



**English Learners  
Procedural Manual  
2024-2025**

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## **Introduction**

The Kosciusko School District (KSD) serves the community by engaging each student in an excellent education that develops skills and citizenship needed for success in a global society.

The Board of Trustees set the following goals:

- Goal 1: Increase student achievement across the district.
- Goal 2: Provide a safe and orderly environment in all schools
- Goal 3: Attract and retain stakeholders
- Goal 4: Maintain sound financial stability
- Goal 5: Ensure ALL graduates are career/college ready.

The KSD is committed to creating a positive and welcoming environment for English Learners and their families. The KSD leadership recognizes the value culturally and linguistically diverse learners bring to the district and local community. Therefore, the following will serve as the guiding principles for the KSD English Learner Program.

## **Potential**

English Learners (ELs) have the same potential as native speakers of English to engage in cognitively complex tasks. Regardless of English proficiency level, ELs need access to challenging, grade-appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment and benefit from activities requiring them to think critically. Even though ELs will produce language which might distinguish them from their native English-speaking peers, they should be expected to participate fully in all levels of the educational program of KSD.

## **Funds of Knowledge**

ELs' primary languages and other social, cultural, and linguistic background knowledge and resources (i.e., their "funds of knowledge" [Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992]) are useful tools to help them navigate among their schools and their communities' valuable resources (world knowledge and different viewpoints) as they develop the social, cultural, and linguistic competencies required for effective communication in English. In particular, an awareness of culture should be embedded within curriculum, instruction, and assessment provided to ELs.

## **Diversity in EL Progress in Acquiring English Proficiency**

A student's ability to demonstrate proficiency at a particular level will depend on context, content-area focus, and developmental factors. Progress in acquiring English may vary depending upon program type, age at which entered program, initial English proficiency level, native language literacy, and other factors. ELs must simultaneously develop language and content-area knowledge, skills, and abilities. ELs do not need to wait until their English Proficiency is sufficiently developed to participate in content area instruction and assessment.

## **Scaffolding**

ELs at all levels of language proficiency should be provided with scaffolding in order to reach the next proficiency level. These scaffolds will assist them as they develop grade-appropriate language capacities, particularly those that involve content-specific vocabulary and registers. The type and intensity of the scaffolding provided will depend on each student's ability to undertake the particular task independently while continuing to uphold appropriate complexity for the student. *Scaffolds provided to EL students should be reduced as the students' English proficiency increases.*

## **Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education**

Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) are English language learners who have experienced interrupted education due to war, civil unrest, migration, or other factors; who have never had the opportunity to participate in any type of schooling before entering school in the United States; or who have experienced limited education in their home countries due to lack of resources or trained teachers, the type of schooling they participated in, or other circumstances. ELs with limited or interrupted formal education should be provided access to targeted supports that allow them to develop foundational literacy skills in an accelerated time frame (DeCapua & Marshall, 2011).

## **Special Needs**

ELs with disabilities benefit from English language development services and language development goals are included as a part of their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Educators should be aware that these students may take slightly different paths toward English language proficiency.

## **Modifications and Accommodations**

Based on their individual needs, all ELs should be provided appropriate modifications and accommodations for assessments. Educators should be aware modifications and accommodations can be used in classroom instruction and assessments to ensure students have access to grade-appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessments.

## **Goals of the English Learner Program:**

- **Decrease the Number of Long-Term EL Students**
  - KSD plans to reduce the number of long-term ELs by 50% over a three year period.
- **Improve Academic Achievement in the Classroom and on MAAP**
  - KSD plans to improve the overall academic achievement of ELs by decreasing the number of ELs in the lowest performing group by 5% in the next two years.
- **Meet Language Proficiency Targets for LAS Links in All Domains**
  - KSD plans to increase the number of ELs who meet the Language Proficiency targets to 70% by 2027-2028.
- **Improve Family and Community Engagement**
  - KSD plans to improve Family and Community engagement by increasing the number of EL parents who attend family engagement activities by 30% in the next year.
- **Improve Management of EL Data**
  - KSD plans to improve EL student progress by utilizing a data management system which allows easy access to data from multiple years.

