



Comprehensive Plan for ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs) & Immigrant Students.

**Identifying, Assessing, Placing, and Meeting the Educational Needs
of Students Identified as EL.**

2025-2026

The Ozark City School system is committed to providing all students (K-12) equal opportunity to benefit from educational programs and services. Further, the Ozark City School system is committed to supporting scientifically research-based programs, practices, training, and accountability so that all students are able to become proficient in listening, speaking, reading, writing and comprehending in the English language as well as achieve the state's academic content and student achievement standards. Ozark City Schools' Comprehensive Plan for Serving English Learners and Immigrant Students is developed according to guidelines set forth by the Alabama State Department of Education (June 2003) and in accordance with Section 3116 of Title III, NCLB 2001.

THEORY AND GOALS

The system's plan for providing services to English Learners (ELs) shall include:

- A consistent method for identifying and assessing ELs at each school.
- A program of instruction for each ELs to ensure timely English Language acquisition as well as success in meeting achievement proficiency standards.
- Strategies for promoting parental involvement of ELs in the education process.
- A consistent method for collecting data on individual student progress and program effectiveness.
- Conduct an annual review/revision of the system's comprehensive plan.

IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

1) Procedures for Implementing EL Advisory Committee

ENGLISH LEARNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Ozark City School System shall establish an EL Advisory Committee for the purpose of program needs, assessment, evaluation, and for developing the Comprehensive EL Plan. This committee will include Federal Program Director, school administrators, school counselors, classroom teachers, and EL staff members. The committee will also include parents and/or community representatives who work with these students and their families in other settings. Our school system can receive valuable input from those whose support and efforts may be important to the success of the English language instruction educational program. The Ozark City School EL Advisory Committee shall make recommendations to the LEA regarding its EL program. Some examples of committee responsibilities would be to make recommendations regarding:

- ★ The English language development program.
- ★ High-quality professional development for staff.
- ★ Parental involvement programs to further student success.
- ★ Budgeting of state, local, and federal funds.
- ★ The English language program evaluation.

The Ozark City School EL Committee shall make recommendations to the LEA regarding its EL program. Some examples of committee responsibilities would be to make recommendations regarding:

- ★ Reviewing information concerning the student's language background, English- proficiency level, and academic performance before considering a student for an EL program.
- ★ Determining placement in and exit from the EL program.
- ★ Determine participation in and/or accommodations for the State Assessment Program.
- ★ Suggesting accommodations for use in regular content area classes.
- ★ Determining best grading procedures for students.

2) Methods for Identification and Placement, Enrollment, and Placement of Language-Minority Students

Home Language Survey

In the Ozark City School System, English Learners (ELs) must be identified at the point of enrollment. A consistent enrollment procedure for language-minority students, which includes the use of a Home Language Survey (HLS), facilitates their entry into the school system. A language-minority student is one whose home language is other than English. It is vital to have trained school personnel who are dedicated to meeting the needs of students from different cultures with different levels of English proficiency. A Home Language Survey must be completed for each student registering for enrollment. The assistance of a translator may be required to complete the survey. The EL teacher/coordinator should be informed within two days about this student, and a copy of the Home Language Survey for any language-minority student should be provided to the EL teacher/coordinator. The original Home Language Survey for every new student, regardless of language background, should be filed in the student's cumulative folder.

The Home Language Survey must contain, at a minimum, the following questions:

1. Is a language other than English spoken at home?
2. Is your child's first language a language other than English?
3. What language does your child most frequently speak at home?
4. What is your child's country of origin?
5. Has your child been in US schools for at least three years?

When all responses on the HLS indicate that English is the only language used by the student and by individuals in the home, the student is considered an English-only speaker. Procedures established by the school system for placement in the general student population will be followed.

Any student whose registration or HLS indicates a language other than English on any of the survey questions is a language-minority student. If any response on the HLS indicates the use of a language other than English by the student or an individual in the home, then further assessment must be conducted to determine the student's English-language proficiency level. However, the presence of a language other than English does not automatically signify that the student is not a competent and proficient speaker of English.

WIDA Screener for Kindergarten and WIDA Online Screener

Initial assessment of English language proficiency will be conducted to determine the level of English proficiency and to facilitate appropriate instructional and program placement decisions. Language-minority students identified through the HLS during registration at the beginning of the school year will be assessed for English-language proficiency within thirty (30) days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year. Language-minority students who register after the beginning of the school year must be assessed within ten (10) days of enrollment. The Ozark City School System will record the registration date as "original entry date" in PowerSchool or "date first enrolled" when completing the demographics page of the for EL English proficiency test.

ACCESS for ELLs

The ACCESS for ELLs is an annual assessment that indicates the progress students have made from year to year and annual proficiency level. Both the ACCESS for ELLs and the Screener assesses the four language domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The Screener and ACCESS test items are written from the model performance indicators of WIDA's five English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards. The standards are:

1. English language learners communicate in English for SOCIAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL purposes within the school setting.
2. English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of LANGUAGE ARTS.
3. English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of MATHEMATICS.
4. English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of SCIENCE.
5. English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of SOCIAL STUDIES.

The WIDA Screener and ACCESS test forms are divided into five grade-level clusters: Kindergarten, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8 and Grades 9-12.

The ACCESS for ELLs is administered each spring in accordance with the testing calendar set forth by the Alabama State Department of Education. All Kindergarten students are assessed individually. Students in grades 1-12 take the speaking portion of the test individually and the listening, reading, and writing portions in small groups with students of the same grade level cluster and tier. Within each grade-level cluster (except Kindergarten), ACCESS for ELLs consists of three forms: Tier A (beginning), Tier B (intermediate), and Tier C (advanced). This keeps the test shorter and more appropriately targets each student's range of language skills.

