



# Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) Plan

Ensuring Equitable Access and Academic Success for Multilingual Learners

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND VISION

### Overview

Columbia Heights Public Schools (CHPS) is proud to serve a richly diverse and multilingual student population. Our English Learner (EL) population represents speakers of **37 documented home languages**, underscoring the linguistic and cultural richness of our schools. The table below represents the total number of English Learners in comparison to the total district student population for the past three school years, according to the [Minnesota Report Card](#).

<i>School Year</i>	<i>Total District students</i>	<i>Total English Learners</i>	<i>Percentage ELs</i>
<i>2024-25</i>	<i>3,516</i>	<i>1,697</i>	<i>48.3%</i>
<i>2023-24</i>	<i>3,420</i>	<i>1,426</i>	<i>41.7%</i>
<i>2022-23</i>	<i>3,281</i>	<i>1,207</i>	<i>36.8%</i>

The English Learner Program provides comprehensive, research-based services that develop English language proficiency while ensuring access to grade-level content. It is aligned with Minnesota Department of Education guidance and the WIDA English Language Development Standards. The program offers designated English Language Development (ELD) instruction, integrated supports, and culturally responsive practices. EL teachers collaborate with classroom educators, instructional coaches, and school leaders to embed language supports across the curriculum and empower multilingual learners with the skills and confidence needed to thrive.

### Vision

In Columbia Heights Public Schools, we believe that **multilingualism is a powerful asset**—not only for individual students, but for our schools and communities. Our vision is to create learning environments where the **full linguistic repertoire of every student is recognized, valued, and leveraged** for academic success and personal growth.

We are committed to instructional practices that encourage translanguaging, allowing students to draw on all their native languages to make meaning, express understanding, and deepen learning. By fostering a culture of belonging, collaboration, and high expectations, we aim to empower multilingual learners to thrive academically and socially—graduating with pride in their identities and the ability to navigate and contribute to a multilingual world.

We believe that:

- Multilingualism is an asset that strengthens and enhances learning.
- Language development is a shared responsibility, and all educators play a critical role in supporting multilingual learner success.
- Family and community partnerships are central to student growth and belonging.
- Equity-driven systems must be in place to eliminate opportunity and educational gaps.

## **MINNESOTA STATE STATUTES**

### **Minnesota's Definition of an English Language Student (Minnesota Statute 124D.59):**

A student, as declared by a parent or guardian:

1. First learned a language other than English OR
2. Comes from a home where the language usually spoken is other than English, OR
3. Usually speaks a language other than English

The student is determined by developmentally appropriate measures, which might include observations, teacher judgment, parent recommendations, or developmentally appropriate assessment instruments, to lack the necessary English skills to participate fully in classes taught in English.

### **Language Instruction Educational Program Plan (LIEP Plan) State Statute:**

#### **Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.61:**

General Requirements for Programs require a district enrolling one or more English learners to implement an educational program that includes a written plan of services that describes programming by English proficiency level, made available to parents upon request. The plan must articulate the amount and scope of service offered to English learners through an educational program for English learners.

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## PROGRAM TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**ACCESS:** WIDA ACCESS for ELLs; annual assessment of English language development for English learners

**EL:** English Learner – See definitions in the Minnesota Statute 124D.59(2) and the Every Student Succeeds Act Statute 8101(20).

**ELD:** English Language Development – often refers to the state’s ELD standards outlining benchmarks for progress toward English language proficiency.

**ELP:** English Language Proficiency

**ILP:** Individual Language Plan – a tool for documenting and communicating differentiated EL instruction

**LEA:** Local Educational Agency (refers to districts and charter schools)

**LEAPS:** Learning English for Academic Proficiency and Success

**LIEP:** Language Instruction Educational Program. May be commonly referred to as the “EL program”

**LTEL:** Long-Term English Learner MARSS: Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System

**MDE:** Minnesota Department of Education

**MEP:** Migrant Education Program

**MNLS:** Minnesota language survey – formerly known as the home language questionnaire, it is part of Minnesota’s standardized procedures. All districts must include this in their enrollment packets.

