

**Canton Public School District**

**English Language Policy/Plan**

**2021-2022**



Mr. Gary Hannah, Superintendent

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## **English Learner Policy**

The mission of the Canton Public School District (CPSD) is to meet the needs of all students by providing challenging learning experiences in a collaborative, concerned community committed to producing life-long learners. In compliance with Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act 2001, the CPSD has established a plan that addresses not only English proficiency and academic education of English Learner (EL) students but also the emotional, physical, psychological, and cultural aspects of an EL student's adjustment to a new culture. Students identified as EL as defined by the law shall receive English Language Acquisition services as required under *Section 1111* of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) (2015) and the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Board Policy. Services for students are determined individually based on the Home Language Survey (HLS), which is completed at the time of enrollment, and the state adopted English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT), as mandated by the Mississippi Department of Education.

### **Legal Requirements**

During the past fifty years state and federal governments have enacted laws and regulations to protect the rights of language minority students. The following is a list of laws and regulations that have been instrumental in establishing federal, state, and district policies related to the education of ELs.

#### Free and Equitable Education for All Students

Every public school in the United States is required to provide a free and equitable education to all eligible children who live within the boundaries of the school district. In the past, there was some questions as to whether school districts were required to educate children who were not legal residents of the United States. However, in 1982 the Supreme Court ruled in *Plyer v. Doe* that the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution prohibits states from denying a free public education to undocumented immigrant children regardless of their immigrant status.

Furthermore, the Court stated that school systems are not agents for enforcing immigration law; thus, schools should not request any information related to U.S. Residency as this might discourage children from attending school. In keeping with this

ruling, schools are advised not to request any information of students (immigration or non-immigrant) which might be used to disclose undocumented status including social security numbers, passports, visas, etc. As a result of this, school districts are only permitted to require two kinds of information for enrollment: proof of residency in the district (i.e. two bills with an address that is in the district) and proof of required vaccinations.

Should the school, for whatever reason, come across information regarding the immigration status of students or their parents, it is prohibited under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from providing any outside agency including the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) of the Department of Homeland Security, with such personally identifiable information without first getting permission from the student's parents or valid court order.

School policy should make it clear to all school personnel that their primary responsibility is to provide all students living in the district with a quality education. As educators they should not be involved in any policing activities for ICE, nor are they under any legal obligation to do so.

### **Definition of an English Learner**

The U.S. Congress passed Public Law 107-110, the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act of 2001, as reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In January 2015, the ESEA was reauthorized with the enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA uses the term English Learner (EL) to refer to students acquiring English as a second language.

According to the federal government, an English Learner is an individual:

- (A) Who is 3 to 21 years of age; and
- (B) Who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school;  
and
- (C) (i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language is a language other than English;

- (ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of outlying areas: and
  - (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or
  - (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- (D) Who has difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language and whose difficulties may deny such individual the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to fully participate in society.

### **Definition of Immigrant Children and Youth**

An individual-

- (A) Who is 3 through 21 years of age;
- (B) Was not born in any state or U.S. territory; and
- (C) Has not been attending one or more schools in any one or more states for more than three full academic years.

### **Definition of Migrant Student**

An individual-

- (A) Who is 3 through 21 years of age and has not graduated from high school or obtained a GED.
- (B) The child has parent(s), guardian(s), a spouse, or he/she is a migratory agricultural worker or fisher and has moved within the past thirty-six months from one school district to another to obtain work. The move has enabled the child, the child's guardian, spouse, or member of the child's immediate family to obtain temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity as a principal means of livelihood.

## **Enrollment**

Plyler v. Doe (U.S. Supreme Court Decision, 1982), states that “The undocumented status of these children does not establish a sufficient rational basis for denying them benefits that the State affords other residents...” All ELs must be allowed to attend school, regardless of their ability to present a birth certificate, social security number, or immigrant documentation. In the case where a student is unable to present a social security number, the school must assign the student a MSIS identification number until a social security number is acquired. If the parent is unable to locate immunization records, the Local Education Agency (LEA) may need to contact the former school system. If necessary, students can begin the immunization series at the local public health department. If appropriate immunization documentation cannot be obtained within ninety (90) days, the student’s case should be handled in accordance with approved state and local board of education procedures.

