

A Nation of Immigrants in a Nativist School System

Leah Zachary || Northern High School

Introduction

ELL students are students who are learning English, there is a clear issue between ELL students. Many ELL students are of Latin American descent and students being put into IEPs or Individualized Education Programs at alarming rates.

The General Question

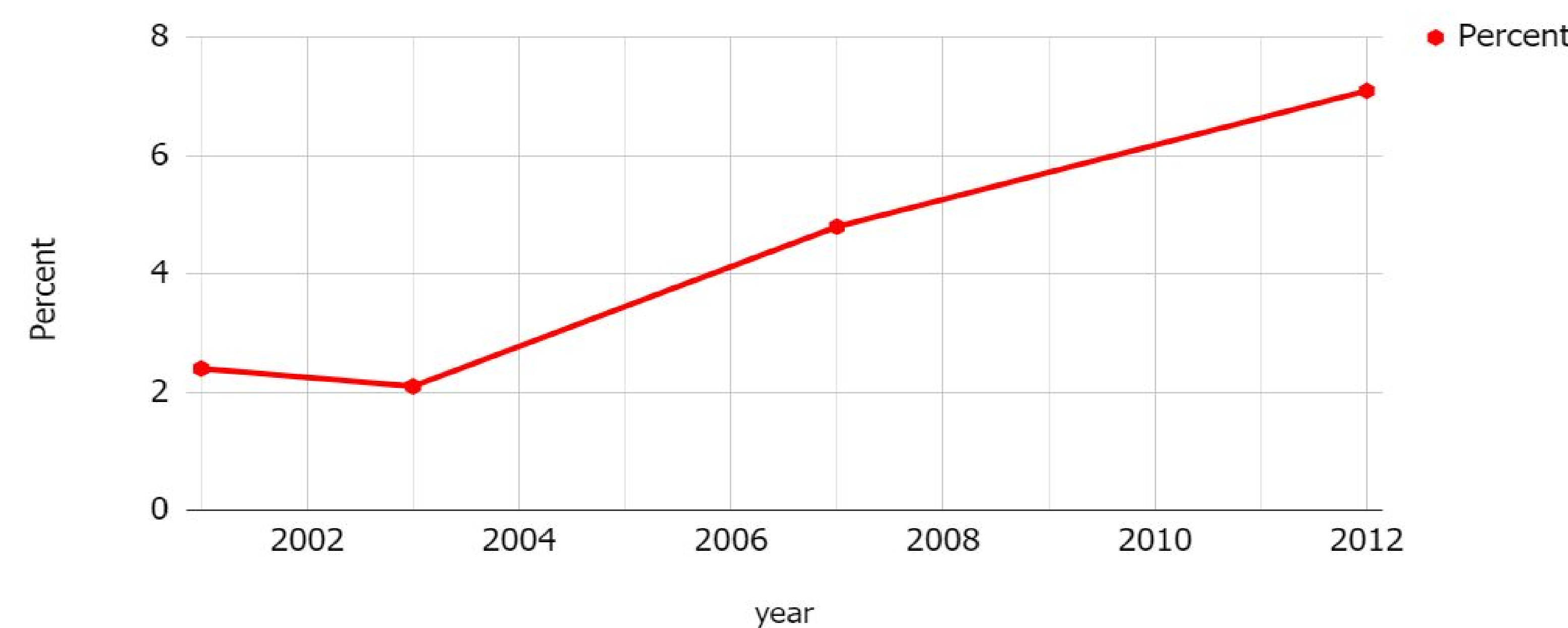
How does the overrepresentation of English Language Learners in Special Education programs to high dropout rates?

