

English for New Bostonians (ENB) Report on Survey of ESOL Students' Skills

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I. Introduction

The English for New Bostonians (ENB) Project, initiated by the Mayor's Office of New Bostonians (MONB) in 2001, is a private-public partnership that aimed to address the City's growing ESOL needs. From 2001 till June 2005, ENB had awarded 32 grants with a total of approximately \$2.5 millions to ESOL providers. Over 700 New Bostonians were served in each of the first 4 years and a web-based ESOL directory was created. The second phase of the project, ENB II with another 3 years funding commitment from the City and the private sector, was launched in June 2005.

In April 2006, MONB developed and conducted a survey of ESOL students' skills, work experience, educational and vocational goals with the hope that the information collected could be used to: (1) highlight the strengths and contributions New Bostonians bring to the City, and (2) to advocate for more funding for ESOL programs from our funders and other businesses.

The survey explored the following 4 topics:

1. Coming to the US: Country of origin and arrival date
2. Highest level of education achieved
3. Employment history in the US and in the country of origin
4. Educational and employment goals

Each of the 18 ENB Programs citywide, with a total enrollment of 983 students in 2006, received a copy of the survey. 650 responses were collected (66%), however, since not every participant answered all the questions, small discrepancies exist between the total number of people who answered a particular question, and the percentage of people who returned the survey.

II. Results

Coming to USA: Country of Origin

In this first section, the students were asked to name their countries of origin and the date that they arrived in this country. The largest number, 139 of the students (22%) reported that they came from Haiti. This was followed by China (12%), Cape Verde (11%), Dominican Republic (9%), and Vietnam (8%). Other reported countries were: Albania, Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Columbia, Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, El Salvador, Estonia, Greece, Guetamala, Honduras, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal,

Panama, Peru, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Slovakia, Somolia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Ukraine, USA, and Venezuela.

Table 1 summarizes the results provided by the respondents.

Table 1

Haiti	139	Peru	7	Congo	1
China	75	Honduras	6	Bangladesh	1
Cape Verde	71	Ukraine	5	Nepal	1
Dominican Republic	61	Bolivia	4	Indonesia	1
Vietnam	49	Lebanon	4	Malaysia	1
Albania	28	Syria	4	Angola	1
Columbia	25	Myanmar (Burma)	3	Belarus	1
El Salvador	21	Portugal	2	Canada	1
Morocco	17	Japan	2	Kuwait	1
Brazil	16	Korea	2	Mauritania	1
Ethiopia	14	Ecuador	2	Estonia	1
Guatemala	13	Venezuela	2	Iran	1
Russia	12	Cameroon	2	Laos	1
Somalia	11	USA	2	Sri Lanka	1
Hong Kong	10	Portugal	2	Greece	1
Mexico	8	Argentina	2	Rwanda	1
Puerto Rico	8	Romania	1	Panama	1
				Slovakia	1

Date of Arrival

On the responses regarding arrival dates, the largest number of students, 92 of them (14%), came in 2005, followed by 89 (13%) in 2003 and 78 (12%) in 2004 . No respondents reported arriving in the USA in the following years: 1983, 1975, 1976, 1973, 1972, 1970, 1969, 1968, 1967, 1966, 1965, and 1964. The earliest arrival date, indicated by one student, was 1963. 16 students did not respond to the question.

Table 2

Year	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages (%)
2006	18	2.7%
2005	92	14%
2004	78	12%
2003	89	14%
2002	50	7.7%
2001	65	10%
2000	44	6.7%
1999	29	4.4%
1998	26	4 %

Table 2 cont'd

Year	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages (%)
1997	12	1.8%
1996	17	2.6%
1995	12	1.8%
1994	13	2.4 %
1993	10	1.5%
1992	12	1.8 %
1991	6	0.9%
1990	4	0.6 %
1989	9	1.4%
1988	3	0.46%
1987	5	0.77%
1986	9	1.4%
1985	5	0.77%
1984	5	0.77%
1983	0	0 %
1982	4	0.6%
1981	2	0.3%
1980	2	0.3%
1979	1	0.15 %
1978	3	0.4 %
1977	1	0.15 %
1974	1	0.15 %
1963	1	0.15 %

Education:

In this section, we asked each student of his/her highest level of education received. 401 of them (62%) responded they had attained high school level. This was followed by 127 (20%) who answered they had elementary school level of education, 103 (16%) with college education, and 102 respondents (16%) did not answer the question. Compared to the figures provided by the US Bureau of Census 2000 with a 5% City sample, fewer ESOL students had college education (16% vs. the City's average of 36%) but with a higher completion rate on high school education (62% vs. the City's average of 24%). Some respondents provided more than one selection in their answers. Table 3 below summarizes the results of the educational levels.

Table 3

Level of Education	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages (%)
Primary/Elementary	127	20 %
High School	401	62%
Vocational	56	9%
Certificate	96	15%
Academy	28	4%
College	103	16 %
Masters Degree	6	1%
Doctorate Degree	4	0.6%
Post Doctorate	0	0%
Other	37	6%
Did Not Answer	102	16%

Fields of Education

458 respondents (70%) did not provide an answer to this question. 192 students (29.5%) responded and the fields, as described by the respondents, are listed below.

