

# **Northwest Local School District**



# **English Language Learner Procedure Manual**

# Northwest Local School District

## Plan for English Language Learners

The district's plan follows state guidelines in providing service to Limited English Proficient students. English Language Learners have equal access to a quality education that enables them to progress academically and socially while learning English.

### **History of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the District:**

During the past five years, our district has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of ELL students served. The ELL population currently has over 350 students, representing over 30 countries and speaking nearly two dozen languages. The two most prevalent languages of our ELL students are Spanish and Nepali. The Northwest Local School District is comprised of one preschool, seven elementaries, three middle schools and two high schools and we have ESL staff members in each building.

### **Mission Statement:**

To provide high-quality instruction in the English language, as well as appropriate modifications and accommodations in the mainstream classroom, so that English Language Learners may develop the language skills necessary to successfully achieve academically and socially in the United States.

### **ESL Program Goals:**

The goal of Northwest Local School's ESL Program is to provide high-quality instruction in the English language in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as appropriate modifications and accommodations in the mainstream classrooms, so that English Language Learners may develop the second language skills necessary to successfully achieve academically and socially in the United States.

Our goal is to provide a program that is effective in meeting the educational needs of the LEP students that will lead to academic achievement and timely acquisition of English language proficiency. We will monitor AMAO data, along with data from state and district assessments and responsively adjust our instructional program as needed.

### **Educational Theory:**

Direct instruction in ESL is provided by certified teachers, following State Standards, using district-approved reading and grammar texts designed for second language learners. At the preschool, elementary, middle and high schools, ESL is implemented by using pull-out, inclusion basis and self contained models. Modifications and accommodations in the classroom are based upon recommendations from the State of Ohio, and best practices. Progress of ELLs is monitored through conferences with classroom teachers, district and state assessments.

LEP students can be expected to attain proficiency in Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) within 1-3 years of instruction in US Schools. They can be expected to attain Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) within 5-7 years.

**Definition of ELL:**

A child who is Limited English Proficient (LEP) is: between the ages of 3 and 21; enrolled in an elementary or secondary school; has a native/home language other than English, whether born in the U.S. or another country; and has such difficulty speaking, reading, writing or understanding English that the student may be unable to perform well enough in class or on state tests to meet expected state standards for achievement (Source: ODE Proficiency Rules).

**Legal Responsibilities:**

There exists a substantial body of Federal Law that establishes the rights of ELL students and which define the legal responsibilities of a school district serving these students. Administrators and school boards who are responsible for local policies and programs can turn for guidance and direction to this body of law. It includes the following:

*1868 Constitution of the United States, Fourteenth Amendment*

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

*Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*

Title VI prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. The Title VI regulatory requirements have been interpreted to prohibit denial of equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English.

*1974 Lau v. Nichols*

A class action suit brought by parents of non-English-proficient Chinese students against the San Francisco Unified School District: In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled that identical education does not constitute equal education under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The court ruled that the district must take affirmative steps to overcome educational barriers faced by the non-English speaking Chinese students in the district. [414 U.S. 563 (1974)]

*1981 Castañeda v. Pickard*

On June 23, 1981, the Fifth Circuit Court issued a decision that is the seminal post-Lau decision concerning education of language minority students. The case established a three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of a district's program for ELL students: (1) is the program based on an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or is considered by experts as a legitimate experimental strategy; (2) are the programs and practices, including resources and personnel, reasonably calculated to implement this theory effectively; and (3) does the school district evaluate its programs and make adjustments where needed to ensure language barriers are actually being overcome? [648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir., 1981)]

*1982 Plyler v. Doe*

The decision of the Supreme Court in Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982), holds that States may not, consistent with the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, withhold from undocumented children the same free public education they provide to other children residing in the State. The Court emphatically declared that school systems are not agents for enforcing immigration law, and determined that the burden undocumented aliens may place on an educational system is not an accepted argument for excluding or denying educational service to any student.

### **Program Staffing:**

The District's ESL department consists of a coordinator, an ESL teacher and several licensed/certificated tutors with either TESOL endorsements or comparable training and experience who provide direct instruction and support in ESL per state guidelines.

### **Translation and Interpretation for Families:**

District documents have been translated into alternate languages, including, but not limited to: registration, Free & Reduced Lunch Applications, intervention, and health forms. The Northwest Local School District supports ELL families preK-12th grade by hiring interpreters for, screening, conference nights, and as needed for individual enrollments. Bilingual interpreters are provided for parent teacher conferences, IEP and MFE meetings. News and information posted on our district website (with the exclusion of PDF attachments) can be translated into nearly 100 languages using the Google Translate feature at the top of the district's main webpage. School administrators are encouraged to use this feature to effectively communicate with ELL families.

