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Massachusetts State regulations have determined three primary components of the Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) initiative (www.doe.mass.edu/retell/) to strengthen teaching and learning for ELLs.

1. Required professional development in regards to sheltered content instruction and the promotion of language development for ELL.
2. English language development standards (WIDA ELD standards)
3. Annual language proficiency assessment, to assess comprehension and communication in English (ACCESS for ELLS)

Due to these laws and regulations, AMSA has implemented the following process and criteria to determine ELL needs:

1. Upon initial enrollment, a student's ELL needs and subsequent need for placement, in regards to English language proficiency, will be determined
2. Notification will be provided to the parent/guardian with information about the student's language status and initial program placement
3. Information will be provided regarding their rights to "opt out" or to waive state requirements for language programs
4. Annual assessment of ELLs will occur
5. Based upon a standard process and set criteria, ELL eligibility, to receive or to exit the program, will be determined, including the monitoring of FLEP (Former Limited English Proficient) students

As per the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education's *Transitional Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of English Language Learners* (August, 2013) and in an effort to meet the needs of all students at AMSA, the following are the procedures which have been put into place for the identification, initial placement, assessment and reclassification of English Language Learners (ELL) at the Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School (AMSA) in Marlborough, Massachusetts. The procedures are based upon and in compliance with the regulations launched and implemented by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2012.

Initial Identification of English Language Learners (ELL)

Step 1: Administer a Home Language Survey to all new enrolling students

Upon admission to AMSA, a Home Language Survey will be completed by each student or the student's parent or guardian. Based upon the response from this survey, an evaluation will be made to determine if the student's English Language Proficiency will be assessed. If a student's initial or native language and/or the language spoken at home is any language other than English, secondary and tertiary components will be reviewed as part of the evaluation process.

Step 2: Assess student's English proficiency

The Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School has determined the following factors to be the secondary and tertiary considerations in the decision-making process when determining if additional English language proficiency assessments are needed. A student must have received a score of proficient or advanced on the prior year's ELA MCAS and the student's final English Language Arts (ELA) grade from the prior academic year must have been a B+ or higher for a determination to be made that no further English Language Proficiency assessment is needed.

Step 3: Determine if the student requires initial placement

If it is determined, based upon AMSA's set criteria for determining English language proficiency, that a student is in need of additional evaluation, the licensed ELL teacher or trained administrator will perform a language assessment with the student. AMSA utilizes the WIDA-ACCESS for ELLs Placement Test (W-APT) to aid in the assessment of English Language proficiency. If a student transfers from another district, from within Massachusetts, and has completed a language proficiency assessment within the last calendar year, his/her records may be retrieved from the Edwin Analytics system to determine language proficiency rather than re-assessing that student.

The licensed ELL teacher or trained administrator will interpret the results of the language screening assessment (W-APT) and, in conjunction with other pertinent information, will determine whether or not the student is in need of English Language Learner (ELL) services.

Upon identification of a student as an ELL, the student will be placed in a program where instructional support will be provided based upon the student's level of need.

Step 4: Notification regarding screening results and placement determination including the right to "opt out" or waive program placement

Once a determination has been made, the student's parent/guardian will be notified of such determinations. Information in regards to the parent/guardian right to "opt out" of or to waive the rights to a language program will be provided. Notification should occur no later than 30 days from the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of the student's enrollment to the school during the school year. Communication of this information will be provided in both English and in the parent's primary language.

"Opt out" Requests - The parent/guardian of ELL students must be informed of the services the child will receive if enrolled in the language program as well as the type of support that will be provided if the parent/guardian decides to "opt out". If the decision is to "opt out", documentation of such request will be placed in the student's file and the student will be placed in a mainstreamed classroom.

Federal and state law requires that instructional support is to be provided to ensure all ELL students, including those whose parent/guardian have chosen to "opt out" of language programs, have access to the curriculum and meet the same

academic standards as their native English speaking peers. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, 20 USC §1703(f); G.L. c. 71A § 7) Additionally, the school is required to assess the ELL student's language proficiency, annually. Therefore, when it has been determined that the student will "opt out", meaning the child will not receive separate ELL instruction focused on language development however, the school must continue to meet the student's English language and academic needs.

The school's obligation to provide equitable access to the curriculum and English language development for the "opt out" ELL student can occur in a variety of ways. The school could place those students in classrooms where they receive their sheltered content area instruction with a teacher who is qualified to teach ELL students (having completed the RETELL), they may be provided additional literacy and language support, through reading specialists qualified to teach ELL students, or the school may establish structured opportunities for the student's content area teachers to plan content area instruction in collaboration with a licensed ELL teacher.

