March 2025

Greater Tulsa Area Adult ESL

Landscape Analysis & Needs Assessment Report

The City of Tulsa
George Kaiser Family Foundation
Tulsa Community College

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This executive summary overviews the Language Equity and Access Partners' (LEAP) Landscape Analysis and Needs Assessment Report developed for the City of Tulsa, George Kaiser Family Foundation, and Tulsa Community College. As the first Certified Welcoming[1] community in the state of Oklahoma by national nonprofit Welcoming America, the City of Tulsa is committed to supporting immigrant and refugee communities.

The Landscape Analysis and Needs Assessment Report meets four aims. First, the report conducts a policy analysis and identifies potential funding sources for adult ESL (English as a Second Language) programs and other approaches to funding them. Second, the report assesses and documents the demographic profile and needs of the population that requires adult ESL programs and services, in addition to evaluating the current state of adult ESL programming offered by service providers in the region to identify gaps. Third, the report evaluates the current state of adult ESL programming provided by service providers in the region to identify gaps, strategies, and interventions the City of Tulsa would need to prioritize to meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the area. Fourth, the report outlines short-term and long-term strategic objectives and goals for offering the full breadth and scope of adult ESL programs needed in the region and offers recommendations for providing comprehensive and accessible adult ESL programs.

Sections include Methodology, Landscape and Policy Analysis, Demographic Data Analysis, and Findings. The **Methodology** section describes LEAP's Strategic Planning Framework, which guided the creation of this Needs Assessment, and a description of the data collection methods. The **Landscape and Policy Analysis** provides an overview of funding streams for language acquisition and potential funding sources for adult ESL programming. The **Demographic Data Analysis** section outlines and summarizes the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) data on persons who speak a language other than

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[1]Welcoming America, "Certified Welcoming," accessed January 27, 2025, https://welcomingamerica.org/initiatives/certified-welcoming/.

English at home (LOTEH)[2] including those with limited English proficiency (LEP)[3] and foreign-born individuals in the Greater Tulsa Area[4]. The **Findings** section presents key insights from our **Community Scan** analysis, focusing on the current state of adult ESL programming and identifying priority interventions. The **Strategic Recommendations** section outlines short-term and long-term strategic objectives and recommendations for providing comprehensive and accessible adult ESL programs.

LEAP is grateful for the collaboration with the City of Tulsa, George Kaiser Family Foundation, and Tulsa Community College and appreciates their invaluable support throughout this assessment's conceptualization, analysis, and drafting.

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[2] Persons who speak a language other than English at home (LOTEH) is a term used in the American Community Survey (ACS) to denote whether a person aged five years and older speaks a language other than English. This is a broader term compared to Limited English Proficient (LEP), the legal term denoting any person aged five years and older who self-reports as speaking English less than "very well" in the US Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS).

[3] English-speaking ability data is collected in the American Community Survey (ACS) and asks about whether a person speaks a language other than English at home, what language he/she speaks, and how well he/she speaks English. Those who speak English less than "very well" are considered Limited English Proficient. More detailed information is found in Appendix 1 of this report.

[4] The Greater Tulsa Area refers to the broader region that relies on the City of Tulsa as its central hub. It includes nine counties: Tulsa, Rogers, Wagoner, Creek, Osage, Okmulgee, Pawnee, Washington, and Muskogee counties. Tulsa County is one of these counties and serves as a larger administrative region that includes the City of Tulsa as well as other municipalities such as Broken Arrow, Bixby, Jenks, and Owasso, among others. While Tulsa County is part of the Greater Tulsa Area, it does not encompass the entire region. The City of Tulsa is an incorporated city with clearly defined municipal boundaries, located within Tulsa County. However, it does not cover the entirety of Tulsa County, as the county also includes several other cities and unincorporated areas.

Summary of Findings

Table 1: Summary of Demographic Data Analysis Findings

	Greater Tulsa Area's Demographic Profile
1	11.11% of the Greater Tulsa population speaks a language other than English at home (LOTEH).
2	4.09% of the Greater Tulsa Population is limited English proficient (LEP).
3	Spanish is the top language spoken by Greater Tulsa's LEP population.
4	6.88% of Greater Tulsa's population is foreign-born.
5	Mexico is the top place of birth for Greater Tulsa's foreign-born population.
	Tulsa County's LEP Population
6	15.25% of Tulsa County's population speaks a LOTE.
7	5.86% of Tulsa County's population is LEP.
8	The top five languages spoken by Tulsa County's LEP Population are Spanish, Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages, Vietnamese, Other-Indo European Languages, and Chinese.
	Tulsa Public Schools Language Data
9	12,759 Tulsa Public Schools students use a language other than English (LOTE).
10	Spanish represents 90% of all students who use LOTE.
11	The top five schools with the highest number of LOTE students are East Central High School, Rogers College High, East Central Middle School, Hale High School, and Rogers College Middle School.

Greater Tulsa Adult ESL Landscape Analysis and Needs Assessment Report
Produced by Language Equity & Access Partners

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Table 2: Summary of Community Scan Analysis Findings

	Community Scan Analysis
1	The Greater Tulsa Area is home to numerous organizations supporting refugee and immigrant communities.
2	Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic are identified as the languages encountered most frequently by community advocates and Adult ESL providers.
3	The continuously changing landscape of the refugee and immigrant populations creates challenges in providing programs and services, as the demand for different types of adult ESL programs and services varies by language and cultural community.
4	Adult ESL programs are somewhat accessible to community members who speak a language other than English (LOTE) despite the many barriers community members face.
5	Adult ESL program providers in Greater Tulsa are somewhat successful in collectively meeting the local demand for adult English language instruction despite facing many challenges.
6	Adult ESL Providers and Community Advocates highly recommend creating and strengthening collaborative systems to streamline all efforts.
7	Adult ESL Adult ESL Providers and Community Advocates recommend implementing creative solutions to address adult ESL learners' barriers.

Table 3: Strategic Recommendations

	Recommendations
1	Establish an adult English literacy coalition to develop a hub for strategic planning, resource-sharing, and professional development.
2	Strengthen channels for ongoing communication with community members, community leaders, advocates, and providers.
3	Develop a comprehensive strategy to address common barriers to participation, including transportation.
4	Strengthen partnerships for data-sharing practices with adult educational providers to identify and meet the unique needs of the communities.
5	Develop programming to meet the various refugee and immigrant community's unique linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds and practices.
6	Develop strategies to ensure that the recruitment, hiring, development, and retention of educators addresses the unique needs of students being served.

| 7 | Leverage and braid funding streams to support adult ESL programming and lead coordination efforts between services and program providers. |

INTRODUCTION

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The second largest city in the state of Oklahoma, the City of Tulsa is committed to being a globally competitive, world-class city through building a cohesive and equitable Tulsa and fostering connections between immigrants and long-term residents. Launched in 2018 under Mayor G.T. Bynum's leadership, the New Tulsans Initiative has expanded with the significant step in becoming a Certified Welcoming community in November 2023, becoming the first Certified Welcoming community in the state of Oklahoma.[5] The City of Tulsa is a strategic regional leader, collaborating and providing resources to organizations, companies, agencies, and individual partners committed to an equitable and cohesive Tulsa while offering strategic alignment on efforts.

The New Tulsans Initiative Welcoming Plan[6] outlines the policies, programs, and practices the City and its partners will implement to reach the goal of building a Welcoming City through five categories, including Civic Engagement, Economic Development, Education, Health, and Public Safety. The Vision for Education and aspirational declaration for the future is "All Residents, including immigrants and their children, have the needed support and resources to succeed in school and the needed education to experience overall success in work and in life." To achieve this vision, Goal 4 states, "Immigrants have equitable access to adult literacy, English language, and GED programs both in native and English languages."

In alignment with the aim of building a cohesive and equitable Tulsa, the City of Tulsa, George Kaiser Family Foundation, and Tulsa Community College contracted Language Equity & Access Partners (LEAP) in September 2024 to conduct a Needs Assessment. The purpose of the Needs Assessment and Recommendations Report is to outline a policy analysis and identify potential funding sources for adult ESL programs, assess the demographic profile and needs of the population, assess the current state of adult ESL programming, and identify gaps and interventions the City would need to prioritize to meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the area. This report presents key findings from a Community Scan conducted via a survey and interviews with community members, leaders, advocates, and providers. Insights from this report will inform and contribute to the ongoing efforts of the City of Tulsa and its partners in building a welcoming and inclusive Tulsa.

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[5]See the "New Tulsans Initiative." City of Tulsa. https://www.cityoftulsa.org/newtulsans
[6]See "The New Tulsans Initiative Welcoming Plan." City of Tulsa www.cityoftulsa.org/media/25766/nt-englishplan-4pg-web.pdf

LEAP

LEAP is a minority and women-owned firm founded in 2021 with expertise in immigrant and refugee inclusion, community Needs Assessments, and strategic planning. LEAP's mission is to support organizational and community change efforts that advance equity and access for culturally and linguistically diverse communities in alignment with federal and local legal requirements and industry best practices.

METHODOLOGY

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The Needs Assessment Report was designed and executed in alignment with LEAP's ESL Landscape Analysis Framework, which consists of five distinct steps. This framework serves as the foundation for the Needs Assessment Report, ensuring a comprehensive approach to understanding and addressing the needs of Adult ESL learners and providers in the Greater Tulsa Area. The report is organized into six sections, which include: a review of the ESL landscape and best practices, an analysis of demographic data on Tulsa's population who use LOTE and the foreign-born populations, and an analysis and findings collected from the Community Scan. Figure 1 illustrates the five distinct steps of the LEAP's framework which align with the Needs Assessment sections.

Figure 1: LEAP's ESL Landscape Analysis Framework

Collaborative work with clients is a central feature of LEAP's project implementation approach and is essential to the success of community engagement projects. The project team played a pivotal role in designing and executing data collection goals and activities. The project team's responsibilities include identifying and recruiting stakeholders and participants, coordinating and scheduling data collection

opportunities, and providing background information and relevant data for analysis. This collaborative approach ensured alignment with community needs and enhanced the findings' depth and relevance.

The Landscape and Policy Analysis section provides an overview of existing adult ESL programs, both locally and nationally, to identify opportunities for replication in the Greater Tulsa Area. This section also explores existing funding opportunities and highlights best practices for leveraging diverse funding streams to support adult ESL programming.

The Demographic Data Analysis section examines demographic research on the languages spoken by communities who use LOTE, individuals with LEP, and foreign-born populations. The analysis creates a demographic profile of the Greater Tulsa Area, highlighting trends that inform the current and future demand for adult ESL programming.

The Community Scan and Analysis Findings section reviews primary data collected through three group interviews with ESL providers, community advocates, and a refugee resettlement agency, two surveys aimed at understanding the needs and experiences of Adult ESL providers, community advocates, and ESL Learners. The findings from the section offer valuable insights into the challenges faced by these stakeholders and identify strategies to enhance the effectiveness of ESL services.

Data Collection Summary

The Community Scan was conducted to identify the needs and challenges faced by individuals accessing ESL services, as well as to understand the shared needs and challenges experienced by ESL providers and community advocates in delivering these services to ESL learners. Additionally, the Community Scan aimed to gather recommendations and strategies from stakeholders to enhance the ESL ecosystem in the Greater Tulsa Area.

