Section I Coversheet, Assurances, Signature Page		
EL District Plan Cover Sheet		**Local Education Agency (LEA) Name:** Colbert County Schools
LEA Contact for ELs:		
Name: Ashley Harris		**Signature:** Ashley Harris
Position and Office: EL Teacher		**Email Address: aharris@colbertk12.org**
Telephone: 256.446.8351 ext. 110-134		**Fax: 256.446.6668**
☒	**Check box if LEA receives Title III Funds**	
☐	**Check box if LEA receives an Immigrant Grant**	

Assurances

The LEA will:

- ☒ Assure that the LEA consulted with teachers, school administrators, parents, and, if appropriate, education-related community groups and institutions of higher education in developing the plan
- ☒ Assure that all teachers in any language instruction educational program for English Learners (ELs) that is funded with any source of federal funds are **fluent in English**, including having written and oral communication skills
- ☒ Assure that all schools in the LEA are in compliance for serving English learners
- ☒ Assure that all individuals used as **translators or interpreters are fluent** in the language they are translating.
- ☒ Assure ELs **have equal access to appropriate categorical and other programs** and are selected on the same basis as other children

(The following assurances **apply only to LEAs that receive Title III funds**)

- ☒ Assure that the LEA has a process for parents to **waive Title III** Supplemental Services.
- ☒ Assure that the LEA has an **Equitable Services Implementation plan,** if applicable.
- ☒ Assure **timely and meaningful consultation with private school officials** regarding services available to ELs in private schools that are located within the geographic boundaries of the LEA, if applicable

Ashley Harris	Ashley Harris	9.18.26
EL Program Administrator	**Signature**	**Date**
Mr. Nathan Fuller	Nathan Fuller	9-17-26
LEA Superintendent	**Signature**	**Date**

***THIS COVER SHEET IS TO BE USED BY LEAS THAT RECEIVE TITLE III AND THOSE THAT DON'T.**

*EL Advisory Committee Signatures
Tiffani Fuqua Brooke Cunningham Megan Estes Destin Gapp Emily Cuello Ashley Harris

Comprehensive English Learner District Plan

Each LEA in Alabama must develop and implement a Comprehensive English Learner (EL) District Plan, in accordance with Section 3115 of Title III of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) for serving students who are English learners and immigrant students, where one or more students are determined to need support. **The LEA is required to have a Comprehensive EL District Plan whether or not the LEA currently has ELs enrolled and regardless of Title III eligibility.**

The Comprehensive EL District Plan should address each aspect of the instructional program for all ELs, at all grade levels, and in all schools in the school system. The Comprehensive EL District Plan should: contain sufficient detail and specificity so that all employees can understand how the plan is to be implemented; and should contain the procedural guidance and forms used to carry out responsibilities under the plan.

To facilitate LEA compliance and the Alabama State Department of Education (SDE) review of the plan, LEAs will develop the Comprehensive EL District Plan using the template included at the end of the checklist. LEAs may refer to the EL Policy and Procedures Manual when developing and revising the plan for a clear understanding of the requirements for serving ELs. The EL Policy and Procedures Manual was developed by the Alabama State Department of Education and is available for downloading at www.alsde.edu/departmentoffices/federalprograms.

*THIS SIGN-IN SHEET IS TO BE USED BY LEAS THAT RECEIVE TITLE III AND THOSE THAT DON'T.

COLBERT COUNTY SCHOOLS 2026-2027

LEA COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH LEARNER DISTRICT PLAN

Section A: Theory and Goals

The LEA's educational theory and goals for its program of services – to improve the education of English learners by assisting the children to learn English and meet the challenging state academic standards. (Sec. 3102)

Introduction and Educational Theory

The purpose of the Colbert County Schools' English as a Second Language Program for English Language Learners is to enable EL students to become proficient in the understanding, speaking, reading, and writing of English. The program combines the implementation of accommodations and intervention strategies for ELs in the mainstream classroom and EL pull-out classes, in which students receive instruction in English language skills as well as content area concepts in order to prepare students to participate successfully in the regular academic program.

English Learner (EL) Defined

Under ESSA, an English Learner, means an individual —

(A) who is aged 3 through 21;
(B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
(C) who was not born in the United States, or whose native language is a language other than English;
(ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and
(II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or
(iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
(D)whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual—
(i) the ability to meet the challenging State academic standards;
(ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
(iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Program Goals

The instructional goals of the Colbert County Schools English as a Second Language Program for English Language Learners are as follows:

- To enable students to develop competence in basic interpersonal communication skills (social language)
- To enable students to develop competence in the language of the content area classroom (academic language)
- To help students develop background concepts and cultural literacy vital to their success in the academic classroom and their future roles in the world beyond the classroom (socio-cultural knowledge)
- To support home culture and language
- To reach English language fluency

Section B: Identification and Placement Procedures

1) Procedures for identifying the EL Advisory Committee

English Language Advisory Committee (EL Committee)

Each campus in the Colbert County School System will use the English Learner Committee as the assessment committee for English proficiency. The EL Committee will consist of a core of teachers, school administrators, school counselors, the ESL teacher, and temporary members who are knowledgeable about the child. These temporary members will include the homeroom teacher, special education teachers, the parent or guardian, and/or other staff and community members. The EL Committee must include at least four (4) individuals. The committee will review pertinent information about each EL student and perform the following tasks:

1. Make recommendations concerning the placement of each student in the ESL program.

2. Give written notice to parents/guardians, in a language they can understand, requesting approval to place the students in the ESL program.

