

REGULATIONS FOR THE EDUCATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

1. ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

All English Language Learners (ELL) who receive language support services through the ESL Program are tested annually to assess their second language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. The testing policies for the ELL population comply with state guidelines and are as follows:

All ELLs in grades K-12 are assessed with the MELA-O annually in the spring to assess their oral language proficiency and comprehension.

All ELLs in grades 3-12 are assessed annually in the spring with the MEPA to assess English reading and writing proficiency.

ELL students in grades K-2 who were enrolled in the WPS according to October 1 census data participate in IPT testing to assess English reading and writing proficiency.

All ELLs in grades 3-12 are tested annually with the MCAS at the appropriate grade level. ELLs, like their native-English speaking counterparts, participate in all portions of the MCAS tests for their appropriate grade level, with one exception. That is, ELLs in their first year of schooling in the United States do not have to participate in the MCAS ELA portion of the test (if given at their grade level). Instead, for their first year of participation in the US schools, the MEPA will stand in for the MCAS ELA. After their first year of schooling in the US, all ELLs are held to the same expectation for MCAS participation as their native-English speaking peers.

*NB: All ELLs new to the District after the spring administration of MEPA must participate in MEPA testing in the fall to establish a baseline prior to participating in the annual mandated testing each spring.

*NB: Only Qualified MELA-O Administrators can serve as test administrators for MELA-O.

*NB: ELL Students continue to participate in MEPA and MELA - O testing as long as these assessments and other applicable and significant data indicate that they should be re-designated as FLEP (Formerly Limited English Proficient).

2. MCAS TESTING

All LEP students in grades 3-12 participate in the Math, Science and Technology portions of MCAS, regardless of the length of time they have been in U.S. schools.

LEP students in their first year of schooling in the U.S. do not have to participate in the ELA portion of the MCAS. (See above)

All LEP students and any student who ever was designated as LEP has the right to have use of an MCAS approved word to word dictionary during MCAS testing.

3. STUDENT IDENTIFICATION AND PROGRAM PLACEMENT

The Home Language Survey serves as a screening tool for identification of ELLs. When the Home Language Survey indicates that a child learned a language other than English as his/her first language and/or that the language spoken in the home is a language other than English, proficiency testing is arranged for the students. If the school in which a parent is enrolling a potential ELL student does not have qualified staff to assess English language proficiency, the parent and students are directed to the school(s) at that grade level for ELL assessment. Intake assessment to determine LEP designation occurs at Highland Elementary level for students in grades K-5, South Middle School for students in grades 6-8, and both Westfield and Westfield Vocational-Technical for students in grades 9-12.

Students are tested in reading and writing in grades 2-12 using writing prompts as well as the Language Assessment Scales. Students in grades K and 1 are assessed with the Bilingual Syntax Measure. Cloze tests in the native languages of our students (to the extent possible) are also given to students to rate their native language literacy. The SOLOM is used to assess native language oral proficiency. Native language speakers of Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian administer the SOLOM and rate the native language writing samples and Cloze tests.

Once a determination is made, parents are provided with information regarding their child's LEP or non-LEP status with an Initial Intake Letter. This letter informs parents of the languages in which their child was assessed, the levels of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English and in the native language (where possible). If a child is determined to be LEP, the parents also receive a program description.

4. WAIVER PROCEDURES

Waivers are available to parents of students who have been designated as LEP and who do not want to enroll their children in sheltered English immersion, but another form of bilingual education. Parents are informed of their right to apply for a waiver in the SEI program description provided to them upon registration. Waiver forms are available in English, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian.

Pursuant to state regulations of MGL 71A, waiver applications are available in two forms. One form is for children 10 and older. The second form is for children 10 and younger.