In accordance with the revised MDE EL guidelines (2018), the CPSD is required to provide a free and equitable education to all school age children who live within the boundaries of the LEA, regardless of immigration status. Several laws protect the rights of ELs and their families, particularly during the enrollment process. These protections are provided because many EL students’ levels of transiency and lack of English proficiency make them a particularly vulnerable population.

As outlined in the MS EL Guidelines (2018), the CPSD must enroll all students regardless of their or their parents’ or guardians’ actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status. When enrolling students, LEAs may not request information from students or their parents or guardians in order to deny access to public schools on the basis of race, color, or national origin. For example, while CPSD may require proof of residency, inquiring into students’ citizenship or immigration status, or that of their parents or guardians, would not be relevant to establishing residency. While CPSD requires students or their parents to provide proof of age, CPSD may not bar a student from enrolling because he or she lacks a birth certificate or has records that indicates a foreign place of birth.

Further, the CPSD’s request for a social security number during registration must: 1) inform the family that providing it is voluntary and refusal will not bar the child from enrolling in or attending school, and 2) explain for what purpose the number will be used.

The CPSD may not require families to provide a social security number to enroll in or attend school.

More information regarding the rights of all students enrolling into CPSD as required by the United States Department of Education (ED) is available in this Dear Colleague Letter on School Enrollment Procedures:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201405.pdf>.

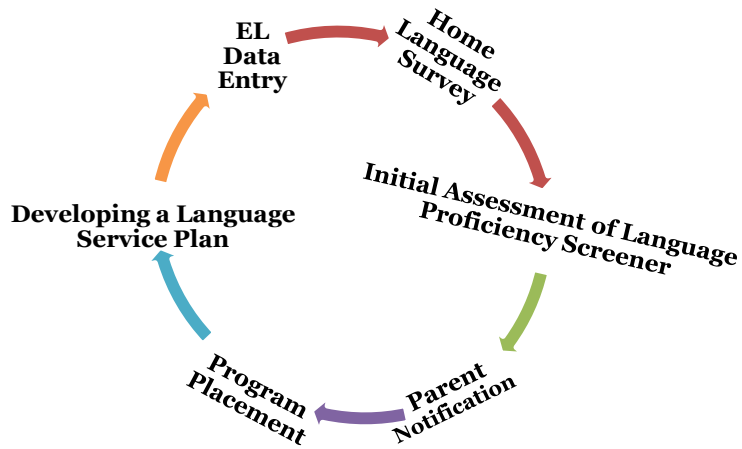
### ***English Language Acquisition Plan***

#### **What is the purpose of English Language Acquisition?**

1. To help ensure that children who are limited English proficient (LEP), including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet;
2. To assist all limited English proficient children including immigrant children and youth, to achieve at high levels in the core academic subjects, to develop high-quality language instruction educational programs designed to assist State Educational Agencies (SEA), local educational agencies (LEAs), and schools in teaching LEP and immigrant children;
3. To provide high quality instructional programs designed to prepare LEP and immigrant children to enter all-English instructional settings;
4. To help schools build their capacity to establish, implement, and sustain language to promote parental and community participation; and
5. To hold SEAs, LEAs, and schools accountable for increases in English proficiency and core academic content knowledge of LEP children.

## Identification Process

The identification and placement of ELs in an appropriate language program that assures them an equitable, quality education is a six-step process.



### STEP 1: Home Language Survey (HLS)

The survey is used to determine if there's a primary language other than English spoken in the home. The HLS must be part of the registration packet for **all incoming** students. It should then be kept in the cumulative file for each student. If English is not determined to be the first language spoken in the home, the school must contact the school's test coordinator to conduct the initial English proficiency screener.

### STEP 2: Initial Assessment of Language Proficiency Screener

An initial screener must be conducted on all incoming ELs to determine the English proficiency level of the student. In the case of a student whose HLS indicates that a language other than English is the first language spoken in the home, the student must be screened within the first thirty (30) days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year. Potential EL students who register after the beginning of the school year must be assessed within 10 school days of enrollment. The English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) assesses the proficiency of students in all four language domains (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Those administering and scoring the placement test must be certified teachers, and they must receive some level of training. The CPSD test security plan must describe who will administer and score assessments and what training is

required to ensure valid and reliable results. **All students' placement test reports must be placed in their cumulative record.**

