The Family English Initiative

2015-2016 Pilot Program Guide

NYC Department of Education

The Family English Initiative

Introduction

The Family English Initiative is a pilot engagement program that targets pre-k students with limited English proficiency and their parents. The idea is to make learning a family endeavor by creating positive experiences that provide parents with the skills to tackle learning challenges with their young children. With NYC's expansion of free pre-k education, this initiative engages new families efficiently, using existing programs, resources and technology. Targeting pre-k families allows the Department of Education (DOE) to engage with families in-depth one year sooner. In addition, it provides parents with an early start on building the confidence relationships and tools they will need to stay involved in their children's learning for many years to come.

How TFEI Works:

Parents will enroll in DOE sponsored adult English classes at or near their children's Pre-K site and be provided with co-curricular activities that promote multilingualism and a shared learning experience with their children. The co-curriculum builds on everyday activities that happen at home and in the neighborhood including grocery stores, parks and other public spaces, cultural institutions, and will be supported by Duolingo, a language-learning application that provides fun and interactive web-based activities.

Goals

- Facilitate literacy and language acquisition for students and their families
- Build the capacity of limited English proficient families to support learning at home
- Create relationship-building opportunities for parents with limited English proficiency

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The Pilot

The pilot program will consist of two phases. Phase One will begin on a realtively small scale, and include approximately 30- 50 parents in one district. The pre-k classrooms and the Adult ESOL classrooms will be in close proximity to each other to maximize attendance and promote a neighborhood atmosphere. Phase Two aims to track approximately 300 pre-k families at pre-k sites again in close proximity to existing OACE programs in targeted Community School Districts in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. Both Phase One and Phase Two parents and students will be given standard pre- and post-tests. Families will also receive reminders to practice from Duolingo and support through texts and emails from program support staff.

Methods:

- Adult ESOL Instruction – Pre-K parents with limited English proficiency will be invited to enroll in a DOE Adult English class at or near their child's school.

- Online Language Learning Activities – Use of the Duolingo app reinforces language acquisition through online-based activities. A game-like platform with a built-in system of rewards and reminders will motivate parents to keep learning. Participating teachers will track progress using Duolingo for Schools.

- Family Centered Co-Curricular Activities – Parents and children broaden their English vocabulary, and parents strengthen their ability to support their child's learning, through fun activities that integrate academic content with their everyday routines (e.g. grocery shopping, using public transportation, going to the laundromat, cultural institutions, etc.).

Pilot Outreach:

The following methods will be used to recruit families:

- Flyers will be distributed in targeted areas surrounding the pre-k/OACE pilot site and at corresponding Family Welcome Centers (Enrollment Offices) and District Offices.

- Referrals from School Principals/ Pre-school Site Directors, Parent Coordinators and Parent leaders (Education Council Officers, PTA Executive Boards) will also be given materials (flyers) to post at their sites and forward to parents. Staff will also be encouraged to share information with parents who meet the criteria (limited English proficient with a child in pre-k.)

- Pre-K parents who have indicated that their preferred home language is other than English, may receive an email/letter directly from the program inviting them to participate. (pending approval)

- Marketing materials will be available online on the DOE's website and the Family and Community Engagement Facebook page.

- Multilingual emails will be sent to families who have subscribed to the Department's mailing list.

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DOE Lead Team

Isabel Gonzalez

is the Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives and Outreach with the Division of Family and Community Engagement at the New York City Department of Education. Ms. Gonzalez leads family and community facing partnerships and communications for the NYC Department of Education. Previously, she was a policy and project manager in the Aviation Department of the Port Authority of NY & NJ.

Isabel was an Education Pioneers Graduate Fellow with the Prince George's County Public Schools Division of School Services. She has BAs in Political Science and Spanish from Arizona State Univeristy and her Masters of Public Administration from Columbia University.

Lora-Lynn Byfield

is the Senior Project Manager for Strategic Intiatives at the New York City Department of Education. Lora-Lynn combines operational expertise, data management and strategic communications to promote citywide Parent Engagement initiatives. Prior to joining the Strategic Intiatives team, Lora-Lynn worked in the Division of Academics Performance and Support where she monitored citywide compliance with New York State Education instructional time policies, facilitated internal audits and managed technology security policies.

Before joining the DOE, Lora-Lynn was the Director of Recruiting at Academic Study Associates (Summerfuel) where she recruited talent to staff international and domestic high school summer programs. She also served as the Director of Diversity and Assistant Director of Admissions at Kingswood-Oxford School. Lora-Lynn holds a M.A. in Education from Tufts University.

