

## **RSU No. 5 Lau PLAN**

### **RSU No. 5 Multilingual Learners (ML) Program**

A Lau Plan, named after the landmark Lau vs. Nichols U.S. Supreme Court Decision of 1974, is an equal access plan that protects Multilingual Learners (ML).

RSU No. 5 does not discriminate against Multilingual Learners (ML). In accordance with the Equal Education Opportunities Act (1974), the School Department makes an effort to do whatever is educationally appropriate to address the English language and educational needs of the Multilingual Learners so that they can participate with their English speaking peers in the educational program of RSU No. 5 schools. Eligible students will be identified and placed in programs and services in accordance with statutory guidelines. RSU No. 5 strives to provide a linguistically and culturally rich teaching and learning environment. It is the policy of RSU No. 5 to comply with all Federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination against students on the basis of all civil rights categories. The district ML services program for will be overseen by the Director of Instructional Support.

### **Part I: STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

#### **A. Identification of Multilingual Learners**

The Maine Department of Education conducts an annual home language survey to determine the number of language minority children who are enrolled in Maine schools. Schools collect the completed surveys from the parents/guardians of new kindergarten students and newly transferring students. In order to provide English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) services in a timely manner, potential Multilingual Learners should be tested and placed within one month.

RSU No. 5 will use the following instruments to identify Multilingual Learners (MLs):

- Home Language Surveys
- Maine Department of Education (MDOE) approved World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Screener
- Review of all relevant educational documents and student records
- Teacher observations

#### **B. Assessment for English Language Proficiency**

Once a child has been identified as being from a non-English language background or having spent considerable amount of time in a non-English speaking country (and that stay has affected the child's ability to comprehend and express in English), RSU No. 5 will ensure that the following instrument is administered annually to determine the English language proficiency of MLs:

- Annual administration of the ACCESS for MLs English Language Proficiency Test
- Teacher observations and recommendations

### **C. District Language Assessment Committee (DLAC)**

The District Language Assessment Committee (DLAC) is a group of district-wide school staff and parents of students that meets to discuss and develop an appropriate and effective structured ESOL program for Multilingual Learners. The District Language Assessment Committee will:

- Oversee RSU No. 5's ESOL program and advise on identifying, serving, assessing, and exiting a Multilingual Learner from the program.
- Serve to notify parents about upcoming WIDA-ACCESS testing.
- Recommend revisions to the Lau Plan for action by the Superintendent and School Board.

The DLAC will meet twice per year in fall and spring, to review the Multilingual Learner Program, the effectiveness of the program, and to redirect certain instructional activities, if necessary. It is the responsibility of the ESOL teacher to convene the DLAC Committee and schedule meeting dates.

**D. A School Language Assessment Committee (LAC)** is established at each school to coordinate and oversee the educational program of Multilingual Learners enrolled in the school. LAC members will include the Director of Instructional Support or Building Administrators, classroom teacher(s) and an ESOL teacher.

The **LAC responsibilities** will include the following:

- To make determinations based on either the WIDA-ACCESS, or WIDA Screener about placement, programming services and delivery of services.
- To meet annually, or more frequently if needed, to monitor Multilingual Learner's language and academic progress.
- To meet with school staff to provide information about Multilingual Learners and the ESOL Program.
- To recommend modification of ESOL support services or reclassification of Multilingual Learners.
- To develop an Individual Language Acquisition Plan for each eligible Multilingual Learner.
- To continue annual monitoring for two years after Multilingual Learner's reclassification to full English proficiency.

## **PART II: STUDENT PLACEMENT (ENTRY AND EXIT)**

### **A. Factors that Affect Program Design**

There are many factors that must be considered when determining the most appropriate and effective structured language support program. Some of those factors are:

- Age of the child
- English language proficiency level
- Native or preferred language proficiency level

- Amount of interrupted schooling in the child's background
- The amount of native or preferred language literacy skills the child possesses
- Complications from trauma associated with refugee status, e.g. histories of war, persecution, resettlement & acculturation
- Amount of literacy readiness/exposure in child's background

## **B. Classification of Student's English Fluency Level**

The English language proficiency level of language minority students can be translated to classification categories. These categories are:

- Level 1 – Entering
- Level 2 – Beginning
- Level 3 – Developing
- Level 4 – Expanding
- Level 5 – Bridging
- Level 6 – Reaching

## **C. Grade-level Placement**

Based on the results of the LAC meeting, the building principal will place the Multilingual Learner in an appropriate grade. An Multilingual Learner will not be placed in a grade level that is more than one year below their chronological age.

## **D. Criteria for Reclassification, Transfer and Exit**

If a structured language support program is effective and appropriate, the Multilingual Learner will eventually be: (a) reclassified at a higher level of proficiency, or (b) exited from the structured language support program entirely. Students will be exited from the program based on achieving a WIDA ACCESS composite score of 4.5.

