

# **East Union Community School District**

## **K-12 Lau (ELL) Plan for Serving English Learners**

**September 10, 2014**

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# Legal Rationale/ Education Rationale and Program Goals

## Office for Civil Rights (OCR) says:

A school district must be able to account for all of its LEP students. A small district may be able to do this informally. A large district, or one with a great number of students whose first language or home language is not English, must have a formal system for objectively identifying students whose limited proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English denies them the opportunity to meaningfully participate in the regular education environment.

Source: OCR Document, The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited-English Proficient Students.

Washington D.C. November 14, 2013 from <http://www.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/eeolep/index.htm>

**The State of Iowa says:** According to [Iowa Code section 280.4](#), a limited English proficient student is defined as follows: "a student's language background is in a language other than English, and the student's proficiency in English is such that the probability of the student's academic success in an English-only classroom is below that of an academically successful peer with an English language background." The term English Language Learners (ELL) will replace the term Limited English Proficient (LEP).

## Title III of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*

Addresses the needs of English language learners and has three goals:

- 1) To help ensure that English language learners (ELLs) Attain English proficiency,
- 2) Develop high levels of academic competence in English, and
- 3) Meet the same challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet.

Title III holds States, LEAs, and individual schools accountable for meeting these goals.

Source: U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition, 2003, p. 5

## Educational Rationale

The legal rationales stated previously provide only part of the reason that special instructional programs for English language learners (ELLs) are necessary. Equally important, if not more so, is the fact that these types of programs are consistent with best educational practices. Both research and experience have proven that such programs provide the most valuable educational opportunities for ELLs.

# Program Goals

1. To help students to become English proficient in the language skills of speaking, reading, writing, and listening.
2. To help students to successfully participate in classroom learning situations and other school activities.
3. To help students to develop and/or reinforce positive attitudes toward self, school, and community

## Identification of ELL Students

### *The Home Language Survey*

Every attempt is made to identify potential English Language Learners (ELL) in the East Union School District School District. The District will use the Home Language Survey provided from TRANSACT. This procedure will be used to identify students of diverse languages who may need to be assessed in order to determine if they are in need of the services from the alternative language programs available in the district. This will replace the home language question on the registration forms. This form will be given to all new students in the district including incoming Kindergarten students and new students registering in the district. All district secretaries will access to the surveys.

### *Initial Assessment*

In order to select the appropriate placement for a student, district personnel should first assess the student's English language proficiency and academic skills, and examine other relevant personal information.

### *English Language Proficiency*

Successful academic performance depends on proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing English. A student's level of proficiency in these skill areas may vary. Therefore, assessing the student's English language proficiency is an important step in deciding upon placement in an English language instructional program. Students will be assessed within 30 days of entering the school district. The Tennessee English Language Proficiency Assessment (TELEPA) will be the instrument used beginning in the Fall of 2013.

Classroom and school social settings (lunch, recess, or before/after school time) observations and an interviews with the child and/or family may also assist in determine proficiency or appropriate programming.

***Parental Notification of Eligibility and Placement:*** Parents are notified of the testing results along with any formal observation information. If supplemental services are recommended, the parents are given the specific program information. If services are not recommended, the parents will be given that information. The notification is given in the language most understood.

# Program Placement

## **APPROPRIATE GRADE PLACEMENT**

As a general rule, ELL students should be placed at the grade level that corresponds with their chronological age. It may take several years for the ELL student to perform grade-level tasks, however, socialization with same-age peers is as important, which will aid in the development of the student's language development .

ELL students' academic experiences may vary greatly, partly dependent on their past opportunities to participate in academic endeavors in any language. Academic skills may be more appropriately assessed in the student's first language. If academic skills are assessed in English, it is important to remember that lack of English skills may influence the performance in content-area testing.

The following is a list of recommended ways to assess ELL students' academic skills:

- Ensure that skills and abilities assessed line up with essential district curricula
- Enlist the help of a translator and/or interpreter
- Allow students to use their first language in answering questions (remember that academic skills and not language proficiency is the focus of this assessment)
- Use plenty of visuals in order to ensure that students understand the task or concept being tested
- Utilize innovative test tasks such as drawing, sequencing pictures, matching, and/or using graphic organizers
- For math, use "language-free" computation problems to assess skills (be aware, however, that other cultures may use different symbols for mathematical operations; a translator/interpreter can provide guidance in this area)

## **Preliminary Program Placement**

At East Union Community School District, an ELL program will be available at every grade level tailored to meet the specific needs of each ELL student. An identified ELL student will be placed into an ELL support program. The curriculum that takes place in the ELL class, whether it is a pullout program, or language support within the general education classroom, will align with the general education curriculum. The ELL teacher and the general education teacher will collaborate to discuss lesson plans and curriculum, so the ELL student is learning the core content that he/she is expected to know upon completion of that grade level.