Alexandra Dalrymple

is the Community Engagement Coordinator for the NYC Department of Education's Division of Family and Community Engagement. Alexandra attended New York City public schools from Kindergarten through her senior year of high school. She received her B.A. in International Studies from Brandeis University. Always drawn to social justice and human rights issues, she spent her junior year in South Africa where she interned with the Commission for Gender Equality, compiling research for the Advice Desk on gender-based violence. After matriculating, Alex spent two and a half years as the Assistant Director of the Kumon Learning Center of the West Village, an after school enrichment program. The center became Manhattan's model center and served as a training facility for incoming national staff members. In her current position, she works on special projects to improve parent engagement. She is thrilled to be part of the Family English Initiative team as she believes language should never be an obstacle when it comes to student achievement and parental involvement.

Richard Wentz

is the Marketing Director for the Divsion of Family and Community Engagement. His day to day tasks involve helping to craft and deliver the DOE's information to the over 1 million public school parents. Prior to working for the Department of Education Richard worked primarily in film and television production. He began in independent films on the production staffs of directors including the Coen Brothers, John Sayles and Louis Malle. He then transitioned to multi-camera television as a production stage manager for the Sesame Workshop (CTW) and Jim Henson Productions. In 2000, Richard began working as a creative director in the infomercial industry. In five years Richard helped to generate over 500 million dollars in televsion and web sales for his clients.

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Academic Leads

Elizabeth Ijalba

is an Associate Professor in the Department of Linguistics and Communication Disorders at Queens College, City University of New York. Her research focuses on developing effective methodologies in parent education with immigrant families of children growing up in multilingual environments. She focuses on the relationships between early literacy, adult literacy, and language learning ability in children and adults. At Queens College, Dr. Ijalba teaches classes with a bilingual and experiential focus on academic language, language disorders, and phonetics. She was the 2012 recipient of the American-Speech-Language-Hearing-Association's Office of Multicultural Affairs award to support research with Latino and Asian families. In addition, she is on the faculty of the Bilingual Extension Institute at Teachers College, Columbia University. Dr. Ijalba has published her work in several scientific journals. Her most recent work "Language, Culture, and Education: Challenges in a Diverse American Society", will be released by Cambridge University Press in 2016.

Roumen Vesselinov

is currently a visiting assistant professor at Queens College, City University of New York. He teaches econometrics, statistics and macroeconomics in the Economics Department. Prior to CUNY he worked as Director of Statistical Methodology Division of Bulgarian National Statistical Institute and was a member of Eurostat Directors of Methodology Group. Professor Vesselinov also worked as Manager of Statistical Consulting Laboratory at the Statistics Department at the University of South Carolina and Senior Statistical Analyst at Policy Research Associates. He has taught statistical methods, econometrics, time-series and forecasting and has more than 15 years experience with statistical research, consulting and working on complex statistical studies.

In 2002, Professor Vesselinov obtained certification as an SAS programmer and is an expert in other software such as SPSS, STATA, R, SAS SQL, etc. He has worked on more than 20 research grants and projects funded by the MacArthur Foundation, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Justice, etc. and has more than 30 publications in peer-refereed journals.

Professor Vesselinov managed and participated in many research projects from the design phase, data collection, data entry, data cleaning and transformations to the analysis, reports, presentations and publications. Many of the projects involved working with very large and complex datasets and sophisticated statistical analysis.

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2014-2015

WELCOME TO PRE-K

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PRE-K FOR ALL

A Time to Learn and Grow

Through Pre-K for All, children from communities throughout the city can benefit from an extra year of high-quality learning. Whether your child is in a district public school, a Community-Based Early Childhood Center (CBECC), or a charter school, he or she will be in a safe learning environment with many opportunities to explore, create, participate in fun learning activities, and socialize with other children and adults. Developing these skills now will help your child thrive in school, at home, and in life.

In pre-K, your child will start gaining the knowledge and skills needed to graduate from high school prepared for college and careers, as set forth by the Common Core Learning Standards. The standards in pre-K, known as the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core, specify five key areas of learning and development, also known as domains.

What happens in pre-K matters!