If and when the child is found to be eligible for reclassification or exit, the LAC will need to monitor the child's academic performance and psychosocial well being after the reclassification or exit is made. In the case of a student who is reclassified, the decreased ESOL instructional time should be monitored in terms of: continued academic success; adjustment to a longer time period in the mainstream classroom; and, instructional needs being met in the structured language support program. In the case of exit from the program, the full mainstreaming should be monitored for academic success; adjustment to the full-time mainstream classroom; and, any emerging language skills needs that may surface once mainstreaming has occurred.

After a child has been exited from a structured language support program, that child's language performance and growth must be monitored for two years (if the child is still in school). During those two years of monitoring, if the child experiences a pattern of difficulty with language or content skills, the LAC may re-enter the child into the structured language program.

In the event that a parent/guardian refuses ESOL services for a student, a signed letter of refusal is to be placed in the student's file. These ESOL services will be offered yearly, and a letter of refusal must be signed annually. The parent may withdraw refusal of services at any time.

### **PART III: PROGRAM INSTRUCTION**

#### **A. Teacher Skills and Credentials**

Just as with any other teaching specialization, ESOL teachers require special pedagogies to provide the best services for their students. The State Board of Education in 1988 adopted an ESOL endorsement for teachers. ESOL language support services may be provided in two personnel configurations:

1. An ESOL-endorsed teacher provides direct ESOL instruction
2. An educational technician supervised by an ESOL-endorsed teacher

The presence of an ESOL-endorsed professional is imperative for an effective and appropriate program to be implemented. The recommended configuration is the former; recommended by the Office of Civil Rights and the Maine Department of Education.

#### **B. Service Delivery Models**

There are several types of structured language support programs that RSU No. 5 believes can be beneficial to Multilingual Learners. This system's ability to provide some of these programs depends on both availability of native or preferred language speaking personnel and availability of native or preferred language instructional materials for sheltered content. The keys to an effective and appropriate program choice will include careful consideration of the child's needs, full research into the resources available (personnel, materials), and full understanding of the possible program configurations.

Some of the likely structured language support programs to be used in RSU No. 5 schools will include:

**English for Speakers of Other Languages:** A structured language learning program or curriculum designed to teach English to students whose native or preferred language is not English. Pullout and push-in services are provided based on individual student's need. Services are provided by or supervised by a State certified teacher endorsed in ESOL.

**Sheltered English:** An approach that utilizes the simplification of the English language to teach ESOL and subject area content simultaneously (sometimes called "content ESOL"). Although the actual content is the same as that taught to non-Multilingual Learners, key concepts and vocabulary are targeted to fit the Multilingual Learners English language proficiency level.

A structured language support program encompassing the above models will be provided in a time allocation that will most benefit the Multilingual Learners. The consideration of many factors must take place when a program is being developed. However, the ultimate goal is to provide effective and appropriate services to the student so that they may benefit fully from and succeed in an education conducted in English.

The determination of a time allotment for structured language support programs will be made by the Language Assessment Committee with assessment information available.

#### **PART IV: PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RECORDKEEPING**

In order to ensure the most effective and appropriate structured language support programming for Multilingual Learners, a model for overall program evaluation must be developed and utilized. An annual program evaluation will illustrate the following: attainment of program outcomes; attainment of learner outcomes; school climate and support for the program and children; the quality of instructional materials; the maintenance of information about students; the effectiveness of staff development activities; the amount and effectiveness of mainstream – ESOL collaboration; the effectiveness of school and program communication with parents/guardians; and the implementation of the district’s Lau Plan itself approved by its Board.

In all the procedures involving the identification, assessment, provision of services, and exit from services for Multilingual Learners, thorough record keeping must be implemented and maintained.

It is the responsibility of the ESOL teacher to maintain accurate files for each Multilingual Learner. Items included in student files (but not limited to) would consist of:

- Copy of the Home Language Survey
- Copy of the WIDA-ACCESS/MODEL tests
- Test scores
- Copy of ILAP
- Any other pertinent information

#### **Part V: STATUTE**

##### **Legal Obligation of Schools toward Multilingual Learners**

###### **1. Civil Rights Act of 1964**

*Title VI: “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance.”*

###### **2. US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Memorandum (1970):**

*“(1) Where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes 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.*

*(2) School districts must not assign national origin minority group students to classes for the mentally retarded on the basis of criteria which essentially measure or evaluate English language skills; nor may school districts deny national origin minority group children access to college preparatory courses on a basis directly related to the failure of the school system to inculcate English language skills.*

*(3) Any ability grouping or tracking system employed by the school system to deal with the special language skill needs of national origin minority group children must be designed to meet such language skill needs as soon as possible and must not operate as an educational dead end or permanent track.*

*(4) School districts have the responsibility to adequately notify national origin minority group parents of school activities, which are called to the attention of other parents. Such notice in order to be adequate may have to be provided in a language other than English.”*

### **3. Lau v. Nichols: U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1974**

*“No state shall deny equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, by –*

*(f) 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.”*

Administrative Procedure Adopted: 4/13/10

Administrative Procedure Reviewed: 4/3/12

Adopted by Board: 4/26/17

Revised: 1/25/23