

PROCEDURES FOR TESTING AND ASSISTING ENGLISH LEARNERS

The following procedures are based on current state rules relating to the testing of EL students (PI 13 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code) and may need to be revised as changes are made to such state rules.

A. Identification of English Learners

1. All new students enrolling in the District will be asked to complete a home language survey. The survey will be used to identify the following students for further evaluation and possible eligibility for the District's services or programs for English Learners:
 - a. Students who communicate in a language other than English; or
 - b. Students whose families use a primary language other than English in the home; or
 - c. Students who use a language other than English in daily non-school surroundings.
2. After any initial identification as provided above, or after some other initial referral indicating that language may be a barrier to the student's learning, the District will review the student's available academic history, consider any input provided by the parent or guardian, and any input based on the student's performance in school, and an interview of the student by the ESL teacher.
3. Students will receive a formal screening for potential placement via testing if: (a) the review of the student's academic history indicates a possible language barrier, (b) a lack of sufficient information on which to judge academic performance and/or the extent to which limited English proficiency may be a barrier to learning, or (c) the student is newly arrived in the United States.
4. Parents and guardians will be notified of identification, assessed proficiency, placement and other information as required by law. Parent or guardian consent for ESL services shall be obtained as required by law. Parents and guardians may refuse ESL services for their child.

B. Assessing English Proficiency

1. On or before June 1 each year, District staff shall conduct a count of all limited English Learners enrolled in District schools, assess the language proficiency of such students and classify such students by language group, grade level, age and English language proficiency (ELP).
2. EL students shall be assessed to determine their English language proficiency using the Department of Public Instruction-approved English proficiency assessment instrument ACCESS for ELLs®. The assessment shall be administered by the English as a Second Language teacher. The District may also use information such as the following when assessing a student's English proficiency: prior academic records from within or outside the United States, information on everyday classroom performance, and course grades, which, in relation to the student's grade level, indicate that lack of progress is due to limited English language skills.

3. American Indian EL students may exercise the option to opt out of the state proficiency assessment. The request to opt out must be submitted in writing to the Title III coordinator no later than two weeks prior to the test administration date.
4. EL students assessed shall be classified and reclassified as appropriate, according to their English proficiency level as outlined in state rules and described below.

Level 1— *Beginning Preproduction* if the student does not understand or speak English with the exception of a few isolated words or expressions.

Level 2— *Beginning Production* if all of the following criteria are met: (a) the student understands and speaks conversational English with hesitancy and difficulty, (b) the student understands parts of lessons and simple directions, and (c) the student is at a pre-emergent or emergent level of reading and writing English, significantly below grade level.

Level 3— *Intermediate* if all of the following criteria are met: (a) the student understands and speaks conversational and academic English with decreasing hesitancy and difficulty, (b) the student is post-emergent, developing reading comprehension and writing skills in English, and (c) the student's English literacy skills allow the student to demonstrate academic knowledge in content areas with assistance.

Level 4— *Advanced Intermediate* if all of the following are met: (a) the student understands and speaks conversational English without apparent difficulty, but understands and speaks academic English with some hesitancy, and (b) the student continues to acquire reading and writing skills in content areas needed to achieve grade level expectations with assistance.

Level 5— *Advanced* if all of the following conditions are met: (a) the student understands and speaks conversational and academic English well, (b) the student is near proficient in reading, writing and content area skills needed to meet grade level expectations, and (c) the student requires occasional support.

Level 6— *Formerly EL Now Fully English Proficient* if all of the following criteria are met: (a) the student was formerly limited-English proficient and is now fully English proficient, and (b) the student reads, writes, speaks and comprehends English within the academic classroom setting.

5. Student English proficiency assessment records shall be maintained by the District in accordance with state and federal laws and District student records policies and procedures. Reports regarding EL students shall be made to the DPI as legally required.

C. Assessing Academic Achievement

1. Decisions regarding academic performance assessment shall be made and documented on an individual basis for each EL student. Assessment decisions shall be made by the English as a Second Language teacher and communicated to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). All communications to parents/guardians of EL students shall be given in such manner as to provide understanding of the information. They should be provided in English, the parent/guardian's native language or any other means to convey the required information.

