

Dothan City Schools  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER  
PROGRAM**

**Policy & Procedures Manual**

**A Comprehensive Plan for Identifying, Accessing  
Placing, and Meeting the Educational  
Needs of English Language Learners**



Revised Spring 2022

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### **Mission of Dothan City Schools**

C.A.R.E.S.: "Communicate, Achieve, Relate, Engage, Succeed."

### **Assurance Statement**

It shall be the policy of the Dothan City Schools Board of Education that no student shall be denied the benefit of any educational program or educational activity on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, limited English proficiency, immigrant status, migrant status or homeless status. All programs offered by schools within the school district shall be open to all students in compliance with statutory and judicial requirements.

## **Students' Equal Educational Opportunities**

It is the policy of the Dothan City Board of Education that no person in this District shall, on the basis of handicap, or race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, or national origin be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in any education program or activity.

In compliance with federal regulations, 45 CRF 185.43 (d) (2), it is the policy of the Dothan City Board of Education that there be no racially identifiable classes established or permitted to exist in the Dothan City Schools, except as outlined in item "C" on the following page under Instructional Practices and Equality of Educational Opportunities. The Board places an equal emphasis upon nondiscriminatory provision of educational opportunities for children concerning such factors, in addition to race or color, as: (1) handicap, (2) creed, (3) national origin, or (4) sex. All programs offered by schools within the Dothan City School District shall be open to all students regardless of sex in compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 as later amended by the final regulations for implementation of this legislation.

## **Admission**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, all students homeless, migratory, immigrant, and Limited English Proficient children have equal access to the same free appropriate public education including public preschool education, provided to all other children and youth.

The enrollment of homeless, immigrant, migrant and limited English proficient children and youth shall not be denied nor delayed unduly due to any of the following barriers:

- \*Lack of birth certificate
- \*Lack of school records or transcripts
- \*Lack of immunization or health records
- \*Lack of Social Security Number
- \*Lack of proof of residency
- \*Lack of transportation
- \*Guardianship or custody requirements

## **Instructional Practices and Equality of Educational Opportunities**

The Board intends that its nondiscriminatory policy includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- A. Assigning students to ability groups, tracks, special education classes, special classes for mentally, emotionally, or socially disturbed, or any curricular or extra-curricular activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, or the sex of the student;
- B. The prohibition of any tests which are considered by experts to be biased to the degree that these tests are discriminatory in nature;
- C. The charging of any fees to those students who are unable to pay these fees even though the charge itself may be in accordance with Board policy and State Statute; no grades, report cards, or other benefits of the instructional program shall be denied any student because of his inability to pay the costs of these programs. Students shall be admitted to the programs without charge.

The above regulations shall not be interpreted to bar legitimate homogeneous or ability grouping based upon reliable, objective evidence that such measures are educationally beneficial to involved students and consistent with all Federal, State, and local regulations.

All grading practices, establishment of promotion and retention policies and decisions concerning graduation requirements shall be of a non-discriminatory nature.

### **Title IX Grievance Procedures**

The grievance procedures shall be applicable to student personnel as well as employees. Should grievances not be satisfactorily resolved at the local school level as stipulated in Levels one and two of the procedure, the complainant shall request a hearing of the grievance in writing. Requests shall be addressed as follows:

Dr. Debra Wright– Title IX Coordinator  
1665 Honeysuckle Rd.  
Dothan, Alabama 36305

### **Dothan City Schools English Language (ELL) Advisory Committee**

The ELL Advisory Committee of Dothan City Schools is comprised of a cross-representation of Central Office leaders, school administrators, instructional coaches, counselors, ELL teachers, classroom teachers, parents, and community members. The committee meets at least once annually. The committee reviews assessment data, budgets, and plans in order to recommend and approve the goals, strategies, and action steps of the EL program.

The EL Advisory Committee makes recommendations regarding:

- Developing elements of the English language instructional program
- Providing high-quality professional development for staff
- Facilitating successful parental involvement programs to further student success
- Budgeting of state, local, and federal funds
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the ELL core program

**Dothan City Schools ELL Advisory Committee**

Elizabeth Brackin	ELL Teacher
Kathy Bull	ELL Teacher
Melba Cook	ELL Aide
Scott Faulk	Student Services
Erica Delgado	Asst. Principal
Lee Jacobs	Federal Programs
Vanessa Gunn	Principal
LaTasha Weatherington	Principal
Zimarie Spencer	Parent Involvement
Leah Oppert	Counselor
Mary Beth Piedra	Counselor
Tracey Horn	Asst. Principal
Jay Bruner	Transportation Director
Emily Hoekenga	Teacher-Music
Ashley Knight	Teacher-SPED
Virginia Nguyen	Teacher
Shannon Mitchell	Teacher
Mallory Monahan	Teacher-English
Valencia Saffold	Teacher-English
Keyana Cole	Teacher-English
Nicole Thomas	Teacher-History
Mark Dunaway	Math/Science Instructional Coach
Roxi Fuentes	Community Member
Taylor Rutland	Community Member
Karla Dominguez	Parent

## Legal Guidance & Compliance

The following is a synthesis of major legislation, court rulings and administrative regulations addressing language minority students. There is a substantial body of federal law established to ensure the rights of national origin minority students.

### Federal Laws

**1868** Constitution of the United States Fourteenth Amendment

"No state shall ... deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

**1964** Civil Rights Act, Title VI

"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin ... be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

**1974** Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA)

"No state shall deny equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, by ... the failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs."

**2001** No Child Left Behind Act

"... ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments."

### Supreme Court

**1974** Lau V. Nichols

Equality of instruction denied to non-English speaking if special provisions are not made to aid them in learning English in schools.

**1982** Plyler V. Doe

States prohibited from denying free public education to children of undocumented immigrants, regardless of legal status. Schools are not agents for enforcing immigration law.

### Federal Courts

**1974** Serna V. Portales

Court ordered schools to make a curriculum available to students who lack English skills.

**1978** Cintron V. Brentwood

ESL students not be segregated completely from other students, but included in art, PE, and non-language based classes.

**1981** *Castañeda vs. Pickard*: The 5th Circuit Court established a three-pronged test for evaluating programs serving English language learners. According to the *Castañeda* standard, schools must:

- Base their program on educational theory recognized as sound or considered to be a legitimate experimental strategy;
- Implement the program with resources and personnel necessary to put the theory into practice; and
- Evaluate programs and make adjustments where necessary to ensure that adequate progress is being made. [648 F. 2d 989 (5th Circuit, 1981)].

## **Memoranda**

**May 25, 1970** Memorandum (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare) Where the inability to speak and understand the English language exclude national origin-minority group children from effective participation in the educational program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students. *\*Memoranda were also posted by the Office of Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education) with policy and policy updates in 1985, 1990, and 1991.*

## **U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice: Joint Guidance on English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents**

January 7, 2015 The U.S. Department of Education’s (the Department’s) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) released a joint guidance entitled “Dear Colleague Letter: English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents,” which outlines the legal obligations of state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) to English learner (EL) students under civil rights laws and other federal requirements.

The guidance can be found on OCR’s resource page on the Department’s website: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>

## **ELL Program Synopsis**

**Policy:** The Dothan City Schools Board of Education recognizes that within the district there are students who have a primary language other than English. The goal of the English as a Second Language (ELL) program is to have each student become proficient in the use of the English language, however, not to replace the student's primary language.

Accordingly, the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent or his designee to take affirmative steps to enable students to overcome language barriers in the classroom. These affirmative steps include identification, assessment, appropriate services, and monitoring.

**Purpose of Program:** English as a Second Language (ESL) shall be taught to enable English language learners (ELL) to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing of academic English. The program shall emphasize mastery of academic English language skills and content area concepts and skills so students are able to participate effectively in the regular academic program and to reach their full potential.

**Home Language Survey:** The Home Language Survey will be administered to the parents of all students at the time of initial registration in Dothan City Schools. The survey should be signed by the parent or guardian. Office staff should ensure that a Home Language Survey is obtained for every new student and given to the ELL teacher assigned to their school within three (3) school days. The ELL teacher will review and initial the document and then return the document to the student's cumulative file. The initialed Home Language Survey must be retained in the student's cumulative file.