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Office Of English Language Learners

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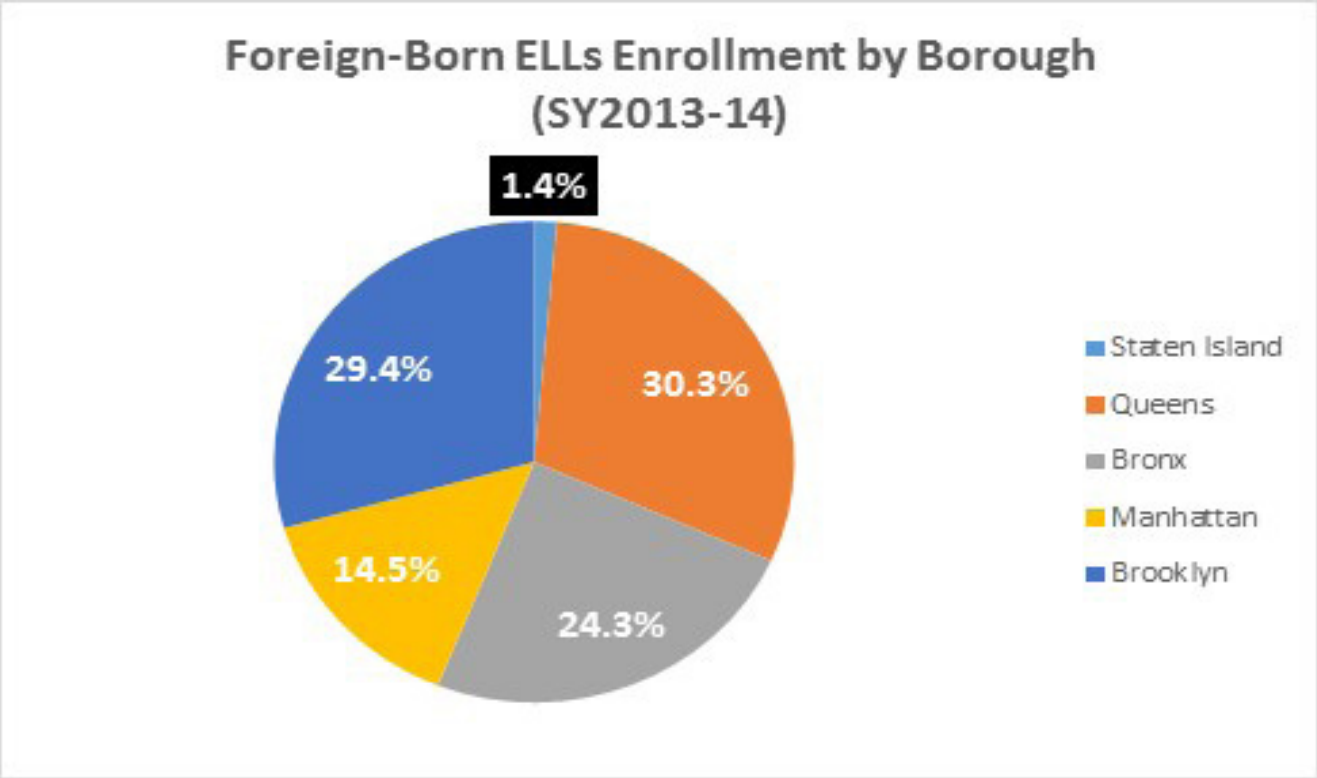

Foreign-born ELLs—those born outside the United States or its territories—represent a significant proportion of the ELL population enrolled within each borough (see table below). For example, foreign-born ELLs accounted for 51.4% of the ELLs in Brooklyn. Manhattan (50.4%), Queens (49.6%), and the Bronx (46.5%) had similar figures. In Staten Island, where the fewest total number of ELLs attended school, foreign-born ELLs made up a little less than a third (31.3%) of the total ELL population.

			# of ELLs	% of Borough Total
Bronx				
	U.S.-born		21,356	53.5
	Foreign-born		18,580	46.5
Brooklyn				
	U.S.-born		21,254	48.6
	Foreign-born		22,442	51.4
Manhattan				
	U.S.-born		10,896	49.6
	Foreign-born		11,084	50.4
Queens				
	U.S.-born		23,513	50.4
	Foreign-born		23,100	49.6

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ELLs by Grade

During the 2013-2014 school year, a little over half of all English Language Learners in DOE were in elementary school grades (82,200). Kindergarten and first grade had the highest numbers of ELLs (17,118 and 17,398, respectively), while there are fewer ELLs in the upper elementary school grades. One reason there may be fewer ELLs in later elementary grades is that ELL status is not a static student characteristic like race. As students become proficient in English and pass the English proficiency assessment, they are no longer identified as English language learners. Over a quarter of all ELLs (44,871) were in high school grades. Ninth grade showed the highest concentration with 13,923 ELLs, potentially signaling a major entry point for recently arrived ELLs.