Background

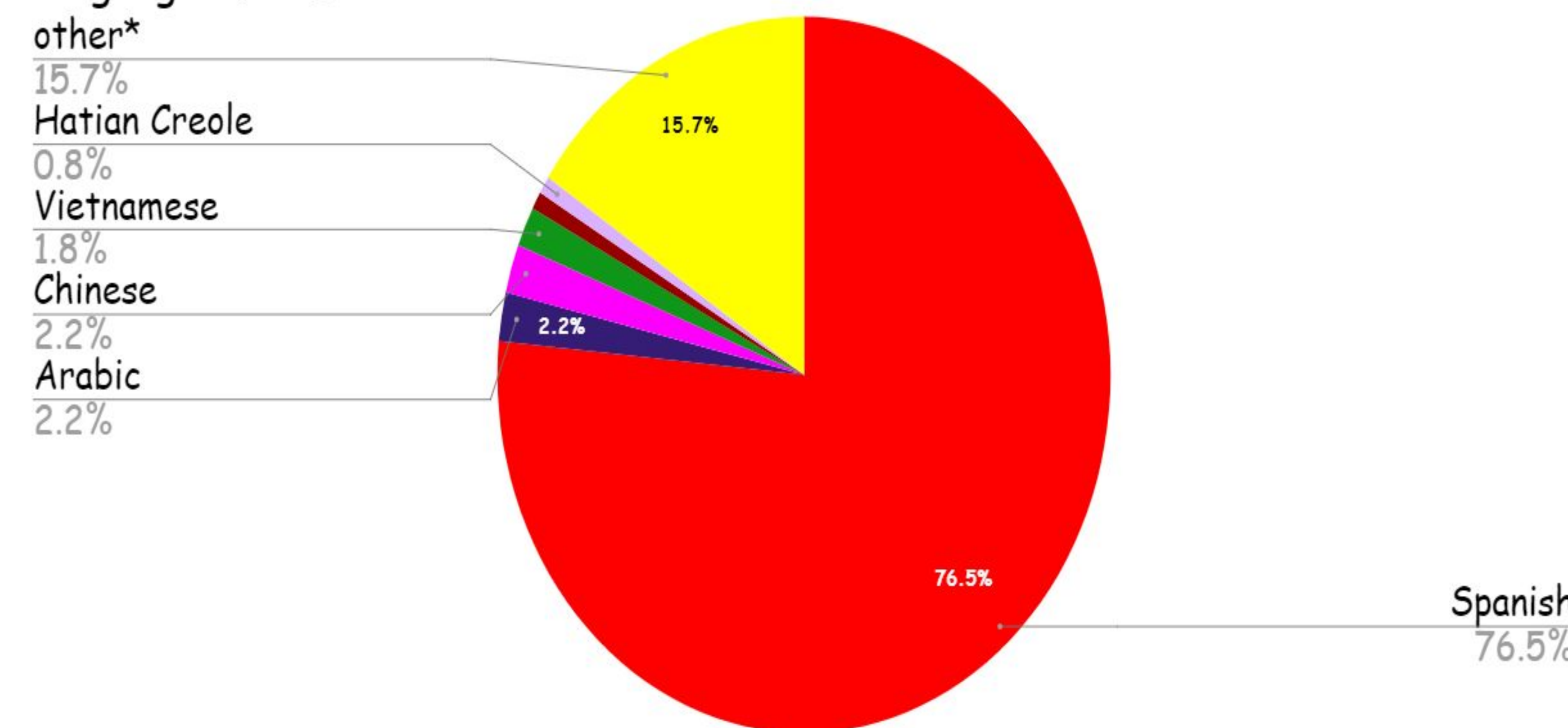
- ❖ There are 4.9 million ELL students in the public school system and less than 360,000 teachers in the United States are qualified to teach ELL.
- ❖ ELL students are mostly Spanish speakers from Latin America, typically Latino students are already discriminated against by the staff by giving less challenging work and by not informing the student of the existence of AP classes (Advanced Placement classes).
- ❖ There is the issue of over referring ELL students into special education programs due to the school system either not understanding the time needed to learn English in order for students to progress in school work.
 - To solve the issue of a student's lack of understanding for various reasons, they may be tested for an IEP. These tests are given in English only.
- ❖ Some schools don't offer bilingual forms for parents who also don't speak English.