**Potential English Language Learners (ELL):** A student with a Home Language Survey indicating any language other than English on any question is a potential ELL. Within 10 days from the date of enrollment, the ELL instructor will gather information on the student and administer the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test to determine the level of English language proficiency. The ELL instructor will convene an school ELL Committee Meeting in order for the committee to review data and information and determine appropriate placement. Parents should be notified of and invited to attend the ELL Committee Meeting.

**Parental Notification:** According to Title III, Part C, Section 3302(a), each Local Education Agency (LEA) shall, "not later than **thirty (30) days** after the beginning of the school year, inform a parent or the parents of a limited-English proficient child identified for participation in, or participating in" an English language instruction program, about the following:

- The reasons for the identification of the student as limited-English (LEP) proficient and in need of placement in an English language instruction educational program.
- The student's level of English proficiency, how such level was assessed, and the status of the student's academic achievement, to the extent known.
- The method of instruction to be used in the English language instruction educational program and how the program differs in content, instructional goals, and use of English from "regular" programs in the school.
- How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the student.
- How the program will specifically help the student learn English and meet age appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.
- Specific exit requirements for the program, the expected rate of transition from the program into regular classrooms, and the expected rate of graduation from high school, if appropriate.
- If applicable, how the program meets objectives of the student's individualized education plan (IEP).

Specifically, the following information pertaining to parental rights must be provided in writing:

- The right of parents to have their child immediately removed, upon their request, from the English language instruction educational program.
- The options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in an English language educational program or to choose another program or method of instruction **if** another program or method is available.
- The assistance that will be provided for parents in selecting from among various programs and methods of instruction if more than one program or method is offered by the LEA.

If a student has not been identified for participation in an English language instruction educational program prior to the beginning of the school year, the EL Committee must carry out the parent notification requirements within **two (2) weeks** of a student being placed in such a program.

The notice to parents shall be printed in English and/or the parents' primary language when available. Parents are not required to respond affirmatively to the notification for the student to participate in the English language instruction educational program. If a parent does not wish for his/her child to receive supplemental ELL services, he/she must sign a waiver (see appendix). Upon receipt of written instructions from the parent, however, the ELL Committee must withdraw the student from the formal English language instruction educational program. The teachers and school are still obligated to provide appropriate, informal strategies to ensure that the student's English language and academic needs are met.

**English Language Committee:** Each school shall form an ELL Committee consisting of a school administrator, a content area teacher, an ELL instructor, the school counselor, and others as designated by the principal. The English Learner's parent will be invited to participate in ELL Committee decisions. The Committee shall review all relevant information and determine appropriate placement and exit from the ELL program for all ELLs.

**Program Exit:** A student will be exited from the ELL program upon achieving a **4.8 or higher** on the ACCESS for ELLs.

Written notice shall be provided to the parents within five (5) school days of the ELL Committee Meeting informing them that their child will be exited from the ELL program. The notice shall be printed in English and the parents' primary language when possible.

Upon exiting the ELL program the student will no longer be classified as LEP. The ELL instructor and the ELL Committee shall monitor the progress of the student for **two (2) years**. During the first year the student will be monitored at the conclusion of each grading period and will be classified as **Former LEP Monitor Year 1 (FLEP1)**. The student will be monitored at the conclusion of each semester during the second year and will be classified as **Former LEP Monitor Year 2 (FLEP2)**. After successfully completing the two (2) years of monitoring, the student will be classified as **FLEP**. If the student is not academically successful or does not pass coursework without accommodations while being monitored, the EL/PST committee will reconvene to determine whether the student should be reevaluated for ELL services using the MODEL. The student may then be reclassified as LEP and reenrolled in the ESL program or other appropriate academic intervention programs.

## Registration Procedures

**All language minority students must be allowed to attend school, regardless of their ability to produce a birth certificate, social security number, immigration documentation, or proof of immunization.**

Regarding Documents Requested for Registration:

1. **Proof of Age** - a valid birth certificate, passport, or other official document listing date and place of birth.

A Birth certificate is not required. Other documentation including but not limited to a family Bible (or other religious documentation) sworn affidavit, or notarized statement of birth date must be accepted in the absence of a valid birth certificate. Refer to ALSDE August 17, 2012 Memorandum.

2. **Proof of Immunization** - The State of Alabama Certificate of Immunization is available at the County Health Department or a physician's office.

If a student does not have a blue immunization form, a copy of their previous immunization record can be accepted (from another country or even from another school sending a copy). The school and/or ESL department then helps the family know where to go to receive an Alabama immunization record and time is allowed for the student to submit the immunization record. However, enrollment is not withheld due to not having a blue immunization form. **These efforts should be documented for future reference as needed.** If appropriate immunization documentation cannot be obtained within a reasonable period of time, the student case should be handled in accordance with approved state and local board of education procedures.

3. **Registration Forms** - School registration forms are to be completed and filed at the school. Registration forms will be available in several languages. No questions regarding immigration status are asked of the parents or students during registration because schools are not agents of the immigration agency (Plyler v. Doe, 1982)

4. **Home Language Survey** - System wide form to be completed and signed at initial enrollment by the parents or guardians of students. This form will be filed in the permanent record of each child in the system.

5. **Proof of Residence** – One proof of residence is requested at the time of enrollment. In the event that families cannot produce this, the school will assist the family in obtaining residency

documentation. The LEA can also assist with residency determinations and/or conduct a home visit to help verify residence.

**6.Social Security Card** - is NOT required for enrollment or for school lunch forms. If social security card is not presented at enrollment, Student Services will assign an identification number. No school or district documents should request a Social Security Number without a disclaimer included that specifies that such information is not required.

**Former School records-** Former school records, report cards, and/or transcripts are requested of the parents or guardians. In many situations, with or without such records, an incoming student's grade will be determined by age-appropriate placement (for K-8).

**If parents or students need language assistance during the registration procedure, every effort will be made to provide an interpreter. Every effort should be made by office staff to provide forms in the family's primary language.**

## Identification of English Language Learners (ELLs)

The *Home Language Survey (HLS)* will be the identification tool for potential English Language Learners (ELLs). This survey will be administered to **ALL** new students as part of the registration process by the staff member responsible in each school for registering students (secretary, guidance counselor, teacher, or administrator). All HLSs shall be filed in students' Cumulative Record Folders.

If a language other than English is identified in any of the HLS responses, the student should be identified as a potential ELL.

1. The school official (data manager/registrar, guidance counselor, teacher, or administrator) registering the student should put the original Home Language Survey in the ELL teacher's box **within three (3) school days** of enrollment. The ELL teacher will review every HLS, looking for and making note of information such as other languages spoken, first language learned by the student, country of birth, initial enrollment in U.S. schools, and indications of parents needing communication in a language other than English. After careful review, the ELL teacher will initial the original HLS and return it to office staff.
2. Any student answering with a language other than English to any of the HLS questions will be evaluated under the procedure and criteria developed for assessment of LEP status.
3. An ELL Committee meeting will be held to discuss the assessment results and placement considerations **within ten (10) school days** of enrollment. NOTE: The Ten Day Rule does not apply to students enrolled prior to or on the first day of school. **They are on a thirty (30) day timeline.**
4. The completed ELL Student Referral and Placement (See Appendix) form will be filed in the student's blue ESL folder, which is part of the student's Cumulative Record Folder.
5. In the event that a student transfers into Dothan City Schools and their cumulative record information includes information about ESL/language acquisition services, the information should be forwarded to the ESL teacher immediately. If parents or students need language assistance during the registration procedure, every effort will be made to provide an interpreter.

## LEP Defined

The Alabama definition of Limited English Proficient (LEP)/English Language Learner (ELL) is taken from the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, S. 9101, 25 of Title IX:

“(25) Limited English Proficient. – The term ‘Limited English Proficient’, when used with respect to an individual, means an individual – (A) who is age 3 through 21  
(B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;  
(C) (i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;  
(ii) (I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and  
(II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency; or  
(iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and  
(D) whose difficulty is speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual –  
(i) the ability to meet the State’s proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in Section 1111(b) (3);  
(ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or  
(iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.”

All **LEP** students participate in the Alabama State Testing Program with or without accommodations. There are no exemptions from state assessments for LEP students except **LEP 1** students in **their first academic year of enrollment in U.S. schools (from date of entry)**. **LEP 1** students, during their first academic year of enrollment in U.S. schools, will not be required to participate in the reading subtest of any State assessments. For the purposes of participation in the assessment program, the **LEP 1** student will take the English language proficiency assessment if they do not participate in the reading subtests described above. This assessment for Alabama’s LEP students is the *ACCESS*, which is administered in the Spring.