Grade	# of ELLs	% of All ELLs
Kindergarten	17,118	11.0
1	17,398	11.2
2	14,399	9.2
3	11,338	7.3
4	11,805	7.6
5	10,142	6.5
6	10,255	6.6
7	9,143	5.9
8	9,237	5.9
9	13,923	8.9
10	13,525	8.7
11	7,858	5.0
12	9,565	6.1

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Office Of Adult and Continuing Education

The Office of Adult and Continuing Education's mission is to empower adults in their roles as parents, family members, workers and community members. We promote lifelong learning and the development of problem solving skills through a continuum of services, including Adult Basic Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages, GED Preparation, and Career and Technical Education.

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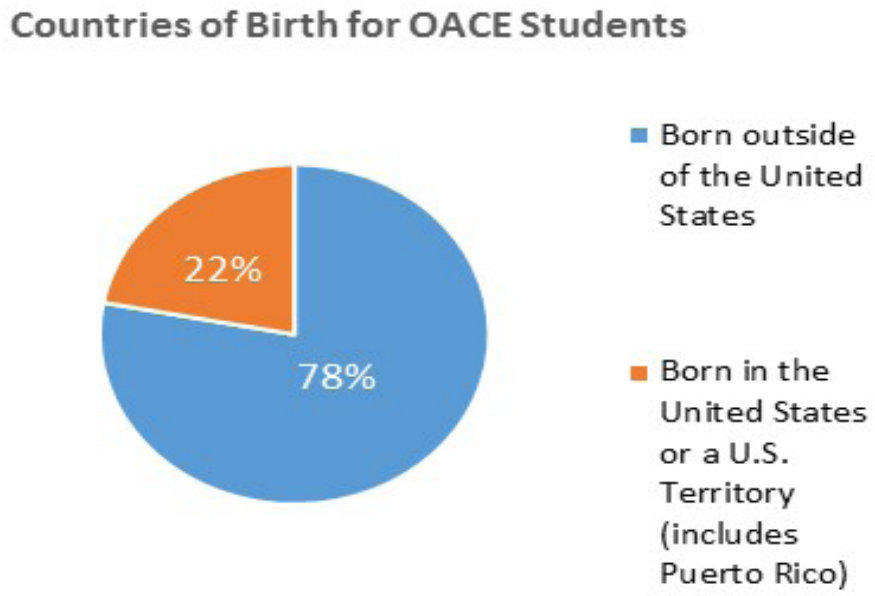
OACE hail from more than 170 countries



Largest countries of birth for OACE immigrant students

Dominican Republic	El Salvador
Ecuador	Guatemala
Mexico	Guinea
Haiti	St. Lucia
Jamaica	Grenada
China	St. Vincent & the Grenadines
Trinidad and Tobago	Senegal
Guyana	Ivory Coast
Colombia	Mali
Bangladesh	Barbados
Honduras	Pakistan
Poland	Ghana
Peru	Nigeria

