

TESFA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING POLICY (592)

I. Purpose

The purpose of the English Language Learning Program is to provide quality instruction aimed at helping English language learners achieve English language proficiency and academic success. Using the Minnesota English Language Proficiency Standards as a guide, the program targets reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in both social and academic contexts. It also provides students with the language skills needed to meet the Minnesota Content Standards in the areas of math, language arts, science, and social studies. By the time students exit the English Language Learning Program, they will have the language tools needed to achieve success in the mainstream classroom.

II. Identification and Placement

A. Identification:

1. Home Language Questionnaire:

When a parent or guardian initially enrolls a student into Tesfa International School, he or she will fill out a Home Language Questionnaire as part of the enrollment packet. The Home Language Questionnaire will determine the student's primary language by asking the following questions:

- Which language did your child learn first?
- Which language is spoken most in the home?
- Which language is your child most comfortable speaking?

Any student with an answer other than English to one or more of the above questions will be considered to have a primary language other than English. The completed form will be placed in the student's cumulative file and the student's home language will be recorded in PowerSchool. The information will be available for the EL teacher and the grade level teacher assigned to the new student.

2. Developmentally Appropriate Measures:

Students who are identified as having a primary language other than English will be screened using developmentally appropriate measures to determine their qualification for EL services. This screening may include observations, classroom teacher and EL teacher judgment, and/or parent recommendations. In addition, the EL teacher or other qualified staff will determine if the student has current ACCESS scores and, if not, will assess the student using the WIDA MODEL language assessment within two weeks of enrollment. This assessment measures whether students are at a level 1 (entering), level 2 (beginning intermediate), level 3 (developing), level 4 (expanding), level 5 (bridging), or level 6 (reaching) in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The WIDA MODEL and/or ACCESS scores will be placed in the student's cumulative file and entered into the school's assessment data program. This information will be available to all stakeholders, including parents and teachers.

3. Screening:

Parents fill out the Home Language Questionnaire as part of the enrollment packet. The home language is recorded in PowerSchool and the completed form is placed in the student's cumulative file.

- a. If all answers are English: Student does not qualify for EL services. LEP NO is entered in MARSS.
- b. If one or more answers is a language other than English: The EL teacher looks in the student's file and/or calls the student's previous school to obtain ACCESS scores. If ACCESS scores are not available, a qualified teacher administers the MODEL assessment.
 - i. If student's ACCESS/MODEL scores are at least 5.0 overall and at least 4.0 in each language domain: Parents are informed of the student's test scores and LEP NO is entered in MARSS. The student does not qualify for EL services.
 - ii. If student's ACCESS/MODEL scores are less than 5.0 overall and/or less than 4.0 in any language domain: Parents are informed of the student's test scores and LEP YES is entered in MARSS.
 1. If parents refuse services: A start date is not entered in MARSS and the student does not receive EL services.

2. If parents do not refuse services: A start date is entered in MARSS and the student receives applicable EL services.

B. Program Entrance:

1. **Eligibility:** Students will be determined to be eligible for EL services according to the following procedures:
 - a. The parent's answer to one or more question on the Home Language Questionnaire is a language other than English.
 - b. The student's MODEL/ACCESS scores are less than 5.0 overall and/or less than 4.0 in any language domain.
 - c. The EL teacher will check with the classroom teacher to ensure that the MODEL/ACCESS scores accurately reflect the student's academic English proficiency.
 - d. Parents have the right to refuse EL service even if their child has been identified as an EL. A parent's decision to refuse EL service does not change the LEP status of the student. The start date for each student's EL service will be entered on the student's individual record in MARSS each year. If a student is withdrawn from services after parental notification, the start date in MARSS will be removed.
2. **Pullout EL:** Any student who scores at level 1.0-1.9 on the WIDA MODEL/ACCESS assessment will qualify for pullout services. Students who score at level 2.0 – 4.9 may qualify for pullout services based on observations, classroom teacher and EL teacher judgment, and/or parent recommendations.
3. **Sheltered English Instruction:** All students in the EL program will receive sheltered instruction in their mainstream classes. All classroom teachers will receive ongoing training in sheltered instruction from the EL teachers. The EL teachers will collaborate with the mainstream teachers to ensure support for ELs at all levels.

C. Parental Notification:

The school will notify parents within 10 days of enrolling a new student in the English Language Learner program. In addition, the school will notify parents annually of students' participation in the EL program within 30 days of the beginning of the school year. Title III of NCLB requires informing parents about the reasons for identification, the level of English proficiency, how the program will help their child learn English, and exit requirements.

D. Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) Data Entry:

Three fields in MARSS relate to EL status: Home Language, LEP Identified, and LEP Start Date.