## **Section One: Understanding Mississippi English Learners**

As the demographics in Mississippi become increasingly diverse, so do the children served in our schools. Students from diverse language backgrounds have been described using many terms including English as a Second Language (ESL), English Language Learner (ELL), and most recently English Learner (EL). According to MDE's *English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports (2018)*, "Mississippi is following the national trend and has seen an increase of 3,000 ELs in the past two years."

## **English Learners**

According to ESSA, an English Learner is defined as an individual:

- who is aged 3 through 21;
- who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
- who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;

- who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and
- 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
- 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
- whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual —
  - the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments;
  - the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
  - the opportunity to participate fully in society.

ELs are a diverse population, representing many varied formal educational backgrounds. Some students may have an interrupted education and may not be able to read or write in their native language. Other students may have been enrolled and attended schools in their native country where their educational experience was very similar to those found in U.S. schools. Many students have studied English in preparation to attend U.S. schools.

<b>Type of English Learners</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>
<i>Newcomer with strong literacy background in their first language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent arrival (1 year or less in an U.S. school)</li> <li>• Adequate education in native country</li> <li>• Catch up academically with relative ease</li> <li>• May still score lower on standardized testing due to need for English acquisition</li> </ul>
<i>Newcomer with low literacy background in first language/interrupted education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent arrival (1 year or less in an U.S. school)</li> <li>• Interrupted or limited education in native country</li> <li>• Limited native literacy</li> <li>• Below grade level in academic content</li> <li>• Poor academic achievement</li> </ul>
<i>English Learner</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending a U.S. school and receiving EL Services 2-5 years</li> <li>• May require significant modifications and accommodations</li> </ul>
<i>Long-Term English Learner</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending a U.S. school and receiving EL Services 6+ years</li> <li>• Below grade level in reading and/or math</li> <li>• Mismatch between student perception of achievement and actual grades</li> <li>• Some have adequate proficiency, but score low on assessments</li> <li>• Have had EL instruction, but inconsistent instructional models.</li> </ul>

### **Immigrant Students**

- are aged 3 through 21;
- were not born in any State (defined as each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico); and
- have not been attending one or more schools in any one or more States for more than 3 full academic years.

## **Migrant Students**

- Between the ages of 3 and 21
- Has not graduated from High school
- Works or parents work in agriculture
- Has changed school districts in the last 3 years
- Someone that follows the crops throughout the country.
- Migrant labor often involves having a low-income that is seasonal or temporary
- Migrant families may move several times during the school year, interrupting the student's education
- Conditions related to the migrant lifestyle may cause a high incidence of health problems
- Migrant children and youth may have limited English skills and/or few successful experiences in school

**Students could potentially be all of these. In other cases, a student could be one or two of these. The English Learner, Immigrant and Migrant status are all independent of the others. Students have to meet the requirements of each one individually to qualify for status in that group.**

## **Section Two: Understanding Federal Civil Rights Laws in the Education of ELs**

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits public schools that receive federal funds from discriminating on the basis of race, color or national origin. The Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) requires school districts to take “appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by students in instructional programs.”

Based on these and other federal laws, federal courts have:

- Ruled that school districts must take affirmative steps to ensure that ELs can meaningfully participate in their educational programs and services. In *Lau v. Nichols* a suit by Chinese parents in San Francisco led to the ruling that identical education does not constitute equal education under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Ruled that states cannot constitutionally deny students a free public education based on their immigration status. In *Plyler v. Doe (1982)* the court ruled that under the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, a state does not have the right to deny a free public education to undocumented immigrant children.
- Established criteria for evaluating the adequacy of EL programs. *Castañeda v. Pickard (1981)* is reputed to be the most significant court decision affecting language minority students after *Lau v Nichols*. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals formulated a set of basic standards to determine school district compliance with EEOA.
  - The "Castañeda test" includes the following criteria:

Theory:

- The school must pursue a program based on an educational theory recognized as sound or, at least, as a legitimate experimental strategy

Practice:

- The school must actually implement the program with instructional practices, resources, and personnel necessary to transfer theory to reality
- Results:
- The school must not persist in a program that fails to produce results.

## **Section Three: Enrolling and Identifying English Learners**

### **Enrolling and Identifying English Learners**

- By Federal law, public schools in the United States are required to provide a free and equitable education to all school age children who live within the boundaries of the local school district.