Enrollment Policy

All language-minority students must be allowed to attend school, regardless of their ability to produce a birth certificate, social security number, or immigration documentation. Children may not be excluded from school because they do not have a social security number. Application forms to obtain social security numbers may be distributed, but the option of completing the forms must be left to the parents. Each school within the Ozark City School System uses procedures described in *Alabama Administrative Code* (AAC) to create a student number.

If parents do not have student immunization records available, the dates of immunization may be obtained by calling the previous school that the child attended. The Ozark City School System will make every effort to contact the former school system. If necessary, students can begin the immunization series at the Dale County Health Department. If appropriate immunization documentation cannot be obtained within a reasonable period of time, the student's case should be handled in accordance with approved state and local board of education procedures.

The LEA should work collaboratively with community and area agencies to **facilitate** the school enrollment process. These efforts should be documented for future reference as needed.

The following conditions are a part of registration procedures:

1. **A parent or guardian** is to be present at the time of registration to provide the signatures required by law.
2. **Proof of residence** can be a signed copy of a lease, a rental or purchase agreement for a residence, indicating the address of the residence. A copy of a utility bill mailed to the residence is also acceptable, as are Housing Authority forms, Social Security or Welfare checks. Students unable to provide proof of residence will be able to enroll, and proof can be provided as it becomes available.
3. **Proof of age** may consist of a valid birth certificate, a valid passport or other official documents listing date and place of birth.
4. **Proof of immunization** consists of the State of Alabama Certificate of Immunization Card(s). This can be obtained from the Dale County Health Department. Admission is granted to EL students who do not have proof of immunization. Assistance will be provided to obtain records of immunization.
5. **Social Security Card** is not mandatory for enrollment. It is requested. A temporary number can be assigned until the card is obtained. A temporary social security number may be obtained by the school secretary at each school.

The enrollment of limited English proficient children shall not be denied or delayed due to any of the following barriers:

- Lack of birth certificate
- Lack of school records or transcripts
- Lack of immunization or health records
- Lack of proof of residency
- Lack of transportation
- Guardianship or custody requirement

Program Placement – WIDA – ACCESS Placement Test

Initial Language Proficiency Assessment and Program Placement

Initial assessment of English language proficiency will be conducted to determine the level of English proficiency and to facilitate appropriate instructional and program placement decisions. Language-minority students identified through the HLS during registration at the beginning of the school year will be assessed for English-language proficiency within thirty (30) days of enrollment. Language-minority students who register after the beginning of the school year must be assessed within ten (10) days of enrollment. Ozark City Schools will record the registration date as “original entry date” in PowerSchool or “date first enrolled” when completing the demographics page of the ACCESS for EL English proficiency test

The WIDA Screener will be administered as the screener for Kindergarten. The *WIDA Online Screener* will be used for grades 1 – 12 to help determine eligibility for placement in the Ozark City School’s EL Program. The WIDA Online Screener assesses English language proficiency in all four domains of language development—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—as well as comprehension to ensure that students' language needs are properly identified and addressed through the school system’s educational program.

The *WIDA Online Screener* yields an overall composite score based on the language domains tested. The following guidelines must be adhered to in determining eligibility for placement in the English language instruction educational program.

A Home Language Survey (HLS) must be completed for each student registering for enrollment. If any language other than English is listed on the student’s HLS, they are a potential candidate for EL services. The LEA may use the appropriate WIDA assessment per grade level. The proficiency level for kindergarten students taking the WIDA Kindergarten is 4.5 and above. The proficiency level for students taking the WIDA Screener Online is 5.0.

ONLINE SCREENER will be considered as only one piece of evidence in the decision-making process regarding placement. Teacher judgment, other assessments, and extenuating circumstances,

such as the student's age and amount and quality of previous schooling, should be factored into the decision.

Further, the following factors should be considered: · Scores from the screener · Scores from classroom assignments/ tests and content assessments (if applicable) · Teacher judgment · Extenuating circumstances (student's age and quantity and quality of former schooling) The following guidelines determine eligibility for placement in the English language instruction educational program: Kindergarten students taking the WIDA Kindergarten screener is less than 4.5. First grade students in the second semester of school and students in grades 2-12 taking the WIDA Screener Online is less than 5.0. Students with disabilities must use one of the screeners listed above, unless current indicates there is no alternate screener at this time.

ELs are placed at the age appropriate grade or level, unless specific documentation is available to indicate lack of academic readiness for the level. Lack of proficiency in English is not the sole determinant in retention or placement below grade level.

After the administration of the *WIDA screener and the ACCESS for ELLs*, the results are listed on the EL Individual Learner Plan (I-ELP) or the EL Committee Documentation Form. The Form is evaluated by the EL Committee. The final placement is based on all pertinent records, including any available from previous schools.

In summary, initial assessment of English language proficiency must be conducted within 30 days of enrollment for any student identified in the HLS who registers before or at the beginning of the school year and within 10 days for students who register after the beginning of the school year.

Parents should be notified no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year of results of the screening and qualification of EL services. Placement scores are not added into a state database, However, new ELs are reported as EL-1 or NOMPHLOTE in PowerSchool. There are no requirements to monitor students who do not qualify or just barely score above the minimum. The WIDA Screener Online (Grades 1-12) may be used to rescreen former EL students to determine if language is a barrier to instruction. If language has been determined to be a barrier to instruction then the student may be placed back into the Language Instruction Education Program.

The placement decision by the EL Committee is noted on the EL Individual Learner Plan or the EL Committee Documentation Form. The form becomes a part of the student's EL file and/or cum folder.

Parent permission is requested for a student to begin services. However, no parent/guardian approval is mandatory for EL services to begin, but notification is provided to parents with information detailing the right of the parent to have their child immediately removed from supplemental Title III programs upon request. Parents must sign a waiver letter each year requesting that their child not receive EL services.