- 1. Primary Home Language:** Enter a numerical code indicating Primary Home Language.
- 2. LEP Identified:** Enter a Y for YES or an N for NO indicating whether or not a student has qualified as an English language learner. This designation is used regardless of whether the parents of the student refused service.
- 3. LEP Start Date:** Enter the date that the student begins EL service each school year. If the parent refuses service, do not enter a start date.

E. Service:

All students who are identified as EL will receive service in an instructional program for ELs.

- 1. Level 1.0-1.9:** Students at level 1.0-1.9 of English language acquisition will receive pullout services. The students will be pulled out of their classroom for 30-45 minutes per day to receive English language instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. A highly qualified teacher will teach the pullout classes. In addition, students at this level will receive sheltered instruction in their mainstream classes. All classroom teachers will receive ongoing

training in sheltered instruction from the EL teachers. The EL teachers will collaborate with the mainstream teachers to ensure support for ELs at all levels.

- 2. Level 2.0-2.9:** Students at level 2.0-2.9 of English language acquisition may receive pullout services (as described above) if it is determined that it would benefit the student based on observations, classroom and EL teacher judgment, and/or parent recommendations. In addition, students at this level will receive sheltered instruction in their mainstream classes. All classroom teachers will receive ongoing training in sheltered instruction from the EL teachers. The EL teachers will collaborate with the mainstream teachers to ensure support for ELs at all levels.

- 3. Level 3.0-3.9:** Students at level 3.0-3.9 of English language acquisition may receive pullout services (as described above) if it is determined that it would benefit the student based on observations, classroom and EL teacher judgment, and/or parent recommendations. In addition, students at this level will receive sheltered instruction in their mainstream classes. All classroom teachers will receive ongoing training in sheltered instruction from the EL teachers. The EL teachers will collaborate with the mainstream teachers to ensure support for ELs at all levels.

- 4. Level 4.0-4.9:** Students at level 4.0-4.9 will receive sheltered instruction in their mainstream classes. All classroom teachers will receive ongoing training in sheltered instruction from the EL teachers. The EL teachers will collaborate with the mainstream teachers to ensure support for ELs at all levels.

F. Annual Progress Evaluation:

The progress of all students in the EL program will be evaluated annually to determine movement from level to level within the program. Progress will be evaluated using the assessments in the following table:

Assessment	Areas Assessed	When It is Given	Who Takes It	Who Administers It
WIDA MODEL	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Within 2 weeks of when a new student enrolls if no EL scores are found in cumulative file	New students whose home language is not English and who do not have ACCESS scores	EL teachers
WIDA ACCESS	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Six week testing window set by state	All LEP identified students	EL teachers and classroom teachers
MCA	Math Reading Science (5 th and 8 th)	During testing window set by state	All students in grades 3-8	Classroom teachers
NWEA	Reading Math Language Usage	September January May	All students	Classroom teachers
Informal Assessments	Reading Writing Math IB Units of Inquiry	Ongoing	All students	Classroom teachers

G. Exit Procedures:

- 1. Exit from Pullout Services:** In order to exit from EL pullout services, students must meet both of the following criteria:
 - a. Obtain level 2.0 or above on the ACCESS/MODEL Assessments.
 - b. Be able to participate in grade level activities with modifications as documented by classroom assessments and agreed upon by the mainstream teacher and the EL teacher.

- 2. Exit from EL Classification:** In order to exit the English Language Learning Program, students must meet both of the following guidelines:

Formal Assessments:

- a. ACCESS/MODEL Assessment: overall score 5.0 or above
- b. ACCESS/MODEL Assessment: scores of 4.0 or above in each language domain: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing.

H. Reclassification as No Longer LEP:

When a student exits from EL classification, he or she will also be reclassified in MARSS as no longer LEP.

III. Plan of Services

A. Description of Services:

- 1. Sheltered English Instruction:** All students in the EL program will receive sheltered instruction in their mainstream classes. In sheltered instruction, teachers support language learning by

developing highly structured lessons based on key concepts and language skills. Vocabulary is introduced early in the lesson using gestures, objects, or other visual aids. Introductory activities activate students' prior knowledge and build background knowledge that the students will need to build on to learn the key concepts. All activities in the lesson support learning of the key concepts and language skills. This may include using nonlinguistic support such as pictures, objects, films, and hands-on activities. All classroom teachers will receive ongoing training in sheltered instruction from the EL teachers. The EL teachers will collaborate with the classroom teachers in planning and co-teaching lessons to provide support for ELs at all levels.

2. **Rationale:** In sheltered instruction, all teachers share the responsibility of educating students. As a result, this program model promotes collaboration between EL and mainstream teachers and encourages team teaching. Since ELs and native speaking peers are in the same classrooms, sheltered instruction ensures that best practices are used for all students and ELs have access to the core curriculum. In addition, this provides interaction between ELs and their native speaking peers. * See attached research.