Data for the Community Scan was collected through multiple methods: three group interviews of ESL providers, community advocates, a refugee resettlement agency; a survey of community advocates; and a survey of ESL providers and teachers. Data was collected from December 2 to December 20, 2024. In total, 36 participants contributed insights to the Community Scan. Table 4 summarizes the data collection methods used in the Community Scan.

Table 4: Community Scan Data Collection Summary

Data Collection Methods	Timeline	Participants
Group Interviews	December 2024	9 Participant
Adult ESL Provider Survey	December 2024	12 Participants
Community Advocate Survey	December 2024	16 Participants

Group Interviews

The group interviews were conducted over Zoom between Wednesday, December 11, and Tuesday, December 17, 2024 to understand the state of Adult ESL programs in the Greater Tulsa Area as well as the needs of Adult ESL learners. The goal of the group interviews was to understand the challenges and gaps in ESL service delivery, identify strategies to improve the effectiveness of adult ESL programming and gather insight from the lived experiences of ESL providers and community advocates. Three group interviews were held, engaging a total of nine participants selected for their expertise in adult ESL programming. Participants included representatives from ESL providers, community advocates, and a refugee resettlement agency. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and involved 25 questions. A summary of the group interviews and the organizations that participated are in Table 5.

Table 5: Group Interview Data Collection Summary

Group Interview	Date	Organizations	Participants
Community Advocates Group Interview	December 11	El Centro	1 Participant
Adult ESL Providers Group Interview	December 17	Tulsa Community College, YWCA, Union Public Schools	4 Participants
Refugee Resettlement Agency and Community Advocates Focus Group	December 17	Catholic Charities of Eastern Oklahoma, Avanzando Juntos	4 Participants

Community Advocate Survey

The Community Advocate Survey was conducted via Survey Monkey from Monday, December 2 to Friday, December 20, 2024. The survey comprised 28 questions designed to assess the demand for adult ESL programming in the Greater Tulsa Area, explore the unique needs of immigrant and refugee communities who use LOTE and participate in adult ESL programs, identify the gaps in the current supply of adult ESL

programming, and collect recommendations and strategies from advocates to address these gaps in. A total of 16 respondents, representing 12 organizations, completed the survey. These organizations included advocacy organizations, community-based organizations, direct service organizations, adult ESL programs, faith-based organizations, government-appointed/affiliated committees, educational institutions, and a refugee resettlement agency. All respondents represented organizations who serve Tulsa County, one organization also serves Creek County, one serves Muskogee County, one serves Osage County, and one also serves Rogers County. Table 6 provides details on participating organizations.

Table 6: Organizations Who Participated in the Community Advocate Survey

Organizations of Community Advocate Survey Respondents		
El Centro	Tulsa Educare	Welcomers International
Family and Children Services	Tulsa Police Department	Oral Roberts University
Growing Together	Tulsa Public Schools	Tulsa Community College TRIO Education Center
Khan Ohana Foundation	Union Adult Learning Center	Tulsa Community College

ESL Provider & Teacher Survey

The Adult ESL Providers and Teacher Survey was conducted via Survey Monkey, running concurrently with the Community Advocate Survey from Monday, December 2 to Friday, December 20, 2024. The survey included 33 questions designed to assess the demand for adult ESL programming, map existing adult ESL programs and identify service gaps, understand the challenges faced by Adult ESL providers, and gather recommendations and strategies for improving ESL services. 12 individuals participated in the survey, which included nine ESL instructors, two ESL program administrators, and one recruitment and outreach coordinator. Participants were selected from Tulsa Community College, a major area ESL provider.

LANDSCAPE & POLICY ANALYSIS

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This section outlines the best practices to leverage diverse funding streams to support adult ESL programming. This includes funding streams and programming related to adult education and workforce development services and federal, state, and private funding streams. Significantly, the policies and priorities of the current presidential administration can influence funding allocations, which affect the availability and type of federal funding streams.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Signed into law in 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was designed to strengthen and improve public workforce systems by supporting youth and those facing significant barriers to employment to attain high-quality jobs and careers and help employers hire and retain skilled workers.[7] WIOA has five title programs:

- Title I: Workforce Development Activities, includes programs for adults, dislocated workers, and youth and establishes the One-Stop delivery system.
- Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) provides grants to states to help adults become literate and develop basic skills for employment; obtain the education and skills to become full partners in their children's education; attain secondary and post-secondary education and training; and improve the English literacy skills of immigrants and other English language learners, along with their understanding of the U.S. government systems and citizenship responsibilities.
- Title III: Amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act, which establishes a national employment system, along with the cooperation with states in promoting such systems.[8]
- Title IV: Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which authorizes funding for vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities.
- Title V: General Provisions includes provisions for the administration of WIOA programs.

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[7] See"Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act", Pub. L. No. 113-128 (2014).
https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf
[8] See "Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, as amended", 29 U.S.C. §§ 49–49l-2 (2023).
https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/american-job-centers/wagner-peyser

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), the U.S. Department of Education (ED), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) collaborate to disperse funding and provide information and resources for WIOA.

WIOA is the primary funding source for adult education, including adult basic and secondary education and English language acquisition programs for immigrant adults. WIOA programs are restricted to certain immigration statuses, which can be disqualifying for some immigrant adult ESL learners.[9] WIOA programs are funded, developed, and governed via a federal-state partnership. For example, in Oklahoma, WIOA is implemented in coordination with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education (Career Tech), and the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services.[10] Six local workforce development boards provide specific strategies to analyze the local labor market, identify occupations and industries in high-demand, and use the information to drive economic and workforce initiatives. Tulsa County is served by the Green County Board. [11] In Tulsa, WIOA programs include High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) preparation classes, correction/institutional education, and English literacy and civic education classes, which "enable adults to become employable, productive, and responsible citizens, workers, and family members."[12]

These programs help participants earn higher wages and economic self-sufficiency, and improve their understanding and participation in American society. One challenge providers face is that WIOA's mandatory performance measures can act as disincentives for local systems and programs to serve adults with lower formal education and English proficiency levels.

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

Part of Title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds programs for adult education on reading, writing, math, and English language acquisition. Federal funds are distributed to states, allocating them to local providers such as community colleges, libraries, and community-based organizations to deliver adult education services. Goodwill TulsaWORKS Career Academy[13] and Madison Strategies Group[14] in Tulsa currently offers programs through AEFLA funding. In Oklahoma, the AEFLA grant is administered by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

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[9] The Michigan Office for New American has a checklist for identifying if an immigrant or refugee is eligible for WIOA Title I Services which was developed in 2022, and is available at
https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/media/pdf/2022/09/owd-102_wioa_immigrant_eligible_english_03-2022.pdf
[10] See "WIOA Core Partners". Oklahoma Works.
https://oklahoma.gov/workforce/partners.html#:~:text=WIOA%20Core%20Partners,%2C%20coordination%2C%20or%20supportive%20role.
[11] See "Local Workforce Development Board". Oklahoma Works. https://oklahoma.gov/workforce/partners/lwdb.html
[12] See "About Us." Oklahoma CareerTech.
https://oklahoma.gov/careertech/educators/adult-education-and-family-literacy/about.html
[13]See "Goodwill Career Academy" Goodwill Industries of Tulsa. https://www.goodwilltulsa.org/gwt/TulsaWorks3.asp
[14] https://www.madisonstrategies.org/

Adult ESL Policies and Funding Programs:

Another federally funded program is the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), which provides federal financial aid through Pell Grants to students enrolled in postsecondary institutions. Individuals seeking English as a Second Language (ESL) education encounter significant barriers when accessing federal financial aid for intensive English programs. For example, to qualify for federal financial aid, students must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program. Federal financial aid options, such as Pell Grants and student loans, are only available to those in programs that lead to a degree or recognized certificate. Programs that focus solely on language instruction, without resulting in a degree or credential, typically do not meet these criteria. Additionally, to qualify for a Pell Grant, the institution offering the ESL program must have approval from the Department of Education and must meet the general eligibility requirements outlined in the Federal Student Aid Handbook. The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) reauthorized HEA, as amended.

Oklahoma SNAP Employment and Training Provider Resources

The federal Employment & Training (E&T) program, administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), provides Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants with opportunities to gain skills, training, work, or experience that increase their ability to obtain regular employment and meet

> **Spotlight: A National Model**
> Washington Community and Technical College uses the I-BEST @ Work model, with grants funded by private entities supporting I-BEST @ Work sites throughout Washington state focused on service industries including retail, hospitality, food service, and tourism. Through this model, navigators offer both classroom and community support, complementing the specific role of teachers. The I-Best Model has been implemented in Washington since 2012.

state or local workforce needs. The educational components of the program include ESL, adult basic education (ABE), basic literacy, high school equivalency (GED), career and technical education (CTE), and post-secondary education. When administering an OK SNAP Works, reimbursement cannot be made to supplant federal awards such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), JobCorps, and "Ticket to Work."

In Oklahoma, the program is administered by Oklahoma Human Services in partnership with community-based organizations. The organization submits the OK SNAP Work- Prospective SNAP E&T Partner Request. More information can be found on the Oklahoma Human Services page.[15]

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[15] See "Become a SNAP Employment and Training Provider" Oklahoma Human Services. https://oklahoma.gov/okdhs/oksnapworks/setprovider.html

Additional Funding Strategies for adult ESL programming: A Brief Overview

The City of Tulsa is a strategic leader in creating local partnerships to expand opportunities for immigrants and refugees and increasing access to adult ESL classes aligns with the priorities outlined in the New Tulsans Initiative Welcoming Plan. While various organizations in the greater Tulsa area offer support using state, federal and foundational grants and funds for adult ESL instruction, there are ways to strategically leverage programming to support ESL provision while meeting the needs of migrant, immigrant, and refugee populations.

For example, Oklahoma's Digital Equity Plan focuses on increasing access, adoption, and use of high-speed internet for all Oklahomans. Covered populations include individuals who experience a language barrier, including individuals who are English learners and have low levels of literacy. The Digital Equity Plan outlines the work of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Division in the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education in assisting adults with low levels of literacy with becoming literate, obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency, and the opportunity to be fully participating workers, parents, and citizens of the state. The Digital Equity Plan also outlines the role of community anchor institutions (CAI), such as schools and public libraries, that serve all covered populations. They may offer digital literacy training, free access to computers, and technical assistance. Public libraries offer programs like Digital Navigators, hotspot lending, computers, and free digital resources. These resources can be leveraged to support local adult ESL provision. National funding opportunities for digital literacy are a potential source of funding for adult ESL programs. Furthermore, funding for adult ESL programs is often supported through blending and leveraging funds. The following section expands on additional funding opportunities the City of Tulsa can explore.[16]

Employer-Funded Programs

Adult ESL learners face intersectional issues, including limited U.S. work experience, that can push them into low-paying, unstable jobs with limited possibilities for advancement.[17] One effective way to fund adult ESL programs is through employer-sponsored programs, where employees can participate in classes held at their workplace. Adult Vocational ESL (VESL) programs are designed to minimize barriers to participation, such as transportation and scheduling conflicts. Collaborations among educational specialists, vocational trainers, and employers, emphasizing developing skills such as ESL and workplace

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[16]See "Fulfilling Oklahoma's Digital Promise: Digital Equity Plan." Oklahoma Broadband Office. (2024). https://oklahoma.gov/content/dam/ok/en/broadband/documents/grant-programs/digital-promise/Digital%20Equity%20Plan%20Approved.pdf

[17]See Hardin, Katherine. "We had a good thing going: the rise, fall, and future of vocational ESL in the United States." Adult Education Quarterly 73, no. 3 (2023): 231-247.

training in a vocational context, can make these programs effective. However, obtaining employer support for the programs is a significant challenge.