5. PROGRAM PLACEMENT AND STRUCTURE

The structure of the SEI / ESL program is such that students designated as LEP receive content instruction from qualified teachers in the content areas, ESL from licensed ESL teachers, and engage in specials with their native-English speaking peers (physical education, art, music). All students enrolled in SEI or other ELL support services receive instruction in the same content objectives in accordance with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the curricula of the Westfield Public Schools in the core areas of ELA, math, science and technology, and history/social studies. Additionally, the instruction of LEP students is based on the *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes*.

The English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes:

The *ELP Benchmarks and Outcomes* guide the instruction of LEP students until they reach a level of English language proficiency that allows them to be placed in the mainstream classroom, thereby exiting the SEI program. These benchmarks and outcomes serve as the basis for language objectives for LEP students in language classes and academic subjects. This document serves as a natural progression to the ELA Curriculum Frameworks and is used in conjunction with the District's curricula to support appropriate instruction for LEP students.

Classroom teachers instructing LEP students are certified in the content and/or grade level that they teach. In addition to content instruction, all LEP students receive ESL instruction by licensed ESL teachers. Students are grouped by proficiency level to target listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills using the English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes as guide.

In classes where the content teachers do not speak the native language of the students, to the extent possible, a native language paraprofessional or tutor is also present. This paraprofessional is available to provide translation and clarification in the native language of content topics. In circumstances where LEP students (above the beginning level) are in classes with content teachers who are not TBE or ESL certified, the District makes every effort to offer professional development according to the June 2004 memo regarding ELL training for content instructors.

6. PROGRAM EXIT AND READINESS

A LEP student will not be exited from the SEI/ESL Program until he/she is deemed proficient enough in English not to require simplified texts, materials, native language assistance or instruction based on the *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes*. A student will be exited from SEI/ESL when he/she can fully access the content and instruction of the general education program at his/her appropriate

grade level. The amount of time a LEP student spends in the SEI/ESL Program is not limited or predetermined upon entry. All LEP students remain in the SEI/ESL Program while they show need of such program based on English language proficiency level as determined by IPT or MEPA and MELA-O, teacher recommendations, and performance as measured by the local curricula. A student will be re-designated as FLEP (Formerly Limited English Proficient) when assessments (MEPA, MELA-O, IPT), teacher input and observations show that the student is ready to enter the general education program.

7. PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The District has developed many strategies to involve parents and community members in school based programs and initiatives. Communication methods include the District's website, school-to-home communications, school and district newsletters, school handbooks and direct communications to parents. Along with District efforts of outreach to parents and families, the SEI/ESL program also strives to involve parents in school-based programs and initiatives. In cases where traditional methods of communication to parents do not suffice, the SEI/ESL Department has developed methods of outreach to parents to recruit and attract their participation in school-based initiatives. This communication includes but is not limited to:

- * Department translators translate written school-to-home communications, school and parent Handbooks, Individualized Education Plans, invitations to programs, announcements of special programs in Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian
- * Special Education and Title I employ District translators to translate school-to-home communications and notices to parents
- * Periodically each year parent involvement events for parents of students in the SEI/ESL Program are planned and parent participation is advertised and sought via native language translators, classroom teachers and translated documents
- * A Russian speaking Bilingual Parent Liaison is employed to facilitate school to home communications with parents, translate at meetings with parents and help organize events of outreach to parents
- * Parents who do not speak English receive invitations to participate on school councils, PTA and such committees in Spanish, Russian, and Ukrainian.

8. DECLINING ENTRY TO SEI PROGRAM

Parents have the right to not enroll their LEP children in the SEI/ESL Program. In cases where parents show the inclination to opt their child out of language support services in SEI, every effort is made by bilingual staff to explain the program in detail, invite parents to observe the program in action, and enroll their students on a temporary basis before making the final decision to decline entry to SEI/ESL.

If it is a parent's decision to opt their LEP child out of the SEI/ESL Program, the SEI/ESL Coordinator arranges for quarterly academic monitoring of the student. Communication with Principals, Guidance Staff, and teaching staff is also established.

9. INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPING

In every circumstance possible, LEP students are grouped by grade level in grade level content classes. In addition, middle and high school students receive ESL instruction in regularly scheduled ESL classes with licensed ESL teachers. They are grouped by their English language proficiency levels to receive instruction targeted to their proficiency levels.

10. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Within ten school days of entry to the SEI/ESL Program, parents of LEP students receive a notice explaining that their child has been assessed and determined to be LEP along with a SEI/ESL program description. This notice also provides information about his/her proficiency level and the recommendation for placement into SEI/ESL. The program description provides information related to how the program will assist the child in acquiring English and informs parents of the ability to apply for a waiver.

Native-language teachers, tutors, paraprofessionals and the Bilingual Parent Liaison are available at intake to assist with the enrollment and registration process, provide clarification about the SEI/ESL

Program and to ensure that the parents' and students' first experiences in their new school setting are informative and pleasant.

All designated LEP students receive report cards and progress reports with the same frequency as their native-English speaking peers. Every effort is made to translate such documents to increase parent understanding of instructional programs and progress within them.

11. EQUAL ACCESS TO ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

LEP students are held to the same high expectations for learning as outlined in the MA Common Core of Learning. District policies are in place to include LEP students in the academic programs that they require based on their needs, just as are available to their native - English speaking peers. These are:

- *LEP students are not separated from native-English speaking peers except when grouped together for SEI content or ESL classes so that the SEI/ESL Program can be effectively implemented.
- * LEP students participate with native-English speaking peers in non-core subjects such as physical education, art, and music.
- * Native language instructors or tutors work with professionals who deliver support services such as guidance and counseling so that LEP students receive these services in a language that they fully understand.
- * LEP students are not hindered in their choices for content classes. If a LEP student chooses to be involved in band, honors classes or other such academically advanced classes in which only one offering is given during the day, staff work to ensure the students' access to such classes and provide support to do so. This includes using native language tutors to assist students in their access to these classes.
- * LEP students qualify for Title I services based on data, teacher input and classroom performance in the same manner that non-LEP students qualify. Additionally, input is sought from ELL professionals to provide the necessary information that the services are needed and should be provided.
- * LEP students receive testing in the native language (to the extent possible) as well as in English to qualify for and receive Special Education services. The District employs a bilingual special education teacher who has knowledge of appropriate testing for ELLs when there is a lack of native language testing and diagnostic tools. Special Education staff work closely with ESL/SEI staff to appropriately determine the need for Special Education and in recent years have improved understanding among district staff about determining special needs versus understanding second language acquisition. Students are not placed in Special Education based on lack of English proficiency. It is a coordinated and collaborative decision among SEI, ESL, and Special Education staff members.
- * District translators provide the students and families with translations of information related to activities, academic benchmarks and outcomes, and program descriptions.

12. EQUAL ACCESS TO NON-ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS

The same non-academic and extracurricular programs available to non-LEP students are available to LEP students. Information related to such activities and events are provided in either oral or written form to students as applicable. District translators are available and provide schools with the translation requests pertinent to non-academic, after-school, or special events that are available to the student body.

13. FOLLOW-UP MONITORING

LEP students who are re-designated as FLEP are monitored for two years following their date of exit from SEI/ESL to ensure that students continue to achieve at grade level curricular standards. Quarterly monitoring sheets are sent from the District's ESL Office to school principals who facilitate this academic monitoring process. Upon completion of monitoring forms by teachers of FLEP students, Principals or their designees return the forms to the District's ESL Office where these are reviewed by the ESL Coordinator and ESL Staff. When monitoring forms show the need for concern as mentioned by teachers, the ESL Coordinator communicates with guidance and teaching staff to determine what needs to be done to assist this student in the mainstream. This may include: re-assessment of students to ensure correct placement/re-designation decisions, professional development for teachers, and/or more frequent monitoring of students.

14. LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

The Westfield Public School has over two hundred students identified as LEP. Therefore, the District employs a full-time Coordinator for the ESL Program, certified in ESL or TBE and holding a Supervisor/Director license.

