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# English as a Second Language

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English as a Second Language (ESL) provides instruction in English language communications skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) to students whose native language is not English. ESL may also include instruction in citizenship to prepare for naturalization.

## **Who are English as a Second Language students?**

More than 10,000 students are enrolled in Michigan English as a Second Language programs each year. This population is very diverse. Demographics for 2006-07 were 38% Hispanic, 36% Caucasian, 23% Asian, 3% African American with the remaining percentages in American Indian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. The average age of the ESL student is 37 years old.

## **What do English as a Second Language students learn?**

The State of Michigan Office of Adult Education has formulated standards for English as a Second Language programs that focus course learning on the following:

- *Speaking*: Teaching students to express themselves orally using English in the home, community, and workplace.
- *Listening*: Helping students to understand the spoken word from a variety of English speakers in diverse situations.
- *Reading*: Teaching students to read the written word with fluency and understanding.
- *Writing*: Expressing themselves in written English using clear and grammatical structures.

## **How successful are Michigan ESL programs?**

Federal funding is based on the percent of students who had educational gains. In 2006-07 gains for each level were as follows: ESL Beginning Literacy 56%, ESL Low-Beginning 66%, ESL High-Beginning 64%, ESL Low-Intermediate 53%, ESL High-Intermediate 51%, and Advanced ESL 57%. Michigan ESL programs surpassed the national average in all performance categories.

## **How do I find an English as a Second Language program?**

More than 130 English as a Second Language programs are located throughout Michigan. For information about local Adult Education programs, contact the DLEG Adult Education unit at (517) 373-8800 or visit their website at [www.michigan.gov/adulteducation](http://www.michigan.gov/adulteducation).