- Kosciusko School District (KSD) strives to create an open and inviting atmosphere to all students regardless of their actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status.
- KSD will not deny access to any student on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Nor will KSD bar a student from enrolling because he or she lacks a birth certificate or has records that indicate a foreign place of birth.
- KSD will periodically review documents required for enrollment to ensure that students are not unlawfully barred or discouraged from enrolling or attending school.

### Step 1: Home Language Survey

- A Home Language Survey (HLS) must be completed for all students registering for enrollment. The HLS is given to all entering students and is used to identify students who may not be proficient in English.
- The HLS will include the following questions recommended by the U.S. Department of Education in compliance with federal law:
  - Is a language other than English spoken at home?
  - Is your child's first language a language other than English?
  - What language did your child learn when he/she first began to speak?
  - What language does your child most frequently speak at home?
- If **any** response on the HLS indicates the use of a language other than English by the student or an individual in the home, then further assessment must be conducted to determine the student's English proficiency level. The completed HLS becomes a part of each student's cumulative record and must be available for future reference.

### ● Step 2: Placement Test

- The state adopted English Language Proficiency Placement Screener must be administered to determine the student's level of English proficiency and to facilitate appropriate instructional and program placement decisions.
- Potential EL students identified by the HLS during registration during the beginning of the school year must be assessed for English proficiency within **30 calendar days of enrollment**.
- Potential EL students who register after the beginning of the school year must be assessed within **10 school days of enrollment**.
- The Placement Screener will assess the proficiency of students in all four language domains (speaking, listening, reading and writing). Those administering and scoring the placement test must be certified teachers who receive annual training.
- The KSD Test Security Plan will describe who will administer and score the placement assessments, and what training is required to ensure valid and reliable results.
- The results of the Placement Screener must be placed in the student's cumulative record **and** entered into the EL data management system.

### Step 3: Parent and Family Notification and Opt-Out Options

Written notification to parents and guardians of their child's recommended placement in an EL program must be provided **within 30 days of the start of the school year (or 10 days for later arriving students)** in a language the parents and guardians can understand.

Parents and guardians have the right to decline or opt out of any direct EL services. KSD may not recommend that a parent or guardian opt a child out of EL programs or services for any reason. KSD will provide guidance in a language parents or guardians can understand to ensure that they understand their child's rights, the range of services that their child

could receive, and the benefits of such services. This is to ensure that the decision to opt out is informed and voluntary. If a parent or guardian decides to opt his or her child out of the EL program or particular EL services, the child retains his or her status as an EL student and will continue to be served in the regular classroom with appropriate modifications and accommodations. KSD remains obligated to take affirmative steps and appropriate action required by civil rights laws to provide the EL student meaningful access to all educational programs and to monitor the academic progress of opted-out students.

If an opted-out student is struggling academically, KSD must take appropriate steps to assist the student. These steps must include reassessing the student's English Language Proficiency using the placement screener; notifying the student's parent or guardian about his or her child's lack of progress; and encouraging him or her to opt the child into EL programs and services; and providing supports for the student's language acquisition, such as offering Professional Development in second language acquisition to the student's core content teachers.

ELs who opt out of services must have their English Language Proficiency reassessed yearly during the annual state-adopted annual assessment period. After it is determined that the student no longer qualifies as an English Learner, the student will be monitored for a period of 4 years.

#### **Step 4: Placement in a Language Instruction Educational Program**

After an EL student has been identified using the placement screener, KSD will provide the student with appropriate language acquisition services and programs, commonly known as "EL services and programs."

The goal for students who are EL is that they attain proficiency in English within five years, master Mississippi academic content standards as demonstrated by proficiency on the required state assessments, and pass any other state required tests. **ELs must be placed age-appropriately in the mainstream classroom** in order to provide them with access to grade-level content and the opportunity to interact with English-speaking peers. Kosciusko High School will award credits based on transcripts provided by the students, even if the coursework was taken in another country and the transcripts must be translated so that credits can be awarded.

#### **Step 5: Developing a Language Service Plan**

All EL students (including those who have refused direct EL services or "opted out") must have a Language Service Plan (LSP), which is updated annually until students meet the MDE exit criteria. The Student Evaluation Team (SET) must meet to develop the LSP at the beginning of each academic year. The SET will be composed of 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. A copy must also be included in the student's cumulative folder.