The school must keep a record of how such students are provided access to the curriculum and how they are progressing academically. Finally, ELL students whose parent/guardian has "opted out" of language programs must still be classified as "ELL" or "LEP" (Limited English Proficient) on district reports and participate in the state's annual language proficiency assessment, ACCESS for ELLs. Parents must be notified of their child's participation in such assessments, as well as assessment results.

Waiver Requests: Parent/guardian may request a program waiver to allow their child to attend a different state-mandated sheltered English immersion program model (G.L. c. 71A § 5). The waiver may be considered based upon the parent request, providing the parent visits the school annually and provides written informed consent. Parents must be informed of their right to apply for a waiver and provided with program descriptions in a language they understand.

Step 5: Accurately code all ELL students in DESE's SIMS report

Accurate information will be submitted for the Department of Education's Student Information Management System (SIMS) report. All students identified as English Language Learners will be coded as "Limited English Proficient (LEP)" (DOE025).

Subsequent Data Elements* are relevant to ELL identified students:

* DOE021: LEP students in the first year in U.S. schools

* DOE022: Immigration status

* DOE023: Country of Origin

* DOE024: First (Native) Language

* Additional ELL-related SIMS Data Elements can be found in the SIMS Data Handbook at:
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/sims/DataHandbook.pdf>

Annual Assessment, Placement, and Reclassification of ELLs

As of the 2012-2013 academic year, Massachusetts retired the Massachusetts English proficiency Assessment (MEPA) and made ACCESS for ELLs the state's English language proficiency assessment. The ACCESS for ELLs provides comprehensive data on each student's performance that can be used to make more effective placement and instructional decisions for ELL students.

Making Placement and Instructional Decisions for ELLs

State and federal law ensure that English language learners are taught to the same academic standards and are provided the same opportunities to master the standards as native English speaking students. (G. L. c. 71A § 7; Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 20 USC § 1703(f); Title III of NCLB § 3102). Additionally, the law requires ELL instruction to be meaningful and appropriate for the individual's English language proficiency level.

Steps for evaluating the educational needs of ELLs students and making placement and reclassification decisions to ensure they are provided equal educational opportunities.

Step 1: *Establish a school-based ELL placement and reclassification team*

AMSA utilizes a school-based ELL placement and reclassification team, composed of educators, administrators and/or support service staff who regularly interact with the student. Additionally, the school will maintain relevant data and information for each student in their individual student record.

The team could include educators such as:

- the student's ELL teacher
- the student's content area teachers
- the school guidance counselors and/or psychologists
- the student's special education teacher (if applicable)
- the school's Student Services Director, assistant/vice principal or principal
- the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)

Step 2: *Review relevant data to determine student's language classification*

Annual assessments of ELL students' language proficiency and academic achievements determine the students' ability to complete regular school work in English and to remove the ELL classification (reclassification) once this ability has been demonstrated. (G.L. c.71A § 4, 7)

Decisions in regards to the reclassification of an ELL will be based upon various factors, including the students' ACCESS for ELL assessment results paired with other considerations by the team in regards to the student's ability to successfully perform ordinary classroom work in English. The attached Table (Table 2) outlines the state's recommendations for using ACCESS for ELLs data to maintain or remove students' ELL classification.

The ELL team will use other relevant data and consider a range of evidence of the student's performance, including a review of:

- the student's scores on reading and other academic assessments, such as DIBELS, GRADE, DRA, Terra Nova, Stanford 9, and/or other District Determined Measures (DDMs)
- the student's scores on locally-administered diagnostic language assessments

- the student’s academic grades
- the written observations and recommendations documented by the student’s classroom teachers
- the *WIDA Performance Definitions* (Appendix E) which describe the criteria used to define performance at each WIDA proficiency level, and the *CAN DO Descriptors* (Appendix F), which provide examples of realistic expectations of ELLs for each of the four language domains and five levels of English language proficiency
- the student’s performance on MCAS content area tests.

These indicators will also be important to determine the level of support, if any, the student may need during instruction in other content areas and whether language-based considerations should be made for the MCAS. If MCAS scores contradict the instructional or classification decisions made based upon the student’s ACCESS for ELLs test results and other district data, seek additional consultation and input from ESL teachers and general education teachers familiar with the student to make final determinations.

