

In order to select or create an appropriate EL program model, it is necessary to understand the local EL population. To help do this, the Education Alliance at Brown University's 2003 publication *Claiming Opportunities: A Handbook for Improving Education for English Language Learners Through Comprehensive School Reform* provides a "Student Population Discussion Tool." This set of ten questions, listed below, can assist schools or LEAs in discussing and learning about their EL populations, and help teachers frame these discussions. Organizations may add to or modify these questions to obtain more information about various sub-populations, including ELs with disabilities.

## STUDENT POPULATION DISCUSSION TOOL

1. How many or what percentage of students in the school have a home language other than English?
2. What languages are spoken in their homes?
3. What places of origin are represented?
4. Are students from urban or rural backgrounds?
5. What community organizations represent various groups?
6. What educational backgrounds are represented? (Continuous or interrupted prior schooling, no prior schooling, schooling in home country, rural or urban schooling, preschool, kindergarten?)
7. Are some students literate in another language?
8. Are ELs the subject of many disciplinary referrals or actions in your school?
9. How many or what percentage of students in the school are actually classified as EL?
  - How many students currently receive language services?
  - How are these students distributed across grade levels?
  - What are their levels of English proficiency?
  - What language services do ELs currently receive?
  - In what types of classrooms do they receive literacy and content instruction?
  - What are these ELs' academic strengths and weaknesses? (What is the evidence?)
10. How many students (for whom English is a second language) have met exiting criteria and are now classified as "English proficient"?
  - How are these students distributed across grade levels?
  - What services, such as monitoring or transitional support, do exited ELs currently receive?
  - How do they perform in mainstream classes? (What is the evidence?)
  - What are their academic strengths and weaknesses? (What is the evidence?)