

District 126 English Language Learner Handbook

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District 126 Mission Statement

Our mission is to graduate responsible and self-confident students who are prepared for the challenges of high school and beyond through a personalized education which provides a sound academic foundation and promotes the student's social, emotional and physical development in a safe, supportive environment.

Philosophy of English Language Learning

District 126 is proud of the rich cultural diversity of our students, and strives to foster students' cultural and ethnic backgrounds while developing their communicative competence in the English language. Our focus on maintaining and educating students in their heritage language through our Two Way Immersion Program allows students to experience the benefits of both bilingualism and biliteracy while maintaining an appropriately rigorous academic program. The future social, emotional and academic success of our students is our priority, and with this in mind, we offer an integration of language acquisition services designed to meet the needs of each individual ESL student. Through a culture of collaboration and leadership, we are proud to prepare our students for the demands of the 21st Century.

Identification Process

District 126 follows the requirements of the Illinois State School Code in regards to screening students to determine eligibility for ESL services based upon the information in the Home Language Survey.

1. The school district will administer a Home Language Survey to each student entering the district's schools for the first time, for the purpose of identifying students of non-English background. The survey shall include at least the following questions, and the student shall be identified as having a non-English background if the answer to either question is yes:

a) Whether a language other than English is spoken in the student's home and, if so, which language; and

b) Whether the student speaks a language other than English and, if so, which language.

2. The Home Language Survey shall be administered in English and offered in the student's home language.

3. The Home Language Survey form shall provide spaces for the date and the signature of the student's parent or legal guardian.

4. The completed Home Language Survey form shall be placed into the student’s temporary record as defined in 23 Illinois Administrative Code 375.

(23 ILLINOIS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE 228 228.15)

English Language Proficiency Assessments:

The Illinois State School Code requires that all screenings of students:

- Be age and developmentally appropriate;
- Be culturally and linguistically appropriate for the children being screened;
- Include one or more observations using culturally and linguistically appropriate tools;
- Use multiple measures and methods (e.g., home language assessments; verbal and nonverbal procedures; various activities, settings, and personal interactions);
- Involve family by seeking information and insight to help guide the screening process without involving them in the formal assessment or interpretation of results; and
- Involve staff who are knowledgeable about preschool education, child development, and first and second language acquisition.

(23 ILLINOIS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE 228 228.10)

District 126 uses Illinois-required screening materials which include the Pre-IPT and the WIDA Universal Screener to screen students who have indicated on their Home Language Survey they speak or are exposed to a language other than English.

Screening for initial EL services:

Screener	When Administered	Domains Assessed	Minimum Score for EL Proficiency
MODEL	K (1 st semester)	Listening, Speaking	5.0 (oral composite of listening and speaking)
MODEL	K (2 nd Semester) and 1 st grade (1 st semester)	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	5.0 Composite AND 4.2 (literacy composite [reading and writing])
WIDA SCREENER	1 st grade (2 nd semester) – 12 th grade	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	5.0 Composite

Pre-IPT Screener

The Pre-IPT will be administered to Pre-Kindergarten students, aged 3-4. The Pre-IPT Oral English Language Proficiency Test is the recommended screener for children entering Preschool up to entering kindergarten, as defined in Section 10-20.12 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/10-20.12] to determine students' English language proficiency and to identify students eligible to receive ELL services. Three-year-old children scoring below Level D (on a scale from Level A-E) are considered limited English proficient and are eligible for English Language Learning (ELL) services. Four and five-year-old children scoring below Level E (on a scale from Level A-E) are considered limited English proficient and are eligible for ELL services.

WIDA Universal Screener

District 126 will use the WIDA Universal Screener in order to measure the English language proficiency of students. It will determine whether or not a child is in need of English language instructional services, and if so, to what extent. The WIDA Screener measures four language domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This assessment shall take place within 30 days after the student's enrollment in the district, for the purpose of determining the student's eligibility for bilingual education services and, if eligible, the appropriate level of placement for the student. District 126 may also base ELL placement upon a student's score attained on the prescribed screening instrument, or the assessment instrument available from another school district, provided that the score was achieved no more than 12 months prior to the district's need to assess the student's proficiency in English for purposes of eligibility and placement. A student will continue to be identified as having limited English proficiency and therefore eligible for language support services when he/she scores less than a 4.8 Overall Composite Proficiency Level on the annual ACCESS assessment administered to students identified as Limited English Proficient in grades Kindergarten through 8th grade.