The LEP/ELL definition includes students with a wide range of educational needs with respect to learning English as a second language (ESL). Examples include the following types of students:

- Children of recent immigrants who speak no English and who have had no formal training in written language.
- Children of highly-educated immigrants who have had formal training in English during formal schooling.
- United States-born children whose primary language is not English and who have had limited formal education through English language.
- Children recently adopted from foreign countries for which English is not the official or native language
- Children reared in homes where the dominant language of communication is not spoken or written English.

Once a student is identified as LEP, the student is classified as Limited English Proficient Year 1 (**LEP1**) for the first complete year in U.S. schools. After the student has completed one complete year (from date of entry), the student is classified as Limited English Proficient Year 2 (**LEP2**). The student will remain classified as an LEP2 until the student exits the ESL program.

A student is considered Limited English Proficient until exited by the ELL committee. In order to exit a student must earn a 4.8 or higher composite score on the state English language proficiency test. For the first year after being exited, the student is classified as Former Limited English Proficient Monitor Year 1 (**FLEP1**). During the second year following exiting, the student is classified as Former Limited English Proficient Monitor Year 2 (**FLEP2**). At the end of the two years of monitoring, the student is classified as Former LEP (**FLEP**).

Any student who has reentered the ELL program will not be classified as “Former LEP” until he/she has again scored proficient on the ACCESS test and progressed through four years of monitoring.

## Language Proficiency Assessments

When the Home Language Survey indicates that English is the not student's primary or native language, the student is given the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test **within ten (10) days of enrollment** by the ELL staff certified to administer these instruments.

WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test, is an English language proficiency "screener" given to incoming students who may be designated as English language learners. It assists educators with programmatic placement decisions such as identification and placement of ELLs.

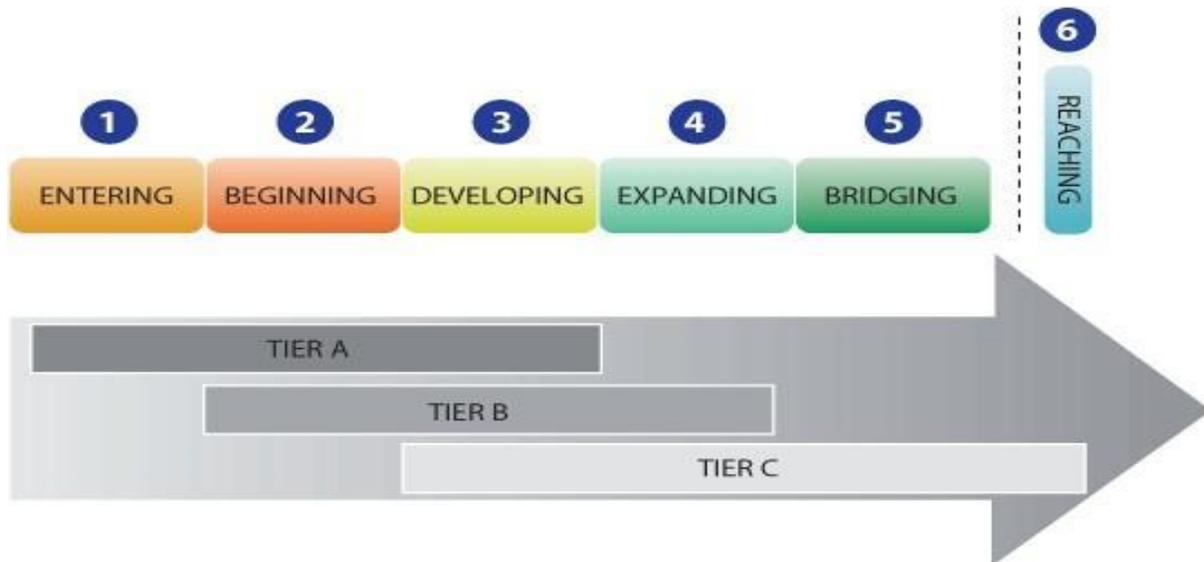
The **ACCESS for ELLs** is an annual assessment that indicates the progress students have made from year to year and annual proficiency level. Both the ACCESS for ELLs and the Screener assesses the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

The Screener and ACCESS test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA's five English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards. The standards are:

1. English language learners communicate in English for SOCIAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL purposes within the school setting.
2. English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of LANGUAGE ARTS.
3. English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of MATHEMATICS.
4. English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of SCIENCE.
5. English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of SOCIAL STUDIES.

The WIDA Screener and ACCESS test forms are divided into five grade-level clusters:  
Kindergarten, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8 Grades 9-12

The ACCESS for ELLs is administered each spring in accordance to the testing calendar set forth by the Alabama State Department of Education. All Kindergarten students are assessed individually. Students in grades 1-12 take the speaking portion of the test individually and the listening, reading, and writing portions in small group with students of the same grade level cluster and tier. Within each grade-level cluster (except Kindergarten), ACCESS for ELLs consists of three forms: Tier A (beginning), Tier B (intermediate), and Tier C (advanced). This keeps the test shorter and more appropriately targets each student's range of language skills. The chart below demonstrates five of the six language levels and demonstrates how each level corresponds with a tier. (Note: Level Six, not illustrated, represents Reaching [proficiency]).



Students scoring less than a 4.8 composite score will participate in the ESL program based on their level of proficiency and grade level in accordance with the decision of the ELL Committee.

***Alternate ACCESS for ELLs*** is a performance-based assessment developed specifically for English learners (ELLs) in Grades 1-12 with significant cognitive disabilities.

Participation Criteria:

- Student must be classified as an ELL.
- Student must be identified as eligible for special education services as a student with a significant cognitive disability.
- Student must be participating in an alternate curriculum and in the *Alabama Alternate Assessment (AAA)*.

According to Title III, Part C, Section 3302(a), each LEA shall, "not later than **thirty (30) days** after the beginning of the school year, inform a parent or the parents of a limited-English proficient child identified for participation in, or participating in" an English language instruction program, about the details of the program as instructed in the parental notification section of this document (Appendix \_\_). If a student has not been identified for participation in an English language instruction educational program prior to the beginning of the school year, the LEA must carry out the parent notification requirements within two (2) weeks of a student being placed in such a program. The most current test results and ELL Student Referral and Placement Form will be placed in the student's blue ELL folder by the designated member of the ELL Committee. Copies can be made by the appropriate personnel as needed.

**All students (including all EL students) will participate in all aspects of the State Assessment Program according to state and federal guidelines. LEP students in their first academic year of**

**enrollment in U.S. schools receive special consideration regarding their participation in state assessments.**

### **Language Minority Students: Language Categories**

Generally speaking, students may be categorized as non-English proficient, limited-English proficient, or fluent-English proficient. For educational purposes, students who are other than fluent-English speakers are considered to be English Language Learners (ELs) and are provided services based on the following codes:

- EL1** Limited English Proficient (**LEP Year 1**)
- EL2** Limited English Proficient (**LEP Year 2 or more**)
- FEL1** Former Limited English Proficient ( **Monitoring Year 1**)
- FEL2** Former Limited English Proficient (**Monitoring Year 2**)
- FEL** Former Limited English Proficient
- NOMPHLOTE** National Origin Minority whose Primary Home Language is Other Than English

**LEP (Year 1)** students are those who have entered our system and have attended U.S. schools less than one year.

The proficiency of these students may be limited and written test scores are neither valid nor recommended. Some of these students are literate in their primary language. These students receive services from an ELL Resource Teacher or ELL Instructional Aide.

**LEP (Year 2 or more)** students usually exhibit good oral skills in English but have difficulty with reading and writing skills. These students will take the norm referenced state tests and remain in the ELL program until they have met exit criteria. They receive support services from the ELL Teacher or ELL Instructional Aide.

Transitional students (**FELS Monitoring Year 1-4**) have met requirements for exiting the ELL program and no longer receive special support services. The ESL Team will monitor their progress for two years. Should these students experience academic failure, the EL Committee should convene and may recommend re-screening for ELL services using the WIDA MODEL test. Based on the screener results, the student can be re-identified as LEP, and can be served again by the EL program. At the end of the two-year monitoring phase, these students become Former Limited English Proficient (FLEP) and their scores will no longer be included in the LEP subgroup.