**RAEL:** Recently Arrived English Learner (often referred to as “Newcomers”)

**SLIFE:** Student(s) with limited or interrupted formal education

**WIDA:** World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment is a consortium – Minnesota has adopted the WIDA ELD standards, Screener, and ACCESS for ELLs standardized assessments.

# ENGLISH LEARNER LIEP PROCEDURES

## Step 1: Identification

During enrollment, all families must complete a Minnesota Language Survey (MNLS). This document is available in multiple languages. Students noting language(s) in addition to English on the MNLS will be referred to our Placement Center, where students will be assessed for EL Eligibility. The identification process used by Columbia Heights follows the [Minnesota English Learner Identification and Placement Guidelines](#) outlined by WIDA and the Minnesota Department of Education (flowchart in Appendix A shows the identification process).

### MDE Entrance Eligibility Criteria

New students are eligible for EL services if they meet the following criteria:

Grade	Assessment	Entrance Criteria	
Pre-Kindergarten	Pre-IPT	Composite score less than 4.0 on the oral language component	
Kindergarten	WIDA Screener for Kindergarten	<b>First Semester</b> Composite score is less than 4.5, with no domain scores of Listening and Speaking less than 4.0.	<b>Second Semester</b> Composite score is less than 4.5, with no domain scores of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing of less than 4.0.
Grades 1-12	WIDA Screener (Online)	Composite score is less than 4.5, or any single domain is less than 4.0.	
Grades K-12	Prior WIDA ACCESS for ELLs	Composite score is less than 4.5, or two or more domains are less than 3.5.	
	Prior WIDA Alternate ACCESS	Prior Alternate ACCESS Composite score is less than 3.0.	
	WIDA Alternate Screener	Overall Composite score (Oral Composite Score for semester 1 of Kindergarten) on WIDA Alternate Screener below 3.0.	

### SLIFE Identification Criteria

Students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE) are an important group of English learners. The Minnesota Learning English for Academic Proficiency and Success (LEAPS) Act defined SLIFE in Minnesota. The definition was updated in state legislation in 2023.

**SLIFE are English learners (EL) who have at least two fewer years of schooling than their peers when entering school in the United States.**

All districts and charter schools identify SLIFE and report SLIFE data to MDE on an annual basis. All districts and charter schools that are Ed-Fi certified for MARRS are expected to report these data elements through Ed-Fi. Any district or charter school not yet certified for MARSS is expected to report in the [Student Support Data Collection](#) (SSDC). The academic and linguistic growth for SLIFE is reported by the Commissioner of Education on the Minnesota Report Card.

### **Immigrant Identification Criteria**

Upon enrollment, the EL teacher, student, and parent/guardian (with an interpreter, if requested) complete a locally created Intake Form. The intake form asks questions to determine if the student meets the following criteria to qualify for the Immigrant Children and Youth Grant:

1. a child who is aged 3 through 21;
2. was not born in any State or any U.S. territory;
3. has not been attending one or more schools in any one or more states for more than three full academic years (on a cumulative basis)

An annotation of immigrant status is entered into the student information system and reported to MDE by June 1 each year.

*Note: eligible students are not required to be eligible for English learner status, though the vast majority of eligible students also qualify for English learner status.*

### **Migratory Children and Families Identification Criteria**

In the spring, migratory families may move into district boundaries. Because migratory children have particular needs due to the migratory lifestyle and high mobility rates, the district's Migrant Liaison is well-connected with new families and the community. The migrant liaison is in close contact with Tri-Valley Opportunity Council (TVOC) to support qualification for migratory services. District staff do not discriminate based on race, language, or culture. Staff submit recruitment requests to TVOC only when conversations with the family confirm that the purpose of their move was to seek agricultural work for economic necessity. Refer to the TVOC website for more information.

Once a student is identified by TVOC and is given an official Certificate of Eligibility (COE), the migrant liaison contacts food service staff to ensure the student receives free meals. The liaison speaks with the family to confirm eligibility for McKinney Vento and communicates with the counselor, the student's home base district, and the Midwest Migrant Education Resource Center (MMERC) to ensure instruction meets the requirements of the home base district. The liaison has access to the Migrant Student Information Exchange (MSIX) national database to gather and update student academic and health information.