### **STEP 3: Parent and Family Notification**

Before the initial placement of a student in an English language program, the CPSD or school must notify the student's parent or guardian. Parents must be notified within the first thirty (30) days of the initial screener. For students who did not begin school within the first month of school, parents must be notified within two weeks of taking the screener. Any parent or guardian whose child is receiving EL services has the right to decline or opt his or her child out of any or all EL services. The CPSD may not recommend that a parent or guardian opt a child out of EL programs or services for any reason. The CPSD **must** provide guidance in a language parents or guardians can understand to ensure that they understand their child's rights, the range of EL services that their child can receive, and the benefits of such services. This is to ensure that the parent or guardian's decision to opt out is informed and voluntary. The ELs who opt out of services must, like those receiving programs or services, have their ELP reassessed yearly during the annual ELPT assessment period. After it is determined that the EL no longer qualifies as an EL, the CPSD must continue to monitor the student for at least 4 years, just as it would an EL who has received EL programs and services.

### **STEP 4: Placement in A Language Instruction Educational Program**

Identified ELs must be placed in a sound language instruction educational program in addition to general content classes. The CPSD must offer appropriate EL services until ELs are proficient in English and can participate meaningfully in educational programs without EL support. This includes continuing to provide EL services to ELs at the highest levels of English proficiency until they have exited from EL services and programs.

The Student Evaluation Team (SET) for each child must determine which program model such as pull-out or push-in will be used. When making this determination individual student data from the ELPT, universal screeners, weekly tests, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), and progress monitoring results will be used.

The goal for students who are ELs is that they attain fluency in English, master the state's academic content standards as demonstrated by proficiency on the state's required student assessments, and pass any other state required tests. Research related to student



placement and retention shows that ELs **must** be placed age-appropriately in the mainstream classroom. This provides them with access to challenging, grade-level content instruction and the opportunity to interact with their English-speaking peers and is considered generally to be the least restrictive educational environment.

At the high school level, credits must be awarded based on transcripts provided by the students/parents/guardians, even if the coursework was taken in another country. If transcripts are in language other than English, translations must be sought so that credits can be awarded.

### **STEP 5: Developing a Language Service Plan (LSP)**

The MDE requires each student designated as an EL to have a LSP, which must be updated annually until the student exits the EL program. The SET must meet to develop the LSP at the beginning of each academic school year. This team must be composed of teachers (including EL teachers), administrators, counselors, and parents or guardians. The team will meet quarterly to evaluate the student's progress and make necessary adjustments. **A copy of the LSP must be provided to all teachers who work with the EL student. (Please note: LSPs should be submitted to the EL Coordinator twice per year, during fall and spring).**

The LSP must contain the following:

- Student's demographic information
- Date of first enrollment in a U.S. school
- Yearly ELPT scores
- Classroom accommodations
- State testing accommodations
- Signatures of SET members

### **STEP 6: EL Data Entry**

The accuracy of EL data is of the utmost importance. Once a student has been identified as an EL, the district must ensure that the student is correctly marked in their student data package. This information will upload to MSIS once the district has submitted their data to the MDE. Districts should ensure each column on the EL roster screen of MSIS is completed. This information should be checked monthly for accuracy.

## Grade Level Placement

ELs are charged with unique challenges that their English-speaking peers are not. ELs must learn the same academic content that their peers in mainstream classrooms are learning. This should be done at the same pace as their native English-speaking peers. ELs are also required to learn and master a second language. **Upon enrollment, students must be placed in an age appropriate grade.** Students can, however, be placed one grade level behind. For this reason, the General Education and English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher must work collaboratively to ensure that students develop cognitively and academically. Educators must remember that students must be placed in an age appropriate grade level.

### ***CPSD Pathway 3***

Mississippi Department of Education's 2018 English Learner Guidelines states the following:

*The goal for students who are English Learners is that they attain fluency in English, master the state's academic content standards as demonstrated by proficiency on the state's required student assessments, and pass any other state required tests. Research related to student placement and retention shows that ELs must be placed age-appropriately in the mainstream classroom. This provides them with access to challenging, grade-level content instruction and the opportunity to interact with their English-speaking peers and is considered generally to be the least restrictive environment (p.18).*

As such, due diligence must be taken to ensure that students are placed in age-appropriate environments as they attain language proficiency. The district's curriculum team will review English Learners' grade-level placement on a yearly basis and recommend placement in age-appropriate environments when necessary. *Students who meet the requirements for Pathway 3 in CPSD will receive intensive interventions during the school year and during the district's Extended School Year program in the summer.*

