

LEA COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH LEARNER DISTRICT PLAN

Section A: Theory and Goals

The LEA's educational theory and goals for its program of services – to improve the education of English learners by assisting the children to learn English and meet the challenging state academic standards. (Sec. 3102)

It is the policy of Dothan City Schools that no student will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, religion, belief, national origin, ethnic group, or disability. The Dothan City School System is committed to providing all students equal opportunity to benefit from educational programs and services. Specifically, students from limited English-speaking families are challenged to learn a language as well as new academic skills simultaneously. These students, English as a Second Language (ESL), require services that will enable them to benefit from instruction. ESL services shall be provided to students for whom English is a second language and who have been identified as being LEP (Limited English Proficient), regardless of immigrant status.

Program Goals:

- Qualified teachers will provide evidence-based and effective appropriate programs, practices, training, and accountability.
- Students will become proficient in English and achieve the state's academic content and student academic achievement standards.
- To assist all English Learners in acquiring fluency in English language skills of listening, speaking, reading, comprehending and writing without replacing or negating the student's primary home language.
- To assist English Learners to master academic content instruction at each grade level.
- To provide English Learners with equal access to all school programs.
- To provide quality professional development to teachers, administrators, and other school or community-based personnel.
- To involve and assist the family members of students enrolled in the ESL program.

Program Objectives:

- To increase the English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing of English Learners by providing quality language instruction educational programs.
- To create a learning environment that will provide for cognitive and affective needs.
- To increase the academic achievement of English Learners in the core academic subjects.
- To improve the instruction of English Learners providing quality professional development to teachers, administrators, and other school personnel in instruction and assessment strategies that address the cultural and language needs of ESLs.
- To improve the coordination of between elementary/secondary language instruction education programs and other relevant programs and services.
- To help ESL students adjust socially, emotionally, linguistically, and academically to their new school environment.
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Section B: Identification and Placement Procedures

1) Procedures for identifying the EL Advisory Committee

EL Advisory Committee: the EL Program Supervisor selects EL Advisory Committee members. Committee members represent central office personnel, school administrators, EL staff members, general education teachers, teachers from specialized areas including SES and Gifted, parents, and community volunteers. The EL Advisory Committee meets yearly to review progress and discuss needed changes.

2) Methods for identification, placement, and assessment

During the enrollment process, the parent/guardian or student fills out the Home Language Survey. This survey identifies any languages other than English that are first learned/acquired by the student, spoken most often by the student. The school staff member collects the enrollment information and forwards all Home Language Surveys to the EL Staff. EL Staff members identify Home Language Surveys that indicate a language other than English.

When it is indicated that English is the student's second language by the Home Language Survey, the students are administered the WIDA Screener (1st-12th) or the WIDA Placement Test (W-APT) (K) within 30 days of the start of school or 10 days of enrollment by EL staff certified to administer these instruments. An assessment will also be made of the student's academic achievement in the regular program based upon records received from the prior school(s). Any student scoring an overall composite score below 5.0 on the WIDA Screener or a 28 on the W-APT (K) will be identified and placed in the EL program. For students scoring 5.1 or higher on the WIDA Screener, the student may be identified as LEP but further assessment is needed to determine appropriate placement. Teacher judgment, other assessments and school history/previous schooling will also be used to determine placement. Students enrolled in the ESL program will take a yearly English proficiency test, the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Online Assessment.

3) Methods and procedures for exiting students from the LIEP and for monitoring progress

ELs remain in the EL program until achieving 4.8 or higher on the overall proficiency score of the ACCESS for ELL's spring assessment. Students scoring 4.8 or higher on the composite will exit the program. An exit meeting is held to discuss the child's progress. Each student who exits the EL program is monitored for four years. The regular program teacher sends a report card each grading period as well as an EL documentation checklist to the EL resource teacher assigned to monitor these students. If these reports indicate that the student is experiencing difficulty in the regular program in academics, attendance, or behavior, the EL staff may administer the WIDA Screener, interview the student, and then meet with the EL committee and the student's teachers and parents. This committee uses all information available in making recommendations to meet the needs of the student.

