



# EL Handbook

# Introduction

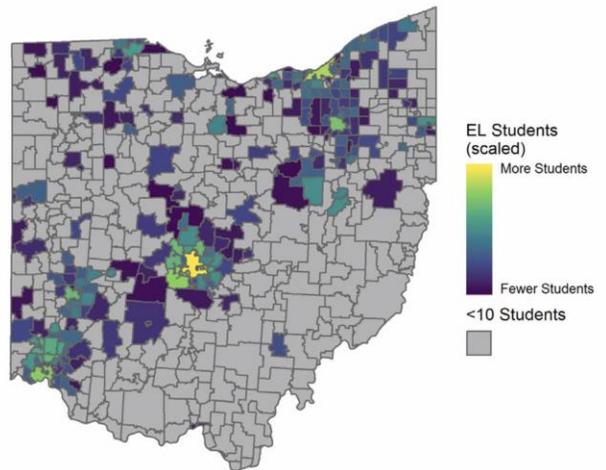
The term English Learners\* (EL) refers to those students whose native or home language is other than English, and whose current limitations in the ability to understand, speak, read or write in English inhibit their effective participation in a school's educational program. Over the past 30 years, the number of EL students in public schools has risen dramatically. .

## EL Students in Ohio

According to the Ohio Department of Education, there were more EL students enrolled in our public schools than the prior year. Ohio's EL students represent many languages. The top 10 languages spoken in the state of Ohio, include Spanish, Somali, Arabic, Chinese, French, Japanese, Pennsylvania Dutch (a dialect of German used by the Amish), Russian, Twi, and Vietnamese. Other groups of Ohio's English learners are from families that have been in the United States for many years but speak languages other than English at home. For example, Ohio's schools enroll students of Puerto Rican, Mexican-American and other Latino backgrounds for whom Spanish is the home language.

Many of Ohio's EL students are children of families who have recently immigrated to the United States from other countries. Most of these families live in urban areas in the state.

With Ohio's EL students representing a wide range of language backgrounds and educational experiences, school districts have the challenge of designing and implementing a wide range of instructional strategies to meet the students' diverse needs. Ohio's English learners include those who have had the benefit of prior education, including literacy development in their native languages. Other English learners, especially those from refugee families, have had little or no prior formal educational experiences.



Ohio's goal for all English learners is to attain English proficiency so that they can achieve the State's academic standards and fully participate in U.S. society. However, the length of time required to attain English proficiency will vary according to a number of factors, including age, grade level, extent of prior formal schooling, home support, and current level of English proficiency.

## English Learners (EL) Students in the South Range Local School District

The South Range School District uses best practices to foster the language needs of students who are identified as language learners.

*Federal Guidelines use LEP rather than EL (English Learner). The terms ELL, LEP and ESL are used interchangeably in this document. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of EL Acronyms, Terms, and Definitions.*

# Mission Statement, Goals and Services

## Mission Statement

The mission of the South Range School District EL Program is to promote student achievement by providing leadership and resources for the development of an English language acquisition curriculum that will allow ELs to acquire proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, thus allowing them to function successfully socially and academically.

## Goals

Our five major goals, as provided by the United States Department of Education, are:

1. to help ensure that English learners, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English;
2. to assist all English learners, including immigrant children and youth, to achieve at high levels in academic subjects so that all English learners can meet the same challenging State academic standards that all children are expected to meet;
3. to assist teachers (including preschool teachers), principals and other school leaders, State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and schools in establishing, implementing, and sustaining effective language instruction educational programs designed to assist in teaching English learners, including immigrant children and youth;
4. to assist teachers (including preschool teachers), principals and other school leaders, State educational agencies, and local educational agencies to develop and enhance their capacity to provide effective instructional programs designed to prepare English learners, including immigrant children and youth, to enter all-English instructional settings; and
5. to promote parental, family, and community participation in language instruction educational programs for the parents, families, and communities of English learners.

(Source: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/legislation/title-iii.html#TITLE-III-PART-A>)

## Instructional Services

EL instructional services in the South Range Local School District are based on individual student's linguistic needs, and include pull-out services in individual or small group settings, as well as push-in classroom support from our EL team. EL service times and settings will be determined by TESOLs in consideration of the Ohio ELP standards. Accordingly, students who have scored level 0, 1, 2, 3 proficiency on the OELPA will receive more service time, because their English language acquisition needs are considered greater. To the same end, students who have scored 4-5 in specific areas of the OELPA will require less instructional time.

