

Ideal Components of an

English

Language

Learning

Policy



School districts must systematically identify and assess the educational needs of students whose native or home language is different than English. Districts must provide appropriate programs to address these learners' unique needs. These services should be documented to show district compliance.

Necessary Policy or Plan Components

These components comprise the minimum of an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) plan that all districts should have in place, as directed by school board policy, for identifying and working with English Language Learners (ELLs). ELL is used to indicate a Limited English Proficient (LEP) student.

IDENTIFICATION

The district must have a procedure in place for identifying ELLs who are enrolling in school. This procedure must determine if there is significant use of a language other than English in a student's background. Either a Home Language Survey or an enrollment form with questions about language use in the home must be administered to all enrolling students.

ASSESSMENT

The district must have a plan in place to assess students speaking other languages for ELL identification. This must include a standardized English language-proficiency assessment of reading, writing, speaking, listening and comprehension. This may be used alone or in combination with informal assessment tools (teacher observation checklist, grades, parental input checklist, etc.).

SERVICES

The district must have a plan to provide instructional services for all ELLs. Although services might vary depending on resources and context, they must include direct English language instruction and appropriate content modifications.

TEACHER QUALIFICATION

When 20 or more ELLs are enrolled, the district must have an ESOL-endorsed teacher who is fluent in English and any other language used in the ELL program. If the district does not, it must have documentation showing that attempts have been made to hire an ESOL-endorsed teacher. The district should prepare for the possibility of 20 ELLs by encouraging one of the presently employed teachers to pursue ESOL endorsement.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

The district must provide notification to parents within 30 days from the start of the school year that their child is being placed in an English language program. If a child enters the program during the school year, this time frame is two weeks.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The district must provide timely notification in a comprehensible format to parents when activities are planned.

WORKING WITH PRIVATE SCHOOLS

The district must consult and coordinate with private schools in a timely manner for equitable service delivery. Delivery of ESOL services must be at a public school or a neutral site.

PROGRAM FAILURE NOTIFICATION

The district must promptly notify parents when the ELL program is failing to ensure language proficiency.



Implementation

- The district must show evidence that it actually uses an acceptable English language proficiency screening procedure.
- If ELLs are identified, there must be evidence of an acceptable English language proficiency assessment.
- If ELLs are identified, there must be evidence that appropriate direct English services are being provided so that limited English proficiency is not a barrier.
- There must be evidence that parents are being notified when their children are placed in an English language instruction program, as well as when the ELL program is failing to ensure English language proficiency.
- There must be evidence that private schools are being consulted for service opportunities.
- When ESOL-endorsed teachers are hired, there must be evidence that the teachers are fluent in English and any other language being used in the program.
- When enrolling more than 20 ELLs, the district must strictly follow the local student-teacher ratio.
- When calculating the number of ESOL-endorsed teachers needed if more than 20 ELLs are enrolled, use the following recommendations.

Divide the number of students by the number of teachers to find each ratio. The ratios must be the same. If they are not, check the table below for an alternative standard.

	Ratio A	Ratio B
	$\frac{\text{Total school enrollment}}{\text{Total number of teachers in classrooms}}$	$\frac{\text{Total enrollment of ELLs}}{\text{Total number of ESOL-endorsed teachers}}$

Are Ratios A and B the same?

Grade Level	Minimum Standard	Desirable Standard
K-2	25	20
3-4	27	22
5-6	30	25
7-12	33	28



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Evidence

All of these elements should be in place during the MSIP review.

1. **Home language questions on the enrollment form** (when the Home Language Survey is not in place) or a **Home Language Survey form** (when the enrollment form is not utilized)
2. **Assessment tool** (districts with ELLs must have one in place) or a **written agreement to borrow an assessment tool** when the first student arrives, including the original signatures of the borrower and the lender (districts with no ELLs may use this option in place of the assessment tool)
3. **Parental notification form**
4. **Fliers or letters** sent to parents that **announce activities** (including appropriate means of communication)
5. School documentation including **assurances and job advertisements when an ESOL teacher is not in place** after 20 or more ELLs are enrolled
6. **School documentation of the student-teacher ratio** (when enrolling more than 20 ELLs) including the names of teachers assigned to ESOL services
7. **Summary of the ELL program** including the instructional models being used by the district, any scientific research conducted during program design and evidence of ELL program implementation
8. **Sample letter or form** to notify parents **when the ELL program is failing to ensure English language proficiency**

The “Educating Linguistically Diverse Students” handbook, contains a wealth of information as well as samples of forms required as evidence. All people working directly with LEP/ELL students, including parents and support staff, should take time to familiarize themselves with this handbook. The district policy should include how the information in the handbook will be disseminated districtwide to all personnel who serve LEP/ELL students.