*Transitional language classification recommendations based on
ACCESS for ELLs results
(except ELL students in Kindergarten)*

ACCESS for ELLs Overall (or Composite) Score	Language Classification Recommendations
Level 1 – <i>Entering</i> Level 2 – <i>Emerging</i> Level 3 – <i>Developing</i>	Students performing at Levels 1–3 require significant support to access content area instruction delivered in English. Such students should remain classified as ELLs.
Level 4 – <i>Expanding</i>	Students performing at Level 4 typically require continued linguistic and instructional supports to access content area instruction delivered in English. Nevertheless, some Level 4 students may be ready for reclassification if they meet the following two criteria: a) scored at least <i>Proficient</i> (240) on the MCAS ELA test; b) demonstrate the ability to perform ordinary class work in English, as indicated by one or more of the measures listed on <i>Other Relevant Data</i> (described below).
Level 5 – <i>Bridging</i>	Students performing at Level 5 may have acquired enough English language skills to be considered English proficient. Level 5 students who meet the following criteria should no longer be classified as ELLs: a) earning an Overall Composite score of at least 5, and Reading and Writing scores of at least 4 on ACCESS for ELLs; b) demonstrate the ability to perform ordinary class work in English, as indicated by one or more of the measures listed on <i>Other Relevant Data</i> (described below). However, increasingly complex and varied language demands on ELLs in late elementary, middle, and high school may support the decision by school-based teams to maintain the ELL classification of a Level 5 student.
Level 6 – <i>Reaching</i>	By the time a student reaches Level 6, he or she should no longer be classified as an ELL. Students in Level 6 have achieved English language proficiency comparable to that of their English- proficient peers functioning at the “proficient” level in state assessments and can be expected to perform ordinary class work in English.

In most cases, it is recommended that students designated as ELL in pre-school and kindergarten continue to be designated as ELL until they complete grade 1 (at minimum), in order to gather more substantial data on their literacy skills and other data needed to support a reclassification decision.

Table obtained from the *Transitional Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement and Reclassification of English Language Learners (Table 2)*

Step 3: Plan an instructional program for the student

Instructional Programs for ELL Students -

As per Chapter 71A of the Massachusetts General Laws (G.L. c. 71A) it is required that students classified as ELL are to be educated in a sheltered English immersion (SEI) program, unless a program waiver has been completed for another program model.

SEI programs consist of two components -

- * Sheltered Content Instruction or Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) - includes approaches, strategies and methodology to make lesson content more comprehensible and to promote language development to successfully master content standards. Instruction will be taught by qualified content area teachers, will be based on the curriculum
- * English as a Second Language (ESL) - also referred to as English Language Learners or ELL- instruction will provide explicit, direct and systematic instruction to learn the English language with the intent to promote English language proficiency and second language acquisition. This includes learning outcomes in the four language domains: speaking, listening reading and writing. This instruction will be tailored to the student's English proficiency level.

Recommended Hours of Instruction-

Pursuant to G.L. c. 71A, ELL instruction will be based upon the amount of language support the student requires to obtain rapid acquisition of English language proficiency. Core academic teachers must possess an ESL license or hold the SEI Endorsement to be qualified as teachers of ELLs throughout levels 1 through 5 in the following table.

Instructional Programs for Reclassified ELL Students (former ELL):

If the school-based team determines, based upon reviewing all student data, the student is able to perform ordinary class work in English without significant instructional support the team will remove the student's ELL classification.

This entails:

- In the next district report, AMSA will remove the student's coding as LEP on the SIMS report to the Department of Education
- Notify the parent/guardian of the student's classification change
- Update all school/district records
- Routinely monitoring the student's academic progress for two years

Former ELL students monitoring process includes:

- Regular communication between the ELL teacher and the student's sheltered content instruction teachers and/or the school-based language assessment team to monitor the student's academic progress and progress in English Language proficiency development.
- Additional individualized monitoring processes based upon the student's needs.

Recommended hours of instruction for ELLs based on ACCESS for ELLs results
(full-day Kindergarten through grade 12)

ACCESS for ELLs Overall (Composite) Score	Recommended Minimum Hours of ESL Instruction	Recommended Hours of Sheltered Content Instruction	Recommended Hours for Specials/Electives (e.g., phys. ed., art, music)
Entering (Level 1) and Emerging (Level 2)	2.5 hours per day to a full day of direct ESL instruction, delivered by a licensed ESL teacher.	Other hours as available outside of ESL instruction, delivered by a teacher qualified to teach ELLs[1] and licensed in the appropriate content area.	The same hours of instruction as former ELLs and native English speaking grade-level peers.
Developing (Level 3)	1-2 hours per day of direct ESL instruction, delivered by a licensed ESL teacher.	ELA or Reading instruction, delivered by a teacher qualified to teach ELLs. Other hours as available for math, science and social studies instruction, delivered by a teacher qualified to teach ELLs.	
Expanding (Level 4)	2.5 hours of direct ESL instruction per week, delivered by a licensed ESL teacher.		
Bridging (Level 5)	2.5 hours of direct ESL instruction per week, delivered by a licensed ESL teacher.	The same hours of content area instruction as native English speaking peers delivered by a teacher qualified to teach ELLs and licensed in the appropriate content area.	
Reaching (Level 6)	Students at Level 6 should no longer be classified as ELLs and should participate in the general education program alongside native English speaking peers. Their progress must be monitored for two years after their ELL classification was removed. Such students should also receive additional supports and services if needed.		