English learners should be placed in Special Education classes on the assumption that materials and teaching methods in general education classes would not be appropriate for the students. Placing students in Special Education classes without screening is a violation of the student's right to the educational opportunities that they are entitled to. *Exception: If a student is not much older than six years old and has not attended school before, it is often best to place the student in Kindergarten (Mississippi Department of Education, English Language Guidelines, 2011).*

Initial placement of EL students may be crucial to their success in the educational program. Students should not be required to repeat content classes they had in their native

language just because of their lack of English skills. Placement in grades 9-12 will be based upon the transcript from previous schools and the graduation requirements of the State and district. Any transcript written in a language other than English will be forwarded to the EL Coordinator at the time of registration. The transcript will be translated, to the extent practicable, and the school will be notified of the results to award credit and schedule classes. If there are problems in evaluating transcripts, the principal may award credits based on competencies.

Placement of EL students in subject area test courses will be done in a manner that allows the EL student the maximum amount of time in school to become proficient in the English language before taking a MAAP course. EL students will not be placed in subject area test courses prior to the appropriate grade level for each test.

**Specifically:**

English II: preferred timeline: second semester of 10<sup>th</sup> grade, but no sooner than the first semester of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

Biology: preferred timeline: first semester of 10<sup>th</sup> grade and not sooner.

U.S. History: preferred timeline: second semester of 11<sup>th</sup> grade, but no sooner than the first semester of 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

Algebra I: Many EL students will excel at math or be able to maintain course/grade-level achievement. The Algebra I test may be scheduled as appropriate. In general, EL students will be placed in courses that are less language/reading dependent until the student can master the language well enough to have a solid grasp of the instruction and content. Advisable courses for entering EL students, or those who scored “Intermediate” or below on the last LAS Links are math, music, art, and PE. EL students should be scheduled in one subject area testing course at a time, as appropriate, for the students scheduled graduation timeline and English language ability.

To prevent any issues with EL students in middle and high school, all LSP’s must have a copy of the student transcripts signed by the principal, as a part of the LSP so that protocols may be put in place to help students graduation on time.

## **Grading Scale**

According to the MDE EL Guidelines (2018), as students are working to learn English during the initial stages of language acquisition, it is a violation of their Civil Rights to retain them due to limited language proficiency. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA), schools must ensure that EL students are placed appropriately and can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs. The CPSD is required to take steps to ensure that students are not retained solely because they are still in the early stages of learning English. Students who receive extensive language supports and classroom accommodations must have this information noted on their report cards, and accommodations must be shared with the families of EL students to ensure they have an understanding of true academic performance in English language proficiency.

### **CPSD Modified Grading System for English Learners K-12 (adapted from *MDE Guidelines for English Learners, 2011*)**

#### **Kindergarten- 5<sup>th</sup> grade:**

1. Levels 1-3 (Beginning, Early Intermediate, Intermediate)
  - a. 65-100% Passing (S= Satisfactory)
  - b. 46-64% Passing (N= Need Improvement)
  - c. 0-45% (U= Unsatisfactory) [Documentation Necessary for 0-45%]
  - d. "EL" noted on the report card
2. Level 4-5 (Proficient, Above Proficient)
  - a. Common criteria for assigning grade (with necessary accommodations and modifications)
  - b. "EL" noted on the report card

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. Levels 1-3 (Beginning, Early Intermediate, Intermediate)
  - a. 65-100% Passing (S= Satisfactory)
  - b. 46-64% Passing (N= Need Improvement)
  - c. 0-45% (U= Unsatisfactory) [Documentation Necessary for 0-45%]
  - d. "EL" noted on the report card

2. Level 4-5 (Proficient, Above Proficient)
  - a. Common criteria for assigning grade (with necessary accommodations and modifications)
  - b. “EL” noted on the report card

Award Carnegie unit credit to students in levels 1-3 based on classroom modifications and accommodations for student’s success.

All students are subject to the attendance policies regarding awarding credit for classes.

### **Retention**

\**Quick Summary Statement:* A non-EL student’s “F” begins below 60. An F for an EL student with Early Intermediate or Beginning stages of language acquisition begins below 45.

