



EAST TALLAHATCHIE SCHOOL DISTRICT

ENGLISH LEARNER DISTRICT PLAN

Equitable Access, Language Development, and Academic Success

DISTRICT PLAN | 2026-2027

Prepared for districtwide implementation
Raymond Russell, Superintendent



DOCUMENT CONTROL AND APPROVAL	
Document	English Learner District Plan
Implementation cycle	2026-2027
Owner	Office of the Superintendent and designated district program lead
Applies to	Charleston Elementary School, Charleston Middle School, Charleston High School, and all district programs
Review cycle	Reviewed at least annually and revised when law, policy, data, or district priorities change
Purpose	Define a consistent district process for enrollment, identification, service delivery, family communication, assessment, exit, monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement for English learners.

This document is an operational plan for East Tallahatchie School District. Applicable federal and state law, Mississippi Department of Education guidance, and current ETSD board policy control if any conflict exists.

Raymond Russell, Superintendent / Date

Board President / Date

Program Lead / Date

Board Approval Date and Minute Reference

District Commitment

East Tallahatchie School District welcomes students and families from every language and cultural background. English learners have the same capacity for rigorous thinking and the same right to grade-appropriate curriculum, programs, activities, and support as their peers. Language development and content learning occur together; students will not be required to wait for English proficiency before receiving meaningful academic instruction.

PROGRAM PRINCIPLES High expectations | Equal access | Evidence-based language instruction | Asset-based practice | Meaningful family communication | Shared responsibility | Continuous evaluation

District EL Leadership Structure

Role	Core Responsibility
Superintendent	Ensures legal compliance, resources, accountability, and districtwide implementation.
Federal Programs/program lead	Coordinates identification, Title III/Title I requirements, records, parent notices, services, and evaluation.
Curriculum Coordinator	Aligns content, language development, instructional materials, assessments, and professional learning.
Principals	Ensure timely implementation, scheduling, staff collaboration, access, communication, and school-level monitoring.



Role	Core Responsibility
EL/ESL-qualified staff	Provide/designated language instruction, consult with teachers, maintain LSP evidence, and monitor progress.
Classroom/content teachers	Deliver grade-level content with appropriate scaffolds and language supports; collect evidence of learning.
Counselors/registrars/test staff	Support enrollment, records, scheduling, graduation, assessment, and family communication.
Families and students	Contribute language, education history, goals, strengths, needs, and feedback to planning.

Legal and Policy Framework

ETSD implements this plan consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by ESSA, *Lau v. Nichols*, *Castañeda v. Pickard*, *Plyler v. Doe*, FERPA, IDEA, Section 504, current MDE English learner guidance, Mississippi English Language Proficiency Standards, and applicable state assessment/accreditation rules.

- Enrollment may not be denied or discouraged because of race, color, national origin, language, immigration or citizenship status, or inability to produce a Social Security number.
- ETSD will take affirmative steps to identify and address language barriers that prevent meaningful participation.
- The language instruction educational program must be based on a sound educational theory, implemented with adequate staff/resources, and evaluated and adjusted when it does not produce results.
- EL status is not a disability. A language barrier may not be used to delay a disability evaluation when one is warranted, and disability may not be used to deny language services.
- Parents may decline particular EL services, but ETSD remains responsible for language access, annual assessment as required, progress monitoring, and equal opportunity.

Definitions

Term	ETSD Use
English learner (EL)	A student meeting the federal definition whose English proficiency may affect full participation or achievement in English-language instruction.
Home Language Survey (HLS)	A uniform enrollment tool used for every student to identify a potential language other than English.
Language Service Plan (LSP)	The student's annually reviewed plan documenting proficiency, language instruction, classroom supports, assessment accommodations, goals, and monitoring.
Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP)	The district's research-based approach for developing English proficiency and ensuring access to academic content.
SLIFE	A student with limited or interrupted formal education who may need accelerated foundational, language, academic, and transition supports.
Former EL	A student who met current state exit criteria and is monitored for four years.



