

Merced City School District

Master Plan for English Learners



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Merced City School District Demographics

English learner (EL) enrollment percentages extracted from Data Quest, California Department of Education, May 2026:
Reflective of 2024-2025 data.

	English Learner Enrollment Percentage
District	15.4%
Burbank	7.8%
Chenoweth	3.3%
Cruickshank	6.2%
Franklin	16.6%
Fremont	11.1%
Givens	9.7%
Gracey	19.7%
Hoover	13.4%
Merced City School Community Day	4%
Muir	14.5%
Peterson	4.6%
Reyes	46.8%
Rivera Elementary	6.2%
Rivera Middle	13.1%
Sheehy	28.3%
Stefani	18.4%
Stowell	28.6%
Tenaya	22.6%
Wright	18%

Purpose

The Merced City School District (MCSD) English Learner program is designed to achieve the following: improve the English language proficiency of English Learner, Immigrant, and Migrant students; and provide their parents with information about available services and resources. To accomplish these goals, the MCSD provides a range of programs and services to support students whose primary language is not English, enabling them to develop strong English language skills.

Home Language Survey

The Home Language Survey (HLS) is a legal document and an essential tool used in California public schools to identify students who may need support in learning English. Required by state law and administered during a student's initial enrollment, the HLS helps determine whether a student should be assessed for English language proficiency. The survey includes four questions aimed at identifying the primary language spoken by the student and their family. If any of the first three questions indicate a language other than English, the student is referred for assessment using the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). This process is in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 11518.5(a), and ensures that English learners are properly identified and supported with appropriate instructional programs. The HLS is available in English, Spanish, Hmong, and Mien. Parents or guardians who speak a language other than English may complete the form with the assistance of an interpreter. It is the responsibility of the Learning Director and school office team to ensure the survey is completed accurately and that the information is correctly entered into the district's Student Information System.

Assessment Criteria

The English language proficiency of students with a language other than English on Questions 1, 2, or 3 of the HLS is assessed within 30 calendar days of initial enrollment in a California school. Students in kindergarten through grade 8 are assessed in Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing using the Initial English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC). Newcomers to the district previously identified as English learners and assessed during the annual ELPAC Summative window do not need to be tested again during the same school year. Upon enrollment, school office personnel ascertain students' English Language Acquisition Status (ELAS) through a search of the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) and request that students' ELPAC scores be sent to the school for the purpose of proper program placement. A record of this information is maintained in the District's SIS.

Assessment for English Language Proficiency

If a student receives an Overall Proficiency Level "3", they are classified as Initial Fluent English Proficient (I-FEP). These students are not identified as English learners, do not participate in the annual Summative ELPAC, and are not subject to the reclassification process.

Classroom teachers are responsible for monitoring the academic progress of I-FEP kindergarteners and newly enrolled students. If a student is not making adequate progress due to language acquisition factors, the teacher should notify the principal or Learning Director for further support.

The Department of State and Federal Programs is responsible for the identification and ongoing monitoring of all I-FEP students.

Students with Reasonable Fluency

Students with reasonable fluency receive Structured English Immersion (SEI): A classroom setting where ELs who have not yet acquired reasonable fluency in English, as defined by the school district, receive instruction through an English language acquisition process, in which nearly all classroom instruction is in English but with a curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language.

Students with Less Than Reasonable Fluency

Students with less than reasonable fluency receive Structured English Immersion (SEI): A classroom setting where ELs who have not yet acquired reasonable fluency in English, as defined by the school district, receive instruction through an English language acquisition process, in which nearly all classroom instruction is in English but with a curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language, and may receive primary language support.

Transfer students from other districts, private schools, or out of the country

The standardized protocol for determining the English Learner Acquisition Status (ELAS) of all students entering MCSD comprises the following steps: Language acquisition status is determined through an authorized CALPADS query; confirmation of the student's language acquisition status is obtained from the transferring school; and the student's Home Language Survey (HLS) information is confirmed with the parent/guardian. Site administrators ensure that appropriately trained staff implement these EL placement procedures.

