

Current and Desired State of English as a Second Language (ESL) Programming in PPS



**Education Committee
April 4, 2017**

Current State and Desired State of ESL

Current State

- Increasing enrollment of English Learners (ELs) without a plan to address long term growth
- Lack of Standard of Service



Desired State

- Creation of ESL delivery model to reduce student travel, increase family engagement, and plan for greater EL numbers
- Consistent Standard of Service

Glossary

EL (English Learner): Refers to the student who has been assessed and qualifies for ESL instruction

Entry Level: Students who qualify for the maximum amount of ESL support daily.

ESL (English as a Second Language): Refers to the program in which English Learners are instructed in the use of the English language

Newcomer: An EL who has been in a U.S. school for less than one year.

Sheltered Instruction: An instructional program designed for students that teaches academic content while developing English language proficiency

Sheltered Instructional Observational Protocol (SIOP): A research-based instructional model that has proven effective in addressing the academic needs of English Learners

Students With Interrupted Formal Schooling (SIFE): Students who have had little, if any formal schooling prior to arrival in the U.S. The term may also refer to students who have had major interruption in their education process either in the U.S or a second country.

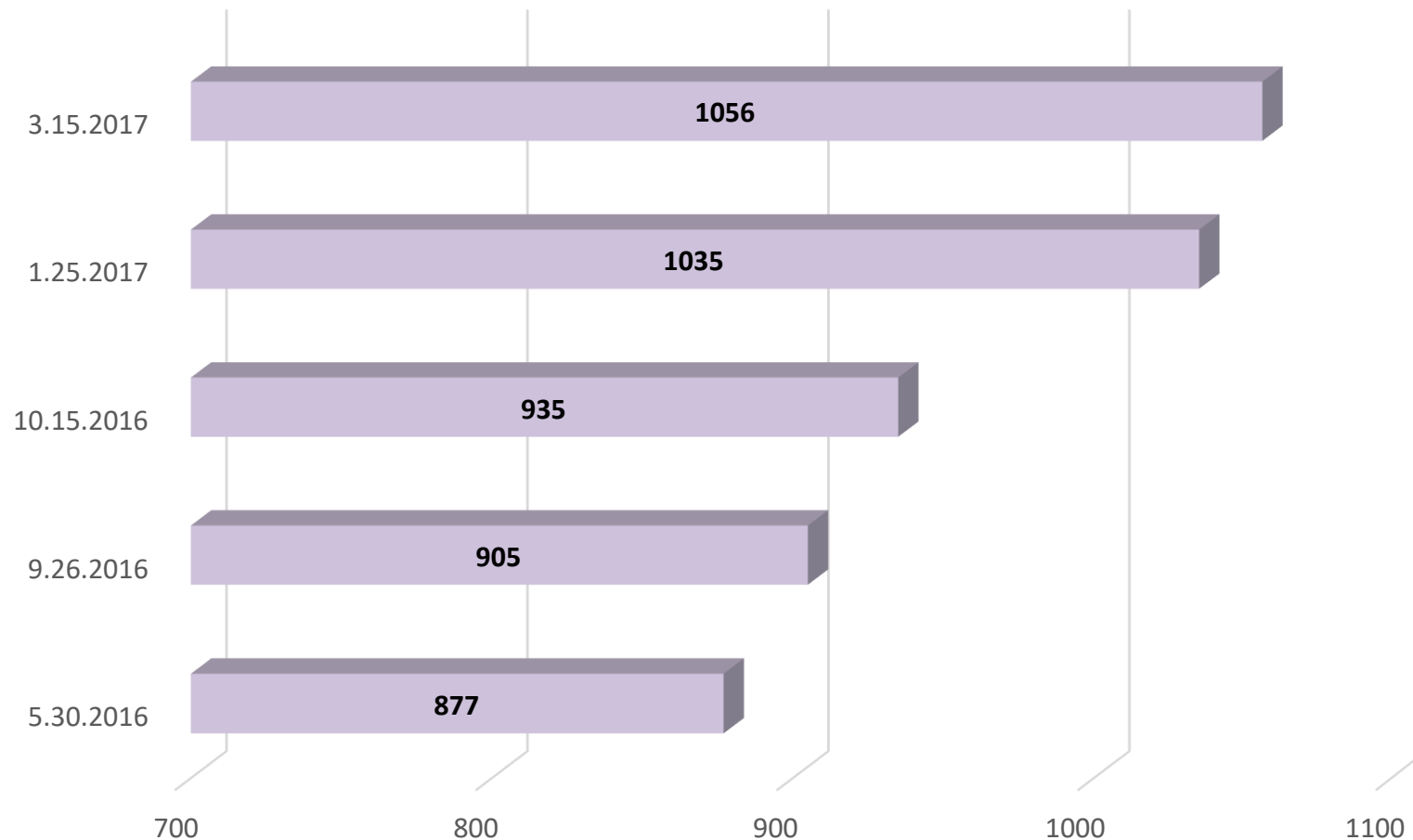
WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (w-APT): An English language proficiency "screening" test given to incoming students who may be designated as English Learners.

Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLS): A large-scale English language proficiency assessment given to Kindergarten through 12th graders who have been identified as ELs. It is given annually in WIDA Consortium member states to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English.

Current District ESL Practices

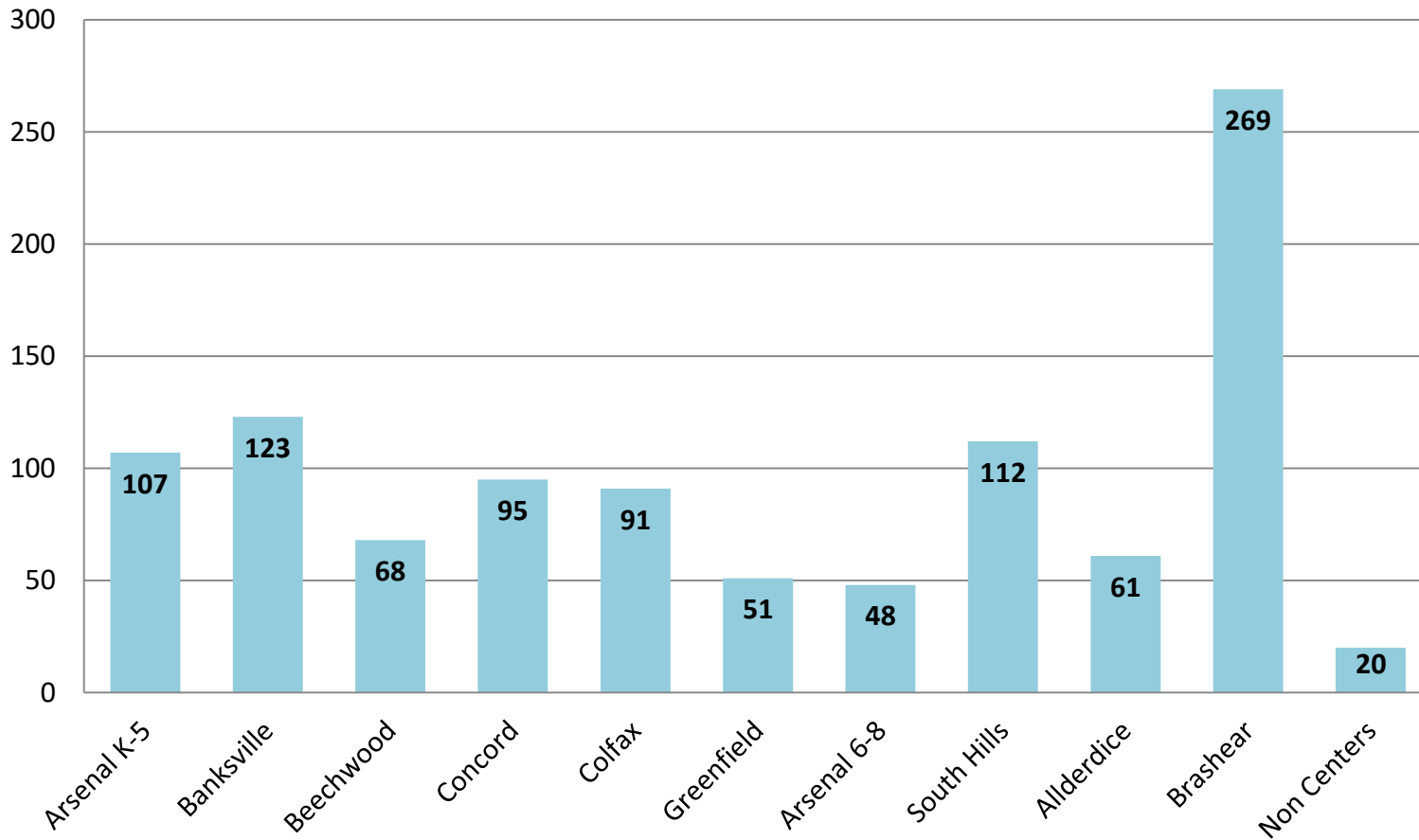
- All English Learners (ELs) meet the required state guidelines for ESL Instruction: 2–3 periods for Beginners, 1–2 periods for Intermediate, and 1–2 periods for Advanced
- All ten ESL Regional Centers have experienced growth in student numbers in 2016–2017
- Currently \$750,000 is being spent on transportation of ELs to Regional Centers up to 50 minutes away
- Select ESL Centers are running out of physical space or need additional teachers (Colfax, Banksville, Arsenal K–5) to support non-feeder pattern enrollment