### **Dual Identification**

The Multilingual Learner (ML) Coordinator and the Special Education Coordinator together review special needs and referrals for EL-identified students. The EL program does not substitute for other educational services for which a student may qualify. Likewise, neither special education services nor tiered reading interventions may substitute for EL services.

If a student demonstrates a possible need for special education services, staff do not delay in beginning the process for special education evaluation, as there is no wait-time requirement for multilingual or EL-identified students to be evaluated for special education services. Further, students who are being evaluated for special

education support must demonstrate a disability in both languages; identification must not solely be the result of being a culturally or linguistically diverse student. If a team documents evidence that the student's ability/achievement/behavior is significantly below that of a comparable peer, disability screening may be appropriate.

If a student is found to qualify for both EL and Special Education services, the teams will collaborate with grade-level/content-area teachers in all stages of the process of scheduling and programming.

### **Gifted and Talented Identification**

Students and parents can self-select to be part of the Gifted and Talented program. However, a specific invitation will be made for students identified as English Learners and other multilingual learners who have shown exceptional abilities through multiple avenues, including:

- Student interviews
- Creative work
- Performance-based evaluations, or nonverbal instruments
- Nominations or referrals from parents and school staff
- Summative data, including written evaluations in English and home languages, and nonverbal GT assessments
- Formative data, such as student work samples and problem- or project-based portfolios
- Anecdotal data, including classroom observations, home visits, and interviews with parents, teachers, and peers.

The Gifted and Talented program aims to include the same percentage of EL-identified students and multilingual learners as the general population.

### **Gifted/Talented Resources**

Book: Identifying Gifted and Talented English Language Learners: Grades K-12 (Iowa Department of Education)

## **Step 2: Initial and Continuing Placement**

Our district uses a data-driven, equitable process to identify students eligible for English Learner (EL) services, determine their appropriate instructional placement, and ensure they receive ongoing support aligned to their language development needs. All decisions are guided by multiple data sources to ensure that services are responsive, individualized, and aligned with both state and federal requirements.

### **Placement Within the LIEP (Language Instruction Educational Program)**

Students are placed into EL instructional levels based on language proficiency data, not content knowledge.

Placement decisions also consider:

- Listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency levels
- SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education) considerations
- Cultural and linguistic background

Placement is documented in the student's cumulative file (CUM folder) and reviewed annually.

### **Continuing EL Placement Decisions**

Placement is reviewed each year using a data-driven approach. Students will continue to receive EL services if:

- Their ACCESS score is below 4.5 overall, or
- They score below 3.5 in any language domain (listening, speaking, reading, writing)

Additional language assessments and student performance data are reviewed in conjunction with ACCESS scores to ensure the most appropriate instructional level is provided. This includes:

- Performance data such as student language samples and evaluations
- Parent input on the student's language use and needs
- Additional academic information, such as MCA or FastBridge scores, for context only
- Team consultation, including EL staff, classroom teachers, and counselors

These data points are used collectively to make informed placement decisions. Families receive a notification letter explaining the results, placement decision, and their rights, including the right to accept or decline services.

### **Parent/Guardian Notifications**

Our district must comply with Minnesota Statute 124D.60 and ESSA Statute 1112(e)(3) and (4), ensuring that parents:

- Receive timely, accessible communication in their preferred language and format (e.g., oral interpretation if needed)
- Understand the data used to determine eligibility and placement
- Know their rights, including the right to opt out of services

### **Step 3: Parent Notifications**

The Placement Center serves as the main point of contact for notifying parents/guardians of English learner (EL) placement as required by Minnesota State Statutes. Notifications are sent in multiple languages and are maintained in the student's electronic file.

#### **1. English Learner Eligibility Notification – Eligible or Ineligible**

Parents/guardians are notified within 10 school days of initial EL identification with a letter stating:

- Assessment results (WIDA Screener or ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS)
- Eligibility determination
- Program services and rights

Annual eligibility notifications are also sent within 30 days of the school year.

#### **2. English Learner Program Exit Letter**

Parents are notified in July when their child meets the exit criteria based on ACCESS scores. The Individual Student Report (ISR) is included.