Table 4

Fields of Education	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages (%)
Nursing/Hospital	30	4.6%
Secretarial/Office Work	22	3.4%
Education	21	3.2%
Computer	20	3%
Management	12	1.8%
Cosmetology	10	1.5%
Restaurant/Culinary Arts	10	1.5%
Tailoring and Design	10	1.5%
Law	8	1.2%
Engineering	7	1.1%
Mechanic	7	1.1%
Pharmaceutical	5	0.7%
Mathematics	5	0.7%
Electrical	3	0.5%
Maintenance	3	0.5%
Agriculture	3	0.5%
Therapist	3	0.5 %
Criminal Justice	2	0.3%
Childcare	2	0.3%
Dental	1	0.2%
Theology	1	0.2%
Theater	1	0.2%
Plumbing	1	0.2%
Documentation	1	0.2 %

Employment in Own Country and in the USA:

66 (10%) students provided information on the types of work they performed in their own countries and 85 (13%) listed their occupations in this country. Table 5 summarizes the kind of work they performed in their countries of origin and Table 6 reflects their employment in the USA. In addition, 487 students (75%) responded that they had worked in their own countries and 461 (71%) answered they had work history in the USA. Majority of the students indicated they had worked in both their native countries and in the USA. In regards to whether they were employed at the time of this survey, 388 students (60%) responded “yes”, 213 (33%) was not employed at the time, and 49 of them (7.5%) did not answer the question. 38% (246) of those surveyed were working full time, 25% (160) had part-time work, and 38% (244) of the respondents did not respond.

Table 5

Kind of Work (Native)	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages (%)
Tailor/Seamstress	8	1.2%
Office	7	1%
Factory Work	6	0.9%
Finance	5	0.7%
Agriculture	4	0.6%
Maintenance	4	0.6%
Student	4	0.6%
Food Industries	3	0.4%
Beautician	3	0.4%
Education	3	0.4%
Sales	3	0.4%
Hospital	3	0.4%
Journalism	2	0.3%
Criminal Justice	2	0.3%
Home-maker	2	0.3%
Public Transportation Worker	2	0.3%
Delivery	1	0.1%
Construction	1	0.1%
Self Employed	1	0.1%
Butcher	1	0.1%
Unemployed	1	0.1 %
Did Not Answer	584	90%

Table 6

Kind of Work (USA)	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages (%)
Cleaning/Maintenance	18	2.8%
Hospital	7	1.1%
Laundry	7	1.1 %
Factory Worker	6	0.9%
Food Industry	6	0.9 %
Business	6	0.9%
Construction	5	0.7%
Education	4	0.6%
Student	4	0.6%
Sales	3	0.4%
Public Transportation	3	0.4%
Not Working	3	0.4 %
Security	2	0.3%
Beautician	2	0.3%
Tailor/Seamstress	2	0.3%
Valet	1	0.15%
Nail Salon	1	0.15%
Self Employed	1	0.15%
Babysitting	1	0.15 %
Did not Answer	565	87%

Table 7

	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages (%)
Worked in Native Country	487	75%
Worked in the USA	461	71%
Working at Time of Survey	388	60%
Not Working at Time of Survey	213	33%
Did Not Answer	49	7.5%
Working Full Time	246	38%
Working Part Time	160	25%
Did not Answer	244	38%

Educational and Employment Goals:

Educational Goal for the next 5 years : A total of 582 ESOL students (90%) answered this question. Table 8 highlights the responses from them.

Table 8

Educational Goals	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages(%)
Learn English	218	34%
Obtain A College Degree	182	28%
Obtain GED/High School	66	10%
Obtain US Citizenship	49	8%
Learn a Trade	42	6%
Obtain a Better Job	10	2%
Other (did not specify)	8	1%
Not to Work	2	0.3%
Become a Nurse	2	0.3%
Massage Therapy	2	0.3%
Realtor	1	0.2%
Did Not Answer	68	10%

Employment Goal in 5 years: Lastly, there were 495 respondents (76%) to this question. 134 of them (21%) stated that they would like to “work in a hospital,” followed by 97 (15%) of them would like “to obtain a better job.” 56 students (9%) preferred to have their own businesses and 42 of them (6%) wanted to seek work in an office. Other goals reported are summarized in Table 9 below.

Table 9

Employment Goals	Number of Respondents (#)	Percentages (%)
Work in a Hospital	134	21%
Obtain a Better Job	97	15%
Have Own Business	56	9%
Work in an Office	42	6%
Become a Teacher	22	3%
Other (did not specify)	22	3%
Continue with Same Job	15	2%
Restaurant	11	2%
Childcare	11	2%
Work with Computers	10	1.5%
Help People	8	1.2%
Dentist	7	1%
Serve as an Interpreter	7	1%
No Preference	5	0.7%
Hotel	5	0.7%
Cosmetology	4	0.6%
Obtain a Second Job	4	0.6%
Not to Work	3	0.4%
Go to College	2	0.3%
Did Not Answer	155	24%