**NOMPHLOTE** students are those whose Home Language Survey indicated a language used at home other than English. These students are automatically screened with a WIDA language screener. If the student does NOT qualify for ELL services, he/she is labeled NOMPHLOTE. This identification alerts school staff of the possibility of non-English speaking parents who may be in need of translation services.

## Educational Approach for the ELL Program & Instruction of ELLs

The instructional goals of the Dothan City Schools ELL Program are as follows:

- To increase the English language proficiency to the degree necessary to allow successful independent functioning in the regular school program.
- To provide the ELL the opportunity to reach his/her full potential.

According to Cummins' research (1979), it takes the average ELL from **one to three years** to acquire *BICS* (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills), the social language which is needed to function on a daily basis; moreover, it takes approximately **five to seven years** to acquire *CALP* (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency), the language skills necessary to function in an academic setting. Working with this premise in mind, the Dothan City School System has developed a plan to meet the needs of the ELLs.

For all aspects of Dothan City's English language instruction educational program, teachers will use approaches based on scientifically based research that demonstrate effectiveness in increasing English proficiency and student academic achievement in core academic subjects.

**The core EL program for Dothan City Schools is ESL (English as a Second Language).** All teachers will receive training in ESL strategies such as SDAIE (and will include activities that focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing to facilitate second language acquisition (Krashen 1982, Freeman and Freeman 1994, Freeman and Freeman, 2002).

Methods of instruction include but are not limited to:

- **Content-based instruction** (Briton, Snow, and Wesche 1989, Crandall 1992, Met 1991, Anstrom 1997)
- **CALLA-Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach** (Chamot and O'Malley 1987, Freeman and Freeman 1994)
- **The Natural Approach** (Richards and Rodgers 1986, Rodgers 2001)
- **Communicative Language Teaching** (Freeman and Freeman 1994, Rodgers 2001) • **Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model** (Echevarria, Vogt, and Short 2004)
- **Total Physical Response** (Freeman and Freeman 1998, Rodgers 2001)
- **Reading instruction methods supported by the Alabama Reading Initiative** (see Closing the Gap available from the Alabama Department of Education,

[http://www.alsde.edu/html/sections/doc\\_download.asp?section=50&id=375&sort=70](http://www.alsde.edu/html/sections/doc_download.asp?section=50&id=375&sort=70) ).

The WIDA consortium provides an abundance of resources created for teachers of ELLs. Professional Development on the WIDA resources will be provided to mainstream teachers. ELL and Mainstream teachers will use the following WIDA resources to help in their understanding of and implementation of appropriate teaching strategies for ELLs:

- WIDA ELP (English Language Proficiency) Standards
- Can-Do Descriptors
- Performance Definitions
- Features of Academic Language
- Guiding Principles of Language Development

ELL and mainstream teachers will work together to provide the most appropriate instruction using best practices to meet the individual language and academic needs of students. The ELL curriculum is based on WIDA – English Language Development Standards for English Language Learners in Kindergarten through grade 12 (2012) in correlation with College and Career Readiness Standards. The district ELL staff is available to provide training in support of effective instruction of ELLs.

In addition to assigning ELLs to a regular class in which the classroom teacher has received training in teaching ELLs, the ELLs receive regularly scheduled ELL instruction. The level of English proficiency determines the amount of specialized instructional time needed for that student.

A combination of strategies is used to teach language: whole language, phonics, oral language skills, cooperative learning, and integrated reading. Emphasis is placed upon the development of the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A variety of materials and equipment is used in instruction. These include textbooks, technology, videos, listening stations, games, purchased programs and materials, and language development activities.

All teachers providing instruction for ELLs should use a variety of approaches in organizing the classroom, designing a curriculum, and presenting lessons. There are several basic elements underlying all good language instruction:

- Versatility and flexibility
- Interactive lessons with hands-on activities and cooperative learning
- Encouragement and support of the mainstream or regular curriculum • Opportunities for all students to feel successful by providing appropriate modifications and

accommodations for the needs of students' different levels of ability • Integration of language skills, thinking skills, and content knowledge.

The following methodologies are promoted as good teaching strategies for ELLs as well as all students:

- Total Physical Response (TPR)
- Cooperative Learning
- Language Experience
- Dialogue Journals
- Learning Centers
- Sheltered Instruction
- Interactive Peer to Peer Oral Techniques (IPOTs)

ELL and regular classroom teachers should:

- Announce the lesson's objectives and activities
- Include both a language and content objective for each lesson
- Write legibly and grammatically correct
- Develop and maintain classroom routines
- List and review instructions step by step
- Present frequent summations of the main points of the lesson
- Use visual reviews with lists, charts, and other graphic organizers
- Have students provide oral summaries
- Present information in multiple and varied ways
- Build Background
- Control rate of speech
- Pre-teach academic vocabulary
- Utilize frequent checks for comprehension

### **English Language Program Services**

An English Language Program is provided to all ELLs in grades K-12 by ELL instructors in each local school.

ELL instruction at all levels is a combination of English as a Second Language (ESL) pullout and grade-level content-centered sheltered classroom instruction. ELL instruction at grades K-8 is provided through a “pull-out” program of individual and small group work combined with classroom support services. At the secondary level grades 9-12, LEP students are provided instruction either in a “pull-out” or push in approach.

Students in the ELL Program receive from thirty minutes to 4 hours weekly of English language instruction based upon their individual level of English proficiency. The decision concerning appropriate time spent receiving ELL services will be made by the ELL Staff (in collaboration with the school based ELL Committee). As the student’s English proficiency increases, ELL instruction decreases.

ELL pullout should not regularly take the place of physical education, art, music, library, or other such courses. ELL staff and mainstream teachers will work together to determine the best times for pullout services. ELL staff should seek to avoid pulling a student from whole group or core content instruction. Mainstream staff should seek to understand the scheduling difficulties imposed by limited ELL staff. Classroom teachers must provide for missed instruction.

Students should **not** be penalized for class activities and assignments missed while pull out services are being received.

ELLs participate the remainder of the school day in regular academic classes and/or special programs. Content area teachers differentiate instruction and provide accommodations as identified in the student’s I-ELP to meet individual ELL needs. Training will be provided to classroom teachers in strategies for appropriate accommodations. Some of these accommodations include oral rather than written assignments, oral testing, extra time to complete assignments, shortened assignments, alternative assignments, and tutoring. The ELL department will provide professional development activities to equip teachers with strategies for instructing and accommodating ELLs.

To appropriately provide accommodations, mainstream teachers should refer to the Accommodations page of the I-ELP, which must be given to all teachers of an ELL. The Accommodations page is to be kept and referred to frequently by mainstream teachers. Some students will not receive the same accommodations in every content area. New secondary ELLs are placed in less language dominant classes but not necessarily less challenging classes. A bilingual instructional aide may be used when available. Spanish speaking students may be placed in Spanish classes to maintain or promote a high level of literacy in

their first language and to provide additional support for the transition to second language acquisition.

High school ELLs may acquire elective credit for ELL classes. ELLs are to be made aware of career technical courses and extracurricular activities that are available.

**If parents refuse services, a *Denial to Participate Form* should be signed by the parents and placed in the student's ELL file (blue folder in Cum) by the ELL instructor. The school district is still required to make accommodations in instruction and monitor the student's academic performance. Although the parent has denied ELL supplemental services for the student, the student must continue to participate in the annual English Language Proficiency testing (ACCESS for ELLs) until attaining proficiency.**

School information is provided to parents in a language that they can understand through interpreters and/or forms and letters in the home language.

ELLs are assessed annually by the ELL staff, using ACCESS for ELLs, to determine progress in English language acquisition. All ELLs will participate in the State Assessment Program on assessments including but not limited to the ACAP Summative, ACT WorkKeys, ACT Plus Writing, and ACT Quality Core End of Course Assessments. The Special Populations Manual provided by ALSDE should be consulted for guidelines relating to the participation of ELLs. No student shall be excluded from participation in the state's required assessments. These scores are collected and reviewed by the EL Committee and the ELL Program Supervisor.

