

Section II

A. INTRODUCTION

1) **Theory and goals** for program of services:

English as a Second Language (ESL) shall be taught to enable English Learners (ELs) to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading and writing of the English language. The program shall emphasize mastery of English language skills, academic language, and content area concepts and skills allowing students to participate effectively in the core content academic program, achieve the state's academic content and student academic achievement standards and to reach their full potential.

Marion County Schools is committed to providing all students equal opportunity to benefit from educational programs and services through sheltered instruction and components of best practices for teaching ELs. Our core program for all ELs is English as a Second Language and the method of delivery is sheltered instruction. Marion County Schools is also committed to supporting evidence based programs, practices, training, and accountability.

B. IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

1) **EL Advisory Committee.**

Each school shall form an EL Committee consisting of a school administrator, a content area teacher familiar with the needs of EL students, an EL teacher, the school counselor, and others as designated by the principal. The EL's parent will be invited to participate in EL Committee decisions as needed. The Committee shall review all relevant information and determine appropriate placement and exit from the EL program for all ELs.

2) **Methods for identifying and assessing students.**

- **Home Language Survey**

Every child enrolled in a school of the Marion County School System is given a Home Language Survey and it is placed in the student's permanent record folder.

- **WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) -**

The ESL staff members who have completed the appropriate assessment training and certification will administer the *W-APT (WIDA ACCESS Placement Test)* to all potential ELs within eight (8) days of identification. The W-APT is the primary instrument utilized to determine the initial level of English language proficiency for program placement.

Language-minority students identified through the HLS during registration at 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. The *W-APT* will be considered as only one piece of evidence in the decision-making process regarding placement. Teacher judgment, other assessments, and extenuating

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

- **EL Committee Placement**

The EL Committee will review pertinent information (Home Language Survey, WIDA screener, other diagnostic data) of the EL student. Based on this information, the ELC will:

1. Make recommendations concerning the placement of each student in:
 - a. An age appropriate grade,
 - b. In the EL program and/or other related services and/or,
 - c. In the regular education program without accommodations if the composite score from the ACCESS for ELs is 4.8 or higher.
2. Provide written (bilingual) notice to parents or, with the aid of an interpreter, request approval to place their students(s) in EL classes.
3. Recommend and monitor the participation of eligible ELs in any other applicable program.....Title I, At-Risk, Homeless, Migrant, etc.
4. Reclassify and recommend exiting the EL program when the student scores a 4.8 on the ACCESS for ELs.
5. Monitor the academic progress of students who exit the EL program for a minimum of four years and reclassify students who are not academically successful. If needed, the student may be pulled back into the EL program or into other appropriate program(s).

3) Method and procedures for exiting students from the English language instruction educational program and for monitoring their progress.

The EL will remain in the ESL program until he/she scores a 4.8 on the ACCESS for ELs. When the student achieves the exit criteria level, the EL teacher will petition the EL Committee for the student to exit the program. The EL Committee will inform the parent that the student has scored a 4.8 and will exit the program. When a student exits the ESL program, the EL teacher will monitor the student's progress for a period of four years. The student will not be monitored after the fourth year unless he/she is referred back to the EL Committee. At the end of four years, a student who is achieving at grade level will officially exit the 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.

C. PROGRAMS AND INSTRUCTION

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

Marion County Schools offers the core program for English Learners in the regular classroom of the core academic teachers. ELs participate the majority of the school day in regular academic classes and/or special programs. Content area teachers accommodate instruction to meet individual EL needs. English language acquisition

services will be delivered through regular core instruction. Ongoing, specific ESL professional development is provided to classroom teachers on strategies for appropriate accommodations. Some of these accommodations include oral rather than written assignments, oral testing, extra time to complete assignments, shortened assignments, alternative assignments, and tutoring. The LEA will provide professional development activities to equip teachers with strategies for instructing and accommodating ELs such as providing opportunities to attend SAMUELS and inviting SDE EL staff to provide in-District training. We will provide the EL components, if available, in adopted textbooks, Freckle, reading programs, and intervention programs.

The LEA adopted textbooks, Freckle, intervention programs, and reading programs have EL components that are used by regular classroom teachers. Teachers meet monthly to review and analyze all current data and redirect instruction as needed.

Resources, such as bilingual dictionaries, iPad apps, picture dictionaries, translated documents, notices, and letters, etc. are placed in the school's library or provided by the EL teacher.