3. Recommend and monitor the participation of eligible EL students in any other applicable program.

4. Monitor the academic progress of all EL students in the regular program and make recommendations to the regular classroom teachers concerning accommodations for EL students in the regular program.

5. Determine, according to state guidelines, if an EL student is to participate in the statewide testing program.

6. Reclassify and recommend exiting the EL program when EL students become proficient in English and have met exit criteria.

All members of the EL Committee 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 required determinations regarding the placement in and exit from EL classes

2) Methods for identification, placement, and assessment

Enrollment Procedures

<u>The enrollment of English learners shall not be denied or delayed due to any of the following barriers:</u>

- Lack of birth certificate
- Lack of school records or transcripts

- Lack of immunization or health records
- Lack of proof of residency
- Guardianship or custody requirements
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of immigration documentation

All potential EL students will be enrolled immediately. Enrollment documents will be pending, and school staff or the ESL teacher will collect documents verifying residence, age, and immunizations as they become available.

The following conditions are needed for enrollment of all students:

1. A Parent or Guardian must 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, a document indicating the address of the resident, like a utility bill, or similar proof of residence. 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 document listing date and place of birth, such as a health certificate or notarized statement.
4. Proof of Immunization consists of the State of Alabama Certificate of Immunization, available at the Colbert County Health Department, 1000 S. Jackson Highway, Sheffield, Alabama. 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. If necessary, students can begin the immunization series at the local public health department.
5. Social Security Card is not necessary for enrollment. If a student does not have a Social Security Card, the Central Office will assign a system number until the student presents an official Social Security Card. Children may not be excluded from school because they do not have a social security number (Plyler v. Doe).

Methods for Identifying and Placing EL Students

During the enrollment process, a Home Language Survey (HLS) is completed for every student. The purpose of this survey is to determine a student's primary language or significant influences of a language other than English which would entitle the student to enter the ESL Program. The survey identifies a language other than English that has been:

- First learned or acquired by the student,
- Spoken most often by the student, and/or
- Spoken most often in the home of the student.

Colbert County Schools follows a timeline under guidance from ALSDE which states that:

"ELs must be identified at the time of enrollment through a Home Language Survey (HLS) administered during the enrollment/registration process. The HLS is a requirement for every student entering schools in Alabama. If the HLS indicates the use of a language other than English by the student or any individual in the home, the student is considered a potential EL, and a screener must be used to determine the student's English language proficiency level.

Potential ELs who enroll during the summer or the first day of school must be assessed for English language proficiency within 30 days of enrollment.

Potential ELs who enroll after the first day of school must be assessed for English language proficiency within 10 days of enrollment.

When all responses on the HLS indicate that English is the only language used by the student and the individuals in the home, then the student is considered an English-only speaker without the need for EL services."

The following procedure is used to identify potential EL students, and is also described in a flowchart at the end of this section:

1. During the enrollment process, the parent/guardian (for Grades K-5) or parent/guardian/student (Grades 6-12) will complete the HLS.
2. The school principal or his/her designee who collects the enrollment information will, on the day of enrollment, refer all students who indicate a language other than English on a Home Language Survey to the system ESL teacher.
3. 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.
4. Completed Home Language Surveys are filed in each student's cumulative folder, one per student.

If a student or parent speaks a language other than English or the most dominant second language, a translator will be provided to facilitate this process.

Kindergarten students who are identified by the HLS as having a primary language other than English or having a primary language spoken in the home other than English will be administered the ***WIDA Screener for Kindergarten***. Students in grades 1-12 who are identified by the HLS as having a primary language other than English or having a primary language spoken in the home other than English will be administered the ***WIDA Screener for Kindergarten*** (for students in the first semester of first grade) or ***WIDA Screener Online***. Language minority students identified during registration before the beginning of the school year must 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. Note: The school should record the registration date as "original entry date" on PowerSchool or if the child is newly arrived in the country, "date first enrolled in US school," when completing the demographics page of the *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* English proficiency test.

