

# Educational Outcomes for Dually Identified Multi-Language Learners with Disabilities

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# Dual-Identified Students

- Dual-identified students **represent the unique intersection between language and disability**, both of which are marginalized groups in the general education environment
- Brief research on **CT resources on serving dual-identified student typically limited** to a statement or a couple of paragraphs at most
  - Focus is on serving either EL students or Students with Disabilities

# The Achievement Gap

- **Disproportionality** evident in the following ways:
  - **Representation in special education** programs
    - Difficulty with disentangling the similar outcomes resulting from language acquisition and disability (Murphy & Johnson, 2022)
  - **Graduation and dropout rates** (Cooc, 2023)
    - Graduate at a rate below their non-EL peers with and without disabilities
    - Drop-out at a rate above their non-EL peers with and without disabilities

# Research Question

What are the common outcomes for transition-aged EL students with disabilities compared to non-EL students with disabilities in the state of Connecticut?

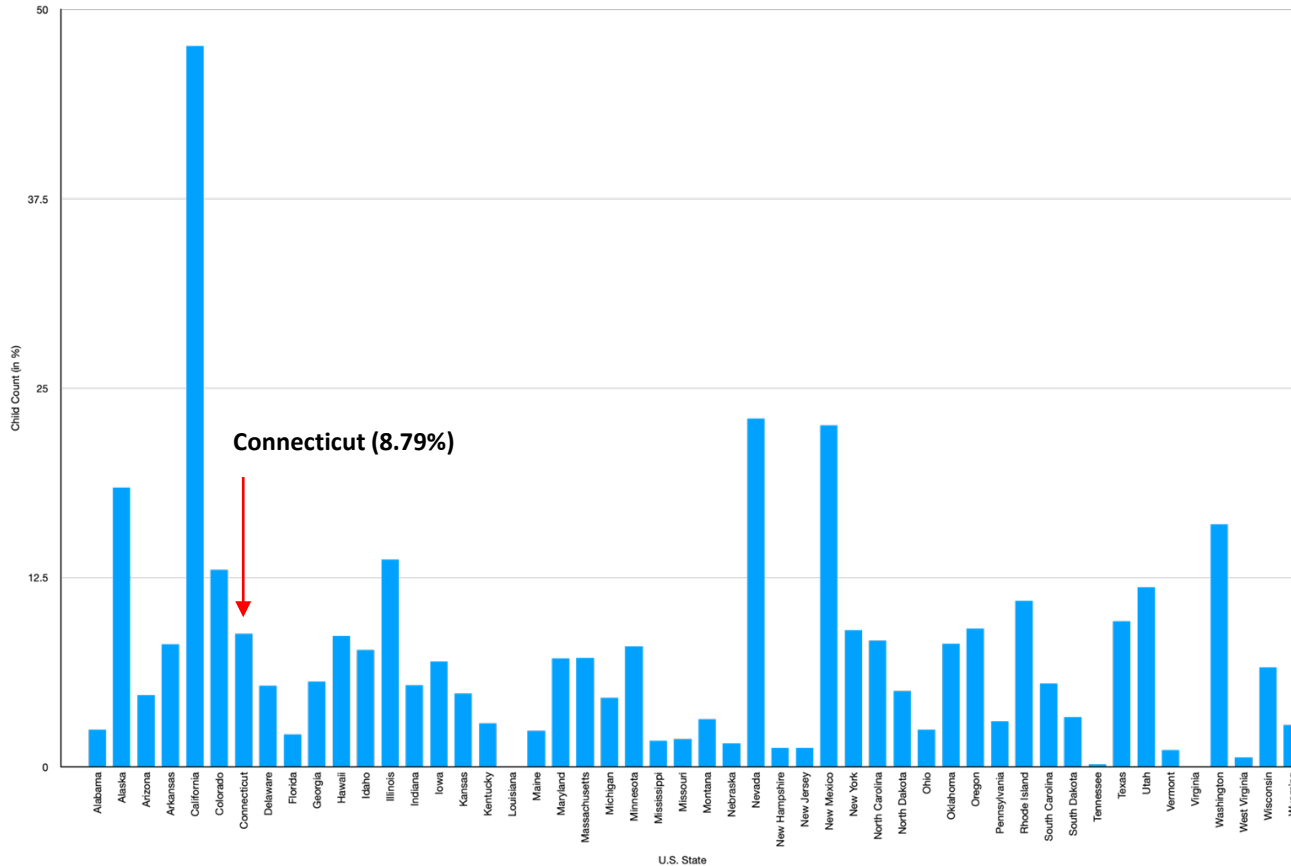
# Methodology

- **Obtained national data** from Office of Special Education Programs (U.S. Dept. of Education)
  - included demographic information (state, race, age, disability classification, EL status, gender, etc.) on the student population (SY 2021 - 2022)
- **Manipulated data** to include only the following variables:
  - U.S. State, exit code, EL status
- **Calculated proportions** of EL students with disabilities under each exit code for *Connecticut only*.
  - Did a particular outcome occur more or less often than expected/general population proportion?