The LSP must contain the following:

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



## **Section Four: Assessing English Learners**

### **English Language Proficiency Assessment:**

The Federal and State obligations require that 100 percent of ELs be annually assessed using the state mandated English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT), including those who have opted out or refused EL services. The ELPT will be given each spring and students will be assessed in the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

### **Accommodations on State Academic Assessments:**

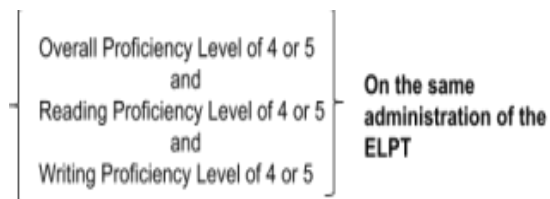
Accommodations will be provided on assessments administered to ELs according to the current edition of the *Mississippi Testing Accommodations Manual*. KSD strives to ensure that the use of accommodations for ELs on any state assessment does not deny the EL the opportunity to fully participate in the assessment and allows the student to receive benefits equal to those received by non-EL students.

If an EL cannot be assessed on LAS Links Assessment in one or more domains due to a disability and there is no appropriate accommodation, the student's English language proficiency will be based on the domains that can be assessed.

## **Section Five: Exiting and Monitoring English Learners**

### **Exiting Students**

On January 19, 2017, the Mississippi State Board of Education revised the ELPT score requirements for ELs to officially exit EL status. According to Mississippi English Language Learner Guidelines (2018) the following criteria are required to exit active EL status:



### **Monitoring Students**

According to MDE's *English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports (2018)*, after students have met the exit criteria and exited EL status, the District must monitor academic progress for 4 years. Monitoring must be conducted and documented every 9 weeks, with the Student Evaluation Team (SET) reviewing students' grades, assessments and related data. The documentation will be stored in the student's cumulative folder. If an exited EL is not progressing academically as expected and monitoring suggests a persistent language need, KSD will re-evaluate using the placement screener to determine if the student needs to be offered additional language assistance services. In no case, should re-evaluation of an exited student's English Language Proficiency be prohibited. If the student re-enters EL services, the SET is required to document the reasons, as well as obtain the parent or guardian's consent prior to re-entry.

## **Section Six: Services and Instructional Supports**

### **Description of Services and Instructional Supports**

Kosciusko School District strives to provide EL students both a language education program and access to academic content.

Therefore, KSD has the following English Learner Program goals:

- To become proficient in English within the recommended five year period
- To achieve proficiency on Mississippi's academic content standards within a reasonable time frame

Students are placed in the EL program based upon results from the English proficiency screener. Instructional decisions related to EL services are based on performance level indicated by the placement screener and the grade level of the student, the instructional program being used and the time frame of classes/services offered at individual schools.

The Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP) for Kosciusko School District is English Language Development, often referred to as English as a Second Language. This is a content-based program of techniques, methodology and special curriculum designed to teach English Learners explicitly about the English language, including the academic vocabulary and structures needed to access content instruction, and to develop their English proficiency in all four domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening).

In the K-6 setting, the LIEP is offered via small group differentiated instruction via thematic, proficiency level-appropriate texts which provides explicit instruction in the four language domains of listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

In the secondary setting, the LIEP is offered through an ESL class. The ESL class is a program of techniques, methodology and special curriculum designed to teach ELs explicitly about the English language, including the academic vocabulary needed to access content instruction and to develop their English language proficiency in all four language domains.

In these models the language of instruction is English. The native language of the child (when feasible) is used only for clarification and not for direct instruction.

### **Ensuring ELs have access to academic content**

ELs have the same potential as native speakers of English to engage in cognitively complex tasks. Regardless of English proficiency level, ELs need access to challenging, grade-appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment and benefit from activities requiring them to think critically. Even though ELs will produce language which might distinguish them from their native-English-speaking peers, they are expected to participate fully in all levels of the educational program of KSD.

Classroom teachers who serve ELs in the content areas must work to help students have access to the Mississippi College and Career Readiness standards. The academic success of EL students can be significantly impacted by implementing appropriate accommodations and modifications when planning instruction to help students master academic content.

