

DALE COUNTY SCHOOLS 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)*

Educational Theory and Goals

It is the policy of the Dale County Schools that no student will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, religion, belief, national origin, ethnic group, or disability. The Dale County Schools is committed to providing all students equal opportunity to benefit from educational programs and services. Specifically, students from limited English-speaking families are challenged to learn a language as well as new academic skills simultaneously. These students, English Learners (EL), require services that will enable them to benefit from instruction. In order to provide these services, the Dale County Schools' Program for English Learners (EL) has the following:

Program Goals:

- Highly Certified teachers will provide evidence based and appropriate programs, practices, training, and accountability.
- Students will improve their proficiency levels in English and achieve the state's academic content and student academic achievement standards.
- To provide English Learners with equal access to all school programs.
- To provide quality professional development to teachers, administrators, and other school or community-based personnel.

Program Objectives:

- To enable English Language Learners (ELL) to become competent in speaking, comprehension, reading and writing of academic English.
- To increase the English proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing of English Learners by providing quality language instruction educational programs.
- To create a learning environment that will provide for cognitive and affective needs.
- To help ELL students adjust socially, emotionally, linguistically, and academically to their new school environment
- To increase the academic achievement of English Learners in the core academic subjects.

Enrollment Procedures:

Students who are to attend the Dale County School System and who are homeless, migrant, limited English proficient, immigrant, foster care or with disabilities will have access to free appropriate education and will not be prohibited from school attendance due to barriers such as:

- Residency requirements
- Lack of Social Security Number
- Lack of Birth Certificate
- Lack of Immunizations
- Legal custody requirements
- Lack of school records or transcripts
- Transportation
- Language barriers
- Disabilities

ALL LANGUAGE MINORITY STUDENTS MUST BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND SCHOOL REGARDLESS OF THEIR ABILITY TO PRODUCE THESE DOCUMENTS.

Section B: Identification and Placement Procedures

1) Procedures for identifying the EL Advisory Committee

The Dale County Schools will establish an EL Advisory Committee for the purpose of determining program needs, assessment procedures, conducting an evaluation and for developing this comprehensive EL Plan. This committee includes central office administrators, assessment specialists, school level administrators, school counselors, teachers working with ELL students, parents and community representatives who work with these students and their families in other settings. For Dale County Schools, these resources will include Dale County Family Services Center, Dale County Department of Human Resources, Dale County Children’s Policy Council, and Dale County Public Health Department. This committee will meet annually to review the plan and make necessary updates. The committee recommendations may include English language development programs, high-quality professional development for staff, parental involvement programs, budget concerns, and EL program evaluations.

2) Methods for identification, placement, and assessment

Our school system is committed to the identification and proper servicing of all students with English language challenges. Our school system is equally committed to providing supportive responses to those issues/situations which may hinder a student’s school enrollment and success and prohibit and/or lessen parents/guardians full and appropriate involvement in their child’s educational experience. In response to these commitments, the following procedures will be utilized:

A. All students enrolled in the Dale County School System are given a Language Survey Form upon enrollment.

B. Upon review of the completed Home Language Survey Form and there is the specification that English is the primary language of the student, the Language Survey Form is filed in the student’s cumulative folder and the procedure ends.

C. Upon review of the completed Language Survey Form, there is a specification that English is not the primary language of the student and/or the home, the student’s school history is reviewed by the school’s guidance counselor, administrator, and teacher. If a review of the student’s

school history reveals that this student has achieved success in an English language instructional environment without additional support from Title I and/or Title III services, as evidenced through above-average class grades and above-average scores on mandated assessment, then the process ends.

D. Upon review of the completed Language Survey Form, if there is the specification that English is not the primary language of the student and/or the home, and the student's school history reveals below average classroom performance and below average performance on mandated assessments or if the student's school history is incomplete or unavailable, the process of evaluation begins. The evaluation of a student's level of English proficiency and placement in our school system's English Learner (EL) program will include the following:

1. Within thirty days after the beginning of school and within ten days of a student's new enrollment, parents/guardians will be notified of the school's recommendation that their child is enrolled in the school's EL program. This recommendation will be based upon: a review of the student's school history, an interview of the family and the student, the administration of the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) to the student.
2. The school counselor will record the registration date as "original entry date" in Powerschool SIS or "date first enrolled" when completing the demographics page of the ACCESS for ELs English proficiency test.
3. Any student in Kindergarten and any student in the 1st semester of first grade will be screened using the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten in the domains of Listening and Speaking only. If the student's oral language score is a 4.5 or higher, the student does not qualify as an ELL student. If the oral language score is a 4.0 or below, the student qualifies as an ELL student.
4. Any student in the 2nd semester of first grade through 12th grade will be screened using the WIDA Screener Online in the domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing. If the student composite score is 5.0 or higher, the student does not qualify as an ELL student. If the student's composite score is a 4.5 or below, then the student qualifies as an ELL student.
5. Parents/guardians grant permission for entrance in the EL program or may choose to waive services. If parents/guardians choose to waive services, it must be done in writing on an annual basis.
6. In the event a parent/guardian chooses to waive EL services, it is the responsibility of the EL Committee members to inform the parent/guardian of all possible instructional implications. The school district is still responsible for monitoring the student and making accommodations for them to attain proficiency. In addition, the ELL student must still participate in the annual English Language Proficiency test (ACCESS for ELLs) until they successfully reach proficiency.

Upon determination of enrollment in the EL program an EL Committee will be convened at the school level. This committee will facilitate the placement, services and assessment of the English Learner student. Members of this committee will include:

- School administrator
- Classroom teacher
- ELL teacher and/or ELL Specialist
- Counselor

- Parent(s) of ELL student
- Others determined by principal

3) Methods and procedures for exiting students from the ELL program

Upon scoring 4.8 (composite score) on ACCESS for ELs, English Learners will be exited from EL services and placed on monitoring status for four academic years. During the monitoring period, the EL teacher and the general education teacher will communicate at least once every nine weeks to ensure that the student(s) are performing to academic standards without EL services. During the monitoring phase, if the EL student is not progressing as expected and language is suspected to be a barrier, then the EL committee will meet to determine next steps. The student may be reclassified as LEP and reenrolled in the ESL program or other appropriate academic programs.

Reclassification codes are as follows:

- FEL-1 Former English Learner First Year of Monitoring
- FEL-2 Former English Learner Second Year of Monitoring
- FEL-3 Former English Learner Third Year of Monitoring
- FEL-4 Former English Learner Fourth Year of Monitoring
- FEL- Former English Learner

A written notice will be provided to the parents informing them that their child will be exited from the ELL program. The notice will be printed in English and the parent's primary language when possible.

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

The Dale County School systems EL program is English as a second language (ESL). The population of EL students changes each school year. In order to address the needs of the current students, Dale County Schools will conduct a needs assessment to determine the services and activities needed. The EL Advisory Committee will collect and analyze data from a variety of sources and use the data to determine goals and strategies for the enrolled students. With the results of the needs assessment, the advisory committee will proceed to select the appropriate programs and activities. The committee will review scientifically research-based materials, seek guidance from SDE consultants, and provide training for the faculty and staff involved in delivering the services. Currently the Dale County Schools implement a sheltered English or content-based program and "pull out" or push in approach.

Students should not be penalized for any assignments missed while pull out services are being received. If assignments are missed, the mainstream teacher will work with the ELL student to make them up.

ELL and Mainstream teachers will use WIDA resources and appropriate computer programs to help in their understanding of and implementing appropriate teaching strategies for ELLs. The ELL specialist will be available to provide professional development and resources to equip teachers with strategies for accommodating ELLs. This best fits the needs of the current students.

WIDA Resources:

WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards and Alternate Proficiency Levels

Can Do Descriptors and Alternate Can Do Descriptors

Performance Definitions

Guiding Principles of Language Development

Features of Academic Language

Computer Programs:

Flashlight 360

Lexia Learning

Lexia English (Rosetta Stone)

Resources and Materials for Instruction:

Pocketalk Translating Devices

Open Court Reading

Math Envision K-6th and 9th-12th

Reveal 7th-8th

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

To appropriately provide accommodations, mainstream teachers will frequently refer to the accommodations page of the I-ELP that was given. Students will receive accommodations accordingly and accommodations may differ between content areas.

