



Multilingual Program Handbook
West Aurora
School District 129

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West Aurora schools provide a unique educational journey for each student by embracing the curiosity, complexity, and the joy of learning. We pride ourselves on being rooted in academic excellence, focused on the needs of all learners, and powered by high-quality educators and staff.

Overview of Language Services in District 129

We provide language services to meet the linguistic and academic needs of children whose native language is not English. Students from over 43 different linguistic and cultural backgrounds are represented in our classrooms. Spanish speaking students comprise the vast majority followed by Nepali, Swahili, and Arabic speaking students, among others.

As of September 2019 Illinois State Board of Education has expanded the terminology of English Learners (ELs) to Emergent Bilinguals (EBs) as well as the term of Multilingual Learners (MLLs). For the purpose of this guiding document, students learning English will be referred to as ELs, and Multilingual Learners.

West Aurora School District 129 enrolls approximately 3,000 students who are classified as multilingual learners in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade. We provide services to meet the linguistic and academic needs of children whose native language is not English. Students from over 40 different language backgrounds are represented in our classrooms. Spanish speaking students comprise the vast majority followed by Nepali, Karen, Swahili, Arabic and Yoruba speaking students, among others.

Federal and state statutes, as well as West Aurora's policies, provide the basis and structure; Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) for students of the same language classification, and Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI) for languages other than Spanish. The main purpose of both Bilingual Education Programs and the Transitional Program of Instruction, is to enable multilingual students to become competent in listening, speaking, reading, and writing through the development of literacy and academic skills in English. Both programs emphasize the mastery of English language skills as integral parts of the academic goals for all students to participate equitably in school. The programs must comply with the Illinois School Code and with District 129's mission and program goals. To promote a positive image in the community of multilingual learners, their families, programming is held to high expectations of a rigorous curriculum with clear and consistent implementation. Therefore, it is important that all staff be responsible for the instruction of multilingual students and be familiar with and follow the prescribed guidelines as set by the state and district.

The purpose of this handbook is:

- to be used as a reference tool for policies and requirements and provide guidance for administrators and teachers with the appropriate identification process
- to provide equitable delivery of language services for all students identified across buildings and grade levels.

Guiding Principles for Multilingual Learners:

Multilingualism is an asset: Multilingual student's unique characteristics leverage learning in the classroom and develop agency.

Full Linguistic Repertoire: Multilingual students use their full linguistic repertoire to engage and enrich their educational experience.

Amplify Language: Multilingual students' language development occurs overtime in valued, meaningful and engaging activities.