Table obtained from the *Transitional Guidance on Identification, Assessment, Placement and Reclassification of English Language Learners* (Table 3)

Summary: Decision Guide for Language Program Processes

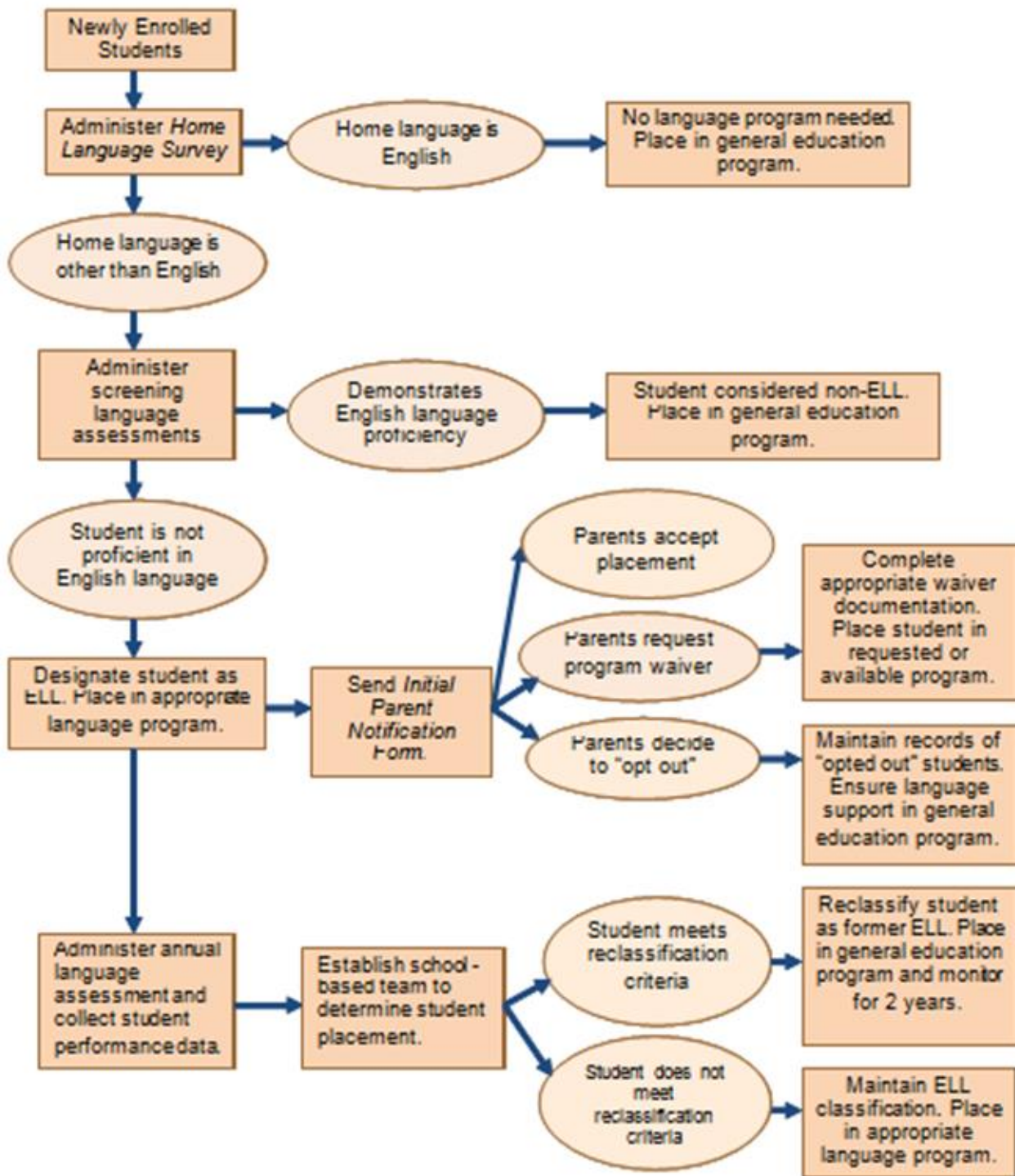


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