According to Robert Parker, Consultant for the New England Multifunctional Resource Center defines "appropriate and sufficient services":

- Focus on English proficiency and academic needs
- Follow effective program and instructional practices in the field of second language education
- Prepare students to perform at grade level in the content areas
- Provide appropriate resources and personnel

- Include multiple criteria for placement, promotion, exit, etc.
- Continue until student is reclassified as fluent English proficient
- Teach English and learning-with-English skills
- Provide equal access to educational opportunity
- Provide interaction with English-speaking peers
- Document services and prove that students are succeeding

As with all East Union students, it is important that the parents of ELL students are involved in the decision-making process of the development of the Instructional Plan for their child. It is well within the rights of the parents to refuse services for whatever reason; however, it is the teacher's, ELL team's, and ELL teacher's responsibility to inform the parents of the benefits to receiving these supportive services.

Depending on the needs of the ELL student, the following areas may need to be considered while the ELL team is determining appropriate programming:

- Alternative language instructional program
- Content area instruction
- Vocational instruction
- Health and/or special needs

The Green Hills Area Education Agency (AEA) will serve as a resource during the development of sufficient and appropriate programming for each ELL student.

At the high school level, ELL programs should have credits assigned to them, so the ELL student can participate in appropriate programs while earning credit toward their high school diploma.

## **Supplemental/Special Programs**

Every student in the East Union School District will be given equal educational opportunities. It is the responsibility of all staff to treat students without discrimination on the basis of linguistic background when determining students' eligibility for district services.

Teachers will provide notification of special programs to the parents of ELL students taking into account the possibility of language barriers. The ELL Team will provide support to classroom teachers if they need assistance with home communication either written or verbal.

### **ASSEMBLIES**

ELL students will participate in school-sponsored assemblies with other students in their class. Accommodations will be made as necessary.

### **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

ELL students can choose to participate in all school-sponsored extra-curricular activities. The same eligibility requirements will apply as they do for all students.

## **ELECTIVE COURSES**

ELL students will have the opportunity to participate in secondary elective courses, with accommodations as needed.

## **VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

ELL students can make the choice to participate in secondary vocational educational classes, with accommodations as needed.

## **COUNSELING SERVICES**

Counseling services provided to ELL students will be comparable to those offered to all students.

## **TALENTED AND GIFTED**

ELL students will have the opportunity to test for the Independent Studies, Accelerated courses and Competency Based Education classes. A review of standardized assessments (with accommodations as needed) along with an assessment of portfolio work will be considered, however, acceleration is open to any student who wishes to enroll him/herself in this work.

## **AT RISK – FAMILY SERVICES**

ELL students will have the opportunity to receive services from the At Risk/Success coordinator and the School/Community Resource Coordinator. These services might also include family assistance. These services are similar to those available to all students.

## **TITLE I READING**

ELL students will have the opportunity to participate in the Title I Reading Program if it is deemed that the student would benefit from this type of small group instruction.

## **SPECIALS – P.E., MUSIC, ART**

ELL students will be fully integrated into specials. The “specials” teachers will receive support from the ELL team.

## Special Education Services

ELL students who experience academic difficulty in the general education setting may or may not be in need of special education services. A comprehensive process is in place to ensure that a child's needs are met with taking into account language barriers and acculturation issues that may exist.

The following is a step-by-step process used to identify ELL students who may qualify for special education services. Please note that although it is important to place a child in need of special education services in a timely manner, it is also important that time is allowed for the child to adjust socially as well as academically. As a general guideline ask yourself is the problem a linguistically or cultural difference or a learning difficulty.