## **Accommodations for English Learners**

ODE believes that the instructional staff who work with the EL students are in the best position to make judgments about which accommodations are appropriate for these students. The ODE provides testing guidelines that assist test administrators determine appropriate accommodations. All EL students, regardless of length in the EL program, are to be given the following accommodations on all state assessments:

### **Dictionary**

- the intent is native language word-for-word substitution, not definitions
- paper copy or hand-held electronic
- no computer dictionary is allowed

### **Extended Time/Alternate Location**

- assessments are to be completed within one school day in an individual or small-group setting

Additional accommodations, may include:

### **Oral Translators:**

- must be an adult
- may not be a relative of the student who is testing

### **Spanish text-to-speech:**

- When available and appropriate (determination made jointly with TESOL, classroom teacher, parent, and building administrator)

### **Alternate Testing Formats:**

- The ODE has developed special test formats to meet the accommodation requirements for eligible EL students

## Legal Background and State Requirements

There exists a substantial body of federal law and Supreme Court rulings that establish the rights of ELs and which define the legal responsibilities of school districts serving these students.

***Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*** This prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs receiving federal financial assistance. This law has been interpreted in the public school context as requiring appropriate steps to ensure that equal educational opportunities are afforded to students who are limited in their English language proficiency.

***Lau v. Nichols (1974)*** Over the years, federal court decisions have recognized that school districts have a responsibility to take the steps necessary to provide equal education opportunities to English language learner students. In *Lau v. Nichols*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a school district's failure to provide English language instruction to English language learners denied them the meaningful opportunity to participate in the district's educational program in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Court further noted that equality of opportunity is not simply providing English Language Learners (ELL) the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum which non-ELL students receive. If English is the language of instruction, then measures must be taken to ensure that English is taught to students who do not speak English or who are limited English proficient in order to provide equal access to educational opportunities.

***Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) of 1974*** This act mandates that no state shall deny equal education opportunity to any individual, "by the failure by an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by students in an instructional program." This requires educational service providers to take appropriate action to help these students overcome language barriers.

***Castaneda v Pickard (1981)*** The Supreme Court delineated a three-pronged standard for determining whether or not ESL students have equal and meaningful access to a school district's program. A program for ELL students is acceptable if:

- the district is pursuing a program informed by an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field, or at least is deemed to be a legitimate experimental strategy;
- the programs and practices used by the district are reasonably calculated to implement such theories effectively; and
- the district will take action if the program, after a legitimate trial, fails to produce results that indicate the language barriers confronting students are being overcome.

***Plyler v. Doe (1982)*** The Supreme Court stipulated that undocumented children have the same right to a free public education as U.S. citizens and permanent residents.

- School officials may not require students to prove they are in the United States legally,
- Schools should avoid attempts to document students' status.
- The following school practices are prohibited:
  - Barring access to a student on the basis of undocumented status
  - Treating students disparately for residency determination purposes on the basis of their undocumented status
  - Making inquiries to a student or his/her parent which may reveal their status
  - Federal education programs may ask for information from parents and students to determine if students are eligible for various programs. In such cases, schools should ask for voluntary information from parents.

***Executive Order 13166 (2000)*** This presidential order required all federal agencies to "ensure that the programs and activities they normally provide in English are accessible to ELL persons and thus do not discriminate on the basis of

national origin in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.”

### ***Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2015)***

**Equity:** ESSA maintains Title III as a separate title with a separate funding stream dedicated to the education of English learners.

**Fair accountability:** ESSA gives states two options for delaying English learners’ inclusion in accountability systems while they are learning English:

- **States can exclude students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than one year from state reading or English language arts tests;** or
- **States can exclude the assessment results of students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than one year from accountability system data.** However, states that choose this option must include in their accountability systems a student growth measure for these students in subsequent years. Additionally, English learners who have successfully left the English learner subgroup by attaining English proficiency can be included in that subgroup for accountability purposes for four years.

**Greater integration into the law’s core:** For the first time, English language proficiency for English learners is integrated into the system by which all schools and districts are held accountable. Furthermore, the academic achievement of English learners is more fully integrated into that accountability system. Moving these two items out of the separate Title III system (while maintaining Title III as a dedicated funding stream) will help ensure that English learners’ academic and language needs are fully considered by education systems.

**Supports for English learners:** ESSA provides resources to states and school districts to establish, implement and sustain high-quality language instruction programs designed to ensure that English learners, including immigrant children and youth, develop both English language proficiency and content proficiency in math and English, as measured against challenging academic standards. ESSA requires states to measure school districts’ progress in these areas and to provide assistance and support to those school districts with ineffective language instruction programs.