Enrollment and Identification Workflow

1. Administer the same state-approved or district-adopted Home Language Survey to every newly enrolling student. Do not use appearance, surname, accent, or assumption as a substitute.
2. Review the HLS immediately. If it indicates a language other than English, notify the district EL program lead and review available prior records and education history.
3. Screen the student with the current MDE-approved English proficiency screener unless valid prior EL records establish status and placement. Complete identification within the state timeline - generally within 30 calendar days of the start of school or within 10 school days for later enrollment.
4. Record screener results, prior EL history, first U.S. school entry, native language literacy, interrupted schooling, disability/504 information, and other data needed for appropriate placement.
5. Determine EL status using current state criteria; create an LSP; schedule language services and accessible grade-level courses without unnecessary delay.
6. Provide required parent notification in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parent understands. For students identified after the school year begins, provide notice within the current federal timeline.
7. Enter accurate codes and dates in the student information system and secure the HLS, screener, notice, LSP, and service records.

ENROLLMENT SAFEGUARD Staff may request records ordinarily required for enrollment, but missing records must be handled consistently for all students and may not be used to discourage or bar enrollment based on national origin or language.

Parent Notification Must Explain

- Why the student was identified and the student's level of English proficiency and assessment method.
- The program and services offered, how they meet educational strengths/needs, and how they will help the student learn English and meet academic standards.
- How the program differs from other available programs, how disability needs are addressed, and expected transition/exit criteria and rate when required.
- How the program supports grade promotion and graduation requirements for secondary students.
- The parent's right to decline or request removal from specific services and the consequences/support that remain.



Language Service Plan

An LSP is required for each identified EL and is reviewed at least annually and whenever data show a material change in need. A collaborative team should include the parent/guardian when practicable, an EL/ESL-qualified staff member or program designee, classroom/content teacher(s), a school administrator/designee, and other staff needed for disability, counseling, testing, or graduation planning.

LSP Element	Required Evidence
Student profile	HLS; languages; U.S. school entry; education history; strengths; interests; SLIFE/newcomer considerations
Proficiency evidence	Current screener/annual domain results in listening, speaking, reading, and writing
Service model	Frequency, duration, setting, provider, group size, materials, and coordination with content instruction
Language goals	Measurable annual/domain goals connected to Mississippi ELP Standards and content demands
Classroom supports	Scaffolds, explicit language objectives, visuals, modeling, structured talk, vocabulary, text access, and checks for understanding
Assessment supports	Only current state-permitted LSP accommodations and classroom supports routinely used
Progress monitoring	Language and academic measures, frequency, responsible staff, and response when progress is insufficient
Access planning	Core, electives, gifted, CTE, advanced courses, activities, special education/504, and graduation requirements
Family communication	Preferred language/mode, interpreter needs, notices, conferences, and student/family goals

Service Model

ETSD uses an English language development and sheltered/content-support model scaled to student need. A qualified teacher or trained program provider delivers explicit English language instruction; content teachers integrate language objectives and research-based supports in grade-level instruction. A computer program may supplement but may not serve as the sole LIEP.

- Newcomers/entering students: intensive oral language, foundational literacy when needed, orientation, survival/school language, and access to grade-level concepts with strong scaffolds.
- Emerging/developing students: systematic development in all four domains, structured academic talk, explicit vocabulary, reading/writing supports, and planned interaction.
- Expanding/bridging students: complex academic language, extended discourse, disciplinary literacy, independence, and reduced scaffolds based on evidence.
- Long-term ELs: diagnostic review of language, literacy, course history, attendance, and program consistency; targeted language/literacy instruction and close graduation monitoring.



