Marengo County (046) Public District - FY 2026 - Consolidated - Rev 0 - Improvement Planning

Section I Coversheet, Signature Page

EL District Plan Cover Sheet

Local Education Agency (LEA) Name:
Marengo County

LEA Contact for ELs:
Kathy Pritchett

Name:
Kathy Pritchett

Position and Office:
Federal Programs Director

Email Address:
kpritchett@marengo.k12.al.us

Telephone:
334-295-4123

Fax:
NA

☐ Check box if LEA receives Title III Funds

☐ Check box if LEA receives an Immigrant Grant

Signatures

EL Program Administrator Signature and Date

LEA Superintendent Signature and Date

*EL Advisory Committee Signatures

Comprehensive English Learner District Plan

Each LEA in Alabama must develop and implement a Comprehensive English Learner (EL) District Plan, in accordance with Section 3115 of Title III of the *Every*

Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for serving students who are English learners and immigrant students. **The LEA is required to have a Comprehensive EL District Plan whether or not the LEA has ELs enrolled and regardless of Title III eligibility.**

The Comprehensive EL District Plan should address each aspect of the instructional program for all ELs, at all grade levels, and in all schools in the system. The Plan should also: contain sufficient detail and specificity so that all employees can understand how the plan is to be implemented and should contain the procedural guidance and forms used to carry out responsibilities under the Plan.

To facilitate LEA compliance and the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) review of the Plan, LEAs will develop the Plan using the template in eGAP 2.0. LEAs may refer to the ALSDE EL Guidebook when developing and revising the Plan for a clear understanding of the requirements for serving ELs.

***Coversheet and Signature page can be found under Improvement Planning → Related Documents → Required Documents.**

Section II Checklist - ALL LEAS MUST USE THIS PLAN TEMPLATE

A. Required Theory and Goals

The LEA's educational **theory and goals** for its program of services - **to improve the education of English learners by assisting the children to learn English and meet the challenging state academic standards. (Sec. 3102)**

B. Identification and Placement Procedures

1) Include the LEA's procedures for identifying members for the EL Advisory Committee.

Marengo County has established an LEA level English Language Advisory Committee for the purpose of reviewing program needs, assessments, evaluations, and annual review of the comprehensive EL plan and program. This committee includes central office administrators, assessment specialists, school administrators, regular classroom teachers, school counselors, parents, and community stakeholders. Each school has representation on this committee. Oral and written communications are also accepted at committee meetings to ensure all members' recommendations are taken into consideration. The EL Advisory Committee makes recommendations to the LEA regarding the EL program.

2) Include the LEA's **methods for identifying, placing, and assessing** the students to be included in the English language instruction educational program. The following components must be explained in the plan.

• Home Language Survey

• WIDA Online Screener (1st-12th Grade)

• WIDA Screener for Kindergarten

• WIDA ACCESS

Consistent enrollment procedures, which includes the Home Language Survey (HLS), will be conducted.

All language minority student will be allowed to attend school regardless of their ability to produce documentation.

If a language other than English is identified on the HLS, the student is considered a language-minority student.

Language minority students identified through the HLS during registration before the beginning of the school year will be assessed within 30 days of enrollment.

Language minority students enrolled after the beginning of the school year will be assessed within 10 days of enrollment.

The World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)-ACCESS Placement Test, WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, and WIDA Online Screener for grades 1-12 will be used to determine placement in the LEA's English language development program.

Any student in grades 1-12 scoring an overall composite score of less than 5.0 will be identified as limited English proficient and will require placement in an English language instruction educational program.

Kindergarten and first semester first grade students, taking the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, scoring a 4.5 or higher in listening and speaking are considered proficient. The student may not need EL services, but their academic progress may be monitored in case rescreening is necessary in first grade to determine reading and writing proficiency.

All students in the Marengo County EL program will take the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 to assess language mastery.

3) Include the **method and procedures for exiting students from the English Language Instruction Educational program (LIEP) and for monitoring their progress** for a period of at least four years (new in ESSA), and at a minimum, follow SDE exiting requirements for ELs. All school personnel should be aware of the State established exit criteria of a composite score of 4.8 on the WIDA ACCESS English language proficiency test.

EL students that make an overall proficiency level of 4.8 on ACCESS for ELLs will exit the EL program. They will continue to be immersed in the language in a regular classroom setting with support if necessary.

EL students that do not make an overall proficiency score of 4.8 will continue receiving core English language instruction.