- ✓ Initial Intake
- ✓ Pre-referral documentation
- ✓ Initial Referral Meeting (SST-Student Success Team)
- ✓ Initial Intervention(s)
- ✓ Follow-up SST Meeting
- ✓ Refer on for evaluation – if that is the recommendation of SST
- ✓ Evaluation by Green Hills Area Education Agency
- ✓ Development of IEP (Individual Education Plan)
- ✓ Initial Placement Meeting

The goal of this process is to provide the best educational setting and least restrictive environment for the ELL student. It is the goal of the East Union School District to provide the best education possible for **ALL** students and for student to reach their full potential.

## Exit Criteria

We follow the exit Criteria as defined by the Educating Iowa's English Language Learners Handbook

A student, upon reaching a composite level of 6 on the I-ELDA, may be able to be exited after sufficient input from a team including teachers, parents and other staff. In addition to the composite level of 6 on the I-ELDA, the student must meet 3 of the following 4 criteria:

- Success in a regular classroom
- ELL support not required
- Sustainability of success
- Score proficient on district-wide and state-wide assessments (currently Iowa Assessment)

The *Iowa Code* addresses exit from an English language instructional program as follows:

An individual student may exit from an ESL or Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program after an assessment has shown both that the student can function in English (in speaking, listening, reading, and writing) at a level commensurate with the student's grade or age peers and that the student can function academically at the same level as the English speaking grade level peers. These assessments shall be conducted by utilizing state, local or nationally recognized tests as well as teacher observations and recommendations. (Chapter 60 - 281-60.6(3)(b)(4))

## Assessments and Grading

All ELL students are required to annually participate in the I-ELDA (Iowa English Language Development Assessment). Staff members at the Elementary and Middle School are trained to administer the assessment.

All ELL students regardless of time in a language instructional program and level of proficiency in English, must be assessed annually in the areas of reading and mathematics. There is some flexibility for recently arrived ELL students (those who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than 12 months) for one test administration. For recently arrived ELL students, local education agencies (LEAs) can count the reading score from the English language proficiency test (I-ELDA) as participation in the reading test. Recently arrived ELL students are still required to take the district-wide math assessment.

Students whose parents have waived ESL service are required to take the I-ELDA.

All ELL students (K-12) must participate in the English language proficiency testing of their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills each year. "Comprehension scores" are required, but there is no separate test for comprehension. It is a combination of scores from listening and reading. Currently, East Union is using the Iowa English Language Development Assessment (I-ELDA). We are required to report the percentage of ELL proficiency each school year.

Appropriate ELL accommodations for testing will be used. Guidance for accommodations are defined in the Educating Iowa's ELLs Handbook, pages 22-25; Iowa Guidelines for K-12 ELL Participation in District-wide Assessments (2011-2012)

Grades for ELL students may be modified if the curriculum has been modified throughout the grading period. Specific modifications are coordinated with the instructor, principal and ELL teacher.

## Professional Development

At East Union Community School District, the ELL teacher will hold an annual training session for new teachers in the district and for teachers who have ELL students in their classroom that year. The training session will include information about effective teaching strategies, assessment ideas, and resources on where to find additional support. Throughout the school year, the ELL teacher and building administrators(s) will assist the classroom teacher with language support strategies with their ELL students, and will also serve as a resource to the classroom teacher. Green Hills AEA Staff Development training will also be available.

# Program Evaluation

The East Union School district will periodically evaluate the ELL program to ensure quality education and academic growth for students involved in the program. The ultimate test of a program's effectiveness is the success experienced by the students in the total school environment. The ELL team will also be evaluated every three years. There is not a formal evaluation tool, but rather a variety of data will be used to evaluate the program.

Another component of the evaluation will be monitoring the progress of individual students. Collection of data will be maintained on a minimum of a bi-annual basis. Typically the data will be results from the TELPA and the Iowa Assessments. This data should be useful in two ways. First, it should help in monitoring individual student progress. Second, it will look at the program's overall effectiveness. It is also important that a portfolio of work be collected on each student. This will include formal and informal assessment along with daily work samples.

It is important that a comprehensive evaluation be addressed by a number of interested parties. Possible member of the evaluation team may include the following:

- ELL Teacher
- Principals
- Iowa Core Coordinator
- Green Hills AEA Staff
- Resource Teacher(s)
- General Education Teachers
- Parents

The guidance counselors will also disaggregate data for an annual report to the school board. The following information must be included (as age appropriate) in the annual report:

- Grade Retention
- Graduation
- Dropout rate
- Gender
- English proficiency
- Economically disadvantaged
- Standardized test achievement levels
- Multiple measures of academic achievement