Current ESL Growth in PPS



Current ESL Enrollment by School

2016-2017 Numbers of ELs at ESL Regional Centers



ESL Department: Community Relationships

- AJAPO
- Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh
- Casa San Jose
- Catholic Charities
- Jewish Family and Children's Services
- Latino Family Center
- Latino Parents United in Action
- Northern Area Refugee Resettlement
- Pittsburgh Refugee Collaborative
- Somali Bantu Community Association
- South Hills Interfaith Ministry
- Squirrel Hill Health Center
- Welcoming Pittsburgh Initiative

Response to CGCS Report

Specific ESL departmental responses to CGCS recommendations:

- Refocus Title III spending
- Strengthen ESL data and systems
- Redesign model delivery for ESL and sheltered instruction
- Increase family support
- Focus academic tracking of ELs
- More ELs in Gifted/Talented
- Increased ESL policy dissemination
- Instruction, instruction, instruction

Recommended Future ESL Model

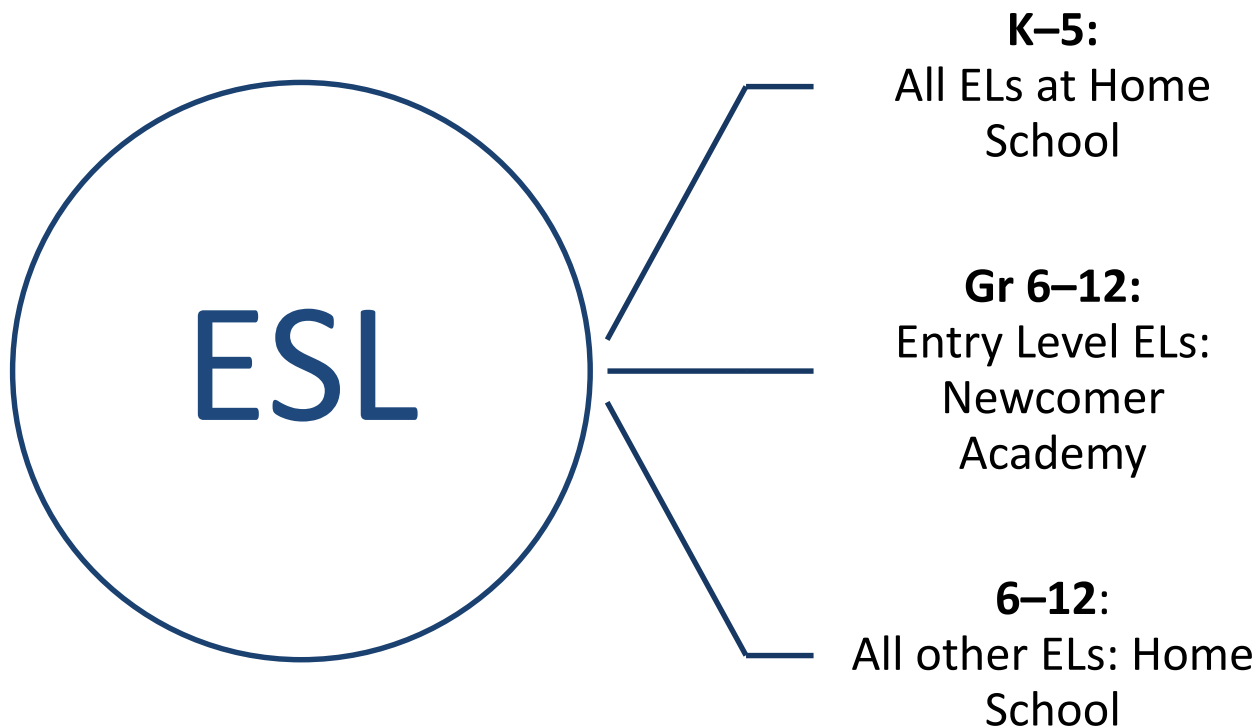
1. Create a 6–12 Newcomer Academy for Level 1 & 2 ELs
2. Offer ESL services in feeder schools for all other 6–12 ELs
3. Provide ESL services in home schools for K–5 ELs