Students that make the overall proficiency score will continue to be monitored for FOUR academic years. Monitoring meetings will be conducted to ensure the student is functioning in mainstream without ESL support.

Students in monitoring year one will be classified as (FEL1), students in monitoring year two will be classified as (FEL2), students in monitoring year three will be classified as (FEL3), and students in monitoring year four will be classified as (FEL4). After four years of successful monitoring, students will exit out of the program and be classified as (FEL) and no longer be included in the subgroup.

C. Programs and Instruction

1) Describe the programs and activities that will be **developed, implemented, and administered to ensure** that ELs acquire academic language as part of the core LIEP.

• Process the system uses to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment

• Rationale for selecting the particular EL program/s and how they are evidence-based

Marengo County will utilize Structured English Immersion (SEI) with evidenced based instruction to engage EL students in developing grade level content area knowledge, academic skills, and increased English proficiency. Teachers will use clear, direct, simple English and a wide range of scaffolding strategies to communicate meaningful input in the content area to students. Learning activities that connect new content to students' prior knowledge, that require collaboration among students, and that spiral through curriculum material, offer EL students the grade level content instruction of their English-speaking peers, while adapting lesson delivery to suit their English proficiency level. Teachers will use physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development.

Marengo County will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment that will collect and analyze data from various sources that will help inform program selection. A comprehensive needs assessment allows LEAs to set up data-driven goals and strategies for meeting those goals.

2) Describe how language instruction educational programs will ensure that ELs develop English proficiency:

• How data is used to improve the rate of language acquisition for ELs

• How the LEA supports each school with respect to continuous improvement practices and specific professional development

• How World-class Instructional Design and Assessment English language proficiency (WIDA ELP) standards are integrated into the curriculum

Marengo County will annually evaluate the effectiveness of the EL program at the LEA and the individual school level. Completion of the English Language Learner Compilation Data Form at the beginning of the school year is completed at the school level and sent to the District EL Coordinator to compile for the LEA. Annual goal-setting sheets will be used throughout the year to ensure each EL student is mastering the goals set for them individually. All of the data gathered will be used to inform specific professional development needs identified through data analysis. These needs are identified through ATOT and ELEOT observations and added to the ACIPs for each school. The following methods will be used to hold schools accountable and to guide program changes:

- Results of EL student data forms
- CIP implementation evidence box and monitoring by the district team
- PST records
- Teacher and parent survey results
- Observations
- Program Evaluation
- Assessment results
- Goal setting mastery

The WIDA ELP standards will be integrated into the classroom to provide meaningful access to local curriculum as EL students progress through the stages of language acquisition. The proficiency levels and performance definitions set forth by WIDA ELP will be utilized in decision making and continuous improvement along with specific professional development.

3) Describe the **grading and retention** policy and procedures. NOTE: ELs cannot fail or be retained if language is the barrier.

Teachers will grade non-English speaking students in the content areas on improvement and participation. The WIDA standards will be utilized in the content areas to assist with instruction. A participation grade may be assigned until the student can demonstrate sufficiently his/her content knowledge. Teacher will be encouraged to maintain high expectations for student learning. The student will be expected to pay attention in class, participate in adapted activities, complete modified classwork/homework, and demonstrate progress.

For intermediate English speaking students (levels 2.5-4.8) teachers will grade on improvement as well as knowledge of content. If a student can demonstrate knowledge and skills in a particular subject, he/she should be assigned an achievement grade. For courses in which the student's limited English proficiency does not prohibit access to instruction, and achievement grade should be assigned. Caution should be taken to ensure that participation grades are not substituted or confused for actual achievement grades in student's actual achievement grades in students' cumulative records.

A grade of "F" cannot be assigned to an EL student without full documentation of accommodations having been made to assure the student full access to the content.

The lack of ability to read and write in English is not the basis for an "F". It is against the law to fail a student because he/she is not proficient in English.

At the end of each grading period, the teacher will complete an EL report on each English language learner in the classroom.

Failure and Retention Policy:

EL students may not receive failing grades when English language deficiencies may have contributed to the failure. Retaining EL learners in a lower grade is ill advised.

The student's level of English language proficiency must be considered.

Was the I-ELP implemented to document classroom accommodations and student progress?

Was there meaningful instructions provided to the student?

How much individual English language development instruction is the student receiving during the school day?

Has an alternate grading strategy been implemented?