Assessment for Primary Language Proficiency

The school may assess primary language proficiency in students' primary language to determine comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. The Spanish Rainbow Test may be used to assess Spanish oral language proficiency. A trained, fluent Spanish speaker administers the assessment. Languages other than Spanish are assessed through informal assessments that may include: Teacher observation, informal interview, or parent questionnaire. The classroom teacher, instructional assistant, or other support personnel may conduct the informal assessment.

Parent Notification

Parents or guardians of English Learners (ELs) will receive written notification within 10 days of assessment completion. This notice will detail their child's English and primary language proficiency assessment results and program placement. It will also include information about all available EL programs and the process for requesting an alternative placement.

Initial Program Placement

Students assessed at levels Novice and Intermediate English Learner are placed in SEI by grade level and overall language proficiency level.

Instructional Programs

ELs are in the process of learning a new language and in many cases a new culture. Their experience with their home language and their culture influences their learning of the new language. The better educated we are about students' personal, socio-cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, the better equipped we will be to provide students with effective learning environments. The responsibility to provide quality education is accepted by all school personnel.

Structured English Immersion

The SEI Program is designed for students assessed at the levels Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging. In the SEI Program, instruction is delivered by a teacher who possesses an English Learner authorization certificate and credential from the Commission on Credentialing for the State of California. English learners identified as Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging receive structured English instruction. In an SEI classroom, English learners are taught "overwhelmingly, but not exclusively," in English. The use of the primary language is not precluded and is used by teaching personnel to facilitate access to the core curriculum. In those cases where the primary language is used by the teaching personnel, it meets the following criteria:

Clarification of a word, concept, or idea;

- Explanation of directions or instructions pertinent to a specific task;
- Emergency communications related to safety and welfare of students;
- Communications with the parents or legal guardians.

The basis for allowing primary language support can be interpreted from the California State Board of Education's emergency regulations, which state "school districts shall continue to provide additional appropriate educational services to ELs in kindergarten through grade 12 for the purpose of overcoming language barriers." ELs in this program receive a minimum of 30 minutes of Designated English Language Development (ELD) instruction daily using the district-adopted ELD curriculum: Wonders kindergarten through grade 5; or Study Sync in grades 6 through 8. English Learners in this program participate in activities that promote a positive self-image and cross-cultural understanding.

Identification, Assessment, and Initial Placement

Personnel Responsible	Procedure	Location
Principal or Designee	Administration of the HLS to newly enrolled students	School Office
Learning Director Office Staff	Contact with students' family to confirm HLS information and coordinate IELPAC assessment, if needed If a language other than English is marked students' ELAS is entered in to the information system as TBD	School Office
Office Staff	If a language other than English is marked students' ELAS is entered in to the information system as TBD	School Office
Learning Director or Trained Examiners	Student assessment with IELPAC	Classroom
Office Staff	IELPAC outcomes determine ELAS as I-FEP or EL. ELAS updated in the SIS	School Office

Principal or Designee/Learning Director	EL students are enrolled in SEI program to include 30 minutes of Designated ELD daily	School Office
Learning Director	Monitors and evaluates EL student placement (Language Proficiency Level, Grade level, and program fidelity)	Learning Director Office
Learning Director	Reports to State and Federal Programs using R-forms to ensure accurate placement and services for EL students	Learning Director Office

Initial ELPAC Overall Scale Score Ranges

Emerging	Intermediate	Expanding/Bridging
150–369	370–449	450–600

Language Program, Structured English Language

Grade	Emerging	Expanding	Expanding/Bridging	Bridging
K	1150-1373	1374–1421	1422–1473	1474–1700
1	1150-1410	1411–1454	1455–1506	1507–1700
2	1150-1423	1424–1470	1471–1531	1532–1700
3	1150-1447	1448–1487	1488–1534	1535–1800
4	1150-1458	1459–1498	1499–1548	1549–1800
5	1150-1466	1467–1513	1514–1559	1560–1800
6	1150-1474	1475–1516	1517–1566	1567–1900
7	1150-1480	1481–1526	1527–1575	1576–1900
8	1150-1485	1486–1533	1534–1589	1590–1900