The *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten* and *WIDA Screener Online* assess the student's ability to comprehend, speak, read, and write English as used both in social interaction and in the content-area classroom. The following guidelines must be adhered to in determining eligibility for placement in the English language instruction educational program:

1. Any student in grades K-12 scoring an overall composite score of 4.5 or below on the *WIDA Screener* must be identified as English Learner (EL) and will require placement in the English language instruction educational program. Note: The *WIDA Screener* assigns scores in increments of 0.5.
2. Any student scoring an overall composite score of 5.0 or above on the *WIDA Screener* may be identified as an English Learner (EL) and may require placement, or may be identified as NOM-PHLOTE (not requiring EL placement). Further assessment of the student's English language proficiency is needed to determine placement.

The *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten* and *WIDA Screener Online* should 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.

Once screening has been completed, the EL Committee will meet to discuss instructional strategies and accommodations. Parents will be invited to this meeting. If the parent is not present at the meeting of the EL Committee, the ESL teacher will communicate with the student's

parents in a language they can understand using TransACT parent notices (NCLB Title III). Parents have the right to deny Title III services. If parents waive services, they will indicate this on the Permission/Denial to Participate form and the student will be placed in the regular classroom and served through non-supplementary ESL services (Sheltered Instruction) and through other programs as permissible. However, parents cannot deny assessment of the student's English language proficiency OR Sheltered Instruction in the regular classroom as part of the ESL program. All EL students will be tested annually with the *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* assessment until receiving a score of 4.8 or above. Once this occurs, exit criteria will be met and students will be identified as Former English Learner (FEL). Proper documentation of parental consent and English language development will be completed. All completed forms become part of the student's EL record and are kept by the ESL teacher for future reference. A copy of the placement form will also be kept by the guidance counselor in the student's cumulative record folder. The district will document each step in the process by filling out the appropriate forms and filing them as indicated.

The ALSDE Alternate Screening Checklist

The ALSDE Alternate Screening Checklist is to be used for those potential EL students who cannot participate meaningfully on the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, WIDA Screener Online, WIDA Screener Paper even with accommodations. The Alternate Screening Checklist is for severely cognitively disabled students and not intended for those students with disabilities who can participate with the use of accessibility supports and/or accommodations. This checklist provides educators with a mechanism to ensure that students with profound disabilities can be identified and provided the services they need.

Provisional Identification for Potential English Learner Students

In an effort to assist school districts in Alabama in the identification of potential ELs during a time of extended school closures and/or during a time when remote learning is an option for the district, the ALSDE Provisional Identification Plan for Potential English Learner Students will be implemented. This plan is intended to guide school staff, who have been assigned the responsibility of identifying potential EL students, to gather enough information from the parents, guardians, and students to be able to make a provisional determination of placement so that EL students may receive language support services. This plan does not negate the administration of the state's screening assessments (i.e., WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, WIDA Screener Online). When school resumes, EL students who were either identified or not identified as EL will be administered these formal screening assessments. For students who have selected the remote learning option and are attending school virtually, the district must determine a date, time, and location that is suitable for the student and allows for a safe process in which to administer the formal screening instrument. EL students who have been provisionally identified will not be coded in the SIS until a formal screening assessment is administered. Documentation from this provisional plan must be submitted to the System Test Coordinator or the EL Coordinator and kept on file until the formal screening assessment is administered once the student returns to school.

During the time when Alabama schools are closed and continuity of services are being provided remotely, face-to-face screening of potential English learners (EL)s is not possible. In the event ELs enroll, and a language other than English has been indicated on the Home Language Survey (HLS), the following procedure will be used. This process does not replace the formal identification process when face-to-face screening is possible. It is simply to be used in order to meet the requirement of screening potential ELs upon enrollment. Once school resumes, and as soon as possible, formal screening with the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online must take place for any student who has been given provisional EL status.

1. Review the HLS:

a. Must be reviewed by an EL teacher/coordinator or other staff member assigned this responsibility.

b. If the HLS indicates a language other than English for any question, a family interview must be conducted to determine if the student is a potential EL.

c. The interview will be conducted by phone or (Zoom, skype, etc.).

2. Family Interview for Student Information:

a. Must be conducted by an EL teacher/coordinator or other staff member assigned this responsibility.

b. May require an interpreter.