\* A student should never be given the grade of “F” when the student’s lack of success can be attributed to limited English proficiency.

\* Retention is generally not recommended for EL students according to MDE’s *Guidelines for English Learners, 2011*.

The Mississippi Department of Education EL guidelines (2011), states that “legally, the Local Education Agency (LEA) is required to accommodate the EL in a way that allows the student to benefit from the educational experience. The student cannot be penalized for his/her lack of the English language. A valid interpretation would mean that ***a student should never be given the grade of “F” when the student’s lack of success can be attributed to limited English proficiency.***” Research shows that English skills in reading and writing takes an average of 5 to 7 years to reach proficiency in English; however, 1-2 years for oral fluency. During this time, students may still be considered English Learners (ELs).

### **Student Evaluation Team (SET)**

The SET is a school level team responsible for guiding and monitoring the placement, services, and assessment of students who are ELs. The team is comprised of an ESL interventionist, a school administrator, a parent, and a content area teacher or general education teacher. The team is required to meet once every nine weeks. During the meeting grades, language acquisition placement, and attendance will be discussed.

## **Exiting Criteria**

The CPSD will follow the exit criteria as set forth by the MDE. The following proficiency levels must be reached on ELPT before a student can exit the EL program.

- Students must have a 4 or 5 Proficiency level in Reading.
- Students must have a 4-5 Proficiency level in Writing.
- Students must have a 4-5 Proficiency level Overall.

The MS EL Guidelines (2018) states that “because ESSA requires states to have uniformed exit criteria, it is unlawful to add other criteria’s as a requirement for exiting. An EL with a disability can be “exited” from EL status when he or she no longer meets the definition of an EL. This occurs when the student meets the State’s definition of ‘proficient’ in English.”

However, there is no provision in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that would authorize the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team to remove the “EL” designation before the student has attained English proficiency. In addition, other CPSD and/or school personnel do not have the authority under Federal law to remove a student’s EL designation before the student has been deemed proficient in English solely because the student has an IEP.

## **Monitoring Process**

When students reach proficiency and are exited according to the MDE’s Title III EL exit criteria, the law requires that they are monitored for four calendar years following the exit from language assistance program.

- Students are no longer classified as LEP/EL (this indicator in MSIS must be turned off),
- Receives no accommodations, (unless they are in the SPED program and have an IEP or a 504 classification), and
- Are not required to take the annual State adopted English Language Proficiency Test

Monitoring must be conducted and documented quarterly with a SET team that reviews monitored students” grades, assessments, and other related data. If an exited EL is not

progressing academically as expected and monitoring suggests a persistent language need, districts must re-test using the state adopted ELPT to see if the student needs to be offered additional language assistance services. In no case should re-testing of an exited student's ELP be prohibited. If the student re-enters EL services, however, the LEA is required to document the reasons why, as well as obtain the parent's consent prior to reentry.

### **Access to Other Program Services**

#### **State Adopted English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT)**

The CPSD will annually screen EL students on the state adopted ELPT. This assessment is administered annually to monitor ELs progress in acquiring academic English. Academic language is defined as the language required succeeding in school that includes deep understanding of content and communication of that language in the classroom environment. This understanding revolves around specific criteria related to dialogue, sentence, and word/phrase levels of language.

#### **The Language Domains**

Each of the five English language proficiency standards encompasses four language domains that define how ELLs process and use language.

- **Listening** - process, understand, interpret, and evaluate spoken language in a variety of situations.
- **Speaking** - engage in oral communication in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- **Reading** - process, understand, interpret, and evaluate written language, symbols, and text with understanding and fluency.
- **Writing** - engage in written communication in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.

<b>PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE LEVEL DEFINITION</b>
<b>6 - Reaching</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialized or technical language reflective of the content area at grade level</li> <li>• A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse as required by the specified grade level</li> <li>• Oral or written communication in English comparable to proficient English peers</li> </ul>
<b>5 - Bridging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The technical language of the content areas</li> <li>• A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays, or reports</li> <li>• Oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English proficient peers when presented with grade level material</li> </ul>
<b>4 - Expanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific and some technical language of the content areas</li> <li>• A variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related paragraphs</li> <li>• 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 occasional visual and graphic support</li> </ul>
<b>3 - Developing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General and some specific language of the content areas</li> <li>• Expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs</li> <li>• 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 occasional visual and graphic support</li> </ul>