This would mean:

- 225+ ELs at Newcomer Academy
- 800 ELs at their home schools receiving ESL services

Potential implementation window: 2 to 3 years

Revised ESL Delivery Models



Proposed Entry Requirements for Newcomer Center

- Score between a 1.0–1.9 on the w-APT screener or less than 2.0 on the WIDA-ACCESS 2.0
- Be enrolled in a U.S. school for less than two calendar years
- Must have parental permission to attend Newcomer Academy
- Be in grades 6–12

Options for K–5 Newcomers

- Most newcomer programs nationwide focus on middle and high school grade bands. This includes over 60 suburban and urban programs according to CAL (Center For Applied Linguistics).
- Proposed PPS option: Build full day newcomer programs within home elementary schools to reduce extra transitions and promote exposure to native English speaking peers. Establish specific entrance, exit, and length requirements and utilize SIOP methodology to increase content and English language outcomes for newcomers.
- Establish a scheduling ratio of *15 Newcomers :: 1 newcomer* ESL teacher. This is in addition to other proposed student to teacher ratios for ESL.

Proposed ESL Standard of Service

- 25 designated ELs per building: 1 K–5 ESL teacher
- 30 designated ELs per building: 6–12 ESL teacher
- 40 designated ELs per building: 1 ESL multilingual ESL EAIII

For Sheltered Instruction K–5:

- 12 ELs who are also SIFE: 1 ESL Math, Science, or Social Studies teacher based on school need.

Immediate Concerns For 2017–2018

- Not enough space, building capacity, or teachers to enroll new ELs at multiple ESL Regional Centers (Colfax, Banksville, and Arsenal K–5)
- Most pressing at Arsenal K-5 based on predicted enrollment patterns
- Banksville and Colfax can continue accepting ELs who live in the feeder pattern, but the schools currently don't have capacity for out of feeder students.

Suggested Option: Continue placing students at Arsenal and provide campus with additional support as needed

- Pros: Established ESL school, student and family familiarity, less transition
- Cons: Potential space and capacity issues continue

Revised Translation Model

ESL Bilingual Educational Assistants:

1. Currently, district level Arabic, Chinese, and Swahili support at BOE one day a week (and are in schools four days a week); in 2017-2018, all eleven Educational Assistants will provide translation and interpretation support in rotating schedule
2. Greater quality control, cost savings (\$67,500), and a more proactive approach to translation and interpretation
3. Additional systems to improve service and increase family engagement are in development.
4. Select freelance interpretation and translation will occur based on language and need.