Section C: Programs and Instruction

1) Programs and activities that will be developed, implemented, and administered to ensure ELs acquire academic language as part of the core LIEP

Students are placed in the EL program based upon their performance on an English language proficiency test of listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as their academic achievement and other informal and formal measures. The decision on the amount of instructional time that a student receives is based on formal as well as informal assessments. The time spent in EL classes depends upon the grade level of the student, the instructional program being used, and the time frame of classes at individual schools.

The Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP) for Dothan City is ESL. ESL is delivered through Sheltered Instruction and ESL Pullout. The LIEP for the district is founded on several researched based models. ESL is a program of techniques, methodology, and special curriculum designed to teach ELs explicitly about the English language, including the academic vocabulary needed to access content instruction and to develop their English language proficiency in all four language domains. Sheltered Instruction focuses on strategic instruction delivered by classroom teachers and includes components of SIOP and SDAIE. EL Pullout is utilized with all LEP students for concentrated intervention. Dothan City also promotes EL Push-in services when available.

These models for instruction were selected for use in the school district based on several factors including the mobility of the EL population, a linguistically heterogeneous EL population, an EL population that is diverse in age and grade levels, and the formal education background and English language proficiency of students. EL instruction begins at the student's individual level of English language knowledge. Many different strategies are used to teach English skills in the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Specific classroom level practices recognize ELs unique needs as second language learners and support learning and comprehension. These include the use of EL and Sheltered Instruction programs that integrate language and specialized content instruction. Some examples of specialized instruction for ELs include the following: use of slower speech by the teacher, use of visuals and manipulatives, sufficient repetition, hands-on/student-centered learning activities, connecting to previous learning, recognition of cultural diversity, chunking and webbing, primary language support, use of scaffolding techniques, providing ELs with supplemental adapted materials, use of a variety of grouping configurations, and modeling.

2) How the LIEP will ensure that ELs develop English proficiency

All ELs are monitored by the ESL Resource teacher throughout the year. Assessment information from the ACCESS 2.0 for ELLs is compiled each year to determine if a student achieved Annual Meaningful Differentiation (AMD). For those students not meeting AMD goals, LEP plans are implemented to ensure additional support for these students, if necessary. Professional development is also offered to teachers working with ELs in the Classroom each year to address implementation of strategies and accommodations in the classroom.

3) Grading and retention policy and procedures

Quarterly grading guidelines for elementary and secondary EL students include grading on improvement in the content areas for any beginning EL scoring levels 1 or 2 on the W-APT or ACCESS for ELLs. For intermediate ELs scoring at levels 3 or 4 on the W-APT or ACCESS for ELLs, teachers grade on improvement as well as knowledge of content. Lack of ability to read and write in English is not the basis for a failing grade. A student cannot be given a failing grade because he/she is not proficient in English. A student cannot be retained based on lack of English proficiency.

4) Specific staffing and other resources to be provided to ELs through the program

The EL lead resource teacher and secondary teacher have been determined highly qualified and hold EL certification. All receive professional development training throughout the school year on a monthly basis. All EL Instructional Aides meet the highly qualified requirements for paraprofessionals and receive EL professional development each year. EL instructional/translators meet the highly qualified requirements for paraprofessionals and receive EL professional development each year. EL Program Supervisor holds certification in Education Leadership. Administrations and teachers are invited to participate in EL professional development workshops during school year.

5) Method for collecting and submitting data

Intake procedures are distributed each year for school office registrars in enrollment procedures for ELs. School registrars, school secretaries, and/or EL teachers code Chalkable data for ELs.

6) Method for evaluating the effectiveness of the program

Data is collected each year on the progress of individual EL students and schools using ACCESS and AMD reports. Surveys are sent to school administrators, teachers, parents, and students to determine strengths and weaknesses of the EL program. This information is collected and compiled to help evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The EL Advisory Committee also assists in evaluating and reviewing the EL Program.