Overview of the Instructional Programs

Language acquisition programs are educational programs designed to ensure English acquisition occurs as rapidly and effectively as possible and provide instruction to English learners based on the state-adopted academic content standards, including ELD standards. (EC Section 306[c]). Structured English Immersion (SEI) is the only language acquisition program offered by the District at this time. The program is designed for students at the Novice, Intermediate, Emerging, Emerging/Expanding, or Bridging level of English proficiency. SEI is a language acquisition program for ELs in which nearly all classroom instruction is provided in English, but with a curriculum and a presentation designed for pupils who are learning English. At a minimum, students are offered ELD and access to grade-level

academic subject matter content. In the SEI program, instruction is delivered by a teacher who possesses an English Learner authorization certificate or credential from the Commission on Credentialing for the State of California. In SEI classrooms, ELs are taught “overwhelmingly, but not exclusively,” in English. The use of the primary language is not precluded and is used by teaching personnel to facilitate access to the core curriculum. In those cases where the primary language is used by the teaching personnel, it meets the following criteria:

- Clarification of a word, concept, or idea;
- Explanation of directions or instructions pertinent to a specific task;
- Emergency communications related to the safety and welfare of students, or;
- Communications with the parents or legal guardians;

ELs in this program receive a minimum of 30 minutes of ELD instruction daily using the district-adopted ELD curriculum; and participate in activities that promote a positive self-image and cross-cultural understanding

Requesting a Language Acquisition Program

Parents/Guardians may choose a language acquisition program that best suits their child. Schools in which the parents or legal guardians of 30 pupils or more per school or the parents or legal guardians of 20 pupils or more in any grade request a language acquisition program that is designed to provide language instruction shall be required to offer such a program to the extent possible. (EC Section 310[a]). Parents may provide input regarding language acquisition programs during the development of the Local Control Accountability Plan.

If interested in the process to choose a different program from that listed above, please contact:

Department of State and Federal Programs

Veronica Villa, Multilingual Coordinator
444 West 23rd Street, Building B
Merced, California 95340
(209)385-6331

Aaron M. Alexander, Director
444 West 23rd Street, Building B
Merced, California 95340
(209) 385-6664

Parents of English learners have a right to decline or opt-out of particular ELs service(s) within a language acquisition program; (20 U.S.C Section 6318[c][A][vii]) however, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) remain obligated to provide the student meaningful instruction (5 CCR Section 11302) until the student is reclassified, inform the parent when progress is not made, and offer the parent programs and services to consider at that time.

English Learner Instructional Programs

Structured English Immersion (SEI)

The Structured English Immersion (SEI) Program is a program for English learners assessed at the Emerging or Emerging/Expanding or Bridging level of English proficiency. In the Structured English Immersion Program, instruction is delivered by a teacher who possesses an English learner authorization certificate or credential from the Commission on Credentialing for the State of California:

- a. In a Structured English Immersion classroom, English learners are taught "overwhelmingly, but not exclusively," in English.
- b. The use of the primary language is not precluded and is used by teaching personnel to facilitate access to the core curriculum. In those cases where the primary language is used by the teaching personnel, it meets the following criteria:
 - Clarification of a word, concept, or idea,
 - Explanation of directions or instructions pertinent to a specific task,
 - Emergency communications related to safety and welfare of students, or
 - Communications with the parents or legal guardians

The basis for allowing primary language support can be interpreted from the California State Board of Education's emergency regulations, which state "school districts shall continue to provide additional appropriate educational services to English learners in Transitional Kindergarten through grade 12 for the purpose of overcoming language barriers."

- c. English learners in this program receive a minimum of 30 minutes of ELD instruction daily using the district-adopted ELD curriculum (Wonders TK-5, Study Sync 6-8)
- d. English learners in this program participate in activities that promote a positive self-image and cross-cultural understanding

Additional Staffing Requirements For SEI

In the Structured English Immersion Program, instruction is delivered by a teacher who possesses an English Learner Authorization certificate or credential from the Commission on Credentialing for the State of California.