In order to administer and score the WIDA Screener Online, the following training modules must be completed: · Logistics · Administration · Scoring and Reporting · Accommodations · Materials and Resources In addition, test administrators must pass the certification quizzes (for the appropriate grade levels) with a score of 80% or higher: · Speaking Quiz Grades 1-5 · Speaking Quiz Grades 6-12 · Screener Writing Quiz Grades 1-5 · Screener Writing Quiz Grades 6-12 Certification is required annually, but an annual refresh of the training course, especially the Speaking and Writing scoring modules, is strongly encouraged.

The Language Proficiency Levels

***based on WIDA – ACCESS screener**

The five language proficiency levels outline the progression of language development implied in the acquisition of English as an additional language, from 1-Entering the process to 5-Bridging to the attainment of state academic content standards. The language proficiency levels delineate expected performance and describe what English language learners can do within each domain of the standards.

1-Entering 2 – Beginning 3 – Developing 4 – Expanding 5 – Bridging

For the ACCESS, students are tested based on a tier level of proficiency at the time the test is administered

Forms

The registration and health forms should be completed by the parent, who may be assisted by an interpreter, or Language Line, if necessary.

The home language survey should be signed by the parent. An interpreter or Language Line may assist in reading this if necessary. The school counselor ensures that a Home Language Survey is completed for

each K and New students registering for enrollment. The counselor will keep HLS on file and send a copy to the EL staff member (if a language other than English is listed on the form). All Home Language Surveys are placed in each student's cumulative record.

School lunch forms should be completed for each student wishing to apply for free or reduced price lunches. Names of all adults living in the household should be listed.

School records, report cards, or transcripts are requested of the student /parent but not required.

Summary Identification and Placement:

Purpose of program: To enable English Learners (EL) to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing of the English language through the use of supplemental educational instruction.

Home Language Survey: At the beginning of every school year, all kindergarten and new students will be given a registration form that includes the home language survey. Currently, enrolled students' Home Language Survey is filed in his or her cumulative record. If any response on the HLS indicates the use of a language other than English by the student or an individual in the home, then further assessment must be conducted to determine the student's English-language proficiency level. However, the presence of a language other than English does not automatically signify that the student is not a competent and proficient speaker of English.

English Learner (EL) Committee Placement- Each school shall have an EL Committee, consisting of an administrator or his/her designee, classroom teacher(s), a counselor, ESL faculty or staff member, the parent of the limited English Language Learner student, and when deemed necessary, other appropriate school personnel. **Duties:** All members of the EL Committee, including the parents, shall observe all rules and laws governing the confidentiality of information concerning individual students. The EL Committee shall review all pertinent information on all EL students and make the determinations required regarding the placement in and exit from the EL program.

Parental notice and approval: Parents shall be given written notice that their child has been classified as EL. The notice shall be written in English as well as their native language if possible. If this is not possible, an interpreter will be asked to convey this to the parents of the EL student. Parents

are invited to be members of the EL Committee. Entry into the EL program does not have to be approved in writing by the student's parent or guardian. A parent has the right to waive services from the EL program yearly, choose another program or method of instruction, or have their child immediately removed from the program.

3) Method and Procedures for Exiting Students From English Language Instruction Education Program and Monitoring Progress

Program exit: When students have achieved proficiency on the state standards (Level III on the English Language Arts portion of state assessments) and/or have tested proficient (4.8 on the ACCESS) on the English language proficiency test for one consecutive year, they will be exited from the program and classified as “Former ESL – FLEP 1, 2, 3, or 4.

No student shall be exited from EL services due to participation in the program a set amount of time. There is no time limit for participation in the EL program. For the purpose of accountability, EL Exit procedures include the following criteria:

A. Student must show proficiency on the ACCESS (4.8 composite or higher) for one year

Written notice shall be given to the parents that their child is to be exited from EL. Students may re-enter the program based on poor academic performance and/or poor score on the English language proficiency test (ACCESS). Any student who has re-entered will not be classified as “Former LEP” until they have again scored proficient on the state English language proficiency test for one year. The parent will be notified.

MONITORING ELS WHO HAVE EXITED THE EL PROGRAM

The progress of the student is monitored for four (4) years. The first year, the student will be monitored on the same schedule as progress reports and report cards are issued. The second – fourth year, the student will be monitored a minimum of once each semester.

If the student is not academically successful, or does not successfully make a passing grade on course work without successful accommodations, the student can be recommended for reclassification as EL (with the MODEL or online screener) and placed in the most appropriate program that will meet the need for English language instruction.

C. PROGRAMS AND INSTRUCTION

1) Program development, implementations, and administration

The Ozark City School System will provide programs and activities that will be developed, implemented and administered to ensure ELs acquire academic language as part of the core ESL program. The Core EL program is the ESL program or SDAIE (Specifically Designed Academic Instruction for English Learners). A method of teaching language acquisition and core academic content. The approach is SIOP – Sheltered Instruction.

A Comprehensive Needs Assessment is conducted using all available, current data. The ACCESS is a major source of data that drives instruction for ELs. However, other data such as EL Web Portal, STAR, ACT, iReady, Lexia, WorkKeys, formative assessments, AimsWeb+, and other assessments will be used for effective program planning and implementation.

Selecting EL Programs

Instruction for English Learners –Curriculum and Instruction

Alabama Courses of Study and World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment English Language Proficiency (WIDA ELP) Standards

The WIDA ELP Standards facilitate the design of language development objectives that support, guide, and develop content knowledge and skills at the appropriate level of English proficiency. The Ozark City School System is committed to teaching ELs survival English by developing their academic English through the context of all content areas.