### **SIOP® Training**

All staff members are offered annual training with the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Model. Definition: A scientifically validated model of sheltered instruction designed to make grade-level academic content understandable for English learners while at the same time developing their English language.

Echevarria, J., Short, D., & Vogt, M.E., (2008) Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners, The SIOP® Model

## **Enrollment, Identification, and Placement of ELL Students**

### **Enrollment Policy**

EVERY new student who enrolls must fill out a language survey, which is part of the enrollment folder for all new students. The Home Language Survey will determine whether or not we proceed with the evaluation to determine LEP status.

Each enrolling student must provide documentation from his/her prior school, if applicable. If such documentation is not available, the parent/guardian will be asked to complete the Student's Previous Educational Experience form and a Record Release Form.

### **Home Language Survey**

English Language Learners (ELLs) must be identified at the point of enrollment. A consistent enrollment procedure, which includes the use of a Home Language Survey, facilitates their entry into the new school. An ESL student is one whose native language is other than English. It is vital to have trained school personnel who are dedicated to meeting the needs of students from different cultures with different levels of English proficiency.

A Home Language Survey must be completed for each student registering for enrollment in Northwest Local Schools.

The Home Language Survey must contain, at a minimum, the following questions:

1. What language did your child speak when he/ she first learned to talk?
2. What language does your child use most frequently at home?
3. What language do you speak most often to your child?

4. What language do the adults at home most often speak?
5. Has your child attended another school in the United States? If yes, most recent school?

When all responses on the Home Language Survey indicate that English is the only language used by the student and by individuals in the home, the student is considered a Fluent English Speaker (FES). Procedures established by the district for placement in the general student population should be followed. If any response on the survey indicates the use of a language other than English by the student or an individual in the home, then further assessment must be conducted to determine the student's English-language proficiency level. However, the presence of a language other than English does not automatically signify that the student is not a fluent English speaker.

### **Initial Language Proficiency Assessment and Program Placement**

Initial assessment of English language proficiency must be conducted to determine the level of English proficiency and to facilitate appropriate instructional and program placement decisions. ELL students identified through the Home Language Survey during registration must be assessed for English-language proficiency within fourteen (14) days of enrollment.

Northwest Local Schools has adopted the *Pre-LAS (K) and LAS Placement Test (1-12)* to help determine eligibility for placement in the district's English language development program. Tests are administered by a district ESL test administrator. The *Pre-LAS and LAS Placement Test* assess English language proficiency in all four domains of language development—listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as comprehension to ensure that students' language needs are properly identified and addressed through the district's educational program.

Students are then designated as "LEP" (if they score less than Proficient in all areas on the LAS) or "Not LEP" (if they score totally proficient). A student must score at the Proficient level in all five domains in order to be considered "Not LEP". The district EMIS Coordinator reports the student's LEP designation (L, Y, or M).

### **Parent Notification**

Within 30 days of the start of the school year (or within two weeks of placement if not identified prior to the beginning of school), schools must notify parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who are participating in ESL programs of the following:

- Reasons for child's identification and placement;
- Child's level of English proficiency, how assessed, and status of child's academic achievement;
- Type of language acquisition program and method of instruction used in child's program;
- How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child;
- How the program will help the child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
- Program exit requirements, expected rate of transition and expected date of graduation;
- If applicable, and the LEP student has been appropriately identified as having a learning disability, how the program meets the child's individual education plan (IEP).

### **Rights of the parent:**

- To remove the child from the program;
- To decline enrollment in the program or other program options available;

- Obtain assistance in selecting from among available programs.

\*If parents deny permission for services, the student keeps the LEP designation, and the student's progress will continue to be monitored by the responsible ESL teacher. The "denied participation" code will be entered in EMIS for that student. However the student will be included in the annual spring assessment of English proficiency given to all LEP students.

**Schools must:**

- Notify parents within 30 days when the district fails to progress on measurable objectives under Section 3122;
- Implement an effective means of outreach to parents of LEP students to inform them how they can be involved in the education of their children;
- Provide above information in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parent(s) can understand.

**Separate Notification Regarding Accountability for Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs)**

In addition to providing the above information, each school that is using Title I and/or Title III funds to provide a language instruction educational program and that has failed to make progress on the annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAOs) for any school year, shall separately inform a parent or the parents of a child identified for participation in the program, or children currently enrolled in the program, of such failure not later than 30 days after such failure occurs.