Provisional Identification and Parent Notification

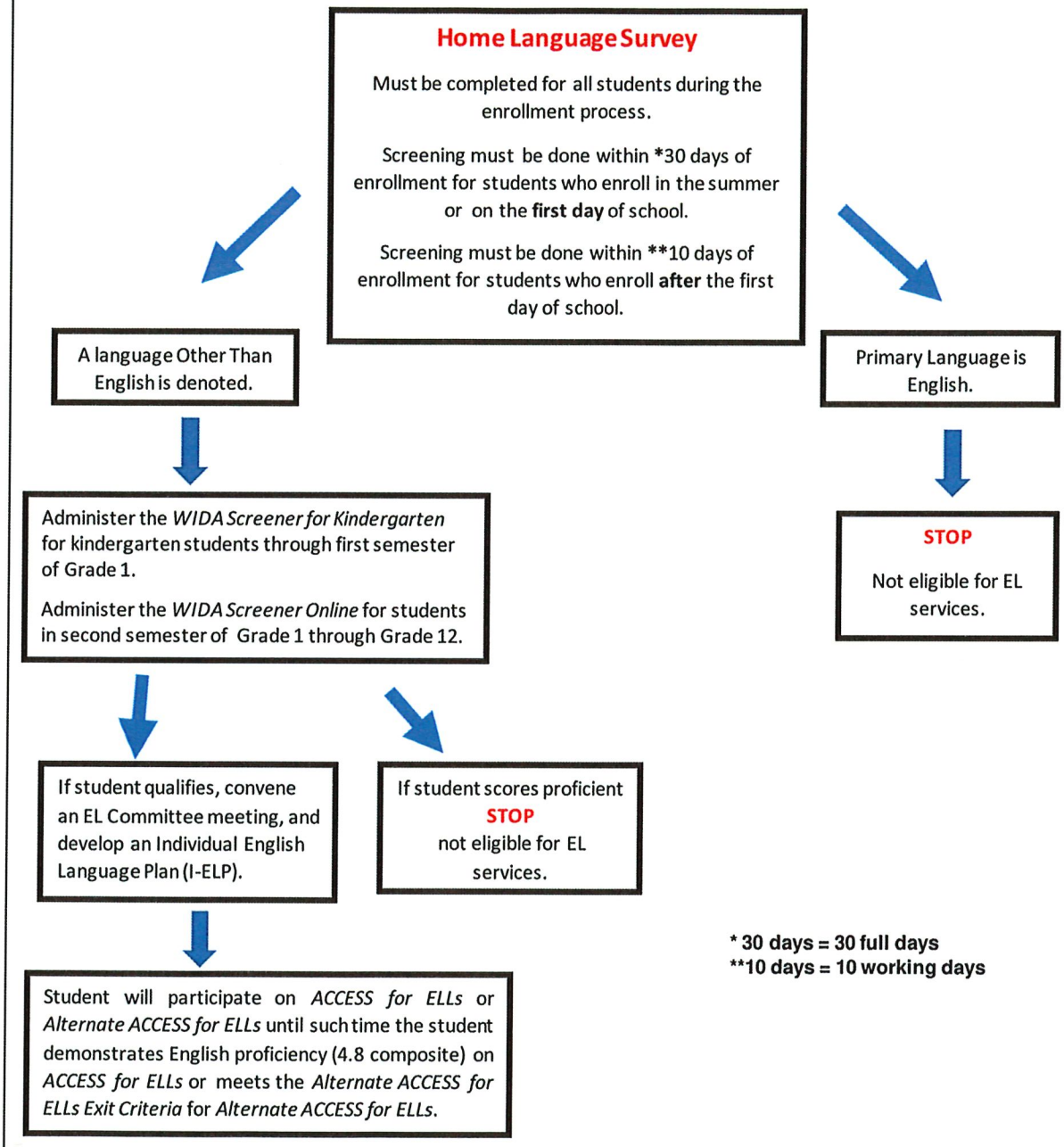
The system must inform the parent/guardian(s) of the provisional status of the student as an EL

OR if the student was NOT IDENTIFIED as an EL. Additionally, the parent/guardian(s)must be provided with a description of the provisional placement and EL services made available to their child. Services will be provided in a manner that is safe for both the student and the educator and in accordance with the LEA's guidance on remote learning.
Once schools have reopened for normal operations, systems will communicate to parents the results of the administration of the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online.

Provisional Identification and Additional Considerations

- If a student is unable to complete the interview process (e.g. because of a disability, inability to understand English, or refusal), then the determination of EL status must be made based on the remaining available evidence gathered from the following:
  - HLS
  - Family Interview Questions for Parent/Guardian
  - Academic records review, if possible
  - Test scores of any kind, if applicable
- If reasonable evidence of English proficiency cannot be established based on those sources, then the student should be provisionally identified as an EL and receive services until formal screening can be completed.
- Generally, a student who easily communicates at a "High Level" is not likely to qualify for EL status and should not be provisionally identified as an EL.
- The interviewer should consider:
  - Under-Identification: students who are most likely not English proficient but seem to be (false positives). In this case, expectations should be set higher and questions modified in order to capture all that you can about the student's language skills, so as not to mis-identify.
- Regardless of whether a student is provisionally identified as an EL or not, the formal identification process must be completed once school resumes and face-to-face screening with the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online is possible. This also includes students who were not provisionally identified. All potential ELs, who were identified as a provisional EL or were not identified as a provisional EL, must be administered the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online as soon as possible.
- The student is not officially identified in the system's student information system (SIS) until the identification process is completed by administering the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online.
- The Local Education Agency MUST ensure that students who are given a provisional status assignment (identified as provisional EL or provisional non-EL) be documented by some means (e.g. records kept at the Central Office by the System Test Coordinator or EL Coordinator) so that once school resumes, all students can be formally screened with the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten or WIDA Screener Online.