<b>2 - Beginning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General language related to the content areas</li> <li>• Phrases or short sentences</li> <li>• 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 visual and graphic support</li> </ul>
<b>1 - Entering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas</li> <li>• Words phrases, or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH-questions, or statements with visual and graphic support</li> </ul>

### **Program Model**

Language acquisition instruction will be provided to students identified as ELs through the pull-out instructional intervention model. Students will be pulled from an elective for thirty (30) minutes at least 4 days a week for language acquisition at the **elementary level**. Students at the **middle school level** will receive language learning strategies at least 4 times per week for forty-five (45) minutes. Students at the **high school level** will receive language learning strategies at least 4 times per week for sixty (60) minutes. During this time, students will have the opportunity to work on state adopted English Language Development Standards, that focus specifically on language acquisition in a small learning environment. The selection of appropriate curricula and materials will be the responsibility of the Office of Curriculum and Instruction and the Office of Federal Programs to ensure that programs are instructionally sound and that all purchasing processes and procedures are in compliance. All teachers will be responsible for ensuring that students designated as ELs have the opportunity to be successful and reach proficiency levels in the areas of Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, and English.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the CPSD English Language Development Plan for ELs is to provide a structure that is consistent and collaborative in the following:

- Common Assessments
- Guaranteed and Evidenced- Based Curriculum
- Differentiated Instruction Delivery
- Implementation of State Standards
- Data- Driven Instruction
- Benchmark Indicators
- Long- Range Professional Development
- Parent and Community Stakeholder Involvement

The main purpose of this plan is to accelerate the acquisition of students’ mastery of the English language. Schools can accelerate acquisition of academic language by providing a comprehensive support system for ELs where they receive specialized, comprehensive content instruction throughout the day. This requires a collaborative effort between the teachers and the interventionist as well as professional development for all staff on the use of effective interventions and differentiated instruction.

### **Stages of Language Acquisition**

<b>Stage I: Pre-production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is considered the silent period. ELs may have up to 500 words in their receptive vocabulary. Students still repeat what is being said. This is not them learning language; they are simply parroting what they hear.</li> <li>• Students will listen attentively and they may even be able to copy words from the board.</li> <li>• They will be able to respond to pictures and other visuals.</li> <li>• They can understand and duplicate gestures and movement to show comparison.</li> <li>• Teachers should focus attention on listening comprehension activities and build a receptive vocabulary.</li> <li>• During this stage ELs will need much repetition of English.</li> <li>• Students at this level will benefit from a buddy.</li> </ul>
<b>Stage II: Early Production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This stage may last up to six months and students will develop a receptive and active vocabulary of about 1000 words.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students can usually speak in one or two-word phrases.</li> <li>• Students can use short language chunks that have been memorized although chunks may not be used correctly.</li> </ul>
<b>Stage III: Speech Emergence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have developed a vocabulary of about 3000 words and can communicate with simple phrases and sentences.</li> <li>• They will ask simple questions that may or may not be grammatically correct.</li> <li>• They will initiate short conversations with classmates.</li> <li>• They will be able to do some content work with teacher support.</li> </ul>
<b>Stage IV: Intermediate Fluency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will have a vocabulary of 6000 active words.</li> <li>• Students will begin to use more complex sentences when speaking and writing and are willing to express opinions and share their thoughts.</li> <li>• Students will ask clarifying questions.</li> <li>• Students are able to do grade level work in math and science with little teacher support.</li> <li>• Students will demonstrate an increase of understanding English Literature and social studies is increasing.</li> <li>• Students will use strategies from their native language to learn content in English.</li> <li>• Students' writing will have errors as they try to master the complexity of the English grammar and sentence structure.</li> </ul>
<b>Stage V: Advanced Fluency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally, it may take students 4-10 years to achieve cognitive academic language proficiency in their second language.</li> <li>• Students will be near native in their ability to perform in content area learning.</li> <li>• Most ELs at this stage have exited the program; however, they will need continued support from classroom teachers, especially in content areas such as, history, social studies, and writing.</li> </ul>

## Gifted Education

The MDE EL Guidelines (2018) states that EL students may possess extraordinary learning or performance abilities that have nothing to do with their language proficiency. Procedures used for identifying students who are gifted must be as bias-free and culturally equitable as possible. The procedures must be designed to highlight student strengths and

abilities, regardless of native language or dominant language use. Generally, assessments used in identification must be administered in the language that gives the student the greatest opportunity for demonstrating extraordinary capability. Assessment of a student's linguistic ability must be done in the language in which the student is most comfortable.