# Methodology

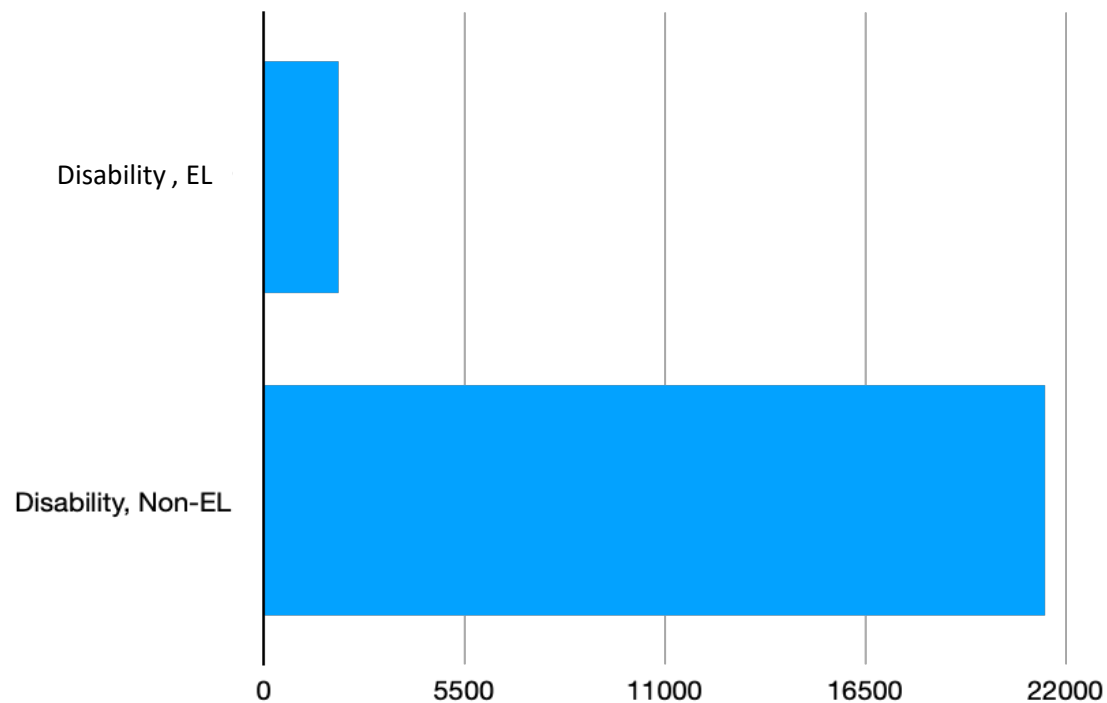
- **Variables:**
  - **State:** U.S. State (territories not included)
  - **EL-Status:** Yes (EL student with disabilities) vs. No (non-EL student with disabilities)
  - **Exit Code:** means by which student was exited from special education
    - Died
    - Aged out
    - Graduated with HS diploma
    - Graduated with alternate certificate
    - Moved, but suspected to remain in special education
    - Dismissed from special education
    - Transferred to regular education

# Results



Proportion of students with disabilities dually identified as EL by U.S. State (SY 2021-2022)