4) Include details on the **specific staffing and other resources** to be provided to English learners under the LIEP in the district. ESL staff should be qualified with academic preparation in English-as-a-second-language, e.g. as documented in the 1991 Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Memorandum.

• Qualified personnel (state certification and/or ESL licensure)

• ESL staff development

• Content teacher and administrator staff development

The number of staff employed by Marengo County in the English Language Learner program will be based on the following criteria:

The number of EL students

The level of English proficiency

The achievement level of students

The grade level of the students

All teachers and paraprofessionals in any English language instruction education program for ELs, which is funded with any source of federal funds, are certified to teach ESL and fluent in English, including having written and oral communication skills.

Marengo County Schools shall provide high-quality professional development to classroom teachers, including teachers in "regular" classrooms, principals, administrators, and other school or community-based organizational personnel. Professional development activities shall be:

•Designed to improve the instruction and assessment of limited-English proficient students and designed to enhance the ability of teachers to understand and use curricula, assessment measures, and instruction strategies for English language learners

•Based on evidence-based research demonstrating the effectiveness of the professional development in increasing students' English proficiency and of substantially increasing content knowledge, teaching knowledge, and teaching skills

•Of sufficient intensity and duration to have a positive and lasting impact on the teachers' performance in the classroom.

5) Describe how the LEA will **collect and submit data** in accordance with SDE requirements.

• How schools are trained to use the state system/database to code ELs and enter reliable and accurate data

In accordance with ALSDE requirements, school systems must systematically maintain information in individual student profiles for all students identified as EL/Language minority. The district will complete and maintain a confidential LEP/EL Student Master List for each school in the district. Marengo County Schools will utilize the Power School data system to manage this information. Training for the entry guidelines for the items in Power School, to be completed for EL data collection purposes will be addressed at district Leadership Team meetings. The counselor at each school will be responsible for entering data pertinent to EL students in Power School. All students with another language spoken in the home are marked in Power School, as determined by the EL Committee.

6) Include the LEA's method for **evaluating the effectiveness of its program** for English learners

• LEA engagement in the continuous improvement cycle

• In relation to English proficiency and challenging state academic standards

Collection of ESL data, teacher and parent survey results, annual state reports, ACCESS for ELLs test results, Confidential LEP/EL Student Master List (PHLOTE List) and adherence to the Marengo County Compliance Checklist will provide evidence of the effectiveness of each school's EL program. Evidence of the implementation of the ESL sections of the individual schools' CIPs is collected by the LEA Leadership Team as part of evaluating the effectiveness of the overall educational program for the Marengo County School System.

7) Include LEA's **method of identification and referral of ELs for special services (including Gifted Ed)** Note that the Individual English Language Plan must describe how the school will communicate with the child and parent in their native language.

Special Education:

English Learners may be referred to the PST only after differentiated instructional strategies have been provided for them for a reasonable amount of time. EL students may not be referred if language is the barrier to achievement. Once language has been eliminated as the barrier to achievement, ELs must be served in the same way as all other students. A child may not be determined eligible for special education if the determinant factor is the child's lack of instruction. Data must be available to support a referral to special education.

If an EL learner is determined to be eligible for referral for Special Education, then the referral process will be communicated through communication in the native language. The materials and procedures used to assess a suspected disability of an EL must be selected and administered to ensure that they measure the extent to which the student has a disability and needs special education, rather than measuring the student's English language skills. The Alabama Administrative Code (AAC) (290-8-9.04(1)(e) states that in order for an EL student to be deemed eligible, the Team must determine that the communication disorder exists in the child's native language and is not the result of learning English as a second language. With the assistance of the ESL Specialist, the Team should determine if the English proficiency is comparable to peers. If not, the assessments must be administered in the EL's native language when such a test format is available. If the team determines that information from administration of the assessments in both languages is appropriate, then this procedure should be completed. Any nonstandard administration of assessments should be documented on the Notice and Eligibility Decision Regarding Special Education Services form.

There will be EL representation on the IEP Team for all students who are EL and have a disability. The IEP and the I-ELP will work concurrently to provide support for the students. This information will be a part of the profile page on the IEP.

Gifted Education:

Gifted students are those who perform at or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. These students require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Students possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. Language will not be a barrier to gifted referral or identification. All notices and some testing will be done in the student's native language if needed. Marengo County Schools will select and administer tests and evaluative materials that are sensitive to cultural, economic, and/or linguistic differences and that are appropriate for the special populations such as

the sensory impaired, LEP, or physically impaired student. Students from underrepresented groups will have both verbal and nonverbal abilities assessed (and creativity when appropriate) before being determined ineligible.

Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or any other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities may refer a student. Additionally, all second-grade students will be observed as potential gifted referrals using a gifted behavior checklist.

For each student referred, information is gathered in the areas of Aptitude, Characteristics, and Performance. The information is entered on a matrix where points are assigned according to established criteria. The total number of points earned determines if the student qualifies for gifted services.

D. Assessment and Accountability

1) Describe how the LEA will encourage and hold schools accountable for **annually measuring the English proficiency** of ELs and for participating in the state-administered testing program.

• Including coordination with the LEA Test Coordinator/Director

• Including communication of assessment and accountability requirements to schools

Marengo County annually evaluates the effectiveness of the EL program at the LEA and the school level. The English Language Learners LEA Compilation Data Form at the beginning of the school year is completed at the school level and sent to the District EL Coordinator to compile for the LEA.

The LEA also completes a nonparticipation in statewide assessments form to be turned in to the SDE for justification of students not participating in state assessments. All students in Marengo County will participate in state assessments.

The district level test coordinator works with the district level federal programs coordinator to ensure that all students participate in testing. The Federal Programs Coordinator provides the Test Coordinator with a master list of EL students and the accommodations that accompany each. The testing is determined in the I-ELP and state testing accommodation pages are discussed and utilized as a part of the meeting.

2) Describe how the LEA will **hold schools accountable** for meeting proficiency and long term goals.

• Monitoring and evaluating school engagement with continuous improvement plan

Marengo County holds schools accountable for meeting proficiency in academic achievement through data meetings. The data meetings are held to analyze all data gathered to determine academic achievement. The LEA also analyzes state testing results in order to hold schools accountable for proficiency. Strengths and weaknesses are established. Goals and strategies are aligned with professional development to address the weaknesses established. Intervention teachers and programs will be utilized to increase proficiency levels. Goals and strategies set forth by the school in the CIP will be monitored regularly by the LEA.

E. Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

1) Describe how the LEA will inform EL parents using information and notification in a language the parents can read and understand.

According to current federal requirements, LEAs must, not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year, provide notification to parents related to:

1. The reasons for the identification.

2. The child's level of English proficiency and how such level was assessed.

3. The status of the child's academic achievement.

4. The method of instruction used in the program.

5. How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child.

6. How the program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.

7. The specific exit requirements for such program, expected rate of transition from such program into the regular education classroom, and the expected rate of graduation from secondary school.

8. In the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the objectives of the individualized education program of the child.

9. Information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance detailing:

a. The right of the parents to have their child immediately removed from Title III programs upon request. (IF APPLICABLE)

b. The options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such Title III programs or to choose another program or method of instruction if available. (IF APPLICABLE)

c. The various programs and methods of instruction if more than one program or method is offered by the eligible entity.

Marengo County will promote parent involvement to help improve student achievement by involving EL parents in committees and school advisory teams. Parents will receive notice of all school activities written in the language of the family. All parent, family, and community involvement activities will be supported and encouraged by the district by using financial and personnel support.

EL identification, placement, exit, and monitoring:

No later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year, Marengo County will provide notification to parents of EL learners identified for participation in an English language instruction program. The notification will include:

The reasons for identification

The child’s level of English proficiency

How the level was assessed

The status of the child's academic achievement

The method of instruction used in the program

How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child

How the program will meet the needs concerning the English language

Specific exit requirements

Parental rights

These rights and a signature space, to acknowledge their review will be covered as part of the I-ELP meeting with the EL's parent. When possible and if the parent requests, the I-ELP should be translated into a language the parent can understand. Parents may also choose to receive or refuse services. A Parent-teacher conference letter (TransACT document) must be sent to parents if the EL Committee determines an I-ELP is needed. If parents request to refuse services, the Waiver Form must be sent and received back in writing from the parent. However, the school is still responsible to ensure that the student's English language needs are being met. A parent can refuse supplemental services, but cannot refuse instruction in the Core EL program and assessment. In the event a parent conference is not possible, the I-ELP should be sent home to the parent with the Notification of English Language Development Program Placement parent letter located in TransACT, for parents to sign and return.

All exiting and monitoring information will be provided in the same manner as identification and placement procedures above.