**Accommodations** alter *how* a student learns. They do not change what the student is expected to learn.

Accommodations describe an alteration of the environment, curriculum format, or equipment that allows an individual student to pursue a regular course of study and/or complete assigned tasks. Accommodations are tools that ensure that students can demonstrate what they know without lessening their expectations. Examples of accommodations are: additional time, breaking tasks into smaller pieces, bilingual dictionaries, etc.

**Modifications** describe changes in the curriculum. They may include altering the standard expectations for a course or assessment, as the student may be unable to learn all of the material, or particular portions of the material presented. Within the classroom, modifications can include shortening assignments or providing texts that are easier to read. For a beginning EL student within a general education class, assignments might be reduced in number or modified significantly due to the language barrier. As students progress in their language proficiency modifications should be reduced. The following accommodations and modifications are available on the Language Service Plan:

Accommodation & Modifications	EL Strategies	Instructional Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional time to complete assignments and assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assess vocabulary via matching, fill-in-the-blanks, word banks, sentence stems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Modified assessments (i.e. shortened)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Modifying scoring rubric for essay questions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Present questions in same phrasing learning/review</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide shortened assignments and assessments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reduced and/or modified class and homework assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Anchor charts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Audio books</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual dictionaries</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Diagrams</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gesturing/Pantomime</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Graphs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Labels</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Manipulatives</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Models</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Photos or Illustrations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Picture Books</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Realia (bringing in the “real” item being discussed)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Simplified text in English</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Thinking maps and graphic organizers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Videos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ask questions that allow student to answer successfully</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Break tasks/directions into subtasks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check for comprehension often</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Face student when speaking-speak slowly</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Highlight/color code tasks, directions, letters home</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increase wait time</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Label items in classroom</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make instruction visual</li> <li>graphic organizers, pictures, maps, graphs...to aid understanding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pair ELs with English speaking “study buddy” for assistance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Previewing of academic support</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Print instead of using cursive: Type all notes, tests, handouts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide with preferential seating or sitting with a peer partner</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide questions for classroom discussion in advance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Record material for student listening</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use audiobooks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use high interest/low vocabulary text material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use manipulatives</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use visuals and provide students with copies of teacher slides, notes, lectures</li> </ul>

## **Supervising Academic Achievement and Language Acquisition**

All ELs are evaluated throughout the year for both academic progress and language proficiency progress by using many data points.

Academic progress is measured by evaluating several data points including: classroom assignments, formative and summative assessments, district benchmark assessments and performance on state mandated assessments.

Language proficiency progress is measured by evaluating information including: the annual ELPT, language proficiency benchmark assessments and progress monitoring checks built into the EL curriculum. The annual ELPT results are compiled and evaluated to ensure students are making progress towards proficiency.

### **Grading Scale**

According to the *Mississippi English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports 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. Districts are required to take steps to ensure that students are not retained solely because they are still in the early stages of learning English.
- 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.
- Students who receive extensive language support and classroom modifications **must** have this information noted on their report cards, and accommodations must be shared with the families of EL students to ensure that they have an understanding of true academic performance in English language proficiency.
- If an EL student receives a failing grade during a grading period, it is the responsibility of the teacher to document that appropriate accommodations and modifications were made and the student's failure did not stem from a lack of appropriate scaffolding.

### **Placement For Newly Arrived Secondary English Learners**

When a student enrolls in U.S. schools for the first time at the secondary level, careful consideration must be given to the student's course schedule to ensure the student has access to a high school diploma. To ensure ELs have access to the foundational skills needed to be successful in high school and ensure that they graduate from high school ready for college and career, school districts must place students in academic courses sequentially. Students must be given an opportunity to take all courses needed for graduation. Students must take the required assessments at the time they are enrolled in the corresponding courses, and they may not skip courses to avoid state assessments. For example, English I, II, III and IV must be offered, scheduled and taught in sequential order. While courses cannot be scheduled or taken out of sequence, simultaneous enrollment is acceptable in situations where a student failed a course and needs to simultaneously enroll in two courses to graduate on time. For example, if a student fails English III, they can take English III and English IV their senior year in order to graduate on time. Students might be enrolled concurrently in English as a Second Language as an elective to receive additional support while taking English I-IV.