Intergenerational adult ESL programs

A two-generation (2Gen) approach supports the integration of adult immigrants and refugees and their children. Centering integration in the program design, beyond improving English skills or facilitating basic education, supports higher wages, deeper community and civic engagement, and long-term economic self-sufficiency. In the report, Leveraging Data to Ensure Equitable and Effective Adult Skills Programming, the Migration Policy Institute highlights how programs should be tailored to the "characteristics of local communities and the school readiness and learning goals of local early childhood and elementary school systems."[18] The U.S. Department of Education's Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) program[19] provides funding for local education agencies (LEAs), community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, or other public or private entities to invest in community schools, "an evidence-based strategy to advance equity and reduce barriers to learning by providing the services needed to support student and family well-being".[20] At this time, Union Public Schools has eight full-service community schools[21], plus the Union Adult Learning Center[22] which provides free adult education classes to the community. These initiatives support economic mobility and prosperity while developing skills for parents and family members to be full partners in their children's education.

Various organizations support English language acquisition in the Greater Tulsa Area. For example, the Community Action Project (CAP) of Tulsa offers community members adult ESL programs to improve English reading and speaking skills. The program covers Osage County, Rogers County, Tulsa County, and Wagoner County. CAP focuses on interrupting poverty cycles by providing high-quality early education services for young children and providing supportive services to improve the economic status of their parents.[23] Strengthening local partnerships would help support local ESL initiatives and qualify for potential funding opportunities, including private and public sectors.

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[18]See "Leveraging Data to Ensure Equitable and Effective Adult Skills Programming for Immigrants." Migration Policy Institute. www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpi_nciip-adult-skills-brief-2023_final.pdf
[19]See "Full-Service Community Schools Program (FSCS)." U.S. Department of Eductation. https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/school-community-improvement/full-service-community-schools-program-fscs#home
[20]See "Community Schools." Learning Policy Institute. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/topic/community-schools
[21] See "Community Schools Initiative." Union Public Schools. https://www.unionps.org/about/community-schools
[22]See "About Us" Union Adult Learning Center. https://ualc.unionps.org/about-us
[23] Se "About CAP Tulsa" CAP Tulsa. https://captulsa.org/about

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ANALYSIS

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The Greater Tulsa area is a linguistically and culturally rich region with constantly changing demographics. Understanding the linguistic and demographic profile of the area is essential to support targeted provisions of adult ESL programming. This section provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the Greater Tulsa area, Tulsa County, and Tulsa Public Schools. The demographic characteristics are analyzed by identifying (1) the languages other than English (LOTE) most commonly spoken by the individuals ages five years and older who speak English less than "very well" or are limited English proficient (LEP); (2) the density of populations who use LOTE and with LEP; and (3) the places of birth of the foreign-born population to understand the linguistic and cultural background of individuals who use LOTE.

The demographic analysis utilizes data sets collected from the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau,[24] including data from the Greater Tulsa Area, Tulsa County, and Tulsa Public Schools. Data from public schools was used to further understand the local context and demographic makeup and capture populations that might be undercounted. Table 1 in the Executive Summary summarizes the demographic findings in this section.

Greater Tulsa Area Demographic Profile

Greater Tulsa's LEP Population

The Greater Tulsa area comprises nine counties: Tulsa County, Rogers County, Wagoner County, Creek County, Osage County, Okmulgee County, Pawnee County, Washington County, and Muskogee County. In total, these counties have an estimated population of 1,064,802 as of 2022.[25] Of the total population, 11.11% of the Greater Tulsa area speaks a language other than English at home (LOTEH). This includes 118,295 individuals who speak

11.11% of the Greater Tulsa population speaks a LOTEH.

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[24] See Appendix 1: Explanation of Data Used in the Demographic Analysis for detailed information on the data selected and used in the demographic analysis.

[25] See U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 _American Community Survey Five Year Estimates_ (Table C16001). https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.C16001?q=C16001:%20Language%20Spoken%20at%20Home%20for%20the%20Population%205%20Years%20and%20Over&g=050XX00US40037,40101,40111,40113,40117,40131,40143,40145,40147&d=ACS%205-Year%20Estimates%20Detailed%20Tables

LOTEH) ages five and older.[26] Appendix 2 summarizes the top languages spoken by individuals who use LOTEH.

| 4.09% of the Greater Tulsa population is LEP. | Of the Greater Tulsa area's LOTEH population, over a third (36.48%) self-report as limited English proficient (LEP). As of 2022, there were an estimated 43,564 individuals with LEP ages five and older in the Greater Tulsa area, or 4.09% of the area's total population.[27] The region's LEP population is significant, as almost 30% of Oklahoma's LEP population resides in this area.[28] |

The Greater Tulsa area has a diverse makeup of individuals with LEP, however, Spanish is by far the most common language spoken by individuals with LEP in the Greater Tulsa area. As seen in Figure 2, almost 70% of the area's LEP population ages five and older speak Spanish[29], with 29,914 individuals. The other top languages and language categories[30] spoken by persons with LEP are Other Asian and Pacific Island languages,[31] Vietnamese, Other Indo-European languages,[32] Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese)[33], and Other and Unspecified languages.[34] Figure 2 displays the top languages spoken by persons with LEP in the Greater Tulsa area and their share of the LEP population.

Spanish is the top language spoken by Greater Tulsa's LEP population

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[26] See U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 *American Community Survey Five Year Estimates* (Table C16001).

[27] See U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 *American Community Survey Five Year Estimates* (Table C16001).

[28] See U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 *American Community Survey Five Year Estimates* (Table C16001). https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.C16001?q=C16001:%20Language%20Spoken%20at%20Home%20for%20the%20Population%205%20Years%20and%20Over&g=040XX00US40

[29] Per the US Census, this language category includes: Spanish, Ladino, etc.

[30] The US Census Bureau has over 1,333 language codes that are collapsed into a set number of language group classifications. According to the US Census Bureau, "The determination of whether to show an individual language or collapse it into an aggregated category depends chiefly on the size of the population in the United States speaking that language at home. In tabulations, smaller languages are aggregated with other languages in a way that meets a certain population threshold, but has some utility for translators or researchers." See About Language Use in the US Population." https://www.census.gov/topics/population/language-use/about.html

[31] Per the US Census, this language category includes several languages including: Japanese, Hmong, Khmer, Thai or other Tai-Kadai languages, Burmese, Karen, Turkish, Uzbek, Illocano or other Austronesian languages, etc.

[32] Per the US Census, this language category includes: Italian, Portuguese, Greek, Armenian, Persian, Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Nepali or other Indic languages, Albanian, Lithuanian, Pashto, Romanian, Swedish, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam or other Dravidian languages, etc.

[33] Per the US Census, this language category includes: Mandarin Chinese, Min Nan Chinese (incl. Taiwanese), Yue Chinese (Cantonese), etc.

[34] Per the US Census, this language category includes languages such as Uralic languages like Hungarian; Semitic languages like Arabic and Hebrew; languages of Africa like Amharic; Native North American languages like American Indian and Native Alaskan languages; and indigenous languages of Central and South America.
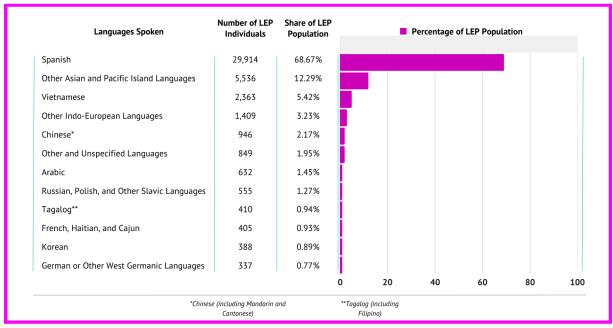
![LEAP logo]

Figure 2: Top Languages Spoken by Greater Tulsa Area's LEP Population Ages Five and Older

Languages Spoken	Number of LEP Individuals	Share of LEP Population	Percentage of LEP Population
Spanish	29,914	68.67%	
Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages	5,536	12.29%	
Vietnamese	2,363	5.42%	
Other Indo-European Languages	1,409	3.23%	
Chinese*	946	2.17%	
Other and Unspecified Languages	849	1.95%	
Arabic	632	1.45%	
Russian, Polish, and Other Slavic Languages	555	1.27%	
Tagalog**	410	0.94%	
French, Haitian, and Cajun	405	0.93%	
Korean	388	0.89%	
German or Other West Germanic Languages	337	0.77%	

*Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese)   **Tagalog (including Filipino)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, 2022 Five Year Estimates (Table C16001)

Greater Tulsa's Foreign-Born Population

> 6.88% of Greater Tulsa's population is foreign-born.

Understanding the correlation between immigration patterns and language prevalence helps determine and provide the necessary resources to support linguistic and cultural diversity. As of 2022, an estimated 73,208 individuals or 6.88% of Greater Tulsa's population, are foreign-born.[35] Understanding the density of the foreign-born population and their places of birth is necessary to understand the cultural and linguistic needs of the LEP population. Cultural context is necessary for adult ESL providers to anticipate the needs of English-language learners and cater programming to better meet their needs. Additionally, understanding the changes in immigration trends is important for future planning. For example, in recent years, communities from the Pacific Islands, Afghanistan, Myanmar, and India have made the Greater Tulsa area their home.

Greater Tulsa's foreign-born population represents over 162 countries. As seen in Figure 3, the top places of birth for the Greater Tulsa Area's foreign-born population include Mexico, Vietnam, Burma, India, and Guatemala. A significant portion of the foreign-born population

> Mexico is the top place of birth for Greater Tulsa's foreign-born population.

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[35] See U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 *American Community Survey Five Year Estimates* (Table B05006). https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.B05006?q=B05006:%20Place%20of%20Birth%20for%20the%20Foreign-Born%20Population%20in%20the%20United%20States&g=050XX00US40037,40101,40111,40113,40117,40131,40143,40145,40147

originates from Mexico, making up almost 40% of the foreign-born population.[36] The size of the population who originates from Mexico underscores the historical migration of Mexican communities to the Greater Tulsa Area. For exa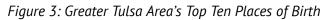mple, significant Mexican migration to Oklahoma began in the early 1900s when thousands of refugees fled Mexico as they experienced deteriorating social and economic conditions and contributed to the development and maintenance of railroads, coal mining, cotton harvests, and other work.[37] The migration of Mexican communities, as well as Guatemalan, Honduran, and Venezuelan communities may also provide context to the sizable Spanish-speaking population in the Greater Tulsa area. Figure 3 displays the top 10 places of birth for foreign-born persons in the Greater Tulsa area.