D. EL Students and State Academic Assessments

1. The results of both state-required tests and alternative assessments shall be used in a manner that is consistent with District policies in making instructional, promotion and graduation decisions. Test results may not be used as the sole criterion in re-classifying an EL student from ESL services or in determining grade promotion, eligibility for courses or programs, eligibility for graduation or eligibility for participation in post-secondary education opportunities. Similarly, exemption of an EL student from taking a state-required test may also not be used as the sole criterion for making such determinations.
2. The District shall administer a state-required test to an EL student unless a determination has been made that the results of the test, with allowable accommodations made for the student as needed, will not be a valid and reliable indicator of the student's academic knowledge and skills, such determination is to be made on an individualized case by case basis. If an EL student is exempted from taking a state-required test, they shall be administered a DPI approved alternative assessment.
 - a. Before making decisions regarding state-required academic assessments for any EL student, the District will first determine if the student has recently arrived in the United States. "Recently arrived" refers to a student that has attended a U.S. school for less than 12 months.
 - (1) A recently arrived EL student may be exempted from one required administration of the state's ELA assessment if they have an English proficiency of level 1 or 2.
 - (2) Recently arrived students must participate in all other content areas (with or without accommodations).
 - (3) If the District does not assess a recently arrived EL student on the state's ELA assessment, the student must participate in ACCESS for ELLs®.
 - b. Students at English proficiency levels 3 through 5 as outlined above shall participate in a state-required test but may also participate in an alternative assessment, based upon the District's assessment of the student's overall academic performance as to whether the alternative assessment and the results obtained from the assessment are likely to be beneficial to the student.
 - c. If an EL student participates in a state-required test, the District shall provide testing accommodations for the student if they are needed. Any accommodations made shall maintain the validity of the test. Testing accommodations may include, but are not limited to the following: providing the assistance of a qualified translator to translate instructions or read items from tests that do not assess English language competency; providing small group or individual testing opportunities; providing more practice tests or examples before the actual test is administered; allowing EL students to use dictionaries or other educational aids while taking the test unless this use would invalidate the test; and allowing EL students as much time as necessary to complete the test, or any other accommodation approved by DPI.
3. School personnel shall make reasonable efforts to consult with a student's parent or guardian regarding the planned approach to the student's state-required academic assessments.
4. Student test/alternative assessment results shall be communicated to the student's parent/guardian and to the DPI as required by law.

E. Educational Program Assistance

1. An EL student will be provided educational program assistance and/or services as appropriate and necessary to help the student improve their English language skills and academic performance. The degree of curricular and instructional modification, type of support or other program services and their duration shall be determined individually, based on student need.
2. Bilingual-Bicultural Programs
 - a. The District will provide each EL student who is participating in a District bilingual-bicultural program with an effective instructional program and supportive services appropriate to meet the needs of the student.
 - b. The District shall provide each EL student with full access to supportive services, such as language development and speech therapy, as are available to other students in the District and as are appropriate to the individual needs of the student.
 - c. The District shall provide programs and services that reflect the cultural background of the student. In appropriate instances, some instruction may be provided that is intended to improve the skills of an EL student in the use of their primary language for the purpose of enabling the student to become proficient or advanced in all subject areas.

F. Students Exiting the ESL Program Based on Proficiency

1. Students classified as EL will no longer be considered an EL student when they have the language skills necessary to compete with mainstream English speakers in age and grade appropriate settings in all areas of language development without the use of adapted or modified English materials. These EL students will:
 - a. Understand and speak English in relation to the full range of demands of the classroom and the academic language needed to succeed;
 - b. Read and comprehend English as evidenced by successful classroom performance and average district score on standardized achievement tests;
 - c. Write English as evidenced by successful classroom performance and average district scores on standardized achievement tests; and
2. An EL student will be exited from the ESL program or services when the student earns a 5.0 or greater overall composite score on the Wisconsin English Language Proficiency Assessment (ACCESS for ELLs®2.0).
3. An EL student in grades 1-12 may be exited from the ESL program or services when:
 - a. the student achieves an overall score of 4.5 or greater on the ACCESS for ELLs®; and
 - b. additional evidence gathered using a Multiple Indicator Protocol (MIP) demonstrates that the student has become fully English Language Proficient.
4. When the district has made the decision to exit a student from the ESL program, the district must notify the student's parent/guardian of the reclassification decision and communicate information about any changes in programming and support.
5. Once students have been exited from the ESL program, they shall no longer be tested on their English proficiency or receive state testing accommodations for EL students. However, the

District will continue to monitor the exiting student for two additional years through teacher observation and by documenting adequate progress/classroom performance. If it is determined that the student was exited from the ESL program prematurely, they will be placed back in the ESL program and provided appropriate services.

G. Notices and Other Communications with Parents and Guardians

District personnel are expected to make reasonable efforts to present formal notices and other information to parents and guardians in an understandable format and in a language parents and guardians can understand. Notices and communications may be provided in the parent's or guardian's primary language (preferred when practical, and required by law in some instances), in English with additional explanation, or via other means that sufficiently convey the required information.

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