EL Procedural Flowchart



3) Methods and procedures for exiting students from the LIEP and for monitoring progress

EL Exiting Procedures

A student identified as EL may not be exited from the ESL program in Kindergarten. A student in grades 1-12 shall be classified as English proficient when he/she receives an overall score of 4.8 or above on a scale of 1-6 on the *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* annual assessment.

When the student achieves the exit criteria level, the ESL teacher will petition the EL Committee for the student to exit the program. The ESL teacher will notify the parent of the EL student exiting the program. The student will be closely monitored by the ESL teacher and regular classroom teacher. The change of status will also be recorded on PowerSchool.

Monitoring Progress

When a student exits the ESL program, the ESL teacher will monitor the student's progress for a period of four consecutive school years. The monitoring will take place on the same schedule as report cards are issued. The monitoring sheet includes a summary of any accommodation being used, how the student gets along with others, progress in completing assignments, current grades, and any other information the teachers consider relevant. If a student who has exited the program is struggling, he/she will be reassessed using the *WIDA Screener* to determine re-entry into the program.

Students who do not score 4.8 or above on the *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* test will continue to be served by the ESL program. There is no time limit for participation in the ESL program. Need is the determining factor, and a student may participate as long as the EL Committee determines the student eligible.

Section C: Programs and Instruction

1) Programs and activities that will be developed, implemented, and administered to ensure ELs acquire academic language as part of the core LIEP

Program Overview

According to research into second language acquisition in the school setting, it takes a student an average of between one and three years to acquire the social language that is needed for interpersonal communication and the ability to function successfully in everyday activities. It takes five to seven years (or longer) to acquire the language skills necessary to function in an academic setting. To facilitate this process of language acquisition and learning, the Colbert County Board of Education has developed a program to meet the needs of its English language learners.

The Colbert County program for ELs is Sheltered Instruction, an English as a Second Language program in which EL students are mainstreamed in regular classes and then pulled out for scheduled ESL classes during the week. The teachers of Colbert County are 100% highly qualified county-wide, and are all fluent in English. EL students are placed in regular classes in which the classroom teachers have received training and support in both teaching EL students and accommodating academic instruction to their English language proficiency level. This training includes annual professional development in accommodations, intervention strategies, and incorporating the WIDA English language proficiency standards for the domains of language (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) in regular classroom instruction.

EL Instruction in the Content Area Classroom

Many of the strategies that regular classroom teachers are asked to incorporate for their EL students are instructional strategies that teachers employ as standard practice and are especially important for at-risk students. Regular classroom strategies for ELs apply the principle of "comprehensible input" and include the following:

- The use of scaffolding techniques that include explanation of the lesson's objectives, clear step-by-step instructions and explanation of activities, teacher modeling, visual aids and graphic organizers for orientation and review, frequent summaries of the lesson's main

points, guided group practice, monitored individual practice, reinforcement activities, teacher feedback, and reteaching.

- The use of classroom routines accompanied by repetition of core vocabulary and formulaic sentences, both of which help to orient the student and allow him or her to focus only on the activity's new language components.

- The use of visual cues/aids and a variety of interactive, hands-on experiences to enhance comprehension of concepts. EL students are intellectually able to comprehend grade-level concepts when they are presented in manners other than oral or written language that they may not sufficiently understand.

- The explanation at the beginning of instruction of new, unfamiliar vocabulary and other language elements that the EL student must understand in order to comprehend the oral presentation, reading assignment, and other classroom and reinforcement activities. By incorporating direct, explicit teaching of vocabulary and language forms into the regular lesson, all classroom teachers become language teachers. This is a basic strategy for incorporating the WIDA English language proficiency standards for listening, speaking, reading, and writing into the regular content-area curriculum. In addition, words should be explained and reinforced in context. In order to learn new words, EL students must hear and/or read words many times in meaningful context before they become part of their passive, and later active, vocabulary, a process that mirrors first language acquisition.

- The use of peer tutoring, cooperative learning groups, and learning centers to support the EL student's comprehension of concepts and provide meaningful opportunities for interaction and language practice.

- The use, when available and when needed, of supplementary materials written in the student's primary language or alternative materials written at the student's language proficiency level, both of which should be used in accordance with the curriculum guidelines of the *Alabama College- and Career-Ready Standards and Support.*

All programs and staff work together to coordinate services in the best interests of EL students. Services for students are enhanced through the Integration of program strategies and through increased cross-program collaboration and planning. Team efforts to incorporate program goals help ensure that the state of Alabama's challenging performance standards are met.

English Language Classes

In addition to regular classroom instruction, EL students are pulled out for ESL instruction, with more time scheduled in ESL classes for less proficient students and less time for those who need less language support for their academic work. The amount of time scheduled for ESL classes for each student is determined by the EL Committee, based on the student's scores on the *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* or *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten/WIDA Screener Online*, grades in the student's content-area classes, scores on standardized tests, and teacher recommendations.