**ESL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The English as a Second Language (ESL) program is designed to enable limited English proficient (LEP) students to become competent in listening, speaking, reading, writing and comprehension of the English language through the use of second language methods. The ESL program emphasizes the mastery of English language skills, as well as mathematics, science, and social studies, to enable the LEP students to participate the same as their native English speaking peers in school. The ESL program is an integral part of the total school program.

Northwest Local Schools will use a variety of program models at all buildings to serve students in the ESL program. The models include:

- ESL Pull-out/ Push-in—students spend part of the day in mainstream classrooms and are "pulled out" for a portion of the day to receive instruction in the ESL program. Students may NOT be pulled out during physical education, music, or art. "Push- in" classroom ESL support is provided by an ESL resource teacher.
- Sheltered Instruction—an approach to teaching content area subject matter through specific teaching techniques. Sheltered Instruction teaching techniques facilitate the acquisition of the second language through content area curriculum. Teachers use challenging materials at appropriate reading levels, which help the student acquire the content, as well as the vocabulary in the target language. The teacher uses clear, concrete language with plenty of visuals, supporting clues, and relevant teaching strategies combined with appropriate manipulatives allowing the students to have real world experiences. Teachers control their speech and vocabulary and use few idiomatic expressions.

## **Special Education**

When an ELL student's performance suggests that he or she is having difficulties attaining academic and social expectations, which are unrelated to the student's ELL status, the student will be referred to the school Student Support Team (SST) for intervention strategies. The ESL staff must be part of this team. The SST utilizes the Response to Intervention model. (RTI) Periodic reviews will be conducted to determine the success or failure of the strategies and what further strategies may be necessary. In the event that various strategies are not successful, the student may be referred for special education evaluation. Prior to this, the district will consider language proficiency of the student by analyzing the most recent English language proficiency scores. Should a PHLOTE student qualify for special education services, he/she will continue to receive ESL services as reflected on his/her IEP.

The Northwest Local School District follows the State of Ohio policies and procedures for referring students for special education evaluations. The intervention strategies must be utilized to ensure that such students are not referred for a formal Multifactorial Team Evaluation when the lack of academic progress is primarily related to language background or a need for more ESL and/or support services. The student may require an evaluation administered in his/her native language. An ESL teacher, who is knowledgeable about the student's native language will be part of the process of diagnosis and placement, and will discuss the effects of language on the evaluation. Parents will be provided an interpreter for due process, testing results and educational team reports in their native language if needed. The IEP or Section 504 plan for a LEP student with a disability will reflect the student's program of services and the service provider. The IEP or Section 504 teams for LEP students will consider the student's language needs when developing the student's educational plan.

If a student needs, or is believed to need special education services or related aids and services, the parents and guardians will be informed about the student's services in a language that they can understand. Documents and proceedings to be translated include, but are not limited to, the following: notices of rights and procedural safeguards, consent forms, notices of meetings, interviews, special education or Section 504 placement meetings, individual education or Section 504 plan documents, statements of goals and objectives, and the district's policies and procedures for identifying, evaluating, and placing students with disabilities. In addition, every LEP student with a disability will receive ESL services by qualified and appropriately trained staff unless the placement committee determines and documents that such ESL services are clearly inconsistent with the student's identified individual needs.

## **Title I Services**

The Northwest Local Schools ensure that ELL students will be eligible for and provided with Title I services on the same basis as other children who qualify for such services. The Northwest Local School Title I Standards ensure that ELL students will be held to the same high content and performance standards required of all students. They will be assessed to determine how well they are progressing toward these standards.

### **Exiting the ESL Program**

The length of time an English Language Learner (ELL) student spends in the program is dependent on their level of proficiency. Research indicates it can take from 5 to 7 years to acquire academic language proficiency compared to a native speaker. Therefore, the amount of support given to an ESL student will depend on their progress in their new language. When the student becomes proficient in the four domains of language acquisition Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (as indicated by their scores on the state language assessment), the student is then exited from the program.

To be exited from LEP programs in Ohio, students must demonstrate proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They must be able to:

Achieve successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is in English; meaningfully participate in academic assessments in English; and attain the state's required level of English proficiency. This includes:

- A composite score of 5 on the Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition (OTELA or as of 2015-16, the OELPA); or
- Obtains a composite score of 4 on the OTELA, subsequently completes a trial period of mainstream instruction and obtains a composite score of 4 or above on the OTELA during the trial period of mainstream instruction.