#### **3. Refusal of Services**

Parents may choose to opt out of EL services. In this case:

- A signed waiver is required
- Students must still take the ACCESS annually
- The waiver is filed and stored in the student record

#### **4. Statewide Testing Participation Notice**

Parents/guardians have the right to refuse student participation in statewide assessments, including ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. A signed form must be submitted annually.

## Step 4: Annual Progress Evaluation

By law, all students in grades K–12 who are identified as English learners must take an English language test every year in the spring called WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 or the Alternate ACCESS (for students in grades 1–12 who have an IEP with a significant cognitive disability)—even if they are no longer receiving EL services.

The language proficiency assessment measures listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of multilingual students who qualify for EL services. The ACCESS test provides scores based on a 1 – 6 scoring scale. Teachers administering the ACCESS (and Screener) will complete all online training and quizzes annually to correctly administer the assessment.

The results of the ACCESS are used to:

1. Determine the English language proficiency needs for each student;
2. Determine which language domains need additional instruction;
3. Measure sufficient language growth over time; and
4. Determine continuation in or exit from the EL program supports

Research shows that it usually takes **five years or more** to learn academic English well. Under the federal law called ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act), schools check whether English learners are making enough growth on the ACCESS test to stay on track with learning the language.

## Step 5: Program Exit and Monitoring

Students must remain in the EL (English Learner) program until they meet the state’s criteria to exit. They qualify to exit if they have reached a level of English that allows them to fully understand and participate in their grade-level learning.

To exit the EL program, a student must score **4.5 or higher overall on the ACCESS test**, and **no more than one area (like listening, speaking, reading, or writing) can be below 3.5**. If they meet this requirement, they will be exited from the EL program and reclassified as no longer needing EL services (EL-N) at the start of the school year. When this happens, the EL department will send a letter to the student’s family within 30 calendar days. The message will be in a language and format that the family can understand. It will include:

- The name of the test used
- How the test scores were used to decide the student’s placement
- Where families can find written information about the process and policies

### Monitoring Exited Students

Students who exit the English Learner (EL) program are monitored for **two years** to ensure they continue making progress in their academic learning. During this time, if concerns arise about a student's performance—especially about language demands in the classroom—**support should first be provided through the school's MTSS framework**. This means implementing targeted interventions and supports (such as small-group instruction, scaffolding, or language accommodations) based on the student’s needs.

If, after these MTSS interventions, the student continues to struggle and there is evidence that language may still be a barrier, a team—which includes the core teacher, EL teacher, school administrator, student, and family—may meet to review the data.

If the team agrees that the student might still need English language services, the district can re-screen the student using the WIDA Screener. The results of the screener will be reviewed as they would be for a new EL student. If the scores show the student meets eligibility criteria again, they may be re-entered into the EL program for additional support.

## Step 6: Communication

Our district is committed to building meaningful partnerships with families and communities by ensuring clear, respectful, and accessible communication about English Learner (EL) services. We value families as essential partners in their child's education and prioritize transparency, cultural responsiveness, and language access in every step of the EL identification, placement, and support process. All communication complies with state and federal **Language Access requirements**, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and the district's **Language Access Plan**, which ensures that families receive information in a language they understand.

### How We Communicate with Families

We ensure families are informed and included through multiple methods:

- **Access to Plans and Resources:** The LIEP (Language Instruction Educational Program) plan is available on the district's website and can be provided in families' preferred languages if requested.
- **Direct Communication:** Families are contacted through text messages, phone calls, home visits, printed notices, and in-person conversations. Interpreters are available for all interactions.
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences:** Classroom teachers and EL staff explain the LIEP plan and student progress. Interpreters and bilingual liaisons are provided.
- **Parent Advisory Committee:** Families are invited to participate in shaping EL programming through annual meetings and focus groups.
- **Culturally Responsive Practices:** Staff receive training to support culturally welcoming environments. Schools host two-way communication events, including EL parent meetings and multilingual family nights.

### Ongoing Communication About Student Progress

- Families receive annual updates through the ACCESS for ELLs results.
- If a student is not eligible or no longer qualifies for services, families receive a Progress Exit Letter.
- During the monitoring period (2 years after exit), families may be contacted again if language needs arise. Re-screening can occur with family involvement if EL services may be needed again.