The Ozark City School System will use language instruction supplemental educational programs in pull out and push in settings to ensure that limited-English proficient students develop English proficiency. State assessments and other measurable objectives will be used to determine annual proficiency. Programs that have a high success rate of helping children to meet proficiency levels will be purchased. Language education programs will be evaluated based on established criteria. These researched based programs will be implemented by faculty and staff who have fluency in English, including having written and oral communication skills. Materials and supplies specific to supplemental instruction will

be purchased with available funds. Our goals are to 1) understand, assess, and provide services which

respond to each student's abilities, backgrounds, and experiences; and 2) to eliminate barriers which interfere with a student's school success.

Students who are acquiring a new language undergo five stages of language development: Entering, Beginning, Developing, Transitioning, and Bridging until they attain English proficiency. By implementing the WIDA- ELP standards in the classroom, teachers are able to provide ELs with meaningful access to local curriculum as they progress through the stages of language acquisition.

2) Language instruction educational programs will be purchased to ensure that limited English proficient students develop English proficiency.

Ozark City Schools will ensure that ELs develop English proficiency by 1) Using the principle and practice of continuous improvement through the use of data to improve the rate of language acquisition for ELs, 2) Support the efforts of each school with respect to its continuous improvement practices, 3) Integrate WIDA ELP standards with the curriculum, and 4) Integration of WIDA ELP standards in teacher lesson plans. To this end, the EL program will offer supplemental instruction that will:

- Lead to the timely acquisition of proficiency in English, and
- Provide teaching and learning opportunities so that each student can become proficient in the state's academic content and student academic achievement standards within the specified time frame that is expected for all students.

Instruction will be offered by EL staff who are fluent in English, including having written and oral communication skills.

The needs of all English Learners will be prioritized to include the following goals:

- 1) To help ensure that English Learners attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging state academic and content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet, the following methods will be used. The needs of ELs including Early Childhood, Elementary, Junior, and High School will be met with the use of quality instruction, assessments, and evaluation of teaching methods. The assessments to be used are: AimsWeb+, ACCESS 2.0, ACT, WorkKeys, report card grades, Diagnostic test, questionnaires/survey, authentic

alternate assessments, and other methods for determining proficiency.

- 2) To develop high-quality language instruction educational programs designed to assist school in teaching limited English Learners; and,
- 3) To demonstrate improvements in the English proficiency of ELs each year.

3) Specific Components of the LEA's EL Program

EVIDENCED BASED PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE ACADEMIC

ENHANCEMENT OF ENGLISH LEARNERS

The Ozark City School System will use Title III supplemental funds to provide high-quality language instructional, educational programs that are based on scientifically based research demonstrating effectiveness in increasing English proficiency and student academic achievement in the core academic subjects and as a part of the core academic program. This research involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to educational activities and programs.

The needs of our school system's English Learners are varied. In response, our classroom teachers and EL staff utilize a variety of instructional programs which allow for the utilization of a variety of instructional strategies and approaches focusing on the acquisition of academic language proficiency and literacy. The WIDA ELP Standards will be formally used for instruction with English Learners.

Other programs include:

In grades Kindergarten through Five, the reading approach to literacy is the use of iReady, AimsWeb+, Open Court, and formative assessment data to drive instruction. Considerations are given when instructing students who have a Primary Home Language and have been identified as an English Learner (EL) student. Phonics programs and AimsWeb+ are used to foster the understanding and relationship between phonemes (the Sounds of spoken language) and graphemes (the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language). This instruction is research based and

systematic. The primary goal of this approach is to help children understand the relationship between written letters and spoken sounds. Resources are varied depending on the needs of the students based on the ACCESS results and other data. Some include:

iReady

SPIRE

Lexia Core 5 Reading

Duo Lingo

Read 180

Other resources that have been used periodically include:

- The Rosetta Stone computer program is available for EL students for use in the regular classroom, before school, and after school. This program is available for student use in school libraries. This is an independently paced computerized program which requires limited monitoring from EL staff. All areas of English proficiency are addressed through this program.
- All adopted textbooks and Alabama Courses of Study are used to ensure that students are correctly offered assistance when needed in currently enrolled academic courses.
- SPIRE is used for EL students (K-5) who cannot read or decode grade level material and struggle with comprehension are targeted for Tier 3.
- Many trade books have been purchased on various topics for use with all EL students. These books are written in English, but celebrate various cultures. These books may be read to the students by EL staff or just available for their independent reading.
- Word-for-Word English-Spanish Spanish-English Dictionary (Collins Language)

The Ozark City School System provides supplemental services to EL students that include, but are not limited to, after school tutoring (if needed), summer reading programs, interpreters on hand as needed, purchasing of Scientifically Based Research EL programs to be used for pull-out, elective, or resource programs for these identified students. Programs and activities will be developed, implemented, and administered through the regular classroom instructional program as well as the individual learner plan to ensure that ELs acquire academic language as part of the core academic program.

Translated handouts/forms/information are distributed in the language the student and parents can understand. All EL students are given the same fair and appropriate education as all other students. All EL students will be taught by certified teachers, and all teachers are fluent in English.

4) Grading and Retention Policy and Procedures

Grading of ELs should be based on students' level of English proficiency. The teacher ensures this through the continual use of accommodations and assessments according to the students' I-ELP. This complies with the federal law (*Every Student Succeeds Act of 2016* (ESSA)). Appropriate instruction and differentiation must be adjusted according to language proficiency level in order to appropriately accommodate the student. Documentation of these components (lesson plans, work samples, and ongoing assessments) should be maintained by the classroom teacher.

Guidelines to Satisfy Legal Requirements of *Lau v. Nichols*). Prior to considering retention of an EL, the following points should be addressed in consultation with the EL Committee.

What is the student's level of English language proficiency?

Has an Individual English Language Plan (I-ELP) been implemented to document classroom accommodations and student progress?

To ensure meaningful participation, are classroom accommodations being made in the areas of:

- Teacher lesson delivery at student's level of English proficiency? - Activities and assignments?
- Homework?
- Formal and informal assessments (e.g., quizzes and tests)?