Dual Language Immersion Program

MCSD is committed to providing diverse and enriching educational opportunities for all students, including our English Learners. MCSD's Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program is designed to foster bilingualism, biliteracy, and sociocultural competence for multilingual students.

Program Goals

- Develop high levels of proficiency in both English and Spanish.
- Cultivate strong academic skills and knowledge in all content areas.
- Promote positive cross-cultural awareness, understanding, and respect.
- Equip students with the skills to succeed in a diverse, global society.

Program Structure

The DLI program will follow a 90/10 model, where students receive 90% of their instruction in Spanish and 10% in

English in kindergarten, gradually transitioning to a 50/50 model by 4th Grade, continuing through the 5th grade. Provide a curriculum aligned with California Common Core and World Language Standards, ensuring rigorous academic content and language development.

Provide integrated and interdisciplinary instruction, incorporating language objectives into content instruction. Use research-based strategies such as Guided Language Acquisition and Design (GLAD) to support language development.

Provide a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment that values the student's native language and cultural wealth. The program will have qualified and well-trained teachers who are committed to its goals and have high expectations for their students.

Allow for family and community involvement.

Help students develop stronger English skills in the four domains (Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing).

Strengthen students' cognitive and critical thinking skills.

Provide students with additional support and interventions if they are struggling.

Provide students with language proficiency assessments to track their progress in their target language and English.

Provide students with social-emotional learning (SEL) programs, counseling services, and school support.

Help students develop greater empathy, stronger communication skills, and deeper cultural awareness.

Eligibility and Enrollment

The program is open to all students, with priority given to students within the designated school's attendance boundaries and those with siblings in the program.

Students who do not live within the attendance boundaries of the designated school will need to complete a School of Choice application. An application must be completed for each child in the family.

If a family moves outside the attendance boundaries of the designated school, you must complete a School of Choice application to request continued enrollment in the DLI program.

Native language-speaking students of the target language will participate in language screening to ensure appropriate placement and support.

We are committed to creating balanced classrooms with a mix of native and non-native speakers. Since DLI follows a structured language progression model, it's best to start in kindergarten. However, students may be able to enter first grade if space is available and they meet the language proficiency requirements.

Beyond first grade, transitioning into the program can be challenging unless the student already has strong skills in the target language.

While we prioritize students within the school's boundaries, we do our best to accommodate students already enrolled in the program.

Teacher Qualifications and Professional Development

DLI teachers are bilingual and have the credentials to teach in the program.

Ongoing professional development is provided to ensure teachers are equipped with the latest strategies for effective dual-language instruction.

Family and Community Engagement

Strong family and community partnerships are essential to the success of our DLI program.

Regular meetings, workshops, and events are held to keep families informed and engaged.

Parents are encouraged to participate in various ways, including volunteering, joining school committees, and contributing to cultural events.

Assessment and Accountability

Students' progress is regularly assessed to ensure they meet language and academic goals. The program's effectiveness is evaluated through various measures, including standardized tests, language proficiency assessments, and parent feedback.

Utilize standards-based report cards to provide clear, detailed feedback on students' progress in both English and

Spanish, aligning with language proficiency and academic content standards.

Pathways and Opportunities

Students in the DLI program can earn the California State Seal of Biliteracy by the end of high school, demonstrating their high level of proficiency and ability to communicate in two languages.

The program prepares students for advanced language courses and opportunities in higher education and careers.

Additional Offerings of Dual Language Programs

The district remains committed to expanding language access and opportunities for all students. As part of this commitment, we will continue to explore additional language offerings within our Dual Language programs in the future. Our goal is to provide diverse linguistic pathways that support multilingualism and meet the needs of our growing community.

Criteria for Reclassification

The Merced City School District (MCSD) Board and the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) have established consistent criteria and processes for reclassifying English Learner (EL) students in kindergarten through eighth grade. At each school, a Student Reclassification Team will be formed, which may include the Principal (or their designee or a Learning Director), a parent, the student, the student's homeroom or core teacher, and other relevant staff.

To gather specific and focused input from teachers and parents regarding students who are strong candidates for reclassification, MCSD will use the Observation Protocol for Teachers of English Learners (OPTTEL). This tool requires teachers to evaluate a student's expressive and receptive English skills and also incorporates parent feedback.

