A Cohort Analysis of LEP Students—Revised Draft
January 13, 2014

This analysis follows a cohort of students who were 5th graders in 2004-05. The focus of the analysis is to compare the academic performance and graduation rates of students in the cohort who were LEP in the 5th grade with those who were not LEP. The analysis uses data on students who were 5th graders in 2004-05, the earliest data currently available that allow us to follow the cohort of students through high school. This analysis is descriptive in that it looks at basic educational outcomes of LEP and non-LEP students broken down in different ways. This type of analysis is an important first step in understanding basic relationships prior to doing a more complex analysis that may identify causal factors that can form the basis for policy guidance.

There were 43,218 5th graders in 2004-05, with 5,391 (12%) identified as LEP. Overall, 45% of students were economically disadvantaged, but among LEP students, the percentage was much higher at 68%. Table 1 shows basic information about the cohort of students. Students in this cohort would be expected to graduate from high school by the end of the 2011-12 school year.

Table 1: Cohort of 5th Graders in 2004-05

	LEP	Not LEP	Total
Economically Disadvantaged	3,678	15,973	19,651
Not Economically Disadvantaged	1,713	21,854	23,567
Total	5,391	37,827	43,218

Table 2 shows the outcomes for students in the cohort at the end of 2011-12. Over the 7-year period, 959 LEP students and 6,026 non-LEP students left the cohort by transferring to private schools in Oregon or to schools outside of Oregon or due to the death of the student. This left an “intact” cohort of 4,432 LEP and 31,801 non-LEP students at the end of the 2011-12 school year.

Table 2: High School Outcomes of Cohort of Students in 5th Grade in 2004-05
4 Years After Starting High School

	LEP in 5th Grade		Not LEP in 5th Grade	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Regular Diploma in 4 Years	2,888	65.2%	23,255	73.1%
GED	84	1.9%	1,562	4.9%
Other Credential	133	3.0%	701	2.2%
Still Enrolled	580	13.1%	2,507	7.9%
Dropped Out	747	16.9%	3,776	11.9%
Total Intact Cohort	4,432	100.0%	31,801	100.0%
Exited Cohort--Private High School/Home School	47		398	
Exited Cohort--High School Outside Oregon	178		960	
Exited Cohort--Exited Prior to High School	731		4,643	
Deceased	3		25	
Grand Total	5,391		37,827	

The table shows that the 4-year graduation rate for LEP students, at 65.2%, was 7.9 percentage points lower than that of non-LEP students and that the dropout rate and continuing enrollment into fifth year of high school for LEP students explains most of that difference.

Table 3 takes a more detailed look at the LEP students in the intact cohort. It shows that 39% of the students who were in LEP status as 5th graders in 2004-05 had exited LEP status by the time they started high school in 2008-09. Those that exited had a graduation rate of 75.8%, 2.7 percentage points ***higher*** than the rate for non-LEP students (Table 2). The dropout rate for those LEP students was actually lower than it was for non-LEP students, 11.2% compared to 11.9%.

Table 3: LEP Student Outcomes by LEP Exit Status

	Exited Before HS		Exited During HS		Did Not Exit	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Regular Diploma in 4 Years	1,300	75.8%	780	66.7%	808	52.2%
GED	44	2.6%	17	1.5%	23	1.5%
Other Credential	26	1.5%	26	2.2%	81	5.2%
Still Enrolled	152	8.9%	208	17.8%	220	14.2%
Dropped Out	192	11.2%	138	11.8%	417	26.9%
Total Intact Cohort	1,714		1,169		1,549	

For LEP students who exited LEP status during high school, the graduation rate was 66.7% and the dropout rate was 11.8%. Much more dramatically, for students who did not exit LEP status within 4 years of starting high school, the graduation rate was only 52.2% and the dropout rate was 26.9%.

Together, the information in Tables 2 and 3 indicate that LEP students who achieve English proficiency prior to entering high school do as well or better than non-LEP students on the measures of graduation rates and dropout rates. At the other extreme, students who are unable to become proficient in English prior to finishing high school have much poorer outcomes on both measures.

Table 4 shows high school outcomes for LEP students broken down by economically disadvantaged status. Table 5 shows similar information for non-LEP students. For LEP students, economically disadvantaged students perform only slightly worse than students who are not economically disadvantaged for both the graduation rate and dropout rate. For non-LEP students, the differences are much larger, with economically disadvantaged students having a graduation rate that is 17 percentage points below that of students who are not economically disadvantaged, and a dropout rate that is nearly twice as high.