Instruction, Grading, and Access

- Teach grade-level Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards and Mississippi English Language Proficiency Standards together.
- Post and use content and language objectives; model expected language; provide comprehensible input; check understanding; and plan structured speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- Use native-language knowledge and cultural assets when appropriate. Translation can support access but does not replace systematic English language development.
- Grade students on demonstrated learning with documented, appropriate supports. A grade may not be lowered solely because a student is acquiring English.
- Retention may not be based solely on English proficiency. Before retention, the school must document appropriate language services, accessible instruction, intervention, progress monitoring, and evidence that concerns are not primarily caused by language acquisition.
- Provide equal opportunity for electives, gifted education, special programs, athletics, clubs, advanced courses, CTE, dual credit, counseling, and college/career information.
- At the secondary level, evaluate transcripts promptly, award transferable credit consistent with policy, avoid unnecessary repetition, and build a feasible graduation plan.

Assessment

Assessment	ETSD Requirement
Initial screener	Current MDE-approved placement assessment administered by trained staff using secure procedures.
Annual English proficiency	All identified ELs, including students whose parents decline services when required, take the current state English proficiency assessment until exit.
State academic assessments	ELs participate as required using only allowable accommodations documented and routinely used.
Classroom/district assessment	Provide valid language-access supports without changing the construct; use multiple measures to distinguish content knowledge from language demand.
Progress monitoring	Review English domain growth, common/benchmark results, grades, attendance, work samples, interventions, credits, and teacher/family evidence.

TEST SECURITY Only trained, authorized personnel may administer secure assessments. Staff must follow the current ETSD Test Security Plan, MDE assessment guidance, accommodation rules, and incident reporting procedures.



Exit and Four-Year Monitoring

- 8. Apply the current MDE exit criteria; do not use local grades, parent request, disability status, or subjective judgment as a substitute for required state criteria.
- 9. Notify the family of exit and explain that the student will no longer receive EL status/services but will be monitored for four years.
- 10. Monitor at least each grading period during the first year and at regular documented intervals thereafter using grades, assessment results, attendance, behavior, credits, course access, and teacher/family input.
- 11. If a former EL is not progressing, determine whether the cause is language need, instruction, attendance, disability, mobility, or another factor; provide appropriate support.
- 12. If evidence shows a persistent language barrier, consult the district EL lead and follow current MDE procedures regarding additional services or reclassification review.

Monitoring	Minimum Review	Evidence
Year 1	Each grading period	Grades, language demands, intervention, attendance, assessment, teacher/family input
Year 2	At least each semester	Academic progress, course access, assessments, supports
Year 3	At least annually and when concern arises	Academic/credit progress and any language-related concern
Year 4	At least annually and when concern arises	Successful sustained access and performance

Parent Declines Specific EL Services

- The decision must be voluntary and informed; staff may not recommend opting out to avoid providing services or accountability.
- Document the services declined, information provided, parent signature/decision, preferred language, and annual opportunity to reconsider.
- Continue accessible content instruction, appropriate classroom supports, annual state English proficiency assessment when required, academic monitoring, and meaningful communication.
- Meet promptly if evidence shows the student is struggling and offer appropriate supports again without coercion.



ELs With Disabilities, Section 504, and MTSS

Language acquisition and disability determination are separate but may coexist. ETSD will not delay a referral/evaluation because a student is an EL and will not identify a disability merely because a student is learning English or had limited prior schooling.

- Use qualified evaluators, multiple measures, education history, language proficiency, native-language information when feasible, and assessment methods that distinguish language difference from disability.
- Provide evaluation notices and procedural safeguards in a language and form the parent can understand to the extent required/practicable.
- If eligible, coordinate the IEP/504 plan and LSP. EL services are not replaced by special education, and special education is not replaced by EL services.
- Apply MTSS with linguistically responsive core instruction, evidence that language supports were implemented, and progress monitoring appropriate to language proficiency.
- Do not use intervention as a reason to delay a suspected-disability evaluation or to deny grade-level instruction.