An EL student will be considered ready for reclassification as Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (R-FEP) when they have developed English language skills comparable to those of an average native English speaker, enabling them to participate equally in the school's regular instructional program. This determination will be based on the following criteria:

Criteria #1: An overall score of 4 on the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC).

Criteria #2: Teacher evaluation of the student's academic performance is specifically related to their English language proficiency. It is essential to note that any motivational or academic challenges unrelated to English proficiency will not prevent a student from being reclassified.

Criteria #3: Parent Consultation.

Criteria #4: Basic Skills Requirement: Achieving a designated proficiency level on the District Progress Assessment (DPA) in English Language Arts, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP): English Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, or California Science Test (CAST)

Updated Basic Skills Requirement:

To determine whether an English learner has met the basic skills requirement for reclassification, the district will compare the student's performance on an objective assessment of basic skills with the performance of English-proficient students of the same age (grade level), in accordance with Education Code 313(f).

The following state and local assessments may be considered when determining whether a student has met the basic skills requirement:

- District Progress Assessment (DPA) – English Language Arts
- California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)
- English Language Arts/Literacy
- Mathematics
- California Science Test (CAST)

The mean scale score of English-proficient students at each grade level on the District Progress Assessment (DPA) or Smarter Balanced assessments shall serve as the comparison point for determining whether an English learner has met the basic skills criterion for reclassification. Mean Scale scores will be updated on the district's website twice annually. An English learner will meet the basic skills requirement if their most recent assessment score meets or exceeds the mean scale score of English-proficient students in the same grade level.

Reclassification Process for Dually Identified Students (as of April 2025)

Key Changes and Importance of Compliance

The recent updates to the California Department of Education (CDE) guidelines emphasize a standardized and rigorous approach to reclassifying dually identified students (students who receive both English Learner and Special Education

services).

A critical change is that IEP teams no longer have the flexibility to modify Criterion 1. To be reclassified, students must meet the required English proficiency score on the ELPAC or the Alternate ELPAC.

Furthermore, IEP teams must carefully review all three reclassification pathways to ensure students receive an equitable English proficiency assessment.

Pathway 1: Standard Reclassification with Supports

Most English Learners (ELs) will follow Pathway 1, which requires an overall score of 4 on the ELPAC. To ensure that students receive appropriate and equitable access to testing, IEP teams must consider the full range of Universal Tools, Accommodations, and Modifications available under the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

1. Universal Tools (Available to All Students)

Universal tools are available to all test-takers and do not require IEP or 504 documentation. These tools support students in demonstrating their knowledge without altering test content.

Examples:

Highlighter – Students can highlight key information in reading passages.

Zoom – Allows for text enlargement for students needing visual support.

Breaks – Students can take breaks as needed during testing.

Scratch Paper – Can be used for note-taking and problem-solving.

2. Accommodations (For Students with an IEP or 504 Plan)

Accommodations change the way students access the test but do not alter the content. These are explicitly listed in a student's IEP or 504 Plan.

Examples:

Read-Aloud (for items, directions, or passages where allowed) – Beneficial for students with reading difficulties.

Speech-to-Text – Allows students to dictate responses instead of typing.

Extended Time – Provides additional time for completion, based on the student's needs.

Alternative Response Format – Students may use a keyboard, speech device, or other assistive technology.

3. Modifications (Only for Alternative Assessments)

Modifications alter the test content or expectations, meaning students may not receive a valid score for standard ELPAC proficiency. Instead, students on an alternate assessment path may use these to demonstrate proficiency in an alternative way.

Examples:

Simplified Test Language – Test items are rewritten in a simplified format.

Fewer Answer Choices – Reducing the number of multiple-choice responses.

ASL or AAC Support – Use of American Sign Language (ASL) or Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices to support language expression.

Pathway 2: Reclassification for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

Students following Pathway 2 must score an overall three on the Alternate ELPAC. This path is reserved for students with the most significant disabilities, and reclassification is determined through multiple measures documented in the IEP team review.

