

Eastern Carver County Schools

English Learner Program

Identifying and Placing English Learners

Home language Survey

All families who enroll students in Eastern Carver County Schools fill out a home language survey. This form, designed by the federal government, asks families which languages their learner speaks and understands. When a learner has experience with languages other than English, the district is required to assess the student's English language proficiency. A consistent process that screens all learners is one way we ensure that determination for English learner services is fair and unbiased. The information on the form is only used to determine appropriate educational services; the results are not reported to agencies outside the school district or used to determine legal status.

Assessment of English Proficiency

Learners who have experience with languages other than English are assessed using a state-approved Wida screener or the MODEL. These screeners measure the learner's current language proficiency level in English in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing based on grade bands; k, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12.

The particular screener depends on the age of the student:


Grade level	Assessment	Qualifies for EL service if:
Fall of Kindergarten	Kindergarten WIDA MODEL	Total composite for listening and speaking is lower than 4.5
Winter/Spring Kindergarten Fall of Grade 1	Kindergarten WIDA MODEL	Total for listening and speaking is below 4.5 composite OR Any domain is lower than 3.5
Spring Grade 1 - Grade 12	WIDA Screener	Composite is below 4.5 OR A single domain is below 4.0

Multilingual learners are often proficient in basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) while still lagging in cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). In this situation, EL services support the student in growing their academic proficiency so that they will be successful in school. Similarly, a student may be very strong in a specific domain (such as speaking English), but would still benefit from support in areas that are less visible outside of

school, such as writing. For this reason, Eastern Carver County Schools strongly recommends EL services for any student who qualifies following the criteria above.

Placing Learners at Proficiency Levels

Based on the results of their assessment, learners are placed according to their current proficiency level as defined by the WIDA consortium (outlined in graphic below). The placement level determines the scope and type of service they receive (outlined later in this document, in the “Scope and Amount of Service” section). Proficiency levels are reviewed and adjusted annually; in addition, teachers differentiate and according to growth during the year.

 Performance Definitions for the Levels of English Language Proficiency in Grades K-12	
At the given level of English language proficiency, English language learners will process, understand, produce, or use:	
6 Reaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specialized or technical language reflective of the content areas at grade level a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse as required by the specified grade level oral or written communication in English comparable to English-proficient peers
5 Bridging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specialized or technical language of the content areas a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays, or reports oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers when presented with grade-level material
4 Expanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific and some technical language of the content areas a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related sentences, or paragraphs oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication when presented with oral or written connected discourse with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
3 Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> general and some specific language of the content areas expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning, when presented with oral or written, narrative, or expository descriptions with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
2 Beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> general language related to the content areas phrases or short sentences oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede the meaning of the communication when presented with one- to multiple-step commands, directions, questions, or a series of statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support
1 Entering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas words, phrases, or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH-, choice, or yes/no questions, or statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support oral language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede meaning when presented with basic oral commands, direct questions, or simple statements with sensory, graphic, or interactive support

Parent Notification and Right of Refusal

Each fall, families of learners who qualify for EL services will receive written notification from Eastern Carver County Schools via US Mail.

Parents or guardians have the right to refuse services for their child. Eastern Carver County Schools is required to have documentation in writing of this refusal, and has created the “Parent Opt-Out Form” for parents or guardians to complete annually. Refusing services does not exempt a learner from the annual statewide test of proficiency, the WIDA Access. Parents or guardians will need to fill out the test refusal form as well to exempt their learner from testing.

Language Instruction Educational Program

Eastern Carver County Schools relies on current research to design and deliver EL services to qualifying learners. English Language instruction is delivered within the context of grade-level content and standards, and multilingual learners spend as much of their school day as possible with their grade-level peers. In addition, the services are scheduled in and provided in such a way to ensure that qualifying learners are still able to access all services and programs as their non-qualifying peers. This includes extra curricular activities, as well as specialized education and gifted services (for those who qualify).

This section describes the instructional models used across the district and the expected amount of service a learner can expect.

Models

Co-Taught courses	Grades K-12	EL teachers are paired with mainstream teachers. The teachers plan and deliver lessons together; typically the mainstream teacher is the expert on the content area, while the EL teacher helps to embed language instruction. Teachers share the instructional load during class time, and partner to differentiate learning for all students in the class.
Small Group Instruction	Grades K-5	EL teachers meet with small groups of qualifying students at the same grade level and similar proficiency levels. Lessons are delivered which are aligned to content-area standards at the grade level of the student and feature more intense language instruction and scaffolding. EL teachers work with classroom teachers to ensure that learners are able to master the content missed during the pull-out lesson.
Sheltered Instruction	Grades 6-12	Licensed EL teachers instruct learners in content areas using high levels of scaffolding and direct language support. The curriculum in sheltered courses mirror equivalent mainstream courses, and care is taken to ensure the expectations are equally rigorous so that learners are able to seamlessly enter mainstream courses in later terms.
Dual Immersion (Spanish)	Grades K-10	Research demonstrates that instruction and growth in a learner's first language facilitates their acquisition of a second. The Dual Immersion program includes a minimum of 25% students whose first language is English and 25% whose first language is Spanish. Students develop literacy in both languages alongside native speakers to serve as role models. Spanish speakers who qualify for EL services receive service in addition to this curriculum.

Scope and Amount of Service

A student is considered to be receiving EL services when they are receiving instruction from a licensed EL teacher that is aligned to their proficiency level and academic strengths.

Grades	Direct Service Models	WIDA level 1	WIDA levels 2-3	WIDA level 4
K-5	Co-Taught courses	225-400 minutes/week	150-300 minutes/week	150-225 minutes/week
	Small Group Instruction			
6-12	Co-taught courses	2-3 class periods	1-2 class periods	1 period with an EL teacher
	Sheltered Instruction			

Ongoing Assessment

Following their initial placement, learners are formally reassessed annually using the WIDA ACCESS. The results of this assessment are used to evaluate the EL program and determine appropriate service for the learner. Student placement and corresponding amount of service is determined in the subsequent year using the results. The assessment also determines when a learner no longer needs EL services. More information on exiting the program is in the final section of this document.

Parents or guardians have the right to refuse to have their student assessed. Eastern Carver County Schools is required to have written documentation of this refusal. Families who have refused EL Services are not automatically exempted from the WIDA ACCESS assessment, and must also submit their refusal in writing using the test refusal form found on the district website.

Program Exit

Once a learner has achieved a level of English proficiency comparable to their grade-level peers, they are exited from the EL program. Exiting is determined by student performance on the WIDA ACCESS assessment given annually. A student is exited when their composite score is greater than 4.5 and their score on at least three of the four domains is 3.5 or greater.

Ongoing Monitoring

After exit, learners who received services are monitored for two years to ensure they do not have a persistent language need that is impacting their school achievement. School leaders and EL teachers review academic performance for exited students twice a year during this period. If a student's academic growth has slowed upon exit (as measured by achievement tests and/or report card grades), the EL teacher will work to determine if a language need is at the root of the drop, and work with mainstream teachers to implement strategies to support the learner.

Program Re-entry

When the interventions are unsuccessful and a learner's achievement continues to suffer, the learner will be considered for re-entry to EL services. Eastern Carver County Schools will notify the learner's family of the intent to re-evaluate, and the learner will be assessed following the same procedures outlined earlier in this document. As always, the learner's parents or guardians have the right of refusal regarding assessment and program re-entry.