Title III law requires effective instruction that: (1) leads to the timely acquisition of proficiency in English and (2) provides teaching and learning opportunities so that each student can become proficient in the state's academic content and student academic achievement standards within the specified time frame that is expected for all students. The English language instruction educational program for ELLs may emphasize English temporarily over content subjects. The special instruction in English language development may be discontinued when the student becomes proficient. The school, however, is obligated to provide any assistance needed to remedy academic deficits that may have occurred in other subjects while the student was focusing on learning English. If a student is identified as English-proficient on a reliable and valid language proficiency test and scores below grade level in core academic subjects, the school system must assist the student in eliminating the deficiencies. If the student exits the English language instruction educational program, efforts to eliminate the deficiencies may continue through the regular program and any supplemental programs and/or services that are available to other students who are eligible for such services.

#### **Resources & Materials for Instruction**

To reach the goal of English proficiency comparable to that of a native speaker of the same age and intellectual ability, ELL materials are used that stress the development of communication skills - comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

Computers, websites, and relevant software, audio and video equipment, language masters, electronic dictionaries/translators, and numerous printed materials are utilized by ELL personnel and shared with regular program instructional staff.

Some of the materials and resources utilized for the implementation of the EL program include but are not limited to:

- Scott Foresman Reading Street ESL Resources for Grades K-5, including
- ELL Handbook & Survival Guides
- Keys for Learning Vocabulary Flashcards
- *Classroom Teacher's ESL Survival #1 & #2*
- Bilingual Dictionaries
- New Oxford Picture Dictionaries & Content Dictionaries
- ACCESS Curriculum from Great Source for grades 6-12
  - o Math
  - o Science
  - o American History
  - o World History
  - o English
  - o Newcomer's Program
- *Keys to Learning: Skills and Strategies for Newcomers* (Longman/Pearson)
- *Finish Line for ELLs* for Grades 1-12 (Continental Press)
- Quick Study Charts: By topic & Common Core by Grade/Subject

Computer Programs:

- Ellevation
- Rosetta Stone
- Duolingo
- Off2Class
- NewsELA

Instructional resources for ELLs are selected utilizing knowledge of research-based strategies for the effective instruction of ELLs. Particular emphasis is placed on the curriculum being written by ESL experts who have used their research and expertise in developing the materials. Any additional resources utilized that are not developed specifically for ELLs are selected based upon the recommendation of teachers and their ability to effectively utilize the selected materials to accommodate their instruction for ELLs. ESL materials and resources are high quality and support the district's goal for high academic achievement for all students.

**Local School English Language Committee: Role in Program Placement**

**English Language (ELL) Committee:**

The ELL Committee should consist of:

- A school administrator
- A classroom teacher of the student
- ELL teacher(s)
- Counselor
- The student's parent(s)
- The student's Special Education teacher (if applicable)
- Others as designated by the principal

The ELL Committee shall convene within **ten (10) school days** after identification to review the *ELL Student Referral and Placement Form* and any other pertinent information available on each ELL.

Based upon this information, the Committee should:

- Make recommendations concerning the placement of each student
  - a. in the ESL program and/or other related services; and/or
  - b. in the regular education program without accommodations if the composite score from the ACCESS for ELLs is 4.8 or higher or the MODEL score is 4.0.
- Suggest the best class schedule for the ELL
- Outline accommodations/modifications for use in regular content area classes
- Determine the best grading procedure for the EL Determine, according to state guidelines, the accommodations necessary for the ELL to participate in the statewide assessment program. ALL students will participate in the State Assessment Program according to state and federal guidelines.
- Provide written notice to the parents of the Committee's recommendation for the child to participate in the EL program. According to Title III, Part C, Section 3302(a), each LEA shall, "not later than **thirty (30) days** after the beginning of the school year, inform a parent or the parents of a limited-English proficient child identified for participation in, or participating in" an English language instruction program, about the details of the program as instructed in the parental notification section of this document (see section XI). If a student has not been identified for participation in an English language instruction educational program prior to the beginning of the school year, the LEA must carry out the parent notification requirements within **two (2) weeks** of a student being placed in such a program. Parents are not required to respond affirmatively to the notification for the student to participate in the English language instruction educational program. Upon receipt of written instructions from the parent, however, the ELL Committee must withdraw the student from the formal English language instruction educational program. The teachers and school are still obligated to provide appropriate accommodations and to utilize informal strategies to ensure that the student's English language and academic needs are met; the

student will still be classified as LEP and will participate in the state English Language Proficiency assessments.

Recommend and monitor the participation of eligible ELLs in any other applicable program; i.e., Title I, at-risk, homeless, migrant, etc.

- Determine that ELLs are eligible to participate in all academic and special programs on the same basis as the native English-speaking students.
- Review the English Language Learners' progress in language acquisition and academic achievement on at least a quarterly basis.
- Encourage the ELL to meet his/her academic goals.
- Lend emotional support and encouragement to the ELL as he/she adjusts to life in the new school.
- Reclassify and recommend exiting the ELL program when ELLs become proficient in English and have met the exit criteria.
- Monitor the academic progress of students who exit the ELL program for a minimum of **four (4) years**. If the student is not academically successful or does not pass coursework without accommodations while being monitored, the ELL/PST committee will reconvene to determine whether the student should be reevaluated for ELL services using the MODEL. The student may then be reclassified as LEP and reenrolled in the ELL program or other appropriate academic intervention programs. If the student is reclassified as LEP and I-ELP should be completed documenting this change and demonstrating the reason for reclassification.
- Make recommendations to school decision makers on professional development for staff and parents regarding ELL success.
- Work with parents to ensure maximum benefit from the school program.

The following documentation should be maintained in the individual ELL student files:

<b>Blue ELL file in Cumulative File</b>
Home Language Survey
Initial Placement test
Parent Notification of Program Placement (signed)
ACCESS scores
I-ELP (current & previous)

**All members of the ELL Committee shall observe all rules and laws governing the confidentiality of information concerning individual students.**

## **Recommendations for the Local School ELL Committee**

- The ELL Committee should as needed either in person or virtually to discuss students progress. All other notes are sent via Ellevation.
- The EL Committee should gather as much information as possible about the ELL's educational background.
- Based on his/her ACCESS for ELLs scores and school records, the student should be placed in appropriate classes.
- Classroom accommodations are determined by the ELL committee. Every teacher of an ELL, including special area teachers, will receive a copy of the ELL's I-ELP that outlines the appropriate accommodations for that student. As a student gains English proficiency, the ELL committee will make changes to the accommodations.
- Classroom teachers will complete the Classroom Monitoring Form via email at each Progress Report grading period to document/verify that the appropriate designated accommodations have been implemented.
- The ELL Committee should review each student's progress each grading period to determine if changes need to be made. In addition, meetings are called as needed throughout the year.
- Written documentation justifying low/failing grades at each grading period, including student work samples, must be presented to the ELL committee for review and maintained in the student's ELL portfolio. Verbal discussion via in person conference or phone with parents in a language they understand should be appropriately documented and filed.
- ELLs should be encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. It may be necessary to appeal to the State High School Athletic Association for special permission for participation of students who have recently arrived to the United States.
- The ELL Committee at the Secondary level should refer to the following recommendations that address specific situations.

## Recommendations for High School ELLs

Scenario	Committee Recommendation
An ELL comes to enroll with a transcript from another country	Counselor contacts ELL Coordinator to help with transcript evaluation
An ELL comes to enroll in school and doesn't bring a transcript or report card	Student must enroll in 9 <sup>th</sup> grade to begin to earn credits
An ELL enrolls in your school and needs additional instructional support	Try to schedule classes with more than one certified instructor and/or teaching assistant whenever possible
A non-English proficient student enrolls in your school	Try to schedule the student in an upper level course of the student's Heritage language as a foreign language elective
There is an ELL, who has recently enrolled in school, and wishes to participate in one of the school's athletic programs. (There may/may not be transferring grades to establish eligibility)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) The ELL Committee should meet and make recommendations for participation in the athletic program.</li> <li>2.) This ELL Committee recommendation should be submitted to the State Athletic Association for consideration</li> </ol>

## English Language Learners-No Prior Records

English Language Learners entering Dothan City Schools with no prior school records or credits will have access to grade-level curricula to meet promotion and graduation requirements. (*OCR Guidance 00086, January 2015*). Students, age seventeen (17) and under, with no high school credits upon enrollment, will be placed in a secondary school setting to begin earning credits toward an Alabama high school diploma. For example, if a student enters school within the first 9 weeks of each semester (block schedule), he/she will have the opportunity to receive full credit for the course, pending successful completion of course content and I-ELP goals and guidelines. However, if a student enters after the first 9 weeks of a semester, he/she will have the opportunity to earn half credit for the course, pending successful completion of course content and I-ELP goals and guidelines. The student will then have the opportunity to complete the missing credits before graduation, without penalty and with the support of an EL teacher and utilizing an online platform format. Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-3-1-.02

Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-3-1-.02

(k) Transfers from Non-Accredited Schools/School Setting(s). Any school/school setting not accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education or other organizations approved by the State Board of Education shall be considered a non-accredited school for the purpose of transfer of class/grade credit. Core courses shall be defined as English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

1. The transfer of credits and/or appropriate placement shall be as follows:(i) Credit for elective courses shall be transferred without validation.(ii) Non-contested credit for core courses shall be transferred as follows:(I) Using all official records and nationally standardized tests, the principal or his/her designee shall determine placement and notify the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s).(II) If the parent(s)/guardian(s) agrees with the placement decision, the student shall be placed.(III) Following placement, for any initial core course successfully completed, transfer of previous credit earned at a non-accredited school(s) in that subject area shall be accepted without further validation.(iii) Contested credit for core courses shall be transferred as follows: 1. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) disagree with the placement decision, the principal or his/her designee shall supervise the administration of the school's most recent semester test for each prerequisite core course in which the parent/guardian is requesting enrollment. For each test the student passes as determined by the school grading scale, the student shall be placed in the next level core course and credit shall be transferred for prerequisite courses. 1. For any test failed, placement shall be made as originally recommended by school officials and no credit shall be transferred for the prerequisite course(s) in that subject.2. In the event of controversial records/transcripts or the absence of records, the student shall take placement tests consisting of the school's previous semester test

## **Grading Policy & Procedures for English Language Learners**

*\*The following pertains to all official progress reports and report cards.*

Traditional procedures for assigning grades to students may not be appropriate for English Language Learners. The same methods and criteria applied to their English-speaking age and/or grade peers cannot always be used to assess students who lack English language proficiency. Teachers should be encouraged to maintain high expectations for student learning and should accommodate and adapt lessons and assignments so that ELLs can progress.

### **Procedure for K-12 ELL receiving minor accommodations as indicated in I-ELP:**

*(generally for students at proficiency levels 3.8-4.7)*

Any student in the ESL program who maintains a passing average (A,B,C,D) by participating in standard grade level classroom assessments should receive those grades on their report card. This student would be in a pull out support program and could be receiving few or multiple accommodations on assignments. (\*This student should not receive F's without proper documentation. See section "Policy for failing subjects and retention of ELLs)

**The I-ELP for this student will state the following:**

**Grading: Standard**

### **Procedure for Grades 1-12 EL receiving major accommodations as indicated in I-ELP:**

*(generally for students at proficiency levels 3.0-3.7)*

Any student in the EL program whose grade averages are the result of major accommodations made by the classroom teacher and /or the ELL teacher must have this reflected on the report card for each subject that has been highly accommodated. The comment "Working with ESL Supports" **must** be entered in a manner that shows this comment on all printed Progress Reports and Report Cards. Do not use this code if grades were not highly accommodated. This student should not have below a 70/C for any class unless proper documentation is provided.

**The I-ELP for this student will state the following:**

**Grading: Accommodated Grading**

### **Procedure for 1-8 EL at Beginning or Emerging proficiency levels:**

*(generally for students at proficiency levels 1.0-2.6. The EL Staff in collaboration with the EL Committee will consider and determine whether an alternate grading plan is appropriate for an EL. This decision will be based upon a variety of criteria: the student's English Language Proficiency Level, teacher observation, and other academic data. Students should ideally not need to be in this alternate grading category longer than 1 academic year)*

Students at proficiency levels 1 or 2 (W-APT or ACCESS scores) are extremely limited in English proficiency and will struggle significantly to participate successfully in general education classroom activities and assessments. Teachers of Level 1 or 2 students should implement alternative grading and utilize the following grading system:

S for Satisfactory: Grade ranging from 81-100%

P for Progressing: Grade ranging from 65-80%

N for Needs Improvement: Grade ranging from 0-64%

Grades can be entered as normal in PowerSchool (recalling that often accommodated assignments are most appropriate); additionally, the comment “Working with ESL Supports” should be entered for each class. No PowerSchool generated Progress Report or Report Card should be distributed to this student or this student’s family. An Alternative Academic Progress Report will be provided by the EL teacher and manually filled out by the general education teachers.

**The I-ELP for this student will state the following:**

**Grading: Alternative Grading**

**Policy for failing subjects and retention for all ELLs:**

ELLs may not fail a course or grade or be retained if lack of English language proficiency is the primary issue. (ELLs include any student in the ELL program, identified as LEP1 or LEP2 in PowerSchool.) Failing grades on progress reports or report cards should not be issued without significant documentation\* by the classroom teacher and ELL Committee. (see below)

Retention of ELs can not be based solely upon level of English language proficiency (*Lau v. Nichols*). Prior to considering retention of an ELL, the following points should be addressed by the ELL committee:

- What is the student’s level of English language proficiency?
- Has an I-ELP been implemented to document classroom modifications and student progress?
- Has the I-ELP been revised throughout the school year as needed?
- To ensure meaningful participation, are classroom accommodations being made in areas of:
  - Teacher lesson delivery
  - Activities and assignments
  - Homework
  - Formal and informal assessments (quizzes and test)
- How much individual English language development instruction is the student receiving during the school week/day?
- Has an alternate grading strategy been implemented (e.g. a portfolio, checklist, teacher observation, or rubric assessment on content and language objectives)?
- Has the student’s classroom teacher been adequately trained with instruction and assessment strategies specifically designed for students learning English?
- Do the report cards indicate that students were graded according to their I-ELPs?

**Documentation for Grades**

The academic progress for all students in the ELL program will be discussed in the quarterly ELL Committee meetings. The ELL Committee will gather Progress Reports, Report Cards, and a Classroom Monitoring Form completed by teachers. These documents, along with teacher input, will provide partial evidence of a student’s progress or lack thereof.

Sufficient evidence must be collected by the teachers and the ELL Committee in order to justify low or failing grades or retention. Such evidence must show that:

- All accommodations listed in the student’s I-ELP have been consistently given
- The teacher has made an effort to teach and assess at the student’s proficiency level
- Concerns were expressed and documented in the quarterly ELL Committee Meetings.

Evidence may include:

- work samples (which include evidence of accommodations provided)
- notes referencing discussions with parents and/or ESL teachers
- print outs of email communications between the general education teacher and the ESL teacher or between members of the ELL committee
- ELL Committee Notes

The preceding Grading Policy is largely based upon ACCESS scores. ACCESS composite scores range from 1.0-6.0. WIDA assigns proficiency level descriptions with the ACCESS scores. The following is an explanation of the WIDA Proficiency Levels:

ACCESS Score of 1.0-1.9	Level 1	Beginning
ACCESS Score of 2.0-2.9	Level 2	Emerging
ACCESS Score of 3.0-3.9	Level 3	Developing
ACCESS Score of 4.0-4.9	Level 4	Expanding
ACCESS Score of 5.0-5.9	Level 5	Bridging
ACCESS Score of 6.0	Level 6	Reaching/Attained

It should be noted that the ACCESS test also aligns levels to the following language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Oral Proficiency, and Comprehension. By consulting an ELL’s ACCESS score sheet, teachers can gain a better understanding of a student’s proficiency levels in the various language domains. A thorough understanding of an ELL’s proficiency level(s) should help guide a teacher in his/her understanding of the assigned grading category according to the Dothan City Schools ELL Grading Policy.

## **ELL Staff**

Dothan City will strive to employ educational personnel who have formal training in teaching second language learners to implement the English language instruction educational program (ELL program). All teachers and bilingual instructional aides in the English language instruction educational program are fluent in English as verified in the interview process. Certified teachers in the area of ESL should be recruited. Non-ESL certified teachers will be encouraged to work toward the attainment of ESL certification and supported through professional development opportunities.

ELL services are provided in all school sites for approximately 289 total students for the system. There are four full-time teachers, one teaching assistant, and two part time tutorial assistant and one aide.

ELL staff is responsible for the English language instruction of ELLs. In addition, they provide assessment, tutoring, and monitoring to ELL and FEL students as needed.

All ELLs will receive their primary instruction from certified teachers in the classroom using CCRS State Standards and WIDA ELD Standards.

