Iowa City Community School District

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PROGRAM SELF STUDY

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IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
All In for All Kids

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MISSION, BELIEF STATEMENTS AND GOALS

As a result of the curriculum review process, the self-study committee reviewed the mission statement, belief statements, and goals for the ELL program and adopted the following.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Iowa City Community School District English Language Learning (ELL) program is to ensure English Learners are socially, culturally, and academically prepared to be successful and contributing members in the ICCSD and our global society.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe:

- Cultural and linguistic diversity enriches the lives of the entire school community and our global society.
- English Learners should have meaningful access to rigorous instruction, materials, and academic choices.
- We must ensure equity for English Learners while maintaining their cultural and linguistic identity.
- The rate of language acquisition is unique to individuals and is influenced by multiple factors. • It is important to encourage English Learners to continue using their first language as a resource for learning and social success.

PROGRAM GOALS

The following linguistic, social and academic goals are connected with the district Lau Plan:

- Promote understanding, respect, and appreciation for the cultural and linguistic diversity of our student population.
- Collaborate with the school community to engage in culturally responsive teaching practices and implement rigorous, research-based, and engaging instructional practices that are designed to meet the unique needs of English Learners.
- Facilitate opportunities for families of English Learners to develop home-school partnerships and encourage involvement in their child's education.
- Develop academic proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English and ensure achievement of grade level standards.
- Develop cognitive academic language proficiency as well as basic interpersonal communication skills (CALP and BICS).
- Ensure English Learners are able to successfully participate in classroom learning experiences and other school activities while maintaining a positive attitude toward self, school, and community.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

The following information was generated from review and analysis of data gathered from surveys. Those responding to surveys included ELL Parents/Guardians, ELL Students (K-12), ELL Teachers (K-12), and Non ELL Teachers (K-12).

ASSUMED STRENGTHS

ELL Parents/Guardians (K-12)

- Helps students adapt to the American system
- Students enjoy their ELL classes and all of the resources provided
- Helps students improve their language and helps them communicate with others • Helps students feel more confident in their English skills
- The teachers are committed to helping students succeed
- Consistency, methods and personalization for every student's needs
- The teachers make everyone feel included, and they make it easy to learn and understand English

ELL Students (K-12)

- Helps students adapt to the American system
- Students enjoy their ELL classes and all of the resources provided
- Helps students improve their language and helps them communicate with others • Helps students feel more confident in their English skills
- The teachers are committed to helping students succeed
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ELL Teachers (K-12)

- Dedicated teachers who care about their students and advocate for kids.
- The program is well established and well-resourced with people who know how to work with ELL students and families.
- ELL Teachers provide inclusiveness, celebration of diversity, and a safe/welcoming environment • Variety of sheltered courses offered for EL students
- Transparent communication between teachers and administrators.
- Good collaboration and communication between teachers across the district.

Non-ELL Teachers (K-12)

- Strong communication and collaboration with classroom teachers
- Qualified ELL instructors at all levels of the ELL Program
- Variety of sheltered courses offered for EL students

ASSUMED LIMITATIONS

ELL Parent/Guardians (K-12)

- Provide families with weekly updates of student progress
- Provide more activities to do at home on weekends with the student Chromebooks
- Offer additional English classes that could be taken in the summer at all education levels
- Increase community involvement by having meetings and inviting parents/guardians to participate

ELL Students (K-12)

- Provide students more time to finish assignments and teach more about the assignments and how to do them (provide examples)
- Keep a consistent instructional pace based on student needs to improve engagement and understanding • More opportunities to read and/or learn how to read in English
- Use more first-language supports

ELL Teachers (K-12)

- More collaboration opportunities with classroom teachers to differentiate for our ELL students in the classrooms
- Align ELL curriculum/ELP standards to general education (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, etc) • Additional instructional resources for newcomers with limited English (K-12)
- Supports for students with interrupted schooling
- Offer more electives at the junior high/high school level (more hands-on classes to experiment in different non-academic skills/ trades-oriented classes)
- Increase ELL family involvement within the schools

Non-ELL Teachers (K-12)

- More/continued opportunities for collaboration between ELL teachers and classroom teachers.
- Students should have greater access to accommodations and scaffolds in the classroom with differentiated instruction
- Provide training to help teachers be prepared to help students with limited English

IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR THE ELL PROGRAM

This improvement plan outlines action steps aimed at addressing the perceived program limitations generated from review and analysis gathered from summary of surveys. This improvement plan aligns with the Iowa City Community School District's High Reliability Schools framework (Levels 1-3).