## **Section Seven: Staffing and Supporting the English Learner Program**

Recruiting, developing and retaining excellent educators is essential to ensure the EL Program successfully achieves the educational objectives of the program and the District. To ensure ELs are provided with an equal and equitable

education KSD employs highly qualified teachers and provides resources to support EL students and families. In order to hire qualified and certified teachers to serve our students, the District has expanded the recruitment area to include several surrounding states. The District recruiter actively seeks EL certified teachers when attending job fairs and when speaking to potential new teachers.

Ongoing professional development about the needs of English Learners is provided to staff at all levels including paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators. Content area teachers are given access to strategies for teaching ELs at school level Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meetings led by district staff and instructional coaches. District level training includes the following strategies for providing ELs access to challenging, grade-appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment and benefit from activities requiring them to think critically. Access to outside trainers such as consultants and professional trainers to build the teachers' foundation of skills, knowledge and expertise. KSD also strives to build capacity through supporting the following areas of essential knowledge for teachers of ELs: supporting oral language development, explicitly teaching academic English, and valuing cultural diversity.

## **Section Eight: English Learners and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**

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 would be to consult informally with the EL representative to request additional instructional strategies for teaching.

The EL representative might include the following:

1. Offer new suggestions;
2. Request to observe the student in the classroom; or
3. Check with the entire team of teachers to see if the student is struggling in more than one class.

If the student continues to struggle, the next option is to refer the student to the Teacher Support Team (TST) for possible intervention. It is essential that the EL representative 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 mainstream teachers' instructional techniques are known to be effective with ELs, as well as whether or not teachers have implemented the recommended EL instructional accommodations.

Tier 1 instruction will be effectively implemented for ELs by ensuring the following:

- Setting high, but reasonable instructional expectations based on data from the annual English Language Proficiency Test that provide instructional supports identified on the Language Service Plan to support increased proficiency in the four language domains
- Promoting language and vocabulary development through out the school day and in all content areas
- Scaffolding language and opportunities to respond. Scaffolding language may include paraphrasing key words, providing opportunities to extend answers, supporting language by using familiar synonyms and antonyms, reframing students' responses, confirming that aspects of an answer are correct, and providing language support to further explain concepts that are difficult to grasp.
- Providing opportunities for appropriate peer learning, including peer learning and small group instruction.

Effective Tier 2 Interventions for ELs by considering the following:

- Intensifying Instruction at Tiers 2 and 3 based on data from the annual English Language Proficiency Test to provide intensive instructional supports identified on the Language Service Plan with English proficiency in the four domains as a consideration
- Increasing instructional dosage which might include the following: group size, instructional period, frequency, and duration
- Utilizing evidence-based Interventions as determined by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC; [www.whatworks.ed.gov](http://www.whatworks.ed.gov)). This government agency has special review standards that consider effects on English language development, reading achievement and mathematics achievement of ELs.

## **Section Nine: Access to other Program Services**

ELs must not be denied access to programs due to language proficiency. ELs who meet criteria are eligible for specialized program services which might include the following: gifted education, advanced placement, dual credit and other advanced courses, special education services and services for homeless students.

### **Gifted Education**

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 bias-free and culturally equitable as possible.

**Advanced placement, dual credit and other advanced courses** ELs must also be provided with access to Advanced Placement, dual credit and other advanced courses. ELs must receive language support to assist them in accessing academic content, just as in other less accelerated courses.

### **ELs with Disabilities**

If an EL is suspected of having a disability, the school must evaluate the student promptly to determine if the EL has a disability and whether the student needs disability-related services. Disability evaluations may not be delayed because of a student's limited English proficiency or the student's participation in an EL program.

The school district must ensure that a student's special education evaluation is 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.

## **Section Ten: Ensuring Meaningful Communication/Connections with Parents**

KSD is committed to communicating successfully with Limited English Proficient parents and families of the students in our schools. Successful communication provides parents, guardians and families with the school-related information they need to make informed decisions about and to be helpful participants in their children's education. This includes communicating 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 and guardian permission for student participation in district or school activities, parent-teacher conferences, parent handbooks and gifted programs.