Pathway 3: Domain Exemptions for Students with Documented Disabilities

Pathway 3 allows dually identified students to be exempt from up to two ELPAC domains due to documented disabilities, ensuring a fair English proficiency assessment. Only one exemption per composite area is allowed: Oral

Language Composite (Listening & Speaking): A student may be exempt from either Listening or Speaking, but not both.

Written Language Composite (Reading & Writing): A student may be exempt from either Reading or Writing, but not both.

Eligibility for Exemptions:

The student’s IEP must explicitly document that their disability prevents engagement with a domain.

Accommodations must be explored first before considering an exemption.

The remaining assessed domains will determine overall ELPAC proficiency.

Pathway 3 ensures fair access to reclassification while maintaining rigorous criteria for English proficiency. Exemptions should be used only when necessary to support equitable assessment.

The Role of the IEP Team in Reclassification

The IEP team must include:

School Psychologist – Provides cognitive and linguistic assessment insights.

Case Manager – Oversees special education services and progress monitoring.

General Education Teacher – Offers academic performance data.

EL Specialist – Evaluates language development and ELPAC results.

Parent/Guardian – Contributes observations and ensures family involvement.

Speech-Language Pathologist (if applicable) – Assesses students with speech or language impairments. This collaborative approach ensures a fair assessment of a student’s language proficiency and ability to succeed in mainstream academic settings.

Reclassification Procedure

If an EL student meets the criteria above, the student may be considered for Reclassification. The Learning Director will:

Notify parents and arrange a meeting to facilitate reclassification;

Complete and record required reclassification forms;

Update the SIS to reflect the student's ELAS as RFEP;

Place the student in a mainstream program;

Coordinate cessation of ELD services; and

Monitor student progress for the first 30 days, the next 90 days, and up to 4 years to assure sustained proficiency.

The local reclassification measures will be updated on the district’s website twice annually.

Local Reclassification Measures									
	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th

Monitoring of Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) Students

Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students receive four years of follow-up monitoring by the district, site administration or designee, and the classroom teacher. Student progress is reviewed and recorded on the Reclassification Form at the end of each quarter during the year following reclassification, with continued monitoring thereafter in accordance with district procedures.

If a student’s achievement falls below expected levels in English Language Arts or other identified areas, the school site team will review the student’s progress and recommend appropriate interventions and supports. Follow-up services for

students who do not demonstrate satisfactory progress may include, but are not limited to, additional tutoring, counseling, instruction in test-taking strategies, and supported or scaffolded academic work in language arts. Procedures and services for students participating in Special Education programs continue to apply as appropriate.

In addition, RFEP students who may benefit from increased connection and encouragement may be recommended to participate in the MCSD Champions Program. This program connects students with student champions or staff mentors who help establish academic and social-emotional goals, provide encouragement, connect students with available resources, and offer a trusted outlet for ongoing support.

English Learners Accountability System Evaluation Plan

Purpose

The superintendent, together with the MCSD Board of Education, identifies major goals and strategies to improve student achievement and accountability. Interventions are targeted at students who are currently not demonstrating success in school. Goals and priorities all address improving student achievement.

Accountability:

ELPAC progress is monitored annually;

Benchmark Assessments (DPAs) are monitored two times per year;

Sites identify students and coordinate intervention services based on achievement data and student needs;

Content and Performance Standards;

Common Core Standards and the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework drive language development instruction, and;

Priority Standards have been developed for English Language Arts.

Program Effectiveness and Evaluation:

The ELPAC and local assessment data are used to monitor student progress and needs;

Data are disaggregated by school, grade, and subgroups for Title I, Migrant, English Learner, Special Education, Gifted and Talented, Homeless, Foster, gender, national school lunch program participation, and ethnicity; Student outcomes and teacher efficacy with Culturally and Linguistically Responsive teaching methodologies determine program effectiveness.

The following guiding questions are examined as data is analyzed:

1. Program Quality: Are students meeting federal, state, and district expectations?
2. Equity: How well are students in different sub-groups performing?
3. Strategic Resource Allocation: Which school, grade, or sub-group is not doing well, indicating a need for additional resources, teacher training, and monitoring?