Newcomer and SLIFE Supports

Need	ETSD Response
Orientation	School routines, transportation, meals, safety, technology, attendance, grading, activities, and family contacts in an understandable form.
Foundational assessment	Native-language literacy information, English domains, numeracy, education history, and interrupted schooling - not English proficiency alone.
Accelerated support	Explicit foundational literacy/numeracy when needed while preserving access to age-appropriate content and peers.
Well-being	Trauma-informed, culturally responsive counseling and connection to school/community resources without assuming trauma.
Secondary planning	Prompt transcript review, credit recovery/transfer decisions, graduation pathway, and extended-time options consistent with law/policy.



Meaningful Communication With Families

ETSD will identify each parent's preferred language and communication mode and provide qualified language assistance at no cost for essential information. Children, students, untrained staff, and family friends should not be used as interpreters for high-stakes communication except in a true emergency until qualified assistance is available.

- Prioritize enrollment, safety, discipline, attendance, health, special education/504, EL services, academic progress, graduation, activities, and parent rights notices.
- Use trained interpreters/translators or vetted services; protect confidentiality; and confirm understanding.
- Translate frequently used vital documents into languages common in the district when practicable and provide oral interpretation for other languages.
- Document interpreter name/ID, date, language, method, and subject for consequential meetings.
- Provide equal opportunity for families to participate in conferences, committees, family events, surveys, and decision-making.

Professional Learning

Audience	Required Learning
Enrollment/records staff	HLS, nondiscriminatory enrollment, timelines, coding, records transfer, interpreter access
Teachers	ELP standards, language objectives, scaffolds, academic discourse, literacy, differentiation, progress evidence
Administrators	Program scheduling, equal access, observation indicators, staffing, compliance, evaluation
Test coordinators	Screeners/annual assessment administration, security, accommodations, incident procedures
Special services/MTSS	Difference vs. disability, valid evaluation, coordinated plans, linguistically responsive intervention
Counselors	Transcript/credit review, graduation pathways, social-emotional support, postsecondary access



Program Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

The district EL committee reviews implementation and outcomes at least annually and more often when data indicate concern. Small-number privacy rules apply. Evaluation must determine whether the program is implemented as designed, whether students are developing English and accessing content, and whether former ELs sustain success.

Domain	Annual Review Evidence
Identification	HLS completion, screening timeliness, notification timeliness, correct coding, record completeness
Services	Minutes/frequency delivered, qualified staffing, schedule/access, LSP quality, classroom implementation
Language outcomes	Annual domain/composite growth, time in program, long-term EL patterns, exit
Academic outcomes	Grades, benchmarks, MAAP, growth, attendance, behavior, credits, graduation, readiness
Equity/access	Participation in core, electives, advanced, gifted, CTE, activities, special services
Family access	Interpreter/translation records, participation, concerns, satisfaction, response timeliness
Former EL success	Four-year monitoring, interventions, sustained course/assessment performance

13. Identify the finding and affected student group/process.
14. Determine root cause using records, observation, stakeholder input, and outcome evidence.
15. Assign a corrective action, owner, resources, completion date, and success measure.
16. Check implementation within 30-60 days and outcome impact at the next data point.
17. Continue, revise, or replace the strategy and document the decision.

Required Student File Checklist

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| ☐ Home Language Survey | ☐ Prior EL records and education history |
| ☐ Screener/annual proficiency reports | ☐ Eligibility/placement determination |
| ☐ Parent notification and language used | ☐ Current and prior LSPs |
| ☐ Service schedule/provider evidence | ☐ Assessment accommodation documentation |
| ☐ Progress monitoring/intervention evidence | ☐ Opt-out documentation, if applicable |
| ☐ Exit notice and criteria evidence | ☐ Four-year monitoring records |

ANNUAL ASSURANCE The district program lead will complete an annual file and implementation audit, report findings to the Superintendent, and maintain evidence of corrective actions.

Reference Basis

- Mississippi English Learner Guidelines: Regulations, Funding Guidance, and Instructional Supports (current MDE version).
- Mississippi English Language Proficiency Standards and current MDE testing/accommodation guidance.
- U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice English Learner Tool Kit and civil rights guidance.
- East Tallahatchie School District board policy, enrollment procedures, instructional plan, MTSS procedures, and test security plan.