Identification of Eligible Students

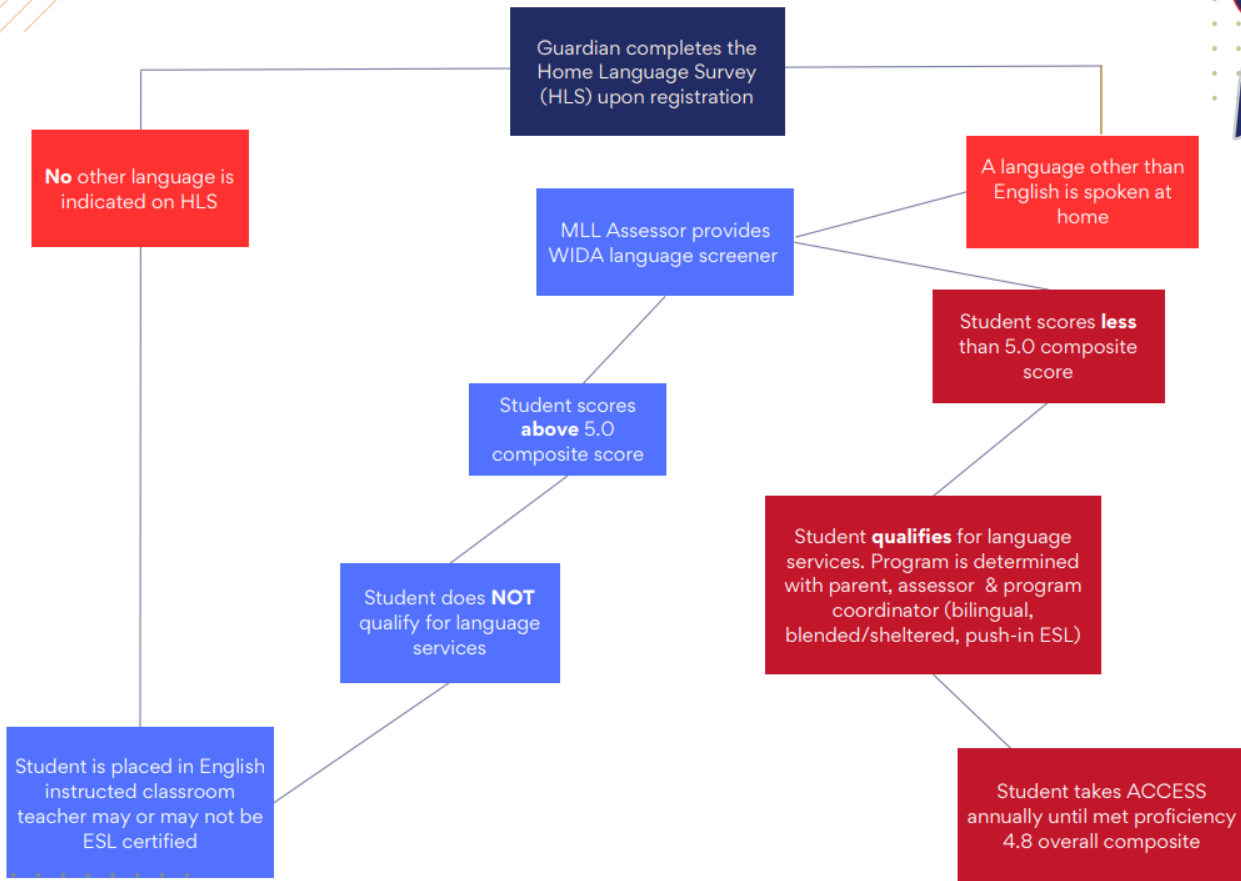
Identification and Screening for Multilingual Learners

The enrollment of any new student to West Aurora School District 129 includes a Home Language Survey. Potential MLs must be screened and placed in language services if they qualify. Additionally, all MLs must take the annual English language proficiency assessment (ACCESS). District 129 makes annual placement determinations for MLs based on the ACCESS scores.

Home Language Survey

Illinois School Code, Part 228.15 under state-mandated requires that schools, when enrolling new students, administer a Home Language Survey (HLS- Form A) to identify students who may need language services. If a parent responds "yes" to *Is a language other than English spoken in your home?* and/or *Does your child speak a language other than English?*, then the child must be tested for English proficiency. The district will only test students if one of the two questions on HLS is answered with a "yes." When questions of ambiguity arise, the multilingual assessor will review the home language screener with parents to determine if testing is appropriate. All new students identified through the Home Language Survey must be initially screened for English Language Proficiency and be given an appropriate placement within 30 days of the student's enrollment in the district. Once school has commenced, the testing must be completed within 14 days.

Identification & Evaluation Process of New Students to SD129 WEST AURORA SCHOOL DISTRICT 129



Language Proficiency Assessment

The Illinois Administrative Code, Part 228 PDF Document, Section 228.15 indicates districts shall administer an individual language proficiency assessment to each student identified through the home language survey. This assessment shall take place within 30 days of the student's enrollment in the district, for the purpose of determining the student's eligibility for bilingual education services.

Students scoring below proficiency of 4.8/ 5.0 will require language services. The ML department fills out appropriate paperwork to notify parent/guardian of recommended placement and screener scores.

Eschool will be updated with the information along with a scanned copy of the language assessment which can be found under the paperclip icon.