## **Professional Development**

Professional development opportunities and training will be provided to address specific areas of need as required. This will be accomplished by providing the opportunity to view relevant videos, attend related workshops, conferences, webinars, podcasts, and/or through contracted consultants.

Regular content area program teachers will receive training opportunities in the instruction of second language learners through workshops, conferences, and/or through contracted consultants. Individual assistance will be provided by the ELL Lead Teacher. Efforts will be made to provide professional development that is sustained, ongoing, and specific, rather than one-shot episodic in-service sessions. Professional Development will seek to:

- Improve the instruction and assessment of limited-English proficient students.
- Enhance the ability of teachers to understand and use curricula, assessment measures, and instructional strategies for English language learners.
- Be of sufficient intensity and duration to have a positive and lasting impact on the teachers' performance in the classroom.

## **ELL Exit Procedures**

Students will be exited from the ELL program upon demonstrating overall proficiency on the ACCESS for ELLs (Composite score of 4.8 or higher).

When a student exits the ELL program, the ELL teacher and the ELL Committee will monitor the student's progress for a period of two years. The student will not be monitored after the second year unless he/she is referred back to the ELL Committee.

There is no time limit for participation in the ELL program.

Exited students remain eligible for some ELL accommodations. In light of the abundant information on the nature of second language acquisition, it is recognized that academic learning in languages additional to the heritage language is a life-long process. Exited students may at times still need assistance and/or accommodations in order to succeed. Teachers should consult ELL staff for assistance and advice should this situation arise.

### **Criteria for Exiting:**

ACCESS for ELLs score indicating overall proficiency (Composite score of 4.8 or higher)

### **Steps for Exiting**

- 1.The ELL Committee meets and exits a student from the ELL program based on the above stated criteria.
- 2.The I-ELP (*ELL Student Referral and Placement Form*) marked for exit will be completed and filed in the blue EL file in the cum and in the ELL Committee Student Profile.
- 3.Written notice shall be provided to the parents within thirty school days by the ELL Committee that their child is exiting from the ELL Program.
- 4.If the student is not academically successful, or does not pass course work without accommodations after exiting from the ELL program, the student can be recommended for reclassification, reassessed using the MODEL, and reenrolled in the ELL program and/or other appropriate programs which meet the need for English language instruction upon recommendation by the ELL committee.

### **Classification of Students**

Limited English Proficient students will be included in the LEP subgroup for the purpose of accountability until he/she has scored at the “proficient level” (composite score of 4.8 or higher) on the ACCESS for ELLs, English language proficiency assessment and has exited from EL services.

Upon exiting the ELL program the student will no longer be classified as LEP. The ELL instructor and the ELL Committee will monitor the progress of the student for two (2) years. During the first year the student will be monitored at the conclusion of each grading period and will be classified as **Former LEP (Monitor Year 1)**. The student will be monitored at the conclusion of each semester during the second year and will be classified as **Former LEP (Monitor Year 2)**. After successfully completing the **two (2) years** of monitoring, the student will be classified as **FLEP**. The ELL teachers will complete the appropriate documentation to change the student’s status during this monitoring period.

If the student is not academically successful or does not pass coursework without accommodations while being monitored, the ELL committee will reconvene to determine whether the student should be reassessed using the MODEL, reclassified as LEP, and/or reenrolled in the ELL program or other appropriate programs which meet the needs for English language instruction. The committee will base their decision on the following criteria:

1. If the student scores below a 4.0 on the MODEL he/she **must** be reclassified as ELL/LEP.
2. If the student scores between 4.0 and 4.8 on the MODEL the committee will use this score and other educational data pieces to make the determination for reclassification.
3. If the student scores above a 4.8 on the MODEL, he/she should remain exited and the committee will recommend other means of intervention.

Students who re-enter the program based on poor academic performance and the ELL committee decision will not be classified as “Former LEP” until he/she has again scored proficient on the state English language proficiency test.

## ELL Monitoring Procedures

- In order to appropriately monitor the progress of students, the school based ELL Committee should meet quarterly for a total of four (4) times a year.
- The school based ELL Committee's Agenda will include all LEP students. In addition, since students are required to be monitored for two years after exiting the EL Program, the EL Committee's quarterly Agenda should also include all monitored (FLEP1/2) students.
- The ELL Committee will ensure that the classroom teachers complete, via email, the Classroom Monitoring Form for ELL Students at each Progress Report grading period. The Classroom Monitoring Form should be used to **document**/verify that the appropriate designated accommodations have been implemented (for LEP students) and to provide important information about the student's progress.
- The ELL Committee should consider each student's progress each grading period by reviewing the Progress Report/Report Card to determine if changes need to be made to the IELP. In addition, meetings are called as needed throughout the year.
- ELL Students should not fail or be retained solely on the basis of limited English proficiency.
- Written documentation justifying failing grades at each grading period, including student work samples with proof of accommodations being made, must be presented to the ELL committee for review and maintained in the student's ELL portfolio. Verbal discussion with parents in a conference or by phone and appropriate documentation must be on file.
- **Documentation of student monitoring should be maintained in the yellow Student Profile folders kept by the ELL Committee.**
- Documentation of monitoring shall be maintained by local school personnel as designated by the ELL Committee and presented as requested by LEA or state officials. **An Agenda, Sign-In Sheet, and Minutes from all ELL Committee meetings should be maintained.**
- Classroom Monitoring Forms can be found in the Appendix.

## Monitoring of Exited Students

When reviewing the Classroom Monitoring Forms for exited ELLs (FLEP1/2), the committee should consider the following criteria to help them decide if the exited student is currently successful:

1. Subject area grades (stable at C or better or improving)
2. Review of formal and informal student assessment results (stable or improving)
3. Review of student work samples
4. Attendance
5. Teacher comments
6. Parent comments
7. Student comments

If the student is not academically successful or does not pass coursework without accommodations while being monitored, the ELL committee will reconvene to determine whether the student should be reassessed using the MODEL, reclassified as LEP, and/or reenrolled in the ELL program or other appropriate programs which meet the needs for English language instruction. The committee will base their decision on the following criteria:

1. If the student scores below a 4.0 on the Screener he/she **must** be reclassified as EL/LEP.
2. If the student scores between 4.0 and 4.8 on the Screener the committee will use this score and other educational data pieces to make the determination for reclassification.
3. If the student scores above a 4.8 on the SCREENER, he/she should remain exited and the committee will recommend other means of intervention.

If the lack of progress is not due to English proficiency, the Committee will make recommendations to meet the needs of the student. These recommendations may include tutoring, counseling, and/or a referral to the school's Problem Solving Team for behavioral or academic intervention.

## Special Education Services and Gifted Program

EL students can be referred for and placed into Special Education and Gifted Education programs by following the same procedures used for all students (Section 3116; Section 3213(2)(2)(G)); OCR Memorandum, September 1991, *Lau v. Nichols*. [See Section 1 pages 4 & 5 of this Manual of Procedures]

### Special Education Services

Students who are experiencing academic and behavioral difficulties, not related to their LEP status, are initially referred to the *Problem Solving Team (PST)* at their school. The EL Committee reviews student's progress and performance on a regular basis. In the event that concerns beyond language acquisition arise, the EL Committee can take the role of the PST for the EL or can refer the student to the PST. If the strategies and interventions set forth by the PST are not successful, the student may be referred for special education services.

As a general rule, ELs who are following normal developmental patterns for learning a new language **SHOULD NOT BE REFERRED**. ELs, because of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, have special instructional needs. These needs should not be confused with disabilities nor should they serve as a basis for referral for a special education evaluation.

Prior to a referral to PST or for a special education evaluation, efforts must be made to meet the student's needs within the context of the regular education program including English as a Second Language classes and documentation of assessments, accommodations, and interventions. Specific indicators, which validate the need for special education evaluation are:

- Poor communicative proficiency in the home as compared to siblings and age peers in bilingual environments, especially when this deficiency is noted by parents.
- English language development that appears to be significantly different than that of peers who are also learning English as a Second Language.
- Noted developmental delays or other at-risk conditions.

Based on the review of the submitted documentation, the Problem Solving Team (PST) and the ELL teacher/specialist will recommend the referral of a student to special education for evaluation after all other avenues have been explored, and after a conclusion has been reached that the student's needs cannot be met by the regular education program.