Figure 3: Greater Tulsa Area's Top Ten Places of Birth

Places of Birth	Foreign-Born Population	Share of Foreign-Born Population
Mexico	29,163	39.84%
Vietnam	3,467	4.74%
Burma*	3,341	4.56%
India	2,980	4.07%
Guatemala	2,665	3.64%
China**	1,824	2.49%
Honduras	1,630	2.23%
Venezuela	1,617	2.21%
Laos	1,472	2.01%
Philippines	1,387	1.89%

*Burma (Myanmar)   **China (including Honk Kong and Taiwan)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, 2022 Five Year Estimates (Table B05006)

Tulsa County's LEP Population

Though this project's service area extends to the surrounding counties, it is important to highlight the primary service area where a large portion of the target population for Adult ESL programming resides in Tulsa County. According to the 2022 American Community Survey, Tulsa County has an estimated population of 623,854 individuals. 15.25% of that population speaks a LOTEH. There are an estimated 95,157 individuals, ages five and older who speak a LOTEH.[38]

15.25% of the Tulsa County population speaks a LOTEH.

Of Tulsa County's LOTEH population, over a third (34.45%) self report as LEP. There are an estimated 36,587 individuals with LEP ages five and older in Tulsa County. These individuals comprise 5.86% of Tulsa County's total population. Tulsa County's LEP population is quite significant, representing 83.98% of the Greater Tulsa area's LEP population.[39] Figure 4 illustrates the population density of Tulsa County's LEP population. Appendix 2 summarizes the top languages spoken by individuals who use LOTEH.

5.86% of the Tulsa County population is LEP.

Figure 4: Heat Map of Tulsa County's LEP Population

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[38] See U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 *American Community Survey Five Year Estimates* (Table C16001).
https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2022.C16001?q=C16001:%20Language%20Spoken%20at%20Home%20for%20the%20Population%205%20Years%20and%20Over&g=050XX00US40037,40101,40111,40113,40117,40131,40143,40145,40147&d=ACS%205-Year%20Estimates%20Detailed%20Tables
[39] See U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 *American Community Survey Five Year Estimates* (Table C16001).

Density of LEP Population Ages 5 and Older

- > 640 to 1,530 Individuals
- > 310 to 640 Individuals
- > 160 to 310 Individuals
- > 90 to 160 Individuals
- > 40 to 90 Individuals
- 1 to 40 Individuals

The top five languages spoken by Tulsa County's LEP Population are Spanish, Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages, Vietnamese, Other-Indo European Languages, and Chinese.

Tulsa County's language diversity is very similar to the Greater Tulsa area, which is understandable given it represents a majority of the LEP population. As expected, Spanish is by far the most common language spoken by individuals with LEP, representing nearly 70% of Tulsa County's LEP population ages five and older. As shown in Figure 5, there are an estimated 25,278 Spanish-speakers with LEP in Tulsa County. Though significantly less, the other languages or language groups spoken by Tulsa County's population with LEP include Other Asian and Pacific Island languages, Vietnamese, Other Indo-European languages, Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese), and Arabic.[40] Figure 5 displays the top languages and language groups spoken by Tulsa County's LEP population ages five and older. Appendix 3 displays a heat map of Tulsa County's LEP population.

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[40] See U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 *American Community Survey Five Year Estimates* (Table C16001).
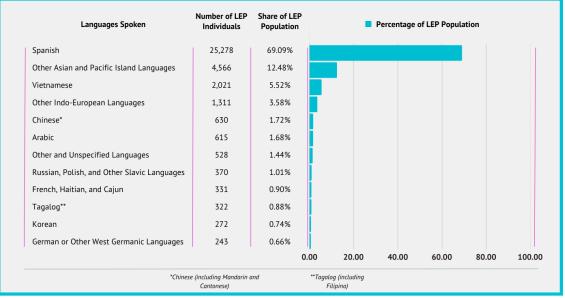
Figure 5: Top Languages Spoken by Tulsa County's LEP Population Ages 5 and Older

Languages Spoken	Number of LEP Individuals	Share of LEP Population
Spanish	25,278	69.09%
Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages	4,566	12.48%
Vietnamese	2,021	5.52%
Other Indo-European Languages	1,311	3.58%
Chinese*	630	1.72%
Arabic	615	1.68%
Other and Unspecified Languages	528	1.44%
Russian, Polish, and Other Slavic Languages	370	1.01%
French, Haitian, and Cajun	331	0.90%
Tagalog**	322	0.88%
Korean	272	0.74%
German or Other West Germanic Languages	243	0.66%

*Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese)   **Tagalog (including Filipino)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, 2022 Five Year Estimates (Table C16001)

Tulsa Public Schools Language Data

In addition to pulling data from the 2022 ACS five year estimates, data was also collected and analyzed from the Tulsa Public Schools (TPS) school district. Language data was collected from 103 public schools within the school district. Using public school data adds additional context to Tulsa's demographic profile, additionally because the ACS relies on estimates, school data might be a more accurate representation of the Tulsa area's LOTE population. For the 2024 school year, 12,759 TPS students spoke a language other than English.

12,759 TPS students speak a LOTE.

The five most common languages spoken by TPS students were Spanish, Chuukese, Hmong, Pashto, and Marshallese. Similarly to above, the population of Spanish speakers was significant with 11,482 students speaking Spanish representing almost 90% of all TPS students who speak LOTE. Figure 6 shows the top 10 languages spoken by TPS students and their percentage of the TPS LOTE population.

Spanish represents 90% of all students who speaks LOTE.

Figure 6: Tulsa Public School Top 10 Languages
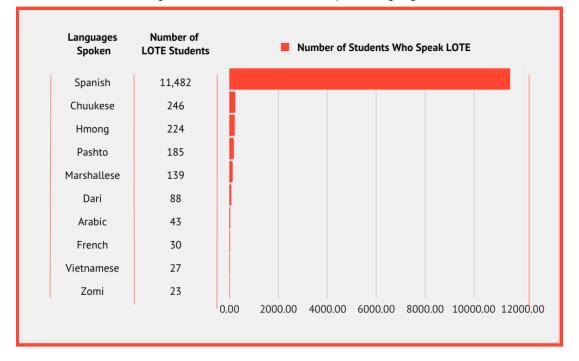

Languages Spoken	Number of LOTE Students
Spanish	11,482
Chuukese	246
Hmong	224
Pashto	185
Marshallese	139
Dari	88
Arabic	43
French	30
Vietnamese	27
Zomi	23

The top 5 schools with the highest number of LOTE students is East Central High School, Rogers College High, East Central Middle School, Hale High School, and Rogers College Middle School.

In addition to understanding the languages spoken by TPS students, it's also important to understand where these students go to school. The top TPS schools with larger populations of students who use LOTE include East Central High School. Rogers College High, East Central Middle School, Hale High School, and Rogers College Middle School. Figure 7 shows the top 10 schools with the largest concentration of students who use LOTE. The Tulsa Public Schools that had the top language other than English reported are East Central High School, with 805 students speaking a LOTE, Rogers College High (729), East Central Middle School (575), Hale High School (494), and Rogers College Middle School (456). Figure 7 displays the top 10 schools for students who speak a language other than English.
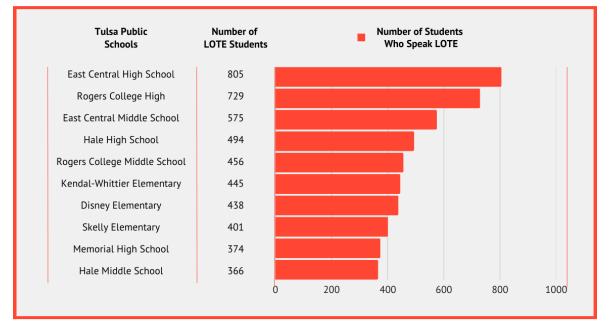
Figure 7: Tulsa Public School Top 10 Schools for LOTE

Tulsa Public Schools	Number of LOTE Students	Number of Students Who Speak LOTE
East Central High School	805	
Rogers College High	729	
East Central Middle School	575	
Hale High School	494	
Rogers College Middle School	456	
Kendal-Whittier Elementary	445	
Disney Elementary	438	
Skelly Elementary	401	
Memorial High School	374	
Hale Middle School	366	

COMMUNITY SCAN ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

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This section provides a comprehensive analysis of the data collected through the Community Scan, which includes surveys and interviews with community advocates and adult ESL providers. Findings highlight how changes in local demographics of refugee and immigrant populations require a strategic approach to tailoring adult ESL programs and services to the linguistic and cultural needs of the communities in the Greater Tulsa Area. The City of Tulsa's leadership in establishing strategic alignment and collaborative structures, and providing resources to organizations, companies, agencies, and individual partners is a continued need. Seven key findings were identified, as outlined in Table 2, and expanded upon in this section.

Current Community Landscape

Finding 1: The Greater Tulsa Area is home to numerous organizations supporting refugee and immigrant communities.

The Community Scan highlighted a network of multi-sector organizations that provide support for community members who use LOTE and support adult ESL programming in the Greater Tulsa Area. Many of these organizations have a long history of working in the region and provide diverse resources, including advocacy, educational, and wrap-around services.

The Community Scan participants represented 15 organizations and educational institutions in Greater Tulsa that support refugee and immigrant communities. The following table outlines the types of organizations represented in the Community Advocate Survey and Adult ESL Provider Survey.

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Table 7: Organizations represented in the Community Advocate Survey

Organization Type	Percentage	Number
Community-Based Organizations	50%	6
Adult ESL programs or Organizations	41.67%	5
Higher Education Institutions	33.33%	4
Advocacy Organizations	25%	4
Direct Service Organizations	16.67%	2
Government-Appointed/Government Affiliated Committee or Commission	8.33%	1
Faith-Based Organizations,	8.33%	1
Public School District	8.33%	1
Refugee Resettlement Agency.	8.33%	1

The question allowed for multiple responses to the type of organization respondents represented. As demonstrated in the table, various respondents represented more than one type of organization.

Twelve of the 16 Adult ESL Provider survey respondents listed the type of organization they represented, as demonstrated in the table below.

Table 8: Organizations represented in the Adult ESL Provider survey

Organization Type	Percentage	Number
Educational Institutions	91.67%	11
Community-Based Organization	8.33%	1

As the City of Tulsa, the George Kaiser Family Foundation, and Tulsa Community College work together to strengthen local adult ESL programming, partnering with the existing network of community partners will support a more cohesive strategic plan.

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Finding 2: Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic are identified as the languages encountered most frequently by community advocates and Adult ESL providers.

Survey findings corroborate the U.S. Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey data that states that an estimated 11% of the population in the Greater Tulsa Area speak a language other than English at home (LOTE), and 4% of the population is limited English proficient (LEP), with Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic being the most widely spoken languages among individuals in the Greater Tulsa Area who use languages other than English (LOTE).