Students who are identified as gifted must still receive EL services until they qualify for exiting EL status. The time spent in the development of English proficiency must not take precedence over appropriate instruction and learning in the student's areas of strength and talent.

### **EL Students with Disabilities**

The IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) address the rights of students with disabilities in school and other educational settings. If an English Learner is suspected of having one or more disabilities, the LEA must evaluate the EL promptly to determine if he or she has a disability or disabilities and whether the EL needs disability-related services. Disability evaluations may not be delayed because of a student's limited English language proficiency or the student's participation in an EL program. Also, a student's English language proficiency cannot be the basis for identifying him or her for special education.

In addition, the CPSD must ensure that a student's special education evaluation is provided and administered in the student's dominant language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information about what the student knows and can do, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. Assessing whether a student has a disability in his or her native language or other mode of communication can help educators determine whether a need stems from lack of English language proficiency or a student's disability-related needs.

When an EL student is determined to have a disability, the student's EL and disability-related educational needs must both be met. For EL students, in addition to the required IEP team participants under IDEA, it is essential that the IEP team include participants under IDEA, it is essential that the IEP team include participants who have knowledge of student's language needs. It is also important that the IEP team include professionals with training, and preferably expertise, in second language acquisition.

CPSD must take the following steps to help prevent over-identification of ELs in Special Education: (1) When a student is having difficulty mastering specific skills, it is important for the teacher to accommodate the instructional strategies and pace of instruction for the student. (2) If the student continues to have difficulty after consistent language accommodations and Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions, the student must be referred to the Student Evaluation Team (SET) along with the TST. The EL coordinator must be a member of the TST. (3) A number of factors must be considering when deciding whether a student must be referred for special education testing. These include the following:

- Entry date in the United States
- Years of consistent schooling
- Educational history, including years in U.S. schools and consistency of education
- Prior evaluation results
- Physical conditions that might account for difficulties, including need for glasses or hearing aids
- School attendance
- Input from parents, guardians, and families

After this information is reviewed, one of two things may occur: (1) The TST may recommend additional interventions and accommodations for the classroom. (2) The SET team can then make a referral for special education testing to determine if the student has a specific disability. Once a referral is made, testing is completed to determine if the student qualifies as a student with a disability under IDEA.

It is important to note that the parent, guardian, or the TST team may request a comprehensive assessment be completed at any time, which would then require a Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET) meeting within 10 days to determine whether a comprehensive evaluation must be completed at this time.

Specific procedures of special education assessment are provided in the Mississippi Policies and Procedures Regarding Children with Disabilities under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act Amendment of 2004 (2009). As noted earlier, proficiency assessment in both English and the child's first language can identify the dominant language for the purpose of further evaluation and assessment if needed. Nonverbal tests are another alternative.

All students who qualify for services under IDEA, regardless of the type or degree of disability, share certain rights and needs, including:

- The right to a free and appropriate public education
- The right to an IEP specifying the student's unique needs along with the special education and related services the student is to receive
- The need to have cognitive, linguistic, academic, and social/emotional characteristics considered and appropriate environmental modification or accommodations made. (*Mississippi EL Guidelines, 2018*).

### **Multi-Tiered System of Support for English Learners**

In accordance with the Mississippi EL Guidelines (2018), once an EL student has been identified as struggling, the CPSD will monitor the student's progress, provide evidence-based interventions, and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness. Schools also identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities. When an EL who is actively receiving support from an EL program is observed by the mainstream teacher to have continuing difficulties with learning, the first course of action is to consult informally with the EL teacher/specialist to request additional instructional strategies for teaching.

In planning interventions approaches, it is important to understand the program in which ELs are enrolled, how their native language and English proficiency is assessed and monitored, and the core literacy program they receive for development of native language and/or English literacy skills. It is essential that effective strategies and differentiation to meet the special needs of ELs are implemented at this level to ensure the success of our EL students. Typically, strategies that work best for ELs also benefit struggling native English-speaking students. It is also necessary to understand that while EL services should

be implemented at all levels of the Tier process, they do not take the place of high quality Tier I instruction and do not serve as an intervention for struggling students.