GOALS

Goal 1:

INCREASE AND ACCELERATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Academic Growth as measured by the ELPAC;

Reclassification rate; and

English language proficiency growth as measured by the DPA and California Assessments of Student Progress and Proficiency (CAASPP).

Goal 2:

PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Provide EL students comprehensive access to all subject areas, with instruction provided by highly qualified licensed teachers who are certified to teach EL pupils;

EL students are enrolled in all subjects and have access to the same grade-level standards as their English-only peers.

Goal 3:

GOAL 3: PROMOTE POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT AND CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Indicators of positive self-concept are:

School attendance rate;

Participation in extra-curricular activities and

Parent participation in school functions.

Teachers

Site principals, with the support of the Human Resources Department, will identify every teaching position that requires authorization for the provision of bilingual and ELD instruction. EL students are assigned to teachers who possess the appropriate authorization to teach English learner pupils.

In Merced City School District, Dual Language Immersion teacher positions are specialized roles requiring a valid teaching credential and either an English Learner Authorization (ELA) or Bilingual Authorization. The Bilingual Authorization verifies partner language proficiency for content instruction, while the ELA supports English language development. All candidates for these specialized positions will undergo an interview process.

Recruitment and Staffing of Bilingual Paraprofessionals

Merced City School District prioritizes supporting its English learners through the recruitment and retention of qualified bilingual paraprofessionals and instructional assistants. These staff members play an essential role in strengthening communication with students and families while providing instructional support that promotes academic achievement and language development. The district also seeks qualified bilingual support staff across special program areas, including Special Education, psychology, nursing, library services, and gifted education, when available, in order to reflect and respond to the linguistic diversity of the community.

MCSD is committed to providing ongoing professional learning opportunities for bilingual paraprofessionals so they are equipped to effectively support students in classroom settings. Beginning next year, the district's focus will be on strengthening instructional practices that increase meaningful student-to-student academic conversations, promote language production, and elevate the rigor of classroom interactions through the use of higher-order questioning strategies. This professional development will help paraprofessionals facilitate deeper thinking, stronger engagement, and increased access to grade-level learning for multilingual learners.

Identification of Professional Development Needs

The Merced City School District delivers professional development through diverse avenues to maximize reach and impact, including the Professional Development Center (PDC), direct classroom coaching, and collaborative lesson study within school sites, flexible online platforms, and within the ongoing structure of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). A key focus of MCSD's professional development is to enhance educators' ability to engage and instruct English Learner (EL) students effectively. To this end, the district offers specific modules tailored to this crucial area, with examples of sessions provided during the 2025-2026 academic year, including:

1. Early Education Teacher Development PK/TK/K
2. Heggerty/UFLI Initial and ongoing support
3. CORE Learning - Online Language and Literacy Academy
4. Literacy and Language Development (SIPPS, Writing, and ELA tandem with ELD)
5. Mathematical Skills and Concepts (Concrete, Representational, Abstract, and Number Talks)
6. ELPAC Deep Dive - alignment with grade-level ELD standards
7. ELPAC Interim Assessment training sessions
8. EL Strategies Training for After School instructional aides staff
9. Parent and Family Empowerment

Common Components of Effective Professional Development Training

District Professional Development Features

- Content focus: Deep dives into specific subject areas, instructional priorities, and student learning needs.
- Active learning: Engaging participants in hands-on activities, modeling, and application of strategies.
- Collaboration: Opportunities for educators to learn from one another through shared planning, discussion, and reflection.
- Research-based practices: Utilizing proven instructional methods grounded in current educational research.
- Coaching and expert support: Providing individualized guidance, mentoring, and side-by-side support.
- Feedback and reflection: Encouraging continuous improvement through data analysis, self-reflection, and actionable feedback.
- Sustained duration: Offering ongoing learning experiences over time rather than one-time trainings.
- Assessment alignment: Professional learning that builds educator capacity to analyze student data and align instruction to standards-based expectations.
- ELPAC integration: Training teachers to use California Department of Education ELPAC results to identify student strengths and needs, inform designated and integrated ELD instruction, and support language development goals.
- Interim assessment use: Supporting educators in the use of Interim ELPAC assessments and practice tools to monitor progress, familiarize students with task types, and adjust instruction based on evidence of learning
- Standards connection: Linking assessment outcomes to the California Department of Education ELD Standards so instruction intentionally develops listening, speaking, reading, and writing across content areas.

