



# Maritime Academy Charter School

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## **English Language Learner Policy (ELL)**

**2025-2026**

Maritime Academy Charter School is dedicated to providing an excellent education for all enrolled cadets. As a part of our enrollment process, parents are asked if their child has a first language, other than English. If so, cadets are screened using the state mandated WIDA (formerly “WorldClass Instructional Design and Assessment”) screener tool. Upon completion of the screener, parents are notified if their child is eligible for the ELL program. At that time, parents may choose to accept placement into this program or opt out.

Identification, assessment, and placement of ELLs will be completed within the first 30 days of school or within 14 days of enrollment if the student enrolls after the first day of school. All records of assessment and placement will be kept in students’ files. Staff will be notified of students’ ESL placements as they are enrolled.

The school provides non-English or limited English Language Learners (ELL) with English language instruction and cultural orientation. Our ELL program is designed to improve English language proficiency in the areas of Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing. Cadets receive either small group instruction or in-classroom support, dependent on their level of need, by a certified ESL teacher. Additionally, the ESL teacher works with the classroom teachers in providing supports and modifications for the cadet. All instruction is completed mixed classes with English only support.

An English Language Learner (ELL) student may not be retained in a grade due to limited English proficiency (as assessed by the annual English proficiency test – WIDA) in the areas of Reading, Speaking, Writing, and Listening.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this program is to help ELL students to attain English language proficiency to enable them to succeed in school and in the community and acquire language proficiency in the areas addressed by the **ELD (“English Language Development”) Standards**:

#### *Pennsylvania ELD Standards:*

- Standard 1 - English language learners communicate in English for social and instructional purposes within the school setting.

- Standard 2 - English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Language Arts.
- Standard 3 - English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Mathematics.
- Standard 4 - English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Science.
- Standard 5 - English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of Social Studies.

***Authority: Title 22 Section 4.26 Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981***

MACS shall provide a program for each student whose dominant language is not English for the purpose of facilitating the student’s achievement of English proficiency and the academic standards. The program shall meet the three-pronged test of compliance: (1) sound research-based educational theory, (2) sufficient resources staffed by appropriate personnel, and (3) periodic program evaluation.

ELL is a supplemental course that will be available to all identified students as determined by appropriate assessments in consideration of multiple criteria. It will be provided to all identified students until English proficiency is achieved.

***Authority: Title 22 Section 4.13 (c) (7) 24P.S. 12-1205.1 and 49.16-17***

English Language Learners participate in annual state assessments with allowable accommodations annually. Students are graded using the same grading system as other students. Each year, our ELL cadets take the state mandated WIDA test to determine growth in the areas of Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing. Parents are notified if their child will need continued instruction or if they have attained proficiency and may be exited from the program. WIDA is an English language proficiency assessment given to new students in grades K–12 to help educators identify whether they are English Language learners. It is a flexible, on-demand assessment that can be administered at any time during the school year. Students are then monitored, by the ESL teacher, for four years following the cadet’s exit from the program.

**Process Implemented for Reclassification for ELLs - Taking the ACCESS for ELLs**

An ELL must demonstrate the ability to access challenging academic content and interact with other students and teachers both academically and socially in an English language setting in order to be considered for reclassification. Evidence of this ability is demonstrated by the student on the annual English language proficiency assessment, ACCESS for ELLs, and gathered by teachers using standardized language use inventories. Using the following system, the ACCESS and the language use inventory together produce a single score. If that score exceeds the state-defined threshold, then the student is eligible to be reclassified.

Students exit the ELL program based on Pennsylvania exit criteria published by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Students are monitored for two years after exiting ELL using a review of grades, school-wide assessments, PSSA/Keystone, and teacher observations. MACS is required to continue reporting ELLs to the state for an additional two years after the active monitoring

period. MACS, however, is not required to actively monitor the progress and academic achievement of ELLs in the general education program during these years. At the end of the fourth year after reclassification, ELLs are coded as Former ELLs – no longer monitored for the remainder of their time in school.

### **ELs with Disabilities - Taking the ACCESS for ELLs**

English Language Learners, who are also students with a disability, are eligible for special education supports. A student's individual supports are determined at an IEP team meeting taking into consideration the child's unique strengths and instructional support needs. An ELL with a disability who has not met the criteria outlined above may be considered for reclassification if:

1. The student has an IEP, AND
2. The student has been continuously enrolled in an LIEP for at least four years, AND
3. The student's overall composite proficiency level score on the ACCESS for ELLs has not increased by more than 10% between any two years or total over the three most recent testing cycles, AND
4. The school has documented evidence that the student has been provided with the appropriate level of language support, including ELD instruction, throughout his/her enrollment in the LIEP ("Language Instruction Educational Plan"), AND
5. A school-based team recommends reclassification.

For students who cannot complete all four domains of the test as a direct documented result of their disability, an overall composite proficiency level can be calculated with fewer than all four domains by using the tool provided on the Reclassification, Monitoring, and Redesignation of ELs webpage.

Documented evidence can include schedules indicating ELD instructional times, specific language supports used, ELD curriculum indicating areas of language instruction covered, language use evaluations based on WIDA rubrics or PA reclassification rubrics, modifications made to assessments, IEP addressing ELD instruction or language needs, etc.

### **Process for Monitoring of ELs Post Program Exit**

Students who exit the LIEP are actively monitored for two years post reclassification. Monitoring takes place at the end of each academic quarter and informally throughout the school year. Measures of student progress include grades in major subject areas (English, Math, Social Studies, and Science), standardized test scores, and teacher observations.

Quarterly monitoring report forms are provided from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and used as guidance for monitoring student academic achievement and progress after reclassification. Teachers in the four major subject areas will evaluate and comment on the progress of each reclassified EL each quarter for a period of two years. The completed report form is

evaluated by an ELL professional in collaboration with other administrators and educators and must be maintained in the student record folder.

The primary purpose of the quarterly monitoring form is to monitor a former ELL's academic achievement after reclassification and to ensure that he/she is continuing to progress and be successful without added support in the area of English language development.

If it is determined during the active monitoring phase that an ELL is struggling academically as a result of persistent language barriers, then the ELL coordinator, ELL teacher and guidance counselor will meet along with two major subject area teachers to discuss whether the student is struggling as a result of persistent language acquisition needs and not other reasons such as academic needs. If language acquisition needs are determined to be the reason then the student will be reclassified as an active EL and re-enrolled in the LIEP. Former ELs who have been redesignated as active ELs must meet the state-required criteria to be reclassified as FELs. In cases such as these, the monitoring process starts over from year 1 upon the second reclassification.

*Authority NCLB Title I 20 U.S.C 6301 et seq.*

**Policy Statements**

Maritime Academy Charter School is committed to a policy of equal educational opportunity. Accordingly, the school admits students, conducts all educational programs, activities, and employment practices without regard to race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or any other legally protected classification.

Students shall have access to and should be encouraged to participate in all academic and extracurricular activities available to MACS students. ELLs can participate in any extracurricular activity MACS has to offer. Being classified as an ELL does not prohibit them from participating in any school activity.