

## **English Language Learner (ELL) Plan River Valley School District**

The River Valley School District is committed to educate and meet the needs of all students; regardless of their primary language or cultural heritage. This plan is designed with procedures that are necessary in the enrollment and education of English Language Learners (ELLs) who are being or have been enrolled in the district. It adheres to the Pennsylvania's Department of Education and the Title 22, Chapter 4, Section 4.26 of Curriculum Regulations.

### **Program Goals**

- Develop competency in comprehending oral and written English and in speaking and writing English.
- Develop learning strategies across all content areas.
- Integrate language, cognitive, and academic instruction to enable students to develop English language proficiency and content area skills.
- Orient students and parents to American culture, so that they may participate in school and community life.
- Ensure that students retain pride in their culture.
- Ensure that all staff in the district assume responsibility for the acculturation and instruction of ESL students.

### **Language Development Standards for English Language Learners K – 12:**

The Pennsylvania Department of Education Language Proficiency Standards and Domains for English Language Learners PreK– 12, as stated below are the core of the program:

#### **Standard 1:**

*English language learners communicate in English for SOCIAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL purposes within the school setting.*

Domain: LISTENING – process, understand, interpret, and evaluate spoken language in a variety of situations.

Domain: SPEAKING – engage in oral communication in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Domain: READING – process, interpret, and evaluate written language, symbols, and text with understanding and fluency.

Domain: WRITING – engage in written communication in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences.

#### **Standard 2:**

*English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for*

*academic concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of LANGUAGE ARTS.*

Domain: LISTENING – process, understand, interpret, and evaluate spoken language in a variety of situations.

Domain: SPEAKING – engage in oral communication in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Domain: READING – process, interpret, and evaluate written language, symbols, and text with understanding and fluency.

Domain: WRITING – engage in written communication in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **Standard 3:**

*English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of MATHEMATICS.*

Domain: LISTENING – process, understand, interpret, and evaluate spoken language in a variety of situations.

Domain: SPEAKING – engage in oral communication in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Domain: READING – process, interpret, and evaluate written language, symbols, and text with understanding and fluency.

Domain: WRITING – engage in written communication in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences

### **Standard 4:**

*English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of SCIENCE.*

Domain: LISTENING – process, understand, interpret, and evaluate spoken language in a variety of situations.

Domain: SPEAKING – engage in oral communication in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Domain: READING – process, interpret, and evaluate written language, symbols, and text with understanding and fluency.

Domain: WRITING – engage in written communication in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **Standard 5:**

*English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of SOCIAL STUDIES.*

Domain: LISTENING – process, understand, interpret, and evaluate spoken language in a variety of situations.

Domain: SPEAKING – engage in oral communication in a variety of situations for a variety of

purposes and audiences.

Domain: READING – process, interpret, and evaluate written language, symbols, and text with understanding and fluency.

Domain: WRITING – engage in written communication in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences

### **Instructional Model:**

The instructional model utilized to deliver these services is commonly referred to as “*Pull-Out.*” In this model the language of instruction is English. English is adapted to individual students’ proficiency level and supplemented by gestures and visual aids. Students leave their English-only classroom to receive ESL instruction focused on grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills. The hours of instructional “*pull-out*” time will be determined by the PA English Language Proficiency Standards and the following guidelines will be considered:

- **Entering (Level 1)/Beginning (Level 2):** 2 Hours
- **Developing (Level 3):** 1-2 Hours
- **Expanding (Level 4):** 1 Hour
- **Bridging (Level 5):** Up to 1 hour or support dictated by student need

### **Collaboration:**

Building level administration arranges collaboration meetings between the ESL instructor and staff who would have an educational interest in the programming for an ELL. The purpose of this formal planning time is to discuss goals and student progress as well as to provide consistency in the program delivery. Ongoing informal exchange of student progress and their individual needs may occur through electronic and incidental meetings.

### **Process for Identification of ELLs:**

Upon registration in the River Valley School District, a Home Language Survey (HLS) will be completed for all Pre-K through grade 12 students as the first step in identifying a potential ELL (English Language Learner) student. (\*Pre-K students are not addressed until entry into Kindergarten, but noted for possible services.)

### **For Affirmative Responses to the HLS:**

Parents of grade K-12 students who answer “yes” to any of the three HLS questions and/or meet the definition of ELL, are advised that the student will need an assessment of English proficiency (W-APT) to determine eligibility and placement in the district’s ELL Program UNLESS they meet the criteria outlined in the next section. If those criteria are not met, the guidance counselor informs the parents of the need for a language assessment. The student is then referred to the designated ELL assessor at the school. A standard letter is sent to parents with the results of the WIDA exam as well as the recommendation for placement within the ESL program at the district. This information is sent by the ESL coordinator.

**Criteria that Precludes W-APT Assessment:**

Students should meet two of the following three criteria to be exempted from a formal ESL assessment. Student records for children from other states or school systems can be considered as part of the criteria.