KSD will determine if parents and guardians have limited English proficiency and what the primary language is, and what their language needs are via the Home Language Survey. KSD will translate the Home Language Survey into languages that are common in the school and surrounding community.

KSD will provide trained and qualified interpreters and translators when necessary. These translators will be:

- Proficient in both English and the target language
- Have knowledge of specialized educational terms or concepts in both languages
- Trained in the role of interpreter or translator
- Trained in the ethics of interpreting and translating (especially maintaining student, family and staff confidentiality.)

Every effort is made to facilitate communication and to encourage parents to participate fully in the education of their child. Therefore, many district forms are available in our most common languages. Schools can utilize TransAct to access a collection of legally-reviewed parent notices in multiple languages ([www.TransACT.com](http://www.TransACT.com)). These collections are professionally translated into multiple languages and are updated in accordance with changing laws mandated by the *Office of Civil Rights and ESEA/ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act)*.

ESSA requires schools to conduct effective outreach to parents, guardians, and families of ELs, this includes outreach for regular meetings attended by non-EL families. Building strong relationships between families and schools is an essential first step to increase student achievement. These relationships develop over time and can be there are many ways families can support the learning and development of their children, for example by being involved in all aspects of the educational process and attending parent and family engagement activities) Efforts to encourage participation should foster relationships by inviting families to actively participate in all aspects of the school. This includes volunteering at all levels of parental engagement activities. Families should be encouraged to help their children integrate their cultural funds of knowledge into school assignments and extra curricular activities.

## **Section Eleven: English Learner Program Evaluation**

Student achievement data will be used to determine effectiveness and ensure compliance with state and federal reporting requirements. Data will be collected, analyzed, and used to strengthen the EL program and services as appropriate. Data points to be collected and used for evaluation may include the following:

- Scores on state assessments
- Scores on local assessments
- Scores on the annual English Language Proficiency test
- Retention rates
- Exit rates
- Graduation rates
- Participation in gifted and advanced courses
- Pre-K students indicating a second language on the Home Language Survey
- 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

The EL program evaluation will include longitudinal data that compares the performance of current ELs, former ELs, and students who are not ELs. The comprehensive and longitudinal evaluation will determine if ELs are meeting the College and Career Readiness Standards, participating in and performing comparably to non-EL peers, accessing the same curricular and extracurricular opportunities as their non-EL peers, and exiting the EL program at appropriate rates.

If evaluations show that the EL program is not effective, the District will make appropriate changes to strengthen the program and more effectively serve students.

Ongoing evaluation of the EL program to ensure both effectiveness and program compliance, incorporates analysis of student achievement data including the following:

- Scores on state and local assessments
- Scores on English Language Proficiency tests (including exit rates)
- Graduation rates
- Attendance rates
- Discipline rates
- EL participation in gifted and advanced courses
- EL participation rates in special education

It is the responsibility of the ESL Coordinator to guide the ongoing analysis of effectiveness as well as lead the end of year program evaluation process. As part of this ongoing evaluation, the ESL Coordinator will audit a minimum of 25% of the EL records for compliance in fall and spring. Results of the audit will be communicated to the principals and the Federal Programs Director.

The EL program summative evaluation will be completed in May of each year utilizing stakeholder surveys and review of data including items listed above to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the EL program. The results of this summative evaluation will be used by district level and school level leaders to make modifications if necessary to strengthen the program and serve students more effectively.

## Glossary

***Accommodation:*** In assessment, accommodations are tools that ensure that students can demonstrate what they know without lessening the expectations of the original assessment. Accommodations may be made to the presentation, response type, method of assessment or timing/scheduling of the assessment.

***Castaneda V. Pickard:*** On June 23, 1981, the Fifth Circuit Court issued a decision that is the seminal post-Lau decision concerning education of language minority students. The case established a three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of a district's program for ELs: (1) is the program based on an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or considered by experts as a legitimate educational strategy; (2) are the programs and practices, including resources and personnel, reasonably calculated to implement this theory effectively; and (3) does the LEA evaluate its programs and make adjustments where needed to ensure language barriers are actually being overcome? [648 F. 2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981)].