A **supplemental** English as a Second Language Program is provided to all ELs in grades K-12 through collaboration, pullout and push-in services by an EL instructor in each local school. These services are provided in a classroom setting. For all aspects of Marion County's English language instruction educational program, the teacher will use approaches anchored in scientifically based research that demonstrate effectiveness in increasing English proficiency and student academic achievement in core academic subjects. The teacher will include activities that focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing to facilitate second language acquisition. EL and mainstream teachers will work together to provide the most appropriate instruction using best practices to meet the individual language and academic needs of students. The EL curriculum is based on WIDA – English Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners in Kindergarten through grade 12 (2004).

2) English language instruction educational programs will ensure that ELs develop English proficiency.

English language acquisition services will be delivered through regular core instruction. English language development will be provided by the EL teacher through pullout and push-in classes and/or by the regular education teacher in the regular classroom. In addition, the EL teacher will collaborate with the regular classroom teacher to build capacity in the teacher to facilitate English language acquisition. ELs will participate in the regular classroom for academic core subjects with appropriate accommodations at the students' English language proficiency levels. The focus for elementary schools and middle schools for Entering and Beginning (Level I and II) students will be the acquisition of the English language (comprehension, speaking, and reading) while providing access to grade level content. The focus for all English Learners will be acquiring English proficiency along with core content. All EL students will focus on college and career readiness.

3) Specific components of the LEA's program of English language acquisition and academic services for ELs.

The core EL program is ESL provided in the regular classroom and the delivery model is sheltered instruction, giving students' the opportunity to practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening, placing emphasis on academic language, and valuing culture and linguistic diversity in the classroom. Teachers and administrators attend SAMUELS to receive professional development on the core program for ELs in the regular classroom. Turn-around training is provided, when possible, for teachers that were not able to attend SAMUELS. The district invites SDE staff to come and provide training. Within the LEA, there is ongoing communication in order to meet the needs of our EL students.

4) Grading and retention:

Traditional procedures for assigning grades to students may not be appropriate for English language learners. The same methods and criteria applied to their English-speaking age and/or grade level peers cannot always be used to assess students who lack English language proficiency. Teachers are encouraged to maintain high expectations for student learning and must accommodate and adapt lessons and assignments so that ELs can progress. Likewise, assessments should be accommodated so that students can demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

A student may not be assigned a failing grade in a content area on the basis of lack of English language proficiency (Section I, Part G, Guidelines to Satisfy Legal Requirements of *Lau v. Nichols*). The key to appropriate grading of ELs is appropriate instructional accommodations. Even non-English proficient students can learn content while acquiring English. If content teachers are unsure how to accommodate ELLs, they should ask for training. Prior to considering retention of an ELL, the following points should be addressed by the EL Committee.

- What is the student's level of English language proficiency?
- Has an Individual English Language Plan (I-ELP) been implemented to document classroom modifications and student progress?
- To ensure meaningful participation, are classroom accommodations being made in the areas of:
 - Teacher lesson delivery?
 - 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 instruction and assessment strategies specifically designed for students learning English?
- Do the reports cards indicate that students were graded according to their I-ELPs?

It is important for content teachers of beginning ELs, to consult with the EL teacher, to formulate alternative assignments and assessments. Implementation of alternative assessments includes, but is not limited to, asking students to prepare portfolios, present projects or oral reports, make lists and other products that express what students have learned, or use rubrics.

Students in Grades 9-12 must be given the opportunity to earn credits toward graduation. Students should be given grades on work done with accommodations. Teachers are often concerned about their responsibility for the state course of study and college and career readiness. They must keep in mind that LEP students work under a dual burden: learning a new language and learning new content in a language they have not yet mastered.

Teachers must follow these guidelines:

- ELs must receive instructional accommodations on content work and accommodations on assessments on when needed.
- Grading is based on accommodated work. True/False questions on tests are discouraged.
- ELs must not be failed on the basis of lack of English language proficiency.
- Grades placed in a student's cumulative folder must reflect the student's academic achievement on grade level academic content and standards.

Teachers must follow I-ELP.

Other Suggestions for Grading:

- Designate on the report card that the student is not fully proficient in English by writing "EL" or by adding an asterisk (*) to the grade. This can be followed by a description of the student's most recent English language proficiency level from an approved language proficiency assessment.
- Assign a grade and follow it with explanatory comments.
- Describe progress over time in narrative form with examples of student work.
- Develop an individualized education plan and assign a grade relevant for plan objectives.

5) Staffing: The core program for EL students is provided by the regular classroom teacher with accommodations. All teachers with EL students are provided with professional development in best practices for ensuring the student receives English language development and access to grade-level core content. This professional development is provided by allowing teachers to attend SAMUELS and other opportunities provided by the SDE as well as professional development provided by the EL teacher and the LEA.