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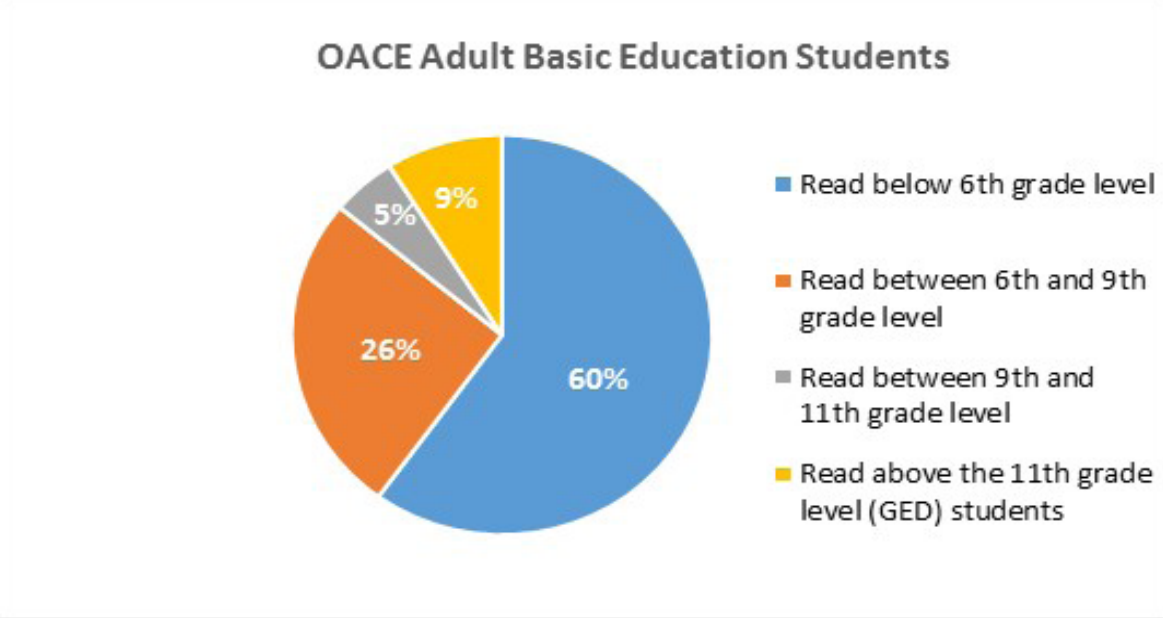
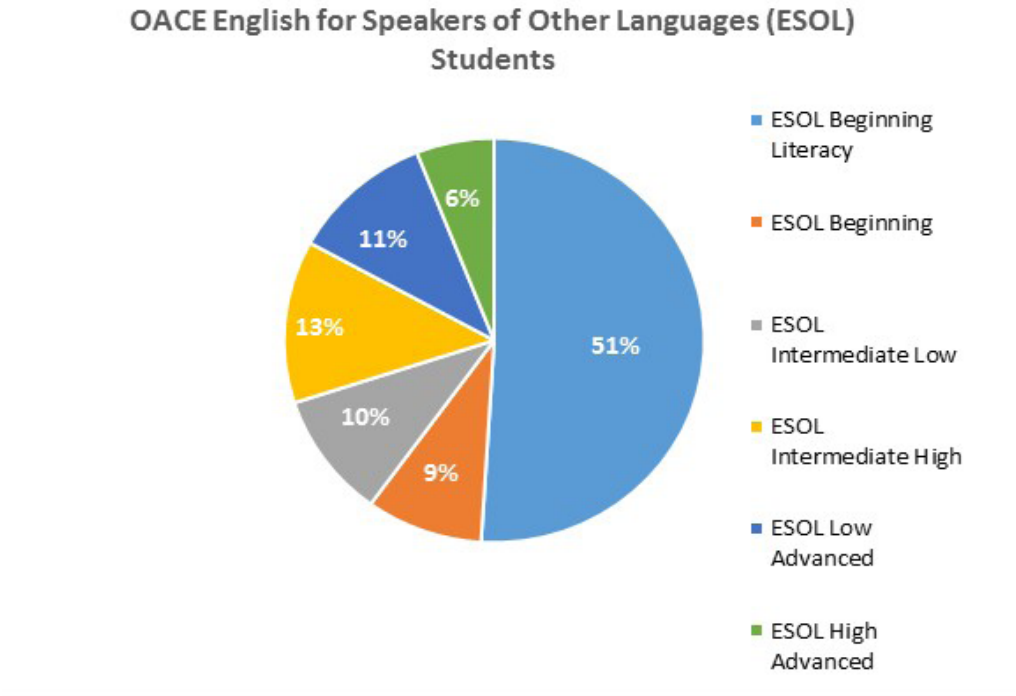
Most OACE students are at the lowest educational levels





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duolingo

About Duolingo

Duolingo is the free science-based language education platform selected by Apple as iPhone App of the Year 2013, by Google as Best of the Best for Android in 2013 and 2014, and by TechCrunch as Best Education Startup.

It was created by crowdsourcing pioneer Luis von Ahn, PhD, and Severin Hacker, PhD.

With over 80 million users, Duolingo has organically become the most popular way to learn languages online in only 2 years.

In a recent independent study, professors from the City University of New York (CUNY) and the University of South Carolina found that when using Duolingo for 34 hours, students learn the equivalent of one university semester of language instruction.

Press:

2013 IPhone App of the Year

"Sure, there was Rosetta Stone, but it's an expensive program (it starts at $274), and the folks who really need to learn to speak other languages "don't have the money," says Louis von Ahn. "They need it to get a better job." **USA Today, December 17, 2013**

http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/columnist/talkingtech/2013/12/17/duolingo-apples-iphone-app-of-the-year/4042469/

This Company May Hold The Future of Education
Time Magazine, June 20, 2014

"Duolingo, along with other web-native learning tools like the computer programming site Codecademy, have carved out an online learning experience that feels both simpler and more engaging than the typical MOOC, which essentially replicates the college lecture hall. von Ahn plans to focus on improving Duolingo's adaptive learning capabilities, so that no two users will have the exact same lesson plan. The goal, he says, is for the app to perform more like a well-trained personal tutor than a pedantic professor."

http://time.com/2902109/duolingo-online-education-moocs/