Palisades Park School District: Annual Assessment & Screening Procedures

Goal: To accurately identify, monitor, and assess the English language proficiency of Multilingual Learners (MLs) to ensure appropriate program placement and instructional support.

1. Initial Screening (New Students)

- Home Language Survey (HLS): Upon enrollment, every family completes a survey. If a language other than English is spoken at home, the student is referred for screening.
- Proficiency Screening: A certified ESL/Bilingual teacher administers the WIDA Screener.
- Eligibility Determination: Students who do not meet the state-mandated cutoff score are identified as multilingual learners and are eligible for ESL/Bilingual services. Parents are notified of results in their native language.

2. Annual State Assessment (ACCESS for ELLs)

- Mandated Testing: All identified MLs (including those whose parents have waived services) are assessed annually during the state-designated window (typically February–April).
- WIDA ACCESS: The district administers this assessment to measure growth in the four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.
- Exit Criteria: Results are used to determine if a student has met the state proficiency target (Composite Score of 4.5 or higher) to exit the program.

3. Internal District Benchmarks (Pre/Mid/Post)

In addition to the annual state assessment, the district conducts internal evaluations to monitor growth and adjust instruction in real-time:

- Pre-Assessment (September): Establishes a baseline for each student's language goals and identifies immediate instructional needs at the start of the school year.
- Mid-Year Assessment (January): Measures progress to determine if adjustments are needed for instructional tiers, classroom accommodations, or language support levels.
- Post-Assessment (June): Evaluates total year-end growth to help determine student placement and program design for the following school year.
- Data Management: All assessment results are recorded in Genesis to ensure data is accessible for collaborative planning and to maintain a comprehensive record of student progress.

4. Record Keeping & Parent Communication

The district ensures that all assessment data is clearly documented and shared with families to maintain a strong home-school connection:

- **Centralized Records:** All screening results and annual state assessment data are maintained in the student's permanent record in **Genesis**, providing a continuous history of language growth.
- **Parental Notification:** Following initial screening and annual testing, parents receive official notification of their child's proficiency levels and program placement in their native language.
- **Progress Reporting:** Parents receive quarterly updates on their child's English language development. These reports are aligned with the district's grading cycle to provide a complete picture of the student's academic and linguistic progress.
- **Annual Performance Review:** The **Supervisor of ESL/Bilingual/World Languages** reviews all assessment data annually. This review ensures that the program remains effective for students and that all state reporting requirements regarding parental notification are met.