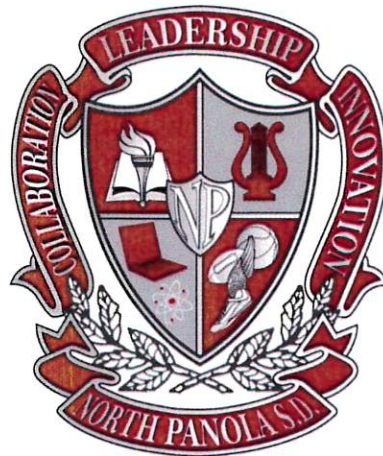


2020-2021 School Year

North Panola School District



English Learners and Immigrant Students Plan of Services

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NPSD'S SERVICE TO ENGLISH LEARNERS

The North Panola School District (NPSD) consists of four schools— Como Primary School serving Kindergarten through 2nd grade, Green Hill Intermediate School serving 3rd through 5th grade, North Panola Middle School serving 6th through 8th grade, and North Panola High School serving 9th through 12th grade. The total enrollment for the district is approximately 1,400 students. During the previous year, there were five students in the district who were considered English Learners. Two students spoke Arabic as their primary language, and three students are English Learners who speak Spanish.

Definition of an English Learner (EL)

An EL is a student:

- who is aged 3-21;
- who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school;
- who was not born in the United States OR whose native language is a language other than English; and
- where difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual:
 - the ability in meeting the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in section 1111(b)(3);
 - the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
 - the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Program Overview and Educational Approach

It is the policy of the North Panola School District that no compulsory school-aged individual shall, on the grounds of race, color, disability, sex, religion, or national origin be excluded from the full participation in or be denied the benefits of the educational programs provided by the school district. The EL program is supported with state and federal Title I, Part A funds. The Federal Programs Director/EL Coordinator is responsible for the oversight of these funds.

English learners receive core instruction in the general education classroom in an immersive setting with English-speaking peers. The general education program provides students with differentiated learning opportunities based on their needs.

Students will receive EL services based on English proficiency levels and individual needs as determined by each student's Language Service Plan (LSP). The program operates using a pull-out instructional model in elementary school. The interventionist develops the EL curriculum based on the state guidelines for English learners and implements evidence-based strategies recommended by the Mississippi Department of Education. It is the overall goal of the program for students to become proficient in the English language within four years of beginning EL services.



NORTH PANOLA SCHOOL DISTRICT

PLAN OF SERVICES

ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL)

ENROLLING EL STUDENTS

Every public school in the United States is required to provide a free and equitable education to all school age children who live within the boundaries of the local educational agency (LEA), regardless of immigration status. Several laws protect the rights of ELs and their families, particularly during the enrollment process. These protections are provided because many EL students' levels of transiency and lack of English proficiency make them a particularly vulnerable population.

LEAs and their public schools must enroll all students regardless of their or their parents' or guardians' actual or perceived citizenship or status.

When enrolling students, LEAs may not request information from students or their parents or guardians in order to deny access to public schools on the basis of race, color, or national origin. For example, while an LEA may require proof of residency, inquiring into students' citizenship or immigration status, or that of their parents or guardians, would not be relevant to establishing residency.

Similarly, while an LEA may require students or their parents to provide proof of age, an LEA may not bar a student from enrolling because he or she lacks a birth certificate or has records that indicate a foreign place of birth.

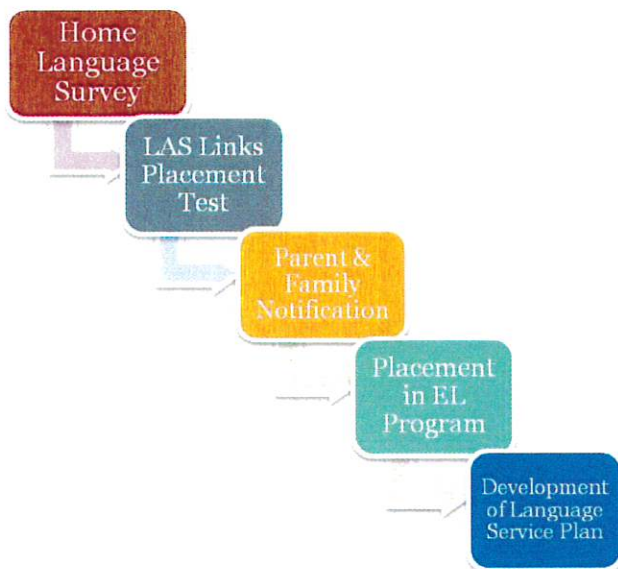
Further, if an LEA requests a student's social security number it must:

- 1) inform the family that providing it is voluntary and refusal will not bar the child from enrolling in or attending school,
- 2) explain for what purpose the number will be used. A school district may not require families to provide a social security number to enroll in or attend school.

In general, LEAs should review the list of documents they require for enrollment to ensure they do not unlawfully bar or discourage students from enrolling in or attending school.

**LEAs may require only two kinds of information for enrollment: proof of residency in the district and proof of required vaccinations.
(State Board Policy 6600-Enrollment, MS Code §41-23-37 Immunizations)**

IDENTIFYING EL STUDENTS



1. A Home Language Survey (HLS) must be completed for each student registering for enrollment in a school in Mississippi. An HLS is a tool to be given to all new entering students and used to identify students who may not be proficient in English. 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.
2. The LAS Links Placement Test must be conducted to determine the level of English proficiency and to facilitate appropriate instructional and program placement decisions. Potential EL students identified by the HLS during registration during the beginning of the school year must be assessed for English-language proficiency within 30 calendar days of enrollment. Potential EL students who register after the beginning of the school year must be assessed within 10 school days of enrollment. The English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) assesses the proficiency of students in all four language domains (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Those administering and scoring the placement test must be certified teachers and receive some level of training. The student's placement test report must be placed in their cumulative record.
3. Any parent or guardian whose child is receiving or is eligible to receive EL services has the right to decline or opt his or her child out of any or all EL services. The LEA must provide guidance in a language parents or guardians can understand to ensure that they understand their child's rights, the range of EL services that their child could receive, and the benefits of such services. This is to ensure that the parent or guardian's decision to opt out is informed and voluntary. The LEAs that receive Title I or Title III funds must provide written

notification to parent or guardians of their children's recommended placement in an EL program within 30 days of the start of the school year (or within 10 days for later-arriving students). The notification must include all of the statutorily-required elements, including the right to opt out.

4. After ELs have been identified using the LAS Links Placement Test, LEAs must provide ELs with appropriate language assistance services and programs, commonly known as "EL services and programs." The LEAs have the flexibility to choose the EL services and programs that meet civil rights requirements and best meet the needs of their EL population.
5. The Mississippi Department of Education requires each student designated as an EL to have a Language Service Plan (LSP), which must be updated annually until the student exits the EL program. The Student Evaluation Team (SET) must meet to develop the LSP at the beginning of each academic school year. This team must be composed of teachers (including EL teachers), administrators, counselors, and parents or guardians. The team will meet quarterly to evaluate the student's progress and make necessary adjustments. A copy of the LSP must be provided to all teachers who work with the EL student.
6. The accuracy of EL data is of the utmost importance. Once a student has been identified as an EL the district must ensure the student is correctly marked in their student data package. This information will upload to MSIS once the district has submitted their data to the Mississippi Department of Education. Districts should ensure each column on the EL roster screen of MSIS is completed. This information should be checked monthly for accuracy.

ASSESSING EL STUDENTS

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires that the LEA must assess all ELs using the annual English language proficiency assessment, including those students whose parents have declined to enroll them in, or had them removed from, Language Instruction Education Programs (LIEPs).

Additionally, all ELs enrolled in schools served by the State must be assessed annually using the State's English language proficiency assessment. [ESEA Section 1111(b)(2)(G)]. "State or district assessment policies, if they include a right to opt a child out of assessments, do not override or diminish the LEA's obligation to assess 100 percent of ELs using the annual English language proficiency assessment."