### **Tier 1 and ELs**

At Tier 1, the interventionist can support the general education teachers with implementing strategies that are helpful to English learners as well as specific accommodations that may be helpful for particular students in addition to the strategies already being implemented by the general education teacher.

### **Tier 2 and ELs**

The interventionist will provide intensive reading interventions to ELs demonstrating low reading skills immediately when needed. These interventions can be effectively implemented as early as 1st grade. Ensure that interventions are sufficiently intense by retaining small groups (3-6 students) who are provided intervention for a minimum of 30 minutes each day. When students receiving literacy instruction in English demonstrate weak reading skills or have evident reading difficulties, it is critical that teachers not wait for English oral language to improve before providing reading interventions. Teachers must use appropriate practices for building oral reading and speaking skills in addition to vocabulary development.

### **Tier 3 and ELs**

ELs who are significantly behind in reading require highly intensive and extensive reading interventions that should begin immediately and continue until the student is able to adequately benefit from reading instruction provided within the general education classroom. Students should be provided with research-based reading interventions that are typically associated with improved outcomes. ELs may not demonstrate immediate significant gains and may require highly individualized reading instruction that considers other factors as attention, language and vocabulary development, and behavior problems. A team approach to problem solving that considers many of these factors may facilitate the development of an appropriate instructional plan.

It is essential that the EL teacher and Coordinator be involved or consulted at each step of the tier process. This is imperative before making recommendations for intervention strategies. Teams must collaboratively determine if the general education teachers' instructional techniques are effective with ELs as well as whether or not teachers have implemented the recommended EL instructional accommodations.

### **EL Program Evaluation**

The CPSD will annually evaluate its English Learner program for effectiveness and ensure compliance with state and federal reporting requirements. Each school will be charged with reviewing the following data points:

- Scores on state and local assessments
- Scores on the English Language Proficiency Test
- Rates of retention
- Exit rates
- Graduation rate
- Participation rates in gifted and advanced courses
- Enrollment in prekindergarten and other programs
- Enrollment rates in special education and related services
- Attendance rates
- Participation rates in extracurricular programs
- Suspension rates
- Results of parent and family, student, and teacher surveys
- Results of surveys from other key stakeholders

The Curriculum Department and The Office of Federal Programs will use the data from the surveys to strengthen the program and determine how it can be more effective to serve the EL students and their families.

### **Professional Development**

It is the responsibility of CPSD to ensure that administrators, teachers, and staff are knowledgeable of EL instructional strategies through regular professional development in both onsite and off-site sessions.

### **Teacher Recruitment**



The CPSD will host job fairs, attend job fairs at local colleges, and post job opening announcements on the Canton Public School District website to attain and attract certified EL teachers and staff.

### **Family and Community Engagement**

According to Mississippi EL Guidelines (2018), the CPSD has a legal obligation to communicate meaningfully with Limited English Proficient parents and families and to adequately notify them of information about any program, service or activity called to the attention of non-LEP parents. Successful communication provides LEP parents, guardians, and families with the school-related information they need to make informed decisions about, and be helpful participants in, their children's education. This may include but is not limited to information about language assistance programs, special education and related services, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, grievance procedures, notices of nondiscrimination, student discipline policies and procedures, registration and enrollment, report cards, requests for parent or guardian permission for student participation in district or school activities, parent-teacher conferences, parent handbooks, gifted programs.

The CPSD will comply with the development and implementation of a clear process for determining (1) if parents and guardians have limited English proficiency, (2) what their primary language is, and (3) what their language needs are. CPSD will use student registration forms and home language surveys to inquire about whether a parent or guardian requires oral and/or written communication in a language other than English.

To the extent practical, the CPSD will translate all communications in the parent's home language and provide a translator that is familiar with the language.

The CPSD will host numerous of outreach programs to strengthen parental and community engagement including family literacy nights, informational forums, and culturally-based engagement activities.

## References

Mississippi Department of Education (2018) Mississippi English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports.

[http://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/EL/EL%20Guidance%2C%20Funding%2C%20and%20Instructional%20Supports July2018combined.pdf](http://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/EL/EL%20Guidance%2C%20Funding%2C%20and%20Instructional%20Supports%20July2018combined.pdf)

United States Department of Education, (2017) English Learner Toolkit.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf>