



POLICY 116 -- ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) PROGRAMS

1. Purpose

In accordance with the Board's Philosophy of Education and Curriculum policies, an appropriate educational program will be designed and provided to identified students whose dominant language is not English, who is limited English proficient (LEP), or an English language learner (ELL).

The primary goal of the ESL program is to increase the English language proficiency of limited English proficient students so that they can meet state and district academic standards and thus be successful in school. A related goal is to increase these students' English language proficiency so that they can fully and successfully participate in all main streamed classes at an age-appropriate grade level. To meet these goals, the objectives of ESL or ELL instruction are the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English, and the provision of an educational environment which helps the ESL or ELL student understand and cope with a new culture.

2. Authority

The Superintendent will appoint the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services to administer and supervise the ESL program to assure that the program in each school provides for a carefully articulated planned course of alternate language instruction. ESL or ELL instruction will be designed to meet each student's individual needs based on the results of the Home Language Survey and assessments in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

ESL or ELL instruction will be provided in each district school where the child attends who is in need of instruction. The method of instruction can be provided locally or through contracted services from the Intermediate Unit depending on the needs of the student and/or as the availability of appropriate certified staff.

3. Guidelines

A Home Language Survey will be completed for every family upon registering in the school district. If the Home Language Survey indicates that the student was born in a country other than the United States and/or a language other than English is spoken in the student's home, i.e., the student's primary language is other than English, the appropriate ELS staff will administer assessments in English comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing to the student. The building principal will notify the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services that an ESL student has registered in the school district. The principal will fill out a request for the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to conduct an English as Second Language evaluation. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the student's English proficiency and then recommend appropriate ESL instruction to the school district.

3. Guidelines (continued)

If the student is English proficient, the student will be placed in an appropriate regular education program. If the student is limited English proficient, the student will be placed in an alternative English language program (ESL) for instruction, with instruction in the regular education program for all other subjects and activities.

ESL students will be placed in an age-appropriate grade level as well as can be determined. Regular education teachers in conjunction with ESL staff will develop accommodations in the regular education program for ESL students in order to help them to be successful in the regular education program. A pass/fail system of grading will be used for ESL students, as appropriate, until such time as they prove to be capable of functioning successfully in the regular education program.

The principal, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services, and the ESL staff will monitor each ESL student's performance in the regular education program and help regular education teachers make additional accommodations, as appropriate.

Standardized tests of intelligence, and other such test instruments as used in the determination of special education, will be administered in a manner free from cultural and racial bias and in the student's primary or native language or preferred mode of communication. The parents and guardians of ESL students will receive communication from the school district in their primary or native language or preferred mode of communication.

ESL students will exit from ESL program as soon as they can perform at or near the Proficient Level on district standard based assessments in speaking, reading, and writing.