Category 1: Family engagement

Limitations	Recommendation and Strategies	Person(s) Responsible	Target Date
Offer more opportunities for families of English Learners to develop home-school partnerships and encourage involvement in their child's education.	● Providing context for families about opportunities; ie, what is the purpose of P/T conference, parent night, Ice Cream Socials, etc. ● Step-by-step guide/FAQ in native languages	● Teachers ● Principals ● Sub-Committees at the elementary & secondary levels ● ELL Coordinator	June, 2023

Category 2: Programming

Limitations	Recommendation and Strategies	Person(s) Responsible	Target Date
There is a lack of summer school options for English Learners at all levels.	● Provided transportation for students through grants & donations ● Partner with community organizations & activities, providing access to families (social interactions, structure)	● District ● Various community stakeholders	April 2024

Category 3: Curriculum and Instruction

Limitations	Recommendation and Strategies	Person(s) Responsible	Target Date
The materials, activities, and/or homework in my ELL class do not include positive images and stories of people of different genders and gender identities.	● Intentional about searching for stories with different genders and gender identities. ● Work with librarian ● Better communication from teacher to families. ● Further conversations needed. ● Clarity for ELL teachers on this topic.	● Classroom teacher ● Coordinator ● Librarian ● Gen ed. Classroom teachers.	Ongoing
The materials, activities, and/or homework in my ELL class do not include positive images and stories of people of different sexual orientations.	● Intentional about searching for stories with people of different sexual orientations. ● Work with librarian ● Better communication from teacher to families. ● Further conversations needed. ● Clarity for ELL teachers on this topic.	● Classroom teacher ● Coordinator ● Librarian ● Gen ed. Classroom teachers.	Ongoing
Students would like teachers to use more examples of the races, cultures, and backgrounds that are like them.	● Awareness that supplemental material is needed. ● Permission to try out alternate materials. ● Seek student ideas and include the ability for students to include opportunities for student input.	● Teacher ● Admin ● Students	Ongoing
Improve the use of English Learners' home languages to aid in their learning (e.g. books, posters, charts, etc.).	● ELL teachers need to be aware of best practices. Support the maintenance of the first language. ● Potential uses of technology? ● Inform parents of L1 literacy	● Teacher ● Admin ● students	Ongoing

Students need more activities that they can do independently at home to grow their English skills.	● Encouraging study groups ● Access to what is available in the community.	● City organizers ● Families	Ongoing
We need additional instructional resources for newcomers with limited English (K-12).	● Onboarding process (longer) ● Mentoring ● Check ins	● Admin ● Teacher ● Families	Ongoing
Provide students more time to finish assignments and teach more about the assignments and how to do them (provide examples)	● Focus on tier 1 teaching with best practices.	● All teachers	Ongoing
More opportunities to read and/or learn how to read in English	● Explore the need for intensive basic English instruction. ● Earlier identification ● More targeted/focus on students struggling with literacy.	● ELL Coordinator ● ELL Teachers ● IDS ● Gen ed teachers	Ongoing
Need to align ELL curriculum /ELP standards to general education (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, etc)	● Incorporate EL standards into weekly PLC conversation.	● Gen ed teachers ● IDS ● ELL teachers	Ongoing

Category 4: School-Level or District-Level Supports (for the ELL program to support, but not to be fully responsible)

Limitations	Recommendation and Strategies	Person(s) Responsible	Target Date
Students with interrupted schooling need more support available to them.	● Diagnostic testing to identify learning gaps. ● School within a school concept to familiarize students with “how things work” in our systems. ● Standard grade-level appropriate resources for “catching students up” in terms of basic academic skills. ● Peer mentoring programs at secondary schools.	● Classroom teachers ● IDS ● ELL teachers	Ongoing
Offer more electives at the junior high/high school level (more hands-on classes to experiment in different non-academic skills/trades-oriented classes).	● Familiarize EL students about what is currently offered ● Be intentional about matching ELL students' interests and skills to opportunities in clubs, sports, and the arts–possibly start new clubs to maximize their interests	● Building admin ● counselors, and SFAs ● sponsors of activities or programs	Ongoing
Teachers feel they need more support from their building administrator(s) and colleagues to meet the needs of the English Learners in their classes.	● Regular professional development opportunities at the building levels ● Collaborations with gen ed teachers in PLC’s	● ELL teachers ● Classroom teachers ● Admin	Ongoing

Category 5: Professional Development

Limitations	Recommendation and Strategies	Person(s) Responsible	Target Date
Not all teachers know how to provide rigorous grade-level instruction and appropriate support for English Learners to be successful in their classes.	● Continue to encourage mainstream teaching to take SIOP professional development ● Continue to offer AEA opportunities for teachers to develop ELL strategies ● Seek IDS support for ongoing coaching opportunities of mainstream teachers ● PLC	● GWAEA ● ELL Teachers ● IDS ● ELL Coordinator	Ongoing
ELL teachers and non-ELL teachers need time to collaborate about students and design inclusive lessons.	● Having common prep periods / given time to meet ● Flexibility with PD time with opportunities to collaborate ● PLC ● Make sure to include and collaborate with special ed teachers	● Building admin ● All Teachers ● IDS	Ongoing
Teachers need more opportunities to learn about the curriculum and goals of the ELL program in their school.	● Building PD - time for ELL teachers to give an overview of the current program ● Content teachers can observe ELL teachers	● Building admin ● All Teachers ● IDS ● ELL Teachers	Ongoing
Not all teachers know how to use English Learners' ELPA21 scores in listening, reading, speaking, and writing to appropriately accommodate their instruction and assessments.	● AEA offers a course that helps with this ● Building PD ● Charts to give content teachers in order to provide a starting point when creating a lesson ● Make sure all staff know how to look at ELPA scores and accommodations on infinite campus	● ELL Teachers ● ELL Coordinator ● GWAEA ● IDS ● Building Admin	Ongoing