



**DEBRA K. DAVENPORT, CPA**  
AUDITOR GENERAL

**STATE OF ARIZONA**  
OFFICE OF THE  
**AUDITOR GENERAL**

**MELANIE M. CHESNEY**  
DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

September 4, 2013

The Honorable Chester Crandell, Chair  
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

The Honorable John Allen, Vice Chair  
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Dear Senator Crandell and Representative Allen:

Our Office has recently completed a 24-month followup of the Arizona Department of Education's implementation status for the 4 recommendations (including sub-parts of the recommendations) presented in the *Arizona English Language Learner Program* special study released in June 2011. As the enclosed grid indicates:

- 1 recommendation has been implemented, and
- 3 recommendations are in the process of being implemented.

Unless otherwise directed by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, this report concludes our follow-up work on the Department's efforts to implement the recommendations resulting from the June 2011 special study.

Sincerely,

Ross Ehrick, CPA  
Director, Division of School Audits

RE:bl  
Enclosure

cc: The Honorable John Huppenthal, State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Arizona Department of Education

# Arizona English Language Learner Program, Fiscal Year 2010 Auditor General Special Study Issued June 2011 24-Month Follow-Up Report

Recommendation	Status/Additional Explanation
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**FINDING 1: Most districts reviewed have not fully implemented State’s SEI program models; improved oversight needed**

<p>1. As ADE continues its monitoring of district ELL program implementation, it should report noncompliant districts in continuing corrective action status to the State Board of Education for possible withholding of SEI funds.</p>	<p><b>Implemented at 12 months</b></p>
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**FINDING 2: More students achieve proficiency since State adopted SEI models, but models’ impact on results is unknown**

<p>1. To improve ADE’s assessment of districts’ implementation of the SEI models, ADE should continue to work with districts to:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Improve the reliability of the program participation data, including ELL students’ eligibility and participation dates, and the type of program provided to each student;</p>	<p><b>Implementation in process</b></p> <p>Auditors reviewed fiscal year 2013 ELL participation data and determined that ADE has improved the reliability of this data. However, auditors found issues with ADE’s process for ensuring data reliability prior to fiscal year-end. Specifically, although ADE’s stated process is to conduct data integrity checks twice weekly throughout the year, auditors found that over half of ELL records as of June 14, 2013, indicated that these checks had not been successfully conducted. However, auditors confirmed that integrity checks were successfully completed for all records shortly after fiscal year-end.</p> <p>Further, as discussed in the audit report, SAIS captures program type—SEI classroom or ILLP—but does not contain an option for districts to record students’ participation in an ILLP program that provides a portion of instruction in an SEI pullout setting. As stated in the audit report, this additional information could help in identifying the relative effectiveness of the different types of programs at improving ELL students’ proficiency and achievement outcomes. ADE officials stated that SAIS is not capable of handling additional information. However, ADE is seeking funding for a new student information system. ADE officials believe this system would allow them to capture this type of information.</p>
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**Recommendation****Status/Additional Explanation**

- b. Collect additional information related to program participation, including the number of English language development hours provided to each student by program type; and

**Implementation in process**

SAIS does not capture ELL-related instructional hours provided to each student by program type. Although ADE officials stated that they review this information for the districts and charters sampled each year, this information is not collected on a state-wide basis. This additional information could help in identifying the relative effectiveness of the different types of programs at improving ELL students' proficiency and achievement outcomes. ADE officials stated that SAIS is not capable of handling additional information. However, ADE is seeking funding for a new student information system. ADE officials believe this system would allow them to capture this type of information on a state-wide basis.

- c. Consider collecting additional information that links student outcomes to instructional quality, such as information on teachers.

**Implementation in process**

ADE officials stated that the current ADE systems do not support the systematic analysis of ELL student outcomes by individual teachers or instructional approaches. However, ADE has requested funding to develop analytic tools that correlate teacher evaluations, professional development, and instructional techniques to student outcomes. ADE officials believe this tool set would be a potential means to evaluate teacher effectiveness in ELL settings.