Districtwide Focus:

Recognizing that our English Learners (ELs) are acquiring a new language and often navigating a new culture, and understanding that their prior experiences significantly shape this learning, we are committed to ensuring all staff is equipped to provide effective, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction that honors their backgrounds and accelerates their academic and linguistic growth. This responsibility is supported by:

- research-based strategies including integrating language and content standards,
- maintaining high expectations for ELs,

- monitoring their progress in English proficiency, and
- fostering a positive learning environment.

We expect all EL students to advance one Language Proficiency level annually.

Role of the District Office with ELAC

The District Office is responsible for ensuring and monitoring the required establishment of an English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) at each California public school (grades K–12) with an enrollment of 21 or more English Learners (ELs). This oversight includes providing technical assistance and guidance to support the ELAC in carrying out its legal responsibilities. These responsibilities include advising the principal and staff on programs and services for English learners, providing input to the School Site Council (SSC) regarding the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), assisting in the development of the school needs assessment, and promoting parent awareness of the importance of regular school attendance.

The District Office also facilitates an annual, ongoing needs assessment process through training and support for parent representatives who serve on the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC). To strengthen accountability and program effectiveness, the District Office conducts cyclical reviews of school site English Learner programs, including site visits that engage parents of English learners as valued members of the review teams.

In addition, the District Office is working toward the standardization of a districtwide ELAC parent recruitment letter. A consistent recruitment process helps ensure all families receive clear, welcoming, and accurate information about the purpose of ELAC and the importance of parent leadership. Standardized outreach promotes equity across school sites, increases opportunities for meaningful family participation, and supports stronger representation of parents in decisions that impact English learners.

District English Learner Advisory Committee

Each California Department of Education public school district with 51 or more English learners is required to establish a District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), unless the district designates a subcommittee of an existing districtwide advisory committee. The DELAC serves in an advisory role to the district regarding programs and services for English learners, including policies related to language acquisition programs, reclassification procedures, parent engagement, and the development of the district's English Learner Master Plan.

The district launches its DELAC work each school year through the annual ELAC Summit held each September. This event brings together representatives from all school site ELAC committees for an evening of learning, collaboration, and community building centered around one shared purpose: supporting the success of multilingual learners and their families. The summit provides orientation, leadership development, and an opportunity for families across the district to connect with one another.

Following the summit, DELAC representatives meet five times throughout the school year to review district initiatives, provide input, and make recommendations related to English learner programs and services. Meetings are conducted in both English and Spanish with the support of district outreach staff to ensure meaningful access, participation, and communication for families.

Role and Responsibilities of the DELAC

The DELAC shall advise the school district governing board on the following required tasks:

- Development of the district master plan for educational programs and services for English learners (ELs); • Conducting a districtwide needs assessment on a school-by-school basis;
- Establishment of district program goals and objectives for EL programs and services;
- Development of a plan to ensure compliance with applicable teacher and teacher aide requirements;
- Review and comment on the district's reclassification procedures; and
- Review and comment on written notifications required to be sent to parents and guardians of English

Language Learners (ELs).

In accordance with California Education Code Sections 52063(b)(1) and 52062(a)(2), the DELAC must also review and provide input on the development or annual update of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

Parents or guardians of English learners must constitute at least 51% of the committee's membership. Each school's English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) may elect one of its members to serve as a representative to the DELAC. For districts with 31 or more ELACs, a system of proportional or regional representation may be used.

The district is responsible for providing DELAC members with relevant training and materials to support their advisory role. Training is developed in full consultation with the committee and funded through appropriate resources, including covering any costs associated with members' participation in training sessions.

MCSD DELAC Meetings, Dates, and Times:

<https://www.mercedcsd.org/departments/educational-services/state-and-federal-programs/delac>