

English as a Second Language Program



Lawrence Township Public Schools

Last Revised July 2010

The Goals of the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program

The philosophy for students learning a second language in Lawrence Township Schools is to validate the importance of their family, their country, and their cultural heritage so they will maintain high self-esteem while acquiring a new language and cultural understanding and earning their high school diploma.

The district's goals for ESL students are:

- To develop English language skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and computing to such a level that the student can successfully function in the English language classroom at the earliest possible opportunity and meet the NJCCCS.
- To develop mathematical reasoning and skills to the level of proficiency to function effectively on the job and in college level courses.
- To participate successfully in mainstream science and social studies programs.
- To develop those language, cultural, and social skills necessary to function socially in school and community.
- To demonstrate study skills, test-taking and computer skills necessary to pass high school courses and be admitted to post-secondary education institutions.

The ESL Program

The basic ESL pull-out program uses a whole language approach for K-3 students and for beginning ESL students at all levels, along with total physical response and the natural approach. Phonics is taught to advanced students to assist with decoding and spelling. When the student reaches Level II, content-based ESL with context-embedded vocabulary and the Sheltered English approach to concepts are used. Initially, the ESL teacher is responsible for reading instruction and the reading grade of the Level I student in grades 2-12. The ESL teacher may also be responsible for the math instruction and grade of the Level I student in grades 2-6, as well as the spelling or language grade. Often, three periods of English instruction are scheduled for the Level I student in order to assist with his/her content courses, as well as reading, writing, and speaking English.

At Levels II and III, the High-Intensity setting is used because the students require specific assistance with study skills in courses such as social studies, science, health, and English. Test-taking skills and reference skills are also taught as preparation for end-of-year testing, standardized achievement testing, vocational school tests, state-mandated testing, etc. All students continue to develop their writing skills.

At each school, the ESL teacher introduces classroom teachers to the diverse needs of students learning English. She recommends specific techniques and grading practices to support the student, improve language weaknesses and assist with lack of familiarity with the new culture. The ESL teacher, the classroom teacher, the counselor, and/or teaching assistant, along with the parents, encourage the student to grow and learn.

Using a High-Intensity ESL setting, elementary students are taught English, reading, writing, and study skills in the content areas such as social studies, math, science, and health using ESL strategies. In the English period, the students speak, listening to both conversational and academic English. A Polish bilingual teaching assistant works in the classroom as needed and translating for parent-teacher and IEP conferences.

In the Middle School, the program is block period based; the heterogeneously mixed language group meets for one or two periods per day. Content support is provided. The regular education program at this school is based on heterogeneous grouping where cooperative learning and students supporting students is encouraged. The Polish-speaking ESL teacher works closely with teams of teachers to implement the program. A part-time Polish-speaking assistant aids the teacher and students, and she translates for parents as needed.

At the High School, students are scheduled for one or two specific class periods of ESL. They may also be enrolled in a sheltered history course (9th grade: Modern World Civilizations, 10th grade: American Civilizations I, 11th grade: American Civilizations II). There is also ESL support in both the science and math programs.

Entrance and Exit Criteria

Upon enrollment in the district, a student's language ability is assessed by the ESL teacher in the home school. During the year, in addition to teacher-designed assessments, the students are formally assessed using the appropriate MAC II test. In the spring, along with all students, they take the state-administered NJ ASK or HSPA. They also take the state-sponsored ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Based upon recommendations of the classroom teacher, combined with those of the ESL teacher, students are retained in or exited from the ESL program.

What Do I Do If I Have a Question or Concern?

If your child currently receives ESL services, you should first contact his/her ESL teacher and the general education teacher. If your child does not currently receive ESL services, you should contact your building principal or Barbara Beers, Supervisor of Humanities at 609.671.5453 or bbeers@ltps.org.

Should your questions or concerns not be resolved at the building or supervisor's level, an appeal may be made to Dr. Crystal Lovell, Assistant Superintendent 609.671.5410 or clovell@ltps.org.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can parents decline enrollment of their child in an ESL program?

Yes. Parents have the right to decline enrollment of their child in an ESL program..

2. If a parent declines ESL services during school registration, may he/she request these instructional services at a later date?

Yes, however, it is the decision of the local district to determine whether to enroll the child mid-year or at what point during the school year such enrollment could occur, based on the needs of the student.

3. Must the district inform the parents of all LEP (Limited English Proficient) students about the requirements of the parental consent amendment?