With the exception that some students are scheduled for more ESL class time than others, based on their language proficiency level, EL students in all schools in the Colbert County system receive the same kind of ESL services.

Classroom teachers of EL students in all of the system's schools also receive the same kind of ESL training and support. Professional development opportunities are offered regularly.

ESL classes use the same strategies for creating comprehensible input that are appropriate for EL students in the regular classroom, with the exception that they are modified for the small-class environment. Further, the ESL classes use a comprehensive strategy that combines formal, direct teaching of language with elements of an informal, natural approach to language acquisition.

Both whole language methods (the language acquisition model), mirroring the way in which students acquire their first language, and direct teaching (the language learning model), in which students receive explicit, systematic instruction in language forms, are used. The goal is to help students develop the academic language they need in the areas of listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing in order to be successful in their content-area classes.

Components of the Whole Language Method used in ESL classes are the following:

- Theme-based lessons incorporating traditional and contemporary stories and nonfiction texts are used to practice the four domains of language instruction: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students practice vocabulary in context orally and in writing, answer lower- and higher-order thinking questions, explore the theme of the text as a group, and respond in writing to the text.

Components of the Direct Teaching Method used in ESL classes are the following:

- Language skills are taught in sequence using a basal integrated EL textbook series. Each lesson teaches basic vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and idiomatic usage and combines practice in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.

- General and specific academic vocabulary is taught using texts and other resources that present target vocabulary and general academic and content-area concepts in context. Texts include topics of general interest, as well as content-area textbooks for EL students.

- Depending on the age and instructional needs of the student, direct instruction in reading skills provides practice and classroom support in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension at the student's instructional level.

Materials and Resources

A variety of materials and resources validated by evidence-based research are used in both regular education classrooms and ESL classes. English learners have equitable access to current adopted textbooks and apps used by Colbert County Schools. Newcomers in their first year of school in the US also use newcomer resources.

2) How the LIEP will ensure that ELs develop English proficiency

Measuring the Progress of All Students

The system will use a variety of methods to measure the successful progress of all students, including the EL students, in meeting the education goals of the regular instructional program and the ESL program. Progress will be measured using the following instruments:

1. The Alabama State Superintendents' Report Card, which comes out each summer and gives the progress of each school and the system. This instrument will be used when our EL population reaches the minimum requirement for reporting. The criteria for this document are state accountability assessment scores, attendance, dropout rates, and pupil-teacher ratio.

2. Progress Reports - Student progress reports are sent to the parents at the end of each nine weeks of school. The criteria used in these reports include achievement, attendance, and citizenship progress for the preceding nine weeks period. At the elementary level (K-5), grades are averaged at the end of the year and a final grade is given. At the secondary level (6-12), grades are averaged at the end of each semester and a semester grade is given. The yearly/semester grade is recorded in the student's cumulative folder, which is kept on file in a central location in each school. A copy of this report is available to the ESL teacher on the school-wide electronic database.

3. Scores on *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* -Each student in the ESL program will be given *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* in the spring of each year. ESL personnel will keep an ESL record on each student that indicates progress in learning English. This information is provided on the IELP- Individual English Learning Plan.

4. New Accountability Measures under ESSA - Each school year, progress in meeting ESL goals and system goals will be evaluated by ESL staff and the EL Committee using growth targets specified under ESSA. The individual reports from each of the schools will be combined into a system report by the ESL Teacher. Criteria used in these reports will include *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* scores and progress reports.

3) Grading and retention policy and procedures

EL Grading Guidelines and Retention Policy

The following guidelines must be followed to assure that EL students are not being discriminated against due to their lack of English Language proficiency. Grading for 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 student's Individual English Learning Plan (IELP). 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.

At the end of each nine weeks period, the classroom teacher will submit information for a Report Card on each EL student in his/her classroom which documents accommodations being made. Report Cards will be filed in the student's ESL file with the ESL teacher.

Retention of ELs shall not be based solely upon level of English language proficiency (Section I, Part G, 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 (IELP) been implemented to document classroom modifications 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?
- Do the reports cards indicate that students were graded according to their IELPs?

4) Specific staffing and other resources to be provided to ELs through the program

Supervisory and Instructional Staff

Supervisory Staff

The following Central Office administrators have a role in planning and oversight of the English as a Second Language Program: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Academic Services, Director of Federal Programs, Testing Coordinator, and Director of Special Education. The Director of Federal Programs is the supervisor of the ESL Program. The Colbert County Board of Education follows the requirements as established by the Alabama State Department of Education for all positions.