The student's EL committee will monitor progress of language acquisition and use the data gathered to improve/modify instruction. Training for faculty and staff will be provided, reflecting the needs identified in the data analysis. The district will integrate the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment English language proficiency (WIDA ELP) standards with the curriculum as well as teachers will integrate the standards into lesson plans. By using these standards teachers will be able to provide the ELL student with access to the local curriculum as they progress through the stages of language acquisition: entering, beginning, developing, expanding, bridging.

WIDA's English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards are as follows:

Standard 1- English Language Learners communicate in English for SOCIAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL purposes within the school setting.

Standard 2- English Language Learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of LANGUAGE ARTS.

Standard 3- English Language Learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of MATHEMATICS.

Standard 4- English Language Learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of SCIENCE.

Standard 5- English Language Learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of SOCIAL STUDIES.

Specific components:

The Dale County Schools EL Program will employ a variety of activities and services in order to meet the unique and individual needs of the EL student, focusing on the acquisition of academic language proficiency and literacy. These will include modeling, access to reading material in their native language for classroom and homework assignments, availability of bilingual books, dictionaries, meaningful hands-on activities and use of native language in writing and speaking activities, even if the teacher does not know this language. WIDA ELP standards will be used to guide the choice and implementation of activities. This will enable the teachers to provide the EL student access to curriculum as they make progress acquiring language skills.

3) Grading and retention policy and procedures

Teachers are encouraged to maintain high expectations for ELL student learning. They can adapt and accommodate lessons and assignments accordingly so that ELLs can progress. With the understanding of the struggles of language barriers that ELLs can face compared to their English speaking peers, traditional procedures for grading may not be appropriate.

Grading is mainly based using ACCESS scores that range from a composite score ranging from 1.0 to 6.0 and WIDA assigns proficiency level descriptions with these scores. ACCESS aligns levels of language in the domains of Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Comprehension and Oral Proficiency. An understanding of the student's proficiency levels in each of the domains will help guide the teacher in grading.

Retention and grading for EL students will be addressed through the Individual ELP Plan (I-ELP) with the input of the student's EL committee. Retention can not solely be based on English language proficiency (*Lau v. Nichols*). The team will gather and analyze data from a variety of sources in order to make the most effective decisions for the student's grading, promotion, and retention. Some items that will be considered in this process include:

- The student's current level of English language proficiency
- Implementation of accommodations and modifications as outlined in the I-ELP
- Revision of I-ELP as needed throughout the school year
- Amount of individual English language instruction received daily/weekly

- Need for an alternate grading strategy
- Adequate teacher training with instruction and assessment strategies specific for ELL students.

Current district promotion and retention policies will also be considered by the EL committee.

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

Dale County will strive to employ personnel who have had formal training in teaching second language learners to help implement the ELL program. ELL students will be taught by highly certified teachers using evidence based materials. The core of their instruction will be in the classroom using state standards and WIDA ELD (English Language Development) standards. Teachers will receive appropriate professional development in order to support their instruction of ELL students. Community members and family will assist the schools in providing services and activities for ELL students as they make progress in language acquisition. Tutors and translators will be utilized as appropriate. Foreign language instructors at district high schools and local universities will provide support. All faculty and staff working with ELL students will be fluent in English. Professional development will be obtained through workshops with turn-around training will be provided at the school level. We will also attend regional meetings provided by the SDE.

5) Method for collecting and submitting data

School faculty and staff are trained to use Powerschool SIS to code EL's as well as enter reliable data regarding enrollment, attendance, health, grades, discipline, and demographic data. The district's EL Specialist and school counselors are responsible for securing school records. District student assessment personnel will follow procedures as outlined by the SDE for collecting and submitting data regarding ELL students. School based data reviews are conducted each quarter to ensure accuracy of reports. Also, district personnel will follow procedures for reviewing EL reports online as required by SDE.

6) Method for evaluating the effectiveness of the program

Each school develops and reviews the Alabama Continuous Improvement Plan (ACIP) throughout the school year. The leadership team at each school maintains the ACIP with accurate, current information. Through this process the EL program will be evaluated. Results of the ACIP process at each school, as well as, district-wide data will be combined and reviewed. The data, to include ACCESS 2.0, will be analyzed and reviewed to determine if the goals of the EL plan have been attained, what adjustments are indicated, and what resources should be allocated. This process will include a self-assessment to determine program compliance, input from stakeholders, student assessment results, and local school data regarding discipline, attendance, and grades. The evaluation template provided by the SDE will be used to summarize the findings and plan for future activities.