### Events and Opportunities for Engagement

- Families are invited to school-based activities such as academic nights, registration help, state testing info sessions, and cultural events.
- Liaisons and bilingual staff actively reach out to build trust and ensure families understand their rights and how to support their children.

### Documents and Interpretation

- Written communication (such as registration forms, refusal forms, and notification letters) is provided in both English and the family's home language.
- Interpreters are always available for important discussions, conferences, and school events.

## ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRAM AND SERVICES

The English Learner (EL) program is designed to ensure multilingual students develop strong English language skills through high-quality, data-driven instruction while accessing grade-level content. The program supports students' academic growth by integrating both language development and content instruction, using a variety of instructional models and strategies that promote language acquisition and academic success.

### Instructional Approach

EL services are guided by best practices in language development and content-based instruction, where English is taught alongside academic content. All instruction is:

- Aligned to grade-level standards and adjusted with scaffolds to ensure accessibility
- Focused on building students' productive language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Connected to both the Minnesota Academic Standards as well as the 2020 WIDA English Language Development Standards

Instructional planning includes both mainstream and EL-specific strategies. EL teachers and classroom teachers collaborate to ensure lessons are responsive to each student's needs and are inclusive of culturally and linguistically responsive practices.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- **EL licensed teachers** provide direct instruction in English language development and collaborate with classroom/content area teachers to support student learning. The EL teachers also participate in mainstream curriculum writing and lesson planning with a focus on language scaffolding and targeted supports. Instruction focuses on developing English communication and academic language skills through listening, speaking, reading, and writing for success in school. The mainstream curriculum is supported through the WIDA language proficiency standards.
- **General education teachers** are responsible for all students and are trained in aligning instruction with English language development (ELD) standards.
- **All staff** work together to provide a welcoming environment for multilingual families and communicate regularly with them about student progress and program services.

## Elementary Services

Most instruction for English Learners (ELs) happens within the general education or content classroom, where classroom teachers are responsible for teaching all students, including those who are developing English skills. In addition to support from the classroom teacher, ELs also receive direct English language instruction from a licensed EL teacher.

During small-group instruction, EL teachers use either Hands on English or Frames for Fluency curriculum resources, which align with the WIDA Standards Framework to support language growth.

EL teachers also work closely with special education staff and other support teams to address the needs of individual students and find strategies to help them succeed in the classroom.

ELs may also receive services through Title I or other academic support programs. For students with disabilities, services are coordinated to meet multiple learning needs. Decisions about services are made as a team—including the classroom teacher, EL teacher, case manager, and school administrators—to determine what will best support the student.

**GRADES K-5 PROGRAM MODEL AND SCOPE OF INSTRUCTION**

<b>WIDA LEVEL</b>	<b>INSTRUCTIONAL TIME WITH EL TEACHER</b>	<b>CLASS / CONTENT</b>	<b>SERVICE MODEL</b>
Entering	At least 30 minutes daily	Hands-on English OR Frames for Fluency Beginner	Pull-out, small group
Emerging	At least 30 minutes daily	Hands-on English OR Frames for Fluency Beginner	Pull-out, small group
Developing	At least 20 minutes daily	Frames for Fluency Intermediate/Advanced	Pull-out, small group
Expanding	At least 20 minutes daily	Frames for Fluency Intermediate/Advanced	Pull-out, small group

**GRADES K-5 PROGRAM MODEL AND SCOPE OF INSTRUCTION**

<b>WIDA LEVEL</b>	<b>INSTRUCTIONAL TIME WITH EL TEACHER</b>	<b>CLASS / CONTENT</b>	<b>SERVICE MODEL</b>
Entering	At least 30 minutes daily	ELA; Math and/or Science	Push-In
Emerging	At least 30 minutes daily	ELA; Math and/or Science	Push-In
Developing	At least 20 minutes daily	ELA; Math and/or Science	Push-In
Expanding	At least 20 minutes daily	ELA; Math and/or Science	Push-In

## Secondary Services

Secondary EL services are designed to support multilingual learners in developing academic English while accessing grade-level content. Students are placed in appropriate EL courses based on their WIDA ACCESS scores, academic background, and individual needs, with additional consideration given to students who are SLIFE, have IEPs/504 plans, and/or scheduling conflicts. EL course offerings may include ELD levels 1–4, sheltered content courses, co-taught classes, and language development electives. EL teachers provide direct instruction and collaborate regularly with classroom teachers, administration, and support staff. EL teachers should meet the requirements of their teacher contract (please see the most current ISD 13 Teacher’s Contract), which includes planning, monitoring progress, and ensuring students receive the language support needed to succeed in both content areas and English language development. The program’s goal is to help students build proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while preparing them for academic success and postsecondary readiness.