Data

ELL students in IEPs with neither parent speaking English

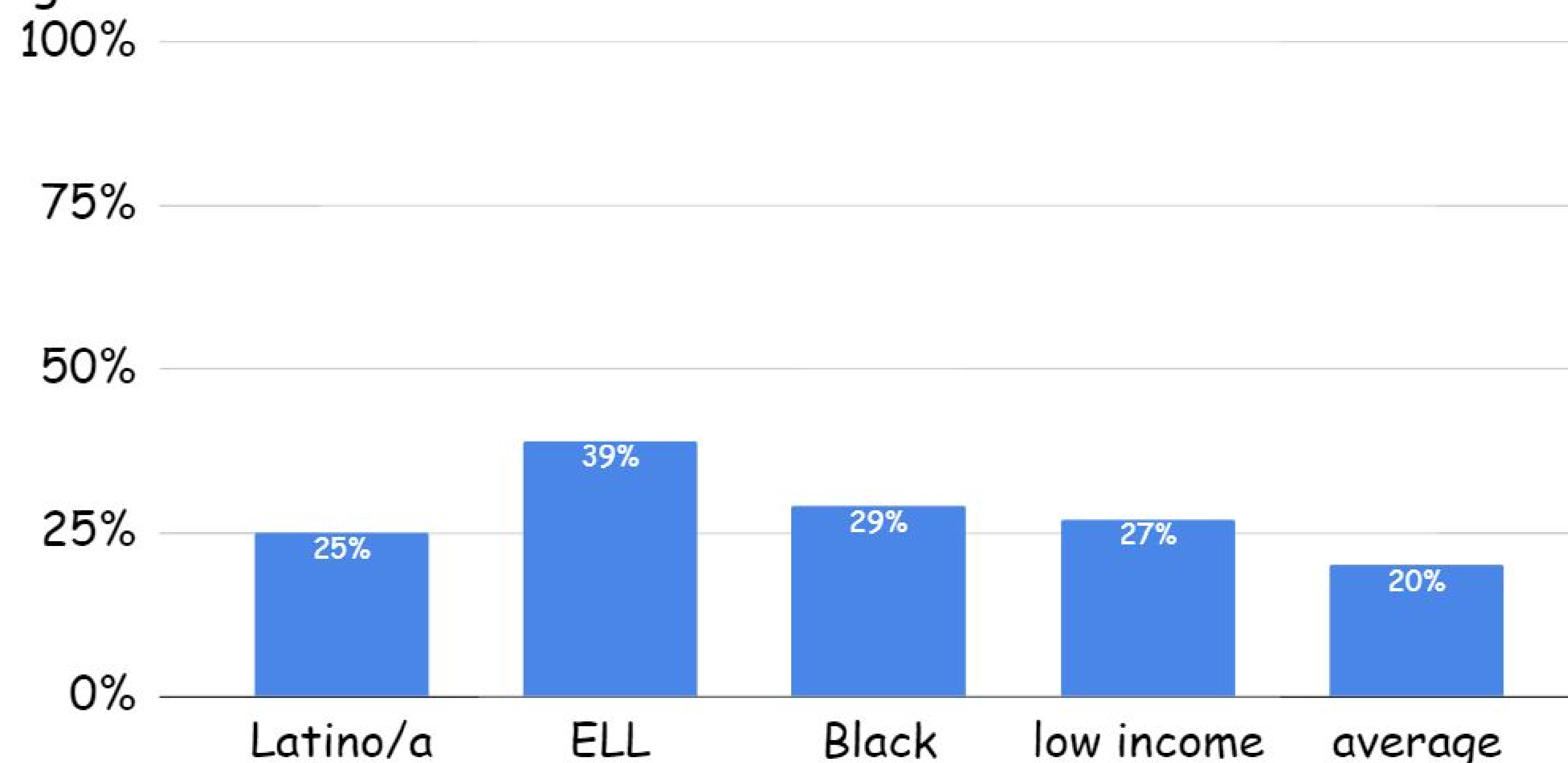


Languages for ELL students



*Other, references languages that couldn't fit on the chart.

High school dropout rate among students who are expected to graduate



Methodology

I went about gathering information through a scholarly search. Many sources used contained the bias of writers from the educational system in the U.S. It wasn't difficult to tie together ELL student disparities due to ethnicity and relate this back to the issue of the failure of the school system to assure the student's graduation.

Results

- ❖ With the amount of Latino students in the school system, there is also a disparity between Latino students in AP classes.
- ❖ Bringing a sense of relatability to the classroom through race or experience increases probability of an ELL students success. Offering challenging courses to the student in subjects that interest students would also help with academic preparedness.
- ❖ There is little information on the correlation between having a Latino teacher in a classroom due only 7.8% of teachers being of Latin American origin in comparison to either the 7.65% of Latino ELL students or 25% of students in the United States who are Latino.
- ❖ Another way to stop the discouragement in general of ELL student is to relate the topic to the students.
 - A study taking 225 high school students primarily of Latin American origin and involving them in a community activity involving Mesoamerican heritage. Through this study, the students sought to enhance their academic standing

Conclusions

- ❖ My plans for next year will be to expand upon the issues of educational disparities among the ELL community involving ELL programs, IEPs, graduation rates and quite possibly of the school-to-prison pipeline.
- ❖ Questions that I still have include the criteria and qualifications schools use to hire teachers and the educational system's stance on the priorities of the local and federal government.