

Grand Island Public Schools English Learner (EL) Program Overview & Review

Based on Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) Rule 15 Regulations

Annual Program Reviews and Reports

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) establishes state guidelines under *Rule 15: Regulations and Procedures for the Education of Students with Limited English Proficiency in Public Schools* (originally signed on June 18, 2012, and updated on May 8, 2018). Rule 15 provides a consistent framework across Nebraska school districts for identifying, serving, and exiting students who are learning English as an additional language, ensuring they receive high-quality language instruction. [Rule 15: A Guide for Implementation - Updated July 2024](#)

“The language instruction program review process includes an annual review by a designated school district team to provide input to the district superintendent in order to guide the planning, implementation, evaluation, and modifications of the district’s language instruction educational program.” — NDE Rule 15, Section 008 Quality Indicator.

The Grand Island Public Schools (GIPS) English Learner Program is guided by the district’s foundational **vision, mission, and student commitments**:

Vision – Students prepared to make positive contributions to society and thrive in an ever-changing world.

Mission – Every Student, Every Day, A Success! In educating students, we teach hearts as well as minds.

Student Commitments – Within the school district of Grand Island

- Every student will be taught to read, write, and communicate effectively; solve problems; acquire and apply knowledge; and demonstrate mastery through performance to the best of the student’s abilities;
- Every student will be treated with fairness and dignity;
- Every student will be honored for their unique qualities and backgrounds;
- Every student will experience a sense of belonging, contribution, and success; and
- Every student will develop responsibility and show respect for others as well as oneself.

The GIPS EL Program is committed to supporting the academic achievement of English learners while celebrating cultural diversity and preserving each student’s native language and background. To support our students, we advocate for and provide:

- Specialized instruction that builds English proficiency in all key areas: reading, writing, speaking, and listening;
- Full access to core academic subjects, high-quality instruction, and grade-level assessments;
- Equal opportunities to participate in all curricular and extracurricular activities;
- Collaboration with students, parents, and staff to meet educational goals;
- Connections to school, community, and society.

Rule 15 Required Elements

Grand Island Public Schools fully meets all state requirements under Rule 15. The district regularly evaluates its English Learner program and services. Detailed evidence is maintained in the district’s EL shared drive, and review notes are maintained by the EL Director.

- ❑ **Student Identification:** The district identifies eligible English Learners (under Rule 15, Section 003) using a three-question Home Language Survey given at enrollment, followed by the ELPA21 language proficiency assessment, and promptly notifies parents of results.
- ❑ **Instructional Program Model:** The district operates a Language Instruction Educational Program (under Rule 15, Section 004) designed to deliver structured, research-backed English language instruction to non-native speakers.
- ❑ **Qualified Staffing:** All language instruction programs are managed and taught by fully certified and specifically trained educators (under Rule 15, Section 005).
- ❑ **Assessments and Accommodations:** The district ensures all English Learners participate in state language and academic content assessments with appropriate support testing accommodations (under Rule 15, Section 006).
- ❑ **Program Exit Standards:** The district applies standardized state criteria to determine when a student has achieved English proficiency and can transition out of language instruction services (under Rule 15, Section 007).

School Year	Final Report	Recommended Action Steps and Priorities
2025-2026	2025-2026 NDE Rule 15 EL Program Review GIPS Final Report	• Strengthen collaborative PLC practices by increasing EL teacher engagement and using shared data to identify student strengths, needs, and progress • Implement intentional supports for Long-Term English Learners (6+years) through data snapshots, collaborative planning, and targeted action • Embed formative language assessments into EL course Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVCs) and secondary Learning Progressions, focusing primarily on speaking and writing • Review Newcomer Programming and adjust based on trending student numbers • Partner intentionally with TSI/ATSI/CSI designated buildings through specialized strategies to improve EL language proficiency outcomes • Direct efforts toward reducing "Not On Track" rates while elevating overall language growth and proficiency across all grade levels
2024-2025	2024-2025 NDE Rule 15 EL Program Review GIPS Final Report	• Create and implement a clear process, grounded in multiple measures, to ensure smooth academic and social-emotional transitions for EL students moving from 5th to 6th grade and from 8th to 9th grade. • Develop and implement clear success indicators and a body of evidence to guide decisions about movement between EL services, ensuring continuity of learning and appropriate support.

