Limited English Proficiency Program

The Bethany Board of Education (Board) recognizes the need to provide equal educational opportunities for all students in the Bethany Public School District (District). Therefore, if the inability to speak and understand the English language excludes a student from effective participation in the District's educational programs, the District shall take appropriate action to rectify the English language deficiency in order to provide the student with equal access to its programs. Students in a language minority (LM) or who have limited English proficiency (LEP) will be identified, assessed, and provided appropriate services. No child will be admitted to or excluded from any program based solely on surname or LM status.

The Board believes that high quality, comprehensive, and effective English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education programs are essential to acquire English language proficiency for students who are English Learners (EL).

The Superintendent or designee is directed to develop and implement procedures, consistent with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) ESSA plan which:

- Determine if a student is a potential EL student through adherence to the Home Language Survey Guidance and completion of the Home Language Survey (HLS).
- Administers the state-mandated English Language Proficiency (ELP) Screener when the review of the HLS results indicates the student may have a primary or home language other than English.
- Informs parents/guardians, in writing, if the results from the ELP assessment indicate the student is an EL.
- Implements English learner services for all identified students.
- Annually assess the English proficiency of all English learners students during the testing window using the state-mandated English language proficiency assessment. (Students can only exit EL status if they meet all EL exit criteria.)
- Monitor the progress of students receiving ESL or bilingual instruction in order to determine their readiness for the mainstream classroom environment.
- Provide parents/guardians with notice of and information regarding the instructional program as required by law and encourage parental appraisal of their child's program.

Definitions

Language Minority (LM) refers to a student whose linguistic background, such as country of birth or home environment, includes languages other than English. Language minority is based solely on the student's background and not on proficiency.

English Learner (EL) refers to an LM student whose proficiency in reading, writing, listening, or speaking English is below that of grade and age-level peers. Limited English proficiency is based on the assessment of a student's English language proficiency.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) refers to an instructional approach that can include structured ESOL immersion, content-based ESOL, and pull-out ESOL instruction.

Parents/guardians who are not able to use English in a manner that allows effective, relevant participation in educational planning for their child will be provided with written, verbal, or signed communication in a language they can understand.

The goal of the ESOL program is to assist students to achieve fluency, including listening, comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing, in English.

Parents/guardians of students of limited English speaking ability shall be notified by mail that their child is eligible for enrollment in an ESOL or English language services education program. The written notice shall include the information that the parents/guardians may choose to enroll their child into the program.

Communications with parents/guardians of students in these programs shall be in writing, in both English and their primary speaking language.

LEP students, including those also identified as requiring special education, who are in their first year of enrollment in a U.S. school and have been in attendance for one (1) school year or less may be permitted to be exempt from one (1) administration of the reading/language arts portion of the statewide assessment tests. These students must take the Language Assessment Scales. No such exemption is permitted, based on federal guidelines, from the mathematics and science assessments of the statewide assessments. Accommodations, as provided in classroom instruction may be used.

LEP students eligible for special education due to significant cognitive impairment must be tested on the state summative alternate assessment, regardless of the one (1) school year exemption option.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes § 10-17

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-17a

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-17d

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-17e

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-17f

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-17g

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-76e

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-146f

Public Act 99-211

State Board of Education Regulations 10-17h.1 to 10 17h.15

Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Equal Education Opportunities Act as an amendment to the Education Amendments of 1974

Legal Reference: Bilingual Education Act. 20 U.S.C. §§ 7401 et seq., as amended by the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act.

34 CFR, Part 200 Regulations appearing in Federal Register, September 13, 2006.

Title III

Public Law 114-95, §§ 3001-3121

20 USC 6812, 6823

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