**Statewide entrance and exit procedures for English learners:** ESSA requires the establishment of statewide entrance and exit procedures for English learners to ensure that English learners get the resources they need while learning English. This also provides stability for English learners who move between schools or districts.

**Reporting requirements:** ESSA requires reporting on English learners with disabilities, as well as reporting on the percentage of students who are long-term English learners, as measured by students who have maintained the classification for five or more years.

## **Summary of Title III Requirements**

<b>Parental Notification Requirements</b>	
<b>IDENTIFICATION AND ENROLLMENT</b>	To inform a parent or parents that their child has been identified as limited-English proficient and is/will be participating in a language instruction educational program.

	<p>A child shall not be admitted to, or excluded from, any federally assisted education program on the basis of a surname or language- minority status.</p> <p>The practice of placing a student in the EL program based on a surname is against the law. Neither should a student be excluded from programs based solely on his or her surname.</p>
<b>WHEN</b>	Not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year,*
<b>SPECIAL RULE</b>	For a child who enrolls after the beginning of the school year, parental notification shall be made within 2 weeks of the child being placed in a program
<b>WHAT – in general, notification to include:</b>	<p>The reason for identification of the child as an EL;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child’s level of English language proficiency, how the level was assessed, and the status of the child’s academic achievement;</li> <li>• Methods of instruction used in the program in which the child is, or will be, participating, and the methods of instruction used in other available programs, including how the programs differ;</li> <li>• How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child and help the child achieve English language proficiency, and meet academic standards;</li> <li>• Exit requirements for the program, expected rate of transition to a classroom not tailored for EL students, and expected rate of high school graduation;</li> <li>• In the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the annual goals in the child’s individualized education program (IEP); and</li> <li>• Information regarding parents’ right to withdraw the child from a program upon their request, and to decline enrollment or choose another program or method of instruction, if available.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note:</i> Title III can only be used as a supplement, not as the main budget to fund a program. It should not be used to hire full-time teachers or run programs that have no other funding source.</p>
<b>RIGHT TO DECLINE OR END SERVICES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rights to have child immediately removed from program upon their request</li> <li>• Options to decline to enroll child in program or to choose another program or method of instruction if available</li> </ul>
<b>ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS</b>	<p>The ESSA requires that the school district still must assess all ELs using the annual English language proficiency assessment, including those students whose parents have declined to enroll them in, or had them removed from, English language acquisition programs. <i>All</i> ELs enrolled in schools served by the State must be assessed annually using the State’s English language proficiency assessment (OELPA). State or district assessment policies, if they include a right to opt a child out of assessments, do not override or diminish the school district’s obligation to assess 100 percent of ELs using the annual English language proficiency assessment.</p>

<p><b>OELPA RESULTS COMMUNICATION LETTER</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress of English language acquisition as measured by the annual measurable objectives (AMO) must be communicated annually.</li> <li>• Must be communicated with Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents in a language they can understand. EL parents are parents or guardians whose primary language is not English and who are limited in either speaking, listening, reading or writing, as defined in federal law.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOR ALL NOTICES</b></p>	<p>Information to be provided in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parent can understand.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> School districts must do their best to provide parent notices in languages understandable to parents. Districts need to be able to provide translations in their most frequently occurring languages.</p>
<p><b>PARENTAL &amp; COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b></p>	<p>First, Title I now requires that each school district that receives a Title I subgrant implement an effective means of outreach to parents of ELs. The outreach must include holding, and sending notice of opportunities for, regular meetings in order to gather and respond to recommendations from parents. Second, a school district receiving a Title III formula subgrant must conduct parent, family, and community engagement, in addition to the required uses of funds for supplementing English language acquisition programs for ELs and providing professional development to teachers and school leaders. Third, the ESSA expanded allowable uses of Title III State-level activity funds to include providing technical assistance to school districts to strengthen and increase not only parent and community engagement in programs that serve ELs, but also <i>family</i> engagement in such programs. Fourth, a State must ensure that its Title III State plan, or a consolidated State plan that includes Title III funds, has been developed in consultation with parents of ELs, in addition to school districts, teachers, administrators of Title III programs and other relevant stakeholders. It is important to note that all school districts have language assistance obligations to EL parents under Title VI and the EEOA. School districts must ensure meaningful communication with EL parents in a language they can understand and adequately notify EL parents of information about any program, service, or activity of a school district or State that is called to the attention of non-EL parents. As part of this obligation, a school district must provide language assistance to EL parents effectively with appropriate, competent staff or appropriate and competent outside resources. In addition, each school district must develop and implement a process for determining whether parents are EL and what their language needs are. A school district may not use Title III funds to meet its obligations under Title VI and the EEOA. Title III funds may be used to supplement a school district's activities if the school district is already meeting its obligation to ensure meaningful communication with EL parents in a language they can understand.</p>