GRADES 6-12 PROGRAM MODEL AND SCOPE OF INSTRUCTION			
WIDA LEVEL	INSTRUCTIONAL TIME WITH EL TEACHER	CLASS / CONTENT	SERVICE MODEL
Entering	At least 168 minutes /day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELD 1 or 1.5</li> <li>- EL Content Social Studies</li> <li>- EL Content Science</li> <li>- Math Foundations or Integrated Math*</li> </ul>	Sheltered Instruction Co-teaching
Emerging	At least 168 minutes /day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELD 2 or ELD/ELA 2</li> <li>- Integrated Social Studies*</li> <li>- Integrated Science*</li> <li>- Integrated Math*</li> </ul>	Sheltered Instruction Co-teaching
Developing	At least 84 minutes /block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELD 3 or ELD/ELA 3</li> <li>- Mainstream Courses</li> </ul>	Sheltered Instruction Co-teaching
Expanding	At least 84 minutes /block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ELD 4 or ELD/ELA 4</li> <li>- Mainstream Courses</li> </ul>	Sheltered Instruction EL Consultation

\*Integrated - means EL support varies in instructional model (e.g., co-teaching, sheltered, consult)

## STATE ACCOUNTABILITY ASSESSMENTS

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) requires statewide assessments to ensure that all students, including English Learners (ELs), are progressing toward academic proficiency and language development. These assessments meet both state and federal accountability requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). English Learners must participate in content assessments like the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) and in annual English language proficiency testing through ACCESS for ELLs. Assessment results are used to evaluate student performance, inform instruction, determine eligibility for EL services, and support school improvement efforts. Alternate assessments are available for students with significant cognitive disabilities who meet specific criteria.

### Required State Assessments for ELs in Minnesota

Assessment	Who Takes It	Purpose
<b>ACCESS for ELLs</b>	All K-12 English Learners	Measures English language proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, writing); used for Title III accountability, EL Placement, EL exit decisions, and instructional planning
<b>Alternate ACCESS</b>	K-12 ELs with significant cognitive disabilities	Measures English language proficiency for students who cannot take the general ACCESS assessment
<b>MCA Reading</b>	Grades 3-8 and 10 (first-year ELs may be exempt)	Measures reading proficiency for state and federal accountability
<b>MCA Math</b>	Grades 3-8 and 11 (all students, including first-year ELs, must take it)	Assesses math proficiency and growth for accountability
<b>MCA Science</b>	Grades 5, 8, and once in high school (usually after Biology)	Assesses science proficiency for state and federal accountability
<b>MTAS (Math, Reading, Science)</b>	Students with significant cognitive disabilities (including ELs who qualify)	Alternate assessment of grade-level standards aligned to content areas

## **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Columbia Heights Public Schools is required by law to ensure parent/guardian, family, and community participation in Language Instruction Educational Programs. Requirements include:

- Effective outreach that informs parents/guardians how they can be involved in the education of their children and assist their children in attaining English proficiency and academic success (ESSA, 2015; MN LEAPS Act, 2014; Minnesota Statutes, 124D.51(2), 2022).
- Providing school information in an understandable and uniform format, and to the extent possible, in the preferred language of parents (ESSA, 2015; Minnesota Statutes 124D.60(1), 2022).
- Family engagement activities that include educational programs and opportunities, family literacy services, and training activities specifically for parents/guardians who are multicultural and multilingual (ESSA, 2015; MN LEAPS Act, 2014).
- Parent and community involvement in the planning, development, and implementation of programs for English learners (ESSA, 2015; Minnesota Statutes, 124D.60–61, 2022; MN LEAPS Act, 2014).
- Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) planning addresses the needs of English learners and their families (Minnesota Statutes, 120B.11(3), 2022).