The EL will also be served by the EL teacher through pullout, push-in and peer collaboration. Marion County Schools employs one and one half EL teachers to serve all EL students in the district. Teachers are certified in compliance with SDE requirements and is fluent in English. One is fluent in Spanish. The EL teachers work with school administrators and classroom teachers to develop a schedule for EL

students and their teachers. The EL teachers participate in all SDE provided professional development as well as webinars (such as TransACT).

6) The LEA will collect and submit data in accordance with SDE requirements.

Upon identification and placement, students should be given a code in INOW. The table below contains codes used by State Student Assessment and INOW along with a definition of codes. For state assessment and accountability purposes, the SDE uses one coding system for ELs. Similar codes are also used by the SDE for data collection from STI. See Table 1 for a list of comparison of codes.

Table 1-COMPARISON OF CODES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Codes for State Assessments	STI Codes	Definitions of Codes
Non-EL	0	Students whose home language surveys do <i>not</i> indicate a language other than English spoken home. These are <i>not</i> students classified as NOMPLOTE
LEP Year 1	1	Limited-English Proficient students who are in first year in a U.S. school.
LEP Year 2 or more	2	Limited-English Proficient students who are in second year or more in a U.S. school.
FLEP Monitoring Year 1	3	Students who have exited the ESL program and in their first year of systematic monitoring. The students no longer take ACCESS for ELLs English Language Proficiency test.
FLEP Monitoring Year 2	4	Students who have exited the ESL program and in their second year of systematic monitoring. students no longer take ACCESS for ELLs.
FLEP	5	Former Limited-English Proficient students who successfully completed two years of monitoring are no longer LEP.
LEP Waived Services	6	Students who are LEP yet parents have refused supplemental Title III services.
NOM PHLOTE	7	National Origin Minority Student Whose Primary Home Language is Other Than English. These students have a non-English language background but are fluent in English and do not require ESL services. Parents, however, may need information in their home language.

7) Method for evaluating the effectiveness of the program,

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

- To increase the English language proficiency to the degree necessary to allow successful independent functioning in the regular school program.
- To provide the EL the opportunity to reach his/her full potential.

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 is assessed at the end of each grading period using the academic progress report given by the regular program, monitoring forms. These reports are kept on file at the individual schools and 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:

General Information

- Number of limited-English proficient students at each school.
- Graduation Rate of EL students
- Pass/Fail Rate of EL students of current grade.
- Number of students by gender and ethnicity who participate in the ESL program.
- EL student enrollment by language and grade level.
- Assessment data such as Scantron, DIBELS, Classworks, ASA, ACT, and Work Keys.

Meeting Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs)

- Percent of ELs making Adequate Progress in Language Acquisition
- Percent of ELs attaining English language Proficiency
- Meeting AYP Requirements for the EL Subgroup at the LEA Level

Each school will be held accountable for the following:

- Annual increases in the number or percentage of students making progress in learning English.
- Annual increases in the number or percentage of students attaining English proficiency by the end of each school year.
- Adequate yearly progress, as defined by the state, for limited-English proficient students consistent with Title I, Section IIII (b)(7).
- The percentage of limited-English proficient students who participate in the state's student assessment system. (Title I, Section IIII (b)(2)(I)(ii) states that not less than 95 percent of each school's limited-English proficient students are required to take the state's assessments, unless the number of such students is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information.

All of this information will be compiled into a system report, which will be completed by the ESL Program Area Specialist with input from the system-wide ESL Advisory Committee. The data is then submitted to the SDE through the Data Compilation Report. Areas of deficiencies will be identified. The ESL Advisory Committee will then develop strategies to correct these deficiencies for the upcoming school year.

Strategies used may include but are not limited to workshops, professional development activities 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.

8) Method of identification and referral of ELs to Special Education.

English Learners (ELs) served by the system's ESL program will receive special education services on the same basis as native English-speaking students. Students who are experiencing academic difficulties, not related to their LEP status, may be referred by the Rtl team at their school. Supplementary aids and services and/or classroom accommodations may be recommended by the EL Committee in an effort to improve the student's academic functioning. If these interventions are not successful, the student may be referred for special education services. If the EL Committee puts in writing that they do not believe the student's difficulties are caused by a language barrier, the committee may directly refer the student for testing.

As a general rule, ELs who are following normal developmental patterns for learning a new language **SHOULD NOT BE REFERRED**. ELs, because of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, have special instructional needs. These needs should not be confused with disabilities nor should they serve as a basis for referral for a special education evaluation.