Assessments in Preschool, Kindergarten and Grades 1-12

SCREENER		DOMAINS ASSESSED				Cut-score for English Language Proficiency
		Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	
Preschool ages 3-5	PreIPT- Oral	X	X	NA	NA	3 yrs old - Score at Level D or E on a scale of level A-E) 4-5yrs old - Score at Level E (on a scale of level A-E) Fluent English Speaker (FES)
WIDA MODEL	Kindergarten (1st semester)	X	X	NA	NA	5.0 oral language proficiency
WIDA MODEL Kindergarten	Kindergarten (2nd semester)	X	X	X	X	5.0 oral language proficiency
MODEL Kindergarten	First Grade (1st semester)	X	X	X	X	5.0 oral language proficiency
WIDA SCREENER	1st Grade (second semester)-12th Grade	X	X	X	X	Overall composite 5.0 proficiency level

Preschool

Prescribed Screening Instrument:

The Pre-IPT Oral English Language Proficiency Test is the recommended screener for children entering Preschool, ages 3 to kindergarten enrollment age as defined in Section 10-20.12 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/10-20.12] to determine students' English language proficiency and to identify students eligible to receive language services.

All potential MLs screened with the Pre-IPT Oral that qualify for language services need to be rescreened with the WIDA MODEL upon entering Kindergarten.

Kindergarten & 1st Grade 1st Semester

Prescribed Screening Instrument: Measure of Developing English Language (MODEL). The WIDA MODEL must be used as a screener for students entering Kindergarten and the first semester of first grade to determine students' English language proficiency and to identify students eligible to receive language services. NOTE: All students identified through the Home Language Survey, including students previously screened when enrolled in preschool, must be screened using the MODEL K prior to entering kindergarten.

Grades 1st (2nd Semester) - 12th Grade

Prescribed Screening Instrument: The WIDA MODEL is used in screening in kindergarten and the first semester of 1st grade. The WIDA Screener (online) for grades 1-12. (Entering first grade in second semester will be screened with WIDA MODEL).

Eligibility for Language Services

As of January 1, 2014, any child entering the first semester of kindergarten who is administered the MODEL and who scores **below** a 5.0 oral language composite (speaking/listening) proficiency level is considered a multilingual student and is eligible for EL/ML services. A student entering the first semester of kindergarten who achieves a 5.0 or above in the oral language composite (speaking/listening) proficiency level is considered English proficient and is not recommended for EL services.

Any student who scores **below** 5.0 overall on the screener shall be considered eligible for the Transitional Bilingual Program or Transitional Program of Instruction, TPI/English as a Second Language, ESL. Upon the completion of the language screener the assessor and/or the program coordinator discuss the results of the test with parents. Together, the parent and assessor/program coordinator decide the best language service and placement for their child.

- Students eligible for language support services indicating Spanish on the HLS will be offered the Transitional Bilingual Education, TBE program. The bilingual classroom is taught by a teacher with approved Illinois certification credentials; bilingual and ESL certification

- Students eligible for the Transitional Program of Instruction, TPI will be placed in a blended classroom. The blended classroom is taught by a teacher with an ESL endorsement and/or work with the building ESL specialist, or a co-teacher with an ESL endorsement.
- All identified ML students are to be annually assessed by the state required WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 to determine their English language proficiency and performance levels. ***This includes identified students whose parents refuse program services.***

West Aurora's Language Program Models

The preschool, elementary, middle school and high school provide language services for students identified as multilingual learners based on the results of the language assessments mentioned above.

Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)

The Transitional Bilingual Program (TBE) in District 129 is offered in schools where there are 20 or more students of the same language group. The TBE program provides instruction in students' home language while learning English. At this time, the district provides TBE in Spanish in our Early Childhood programs. Elementary bilingual hubs are: Greenman, Hall, Hill, McCleery, Nicholson, Schneider and Smith. Washington Middle School is the bilingual hub for grades 6-8th. The amount of native language instruction is determined based on each individual student's English language proficiency throughout the grades. West Aurora provides bilingual education in grades preschool through 5th grade.