The breakdown of language communities encountered by the adult ESL provider survey is as follows: all 11 respondents identified Spanish, nine (81.82%) identified Vietnamese and Arabic, (54.55%) identified Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages, four (36.36%) identified French/Haitian Creole, two (18.18%) identified Chinese and Korean, and one (9.09%) identified Tagalog. For the Community Advocate survey, the breakdown is as follows: all 14 respondents identified Spanish, seven (50%) identified Arabic, four (28.57%) identified Vietnamese, Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages, three (21.43%) identified French/Haitian Creole, two (14.29%) identified Tagalog and Chinese, and one (7.14%) identified Korean. Other languages identified by survey respondents and interviewees include: Zomi/Zou/Chin/Burmese (for Burmese refugees); Pashto and Dari (for Afghan refugees); Ukrainian (for Ukrainian refugees); Farsi; Chuukese, Marshallese, Pohnpeian, and other Micronesian languages; indigenous languages from Central America; Brazilian Portuguese, Turkish, Thai, and Laotian.
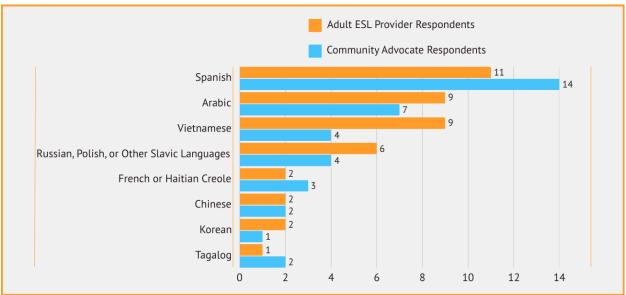
Figure 8: Top Language Communities Encountered by Survey Respondents

Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic are the language communities with the highest representation among learners actively enrolled in adult English language programs, with small pockets of growing language communities emerging as a result of new refugees arriving in Tulsa. These include refugees from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Burma, and countries in Latin America such as Venezuela, Cuba, and Guatemala.

Finding 3: The continuously changing landscape of the refugee and immigrant populations creates challenges in providing programs and services, as the demand for different types of adult ESL programs and services varies by language and cultural community.

In the last five years, Community Advocate and Adult ESL Providers witnessed a change in the refugee population landscape. There is an increase of Burmese, Afghan, Ukrainian, Latin American (specifically Venezuelan, Cuban, Guatemalan, and Colombian), and Syrian refugees, each with diverse linguistic and cultural needs to be met. Also, the City of Tulsa became the first Certified Welcoming city in Oklahoma in November 2023, further increasing its commitment to refugee and immigrant communities.[41]
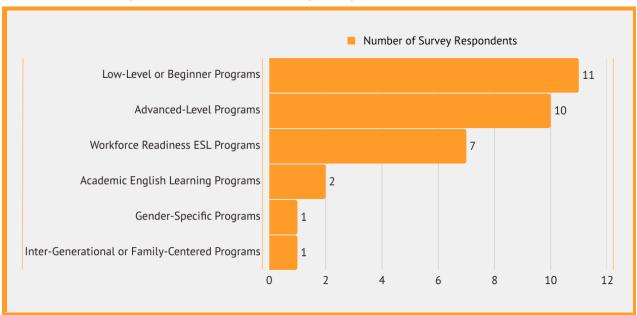
As these populations continue to grow, adult ESL providers and community advocates have had to adjust their programs and services better to meet the needs of each refugee and immigrant community. Survey and interview data highlighted the need to develop gender-specific classes for Muslim Afghan women coming from a more conservative religious background. Organizations are also seeing a growing need to provide literacy classes, as many new refugee populations are coming in with low literacy rates in their native languages, making English language acquisition more challenging without additional support.
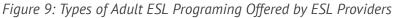
According to the Adult ESL Provider survey, the type of adult ESL program provided by the different organizations can be broken down as such: all of the 11 respondents to this question said their organization offers Lower Level or Beginner Programs. This is followed by ten (99.91%) respondents stating that their organization offers Advanced-level programs, seven (63.54%) offer Workforce Readiness adult ESL programs, two (18.18%) offer academic English programs, and one (9.09%) offers gender-specific and inter-generational or family-centered programs. Figure 9 illustrates the types of programming offered by ESL providers. The respondents of the Community Advocates survey mentioned a wider range of services and programs for adult English learners. These include adult ESL language classes offered at different levels and with an emphasis on specific populations (gender-specific, parents of students attending school district, etc.), referrals services to other

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[41] See "Building a World-Class City: Tulsa Excels In Education and Refugee Resettlement" Certified Welcoming. 2024 https://certifiedwelcoming.org/2024/01/02/building-a-world-class-city-tulsa-excels-in-education-and-refugee-resettlement/

organizations or agencies, outreach to individuals and families regarding educational opportunities available, as well as support on services and resources navigation, other adult learning opportunities such as free GED tutoring, specific vocational training for Certified Nursing Assistant and Child Development Accreditation.
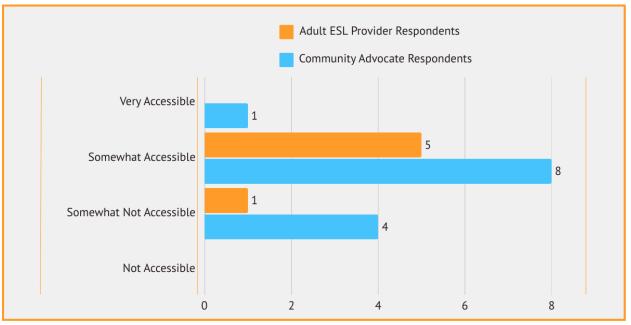
Figure 9: Types of Adult ESL Programing Offered by ESL Providers

Experiences and Needs of Adult ESL Learners and Providers

Finding 4: Adult ESL programs are somewhat accessible to community members who use a language other than English despite the many barriers community members face.

The survey data from the Adult ESL Provider and Community Advocate surveys showed that five (83.33%) of six respondents in the Adult ESL Provider survey considered that adult ESL programs in the Greater Tulsa area are somewhat accessible to community members who use a language other than English, while one (16.67%) considers them somewhat not accessible. These responses align with the Community Advocate survey responses shown in Figure 10, where one (7.69%) of 13 respondents believe they are very accessible, eight (61.54%) believe they are somewhat accessible, and four (30.77%) believe they are somewhat not accessible.

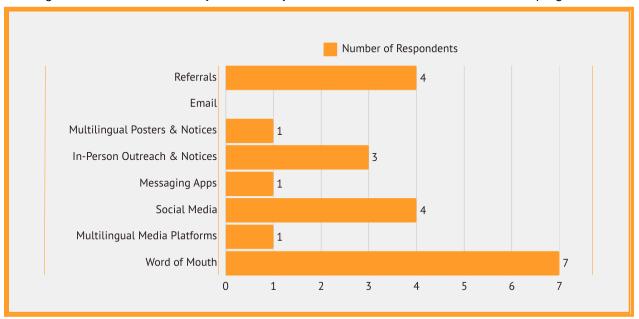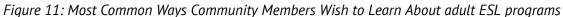*Figure 10: Accessibility of Greater Tulsa's adult ESL programs*

The most common ways community members who wish to learn English find out about the adult ESL programs offered are through word-of-mouth referrals, social media, in-person outreach and engagement, and direct referrals from other service providers. All survey respondents and interview participants identified word-of-mouth referrals as the number one way that information regarding adult ESL programs is shared. Apart from being the most effective way for the information to be shared, it is also the most cost-effective way for adult ESL providers to market their programs, as no money needs to be invested on their end through this means. As seen in Figure 11, of the seven adult ESL providers survey respondents, four (57.14%) identified social media and referrals from other service providers, three (42.86%) identified in-person outreach and engagement, and one (14.29%) identified multilingual media platforms, messaging apps, or multilingual posters and notices as ways that community members find out about the adult ESL programs offered. Of the 13 Community Advocates survey respondents, nine (69.23%) identified social media, eight (61.54% identified in-person outreach and engagement, two (15.38%) identified multilingual media platforms and messaging apps, and one (7.69%) identified multilingual posters and notices.

Figure 11: Most Common Ways Community Members Wish to Learn About adult ESL programs
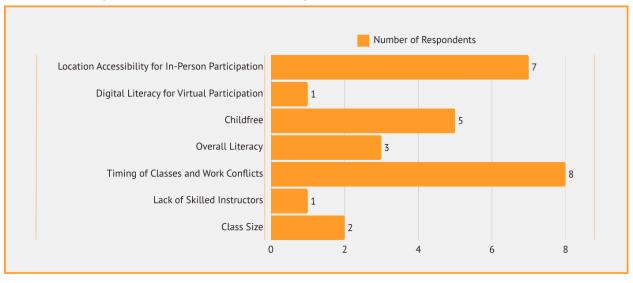
Survey respondents identified multiple barriers as most challenging for adult ESL learners seeking to participate in adult ESL programs. Of the eight respondents of the Adult ESL Provider Survey, all identified the timing of classes and conflict with work, seven (87.50%) identified location accessibility for in-person participation, five (62.50%) identified child care, three (37.50%) identified overall literacy, two (25%) identified class size, and one (12.5%) identified digital literacy for virtual participation or lack of skilled instructors as the most challenging barriers. This is illustrated by Figure 12. Of the 13 respondents of the Community Advocates Survey, nine (69.23%) identified location accessibility for in-person instruction, eight (61.54%) identified childcare, seven (53.85%) identified timing of classes and conflict with work, five (38.46%) identified overall literacy, three (23.08%) identified lack of skilled instructors and lack of wraparound services, and two (15.38%) identified digital literacy for virtual participation, lack of culturally relevant instruction, and lack of workforce readiness instruction as the most challenging barriers faced.

Figure 12: Barriers to Adult ESL Programs Identified by Adult ESL Providers

Other barriers identified were the cost of participation–not including tuition–such as the cost of rideshares to get to class, lack of understanding of the transportation system, participant mindset regarding the need to learn English, or confidence level surrounding their ability to learn English, and fear of negative repercussions for participation based on immigration status (specifically for the Hispanic/Latino immigrant community).

Finding 5: Adult ESL program providers in Greater Tulsa are somewhat successful in collectively meeting the local demand for adult English language instruction, despite facing many challenges.

Based on the Community Advocates and Adult ESL Provides surveys, four (57.14%) of seven total respondents in the Adult ESL Provider survey consider that Adult ESL program providers are somewhat successful. In comparison, three (42.86%) of seven respondents believe they are somewhat not successful. These responses align with the responses in the Community Advocate Survey as one (7.69%) of 13 respondents believes they are very successful, eight (61.54%) believe they are somewhat successful, and four (30.77%) believe they are somewhat not successful.

Survey and interview participants identified the lack of coordination between service and program providers, limited availability of funding opportunities, negative social and political views towards refugees and immigrant communities, low quantity of highly qualified instructors, and lack of professional development as challenges they face to ensure they can successfully meet the local demand of Adult English language instruction, which currently outpaces the availability of resources. Programs consistently have large waitlists of individuals they are not able to serve through their current programming, with examples from the Union Adult Learning Center and the YWCA being at least 100 students on waitlists per semester. For programs like the one in Tulsa

Community College, students are not able to apply for financial aid, as the adult ESL programs are not considered credit courses and do not qualify. A profit-sharing program is currently in place to provide between $30,000-$40,000 in scholarship funds to students, but that still does not meet the need.

The limited availability of funding for programs also directly affects the number of highly qualified instructors and opportunities for professional development. Adult ESL providers acknowledged that the timing of courses, usually set to evenings and weekends to accommodate student schedules, can be a barrier to recruiting highly qualified instructors who may not find those schedules desirable. A factor that is beyond the control of Adult ESL providers and Community Advocates yet has a large impact on their work is the cycles of social and political shifts that lead to greater or less support for the services and programs they offer to refugee and immigrant communities. Even when programs and services may not be in jeopardy due to changing policies, there may be fear within the communities they serve due to the national political climate. All of this is also happening as adult ESL providers and community advocates work on addressing the barriers already faced by community members in the Greater Tulsa area (outlined in the previous finding). One interviewee stated, "…we do the best we can, but because we do the best we can, we make it look really good, and nobody knows the stress going on behind the scenes trying to make it all happen."

