

BILINGUAL – BICULTURAL PROGRAMS

The Board of Education recognizes that within the district there may be students whose primary language is not English. With that in mind, the Board of Education shall provide appropriate services for district students who possess limited or no command of the English language. The purpose of these services will be to help students acquire English language skills that will enable them to function successfully in an all-English classroom and to meet established academic standards.

English Language Learners (ELL) students shall be identified as part of the school enrollment process. Once ELL students are identified, their English proficiency shall be assessed, they shall be classified according to their English proficiency level and placed in an appropriate educational program.

Specialized instructional materials and techniques designed to teach English to speakers of other languages shall be used in the district. An ELL student or a small group of students may work with a qualified tutor to develop their English language skills. The degree of curricular and instructional modification, type of support services and their duration shall be determined individually and be based on student need. If a sufficient number of the ELL students identified are of the same language group to meet statutory requirements, the Board shall establish and implement a bilingual-bicultural education program as required by state law.

The District shall assess the English proficiency and academic progress of ELL students in accordance with legal requirements and established District procedures. Decisions regarding the administration of state-required tests to ELL students shall be made on a case-by-case basis. Testing accommodations may be made based on student needs, provided the validity of the test is maintained. The District shall administer state-required tests to an ELL student unless a determination has been made that the results of the test, with allowable accommodations made for the student as needed, will not be a valid and reliable indicator of the student's academic knowledge and skills. Any ELL student exempted from taking a state-required test shall be administered an alternative assessment approved by the Department of Public Instruction. The results of both state-required tests and alternate assessments shall be used consistent with District policies in making instructional, promotion and graduation decisions. Test results may not be used as the sole criterion in re-classifying an ELL student from a bilingual-bicultural education program or in determining grade promotion, eligibility for courses or programs, eligibility for graduation or eligibility for participation in postsecondary education opportunities. Exemption of an ELL student from taking a state-required test may also not be used as the sole criterion for making such determinations.

Parents/guardians of ELL students shall be notified of student testing arrangements and of educational programs and services available to help their children improve their English language skills and academic achievement. These notifications shall be made consistent with legal requirements and in such manner as to ensure that the student's parent/guardian understands them.