The LAS Links Assessment is a secure, large-scale, English language proficiency assessment administered to kindergarten through 12th grade students who have been identified as ELs. This assessment is administered annually in the spring to monitor each EL's progress in acquiring academic English.

The LAS Links Assessment incorporates both English Language Arts (ELA) standards of the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards and English Language Development Standards to measure each student's English language proficiency level and growth.

Assessing EL Students for Special Needs

EL students may, of course, have special needs over and above their lack of English skills. When an EL student is referred for special needs assessment, school personnel must ensure:

- That the student has had an "opportunity to learn," whether in the native country or in the American classroom;
- That the student's difficulties are not caused by lack of English skills alone; and
- That those difficulties with English, including pronunciation, are not being mistaken for a speech or language disorder.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits students being from placed in special education if their difficulty in school is primarily the result of cultural and linguistic differences.

EXITING EL STUDENTS

Ensuring EL student success requires ongoing safeguards that are embodied in a continuous review of EL student performance and placement. A student evaluation team will be formed to make collaborative decisions about student identification, assessment, placement, and reclassification or exit.

Team members will consist of persons who are familiar with the EL student and his or her performance, as well as individuals who are familiar with assessment, EL techniques, and placement resources and services.

In reclassification and exit of EL students, the district will transition students by reducing the assistance and accommodations that the student receives until they are no longer dependent on additional assistance and can function independently in the regular classroom as other non-EL students.

On January 19, 2017, the Mississippi State Board of Education revised the LAS Links Assessment score requirements for English learners (EL) to officially exit EL status. Under the new policy, the student is required to obtain the following proficiency levels on the ELPT:

- a. Overall Proficiency Level 4 or 5, and

- b. Reading Proficiency Level 4 or 5, and
- c. Writing Proficiency Level 4 or 5.

MONITORING EL STUDENTS

After students have exited EL status, school districts must monitor their academic progress for at least 4 years. Monitoring must be conducted and documented every 9 weeks, with a SET team reviewing monitored students' grades, assessments and other related data. If an exited EL is not progressing academically as expected and monitoring suggests a persistent language need, districts must retest using the LAS Links Placement Test to see if the student needs to be offered additional language assistance services. In no case should re-testing of an exited student's ELP be prohibited. If the student re-enters EL services, however, the LEA is required to document the reasons why, as well as obtain the parent's consent prior to reentry.

EL SERVICES & INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

All instruction and assessment is done in English. North Panola School District provides an EL pullout and structured immersion program to supplement the strategies and interventions that teachers provide in the classroom. This is designed to increase English language proficiency and is based on sound educational research, theory, and practices. Regular teachers modify classroom instruction so that EL students are provided instructional interventions and accommodations. Teachers also communicate with the EL interventionist(s) to ensure that EL students receive additional tutorial support in identified content areas, as well as English language instruction.

After ELs have been identified using the LAS Links Placement Test, LEAs must provide ELs with appropriate EL language assistance services. The LEAs also must provide EL students with access to the content of the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards. Other services, including special education, gifted education, and extracurricular programs, also must be provided as needed.

ELs should have meaningful access to the core curriculum, such as math, science, social studies and language arts, while learning English. While the district's EL program should focus in part on language acquisition, both EL teachers and academic teachers should work together to ensure that students are mastering the academic language needed to be successful.

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a framework for effective team-based problem solving that is data informed, evidence-based, and flexible enough to meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students.

With MTSS, schools identify struggling students, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions, and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness. Schools also identify students with learning disabilities, language barriers, and/or other disabilities.

EL STAFFING & RESOURCES

Every classroom teacher who serves ELs should work to help ELs make sense of the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards, regardless of language proficiency. As part of this expectation, teachers must incorporate a variety of EL strategies into instructional planning to help students make sense of academic content. Teachers should use visual supports to help build student understanding.

Additionally, teachers must understand the basic communication strategies to be used with ELs. All teachers and paraprofessionals who work with ELs in any capacity should recognize that they need to speak slowly and clearly (not loudly). Educators also should be aware that ELs typically need additional processing time when being introduced to new material or being asked to respond to questions.