Should an ELL student qualify for special education services, an ELL staff member should participate in the initial development of the IEP and in subsequent IEPs until the student is exited from the ELL program. An ELL staff member should be included as part of the student's IEP team and should be present at IEP meetings.

Parent participation is a required part of the special education process and to ensure active participation, consideration must be given at all meetings and in all written communications for the non-English speaking parent. These considerations must include the availability of a translator for oral communication, and written communication must be in the parent's native language, when appropriate and possible.

### **Gifted Programs**

English Language Learners are eligible to be considered for participation in the Gifted (LINC) program.

Before any screening test is administered for these programs, the following steps must be taken:

1. The LINC teacher needs to confer with the classroom teacher and check the student's cumulative file to determine the degree of English proficiency (consulting Screener, or ACCESS scores)
2. The LINC teacher should consult the student's EL teacher for feedback and input. This includes having EL teachers submit an additional version of any recommendation paperwork.
3. The LINC teacher needs to make arrangements for the student's EL Committee to meet to discuss:
  - Student's need for alternative assessments
  - A plan to provide parents with interpretation of all forms needed in the referral/eligibility/placement process
4. The LINC teacher will:
  - Review the information gathered
  - Proceed with the screening/referral/eligibility in compliance with the guidelines listed in the Alabama Administrative Code 290-8-9-.12 Gifted.

### **Participation in Other Programs**

Regulatory requirements from Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964* have been interpreted to prohibit denial of equal access to education because of a student's limited proficiency in English.

ELs have equal access to the full range of district programs and services, including special education, gifted and talented programs, career-technical education, Title I, homeless, and nonacademic and extracurricular activities. Every effort is made to notify students and parents

of available programs and activities through newsletters, phone calls, and informational meetings for parents (with translations and interpreters available when possible). ELL and mainstream teachers encourage ELs to participate in extracurricular and non-academic activities.

### **Title I, Part A, Basic Programs**

Dothan City Schools are required by federal law to provide appropriate language acquisition services for students who are limited-English proficient. The language acquisition services are considered an integral part of a free and appropriate public education for all students. Title I, Part A, funds are used to pay part of the salaries of instructional staff to work with students who are limited-English proficient students. Presently 2 EL Resource Teachers, 3.5 EL Instructional Aides, and 1 Interpreter/Parent Liaison are employed for the ELL program.

LEP students (or English Language Learners) are eligible for programs and services provided by Title I, Part A, on the same basis that non-LEP students are eligible. In schools operating Title I school wide programs, all children, including ELLs, are intended to benefit from the program, and the needs of all students are to be taken into account in the program design. In Title I targeted assistance schools, LEP students are eligible and may be selected for services on the same basis as other children.

### **Title I, Part C, Migrant Education Program**

A student may be eligible for services under Title I, Part C, the Migrant Education Program (MEP), if he/she has traveled with a parent or guardian across school system boundaries to obtain temporary or seasonal work in agriculture, fishing, or chicken processing. Migrant education services do not replace the need or requirement for an English language instruction educational program. At present, there are no migrant education qualified students attending Dothan City Schools.

Dothan City Schools Migrant Education Program is supplemental to the basic, regular education program and addresses needs that may be attributed to the migratory status of the student's family. All migrant students are not language-minority, nor are all language-minority students migrant.

### **Education of Homeless Children and Youth**

Title X, the Program for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, promotes access to public schools for homeless children and youth. Dothan City Schools ensures that barriers to enrollment and in-school success for homeless students are eliminated.

A student who is limited-English proficient and also meets the federal definition of "homeless" is eligible in Dothan City Schools to receive services provided through the Homeless Education Program, Stewart B. McKinney Act as are other children who meet that definition.

## **Communication with Parents**

Parents who speak a language other than English are invited and encouraged to participate in all programs and activities. These include parent-teacher conferences, Parent-Teacher Organization, and a wide range of other special activities.

Parents are encouraged to offer their input to the local school and to the ELL Program Coordinator to improve the overall ELL program that will generate success for their children in school.

Dothan City School System will comply with Alabama Department of Education requirements to:

- Evaluate annually its educational programs to identify and eliminate barriers that may exist in preventing parents of limited-English proficient students from participating in school activities.
- Provide an interpreter to assist in the registration of a limited-English or non-English speaking student.
- Provide an interpreter for parent/teacher conferences.
- Ensure, to the extent possible, that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is provided in the child's home language.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for the participation of parents with limited-English proficiency in the education of their children, including providing information and school profiles in a language and form parents can understand.
- Include parents of ELs to the extent practicable and possible, in the development of system wide or individual school Parent Involvement Plans and Title I School Wide Plans, if possible.

Following is a list of factors that may impact the degree and extent of parent involvement for ELLs:

- Length of residence in the United States
- English language proficiency
- Availability of support groups and bilingual staff
- Prior experiences of parents
- Economic need of parents

Whenever possible, the school must provide written communication that the parents can understand and/or provide a person who can speak the parent's native language to facilitate understanding.

The Alabama State Department of Education provides a free subscription to TransAct. TransACT® provides more than 200 legally-reviewed parent notices, letters and documents that

fully support the federal communication mandates of Title I, III, IX, X, FERPA, PPRA and OCR. TransACT offers a collection of notices meeting school district needs in more than 21 languages.

### **Parental Notification**

The LEA must ensure that appropriate notification is made to parents prior to placing a student in an English language educational program. According to Title III, Part C, Section 3302(a), each LEA shall, "not later than **thirty (30) days** after the beginning of the school year, inform a parent or the parents of a limited-English proficient child identified for participation in, or participating in" an English language instruction program, about the following:

- The reasons for the identification of the student as limited-English proficient and in need of placement in an English language instruction educational program.
- The student's level of English proficiency, how such level was assessed, and the status of the student's academic achievement, to the extent known.
- How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the student.
- How the program will specifically help the student learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.
- Specific exit requirements for the program, the expected rate of transition from the program into regular classrooms, and the expected rate of graduation from high school, if appropriate.

Specifically, the following information pertaining to parental rights must be provided in writing:

- The right of parents to have their child immediately removed, upon their request, from the English language instruction educational program.
- The options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in an English language educational program or to choose another program or method of instruction if another program or method is available.
- The assistance that will be provided for parents in selecting from among various programs and methods of instruction if more than one program or method is offered by the LEA.

Each local school must implement "an effective means of outreach" so that parents of limited English proficient students can:

- Be involved in the education of their children.
- Be active participants in assisting their children to learn English, to achieve at high levels in core academic subjects, and to meet the same challenging state content and student achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.

If a student has not been identified for participation in an English language instruction educational program prior to the beginning of the school year, the EL Committee must carry

out the parent notification requirements within ten school days of a student being placed in such a program.

In addition to the information required above, the LEA shall separately inform the parents of LEP students of the LEA's or local school's failure to meet the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) within 30 days of receiving the final AMAO reports from the State Department of Education.

## **ELL Program Evaluation**

The instructional goals of the Dothan City Schools EL Program as stated at the beginning of this document are as follows:

- To increase the English language proficiency to the degree necessary to allow successful independent functioning in the regular school program.
- To provide the ELL the opportunity to reach his/her full potential.

The system will utilize both formal and informal evaluations of the program in order to determine progress in meeting these goals. The evaluation will be an ongoing process. A formal evaluation of the ELL program will be conducted at the end of each school year using ACCESS and State Assessment results. ACCESS results include the stated AMAO goals for the academic year.

AMAOs (Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives) have three parts:

- AMAO-A Making annual increases in the percent of children making progress (identified as a .5 gain in the composite score) in learning English
- AMAO-B Making annual increases in the percent of children attaining English Proficiency each school year
- AMAO-C Making Adequate Measurable Objectives for the LEP subgroup in the areas of Reading and Math (on the Grade 3-8 ACAP Summative, Grade 9 ACT 8/9, Grade 10 Pre-ACT , Grade 11 ACT, and Grade 12 WorkKeys.)

*(\*See ALSDE EL Policy & Procedure Manual (pp. 35-38) for a detailed explanation of AMAOs)*

This evaluation will consist of data collected from the individual schools concerning the following:

### **General Information**

- Number of limited-English proficient students at each school.
- ELL student enrollment by language and grade level.

### **Identification and Assessment**

- The number of students identified as having a primary or home language other than English who are not receiving services (NOM PHLOTE).
- The number of parents/legal guardians who waived English language instruction educational program student services during the year.