Students eligible for bilingual education are students demonstrating English proficiency *below a composite score of 5.0* on the language screener and have Spanish as their home language. This is identified in the home language screener that is filled out upon registration. Parent and language assessor/program coordinator discuss programming options and parents accept or refuse the bilingual education placement entering Kindergarten. Every year students are rolled into the next grade remaining in the bilingual classroom until reaching English proficiency of 4.8 on the annual language assessment, WIDA ACCESS 2.0. Upon achieving a 4.8 composite score, students having received services for three years will be placed in a blended or monolingual English classroom. Please see the eligibility section for more information.

The goal of a bilingual classroom is to teach in the students' native language, Spanish, foster students' knowledge, create a solid literacy foundation in the native language and teach metalinguistic connections of both languages. When students have a strong foundation in their first language, the acquisition of a second language is expanded and developed more precisely in the second language. Metalinguistic connections are always a part of the bilingual classroom. Teachers explicitly teach skills that transfer between Spanish and English and skills that do not. Every bilingual classroom creates an environment that fosters student's cultural and linguistic identity, fosters risks and approximations when learning language and content.

Preschool

Students are screened when a language other than English is indicated on the Home Language Survey

using the Pre-IPT assessment. Each of the West Aurora’s preschool classroom teachers have an ESL endorsement and services students within the classroom as part of daily instruction.

Incoming Kindergarten Information

Testing of preschool students moving on to kindergarten takes place in February-March of the child’s last year in preschool. Parents will be notified of student eligibility via backpack. Parents of students entering kindergarten that are eligible for services will have the opportunity to attend a parent session provided by the district at the Early Learning Academy. This session is mandatory for all parents of multilingual students. Parents learn about the language services provided in the district and have the opportunity to decide which program fits best for their child or refuse services.

Instruction in the Bilingual Classroom

Grade level instruction is taught in the bilingual classroom. Bilingual classrooms teach the same content as the blended/monolingual classrooms. The language of instruction in grades preschool through 1st grade is primarily in Spanish with 20-30 minutes of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. In second grade math is taught in English and a literacy unit is also taught in English. In third grade, math remains in English and two literacy units are taught in English, two units are taught in Spanish. Grades 4-5 the primary language of instruction is English and is adjusted to meet the needs of the students and newcomers to access the content.

Every year Spanish literacy units will be developed to expand to the next school year reaching to 5th grade by the school year 2025-26. West Aurora believes that a student's native language(s) should be valued. By doing so it fosters student achievement as English continues to be developed and strengthened by learning two languages, enhancing the school community.

The following chart illustrates the language allocation by unit of study in both Spanish and English. Green represents Spanish, blue indicates English and purple represents the combination of languages, Spanish and English used by students. Teachers support language development throughout the day.

Language Allocation by Unit of Study in the Bilingual Classroom

Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
ESL- Reach	ESL- FPTR	ESL- FPTR	ESL- FPTR	Status quo- with a Translanguaging approach and SLA standards within units	
Shared Literacy- 4 units en español	Shared Literacy- 4 units en español	Shared Literacy- 3 units en español 1 unit in English	Shared Literacy 2 units en español 2 units in English		
Small group	Small group	Small group	Small group	Small group	Small group
Math, Math+	Math, Math+	Math, Math+	Math, Math+	Math, Math+	Math, Math+
Specials	Specials	Specials	Specials	Specials	Specials

Blue- English Green- Spanish Purple- Student choice

Transitional Program of Instruction with English as a Second Language (TPI/ESL)

District 129 offers English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction in all schools preschool to high school. ESL Instruction is within our blended classrooms in all elementary schools. Buildings that offer TPI have multilingual learners of various backgrounds but do not have greater than 19 students of the same language at the site. The Transitional Program of Instruction is a mandated program to serve students from low incidence language backgrounds. The program provides support to help students succeed in academic subjects and learn English. The methodology of English instruction makes connections to the home language to the greatest extent possible and focuses on language development, socially and academically, through meaningful experiences.

