

New York State

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Leading the Way



New York is the gateway for immigrant success, and we are proud that the legislature just passed the DREAM Act for our immigrant students.

Together we must build solutions to meet the specialized needs of English Language Learner students and families who are an integral part of our community.

According to the NYS Student Information Repository System, well over 60% of New York's ELL students were born in the United States.

While New York ELLs frequently speak Spanish, Chinese, Haitian, Korean and Russian, there are astoundingly over 200 different languages spoken by our more than 273,000 ELL students, according to the State Education Department.

Supporting English Language Learners and Their Families

Adequately supporting ELL students and their families continues to be a challenge for many districts and communities. Therefore, we ask that you continue to also consider:

1. Additional dedicated funding for ELL students, especially for school districts experiencing high density populations of diverse language speakers;
2. Improved current aid to address mid-year influxes of unaccompanied minor students, and increased support for districts with high unaccompanied minor populations;
3. Fiscal support for and examination of Part 154 implementation and requirements;
4. Accelerated teacher training for all educators in supporting ELL students and their families, along with expedited certification of bilingual and TSOL educators;
5. Continued and increased support for the State Education Department (SED) Office of Family Engagement, with staff dedicated to support ELL students and families; and
6. Expansion of the state's capacity to provide translation and interpretation services, especially for key parent documents, to minimize local district impact.

Alongside the Education Conference Board, we call for:

1. Creation of a \$100 million ELL aid category to ensure districts can deliver the enhanced levels of service necessary for ELL success;
2. Adjustment of funding structures for BOCES aid to help offset new costs associated with providing services to ELL students and commensurate resources for non-component school districts with large numbers of ELL pupils; and
3. Expansion of opportunities for teachers to obtain bilingual extension certification and incentives for individuals in teacher prep programs to become certified to teach English Language Learners.

We also support the \$1.5 million proposal for Refugee and Immigrant Student Welcome Grants, which will allow school districts with large or increasing populations of refugees and immigrants to provide additional wrap-around community schools services including free English classes, health care and mental health services, and hiring additional counselors and psychologists.

For more information, please contact Kyle McCauley Belokopitsky, Esq., NYS PTA Executive Director at execdirector@nyspta.org, 518-452-8808