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

Has an alternate grading strategy been implemented (e.g., a portfolio, checklist, teacher observation, or rubric assessment on content and language objectives)?

Has the student's classroom teacher been adequately trained with EL instructional and assessment strategies specifically designed for students learning English?

The following guidelines are to be followed to assure that EL students are not being discriminated against due to the language barrier.

1. For Intermediate English-speaking students, teachers may grade on **improvement** as well as knowledge of content.
 2. A grade of “F” cannot be assigned to an EL student without full documentation of modifications having been made to assure the student’s full access to the content.
6. **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**.

Strict adherence to a “number” grading system is often inappropriate for EL students. To ensure that EL students have a reasonable chance of succeeding in school, the following guidelines will apply:

1. For each EL student, a plan for EL instruction, I-ELP, shall be developed.
2. Satisfactory or unsatisfactory grades relevant to the learning objectives in that plan shall be assigned.
3. In regular classes (not EL), grades shall be assigned in accordance with the scale established by the Ozark Board of Education.

5) Specific staffing and other resources to be provided to ELs through the EL Program

English Learners will be instructed in core classrooms by qualified teachers. Teachers will continue to receive professional development to support instruction. Specific staffing and other resources will be provided to ELs. Our school system has employed two EL teachers, with one having an ESOL endorsement and fluent in Spanish. All staff members speak English fluently and have excellent written and oral communication skills, as evidenced by the employment process and formal and informal observations.

6) Method for Collecting and Submitting Data

The Ozark City School System will collect data from each school’s principal, database, the school’s EL faculty or staff member serving EL students and any other entity as appropriate for collecting and submitted data. Such data may include state assessment results for individual students, performance

indicators, attendance, report cards, progress reports, demographic information, and waiver letters. Each collection of data will be compiled and submitted to the State Department of Education according to requirements. The school system will also follow procedures for reviewing EL reports online as required.

7) Method for evaluating the effectiveness of the EL program

Evaluating the effectiveness of the program. Evaluating the EL program involves collection and analysis of data to determine whether the goals set forth during the comprehensive needs assessment (or previous program evaluation) were met. The data analysis should be summarized to illustrate the status of the EL program and should include our future goals and plans to improve the program the following school year.

According to Chapter 9 of the U. S. Department of Education English Learner Tool Kit for State and Local Education Agencies (SEAs and LEAs), updated November 2016, LEA's should consider the following when evaluating the effectiveness of the EL Program:

- Successful EL programs enable EL students to attain both English proficiency and parity of participation in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time.
- The Ozark City Schools shall collect longitudinal data to monitor and compare the performance of current ELs, former ELs, and never-ELs in the standard instructional program. Data should not be limited to ACCESS for ELs
- When EL programs do not produce both English proficiency and parity of participation within a reasonable period of time, the ALSDE and LEAs must modify the EL program.

Program Evaluation Flowchart

Each school in the LEA will be held accountable by evaluating their current methods of assessing student proficiency, implementing reform strategies, and developing and revising their ACIP (Alabama Continuous Improvement Plan) for increased student achievement. The ACIP and data will be analyzed and reviewed to determine if the goals of the EL plan have been attained, what further strategies are needed, and what resources should be allocated. The data compilation report will also be used to evaluate the EL program

The Ozark City School System's method of evaluating the EL program will include a review of all state assessment results for individual students and schools, analysis of comprehensive needs assessment, adequate yearly progress results per subgroup, evaluation of school reform strategies, and revisions. Such a review will determine the need to revise existing school plans.

The purpose of program evaluation is to provide information for decision-making at several levels in the implementation of the goals, action steps, and program implementation. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the program is student achievement of English language proficiency and proficiency on grade level student academic content standards. Evaluation of the EL Plan, LEA Improvement Plan, and ACIPs -Continuous Improvement Plans are the outgrowth of the plan development and implementation. Evaluation is continuous and an ongoing requirement. A formal evaluation of the proficiency of the English language learner is an instructional educational requirement. A formal evaluation of the EL program will be conducted at the end of each school year and again upon receipt of state assessment results. Assessing scientifically based research methods, materials and approaches on teaching EL students is also an important component of evaluating the program. Attaining English proficiency is crucial to success in obtaining proficiency on content standards.

Three types of standards: English language proficiency standards, academic content and performance standards will be assessed. The annual measurable goals will determine the effectiveness of the program and assist in program improvement. The Ozark City School System is held accountable for improving EL English proficiency through public reporting and by state AYP requirements. Additionally, the ESL Program Evaluation and English Learners LEA Compilation Data /Web Portal Accountability are used to assess the program and make revisions. Such information reported include:

Reporting the Types of Language Instruction Education Programs Utilized by the LEA

Program Exit Information

- The number of students who exited the program with a 4.8 or higher

Other areas to report:

State Assessment and Accountability

All EL students must participate in the statewide Student Assessment Program for accountability purposes. EL students, during their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools, **will not be required** to participate in the Reading/Language Arts test on *ACAP Summative Assessment* or the Reading test of the *ACAP Alternate Assessment*.

EL students in their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools **must participate** in the Mathematics and Science tests of the *ACAP Summative Assessment* or the *ACAP Alternate Assessment*. These students **must participate** in all parts of the *ACT with Writing* and the *ACT WorkKeys* assessments.

EL students, for which this is not their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools must participate in all subjects and all tests in the statewide Student Assessment Program. EL students in Grades K-12, regardless of the number of years of enrollment in U.S. schools must participate in *Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners* (ACCESS for ELLS™), the state-administered English language proficiency test, **or** the *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™*, the state-administered English language proficiency test for students in Grades 112 who have a significant cognitive disability. All ELs, whether they receive or waive supplemental Title III services, must be tested annually on ACCESS for ELLS™ or *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™*. Students in their first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools who take ACCESS for ELLS™ or *Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™* will be counted as participants toward meeting the 95% participation requirement for Reading.