3. **Pullout EL:** Students in first through eighth grade at level 1 of English language acquisition will receive pullout services. The students will be pulled out of their classroom for 30-45 minutes per day to receive English language instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. A highly qualified EL teacher will teach the pullout classes.

4. **Rationale:** In pullout EL, ELs are group by proficiency levels to allow for focused instruction targeting language skills that students need in order to succeed in mainstream classes. Instructional groups are small, allowing for more personalized attention for ELs. * See attached research.

B. Curriculum Writing Process:

EL students will use the main curriculum pieces that the school board has adopted. The EL teachers and the classroom teachers will collaborate to modify the curriculum to best meet the needs of all students.

C. Alignment of English Language Development (ELd) and Content Standards

The school's curriculum will be aligned with the Minnesota language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies standards as well as the WIDA ELD standards. The EL teachers and the classroom teachers will collaborate to align the curriculum and the standards each year that the school's curriculum or the state's standards change.

D. Schedules:

The EL teachers' schedule will support curriculum implementation. A copy of the current EL teacher schedule will be available.

E. Communication:

A description of the EL program and curriculum will be distributed to parents each year when the school mails the parental notification letter (see Identification and Placement: Parental Notification). School staff will have access to the EL Policy on the school website. Parents, staff, and community members will be notified of any changes to the EL program and curriculum throughout the year. This information will also be available to students upon request.

IV. Staff

A. Highly Qualified Staff:

All EL teachers will be licensed by the state of Minnesota in ESL.

All EL teachers and educational assistants will be proficient in English. English proficiency will be determined by the candidate's successful completion of the interview process.

B. Instructional Responsibilities:

The instructional responsibilities of the EL teachers include:

- Coordinating with classroom teachers at the grade level(s) assigned to plan and implement instruction that will benefit students at all English proficiency levels.
- Provide additional pullout English instruction for level 1 EL students and levels 2 through 3.9 as determined by the EL teacher, classroom teacher and/or parent(s).
- Provide ongoing training in the area of sheltered instruction for classroom teachers.
- Communicate with the staff, administration, board, parents, students, and community members.
- Participate in ongoing professional development.

C. Professional Development:

A professional development plan will be implemented each year for the EL teacher, classroom teachers, and educational assistants. A copy of the current professional development plan will be available.

- **EL Teachers:** The EL teachers will participate in ongoing professional development.
- **Classroom Teachers:** Classroom teachers will receive ongoing training in the area of sheltered instruction.
- **Educational Assistants:** Educational Assistants will receive ongoing training in working with English language learners.

V. Collaboration

A. Coordination with Other Programs:

The EL teachers will coordinate instruction with other programs in the school, including special education, tutoring, professional development, and family involvement programs.

B. Planning and Communication with Classroom Teachers:

The EL teachers will meet regularly with the classroom teachers at the grade level(s) assigned to plan instruction that will benefit students at all levels of English language acquisition.

The EL teachers will communicate information about the EL program as well as best practices for teaching EL students via a monthly newsletter, trainings during staff meetings and staff development days, and/or other forms of communication.

If there is more than one EL teacher, the EL teachers will meet regularly to coordinate the EL program across grade levels.

VI. Family and Community Involvement

A. Family and Community Involvement Policy:

Family and community involvement will be encouraged in a wide variety of areas. The EL department will support the implementation of the school's family and community involvement policy.

B. Family and Community Involvement Initiatives Related to EL:

Family and community members from all language and cultural groups represented in the school's student population will be encouraged to become involved in the school. Interpreters will be available at school events and written communication will be translated when needed. Childcare and transportation may be provided if appropriate to the event to ensure that all families are able to participate.

C. Family Communication:

- **Parental Notification:** The school will notify parents within 10 days of enrolling a new student in the English Language Learner program. In addition, the school will notify parents annually of students' participation in the EL program within 30 days of the beginning of the school year. Title III of NCLB requires informing parents about the reasons for identification, the level of English proficiency, how the program will help their child learn English, and exit requirements.
- **Communication with Newcomer Families:** When a family that is new to the country enrolls in the school, the EL teacher will meet with the family to explain the school programs, ways that the family may be involved in the school, ways that the family may help their children at home, and other community resources that are available to assist the family and the child. An interpreter will be available for this meeting if necessary. If the family cannot meet at the school, the EL teacher and an interpreter will make a home visit. The classroom teacher will be invited to attend the meeting as well.
- **Ongoing Communication:** The EL teachers will communicate with families regularly to discuss the progress of students. This

communication may include written notes, phone calls, or home visits. Translation or interpreters will be provided when necessary.

V. State and Federal Requirements

A. Testing Procedures:

Data will be collected on the progress of all EL students in reading, writing, speaking, listening, language usage, math, science, and social studies. This data will be used to determine students' placement in the EL program. It will also be used to inform instructional decisions. A summary of the assessments is included in the table shown under section II F (page 5 of this document).