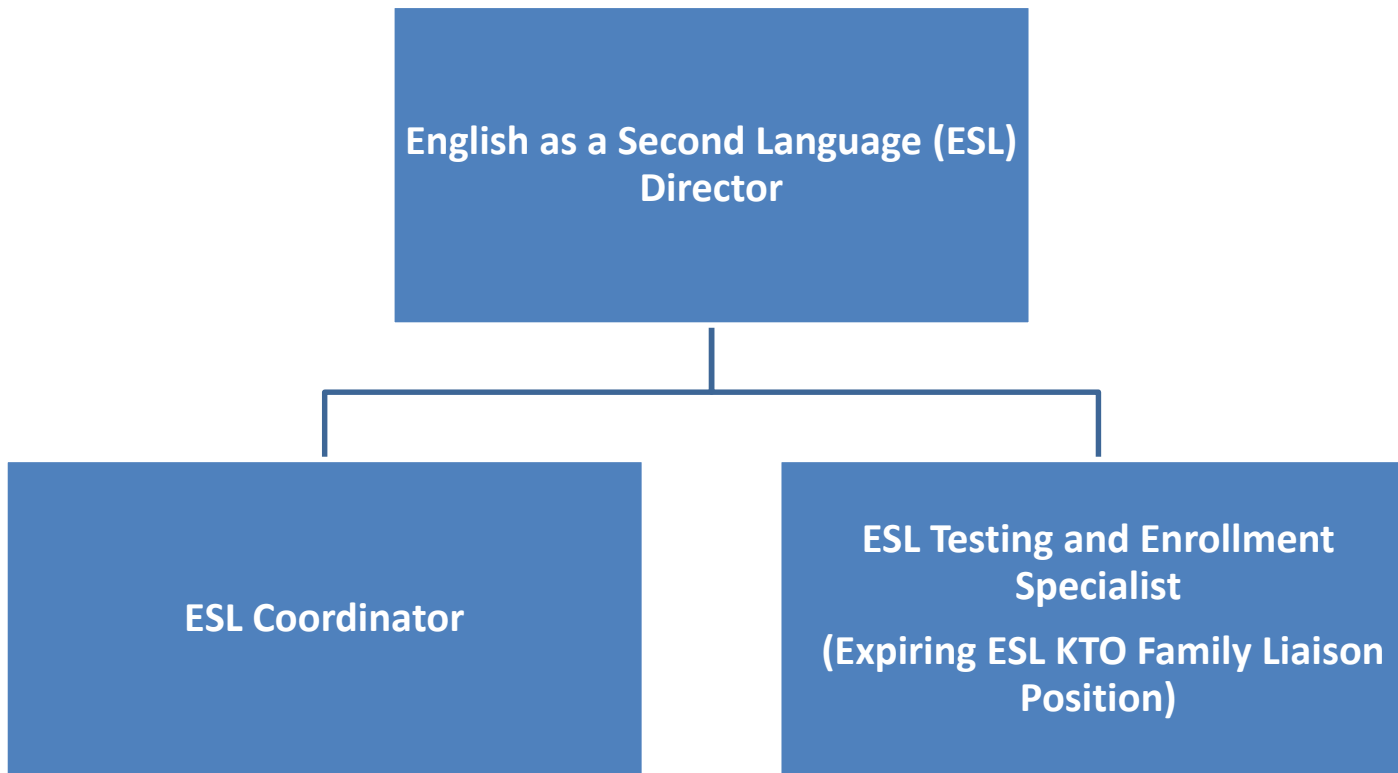
Thank You

**Thank you for your time and support of the ESL
department in Pittsburgh Public Schools.**

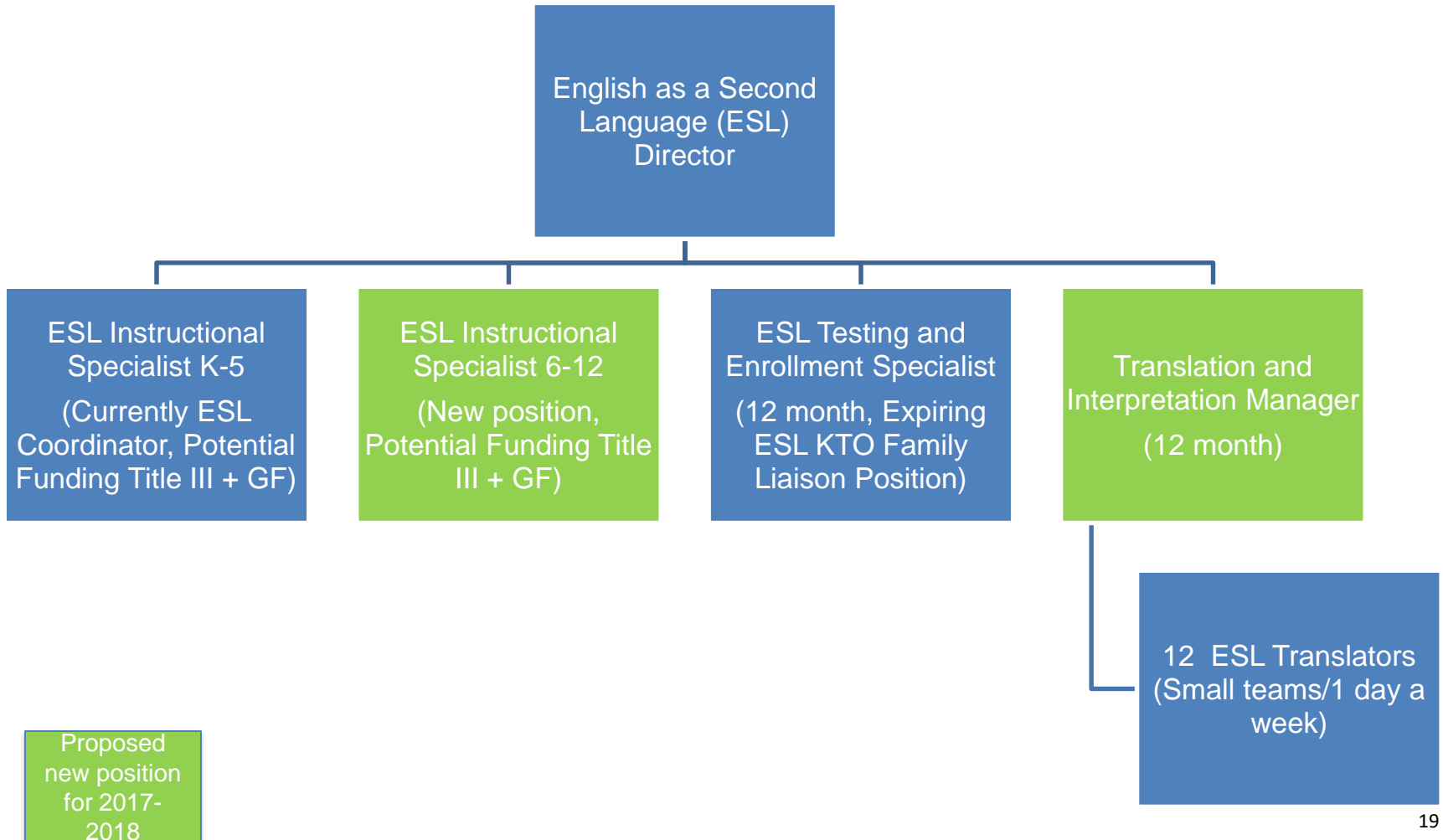
Questions/Comments?

Appendix

Current ESL Office Configuration



Proposed ESL Office Configuration (In Response to CGCS Report)



Proposed Position Overview

Translation and Interpretation Manager

- Manage daily, and longer term, translation and interpretation requests from schools, departments, and other district stakeholders
- Coordinate the work of the internal ESL interpreters daily and update the district bank of online translated documents