Our district is committed to fostering strong partnerships with multilingual families through meaningful, culturally responsive engagement. In alignment with federal and state requirements, the district ensures that families are informed, included, and empowered to support their child’s academic success and English language development.

Family engagement is more than compliance—it is a collaborative effort to build trust, strengthen school-home connections, and ensure equitable access to resources and services. Schools provide families with clear, accessible communication, including translated materials and interpretation services. Outreach is conducted in families’ preferred languages, and information is presented in a way that is understandable and culturally relevant.

Home School Liaisons and the Cultural Liaison play a vital role by bridging communication between families and schools. They facilitate family engagement events, cultural celebrations, educational workshops, and multilingual resource sharing. Liaisons also serve on district committees, consult with staff, and develop partnerships with community organizations to connect families with services and support.

Family engagement events are intentionally designed to reflect the needs of the community. These events offer parents opportunities to learn about EL services, academic support, state assessments (like ACCESS and MCA), and school-wide programs such as transportation, health and wellness, tutoring, bilingual seals, and ParentVue. Parents also receive support navigating the school system and understanding their rights, and they are invited to participate in school improvement conversations through surveys, feedback forms, and advisory committees. Surveys are conducted annually to elicit parent input, recommendations, and measure their satisfaction with school-related programs and services.

Successful engagement requires a team approach involving teachers, EL staff, administrators, and families. Schools meet regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of family engagement strategies and to ensure families feel welcomed, respected, and empowered. For example, parents are interviewed about their child’s hopes and dreams, and this information is shared with teaching staff through our ELevate the Heights newsletter. The district honors its diverse community and celebrates the cultures, languages, and voices of all families it serves.

## Key Components to Communicate During EL Family Nights

EL Family Nights are designed to build trust, increase family engagement, and strengthen the home-school partnership by sharing meaningful, accessible information with families of English Learners. The following components should be included and clearly communicated during these events:

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION	ACADEMIC SERVICES	STATE TESTING	PARENT COMMUNICATION	PARENT INVOLVEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Portal (Parentvue)</li> <li>• School Calendar</li> <li>• Attendance Policies</li> <li>• Transportation Policies</li> <li>• Free and Reduced School Meals</li> <li>• Health And Wellness</li> <li>• Grading System</li> <li>• Extracurricular Activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EL Program Service</li> <li>• Special Education</li> <li>• Bilingual Seals Program</li> <li>• Adult Basic Education</li> <li>• Tutoring and Academic Support</li> <li>• Targeted Services (Summer School)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WIDA ACCESS for ELLs</li> <li>• MCA</li> <li>• FastBridge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreter Services</li> <li>• Translated Materials</li> <li>• Two-Way Text Messaging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer Opportunities</li> <li>• Parent Involvement</li> <li>• Committees</li> <li>• Parent Teacher Conferences</li> </ul>

## PROGRAM EVALUATION AND ADJUSTMENT

Each year, a committee will be formed to review and evaluate the multilingual education program to ensure it meets the needs of English learners, their families, and the broader school community. This committee includes diverse stakeholders such as students, parents, community members, classroom and EL teachers, administrators, and support staff. The group works collaboratively to analyze program effectiveness, assess student progress through multiple data sources, and gather parent input to inform decisions.

To ensure EL services are appropriate and effective, students are assessed annually—primarily through the ACCESS for ELLs test, which measures progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Teachers also monitor ongoing progress through classroom-based assessments. This data helps educators make informed decisions about how to best support each learner while maintaining strict confidentiality.

The district uses the annual review process to examine data for both current and exited EL students. This includes:

- Utilizing state-level data (ACCESS, MCAs, Progress Indicators, graduation rates, and demographics) to guide program improvement;
- Reviewing locally gathered data (student work, teacher observations, formative assessments, and survey results);
- Analyzing trends and needs within specific groups such as newcomers, SLIFE students, and former ELs.

This ongoing cycle of data review supports continuous improvement and ensures that EL services remain responsive, equitable, and effective.