Instructional Staff

The number of staff employed by the Colbert County Board of Education in the English as a Second Language Program will be based on the following criteria: the total number of EL students in the system, the English proficiency levels of the EL students, the achievement level of the students, the grade level of the students, the total number of schools to be served, and other programs in effect at the individual schools that also serve EL students.

English as a Second Language classes can be offered at every school in the Colbert County system. One highly qualified, certified teacher is employed by the system to teach ESL classes. The teacher works under the direct supervision of the Director of Federal Programs. The ESL teacher administers the *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten/WIDA Screener Online* language placement test for newly enrolled students and the annual *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0* assessment to all EL students in the spring. One paraprofessional serves as EL support staff. As enrollment of EL students in the Colbert County system increases, teaching staff will be added, as feasible.

Mainstreaming

All EL students will receive classroom instruction by certified teachers in the regular academic program and in the ESL program. Classroom teachers will be trained in strategies for accommodating EL students in the regular content classroom. Students who are English Language Learners will receive accommodated content instruction.

The ESL teacher and the regular teacher will confer on a regular basis concerning the academic status of EL students regarding instruction and materials.

- Method for collecting and submitting data

Data Analysis

The report card provided by the State Department for the system and for each school gives information regarding our success in student achievement and is made available to all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the general public.

Test results are made available in a timely manner to teachers, parents, and students via interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports. Results are provided to administrators prior to the beginning of the school year. These results are used in workshops to determine strengths and weaknesses, which allow

school staff to be ready to help those students who are in need of assistance. Results are discussed, explained, and presented in an easily understandable format at parent/teacher conferences. Newspaper articles relate overall student achievement and progress to the general public. If parents do not come for conferences, the results are sent home in a language they can understand. All data entry personnel have been trained on proper data management in PowerSchool by LEA personnel. Each year, additional professional development is offered and PowerSchool is maintained with current updates. Staff professional development activities are correlated to each school's needs. Sessions are planned at the school level, at the department level, and through a professional development director that collaborates all activities and resources through Title II and state initiatives.

5) Method for evaluating the effectiveness of the program

Program Evaluation

The ESL instructor serves on all the CIP teams, both non-Title I schools and Title I schools. She provides guidance to the teams and they develop a comprehensive plan for continuous improvement. Each year, a program evaluation is completed based on current data, teacher input, and consultation with school administrators. A comprehensive evaluation is completed every four years by the ALSDE monitoring team. At this time, there are no students receiving services who attend non-public schools. The system also will provide a full range of services to special needs children in private and church-based preschools, childcare centers, Head Start, or other programs offered throughout the community where children may attend and demonstrate a need.

Instructional Goals for Program Evaluation

The instructional goals of the Colbert County Schools ESL Program as stated at the beginning of this document are as follows:

- To enable students to develop competence in basic interpersonal communication skills (social language)
- To enable students to develop competence in the language of the content-area classroom (academic language)
- To help students develop background concepts and cultural literacy vital to their success in the academic classroom and their future roles in the world beyond the classroom (socio-cultural knowledge)
- To support home culture and language
- To reach English language fluency

The system will utilize both formal and informal evaluations of the program in order to determine progress in meeting these goals.

The evaluation will be an ongoing process. The progress of each EL student is assessed at the end of each nine-week period using the Report Card submitted by the regular program and is kept on file in the ESL office. These reports will be used in the annual evaluation. A formal evaluation of the ESL program will be conducted at the end of each school year. This evaluation will consist of data collected from the individual schools concerning the following:

- Number of students in ESL classes
- Progress made according to *ACCESS for ELLs 2.0*
- Number of students who were recommended to exit the program
- Regular program progress reports
- Scores on standardized tests
- Promotion and retention rates
- The Compliance Checklist submitted by each school
- Questionnaires completed by teachers and administrators

All of this information will be compiled into a system report which will be completed by the ESL teacher and the Federal Programs Director. Areas of deficiency will be identified. The ESL teacher will then develop a plan of action to correct these deficiencies for the upcoming school year. Methods used may include, but are not limited to, instructional strategies, workshops, in-service for ESL staff or regular staff, purchasing updated and/or new materials and teaching supplies, employing additional staff, and research on specific areas that need to be addressed.

6) Method of identification and referral of ELs to the Special Services Program including Gifted Ed

Special Education Services

All EL students served by the system's ESL program will receive special education services on the same basis as the English-speaking students. Students who are experiencing academic difficulties are initially referred to the EL Committee at their school. Supplementary aids and services and/or classroom accommodations may be recommended in an effort to improve the student's academic functioning. If these interventions are not successful, it may be necessary that the student be referred to RTI. The School's Problem Solving Team determines if a special education referral is to be made.

EL students are eligible for all special education services, including the Gifted and Talented Program, on the same basis as English-speaking students. The Special Education Director is the primary administrator responsible for the provision of services to all special education students.

The Individual English Learning Plan (IELP) indicates whether a parent needs an interpreter for school meetings.