B. Testing Accommodations:

Testing accommodations will be provided for students who require them.

C. Supplementary Programming:

The EL program is designed to supplement, not supplant, the mainstream instructional program.

D. Title III Funding:

Title III funding will be used to supplement the EL program. Budget expenditures will align with the purpose and goals of the program, including parental involvement and professional development. An articulated description of how Title III and other funding sources are integrated including a breakdown of line item expenditures will be included in the school's budget.

Adopted:

Revised:

Research Rationale for Services

Tesfa International School strives to provide services for English learners that align with the most current research in EL best practices. According to the Center for Applied Linguistics, research suggests that several characteristics influence the effectiveness of EL programs:

- “Supportive whole-school contexts (Lucas, Henz, & Donato, 1990; Tikunoff et al., 1991).
- High expectations for language minority students, as evidenced by active learning environments that are academically challenging (Collier, 1992; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Pease-Alvarez, Garcia, & Espinosa, 1991).
- Intensive staff development programs designed to assist ALL teachers (not just ESL or bilingual education teachers) in providing effective instruction to language minority students (Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Tikunoff et al., 1991).
- Expert instructional leaders and teachers (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990; Pease-Alvarez, Garcia, & Espinosa, 1991; Tikunoff et al., 1991).
- Emphasis on functional communication between teacher and students and among fellow students (Garcia, 1991).
- Organization of the instruction of basic skills and academic content around thematic units (Garcia, 1991).
- Frequent student interaction through the use of collaborative learning techniques (Garcia, 1991).
- Teachers with a high commitment to the educational success of all their students (Garcia, 1991).
- Principals supportive of their instructional staff and of teacher autonomy while maintaining an awareness of district policies on curriculum and academic accountability (Garcia, 1991).
- Involvement of majority and minority parents in formal parent support activities (Garcia, 1991)” (Rennie, 1993)

Tesfa International School integrates each of these characteristics into its plan for services. In addition, research shows that a combination of sheltered instruction and pullout classes increases the success of English learners.

Sheltered Instruction

Tesfa International School’s sheltered instruction model is based on the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) Model. The SIOP Model was developed during a seven-year project by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE), a national research center funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. The goals of this project were to create a model of sheltered instruction that could be used to train teachers in effective sheltered

instruction strategies as well as to conduct experiments and collect data to evaluate the effects of sheltered instruction on English learners' language and content area achievement. The SIOP Model focuses on lesson preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice/application, lesson delivery, and review/assessment (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008).

Since the SIOP Model was developed, research has shown the model to be effective in improving the language development and content knowledge of English learners. A study conducted in Illinois, during the 1998-1999 school year, compared the expository writing scores of two groups of middle school English learners in the fall and again in the spring. The groups of students were similar, except that the students in one group had teachers who were trained in the SIOP Model while the students in the other group had teachers who had no exposure to the SIOP Model. The students whose teachers implemented the SIOP Model significantly improved in all areas of writing compared to the students in the control group (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006).

Another study, *Academic Literacy through Sheltered Instruction for Secondary English Language Learners*, compared secondary English learners in New Jersey who were exposed to teaching based on the SIOP Model with those whose teachers were not exposed to the SIOP Model. Researchers collected data from the New Jersey state content assessments as well as the IPT (Idea Proficiency Test), an assessment of English language development. A preliminary analysis of the data shows that the students with SIOP-trained teachers made significantly greater gains than the students in the control group (Short & Bauder, 2006).

Pullout EL Classes

Although sheltered instruction is the main component of Tesfa International School's EL Program, we also recognize the need for pullout classes for our level 1 English learners. For level 1 students, sheltered instruction is not as meaningful as it is for students who have basic communication skills already. According to the *Toolkit: Connecting ESL Best Practices and Limited English Proficient Students*, "Initially, the majority of ESL instruction provided to students with very limited English should focus on "direct language" instruction, such as basic literacy instruction and "survival" English. In these instances, separate ESL-specific texts and instructional materials may be useful" (2009). As students progress in learning English, their need for direct language support decreases while their need for academic content support increases. Therefore, Tesfa International School limits pullout classes to serving only the students who are at the very beginning levels of English language acquisition.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Tesfa International School uses research in EL best practices to determine its plan of services for English learners. The school places an emphasis on English learners by holding high expectations for all students, providing staff development for all teachers, employing expert principals, instructional leaders and teachers with a high commitment to student success, emphasizing communication and student interaction, and involving parents. In addition, Tesfa International School's program of sheltered instruction combined with pullout classes for level 1 students follow the best practices for teaching English learners. By providing these services, Tesfa International School strives to ensure the success of English learners at all levels.

References:

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