- 1) Final grades of B or better in core subject areas (Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies)
- 2) Scores on district-wide assessments that are comparable to the Basic performance level on the PSSA
- 3) Scores of Basic in Reading, Writing and Math on PSSA or an equivalent assessment from another state

**Additional Information for Student Identification:**

- Newly enrolling students without academic records must be assessed for their ELP .
- LEAs must use the WIDA ACCESS PLACEMENT TEST (W- APT), which is aligned to the required annual State ELP assessment, ACCESS for ELLs, to assess students for placement in language instructional programs for ELLs.
- LEAs may choose to use other formal, standardized ELP assessments for additional information BUT identification and placement must be based on the W- APT and the multiple criteria outlined above.
- The W- APT results are one of the indicators for placement in ESL /Bilingual programs and must be used in combination with the above multiple criteria, if available, to determine placement in an ESL program.
- Educators must take into consideration the State's ELP levels described within the PA ELPS standards when placing students in an instructional program for ELLs.
- Instructional placement of ELLs must be age and grade appropriate. Additionally, ELLs must be given equal access to all educational programs, opportunities, and extracurricular activities in the same manner as for all students.
- Parent permission to assess IS NOT REQUIRED.
- Parent notification of student assessment results and placement in an ESL /Bilingual program is required.

**Parent(s)' Opt Out Options:**

According to 22 Pa. Code § 4.4(d)(3) of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education Regulations require school entities to adopt policies that permit parents to have their children excused from specific instruction within the limited scope described below.

*The right to have their children excused from specific instruction that conflicts with their religious beliefs, upon receipt by the school entity of a written request from the parents or guardians.*

**Parental Involvement:**

The ELL teacher notifies parents by letter when their child enters the ELL program. Parents are then invited to attend an ELL open house which is held in the fall of each school year. ELL teachers schedule parent conferences as needed or sit in on conferences with regular content area teachers by request. Phone contacts are often made in lieu of conferences. Some parents are also notified of progress via school email. When the student exits the program, the dates and status are logged into the district ELL database and the parents are notified. Translation services will be provided as needed.

### **ELLs with Disabilities:**

ELLs may be eligible for Special Education. The IEP team must consider the need for ESL instruction as they address all students' needs related to the provision of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). In determining the student's needs, IEP teams must consider both special education services and ESL instruction simultaneously, as appropriate. All procedures for the screening, evaluation, IEP, and the provision of services and/or instruction will be in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and PA Chapter 14 Regulations.

- **The IEP team**

The IEP team for an ELL with disabilities will include an ESL professional familiar with the student's language needs as well as the nature of his/her disability. If a student is identified as an ELL, then the IEP team will check the Limited English proficiency under special considerations on Part I of the IEP. Any special considerations identified will be addressed in the IEP.

- **The academic program**

ESL /Bilingual programs are identified in The Pennsylvania School Code of 1949, Chapter 4, Section 4.26, as general curriculum. The academic program for an ELL with a disability must consider ESL just as it must consider any other general curriculum services available to non-disabled students. Programmatic decisions regarding ELLs with disabilities should be made by the IEP team with appropriate representation. It is not appropriate for an ELL with a disability to be denied access to general curriculum including an English language instructional program as defined above. Special education services do not replace an English language instructional program.

### **Annual English language proficiency assessment:**

Both Titles I and III of NCLB require LEAs and state educational agencies (SEAs) to provide an annual assessment of English language proficiency for all ELLs in the state enrolled in public schools in grades Kindergarten through twelve in the domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This includes students with disabilities. Even though ELLs with disabilities may always achieve depressed scores in particular domains of language as a result of their specific

disability, they must be given the opportunity to demonstrate their level of proficiency in English and be included in the annual state ELP assessment in all domains.

### **Participation in assessments:**

ELLs with disabilities participate in all assessments, including the annual state ELP assessment and PSSA (or PASA , if appropriate) in accordance with 34 CFR § 300.160. Participation in state and local assessments is documented in Part III of the IEP. An ELL student with a disability may participate in assessments through the use of one or more state-approved accommodations appropriate for his/her disability.

### **Assessment accommodations:**

The IEP team, with appropriate representation, may make decisions regarding assessment accommodations for ELLs with disabilities as they would for any student with a disability. The following rules govern assessment accommodations for ELLs:

- Accommodations must not invalidate the results of the assessment.
- Accommodations may be used for the entire assessment or only for part/parts of the assessment.
- Determinations of any accommodations used must be:
  - based on a student's disability,
  - made by the student's IEP team,
  - properly documented in the student's IEP, and
  - properly coded on the assessment.

### **Accommodation Guidelines:**

- For PSSA accommodations guidelines, reference the appropriate documents on the following website:  
[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/testing\\_accommodations\\_security/7448](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/testing_accommodations_security/7448)
- For WIDA ACCESS for ELLs® accommodations guidelines, refer to the information contained on the following website:  
<http://wida.wceruw.org/assessment/ACCESS/accommodations.aspx>

### **ELLs with Giftedness:**

ELLs may be eligible for Gifted Education. Determination will be based on the district-approved gifted screening and eligibility determination process. The process ensures that intervening factors that might mask giftedness are identified and addressed. Refer to the Gifted Programming on the Blairsville-Saltsburg district website.