Section D: Assessment and Accountability

1) Method for holding schools accountable for annually measuring the English proficiency of ELs and for participating in the state-administered testing program

ANNUAL MEASUREMENT OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

All students must be included to the fullest extent possible in all assessments and have their results included in the state accountability system. All assessments are available in English only; therefore, all students, including English learners, must take state assessments as written, in English. The exception to this policy is outlined in the *Decision Chart for English Learner Students in Their First 12 Months of Enrollment in U.S. Schools* provided by ALSDE. Colbert County Schools follows this decision chart as appropriate.

In order to promote equal access to grade-level content, every EL Committee member and all teachers must be familiar with state content standards and collaboration among general educators and the ESL educator must occur. All students can work toward grade-level academic content standards and most of these students will be able to achieve these standards when the following three conditions are met:

1. Instruction is provided by teachers who are qualified to teach in the content areas addressed by state content standards and who know how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners.
2. Individual English Learning Plans (IELPs) are developed to ensure the provision of specialized instruction needed by the individual student.
3. Appropriate instructional accommodations are provided.

ANNUAL PARTICIPATION IN THE STATE-ADMINISTERED TESTING PROGRAM

The LEA Student Assessment Director serves as a liaison between the LEA and the SDE for all Student Assessment Program activities and coordinates the Student Assessment activities within the LEA. The Student Assessment Director works with the system ESL Teacher on test administration for EL students and submits requests to the SDE for any special accommodations. The Student Assessment Director conducts training for Building Test Coordinators, system ESL Teacher, and coordinates monitoring of assessment schedules, procedures, and monitoring visits. The Student Assessment Director distributes test results in a timely manner and provides technical assistance regarding the Student Assessment Program to school personnel including test interpretation and utilization.

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

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR REACHING PROFICIENCY

- School Walk-Throughs
- School Data Meetings
- District-wide Data Meetings
- Instructional Leaders Meetings
- A-CIP Plans
- Professional Development Regarding Expectations
- Regional EL Meetings
- State Monitoring Visits
- AdvancEd Accreditation

Section E: Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

1) Methods for promoting parent involvement activities to help improve student achievement

Parental Notification

Every effort is made to include the parents/guardians of EL students in EL Committee meetings. During these meetings, the ESL program is explained and further discussion includes instructional interventions and accommodations in the regular classroom, as well as any other special services that

the student is entitled to receive. The parents/guardians are also notified in writing in their home language of the type of ESL program offered by the school system, the services that their child will receive, and other options for EL students.

Invitations to school and community activities are provided to parents/guardians in a language they can understand by way of notes, newsletters, emails, texts, and/or phone calls. This promotes parental and family engagement that will help improve student achievement.

Multilingual TransACT signs have been posted in all schools directing parents/guardians to the main areas of the school's facilities.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

Colbert County Board of Education believes that the education of children is a cooperative partnership between parents/guardians and schools for the benefit of the children. Further, it is our belief that parent/guardian participation increases the effectiveness of the Parental and Family Engagement Plan and contributes to the success of the children. Involving all parents/guardians in this effort is our mission. The comprehensive goals of our engagement programs are:

- To outline and describe the implementation of policy and improve the overall effectiveness of the policy and plan in improving the academic quality of Title I schools.
- To identify barriers and challenges within the educational program.
- To provide materials and suggestions to parents/guardians to help promote the education of their children and overcome identified challenges and barriers.
- To provide accessibility for parents/guardians to counselors, teachers, and other educational personnel.
- To encourage parents/guardians to visit their child's classroom to observe activities.
- To provide opportunities for parent-teacher conferences to discuss a child's progress, placement, and methods parents/guardians can use to complement school instruction.
- To increase parents'/guardians' awareness of learning activities that are easily done at home, such as literacy activities, reading with children, etc.
- To promote a thorough understanding of what children are specifically expected to learn by informing parents/guardians about the skills required at each grade level.

2) Methods (in a language they can understand) for notification requirements for ELs students regarding
    - EL identification, placement, exit, and monitoring

Notification Requirements

The standard communications of the Colbert County school system are available to the parents/guardians of EL students in their home language. These include, but are not limited to, such communications as the enrollment form, the Home Language Survey, parent/school compacts, the field-trip permission form, free/reduced lunch forms, Special Education forms, and grade reports.

Particular to the ESL Program are forms such as the Individual English Learning Plan (IELP), Permission/Denial to Participate in the ESL Program, Accommodations Form, and ESL Program Exit form.

In addition, the ESL teacher is available to serve as a liaison/translator between teachers and parents/guardians for Parent/Teacher conferences and between teachers and/or administrators for other communications or meetings about academic progress or student conduct. The ESL teacher either provides written translations of classroom activities/extra-curricular activities/school events or communicates these directly to the parents/guardians in order to provide explanations and answer questions. The LEA also has access to all forms and resources available in various languages in the online TransACT Parent Notices Compliance and Communication Center.