ACCESS Testing

School districts must annually assess the English language proficiency, including aural comprehension (listening), speaking, reading, and writing skills, of ALL children identified as being LEP in kindergarten through grade 8 (Section 14C-3 of the School Code) using the English language proficiency assessment prescribed by the State Board of Education. The ACCESS test assesses academic and conversational English as well as the language associated with language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies within the school context across the four language domains. Illinois uses the ACCESS Test, and it is administered by qualifying ESL teachers who have also been certified to administer the ACCESS. This takes place each year in January and February with the results being sent home in the early Fall of the following school year. The results of this test are one of the factors used to make instructional and programmatic decisions for all of our ESL students.

Parent Notification of Students Identified as LEP (Limited English Proficient)

District 126 must provide written notification to parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students each year that they enroll in a TBE/TPI program in compliance with state and federal regulations. Districts must notify parents every year in which LEP students participate in a language instruction program. No later than 30 days after the beginning of each school year, District 126 sends notification letters to parents of Limited English Proficient students who participate in language instruction programs.

When a student enrolls after the start of the school year and then is identified as LEP, the district is required to send a notification letter to the student's parents within 14 days of the child being placed in a language instruction program.

(23 ILLINOIS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE 228 228.40)

Parent Notification of Enrollment & Parent Rights

Each letter will be sent to the parent in an English Language version and whenever possible, a version in the student's native language.

1. The initial letter sent to parents is the Notification Letter for Parents of Students enrolled in their first, second or third year of the program (Appendix)
2. Should a student qualify for services beyond a three-year period, a Parent Permission letter is sent to parents of students enrolled in the program. (Appendix)
3. Program description pages are included with the Notification letters and include descriptions of Transitional Bilingual Education, Transitional Program of Instruction, Dual Language/Two-Way Immersion, Developmental Bilingual Education, and Newcomer Program.
4. Parents will also be sent a letter indicating if their child's score on the most recent ACCESS test has indicated that they have exited from LEP services.

Refusal of Services

All EL students are entitled to services. Parents may, however, choose to opt their children out of District 126's EL program or out of particular EL services within the EL program. Parents are entitled to guidance in a language that they can understand about their child's rights, the range of EL services that their child could receive, and the benefits of such services. The district will appropriately document that the parent made a voluntary, informed decision to opt their child out of the EL program. The district will still take steps to provide opted-out EL students with access to its educational programs, monitor their progress, and offer EL services again if a student is struggling.

Program Models

Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)	Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required when 20 or more students share the same home language in a school building ● It May be offered when fewer than 20 students share the same home language ● English as a Second Language (ESL) and instruction in English and in the home language in core academic subjects ● Instruction in core subjects in English and students' home language: Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It May be offered instead of TBE when 19 or fewer students share the same home language in a school building ● District/school locally determined: The program usually offers at least English as a second language (ESL), and native language support as needed ● Components of full-time programs selected for each student based on assessment of student's linguistic and educational needs ● Daily instruction in the student's home language (as determined by student's needs) and English

TBE Full-time	TBE Part-time	TPI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two-Way Dual Language ● Self-Contained TBE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transitional program in English (self-contained) ● Transitional program in English (pull-out/push-in) ● Specific scores on ACCESS (English proficiency assessment) or English language proficiency screener as determined by the state ● The current cut-off scores are: In kindergarten: at least 4.0 Oral composite score. In the older grades: at least 3.5 literacy composite score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transitional program in English (pullout/push-in) ● ESL instruction ● Native language support or instruction, to the extent necessary ● Components of TBE services, as needed

Teacher Certification Requirements

Staff Member(s)	Certification Held / Description
District 126 Teachers	All-District 126 teachers are highly qualified and meet the certification requirements of the State of Illinois within their grade levels and subject areas.
ELL/LEP Teachers	All ELL/LEP Teachers meet the certification requirements of the State of Illinois in regards to education English Language Learners.
Dual Language TWI Teachers	All of District 126 TWI Teachers hold the required State of Illinois licensure for their appropriate grade levels and subject areas, and also hold the Spanish Language Bilingual Certification applicable to their grade level(s).
Bilingual Program Director	The Bilingual Program Director for District 126 meets the State of Illinois Certification requirements which includes holding both an Administrative Certificate and the ESL Endorsement.
WIDA Universal Screener ACCESS Administration	All teachers who administer the WIDA Screener and the ACCESS Tests have been certified to administer these specific assessments.

