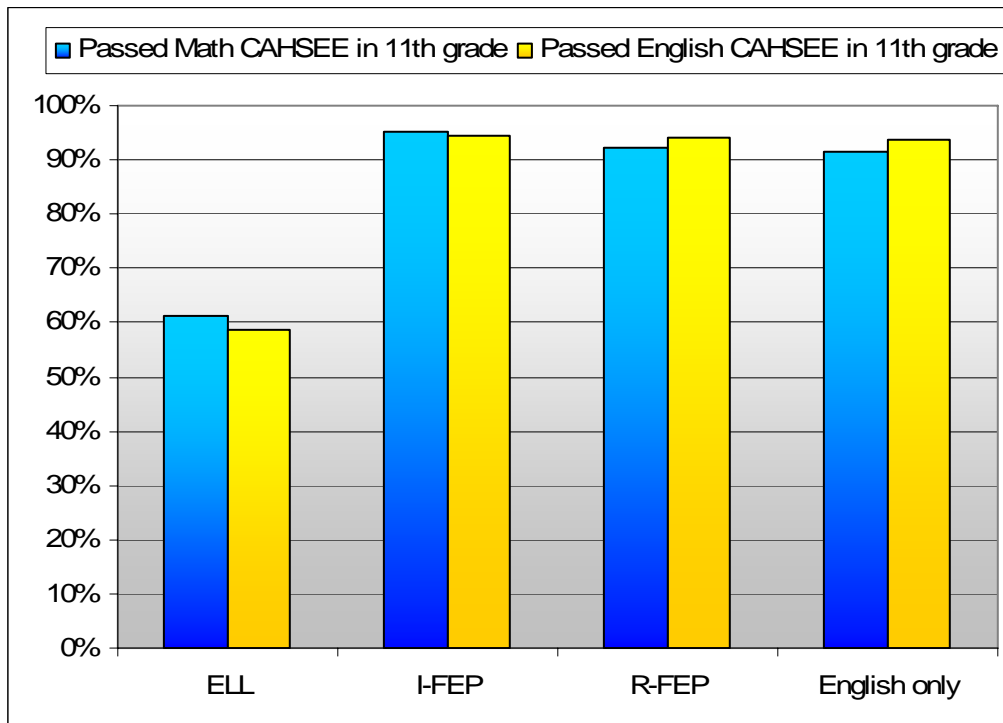


Figure 3. Percent of students passing CAHSEE tests in 11th grade by English proficiency (not shown are students who passed prior to 11th grade).