# Results



$N_{\text{Total}} = 23,493$

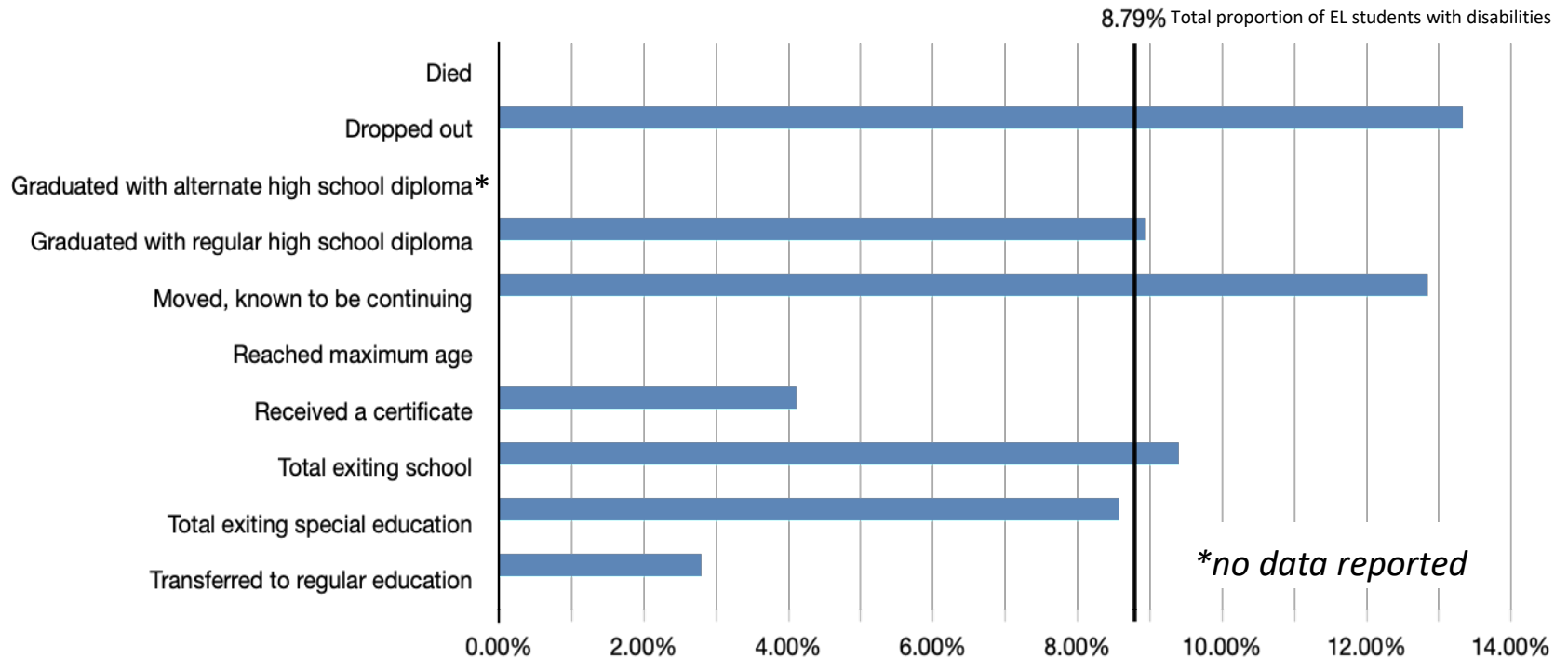
$N_{\text{EL}} = 2,064 (8.78\%)$

$N_{\text{non-EL}} = 21,429 (91.22\%)$

Proportion of students with disabilities by EL status, in CT (SY 2021-2022)



# Results



Outcomes for dually identified EL students with disabilities by 'exit code'

# Limitations

- **Pre-existing data** obtained by Office of Spec. Ed. & Programming with Dept. of Education
  - No control over data collection methodology
- Data is **self-reported** at state level
  - Potential, though likely slight, variability in reporting?
  - No standardized reporting procedures identified
- Data reflects **numbers from 2020-21 and 2021-22** school years
  - No data from more recent school years available
- Population represents **all students served** under IDEA Part B
  - *without* differentiating consideration for important variables such as disability classification or educational environment served

# Conclusions

- Connecticut **ranks 13th with greatest proportion** of EL students with disabilities, at 8.79%
- EL students with disabilities **dropping out more often** than expected and more often than any other educational outcome
- EL students with disabilities are **least often to transfer into regular education** before graduation

Critically evaluate the referral, evaluation, and service delivery practices and their level of cultural sensitivity for diverse students.

# A Note on Terminology

Academics in the field use **multiple different terms** to describe students whose first language is not English, including but not limited to:

- English language learners
- Second language learners
- Dual language learners
- Multi-language learners
- Bilingual students

What are the **implications of the language** we use when speaking to colleagues, students, or families?

# Opportunities for Future Research

- **Examine the language within state and federal documents** on service delivery for EL students, students with disabilities, and dual-identified students
  - Update them to better reflect the growing diversity of student identities and their individual needs
- At the state level, identify the **level of interdisciplinary coordination** between EL and Special Education professionals
  - What does their collaboration look like?
  - What does dual-identified students' programming look like?

# References

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- U.S. Department of Education. (2016, September 23). *Non-Regulatory Guidance: English Learners and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*. <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiiiiguidenglishlearners92016.pdf>