ESL Teacher / Classroom Teacher Roles and Responsibilities

<p>ELL Teacher Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assess language proficiency. -Communicate methods and goals of ESL to General Education teachers, as well as student-specific goals to classroom teachers. -Facilitate regular communication with classroom teachers. -Provide general education staff with links to suggested resources and strategies for language acquisition. -Teach to WIDA and State Standards. -Provide appropriate modifications and accommodations for the instruction of ESLs. -Provide guidance for staff on how to appropriately provide needed differentiation, modifications, and accommodations for ESL students. 	<p>Classroom Teacher Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assess academic achievement and classroom performance of ESL students. -Collaborate with ESL teachers on best practices to be used for English Language Learners in the regular classroom -Determine possible modifications and accommodations for ELLs. -Incorporate ELL best practices into daily lessons. -Contact ELL staff regarding any concerns with ELL students. -Seek English Language Learners teacher input when grading ESL students. -Accommodate ESL testing schedules. -Accept cultural differences of all students and strive to expand knowledge of other
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Advocate for ESL students. -Teach ESLs how to advocate for themselves. -Know students and their families. -Initiate contact with classroom/mainstream teachers. 	cultures.
<p>ELL and General Education Teacher Shared Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establish expectations for learning. -Monitor student progress including social/emotional and academic achievement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create a nurturing environment. -Provide necessary interventions. -Schedule, plan for and participate in the collaboration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster home/school communication. -Facilitate parent involvement. -Act as a contact for ELL parents. 	

ELL Services/Programming

The Elementary ELL curriculum is tied directly to District 126 curriculum, Common Core State Standards, and Illinois English Language Development Standards/ WIDA Standards. Language acquisition takes place while working through academic content using current instructional strategies that emphasize active and cognitively complex learning. ELL services provide students with support in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills necessary to attain English language proficiency and meet state learning standards. Integrated language and content instruction enable English language learners to learn English through the study of academic disciplines such as mathematics, science, and social studies. This approach is an effective way for English language learners to develop their language skills and their academic skills at the same time.

Students receive ELL services based on TBE and TPI models of instruction: Self-Contained, ESL Push-in, and Pull-out. Materials and strategies are appropriate for all students and are specifically adapted to meet the individual needs of ELL students. The district's Two-Way Spanish Immersion (TWI) program located at Stony Creek School provides Spanish and English instruction simultaneously. TWI instruction follows the district's curriculum in all subject areas.

- *Two Way Immersion:* Instruction is given in English and another language to English-speaking students and students who speak the other language together in the same classroom with the goal of developing proficiency in both languages for all students in the class.
- *English as a Second Language:* Teachers focus on building English language skills. The language of instruction is English, support may be provided to students in their native language. Teachers also use sheltered English instruction strategies to modify instruction for ELs to

facilitate student comprehension of learning area content. Classes may be composed of ELs from many different language backgrounds who do not share the same home language.

Assessment of Student Progress

District 126 is continually assessing student progress in order to ensure that each child's academic program is tailored to his/her needs. Parents are encouraged to speak to their children's teacher(s) and ask questions in order to keep themselves informed of their child's progress. District 126 staff are also encouraged to connect with parents frequently via telephone, in person, or electronic communication in order to share information pertaining to student progress. Here are some highlights of more formalized assessment procedures that occur throughout the year for our English Language Learners.