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

EL students are eligible for Special Education Services and Gifted Education Programs and will follow the same protocols and procedures used for all students attending Dale County Schools eligible for those programs and services. Cooperation with the EL Program will be sought to ensure the language proficiency of ELL students does not prevent any access to these programs.

Special Education:

Students having difficulty with academic and/or behavioral concerns not related to language barriers or LEP status will initially be referred to the Response to Intervention (RTI) team at their base school. Strategies and interventions will be set forth by the team. If these strategies are implemented with ample documentation and are deemed unsuccessful and all alternate avenues have been explored, then the student may be referred for special education services. Specific indicators will be used to validate the need for a special education evaluation. These indicators can include:

- **Poor communication skills in their native language compared to siblings or same aged peers in a bilingual environment.**
- **Deficiencies noted by parents**
- **English Language Development compared to peers learning English as a Second Language**
- **Other at risk conditions or noted developmental delays**

Gifted:

English Language Learners are eligible to be considered for participation in the gifted program as their English speaking peers. All efforts will be made by the gifted program, classroom teacher, and EL committee to provide input and feedback to the gifted teacher.

The Dale County Schools' Program for Students with Disabilities and the Dale County Schools' EL Program will work together to identify students who are eligible for services as students with disabilities. The identification, eligibility and service provision for these students will be provided in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. In order to support these procedures the EL Program will help with securing the services of someone to administer the test or other evaluations in the native language. These accommodations will include a translator or the use of translation services through MasterWord for oral communication and written communication in the parent's native language. The materials used to assess an English Language Learner student will be selected and administered to ensure that they measure the extent to which the student has a disability and needs special education, rather than measuring the student's English language skills. Also, the EL Program will maintain a contact list of resources in the area for providing communication with the parent in the native language. The EL Program and the Program for Students with disabilities will work together to ensure the EL student is provided English language acquisition services as an integral part of the IEP. A student will not be determined to be eligible for special education if the determinant factor is the child's lack of English proficiency. All required procedures as outlined in the Alabama Administrative Code will be followed for referral, eligibility, evaluation, and services (IEP) for EL students.

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

The district student assessment coordinator and the EL program coordinator will work together to ensure that EL students participate in state-administered assessments. Through the district's accountability program results of the assessments will be shared with schools and parents in a timely manner. These same results will be incorporated into the school's ACIP. Technical assistance will be sought through the SDE in order to adequately address the needs of the EL students in the ACIP. The student assessment results will be reviewed and incorporated into the goals and activities of the school's ACIP. Professional development opportunities will be made available to the faculty and staff of the school through the ACIP in cooperation with the central office staff, SDE, and local in-service center.

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

The Dale County Schools' EL program and accountability coordinators will meet to monitor and evaluate school engagement with the ACIP.

Section E: Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

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

Dale County Schools will provide notification to parents of ELL students identified for participation in the English language instruction program, no later than thirty (30) days after the beginning of the school year, regarding the following:

1. The reasons for the identification of the student as limited-English proficiency and placement into the English Language program.
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 and how the program differs from "regular" school in content and goals.
4. How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the student.
5. How the program will specifically help the 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.

Information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance detailing:

1. The right of the parents to have their child immediately removed from supplemental Title III programs upon request.

2. The options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such supplemental Title III programs or to choose another program or method of instruction if available.
3. The various programs and methods of instruction if more than one program or method is offered by the eligible entity.

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

The EL committee will provide a resource for communication with parents. The EL program coordinator will monitor all required communication for parents through the team process. Parents of ELL students will receive notification of identification and placement in a language they understand. Through the use of ELLEVATION platform or TRANSACT and local resources (translators, family members, staff, community partners) this oral and written communication will be made available. If the school fails to achieve adequate growth, the separate notification will be made available to parents in their native language. An opportunity to review this communication, ask questions and receive clarification will also be scheduled through the EL committee process with support of the EL program coordinator. This notification will be separate from other notices and not later than 30 days after such failure occurs. If a child enrolls in school after the beginning of the school year, the district will notify parents of the failing school's language instruction educational program within two weeks.