Participation of EL students in any of the assessments that allow flexibility during the first 12 months of enrollment in U.S. schools, will not result in their scores being used for accountability determination. However, these students will be counted as participants toward meeting the 95% participation requirement for accountability purposes. ELs, during their **first academic year of**

enrollment in U.S. schools, must take the appropriate mathematics portion of state assessments, with accommodations as necessary, but their scores will not be included in accountability determinations.

These students will be counted as participants toward meeting the percent participation

Assessment results for each limited –English proficient student that participates in the state’s assessment system, under standard conditions or with approved accommodations, will be included in the calculations and determinations for academic accountability at the LEA and school levels. The State Department of Education has established annual measurable achievement objectives (WIDA standards) for English language learners and for students’ development and attainment of English proficiency while meeting challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards as required by Title I, Section 1111(b)(1). The measurable objectives will include the definition of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for limited-English students.

2) Method for holding schools accountable for meeting proficiency in academic achievement

Each school and LEA will be held accountable for:

- ❖ Annual increases in the number or percentage of students making progress
- ❖ Annual increases in the number or percentage of students attaining English proficiency by the end of each school year
- ❖ Proficiency as defined by the state, for EL students
- ❖ The percentage of limited-English proficient students who participate in the states’ student assessment program. (Title I, Section 1111(b)(2)(I)(ii) states that not less than 95 percent (95%) of each school’s limited-English proficient students are required to take the state’s assessments.

All discrepancies between the number of students enrolled, the number of students tested, and the number of students included in accountability decisions must be documented. Title III, Part A, Subpart 2, requires LEAs to annually assess the English language proficiency of each EL student. Students must achieve proficiency in their English language acquisition based on the state-adopted English language development assessment.

Each school is held accountable for evaluating their EL Program and Plan in conjunction with the ACIP. The results will be used for program improvement and revisions. The Plan will be presented to the faculty and staff.

Testing Considerations

In addition to English language proficiency, a number of other factors should be taken into account when testing EL students. Inexperience with standardized testing and cultural differences in the relationship between the home and the schools must be considered. The following suggestions may be helpful in testing EL students:

Familiarize the student with testing procedures, since his or her culture may not have provided extensive experience with standardized testing.

Practice on items that have formats similar to those used with standardized testing, including a machine scored document for practice with "bubbling", is recommended.

Take precautions to ensure that the parents/guardians are informed, understand the purpose of testing, and know the meaning and any implication of the results.

Testing Accommodations

The purpose of testing accommodations for an EL student is to enable the student to demonstrate the degree of achievement which he or she possesses. Accommodations can be made to ensure that each EL student receives individual consideration of his or her language proficiency, but an accommodation cannot be provided if it changes the nature, content, or integrity of the test.

When determining appropriate accommodations for an assessment, the EL Committee must look at the accommodations regularly being made on the student's classroom tests over time in that particular subject area. Accommodations on state assessments must be accommodations which are a part of the student's instructional program; however, the EL Committee must work within the framework of the approved accommodations on the EL Accommodations Checklists. The EL Committee must remember that accommodation on a state assessment cannot supplant the skill that the test is designed to measure. Accommodations which change the nature, content, or integrity of the test, such as reading of a reading test designed to assess the skill of reading, are not allowed. (See Appendix for EL Accommodations Checklists)

Identification of EL Students on the Answer Document

All EL students must participate in the assessment program and should be coded as such on the answer document. The EL bubble will be graded on the student's answer document.

With ACCESS testing, demographic information is coded in the data program PowerSchool. This information is pulled by the state department via the school's system's reporting.

Accommodations for English Language Learners on the Statewide Student Assessment Program

Decisions regarding appropriate accommodations for EL students must be made on an individual basis by the EL Committee. The EL Committee should consider the content and nature of each specific assessment and the level of the student's language proficiency when making decisions about appropriate accommodations for assessments and the students' instructional program.

The percentage of students gains in proficiency according to the growth chart

The percentage of students exiting the program

The percentage of students meeting standards according to growth models - iReady or STAR

- The number of students who returned to the English language instruction educational program, by school and for the LEA.
- Number of ELs who are in their first year of school in the United States.
- Number of students who are in the first year of monitoring as a Former Limited English Proficient student.
- Number of students who are in the second year of monitoring as a Former Limited English Proficient student.
- Number of students who are considered Former Limited English Proficient.

Participation in other programs:

The number of EL and general education students referred for special education evaluation by school and for the LEA.

- The number of EL and general education students who qualified for placement in special education programs and/or services by school and for the LEA.
- The total number of ELs and general education students currently enrolled in the LEA's special education program.
- The number of ELs and general education students referred for admission into the LEA's gifted and talented program.
- The total number of ELs and general education students currently enrolled in the LEA's gifted and talented program.
- The total number of ELs and general education students currently enrolled in the LEA's career-technical education program.

- The number of ELs and general education students participating in extracurricular activities, e.g., intramural sports, clubs.
- The number of ELs and general education students who received an honor or award during the school year.
- The number of ELs and general education students being served by Title I.

Number of Immigrant Children and Youth

Number of LEP students in their first academic year in the United States with limited or no formal schooling

English Language Proficiency

- The number of ELs making progress in learning English according to the ACCESS for ELLs scores
- The number of ELs exiting EL.

Staffing

- The number of EL certified teachers in the school and LEA.
- The number of teachers highly-qualified to teach ESL (foreign language or elementary certified teachers), but not certified in ESL.
- The number of certified teachers teaching ESL (certified in a field other than ESL).
- The number of paraprofessionals working in the ESL program.

Training

- A list and brief description of English language instruction educational program training provided for all personnel at each school and in the LEA; including the date, the intended audience and the number of participants.