7) Method of identification and referral of ELs to the Special Services Program including Gifted Ed

A special education referral for ELs can only proceed once language has been eliminated as the central obstacle. EL students in need of additional academic or behavioral support are initially referred to the EL Committee at their school. EL students are required to receive accommodations within the general education classroom and special assistance from EL staff members. When an EL is experiencing academic or behavioral problems, the Rtl process can be implemented at the local school level. Various interventions at Tier 1, 2, and 3 will be implemented. A special education referral may be initiated based on the results from the PST meetings and success of interventions. The EL resource teacher must be a member of the Problem Solving Team. Information regarding a special education referral is communicated to the parent in a language they can understand. The EL teachers/translators work closely with the EL committee to communicate appropriately with the parents.

Section D: Assessment and Accountability

1) Method for holding schools accountable for annually measuring the English proficiency of ELs and for participating in the state-administered testing program

The EL Program Supervisor and System Testing Coordinator work closely together to review, coordinate and analyze testing information. All testing and accountability requirements are provided to school administrators. ACCESS 2.0 for ELLs testing data is sent to all school administrators, counselors, teachers and EL resource teachers each year. AMD reports are sent to all school administrators, central office personnel and EL resource teachers. Information from these reports is used to measure the progress of ELs in the school and the district.

2) Method for holding schools accountable for meeting proficiency in academic achievement

School AMD data is reviewed and analyzed each year to provide school administrators, CIP members and EL resource teachers with the data needed to develop their individual school plans. AMD information is reviewed each year to determine school and individual student progress and to develop objectives to meet AMD goals each year.

Section E: Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

1) Methods for promoting parent involvement activities to help improve student achievement

A district Spanish translator is employed to translate written information for parents. Teachers, administrators and central office personnel can request documents be translated into Spanish. Documents for parents are printed in their native language, whenever possible. TransACT document service is utilized when applicable. Documents including school registration materials, pupil responsibilities, field trip information, special programs and meetings are some of the communication that is translated into the appropriate language whenever possible. Bilingual EL teachers and aides are available to work with schools and teachers to aid in communication with parents. Dothan City also has a contract with TransAct's Language Line, a phone translation service that enables communication in over 200 languages. Dothan City also has contracted with 2 different Translation Services to provide written translations in other languages.

The district Interpreter also serves as a Parental Involvement Liaison for the entire district. The interpreter is available for conferences, phone calls, meetings during and after schools, and special activities. The district Interpreter provides frequent notices via text, email, social media, app notifications, and phone calls to parents and community members.

The EL Staff team also conducts 2-4 parent meetings throughout the school year and address the following topics regularly: ACCESS test scores, I-ELPs, School/District Policies, Suggestions for helping students succeed, Community Resources, Celebrating Community Cultural Diversity, and Standardized Testing, among other topics.

2) Methods (in a language they can understand) for notification requirements for ELs students regarding

- EL identification, placement, exit, and monitoring

At the time of enrollment, parents are notified of all programs and services available for their child. This is done in a language they can understand, if at all possible. If parents are not present or if communication could not be established at the time of enrollment, they are notified either in writing (using their language) or by an employee or designee of the school system making a home visit or call explaining the types of programs and services available. The following information is provided to parents of ELs receiving EL services not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year or 10 days after a later date of enrollment:

1. The reasons for identification in an English language instruction educational program.
2. The student's level of English proficiency and how it was assessed.
3. The method of instruction to be used in the EL program.
4. How the EL program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the student.
5. How the program will help the student learn English and meet academic achievement standards.
6. Specific exit requirements for the program.
7. Parent rights related to removing their child from the Title III Supplemental English language instruction educational program.
8. If the child has a disability, how the EL program will meet the child's IEP objectives.

Section F: Immigrant Children and Youth (To be completed if the LEA receives Immigrant Grant)

1.) Describe how the LEA uses Immigrant Children and Youth Grant funds.

Dothan City Schools will use Immigrant money to hire an additional Tutorial Assistant who can provide services to immigrant children and youth. Many of Dothan City School's Immigrant students are secondary students with limited or interrupted formal education. DCS will hire a part time Tutorial Assistant who will partner with the ESL teachers to help meet the many needs of our immigrant population and their families.