Students receive English instruction from their classroom teacher within the classroom environment. In some cases, the ESL teacher will push-in to provide services within the classroom. In West Aurora every elementary school has blended classrooms. There are instances where ESL push-in/pull-out is the method in which ESL services are provided to eligible students. As well, there are elementary buildings that continue to have sheltered classrooms as a means to meet the language services of multilingual students. These limited types of ESL services are provided based on need.

Blended Classroom (TPI/ESL)

West Aurora's language service model has developed in creating more ESL certified classroom teachers. Our previous model of sheltered classrooms for students needing language services is expanding into the Blended model. West Aurora's blended model language of instruction is English. Diverse students of various language backgrounds include students identified as multilingual learners and non-identified students also known as monolingual English students are the make-up of the blended classroom. As more teachers become ESL certified West Aurora is reaching the language needs and services of multilingual students within the classroom in all content areas. This programming acknowledges diverse classrooms that students benefit from by providing various perspectives, experiences, knowledge and talent.

Instruction in the Blended Classroom

In the Blended classroom, the classroom teacher is ESL certified and provides English instruction with ESL strategies throughout the school day. ESL strategies are implemented by identifying the language needs of individual students and that of the whole class using results from the yearly language assessment, WIDA ACCESS 2.0 or the language screener results upon registering to the district, whichever is the most recent. ESL strategies are used throughout the day to increase English proficiency in the four language domains, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Over time and with consistency ESL strategies support language development so students reach English language proficiency.

6th-12th Grade

Washington Middle School

Washington Middle School is the bilingual hub for Spanish speaking students in grades 6-8th. New students entering middle school and whose home language is Spanish, scores below 3.0 composite

score are recommended to attend Washington Middle School. Washington Middle School provides full time and part time services for eligible students. Full-time services are provided to eligible students (refer to eligibility section) within the content areas with bilingual and ESL endorsed teachers. Transportation is provided to students living outside of the Washington boundaries.

For students whose home language is different from Spanish/English and qualifies for language services attend their home school. If the student resides in the Washington boundaries, students attend the TPI program at Washington on a part-time basis. Students are provided with language services within the language arts classroom or other content areas with a certified content and ESL endorsed teacher.

Jefferson, Jewel, Herget Middle Schools

The three middle schools welcome students of various language backgrounds and students achieving 3.0 composite scores on the annual language assessment, WIDA ACCESS 2.0. Students attending these schools are provided with language services within the language arts classroom or other content area with a certified content and ESL endorsed teacher. All content is grade level appropriate and amplifies student language and English acquisition.

All multilingual learners in middle school are provided with middle school curriculum and opportunities to increase social and academic skills.

West Aurora High School Placement Description

West Aurora High School offers language services to eligible students.

Newcomers have the option to receive a newcomer lab class as an exploratory class. Language services are provided at the high school based on their screener scores and ACCESS scores and overall performance. EL supported classes include: EL English, EL Chemistry, EL Biology, EL History, EL Algebra 1 & 2, EL Geometry, EL Economics/Civics.

Teachers monitor the progress of students in literacy and oral language as they create and work toward growth goals in literacy and language. Students progress to the next level as soon as they demonstrate readiness.

Monitoring Language Development Progress

According to the Illinois State Board of Education, parents are to receive a progress report on the development of their child's English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing as frequently as non-identified students' progress is reported.

Students New to the Country

District 129 welcomes all families to our learning community. We provide services to meet the linguistic and academic needs of children whose native language is not English. Students from over 40 different language backgrounds are represented in our classrooms. Spanish speaking students comprise the vast majority followed by Arabic, Burmese, Urdu, Polish and Tagalog speaking students, among others. District 129 follows protocol when students new to the U.S register. We believe in the

social and emotional aspects of newcomers by learning about students and families, providing them with a tour of the school prior to their first day. Continued support is provided to make a smooth transition for the family and student for optimal learning and feeling supported within the new school.