Recommended Actions from Providers and Advocates

Finding 6: Adult ESL Providers and Community Advocates highly recommend creating and strengthening collaborative systems to streamline all efforts.

The need for systemic collaboration between stakeholders is highlighted throughout the surveys and interviews. Adult ESL Providers and Community Advocates see an opportunity to develop formal referral systems to ensure learners are matched with programs and services that best meet their individual needs, share professional development to grow the pool of highly qualified instructors, network with other service providers to get to know the work happening in different spheres, and find opportunities to work together; collaborate on grant applications to increase funding revenues and use each organization's expertise to develop programs and services that best meet the needs of the community; and develop an online platform and communication methods to establish information-sharing pipelines to stay up to date with new and ongoing programs and services provided by different stakeholders. The SettleIn app is currently a tool that is used by some adult ESL providers to provide programming to refugee communities, and it could be leveraged to support the information-sharing pipelines as other resources are developed.

One Adult ESL Provider survey respondent stated that the "[c]reation of a language access council, coalition, consortium, or similar entity to include local and state government, higher education institutions, K-12 school systems, non-profits, foundations, companies, faith communities, and other organizations to collect-organize-disseminate ESL/ELL information, develop-offer professional training opportunities, facilitate networking and collaboration, coordinate-implement grant and foundation opportunities, recruitment and training of instructors, etc.," is a regional infrastructure that would assist their organization as well as other providers in fully addressing the needs of adult ESL learners. Other respondents also mentioned that an annual conference or workshop for providers, community advocates, and other stakeholders would be beneficial in facilitating collaboration among Adult ESL program providers. It would offer an opportunity to participate in professional development and network with other community partners, as well as provide an avenue for participants to share and receive updates on the current state of adult ESL education in the Greater Tulsa area.

At the root of this is the need for additional private funding streams that allow more flexibility in program planning and implementation, and collaborative partnerships that leverage the strengths of each partner. Government funding, whether local, state, or federal, usually comes with restrictions and strict reporting guidelines that Adult ESL providers may not have the capacity to fulfill in their current state. Another opportunity for additional funding is through partnerships with employers interested in implementing workforce ESL classes within their workplace. These additional requirements are an added burden to organizations whose staff is already stretched thin to keep programs running as they stand.

Finding 7: Adult ESL Providers and Community Advocates recommend implementing creative solutions to address adult ESL learners' barriers.

The diverse needs of the different refugee and immigrant communities require that varied approaches be taken to address the barriers that adult ESL learners face. No organization needs to have all the solutions, and as the Adult ESL Providers Interview participants stated, each organization has its "niche." For example, organizations know that if a student has reached their advanced level courses and are interested in pursuing college-level courses, the best next step for them would be the Intensive English Program (IEP) classes offered through Tulsa Community College, a program that is already recognized for its ability to provide higher level English language education to prepare students for college-level courses. On the other hand, Tulsa Community College does not offer transportation or childcare to support its students, something that community organizations like Welcomers International offer their students. The limited funding available also makes it difficult to recruit and train highly qualified instructors, and additional

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private funding is an opportunity to fund program staff who can focus on recruiting instructors, as well as professional development and training for instructors.

To tackle the limited transportation options that Adult ESL learners have, some organizations like the Khan Ohana Foundation, Welcomers International, and YWCA offer classes in community buildings where a large population of refugee and immigrant communities reside, such as public libraries, community rooms in apartment complexes, and faith-based buildings. Apart from easier physical access, these programs also provide additional "community cohesion" and "community building", as mentioned by interview participants. Another strategy mentioned by interview participants and survey respondents to ensure access to classes is to increase the digital literacy of Adult ESL learners by having additional virtual offerings available to them.

It is also important to take time to get to know the individual communities being served and allow their voices to be heard when it is time to implement new strategies. Organizations like Welcomers International, YWCA, and Khan Ohana Foundation offer gender-specific classes to accommodate the cultural and religious needs of Afghan Muslim women who expressed interest in learning English, but did not feel comfortable doing so in a mixed-gender classroom. Union Adult Learning Center and Tulsa Educare are educational institutions offering Adult ESL classes to the parents of students attending their respective schools. They recognize that many families had limited opportunities to attend classes at different times and "opted to offer [their] families ESL because [the] limited choices [they] found for families to utilize during the day while their children were in school." Understanding the difference between refugee communities also helps Adult ESL providers make updates to their programs as needs arise. An example given in the Community Advocate Interviews is a partnership between Catholic Charities and a local synagogue before the pandemic that provided Adult ESL language classes to stay-at-home moms. The program started with primarily Burmese moms and their children (childcare was provided) and then "expanded to also offer [classes] to Russian speakers[42]." There were likely differences in the levels of access to educational opportunities in their country of origin between both communities, which impacted how they engaged in the ESL classes in their program. The Russian speakers requested homework and a more formal educational setting, and the synagogue took that feedback and decided to focus on higher-level classes to support this community.

According to the Community Advocates Survey, there is a "growing emphasis on teaching functional English [which] helps learners navigate specific contexts, such as job interviews, workplace interactions, safety training, and customer service." A participant in the Community Advocates

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[42] A community advocate referred to "Russian" speakers, however it is important to note that data gathered from the interviews and surveys identified Ukrainian refugees as a growing linguistic community, and although Ukrainian is the official language of Ukraine, Russian is widely spoken in some areas of Ukraine.

Interviews noticed a drop in enrollment after level two and level three, as this is usually the level when Adult ESL learners "have enough [English] to be able to get around, either at the grocery store or […] interacting with the teachers at their kids' school or in the workplace." Another participant stated that after surveying parents at a school, she learned that their preference was towards less formal ESL classes that introduced vocabulary necessary to "communicate at the school or communicate to the doctor or communicate at the supermarket." Adult ESL providers must adapt to the needs of the refugee and immigrant populations to ensure their program and service offerings can best support their English language acquisition needs.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

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This section outlines short-term and long-term strategic objectives and goals for offering the full breadth and scope of adult ESL programs needed in the region. The strategic recommendations develop a vision and path forward for providing comprehensive and accessible adult ESL programs that address existing gaps and meet ELLs where they are.

The Community Scan highlighted the City of Tulsa's leadership in offering strategic alignment on efforts that will support local ESL implementation. Additionally, the Community Scan underlined the need for the City's continued leadership in providing opportunities and resources to organizations, companies, agencies, and individual partners. These initiatives align to support immigrants' equitable access to adult literacy English language and GED programs in native and English languages.

Program, Service, Community Mapping

Recommendation 1: Establish an adult English literacy coalition to develop a hub for strategic planning, resource-sharing, and professional development.

Throughout the Community Scan, interview participants and survey respondents highlighted the need for a cohesive strategy between all adult ESL providers and community-based organizations providing adult ESL programs. At this time, most are working in silos, largely in part to the high demand and limited resources available, which leaves little time and energy to develop deeper ties with other groups. By establishing an adult English literacy coalition, the City of Tulsa, George Kaiser Family Foundation, and Tulsa Community College can bring together key stakeholders to shape the adult English literacy landscape in the Greater Tulsa area.

Examples of adult English literacy coalitions in the U.S. are:

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- Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL)[43] in Montgomery County, Maryland, whose mission is to "strengthen and build adult English language learning programs and instruction to further individual and family success at work, school, and in the community." The coalition is made up of public, nonprofit, and business partners and focuses on two areas: building program capacity and promoting English literacy. They also provide funding for adult ESL programs at different stages, from small grants for start-up programs to larger program grants for more established programs. Apart from instructional and programmatic support, grant funds can be used for supplementary services, such as childcare and transportation costs.
- The New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy (NYCCAL)[44] is an advocacy organization that brings together multiple community stakeholders across New York City "to [advocate] for an adult literacy system that provides quality, comprehensive and accessible educational services," and "believes that being able to read and write, learn English, obtain a High School Equivalency, and enter training and post-secondary education are the rights of every New Yorker, and the cornerstone to an equitable and just society."
- The Literacy Coalition of Central Texas[45] was founded in 2001 by "a wide network of literacy providers and community leaders [...] in response to the need for a centralized location for literacy services." They provide Adult Education, Career Development Education, Family Education, training for community partners that host the coalition's programs at their locations, and resources for partners that include literacy information for advocacy support, curriculum and instruction, and capacity building, among others.

The Community Scan highlighted local organizations that provide and support local infrastructure for adult ESL programming. To lay the groundwork for coalition building, additional organizations that offer adult ESL programs can be identified through an asset-based community development (ABCD) mapping exercise.[46] Strengthening and leveraging regional assets and partnerships through coalition building will support a healthy local ecosystem for local adult ESL programming. Once developed, the coalition can then identify strengths and gaps in services and programs, potential collaborative opportunities, and additional resources that are available or are needed to be successful.

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[43] See "MCAEL Coalition for a Connected Community" MCAEL. https://www.mcael.org/

[44] See " New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy" NYCCAL. https://www.nyccaliteracy.org/

[45] See the "Literacy Coalition of Central Texas: Building Stronger Communities." Literacy Coalition of Central Texas . https://willread.org/

[46] See "Toolkit" ABCD Institute. https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/resources/Pages/tool-kit.aspx

Recommendation 2: Strengthen channels for ongoing communication with community members, community leaders, advocates, and providers.

The lack of local coordinated efforts and a need for systemic collaboration between stakeholders can be addressed through strengthened channels for ongoing communication between community members, leaders, advocates, and providers. The City of Tulsa can be a strategic leader, convening and organizing stakeholders to develop a clear direction for adult ESL programming.

Developing a comprehensive strategy to leverage diverse media and communication platforms would promote welcoming initiatives and can be used to gain local support for adult ESL programming and recruitment of instructors and students. Communication campaigns aimed at recruiting participants or disseminating information should align with community preferences, particularly highlighted in the Community Scan as word of mouth. Other effective strategies involve distributing printed flyers, utilizing multilingual social media platforms, and engaging in door-to-door outreach.

Additionally, leveraging the City of Tulsa's Welcoming initiatives can support strengthened public communication on welcoming efforts and counter misinformation. The Community Scan revealed how negative social and political views of refugees and immigrant communities impacted local efforts for adult ESL programming and participation in ESL classes. As a Certified Welcoming community, the City of Tulsa can leverage its partnership with Welcoming America to develop communication focused on how welcoming efforts benefit everyone. Effective communication purposefully aligns welcoming efforts with local values and addresses why targeted efforts are needed and what residents can do to take action.[47] Communication campaigns can also draw from the work of partner organizations.

Recommendation 3: Develop a comprehensive strategy to address common barriers to participation, including transportation.

Transportation was a key barrier to participation, as identified in the Community Scan. The City of Tulsa, in partnership with other agencies, can develop strategies to address the barriers to transportation, including barriers to accessing public transportation or the cost of ride-sharing apps for participants. A promising strategy to address the transportation barrier is to hold ESL classes in public libraries, community rooms in apartment complexes, or faith-based buildings.