Communication

- The number and name of the different languages for which the LEA has written school-related documents.
- A list of interpreters who are readily available to assist in parent/guardian communications and a description of how the list is maintained, by whom and where.
- A description of community activities conducted and resources in the community that are available to provide services.

- A description of efforts and activities to involve parents/guardians in the educational process.

General Comparison Information

- The LEA's number of EL and General Education dropouts.
- The total number of truancy petitions for EL and general education students the LEA has issued during the school year.
- The number of EL and general education seniors that graduated.
- The number of ELs and general education students who participated in state assessment program.
- The number of EL and general education students receiving supplemental services.
- The number of EL and general education students prohibited or excluded from extracurricular activities based on grades.
- The number of high school ELs using elective credit for ESL services.
- The number of EL and general education students enrolled by grade level.
- The number of EL and general education students retained by grade level.

Progress Within the Program

- The beginning English proficiency level.
- The beginning academic level.
- The number of years in the English language instruction educational program (particularly using the Date First Identified LEP).
- The type of English language instruction educational program service received, e.g., English as a Second Language, one-on-one tutoring.
- The current English proficiency level.
- The current academic level.
- The current number of hours spent in the English language instruction educational program.

Parents also play a role in evaluating the program by serving as active participants in offering input into EL plan for program improvements.

8) Method of identification and referral of ELs to the Special Education Program

Gifted and Talented Education

English Learners will be considered for the gifted program under the same guidelines as all students. EL students will participate in the second-grade screening process. For consideration and inclusion in the **gifted program**, minority students can be given special deference with an interpreter or an adaptive version of the placement test. It is important that EL students who receive EL instruction are not penalized and/or burdened by their participation in EL instruction, especially in grades Kindergarten through twelfth, when this instruction is offered in a pull-out format.

For all students, it is vitally important that the EL student's classroom teacher(s) and the EL staff member cooperate with each other fully to ensure the best instructional opportunity for each EL student.

English Language Learners with Disabilities - Special Education Guidelines for Service to EL Students

The EL student with disabilities has a right to the same special education services as other students with disabilities. All students with disabilities are guaranteed the right to a free, appropriate public education; an IEP with related services, if needed, that meet their specific needs; due process; education in the least restrictive environment; tests that are not culturally discriminatory; and a multidisciplinary assessment. However, cultural and linguistic backgrounds should not be confused with disabilities and should not serve as a basis for referral for a special education evaluation. Among the concerns are identification, eligibility, and service provision for ELs suspected of having a disability.

The school system's programs for students with disabilities and English Learners will work cooperatively to identify students who are eligible for services. The identification, eligibility and service provision for these students will be provided in accordance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004*. Specific procedures concerning the referral of EL students located in the Alabama Department of Education, EL Policy and Procedures Manual will be followed. As a general rule, EL students who are following normal developmental patterns for learning a new language should not be referred. Care should be exercised or used to ensure that limited-English proficiency is not the basis of a referral. A child may not be determined to be eligible for special education if the determinant factor is the child's lack of instruction in reading, math, or limited-English proficiency.

Prior to a RTI /MTSS referral, efforts must be made by the student's classroom teacher to meet the student's needs within the context of the services which are part of the regular education program, including the accommodations. Such efforts and their results must be documented. A referral to the

RTI/MTSS is made only after sufficient evidence is on file indicating that accommodations have been made, and the student has not made progress in research based programs for at least 6 months to 1 year. Three specific indicators which validate the need for special education evaluation are:

1. Poor communicative proficiency in the home as compared to siblings and age peers in bilingual environments, especially when this lack is noted by parents;
2. English language development that appears to be significantly different from that of peers who are also learning English as a Second Language; and,
3. Noted developmental delays or other at-risk conditions.

Distinct Roles of RTI/MTSS– Team and English Learner (EL) Committees

1. The RTI/ MTSS Team is to be used for developing strategies for any general education student that is at risk of failure academically or behaviorally and has not responded to instruction in the whole group – core instruction. At-Risk definition: core grades below C, or Level 1 or 2 on state assessments/tests, chronic behavior referrals, etc. Although it is a required step before special education testing, it is not used **only** for pre-special education testing purposes. ELs may be placed on RTi/MTSS, provided they have been and are currently being served with appropriate instructional and assessment strategies determined by the EL Committee, but continue to demonstrate risk of failure. ELs cannot be referred for RTi if language is the barrier to achievement. The RTI /MTSS committee may not have the specialized training needed to write appropriate strategies or accommodations for students whose primary language is other than English.
2. If an EL student is being discussed for possible special education issues and language is clearly not the issue, then RTI/MTSS is the appropriate vehicle, provided EL staff member(s) are part of the team. Once language has been eliminated as the barrier to achievement, EL students must be served in the same way as all other students.
3. The EL and RTI/MTSS committees are separate entities, but may include some of the same members. In smaller school districts, there are a limited number of personnel available for these important roles. The issue is not the duplication of personnel on the committees; it is the purpose of the committees. Appropriate personnel to serve on the EL Committee include content-area or general classroom teachers of ELs, assessment specialists, school administrators, school counselors, and ESL staff.

The EL Committee can refer an EL to RTI/MTSS. When the RTI /MTSS process is completed, the information recorded should remove all doubt that sociocultural factors are the primary contributors to the student's learning or behavior. Language should not be considered as a barrier. In situations where it is not realistic to test in the native language or mode of communication for an EL, the Ozark City School System must consider information that will enable the eligibility team to make a decision whether the child has a disability and the effects of the disability on educational needs.