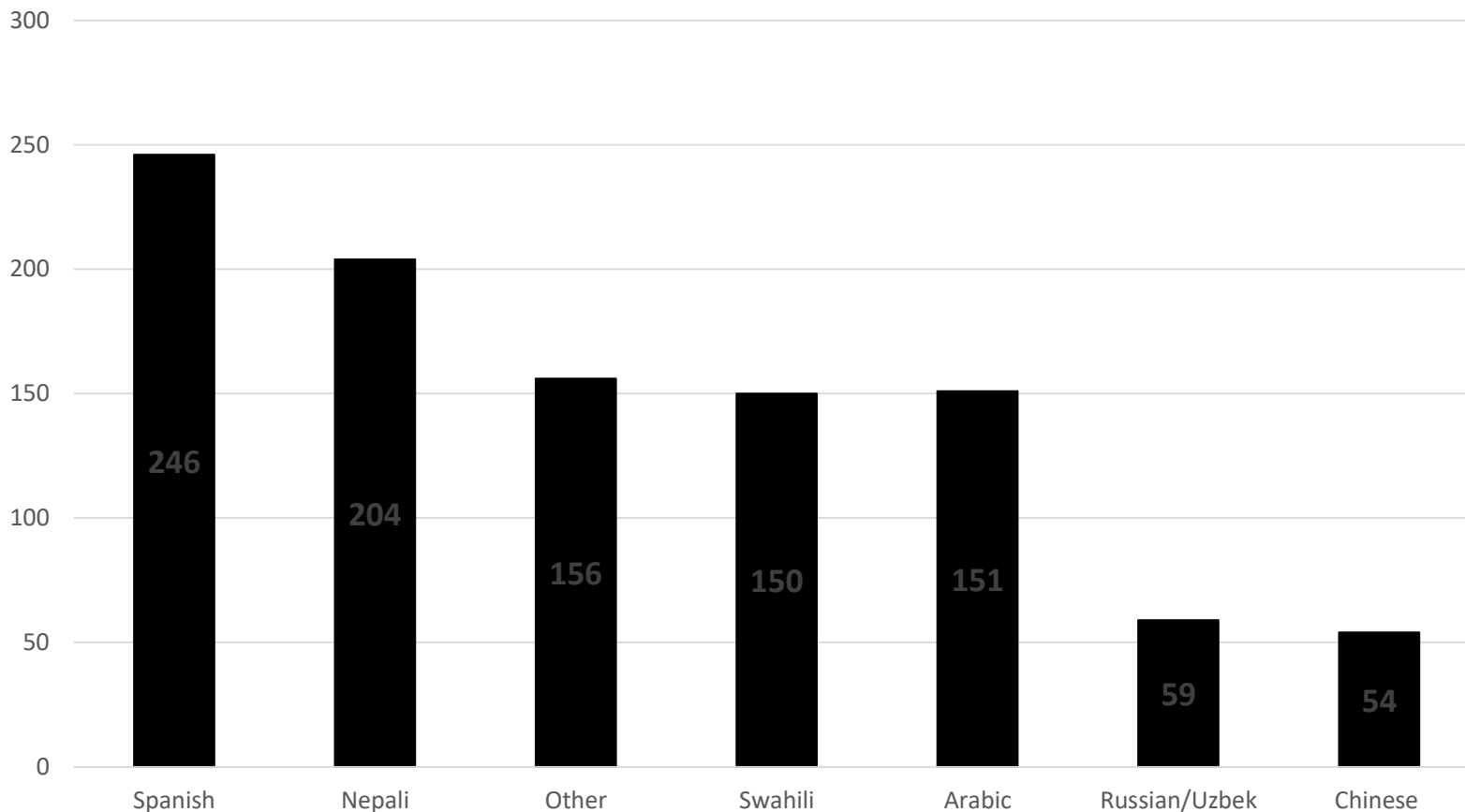
ESL Testing and Enrollment Specialist

- Provide transitional support to families into the American education system and appropriate ESL screening to determine English language proficiency

ESL Instructional Specialists (K–5 and 6–12)

- Assist ESL and mainstream teachers with improving the quality of ESL and mainstream instruction for the District's elementary and secondary English language learners
- Provide appropriate professional development, support with master scheduling, and aid with other instructional needs

Languages Spoken By ELs in PPS



Note: Other languages include Burmese, Karen, French, Somali, Farsi, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Japanese, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, et al.

Considerations

Pros For Newcomer Center

- Focused and concentrated instructional and transitional support for Limited Formal Schooling and Newcomer ELs 6–12
- Opportunity to smoothly transition to American educational system
- Smaller class sizes in less intimidating setting
- Reduced transportation costs
- Extensive multilingual support for families and students
- Potential job training and transitioning for older ELs (over age 18)
- Graduation rates for SIFEs wouldn't be attributed to other high schools
- Concentrated family support
- Could contain a district Welcome Center for families/testing/enrollment

Considerations

Cons for Newcomer Center

- Students not in neighborhood schools
- Potential travel times
- Challenges for space in centralized part of the city
- Out of feeder transport still needed

Wonderings/Comments

- Families would always maintain the right to attend their home school for ESL.
- High level of fluidity with students able to attend their home school based on language acquisition and academic progress.
- Possibly have a newcomer session (nine weeks) for all new English Learners.
- Would need full school staffing.