School Year	Final Report	Recommended Action Steps and Priorities
		• Update rubrics for ELP Formative Assessments to identify patterns in students' progress in speaking and writing. • Enhance collaboration between general education, Special Education (SE), and EL teachers through PLC structures to provide cohesive, targeted support for students. • Improve processes for proactively planning linguistic supports and accommodations with all stakeholders, starting in the early fall.
2023-2024	2023-2024 NDE Rule 15 EL Program Review GIPS Final Report	• Continue to define outcomes for movement out of Newcomers, especially in Grades 6-8, to provide clarity and consistency • Focus on language acquisition through the MTSS process by continued creation of formative assessments aligned to ELP Standards. • Start the alignment of the EL curriculum to the district Guaranteed & Viable Curriculum (GVC) framework and identify gaps • Develop remediation lessons with an EL focus for striving students in K-2 • Explore UFLI as a curriculum resource to support 2-5 Newcomers • Update scheduling considerations and further define EL In-class supports. • Improve processes for proactively planning linguistic supports and accommodations with all stakeholders, starting in the early fall.
2022-2023	Rule 15 Program Review - Middle School Feedback	• Evaluate and update processes at the Welcome Center • Support schools with ELPA21 data analysis • Clarify the difference between an EL service and an intervention (K-8) • Expand Newcomer Programming (2-12) • Increase opportunities for students in Newcomers and Transitions to have access to grade-level instructional materials
2021-2022		• Evaluate opportunities for Newcomers to transition to earn credits as early as possible (9-12)

School Year	Final Report	Recommended Action Steps and Priorities
		• Explore an EL staffing equity formula • Continue use of coaching cycles to amplify EL research-based strategies • Develop process to implement the AltELPA for students with significant cognitive needs
2020–2021	2020–2021 NDE Rule 15 EL Program Review – GIPS Final Report	• Clarify small-group pullout and sheltered (classroom-supported) English instruction for elementary grades (K–5) • Provide training for all teaching staff on English Language Proficiency standards and annual language assessments (Elementary CIA – April 2022) • Implement targeted writing assessments for middle school grades (6–8) • Review Grades 9–12 EL programming for alignment to core classes and the GIPS Graduate Profile • Ensure every school has access to their EL Profile and can answer the following questions: ○ How many students in your school are learning English? ○ Which grade levels are English Learners enrolled in? ○ What are their current English language proficiency levels? ○ How many students receive both English Learner and Special Education or Gifted services? ○ How many teachers in the school are certified/endorsed to teach ELs? ○ What teaching models are used in your school to support English Learners? ○ How many students have met fluency criteria and graduated from the program? ○ How many former English Learners are currently in their post-exit monitoring period? – “And Justice for ELs” By Ayanna Cooper
2019–2020	2019–2020 NDE Rule 15 EL Program Review – GIPS Final Report	• Supporting ELs in remote/virtual learning • Addressing unfinished learning and ELs

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2018-2019	2018-19 NDE Rule 15 EL Program Review - GIPS Final Report	• Establish a collaborative process between English Learner specialists and Special Education teachers to deliver dual services • Implement a standardized exit form for students transitioning out of English Learner services due to language disability criteria • Provide specific EL professional learning focused on the in-class supports
2017-2018	GIPS EL District Review Team 2017-2018 Final Report	• Analyzing Individual Student Data to Ensure Success of ELs • Utilize success criteria to identify what is expected of ELs when transitioning to general education • Professional development regarding inclusive practices • Continuing to define the role of EL specialists & in-class supports • Intentional focus on ELP standards in relation to content area standards
2016-2017	GIPS EL District Review Team 2016-2107 Final Report	• Analyzing Individual Student Data to Ensure Success of ELs • Monitoring for Success (what does the 4-year monitoring process look like)?
2015-2016	GIPS ELL District Review Team 2015-2016	• EL and Special Education Services • Common Language and dispelling myths
2014-2015	ELL District Review Team 2014-2015 Final Report	• Identifying the Needs for Dually-Served ELL Students and RTI Considerations • The Changing Role of the ELL Specialists in schools (addition of inclusive practices) • Meeting the Academic Needs of our ELL Students • English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards - technical assistance from NDE • Other Professional Learning Needs - TBD
2013-2014	6e. ELL District Review Team 2013-2014 Final Report.pdf	• Review a district ELL vision statement written by the K12 ELL teachers • Analyze student performance data from language assessments and state testing to guide instructional improvements • Recommend modifications for GIPS English Language

School Year	Final Report	Recommended Action Steps and Priorities
		Learner service delivery based on data (ongoing) • Continue conversations regarding RtI and ELL (considerations for IEP meetings and exit conferences regarding students with disabilities) • Review and make recommendations for the English Language Learner program family literacy programs (family engagement) held at each building • Begin to identify and outline explicit connections (specific to ELL) to the GIPS district reading focus goal
2012-2013	ELL District Review Team 2012-2013 Final Report	• Analyze English Learner performance on state standardized tests and proficiency exams • Review the Process for Continued Monitoring of ELL Students for Two Years After Formal Exit from ELL Services • Dual-Served Students (RtI and SPED) • Continual ELL Program Modifications Based on Data