Special education programs and services must be provided in accordance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004*. The Ozark City School System is to include a description for communicating with non-English speaking students/parents in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). The Ozark City School System will secure the services to communicate with the child/parent in the native language. The materials and procedures used to assess a limited-English proficient student 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 limited-English proficient student with disabilities has a right to the same individual special education services as other students with disabilities. The IEP for an EL with a disability must include all of the components as listed in the *Alabama Administrative Code*. The IEP team shall consider the language needs of the student as those needs relate to the student's IEP. Parent participation is a required part of the special education process and to ensure active participation, accommodations must be made at all meetings and in written communications for the non-English speaking parent. This may also be necessary for parents of students who are National Origin of Minority whose Primary Home Language is Other Than English. These accommodations must include a translator for oral communication, and written communication must be in the parent's native language.

The EL definition includes students with a wide range of educational needs with respect to learning English as a second language.

Consider the following types of students, all of whom are present in Alabama schools:

- Children of recent immigrants who speak no English and who have had no formal training in a written language

- Children of highly educated immigrants, who have had formal training in English during proper schooling.
- United States born children whose primary language is other than English and who have had limited formal education through the English language.

All EL students have participated in the statewide student assessment programs, with or without accommodations, and be included in the accounting system. Additionally, each year EL students who are currently being served will be administered the ACCESS. EL students in their first academic year may be exempted from the reading subtest portion of state assessments. However, if these students participate, their scores will not be included in accountability determinations for reading. Students in their first academic year of enrollment in U.S. schools and who take ACCESS will be counted as participants toward meeting the growth targets and proficiency set by the State Department of Education. An academic year cannot exceed 12 months or allow more than one exemption from the state reading assessment, regardless of the date of enrollment.

E. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

1) Methods for promoting parental notification and parental and community participation in programs for limited-English proficient students.

Parental and community participation will be promoted and encouraged. Parental involvement activities will include programs that link families and schools together. When parents feel they have the power to change and control their circumstances, their children tend to do better in school. Their parents are also better equipped to help them. When schools work with families to develop their connections, families become powerful allies of the school and advocates for public education. Home –School Compacts are translated as well as other school information.

An annual system-wide meeting is held for the parents of English Learners. Not later than thirty days after the beginning of the school year, parents must be informed of identification, level of proficiency, instruction, IEP objectives (if applicable) exit requirements, academic achievement standards for promotion and graduation.

Parents and community members who speak a language other than English are invited and encouraged to participate in all school and system level programs and activities as English-speaking parents. Parents of

EL students will be notified of Adult Education classes and community classes where they may attend to benefit them. The school system will provide the following:

- Conduct an annual evaluation of educational programs to identify and eliminate barriers that may exist in preventing parents from participating in school activities
- Provide an interpreter to assist in school registration or LANGUAGE LINE, if needed
- Provide an interpreter for parent/teacher conferences, or Language Line
- Provide notices of school meetings and other activities in the language parents can understand
- Provide opportunities for parents to participate in the education of their children
- Provide opportunities for parents to be included on school and system level committees

1) Methods (in a language they can understand) for notification requirements for ELs students regarding

Parents shall be given written notice that their child has been classified as EL. The notice shall request parental approval (as indicated on the EL Committee documentation) to place the student in the EL program, as well as information about the benefits of the program and that it is an integral part of the school program. The notice shall be printed in English as well as their native language with the TRANSACT program. If this is not possible, an interpreter will be asked to convey this to the parents of the EL student. Entry into the EL program must be approved in writing by the student's parent or guardian. Approval shall be considered valid for the student's continued participation in the program until the student meets the exit criteria, graduates from high school, or the parent requests a change in the program placement.

The Ozark City School System will, no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year, provide notification to parent(s) of ELs identified for participation in an English language instruction educational program of:

1. The reasons for the identification.
2. The child's level of English proficiency.
 - a. How such level was assessed.
 - b. The status of the child's academic achievement.
3. The method of instruction used in the program.
4. How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child.
5. How the program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.

6. 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.
7. In the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the objectives of the individualized education program of the child.
8. Information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance detailing:
 - The right of the parents to have their child immediately removed from supplemental Title III programs upon request.
 - The options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such supplemental Title III programs or to choose another program or method of instruction if available.
 - The various programs and methods of instruction if more than one program or method is offered by the eligible entity.

If a child enrolls in school after the beginning of the school year, the LEA must notify parents of the failing school's language instruction educational program within two weeks of the child being placed in such a program. Parent notifications must be communicated in a language and/or manner that the parents can understand. Acceptable parent notification forms are available in 22 languages online at TransACT. These parent notification forms, along with several other ESSA compliance forms.

Program exit: When students have tested proficient on the English language proficiency test (ACCESS) for one year they will be exited from the program and classified as "Former EL".

Students who re-enter the program based on poor academic performance, a poor score on the English language proficiency test, or a reading score on a state assessment that does not meet the standard (Level III) are required to receive EL services. Any student who has re-entered will not be classified as "Former LEP" until they have again scored proficient on the state English language proficiency test for two consecutive years and achieved Level III on the grade level appropriate reading portion of a state assessment.

OCR Policy

Districts are required to modify their programs if they prove to be unsuccessful after a legitimate trial. As a practical matter, recipients cannot comply with this requirement without evaluating their programs every one to two years.

Generally, districts measure "success" in terms of whether the program is achieving the particular goals the district has established for the program and its students. If the district has established no particular

goals, the program is successful if its participants are achieving proficiency in English and are able to participate meaningfully in classrooms without EL services.

CONCLUSION

It is the ultimate goal of the Title III program to eliminate barriers to school enrollment and matriculation. The changing world and our changing schools require dedication and the acquisition of new skills. School personnel must be given the support through professional development programs and through the provision of materials and supplies needed to respond to these needs. The Ozark City School System recognizes that diversity is an opportunity for growth and development and that cultural and background difference must not be a hindrance to school success. Each student must be regarded and treated as an individual, and unique talents and skills must be recognized.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Alabama Department of Education -English Learners (EL) Policy and Procedures Manual