## State Requirements and Annual Measurable Objectives

## State Requirements

Most state requirements are based on Federal Law. In Ohio, guidelines have been established for the identification and assessment of Limited English Proficient students/English Learners. These guidelines may be found on the *Ohio Department of Education* website using the search term “Guidelines for Identifying English Learners.”

The test that is used to assess English language proficiency is the **OELPA** (Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment). It is administered every spring to all EL students in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Please see page 10 for information about EL Proficiency Levels and Exit Criteria.

## English Language Proficiency Performance Levels

On the OELPA, there are three overall performance levels: **Emerging, Progressing, and Proficient**. The performance levels are determined as follows:

- “Emerging” students are those scoring any combination of 1s and 2s across all four domains. These students may speak no English and/or exhibit the “silent phase” of language development. Playground English begins to develop.
- “Progressing” students have a variety of scores in any combination across the four domains, thus do not fall into Proficient or Emerging. They use “playground English” with ease and are beginning to use some academic English.
- “Proficient” students are those scoring any combination of 4s and 5s across all four domains. These students have a moderate grasp to mastery-level use of academic English at grade level.

## Exit Criteria

Ohio uses the OELPA scores to determine the English language proficiency levels of students who have been identified as English learners. The score results are used as the state's progress indicator and exit indicator for students to be reclassified from the status of English Learner. A student is reclassified (no longer an *English Learner*) when the student has attained a performance level of Proficient on the OELPA. The Proficient performance level is defined as domain/test level scores of 4s and 5s in any combination across all four domains (listening, reading, writing and speaking). Students in grades K-12 are eligible for reclassification if the student receives a performance level of Proficient. Reclassified students are monitored by the TESOL for two years upon exit.

## Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)

AMOs measure the academic performance of specific groups of students, such as racial and demographic groups. Each of these groups is compared to the expected performance goals for that subgroup to determine if gaps exist. As written in Ohio's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, there are different AMOs set for English language arts (ELA), math, and graduation rate for each student group. ELA and math AMOs are measured through a Performance Index (PI) score calculation that differentiates tests by proficiency level. They include grades 3-8 state tests as well as first-time End of Course (EOC) tests. Graduation rate AMOs are set based on each subgroup's Four-Year-Adjusted-Cohort graduation rate. The fourth domain, English Language Proficiency (ELP), is measured through the percent of English Learners making adequate progress towards English Language Proficiency, defined as either a 1 or 2 point annual increase earned on the OELPA (see Appendix I for more details).

## English Language Proficiency Standards

Ohio's English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards (Revised in 2015) provide a summary description of the English language competencies that EL students must acquire. These standards have been integrated into our language acquisition goals to ensure articulation between district goals and state academic content standards.

The Ohio English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards are a resource for teachers and other school staff who work with ELs in kindergarten through grade 12. The standards define progressive levels of competence in the acquisition of English and help TESOLs move ELs toward proficiency both in the English language, while supporting growth along Ohio's academic content standards.

The 10 standards highlight a set of language functions and forms that are needed by English language learners as they develop competence in English language arts, mathematics, science, and other academic content areas. Along with the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), the standards should guide the instruction and assessment of English Learners (ELs) in Ohio schools. Divided into grades K, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12, the standards directly link to the Ohio Learning Standards. They highlight and amplify the critical language, knowledge about language and skills using language that are needed to be successful in school and are as follows:

<b>Ohio English Language Proficiency Standards</b>
1. Construct meaning from oral presentations and literary and informational text through grade appropriate listening, reading, and viewing.
2. Participate in grade-appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas, and analyses, responding to peer, audience, or reader comments and questions.
3. Speak and write about grade-appropriate complex literary and informational texts and topics.
4. Construct grade-appropriate oral and written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence.
5. Conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings to answer questions or solve problems.
6. Analyze and critique the arguments of others orally and in writing.
7. Adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing.
8. Determine the meaning of words and phrases in oral presentations and literary and informational text.
9. Create clear and coherent grade-appropriate speech and text.