ACCESS Testing

School districts must annually assess the English language proficiency, including aural comprehension (listening), speaking, reading, and writing skills, of ALL children identified as being LEP in kindergarten through grade 8 (Section 14C-3 of the School Code) using the English language proficiency assessment prescribed by the State Board of Education. The ACCESS test assesses academic and conversational English as well as the language associated with language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies within the school context across the four language domains. Illinois uses the ACCESS Test, and it is administered by qualifying ESL teachers who have also been certified to administer the ACCESS. This takes place each year in January and February with the results being sent home in the early Fall of the following school year. The results of this test are one of the factors used to make instructional and programmatic decisions for all of our ESL students.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

At the end of the first trimester, parents are invited to their child's school to speak with their child's teachers about the progress their child has made so far in the school year. All of a child's teachers, including ESL teachers, will be available to discuss the child's progress and share goals for the student for the remainder of the year.

Monitoring EL Students Exited from EL Programs

School districts must monitor the academic progress of former EL students for at least two years to ensure that students have not been prematurely exited; any academic deficits they incurred resulting from the EL program have been remedied, and they are meaningfully participating in the district's educational programs comparable to their peers who were never EL students.

Parent Involvement & Parent Resources

District 126 knows that the academic success of its students is enhanced through a strong home-school partnership and welcomes all families to take an active part in their child's educational experience. The ELL Program in District 126 offers a variety of opportunities for parents of ELLs, including adult English/ESL Classes, a Bilingual Parent Advisory Council (BPAC) and the opportunity to participate in the State Bilingual Parent Summit, and the availability of translated documents and resources in multiple languages. An overview of each opportunity/ resource is provided below.

Bilingual Parent Advisory Council (BPAC)

The Illinois State Board of Education requires the school district to have a Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee to support English Language Learners and their families.

From Illinois State School Code:

Each district or cooperative shall establish a Parent Advisory Committee consisting of parents, legal guardians, transitional bilingual education teachers, counselors, and community leaders. This committee shall participate in the planning, operation, and evaluation of programs. The majority of committee members shall be parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in these programs. Membership on this committee shall be representative of the languages served in programs to the extent possible. (Section 14C-10 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/14C-10])

The committee shall:

i) meet at least four times per year;

ii) maintain on file with the school district minutes of these meetings; and

iii) review the district's annual program application to the State Superintendent of Education In addition, each district or cooperative shall ensure that training is provided annually to the members of its parent advisory committee. This training shall be conducted in a language that the parent members can understand and shall encompass, but need not be limited to, information related to instructional approaches and methods in bilingual education; the provisions of State and federal law related to students' participation and parents' rights; and accountability measures relevant to students in bilingual programs.

The bilingual parent advisory council meets at least four times a year. It consists of parents and guardians of District 126 students and District 126 staff members. More information regarding these meetings can be found on our website and will also be communicated to parents throughout the year.

State Bilingual Parent Summit

Illinois State Board of Education's Division of English Language Learning has sponsored a conference for members of the Bilingual Parent Advisory Councils. Topics addressed include Pre-K-12 educational programs and services, higher education opportunities, parental leadership and advocacy, community outreach, and family support.

Translated Documents & Resources

Many school letters and documents are offered in multiple languages. The district's student database, Skyward, and our school website can be set to multiple languages. Translators are available for Parent-Teacher Conferences and Special Education Meetings. It is our goal to facilitate clear communication with all families within our district whenever possible.

Parent Communication

Communication between parents and guardians and teachers about learning progress is an important part of student academic success. Parents are encouraged to contact their students' teachers with any questions, concerns, or comments. It is expected that District 126 staff members contact parents through written or verbal means on a regular basis. We would like all of our families to feel that they are directly involved in their child's education.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

At the end of the first trimester, parents are invited to their child's school to speak with their child's teachers about the progress their child has made so far in the school year. All of a child's teachers, including ESL teachers, will be available to discuss the child's progress and share goals for the student for the remainder of the year.

Open House/Curriculum Night

Each school in District 126 hosts a yearly Curriculum Night/Open House within the first few weeks of the school year. The purpose of curriculum night is for parents and guardians to meet with classroom teachers and or specialists to learn about grade-level curriculum and expectations for the school year. ESL Teachers and staff are available during this evening to meet parents and discuss the curricula of ESL students for the school year.

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