

English Language Learner (ELL) Program.

The following procedures will be employed with any student who enrolls in the Issaquah School District with an apparent deficiency in speaking and/or understanding the English language.

A. Registration

At the time of registration at a school, parents of students shall be asked to identify the principle language that is spoken in the home. Students from limited-English-speaking homes will be assessed by a staff member to determine the English proficiency level of the student. If the interview reveals that the student speaks little or no English, he/she will be declared eligible for the ELL program.

B. Assessment

When the student shows limited English-speaking skills, the district ELL Coordinator or certified ELL specialist shall administer an approved English proficiency test (e.g., Language Assessment Scales) no later than the twentieth school day after the date upon which the student commences attendance. If the score on such test falls at "3" or below, the student shall be eligible to receive ESL instruction.

C. Placement

1. District and/or school staff - including principals, regular classroom teachers, ELL teachers and educational assistants, ELL coordinator, school counselors - will make the most appropriate regular program placement based upon the assessment results and the age, size, maturity, and educational background of the student.
2. The ELL teachers and educational assistants will work with the principal and teachers to create a direct service schedule. The ELL teachers and educational assistants, with assistance and training from the ELL coordinator, will develop an instructional program and materials for the student.
3. When there are twenty or more eligible students at the same grade or age whose primary non-English language is the same, the district shall provide bilingual instruction in English and in the students' primary non-English language, provided that a qualified instructor can be employed.

D. Parent/Guardian Notification

Parents/guardians will be notified, in writing when feasible, of their child's initial eligibility and notified annually of their child's continuing eligibility in the ELL Program. At a minimum the parent/guardian notification will contain:

1. How the child's eligibility was determined and the child's current level of English proficiency;
2. A description of the district's program and how it will meet the child's educational needs;
3. The specific exit requirements for the program; and
4. Information on the parent's rights to refuse services.

Communication with parents/guardians should be provided, when feasible, in the parent's primary language.

E. Continued Eligibility

Each limited-English-speaking student shall be reassessed with a standardized reading and language arts test, e.g., the California Test of Basic Skills, each year to determine if he/she is eligible to receive ELL instruction. Any student who scores above the 35th percentile will be exited from the program. No student shall continue to be entitled to an ELL or alternative instructional program after the student has received instruction in an ELL or alternative instructional program conducted within any one or more school districts for a period of three school years (i.e., 540 school days or portions thereof): Provided, that each such student who is unable to demonstrate an improvement in English language skills that is sufficient to overcome the student's learning impairment (i.e., unable to score above the 35th percentile on an approved test) shall continue to be entitled to an approved ELL or alternative instructional program.

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