10. Make accurate use of standard English to communicate in grade-appropriate speech and writing.

# Identifying English Learners in Ohio

School districts and community schools have a responsibility to identify English learners so they can provide instruction designed to help them use the English language and learn subject matter content. This document describes the two-step process for identifying English learners in Ohio. These guidelines are effective beginning with the 2018-2019 school year.

Schools must complete this process and notify parents or guardians of the student's identification as an English learner within 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment during the school year.

## Step 1: Giving the Language Usage Survey

Districts and community schools use the Language Usage Survey to identify students' language experiences and educational backgrounds, as well as the communication preferences of parents and guardians.

- Review this document, including Appendices A, B and C, before administering the language usage survey and English language proficiency screener.
- Designate an adequate number of personnel to administer the language usage survey to meet the needs of new students enrolling in your district or school. Adequate training and the selection of appropriate staff are key to ensuring the validity of the language usage survey and the overall success of the identification.
- Train the personnel administering and reviewing the language usage survey in these procedures and guidance.
- Give the language usage survey the Ohio Department of Education provides ([Appendix A](#)) to all new students enrolling in grades preK-12. When students transfer from other districts or schools, refer to existing records to determine English learner status.
- Use parental communication preferences and home language(s) indicated on the survey to determine language-assistance needs for parents and guardians.

- Provide translation, interpretation and English language supports to ensure meaningful communication during the registration process.
- Review and validate the language usage survey. Trained school employees, preferably those with a TESOL<sup>1</sup> license or endorsement, validate each language usage survey ([Appendix A](#)) with the annotations below.

## Program Evaluation

Our program goals and/or procedures are assessed annually to insure our legal compliance and efficacy. Changes may be required to improve our procedures for ELs, EL staff, and our service delivery.

Procedure	Person Responsible	Documentation	Standards/Criteria	Timeline
Evaluating student progress	EL staff, general education/content teachers, counselors	OELPA scores, statewide assessments, grades, progress reports	Proficient on OELPA, passing percentage on statewide assessments, student achievement as compared to non- EL students	Annually, on-going
Evaluating staff performance	Building principals	District approved evaluation forms	Meets standards	Per teacher evaluation, schedule/ contract
Evaluating overall EL services	ODE, EL facilitator, program director	OELPA AMO's Statewide assessment data, adequate yearly progress, federal program review criteria	Language Proficiency, progress in meeting AMO objectives, compliance with Title III review criteria	Annually
Monitoring exited English learners for a period of at least two years.	EL staff, general education/content teachers, counselors	Progress monitoring forms	In compliance with federal and state mandates.	Quarterly



## Appendix A: Language Usage Survey

Parents and Guardians: Please only complete this page of the survey. The back of this form will be completed by the school. A completed language usage survey is required for all students upon enrollment in Ohio schools. This information will tell school staff if they need to check your child's proficiency in English. Answers to these questions ensure your child receives the education services to succeed in school. The information is not used to identify immigration status.

<b>Student Name:</b> <i>(First Name and Last Name)</i> _____		<b>Student Date of Birth:</b> <i>(mm/dd/yyyy)</i> _____	
<b>Communication Preferences</b> Indicate your language preference so we can provide an interpreter or translated documents at no cost when you need them. All parents have the right to information about their child's education in a language they understand.		1. In what language(s) would your family prefer to communicate with the school? _____	
<b>Language Background</b> Information about your child's language background helps us identify students who qualify for support to develop the language skills necessary for success in school. Testing may be necessary to determine if language supports are needed.		2. What language did your child learn first? _____ 3. What language does your child use the most at home? _____ 4. What languages are used in your home? _____	
<b>Prior Education</b> Responses about your child's birth country and previous education give us information about the knowledge and skills your child is bringing to school and may enable the school to receive additional funding to support your child.		5. In what country was your child born? _____ 6. Has your child ever received formal education outside of the United States? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, how many years/months? _____ If yes, what was the language of instruction? _____ 7. Has your child attended school in the United States? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, when did your child first attend a school in the United States? _____ / _____ / _____ Month      Day      Year	
<b>Additional Information</b> Please share additional information to help us understand your child's language experiences and educational background.		_____ _____	
Parent/Guardian First Name: _____		Parent/Guardian Last Name: _____	
Parent/Guardian Signature: _____		Today's Date: <i>(mm/dd/yyyy)</i> _____	

Thank you for providing the information above. Contact your school or district office if you have questions about this form or about services available at your child's school. Translated information about schools' civil rights obligations to English learner students and limited English proficient parents can be found here: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ellresources.html>



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