Yes. The district must notify parents that their child has been identified for enrollment in an ESL program. Each school year, parents of all limited English proficient students should be informed of their children's status and of their rights to decline program participation. For LEP students who are currently enrolled in a program, this notification should take place after the students are tested for language proficiency at the end of the school year. For newly enrolled students, such notice should occur at the beginning of the school year.

4. What information is shared with parents regarding the availability of ESL services and their benefits for limited English proficient students?

Annually, the district provides parents with a description of the ESL program in order to assist them in making an informed decision regarding their child's enrollment in the program. This description also provides information regarding policies relative to LEP students including accommodations for standardized tests in English and eligibility for the Alternative High School Assessment (AHSA) in the native language for high school students.

5. May a parent remove an LEP student from an ESL program before the end of the school year?

During the first three years of a pupil's participation in a program, the parent or guardian may only remove a pupil at the end of the school year. If the parent or guardian wishes to remove the pupil prior to the end of the school year, he/she must follow the appeals process.

6. If a parent does not want his/her child in a program, regardless of the student's English language skills, is there an appeal process for school districts?

No. If a parent refuses enrollment of a limited English proficient student in an ESL program, then the child cannot be enrolled in the program. The law and administrative code do not allow for an appeal process for school districts. Once the student is enrolled, he/she may only be removed at the end of each school year, during the first three years of a pupil's participation in a program.

Lawrence Township Public Schools

English as a Second Language Program

2565 Princeton Pike

Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648

(609)671-5453 FAX (609) 538-8136

Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Our district schools provide an English language program for students who demonstrate a need for instruction in English language skills. The English as a Second Language Program (ESL) offers a curriculum of activities designed to teach students the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills necessary for success in school. Your child is eligible to take advantage of the opportunities this program can provide and is being recommended for placement in the program.

You, as a parent or guardian, have the right to decline these services being offered to your child. It must be understood that your child's academic progress may be limited should you decide against participation in this program.

If you have questions concerning our program, or wish to discuss the identification process used in determining your child's eligibility, please contact my office or the ESL teacher. If we do not hear from you within five days of receipt of this letter, we will assume that you acknowledge the placement of your child in the ESL program.

We wish your child great success in our schools.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Beers,
Supervisor of Humanities

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Sample Parent Letter

Szanowni Rodzice lub Opiekunowie!

W naszym dystrykcie organizowany jest program nauki języka angielskiego dla uczniów, którym potrzebny jest kurs angielskiego jako języka obcego (ESL). Po dokonaniu oceny znajomości języka angielskiego Państwa dziecka ustaliliśmy, że kwalifikuje się ono do skorzystania z programu ESL.

Program ESL jest opracowany w ten sposób, aby nauczyć słuchania, mówienia, czytania i pisania w języku angielskim, umiejętności koniecznych do osiągnięcia sukcesów w szkole.

Państwo, jako rodzice lub opiekunowie, mają prawo nie przyjąć usług oferowanych Państwa dziecku. Uczestnictwo w tym programie pomoże Państwa dziecku odnosić sukcesy w szkole. Muszą zdawać sobie Państwo sprawę z tego, że jeśli zdecydują się Państwo nie uczestniczyć w programie, postępy w nauce Państwa dziecka mogą być ograniczone.

Jeżeli nie życzą sobie Państwo, aby Państwa dziecko uczestniczyło w tym programie, prosimy o kontakt z:

_____ do: _____
Imię i nazwisko oraz numer telefonu Data

Z poważaniem,

Barbara A. Beers,
Supervisor of Humanities

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Sample Parent Letter

Estimado padre o tutor,

Nuestro distrito ofrece un programa de inglés para los estudiantes que necesitan de clases de inglés por ser su segundo idioma (English as a Second Language - ESL). Basándonos en nuestra evaluación de la capacidad de su hijo(a) para hablar inglés, se ha determinado que él / ella puede participar en este programa de ESL.

El programa de estudios de ESL está diseñado para enseñar a los estudiantes las aptitudes necesarias para escuchar, hablar, leer y escribir y así progresar con los estudios.

La participación en este programa ayudará a su hijo(a) a obtener el éxito académico, pero usted, como padre o tutor, tiene derecho a rechazar estos servicios que se le están ofreciendo a su hijo(a). Aunque debe quedar por entendido que el progreso académico de su hijo(a) puede que se encuentre limitado si decide no participar en este programa.

Si usted no desea que su hijo(a) participe en este programa, por favor, póngase en contacto con

_____ por _____

Nombre y número de teléfono

Fecha

Atentamente,

Barbara A. Beers,
Supervisor of Humanities