

# AMSD Position on Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Funding

**T**he Association of Metropolitan School Districts believes the five year limit on eligibility for Limited English Proficiency funding should be repealed and the formula should be enhanced to provide school districts with the resources needed to ensure that English language learners have the opportunity to achieve State and Federal standards.

## AMSD BELIEVES

- Research consistently shows it can often take more than 5 years for English language learners to reach academic proficiency in English.
- The state formula should reflect the time and resources needed to prepare students to achieve state and federal standards.
- Additional staff training and funding will be needed to support the new assessment associated with joining the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) consortium.

## BACKGROUND

Minnesota defines an LEP learner as:

- A student whose primary language is not English;
- A student whose English language skills do not allow for full classroom participation;
- A student whose prior year score on the TEAE test is below the cutoff score; and
- A student who is enrolled in an LEP educational program, but has not been enrolled in Minnesota public schools for five or more years. (MN Stat. § 124D.59).

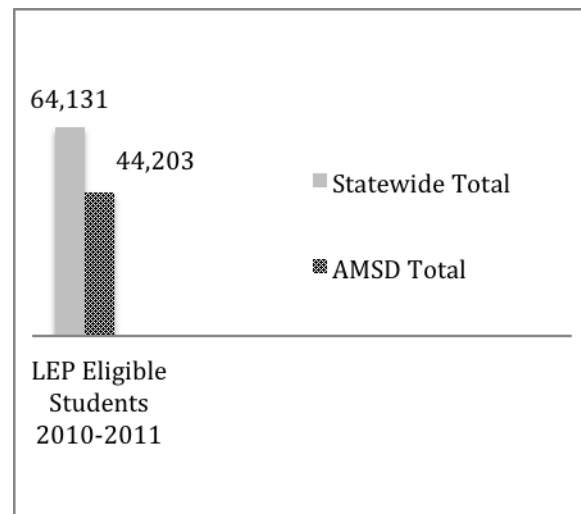
According to the Department of Education FY2010-2011 population reports there were 64,131 students who were eligible for Limited English Proficiency services.<sup>1</sup> 44,203 (69%) of these students attended school in an AMSD school district.

In August 2010, Minnesota joined the WIDA consortium. The state will implement WIDA's English-proficiency standards and assessment, ACCESS, for ELL students during the 2011-2012 academic year.

## RESEARCH

In one of the most extensive studies of LEP students, Dr. Virginia Collier and Dr. Wayne Thomas of George Mason University found that the long-term benefits of supplemental English Language development services only occur when students have access to these services for a minimum of four to seven years.<sup>2</sup> In the

Spring 2011 issue of *The Future of Children*, authors reviewed research and concluded that what matters most in educating English language learners is the quality of instruction within effective school structures.<sup>3</sup> The authors found that without support for the teachers, one cannot expect better outcomes for English learners. Schools need comprehensive professional development and it requires appropriate funding.



Association of Metropolitan School Districts  
1667 Snelling Ave. N  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
651-999-7325 fax 651-999-7328  
www.amsd.org

<sup>1</sup> "Special Populations," *Data Reports and Analytics*, 2011, Minnesota Department of Education, 18 Jan. 2012 <<https://education.state.mn.us/MDEAnalytics/Data.jsp>>

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Virginia Collier and Dr. Wayne Thomas, *A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term*

*Academic Achievement* (Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> Margarita Calderón, Robert Slavin and Marta Sánchez, "Effective Instruction for English Learners," *The Future of Children* 21.1 (2011): 107, 118-119.