Rationale and Research For 6–12 Newcomer Center

1. English Learners who complete newcomers programs and transition to mainstream classes have greater academic achievement (Sonoma County Public Schools, CA)
2. It may take a student with interrupted or no formal schooling 4–10 years to become proficient in content areas (Thomas and Collier)
3. A newcomer center serves as a “cultural shock absorber” and allows for students to gain confidence, build friendships, and learn about the complex American education system (Friendlander)
4. Dropout rates may be reduced due to newcomer centers; Peekskill City School District (NY) saw a 1% decrease in dropout rates the same year their Newcomer Program began (Wilson, Colleen)
5. Can create and strengthen valuable partnerships with parents, community organizations, etc. (Chang)

Pros/Cons of Proposed K–5 Model

Pros:

- Minimal transitions for K–5 Newcomers
- Close proximity to school for families
- Opportunities for greater exposure to native English speaking peers

Cons:

- Planning for small EL population with mixed proficiency levels. (e.g., What happens if there is one newcomer in a school with six intermediate students?)

Research Foundations for K-5 ELs

- K–5 ESL should be a gradual transition from pull out to push in support within a co-teaching model
- Both English language and academic skills should be taught simultaneously (i.e., CALLA or SIOP models) in both push-in and pull out ESL scenarios (Council of Great City Schools)
- A newcomer program should be flexible and last no more than two years maximum (Center for Applied Linguistics)
- Districts of comparable size offer ESL at home schools and ESL Regional Centers dependent on district philosophy
- Most newcomer programs at elementary level are from grades 3–5
- When instruction fails to meet the linguistic, cultural, socio-emotional, and academic needs of ELs in elementary school, the lack of progress can lead to long term ELs in secondary schools (Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures)

What's Working In Other Districts?

Based on the research of Deborah J. Short, other districts with Newcomer Centers have seen success in the following areas:

- Flexible scheduling
- Careful staffing plus targeted professional development
- Basic literacy and initial content-area instruction
- Literacy development materials for adolescents and reading interventions adapted for English learners
- Doubling up courses (e.g., ESL study skills with ESL 1)
- More time for instruction and support (e.g., after school, before school, summer, Saturdays)
- Connections with families and social services
- Diagnostics and monitoring, including better English language proficiency tests
- Transition practices (shadowing, auditing, teacher input, committee reviews, benchmarks)
- Options and advocacy for high school credits (e.g., LUCHA, credit recovery)

Challenges In Other Districts?

Based on the research of Deborah J. Short, other districts with Newcomer Centers have noted challenges in the following areas:

- Meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP) in separate newcomer centers
- Testing newcomers in English before they have developed much proficiency
- Keeping high school newcomers in school
- Closing education gaps
- Graduating students in 4 years as per federal regulations
- Dealing with family reunification and post-traumatic stress
- Providing special education services
- Evaluating long-term effects of the program

Potential Academic Placement, Progress, and Exit Measures

Entry Measures

- **English Language Proficiency:** WIDA Screener
- **Content Areas:** Math Inventory, Phonics Inventory, Reading Inventory, Fast Math

Progress Measures

- **English Language Proficiency:** Inside (6–8) and Edge (9–12) unit assessments; WIDA MODEL scores
- **Content Areas:** Fast Math unit assessments; modified science and social studies unit assessments

Exit Measures

- **English Language Proficiency:** growth of one proficiency level on WIDA ACCESS 2.0
- **Content Areas:** Fast Math assessments, curriculum assessments
- **Other:** Teacher recommendation, portfolio review, more than two years at Newcomer Academy

Other Comparable District Models

Name	ESL School Options	Total ELs
Cincinnati Public Schools	ESL at home schools (K–12)	3500
Cleveland Public Schools	ESL Regional Centers + K–12 Newcomer Center	3750
Buffalo Public Schools	ESL at home schools + 9–12 Newcomer Center	6000
Lancaster Public Schools	ESL at home schools (K–12)	1900
Newport News Public Schools	ESL(K-5) at home schools; Gr.2–5 Newcomer Center; ESL Regional Centers 6–12	1200

Examples of Newcomer Schools

- Allentown: Grades 7–12 Newcomer Academy (68 students)
http://www.wfmz.com/news/lehigh-valley/refugees-adapt-to-america-with-help-of-newcomer-academy_20160526191930703/17733139
- Buffalo: Grades 7–12 Newcomer Academy (240 students)
<https://buffalonews.com/2016/03/21/buffalo-schools-pathway-programs-target-new-immigrants-nontraditional-students/>
- Greensboro, NC: Grades 3–12 Newcomer Academy (260 students)
http://www.greensboro.com/news/local_news/newcomers-school-bridges-language-gap-among-guilford-students/article_8a0e83a2-4dad-11e5-904c-83b15803d80e.html

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