Instructional Practices for Multilingual Learners

Teachers will use a variety of effective instructional and developmentally appropriate practices for the students to acquire academic skills and incorporate home language connections. For the success of Multilingual Learners, it is essential that these best practices are implemented in every classroom throughout D129. Adhering to best practices, the guiding principles and programmatic goals is optimal in student success. Translanguaging practices are encouraged to connect the student's home language to make meaning in the new language. Cross-linguistic connections provide students the opportunity to think and understand relationships between (or among) languages. Reviewing, analyzing and interpreting ACCESS scores is imperative to incorporate instructional practices within the classroom to meet the language development needs of the students individually and as a whole class. The following instructional practices are used by teachers but are not limited to:

- Positive teacher-student interactions
- Positive student-student interactions
- Challenging learning practices and thinking
- Use of various comprehension strategies such as: visuals, building oracy, cognate walls, relevant and interesting topics, total physical response (TPR), bilingual pairing, same language pairing, paired literacy, etc.
- Purposeful and strategic cross -linguistic activities
- Communicate and model high expectations
- Use of content and language objectives
- Understand and support students and families by being knowledgeable of language, race, gender and other cultural differences

Refusal Process and Documentation

Students scoring below proficiency of 4.8/ 5.0 will require language services. The program coordinator fills out appropriate paperwork and discusses the language screener results with parents to choose the best placement. If a parent refuses language services for their child a letter from the parent must be **written** stating the reason for refusing language services in the language they know best, signed and delivered to the program coordinator and filed in eschool. The program coordinator will email principal and building office professionals to remove students from receiving EL services. Parents are notified that their student will continue to take the WIDA ACCESS 2.0 to monitor English development until the student achieves proficiency at 4.8 overall composite score. Students/parents **may not** opt out of taking the yearly WIDA ACCESS 2.0 language assessment.

Annual Evaluation, Exit Criteria, Progress Monitoring

Annual Evaluation: ACCESS Online 2.0

ACCESS for ELLs Online (ACCESS Online 2.0) is a computer-based, adaptive test that responds to student performance and may be administered in group or individual settings. The ACCESS assessment measures a student's English language in the four domains: Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking. The assessment is given in January of every school year until the exit criteria of 4.8 overall is achieved.

- Students who are identified as LEP but are not receiving services due to parent refusal, must still take the annual ACCESS test for ELLs until they receive a 4.8 overall composite score. **If a parent refuses services, it is important to explain that their child continues to be required to take the annual language proficiency assessment, ACCESS 2.0 until proficient, per Illinois State Board of Education.**
- Each language domain (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing) is given separately and may take a different amount of time to deliver depending on the students' grade level, abilities and modes of communication.
- No further testing is necessary when the student achieves an overall composite score of 4.8. The student will be reclassified as "Exit" and no longer be considered to be limited English proficient (LEP).
- When a student achieves a score of 4.8 overall composite score, the student will be monitored in academics for two years to determine if progress is being made within the classroom in English. Additional language support may be given if it is considered that the student would benefit from additional language services without returning to the LEP label. Documentation of student progress (Monitoring Forms) is filed and turned in to comply with state requirements for two years.

Special Education Considerations

Students that are eligible to receive special education service in the school setting, and are identified as LEP yes, are eligible to receive language services in conjunction with their individualized education program (IEP). Neither service supersedes the other. Rather, the educational staff will support the needs and language services of the student appropriately.

Assessment Accommodations for Multilingual Learners

Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR)

Every classroom with a student with the label of LEP yes will have a bilingual dictionary accessible to them in their home language and English to the extent possible. Word to word dictionaries should be used by the classroom teacher and student through the school year. Using the bilingual dictionaries only for assessment is not appropriate. For more information on the IAR for language learners, please visit [Illinois Assessment of Readiness](#).

Parent Committee

Bilingual Parents Advisory Committee

Per Illinois State Board of Education, District 129 has a Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee that meets at least four times a year. The participants in the committee consist of parents of students that are multilingual learners. Please follow the link for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions

Colorín Colorado offers parents and educators the opportunity to learn more on various topics related to dual language and language acquisition. Please follow the link: Colorincolorado.org

Frequently Asked Questions on District 129's website.