Teachers of ELL Students are qualified to teach ELL students based on complying with the following:

Elementary and Early Childhood:

- * Teachers are licensed in ESL at pre-K - 8, pre-K-9, or 5-12 level in classrooms where instructional focus for the year is primarily on learning English; or
- * TBE license in any language and an Early Childhood or Elementary license appropriate for the grade level served and documentation maintained at the local level that the individual teacher has taken or is taking professional development coursework in strategies for teaching sheltered subject matter. The language of the TBE license need not be the primary language of the students; or
- * Early Childhood or Elementary license appropriate for the grade level served and documentation maintained at the local level that the individual teacher has taken or is taking professional development coursework in strategies for teaching sheltered subject matter, first and second language acquisition and linguistics.

Middle and Secondary Levels

- * ESL license at Pre-K - 8, pre-K - 9, or 5-12 level in classrooms where instructional focus for the year is primarily on learning English rather than subject matter content; or
- * For instruction in a particular content area, a specialist in the content area should be used in conjunction with the ESL teacher OR the ESL teacher should document that he/she has taken or is taking professional development coursework in the area to be taught; or,
- * TBE license in any language and subject matter. Documentation should be maintained at the local level that the individual is taking or has taken professional development courses in strategies for teaching sheltered subject matter. The language of the TBE license need not be the primary language of the students. or,
- * Subject matter license and documentation maintained at the local level that the individual has taken or is taking professional development coursework in strategies for teaching sheltered subject matter, first and second language acquisition and linguistics.

Pursuant to NCLB, *all instructional staff is required to be trained in second language acquisition methods and in working with culturally and linguistically diverse students* in order to ensure that LEP students are fully integrated into all programs and the life of the school. There must be a professional development plan for the district that provides high quality training of instructional staff.

High quality professional development is defined as:

- * Intense and sustained
- * aligned to MA learning standards
- * grounded in research
- * focused on classroom implementation
- * provided by trained staff
- * involves the participants

The school must provide opportunities that ensure the progress of LEP students in developing English proficiency in the four skill areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and in meeting academic standards and curriculum frameworks.

15. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

The District implements a professional development plan that provides teachers and administrators with high quality training as described by the MA Department of Education in the following four categories:

(1) Second Language Learning and Teaching; (2) Sheltering Content Instruction; (3) Assessment of

speaking and listening with the MELA-O; (4) Teaching Reading and Writing to limited English proficient students.

Each year, professional development is planned and provided to teachers of LEP students based on collaboration between the ELL Department and school principals. The District evaluates the need to provide the four categories of ELL PD listed above based on student enrollment numbers and numbers of LEP students assigned to trained teachers and teachers in need of training.

16. EQUITABLE FACILITIES

To the extent possible and based on ELL population in each setting, the District ensures that ELL students receive instruction, materials, and services in facilities equitable to those in which their native English speaking peers are provided during the school day.

17. PROGRAM EVALUATION

Each year the ESL Program Coordinator reviews the effectiveness of the Program with the goal of developing and improving LEP students' skills and increasing their ability to participate meaningfully in the grade level curricula, K-12. Information used in this evaluation is:

- * LEP student assessment data
- * Classroom groupings and assignments of teachers
- * Building based information related to population, proficiency levels of students, course assignments for ESL and SEI staff
- * Available funding and program options/program development
- * Professional training of mainstream teachers

18. RECORDS OF LEP STUDENTS

The District maintains records of LEP students from intake, placement, exit and monitoring. Pertinent data in the records of LEP students are:

The Home Language Survey

Parental notification of LEP status and program placement (initial)

Yearly program placement

Report cards, progress reports

MCAS data

An ISSP if the student has failed MCAS

MEPA and MELA-O data

ESL Data Record (blue card)

Waiver documentation information if this applies

Parents' Opt Out documentation if this applies

Monitoring information for FLEP status students

First Reading: waived

Second Reading: May 19, 2008

Adopted: May 19, 2008