Prior to the acceptance of a referral for a special education evaluation for the ELs, efforts must be made to meet the student's needs within the context of the regular education program including English as a Second Language classes and documentation of assessments, accommodations, and interventions. Specific indicators, which validate the need for special education evaluation are:

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

Based on the review of the submitted documentation, the RTI team **or** the EL Committee **and** the ESL teacher/specialist will recommend the referral of a student to special education for evaluation after all other avenues have been explored, and after a conclusion has been reached that the student's needs cannot be met by the regular education program.

Referral information may indicate that a structured development history is needed to assist in the evaluation of a student's problem. The information gained from this history would be helpful in determining that a student's eligibility for special education services was not determined by the student's limited English proficiency or a lack of instruction in reading and math. The information recorded should remove all doubt that socio-cultural factors are the primary contributors to the student's learning or behavior problems. Essential factors needed to make this determination may be beyond the referral information required for non-LEP students.

D. ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

All EL students must participate in the statewide student assessment programs, with or without accommodations, and be included in the accountability system. There are no exemptions from state assessment for EL students after the first year in a U.S. school.

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

Each school and the LEA will be held accountable for the following:

- Annual increases in the number or percentage of students making progress in learning English.
- Annual increases in the number or percentage of students attaining English proficiency by the end of each school year.
- Adequate Yearly Progress, as defined by the state, for limited-English proficient students consistent with Title I, Section 1111(b)(7).
- The percentage of limited-English proficient students who participate in the state's student assessment program. Title I, Section 1111(b)(2)(l)(ii).

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

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

When determining appropriate accommodations for an assessment, the ESL committee must look at the accommodations regularly being made on the student's classroom tests over time in that particular subject area. Accommodations on state assessments must be accommodations which are a part of the student's instructional program; however, the ESL committee must work within the framework of the approved accommodations on the on the EL Accommodations Checklist. The ESL committee must remember that an accommodation on a state assessment cannot supplant the skill the test is designed to measure. Accommodations which change the

nature, content, or integrity of the test, such as reading of a reading test designed to assess the skill of reading, are not allowed.

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

E. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parental Notification - According to Title III, Part C, Section 3302(a), each Local Education Agency (LEA) shall, "not later than thirty (30) days after the beginning of the school year, inform a parent or the parents of a limited-English proficient child identified for participation in, or participating in" an English language instruction program, in a language they understand, about the following:

1. The reasons for identification.
2. The child's level of English proficiency.
 - (a) How such level was assessed.
 - (b) The status of the child's academic achievement.
3. The method of instruction used in the program.
4. How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child.
5. How the program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.
6. The specific exit requirements for such program, expected rate of transition from such program into the regular education classroom, and the expected rate of graduation from secondary school.
7. In the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the objectives of the individualized education program of the child.
8. Information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance detailing:
 - (a) The right of the parents to have their child immediately removed from supplemental ESL programs upon request.
 - (b) The options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such supplemental ESL programs or to choose another program or method of instruction if available.
 - (c) The various programs and methods of instruction if more than one program or method is offered by the eligible entity.

If a student has not been identified for participation in an English language instruction educational program prior to the beginning of the school year, the EL Committee must carry out the parent notification requirements within two (2) weeks of a student being placed in such a program.

The notice to parents shall be printed in English and/or the parents' primary language. Parents are not required to respond affirmatively to the notification for the student to participate in the English language instruction educational program. Upon receipt of written instructions from the parent, however, the EL Committee must withdraw the

student from the formal English language instruction educational program. The teachers and school are still obligated to provide appropriate, informal strategies to ensure that the student's English language and academic needs are met.

If parents refuse supplemental services, a *Denial to Participate Form* should be signed by the parents and placed in the student's Cumulative Record Folder by the ESL instructor. The school district is still required to make accommodations in instruction and monitor the student's academic performance. Although the parent has denied ESL services for the student, the student must continue to participate in the annual English Language Proficiency testing (ACCESS for ELs) until attaining proficiency.

School information is provided to parents in a language that they can understand through interpreters and/or forms and letters in the home language. These forms are often obtained through TransACT, the compliance and communication center provided to the district by the Alabama SDE.

If a school fails to make AMAOs within the specified time limit, parents will be notified by written notice in a language that they can understand.

All EL students and parents in Title I schools will be included in the Title I Parental Involvement Program. Angela Wilds sends newsletters and social media links to parents that are in a language the parent can understand. An EL parent is included as a parent leader for the LEA.