### **ESL Program Evaluation**

As the district defines the ESL program services available and develops others to meet the needs of ELL students, the ESL staff will work with the individual building staff to develop appropriate measures of implementation and effectiveness.

The evaluation will address participant, program, and system-level evaluation. This evaluation format will be ongoing to allow for mid-year corrections within services and will summarize to provide an overall accountability of services.

System evaluation will provide an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the district in meeting the needs of ELL students. In addition to providing evidence of implementation, the system-level evaluation will examine ELL students' performance on all current indicators of accountability.

Northwest Local Schools use the following measures at all three levels to evaluate the success of the ELL program:

- teacher observation measures and checklists,
- district assessment data,
- grade point averages,
- graduation/promotion rates,
- inclusion of ELL students in Gifted and Talented and other special programs,
- participation in extracurricular activities,
- drop-out rates,
- and measures such as the AMAO and AYP objectives.

Northwest Local School District has a Curriculum Leadership Team which oversees the District Leadership Team (DLT) and the Building Leadership Teams (BLT). When the data is available, the Curriculum Leadership Team takes the district data and presents it to the groups for analysis and discussion. The data is then presented to the entire staff during professional development days. The teams look at the LEP data to determine whether or not they have reached their Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO). When AMAO was not reached two years in a row, a District ELL Plan was implemented.

In addition to analyzing the data, the ESL teachers will progress monitor students through programs such as LAS Links, MAP data, scores from state assessments and classroom assessments. Students who are not progressing satisfactorily, are brought to a Response to Intervention (RTI) meeting. At each meeting interventions are discussed and agreed upon and then implemented. Follow-up meetings are scheduled to discuss the success of the interventions and more interventions are recorded as necessary.

After the above mentioned data is reviewed by the DLT, BLTs, and the ESL department, appropriate decisions are made regarding curriculum and staff. This is done to ensure that the district is meeting the needs of its LEP students and providing appropriate services that will enable the students to become proficient in English.

By September 1 each year, ESL staff will review the procedures in the procedural manual, train new staff on the use of the manual and its procedures, and make any necessary revisions. The ESL Supervisor, along with building administrators will monitor the procedures throughout the school year to ensure proper compliance.

### **English Language Proficiency Levels and Characteristics**

#### **Pre-Functional (1)**

- Student is dominant in native language at school and home.
- Student may not yet produce speech in English and may spend weeks or months in a “silent” stage.
- Student is listening and may begin to respond with nonverbal signals.
- Student may be able to participate in class through physical actions rather than verbal responses.
- Student has little or no literacy skills in English.
- Student may possibly have little or no background in grade level subject matter.
- Student has little or no command of English structure.
- Student has little or no grasp of English phonology.
- Student operates generally in the concrete.

#### **Beginner Characteristics (2)**

- Student continues native language dominance in school and at home.
- Student may begin to respond with short answers and have a greater understanding of verbal instructions and directions.
- Student will begin to initiate conversation and respond to a wider variety of comprehensible language input.
- Student still has limited literacy skills in English.
- Student still has limited background in grade level subject matter.
- Student has limited receptive or expressive vocabulary.
- Student has little command of English structure.
- Student has limited grasp of English sound system.
- Student still operates generally in the concrete.

#### **Intermediate Characteristics (3)**

- Student is still dominant in native language at school and home.

- Student is able to respond with phrases and some complete sentences and is able to engage in basic classroom discourse.
- Student is able to communicate thoughts effectively both orally and in writing.
- Student can use more academic language in a variety of settings.
- Student can participate in classroom discussions and conversations.
- Student has acquired some literacy skills in English.
- Student has acquired some background knowledge in grade level subject matter.
- Student has increased receptive and expressive vocabulary.
- Student has increased command of English structure.
- Student has increased understanding of the phonetic sounds of English.
- Student still operates generally in the concrete.

#### Advanced Characteristics (4)

- Student is dominant in English at school and native language at home.
- Student is capable of communicating orally in English and in most classroom situations.
- Student can use more academic language in a variety of settings.
- Student near grade level in English literacy skills.
- Student has acquired background knowledge in grade level subject matter.
- Student produces complete sentences appropriate for developmental age.
- Student has a very good command of English structure but makes occasional errors that would not be uncommon among native speakers.
- Student has an increased ability in the abstract.

#### Fully English Proficient (5)

- Student is dominant in English at school.
- Student is proficient in oral and literacy skills in English.

A printed version of this manual, including forms, can be obtained from the NWLSD Central Enrollment Center, located at 3310 Compton Road, Cincinnati Ohio 45251

#### **Contact information:**

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