A key barrier to public transportation was knowledge of how to use the public transportation system. Developing public campaigns tailored to community members who use LOTE in partnership

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[47] See "Standing Up for Welcoming: Four practical actions for local leaders" Welcoming America.https://welcomingamerica.org/resource/standing-up-for-welcoming-four-practical-actions-for-local-leaders/

with public transportation agencies, such as Metrolink Tulsa, would help address this gap. Demonstrations to show community members who use LOTE how to use the transit systems could support these efforts.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen partnerships for data-sharing practices with adult educational providers to identify and meet the unique needs of the communities.
The demographic data points to a need to tailor local services to the demographic profile of the communities served and develop a strategy for collecting and sharing data on the languages spoken by communities and the demographic profile of the communities to ensure programs are culturally and linguistically relevant.

For example, key data from the Greater Tulsa Area's demographic profile outlines how **6.88% of Tulsans are foreign-born**, with **Mexico, Vietnam, Burma, India, and Guatemala** as the top places of foreign-born populations. Additionally, 7.55% of the Greater Tulsa population, ages five and older, speak Spanish. The demographic profile of Tulsa County and Tulsa Public Schools for School Year 2023-2024 mirror the data where Spanish is a top language. The Community Scan analysis highlighted the linguistic and cultural diversity within the region, which the demographic analysis outlined in more depth. Developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and other strategies to collect, analyze, use, and share state, regional, and local demographic data will support the City of Tulsa in ensuring efforts are aligned with the community's needs.

Recommendation 5: Develop programming to meet refugee and immigrant communities' unique linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds and practices.
The Community Scan highlighted the changing demographics of linguistically and culturally diverse community members. Ensuring adult ESL programming meets the religious, cultural, and linguistic practices of individuals who speak LOTE is a key priority. Key aspects include developing programming and classes that are responsive to participants' religious and cultural practices, including gender norms.

The community can shed light on the growing need to provide literacy instruction in response to communities with low literacy rates in their native languages, which makes text-based ESL instruction challenging. Additionally, ESL instruction should consider the linguistic and cultural practices of refugee and immigrant groups who primarily use oral communication methods. For some groups, dialogue-based methods of instruction might be more effective.

Recommendation 6: Develop strategies to ensure the recruitment, hiring, development, and retention of educators addresses the unique needs of students being served.

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A key challenge highlighted in the Community Scan was the low quantity of highly qualified instructors and professional development opportunities. Partnerships with local higher education institutions, including Tulsa Community College, can support these efforts. One approach to address this issue is to build local capacity by creating training programs for ESL instructors in communities that use LOTE. Another strategy is to recruit ESL instructors from teacher education programs. Additionally, partnerships can be formed with curriculum and instruction programs to develop and evaluate curriculum and assessment materials. Furthermore, local higher education institutions can offer space for ESL classes.

Funding Strategies

Recommendation 7: Leverage and braid funding streams to support adult ESL programming and lead coordination efforts between services and program providers.

A key barrier identified in the Community Scan was the lack of coordination between services and program providers and the limited funding opportunities. The Landscape Analysis documented the diversity in funding streams available for adult ESL and the need to strategically align adult ESL efforts to outcomes that support adult educational and family literacy, career laddering, continuing licensing, credentialing, and digital literacy. Various funding opportunities can be strategically directed to adult ESL programming, and combining funds from multiple public and private sources would support more comprehensive services. The City of Tulsa can be a strategic leader in developing clear outcomes and strategies to ensure local partners take full advantage of existing resources. Additionally, the City of Tulsa's leadership can ensure local efforts can proactively anticipate and address workforce shortages, reduction in funding, and other scenarios that impact financing. In addition to the strategies outlined in the Landscape and Policy Analysis, the list Below outlines grants and sources for adult literacy.

Aligning the curriculum to **Teaching Skills That Matter in Adult Education**[48] and the five topic areas support evidence-based instruction while supporting greater access to funding opportunities by demonstrating alignment with national priorities in adult education.

1. Civics Education
2. Digital literacy
3. Financial Literacy
4. Health Literacy
5. Workforce Preparation

The Teaching the Skills That Matter Toolkit includes topic-based issue briefs, case studies, lesson plans, an annotated bibliography, and additional tools and resources.

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[48] https://lincs.ed.gov/state-resources/federal-initiatives/teaching-skills-matter-adult-education

Opportunity: Federal Government Grants

Managed by the Department of Health and Human Services, _Grants.gov_ provides a centralized listing of funding opportunities from federal agencies. To apply for grants to organizations through _Grants.gov_, your organization must be registered with the U.S. government through its System for Award Management (_SAM.gov_). The platform can help identify grants from the federal government to support Adult ESL.

Higher Learning Grant Programs: With the leadership of the Tulsa Community College, partnership with faculty and students at the college can be a potential funding source. The partnership can include creating and co-teaching courses in linguistically and culturally diverse communities, incorporating service-learning projects where students apply language skills in partnership with adults in the English language acquisition program, and developing and utilizing tools and platforms to engage language acquisition, such as interactive storytelling and online archives. Other funded activities can support content creation, including audio and video works, databases, software, digitization of works, books, white papers, or other digital content.

Full-Service Community Schools Program: Funding from the Full-Service Community Schools Program can be leveraged to further expand the current integrated English literacy and civics education course offerings for families and community members. Community Schools grantees are expected to provide "comprehensive academic, social, and health services for students, student's family members, and community members that will result in improved educational outcomes for children," therefore, adult education and workforce readiness programs are one way that funding can support this goal.

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Grants: Oklahoma CareerTech manages the AEFLA grants for the state and has opportunities for funding through three different grant opportunities: Adult Education & Family Literacy, Correctional/Institutional Education, and Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education. All three grants allow grantees to use the funding for English Language Acquisition Programs, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education, Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activities, and Workforce Preparation Activities.

Opportunity: Partnership with Local Libraries

Partnerships with the local library can strengthen programming. For example, funded through the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the American Library Association offers the ALA Library Building Capacity Grant, which supports libraries to increase their capacity to provide essential services. Funded initiatives related to adult ESL include broadening technology access, providing digital instruction, increasing staffing to support linguistically and culturally diverse communities,

expanding outreach, and maintaining and amplifying existing services or adding new ones. The program prioritizes serving marginalized or underrepresented communities. In 2024, designated grantees were libraries serving incarcerated persons or assisting those re-entering society. Funding Amount: $10,000.

Opportunity: Foundation Grants

Foundation grants can provide supplementary funding for adult ESL programming. For example, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation offers two programs to support adult ESL initiatives. The Adult Literacy Grants are awarded to organizations that provide direct services to adults needing literacy assistance. This can include Adult Education Instruction, GED or High School Equivalency preparation, and English Language Acquisition. In 2024, the foundation funded literacy initiatives from the Catholic Charities of The Diocese of Tulsa and the Community Action Project of Tulsa County Inc. Funding Amount: $10,000. The Family Grants support nonprofit organizations that help families with literacy. Funded activities include adult education instruction, children's education, and parent and Child Time (PACT). Applications open in January 2025. YMCA Tulsa Inc. was awarded in 2024 in the amount of $10,000.

Foundation Grants with a Literacy Focus

Adult literacy The Literacy Opportunity Fund offers two programs that support adult literacy and can be leveraged for adult English language acquisition. First, the National Book Fund provides print materials for the New Readers Press material.
- $500 - $2,000 (greater or lesser funds can be considered)
- Awarded annually
- Application period: February 1- March 15

Mobile Learning Fund provides subscriptions and licenses to digital learning materials
- Up to $3000
- Materials include preparation for GED, or HiSet test, career preparation courses for English language learners, and digital news sources
- Grants are awarded throughout the year

Opportunity: Corporate Grants and Sponsorships

Partnerships with local businesses can support adult ESL provider efforts to increase program offerings through workforce development of adult ESL programs and offer funding for supplemental services at current ESL program sites, such as childcare, transportation, and food. To support these partnerships, AEFLA funding can be used to enhance the investment that companies make to ensure their employees have access to quality English language acquisition programs to

further their career advancement. As sponsors for supplemental services, companies can further their investment in their communities by enhancing the services that adult ESL programs can offer.

CONUSION

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Key findings from a Community Scan based on surveys and interviews with community members, leaders, advocates, and providers documented the continuously changing landscape for refugee and immigrant populations and the need for tailored and flexible programming that addresses adult ESL students' unique experiences and needs. Findings highlight the City of Tulsa's leadership role in addressing barriers to participation, including transportation, and leading coordination efforts and partnerships. Overall, 37 participants contributed to this assessment with contributions from community members, leaders, advocates, and providers for adult ESL programs.

Significantly, the policy analysis documented best practices for leveraging diverse funding streams to support adult ESL programming, including the federal funding streams and disbursements in the state of Oklahoma. As the City of Tulsa, George Kaiser Family Foundation, and Tulsa Community College continue to strengthen local ESL efforts, continued partnership and coalition building with community-based organizations that are recipients of federal funding will enhance local services.

New Tulsans Initiative Welcoming Plan

"All Residents, including immigrants and their children, have the needed support and resources to succeed in school and the needed education to experience overall success in work and in life." - *Vision for Education*.

"Immigrants have equitable access to adult literacy, English language, and GED programs both in native and English languages." - *Education, Goal 4*

The report will support the ongoing work of the City of Tulsa, George Kaiser Family Foundation, and Tulsa Community College in ensuring equitable access to adult ESL programming that promotes education for overall success in work and life, aligning with the New Tulsans Initiative Welcoming Plan.

LIMITATIONS

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This report aims to provide a comprehensive review of the needs of Adult ESL providers and ESL learners. While the **Landscape and Policy Analysis**, **Demographic Analysis**, **Community Scan**, and **Strategic Recommendations** sections offer valuable insight, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations of the data collection and analysis.

One of the Needs Assessment's key limitations is the reliance on the American Community Survey (ACS) from the U.S. Census Bureau to analyze demographic data. While a valuable tool and the best source for demographic data, ACS data has inherent limitations in accurately counting immigrant populations and persons who speak LOTE. Since ACS data relies on a sampling of self-reported data, there is risk of undercounting historically marginalized communities due to factors such as language barriers, cultural distrust, and fear of legal repercussions. Additionally, ACS data often categorizes languages of lesser diffusion into broader language groups, making it challenging to identify smaller linguistic communities within the Greater Tulsa area accurately. These limitations underscore the importance of using supplementary data sources and community engagement to ensure a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the region's diverse demographics.

Another limitation lies in the Community Scan's participation rates. While the data in the Community Scan was rich in documenting the experiences of Adult ESL providers, community advocates, and the refugee resettlement agency, engagement levels were lower than expected. The Community Advocate Survey had only one participant despite multiple scheduling efforts, and both surveys received response rates below 50%. Greater participation could have strengthened the accuracy and depth of the findings. Additionally, the voices and experiences of adult ESL learners themselves were not directly represented in the survey, limiting the report's ability to fully capture their perspectives. Including input from ESL students in future assessments would provide a more holistic and accurate portrayal of Greater Tulsa's Adult ESL landscape.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This report would not have been possible without the contributions of the Project Team: Krystal Reyes, Cynthia Jasso Burke, and Daniel Chaboya. Thank you to the City of Tulsa, the George Kaiser Family Foundation, and the Tulsa Community College for their input and guidance throughout this process and for providing a great experience. Thank you to all those who have participated in and contributed to this report and supported the process all along.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Explanation of Data Used in the Demographic Data Analysis

The Demographic Analysis analyzes data from the 2018 to 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) five year estimates to assess the languages other than English spoken at home (LOTEH), English language abilities, and places of birth of the foreign-born population within the Greater Tulsa area. The ACS, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, is a large-scale survey that provides population estimates over one-year, three-year, and five-year periods on various demographic characteristics such as age, race, languages spoken, place of birth, educational attainment, income, poverty, housing, employment, and other topics for states, counties, cities, and other geographic areas. The data from this report utilizes five-year estimates, which combines data collected over a 60-month period between 2018 and 2022. This data set was selected because it provides increased statistical reliability compared with that of single-year estimates and offers greater precision to identify the languages other than English (LOTE) spoken in the region. Additionally, five-year estimates provide block group data, the lowest level of geography available through the ACS data.