### **Grading of ELLs:**

ELLs must be graded using the same grading system as all other students. It is important that student content knowledge is what is being assessed however, and not their limited proficiency. Content area teachers should work with the ELL teacher to better understand their level of proficiency and capabilities.

### **Area Career and Technical Centers (CTCs):**

ELLs may not be denied access to participate in programs at CTCs based solely on English language proficiency. ELLs participating in vocational programs must be provided ESL instruction appropriate to their level of proficiency and properly adapted content-area instruction. Comprehensive AVTS/ CTC schools are responsible for providing ESL programs and staffing for students identified as ELLs as outlined in this document.

### **Annual Assessment of ELLs:**

All ELL students are tested annually to measure progress and readiness for exit from the ELL program. A record of all test results and progress reports is maintained by the ELL teacher. All identified students must take the PDE mandated *ACCESS for ELL's* WIDA Test unless they are in the monitoring stage. Depending on their date of enrollment, all ELL students are expected to participate in their grade level standardized testing. The PSSA/Keystone accommodations allowable for ELLs are published annually by PDE.

### **Process for Exiting ELLs:**

Pennsylvania's required exit criteria will be used when exiting ELLs from the language instructional program. Students may not be exited from the language instructional program based only on their oral proficiency; proficiency in academic reading and writing must also be assessed. These criteria can be found on PDE and are as follows:

### **Exit Criteria:**

In order to meet the required state exit criteria for Pennsylvania's English language instructional programs for ELLs, LEAs must use **both of the required exit criteria** listed below. In addition, LEAs must ensure that students meet **one of the two additional exit criteria** provided below to exit from an English language instructional program:

- **Required Exit Criteria:**

1. Score of BASIC on the annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA).

### **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:**

- For students transferring from other states, out-of-state academic achievement assessment results may be considered when the academic proficiency level is comparable to BASIC on the PSSA.
  - For students that are in a grade that is not assessed with the PSSA, LEA's must use each of the remaining criteria listed below to exit students.
2. Scores of 5.0 on a Tier C ACCESS for ELLs assessment (*see Items A and B below for cutoff score flexibility*)
    - A. Following the scoring criteria in the table below, the W-APT may be administered between April and June to students who scored below the minimum cutoff for program exit on the January administration of the ACCESS in order to demonstrate sufficient progress to justify exit.

*NOTE: The W-APT may ONLY be administered to a student **once** in any school year.*

<b><u>Grade Level</u></b>	<b><u>ACCESS Score</u></b>	<b><u>Required W-APT Scores*</u></b>
1-5	4.6-4.9	5.0 in each domain
6-8	4.7-4.9	5.0 in each domain
9-12	4.8-4.9	5.0 in each domain

\* *A student must score 5.0 in each domain (listening, speaking, reading and writing). A composite proficiency score will not be used.*

- B. A score of **PROFICIENT** on the reading PSSA can be used along with all other required criteria outlined in this policy to justify exit for students who achieve a composite proficiency score of 4.5 to 4.9 on the January administration of the ACCESS. In this case, W-APT scores are not necessary to demonstrate progress from the time of ACCESS administration to the end of the school year.

**Additional Exit Criteria:**

1. Final grades of C or better in core subject areas (Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies).
2. Scores on district-wide assessments that are comparable to the BASIC performance level on the PSSA.

**Monitoring of ELLs After Program Exit:**

Monitoring is required for two years after a student exits an ESL/Bilingual program and appropriate records of student progress must be maintained.

Monitoring may include any or all of the following:

- Periodic review of grades
- Local assessments
- Required state assessments
- Teacher observation
- Teachers may offer support to monitored students as they would for any student seeking additional assistance with classroom work, instruction, or assessment.
- Monitoring is NOT an extension of the language instructional program.
- Students who are monitored CANNOT be counted as ELLs in any state or federal data collection systems for the purpose of acquiring state or federal funding.

Monitoring guidance and forms can be found on the PDE website.

### **Professional Development:**

All LEAs with ELLs enrolled must offer staff development related to ESL for all LEA personnel as part of the Professional Development Act 48 Plan.

### **Program Evaluation**

The ESL program will be evaluated yearly by a committee made up of the ESL teacher, the program administrator, a building principal, and a school psychologist or guidance counselor, and a mainstream teacher. The formal evaluation will examine and make recommendations regarding the following:

- Curriculum goals and objectives, evaluated according to needs
- The rate of students' progress toward full proficiency in English
- Students' progress in curricular areas measured using tests, portfolios, standardized tests, and performance assessments
- Program effectiveness in regard to identification, assessment process, exiting, monitoring, staffing, parental notifications, and adequacy of facilities and instructional materials
- Whether ELLs are able to participate successfully in the full curriculum, as determined by graduation rates, scholastic achievement, awards, and honors in sports and other extracurricular activities
- Whether ELLs have access to all district programs, including vocational education and special education
- Whether ELLs are being retained in grade or are dropping out at rates similar to their non – ELL peers

When the evaluation indicates that the ESL program is not achieving its goals, the district will modify its program accordingly.