***Cultural Proficiency:*** Understanding that students come from a variety of ethnic, geographic, economic and religious backgrounds and how these diverse cultural and/or academic backgrounds impact the educational process. Educators who are culturally proficient are able to create welcoming, engaging environments for all students, have high expectations, and are dedicated to providing equitable education for all students.



**English As A Second Language (ESL) Students:** This term was often used to describe EL students during the No Child Left Behind era. This phrase has been generally replaced by English Learner (EL) with the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), but the terms are still sometimes used interchangeably.

**English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT):** The federally mandated assessment given to EL students annually to measure English language proficiency. The assessment is required to cover the four domains of language – reading, writing, listening and speaking. In Mississippi, EL students currently take the LAS Links assessment.

**English Learner (EL):** Anyone whose native language is not English, but who is in the process of learning English and who may benefit from various types of English language support programs. This term is used mainly in the United States to describe K-12 students who are enrolled in EL programs.

**Equal Education Opportunities Act Of 1974:** This civil rights statute prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunity to an individual based on his or her race, color, sex or national origin. The statute specifically prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunity by 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. [20 U.S.C. §1203(f)].

**Former English Learners:** students who were once ELs but have exited EL status after meeting established exit criteria.

**Home Language Survey (HLS):** Form completed by parents/guardians that gives information about a student's language background. Must be kept in the student's cumulative folder.

**Immigrant:** According to Title III of ESEA, an immigrant child is an individual who:

- Is aged 3-21
- Was not born in any state; and
- Has not been attending one or more schools in one or more states for more than 3 full academic years.

**Language Domains:** The four main subdivisions of language: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

**LAS Links:** The assessment used to identify and monitor the progress of EL students in Mississippi. The web-based assessment includes tests in listening, speaking, reading and writing, as required by federal guidelines.

**Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP):** An educational program means an instruction course: (a) in which a limited English proficient child is placed for the purpose of developing and attaining English proficiency, while meeting challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards; and (b) that may make instructional use of both English and a child's native language to enable the child to develop and attain English proficiency, and may include the English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports 4 40 participation of English proficient children if such course is designed to enable all participating children to become proficient in English and a second language.

**Language Service Plan (LSP):** An individual plan detailing the English language services that will be received by the EL student. The plan should be updated at least annually until the student exits EL status. Plans are developed by Student Evaluation Teams (SET), which should include, at the minimum, an EL teacher, general education teacher, a school administrator and a family representative. The team should meet at least quarterly.

***Lau V. Nichols:*** Class action lawsuit brought by parents of non-English-proficient Chinese students against the San Francisco Unified School District. In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled that identical education does not constitute equal education under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The court ruled that the district must take affirmative steps to overcome educational barriers faced by the non-English speaking Chinese students in the district. [414 U.S. 563 (1974)].

***Migrant:*** Refers to a child who is, or whose parent, spouse or guardian is, a migratory agricultural worker or migratory fisher and who, in the preceding 36 months, has moved from one school district to another to obtain or accompany the parent, spouse or guardian in order to obtain temporary or seasonal employment in the agricultural or fishing industry as a principle means of livelihood.

***Modification:*** Changes made to the core content, so that the learning objective may be different than for a non-EL student, with the purpose of making the core content more accessible to the EL student.

***Native Language:*** The first language learned in the home, or the home language.

***Scaffolding:*** Building on acquired skills and knowledge from level to level of language proficiency based on increased linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage and language control through the use of supports.

***Student Evaluation Team (SET):*** The group that collaborates to review data and develop the Language Service Plan. The team should be composed of teachers (including EL teachers), administrators, counselors, parents or guardians. The team should meet quarterly to evaluate student progress and make necessary adjustments.

## **English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports**

***Student With Limited Or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE):*** These are students who have not consistently attended school, most often due to unstable conditions in the country or region where they previously resided.

***TITLE I:*** Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act supports programs to assist economically disadvantaged students and students at risk of not meeting educational standards. The reauthorized Title I makes it clear that ELs are eligible for services on the same basis as other students. Additionally, accountability for serving ELs has shifted from Title III to Title I.

***TITLE III:*** Title III of ESSA ensures that ELs, including immigrant children and youth, develop English proficiency and meet the same academic content and academic achievement standards that other children are expected to meet.