Figure 14: ACS Question on English Speaking Ability

14 **a. Does this person speak a language other than English at home?**
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No → *SKIP to question 15a*

b. What is this language?

[ ]

For example: Korean, Italian, Spanish, Vietnamese

c. How well does this person speak English?
- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Well
- ☐ Not well
- ☐ Not at all

While the ACS five-year estimates are often the only source of demographic data for communities that are too small or infrequently surveyed, making it useful to organizations for planning and research purposes, it is also important to note its limitations. Smaller populations will be grouped together, and diverse languages may not specifically be named. A community-based assessment directly engaging community stakeholders and partners is needed to better identify and map smaller language communities that speak languages of lesser diffusion.

The ACS collects data on speakers of languages other than English and on their English-speaking ability by asking participants if they speak a language other than English at home. Participants who self-report speaking a language other than English at home are asked to identify the language and indicate whether they speak English "Very Well," "Well," Not

Well," or "Not at All". All but those who select "Very Well" are considered to be limited English proficient or LEP. This data was pulled at the county level using the code B16001. Figure 14 displays the ACS survey question on English language speaking ability.

Appendix 2: Most Common Languages Spoken by Greater Tulsa and Tulsa County's LOTEH Populations
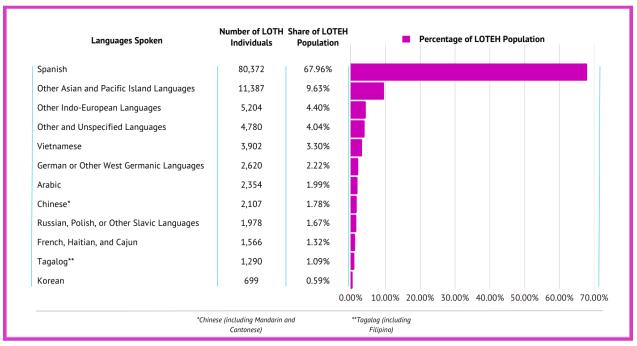
Figure 15: Top Languages Spoken by Greater Tulsa's Population Who Speaks LOTEH

Languages Spoken	Number of LOTH Individuals	Share of LOTEH Population
Spanish	80,372	67.96%
Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages	11,387	9.63%
Other Indo-European Languages	5,204	4.40%
Other and Unspecified Languages	4,780	4.04%
Vietnamese	3,902	3.30%
German or Other West Germanic Languages	2,620	2.22%
Arabic	2,354	1.99%
Chinese*	2,107	1.78%
Russian, Polish, or Other Slavic Languages	1,978	1.67%
French, Haitian, and Cajun	1,566	1.32%
Tagalog**	1,290	1.09%
Korean	699	0.59%

*Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese)   **Tagalog (including Filipino)*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, 2022 Five Year Estimates (Table C16001)

Figure 16: Top Languages Spoken by Tulsa County's Population Who Speaks LOTEH

Languages Spoken	Number of LOTH Individuals	Share of LOTEH Population
Spanish	65,395	68.72%
Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages	9,165	9.63%
Other Indo-European Languages	4,580	4.81%
Vietnamese	3,398	3.57%
Other and Unspecified Languages	3,128	3.29%
Arabic	2,218	2.33%
German or Other West Germanic Languages	1,658	1.74%
Chinese*	1,643	1.73%
Russian, Polish, or Other Slavic Languages	1,366	1.44%
French, Haitian, and Cajun	1,248	1.31%
Tagalog**	901	0.95%
Korean	457	0.48%

*Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese)   **Tagalog (including Filipino)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, 2022 Five Year Estimates (Table C16001)

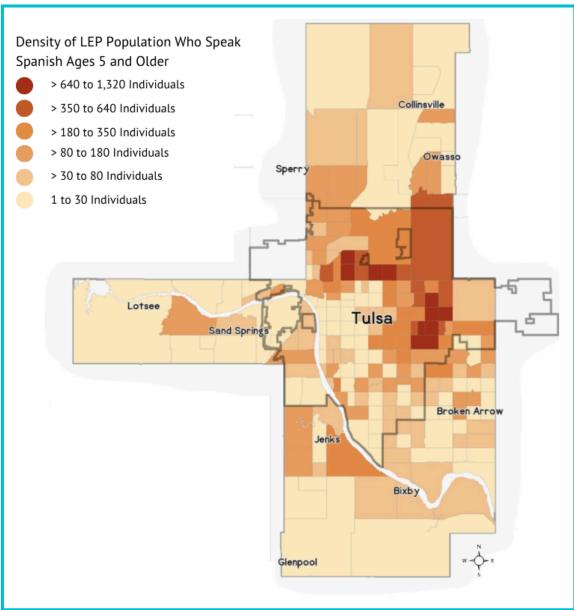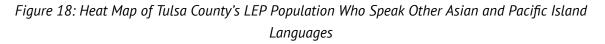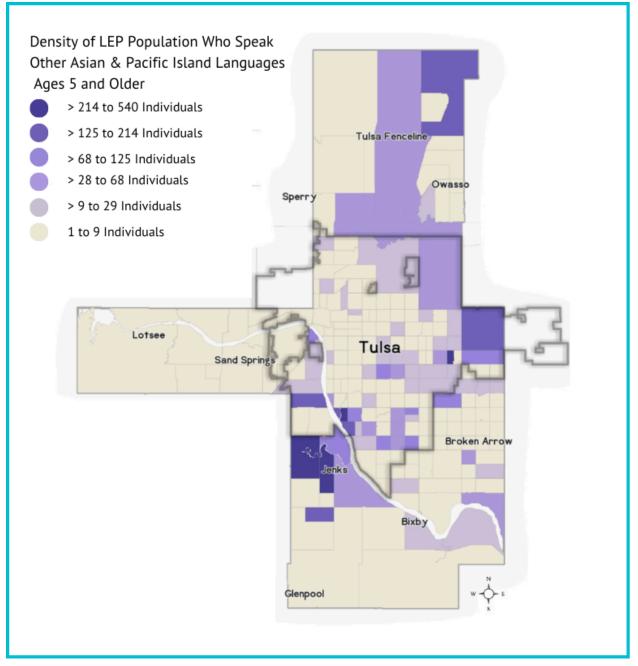## Appendix 3: Tulsa County LEP Population Heat Maps

Figure 17: Heat Map of Tulsa County's LEP Population Who Speak Spanish

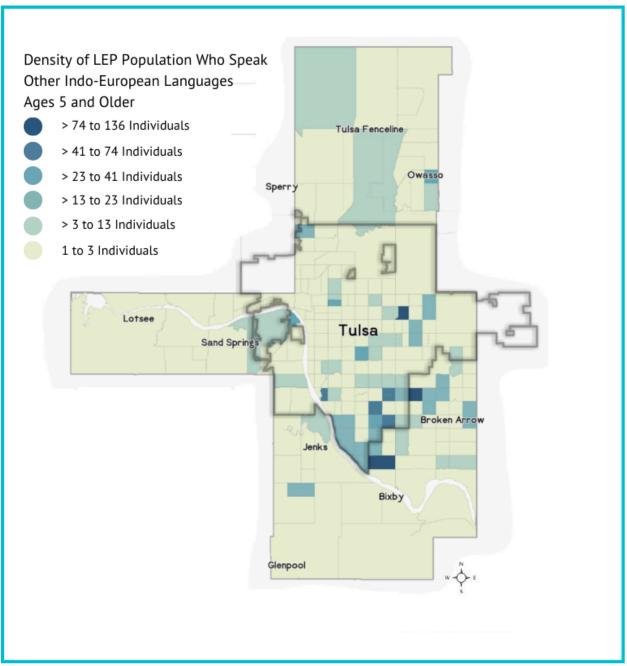*Figure 18: Heat Map of Tulsa County's LEP Population Who Speak Other Asian and Pacific Island Languages*

Figure 19: Heat Map of Tulsa County's LEP Population Who Speak Other Indo-European Languages
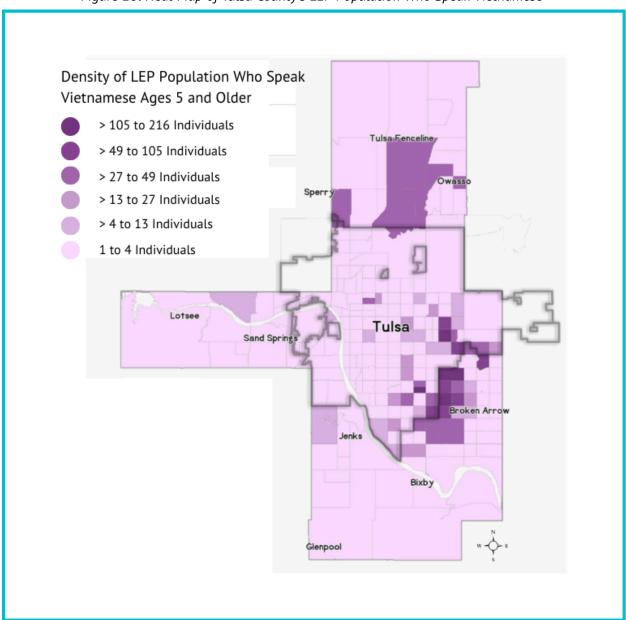
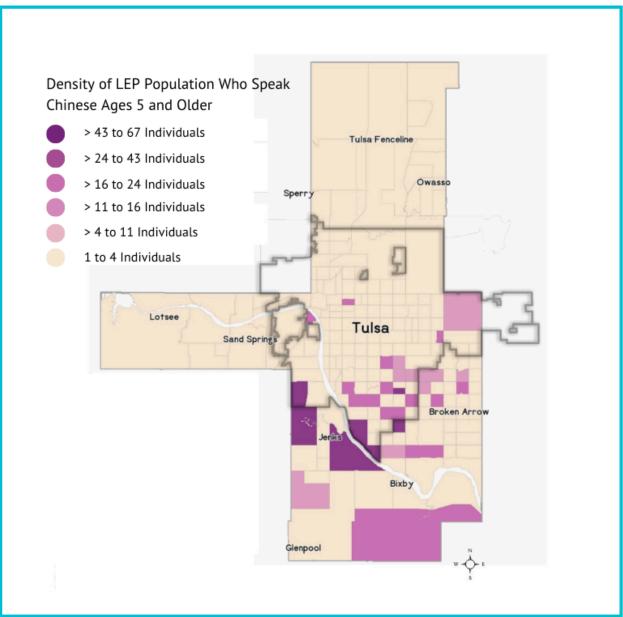*Figure 20: Heat Map of Tulsa County's LEP Population Who Speak Vietnamese*

Figure 21: Heat Map of Tulsa County's LEP Population Who Speak Chinese