Teachers also should recognize the value that collaborative learning has for ELs, including strategies such as assigning peer buddies and language buddies for assignments with high-language demands, think-pair-share activities and the incorporation of sentence starters, sentence frames and word banks to support production during collaboration.

EVALUATING EL PROGRAMS

Successful EL programs must, at a minimum, be designed to enable EL students to attain both English proficiency and full access to the grade-level content. This access helps ELs to exit from EL programs within a reasonable period and graduate high school prepared for college and careers.

To determine the effectiveness of an LEA's EL program, an LEA must conduct periodic evaluations as well as ongoing analysis of effectiveness. Student achievement data must be used to determine an EL program's effectiveness and ensure compliance with state and federal reporting requirements. Evaluations of an EL program should not be limited to required data used for accountability purposes but should instead include multiple data points. Data should be gathered, analyzed, and used to strengthen EL programs and services as appropriate.

EL performance will be evaluated and monitored throughout the school year. Any deficiencies found in providing adequate language support services for ELs will be

corrected in a timely manner. An evaluation team consisting of the guidance counselor, EL teacher, grade-level teachers, and other district or school level staff will meet to consider the following items:

- Standardized test scores;
- Academic achievement as measured by classroom assignments and tests;
- Observation of classroom behavior;
- Interviews with the student;
- Length of time in school; and
- Student's educational background.

If evaluations show that EL programs are not effective, the LEA must make appropriate changes to strengthen programs and more effectively serve students. The Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Federal Programs monitors EL programs to ensure that EL plans are in place, effective, and being implemented with fidelity.

EL TRAINING

In Mississippi, there are several college and university programs that offer courses that can lead to the ESL (177) endorsement. These are not degree programs, but are an approved set of courses that a fully certified teacher could take to add the endorsement. Additionally, Mississippi educators now have the option of taking the Praxis Subject Area Assessment, English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) (Test Code 5362). The current Mississippi State Board of Education approved qualifying passing score is 149.

The Mississippi Department of Education provides onsite training and instructional webinars to inquiring districts as well.

EL RECRUITMENT

Recruiting, developing, and retaining qualified educators is essential to ensuring that any EL program model is effective. The LEAs should hire an adequate number of teachers who are qualified to provide EL services, and core-content teachers who meet requirements in their field should be trained to specifically support EL students. These teachers should meet state requirements and have mastered the skills necessary to effectively teach in an EL program.

The LEAs should hire teachers qualified and certified to teach ELs, or support unqualified staff as they work toward obtaining the qualifications within a reasonable period of time. LEAs that cannot hire an adequate number of qualified EL trained teachers must ensure that current teachers obtain the necessary training, either through Mississippi Department of Education-provided professional development or through training provided through the LEA.

Paraprofessionals may not take the place of qualified teachers and may be used only as an interim measure while the school district hires, trains, or otherwise secures enough qualified teachers to serve its EL students and must always be under the supervision of a teacher.

Even when teachers already hold an ESL license, it is expected that the LEA provide teachers and paraprofessionals with ongoing PD designed to improve effectiveness.

EL ENGAGEMENT/INVOLVEMENT

North Panola School District communicates information to EL parents in a language that they can understand, to the extent practical. The District provides translators, as needed and available.

The District has a procedure whereby the parents or legal guardians may waive EL services for their child. The District informs the parents that their child has been placed in an EL program. Parents may sign a form refusing the EL services.

Successful communication provides LEP parents, guardians, and families with the school-related information they need to make informed decisions about, and be helpful participants in, their children's education. This may include but not be limited to information about language assistance programs, special education and related services, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, grievance procedures, notices of nondiscrimination, student discipline policies and procedures, registration and enrollment, report cards, requests for parent or guardian permission for student participation in district or school activities, parent-teacher conferences, parent handbooks, gifted programs, and magnet and charter schools.

This NPSD Plan for the 2021-2022 school year was board approved August 24, 2021.