Table 4: LEP Students by Economically Disadvantaged Status*

	Ec. Disadvantaged		Not Ec. Disadvantaged	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Regular Diploma in 4 Years	1,996	65.0%	892	65.5%
GED	58	1.9%	26	1.9%
Other Credential	97	3.2%	36	2.6%
Still Enrolled	385	12.5%	195	14.3%
Dropped Out	535	17.4%	212	15.6%
	3,071		1,361	

* Status in 5th Grade

Table 5: Non-LEP Students by Economically Disadvantaged Status*

	Ec. Disadvantaged		Not Ec. Disadvantaged	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Regular Diploma in 4 Years	9,214	62.3%	14,041	82.5%
GED	965	6.5%	597	3.5%
Other Credential	469	3.2%	232	1.4%
Still Enrolled	1,765	11.9%	742	4.4%
Dropped Out	2,372	16.0%	1,404	8.3%
	14,785		17,016	

* Status in 5th Grade

The focus on economically disadvantaged students in tables 4 and 5 shows that LEP students perform slightly better than those who are non-LEP on the graduation rate and slightly worse on the dropout rate. This suggests that it is language proficiency attainment, not economic disadvantage, that is the primary challenge for LEP students.

Tables 2 through 5 look at the outcomes for students after 4 years of high school. Table 6 below presents results for that same cohort of students after a **5th year** in high school in which students who did not receive a regular diploma or some other credential had the opportunity to do so. Table 7 compares the results after this 5th year to those after the 4th year.

Table 6: High School Outcomes of Cohort of Students in 5th Grade in 2004-05
5 Years After Starting High School

	LEP in 5th Grade		Not LEP in 5th Grade	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Regular Diploma in 5 Years	3,175	71.9%	24,430	77.2%
GED	115	2.6%	1,965	6.2%
Other Credential	157	3.6%	831	2.6%
Still Enrolled	146	3.3%	635	2.0%
Dropped Out	821	18.6%	3,801	12.0%
Total Intact Cohort	4,414	100.0%	31,662	100.0%
Exited Cohort--Private High School/Home School	54		442	
Exited Cohort--High School Outside Oregon	190		1,077	
Exited Cohort--Exited Prior to High School	730		4,619	
Deceased	3		27	
Grand Total	5,391		37,827	

Table 7: Comparison of Outcomes for the Cohort After 4 Years and After 5 Years

	LEP in 5th Grade				Not LEP in 5th Grade			
	4-yr	5-yr	Change	% Change	4-yr	5-yr	Change	% Change
Regular Diploma	2,888	3,175	287	9.9%	23,255	24,430	1,175	5.1%
GED	84	115	31	36.9%	1,562	1,965	403	25.8%
Other Credential	133	157	24	18.0%	701	831	130	18.5%
Still Enrolled	580	146	-434	-74.8%	2,507	635	-1,872	-74.7%
Dropped Out	747	821	74	9.9%	3,776	3,801	25	0.7%
Total Intact Cohort	4,432	4,414	-18	-0.4%	31,801	31,662	-139	-0.4%

Tables 6 and 7 show that a 5th year in high school has benefits for both LEP and non-LEP students in terms of increasing the number of students receiving a regular diploma. However, a large number of LEP students who return for a 5th year end up dropping out. Of those remaining in the intact cohort, nearly 18% (74 of 416) ended up dropping out. For non-LEP students, only 1.4% dropped out.

Finally, Table 8 presents 4-year graduation rates for LEP students by the number of years they spent in LEP status. Recall that, because of data limitations, our cohort is comprised of students who were in LEP status in the 5th grade in 2004-05. Thus, the earliest cohort for which we have high school graduation data. This means that our analysis does not include data on LEP students who exited LEP status prior to 5th grade. And since our cohort is students who were LEP students in the 5th grade, for students who did not exit LEP status we have data only for students who spent at least 8 years in LEP status. As we collect more years of student-level data, we will be able to evaluate students who exit LEP status in earlier grades as well.

Table 8: LEP Graduation Rates by Years in LEP Status

Students Receiving Regular Diplomas

	Students Who Exited LEP Status			Students Who Did Not Exit LEP Status		
Time in LEP Status	**Graduates**	**Total Students**	**Grad Rate**	**Graduates**	**Total Students**	**Grad Rate**
1 Year	15	18	83.3%			
2 Years	35	49	71.4%			
3 Years	58	76	76.3%			
4 Years	68	85	80.0%			
5 Years	141	196	71.9%			
6 Years	320	406	78.8%			
7 Years	317	425	74.6%			
8 Years	229	329	69.6%	61	114	53.5%
9 Years	207	284	72.9%	85	162	52.5%
10 Years	177	261	67.8%	36	90	40.0%
11 years	154	222	69.4%	58	107	54.2%
12 Years	100	152	65.8%	95	176	54.0%
13 years	53	83	63.9%	385	716	53.8%

As we might predict, students who spend less time in LEP status—that is, those who become proficient at English relatively more quickly, generally graduated from high school in 4 years. In stark contrast, students who spend 8 or more years in LEP status but still do not exit graduate from high school at dramatically lower rates.

The next steps in our analysis will be to evaluate other cohorts of students to determine if the results were found for this cohort are consistent across other cohorts, and then to do a more complex student-level analysis that brings in more detailed data for student and school characteristics that can help provide insights that can be a guide to policymakers in developing programs that can better serve LEP students.