



eStem Public Schools

ESOL Program

English for Speakers of Other Language

Handbook

I. DISTRICT INFORMATION

A. Purpose of Handbook

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Handbook will provide information about the ESOL program to teachers and administrators so they can better meet the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students.

This handbook contains policies and procedures for meeting compliance regulations in the process of identifying, assessing, placing, serving and monitoring ELs in reaching English proficiency.

B. Program Goals

- Goal 1 - Program Implementation - The eStem ESOL Program will comply with federal guidelines through the program implementation practices (such as identification, assessment, etc)
- Goal 2 - Progress in English language development - ELLs will show growth in all four domains of the English language (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) to attain English proficiency.
- Goal 3 - Progress in academic content - ELLs will show growth comparable to their never EL-peers within a reasonable amount of time.

C. Program Objectives

- Implement and maintain consistent procedures for student identification process.
- Assess all students who have a primary home language other than English.
- Design an appropriate education plan that will aide ELL students to achieve academically while becoming proficient in English.
- Provide highly qualified staff for the ESOL program.
- Encourage parental/family involvement.
- Provide equitable access to other district programs and services, including special education and gifted/talented education.
- Use state mandated criteria for exiting students from the ESOL program.
- Monitor the progress of all ELL students during and after program participation.
- Evaluate the ESOL program and make necessary modifications.
- Maintain accurate and meaningful student records.

D. English Language Proficiency Standards

[ELP Standards](#)

[ELP Standards At A Glance](#)

The 10 English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards are organized according to a schema that represents each standard's importance to ELs' participation in the practices called for by college- and-career-ready ELA & Literacy, mathematics, and science standards. In the complete ELP Standards documents the ten standards are linked to K-12 Practices in math, science, and ELA, as well as to the CCSS ELA/Literacy Standards.

Standards 1 through 7 involve the language necessary for ELs to engage in the central content-specific practices associated with ELA & Literacy, mathematics, and science. They begin with a focus on extraction of meaning and then progress to engagement in these practices.

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, 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.

Standards 8 through 10 hone in on some of the more micro level linguistic features that are undoubtedly important to focus on, but only in the service of the other seven standards.

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.

E. **SCHOOL DISTRICT OBLIGATIONS TO EL STUDENTS AND LEP PARENTS**

The obligation not to discriminate based on race, color, or national origin requires public schools to take affirmative steps to ensure that limited English proficient (LEP) students, now more commonly known as known as English Learner (EL) students or English Language Learners (ELLs), can meaningfully participate in educational

programs and services, and to communicate information to LEP parents in a language they can understand.

The following materials include information for students and parents, OCR guidance and resources for education officials about their obligations to EL students and LEP parents, and added resources with related information.

The following summary provides the legal context for services provided to ELs and their families:

F. [Legal Context For EL Services](#)

G.. Alternative Language Program - Approach and Models

An approach is defined as a broad, conceptual framework. The U.S. Department of Education (LIEPS): A Review of the Foundation Literature states there are two types of research based approaches for LIEPs: the ESL approach and the Bilingual approach.

The eStem Public Charter Schools Program uses the English as a Second Language Instructional approach which is based on an educational theory recognized as a sound by some experts in the field. This instructional approach, rather than the bilingual approach was selected because it is in compliance with Ark. Code Ann. 6-16-104 which states, “The basic language of instruction in the public school branches in all the schools of the state, public, and private, shall be English only.”

As its name implies, the ESL approach focuses on instruction on instruction in English as the primary means to help ELs acquire the language to meet high academic standards. Students learn and are taught in English exclusively or primarily.

A model is a specific set of instructional services or a fully developed curriculum within an approach. It comprises a set of characteristics, principles and practices that have been developed based on theory and research that will be used as an implementation guide. There are many different models that follow the ESL approach. The eStem ESOL Program models that follow the ESL approach vary from building to building depending on the needs of the students and the dynamics of the building. The models are designed to help ELs acquire English proficiency and meet high academic standards.

H. ESOL Staff

Teri Harrah - District ESOL Coordinator

Tracy Harris - Downtown Elementary Coordinator

Tammy Moore - East Village Elementary Coordinator

Robin Kratzke - East Village Jr. High Coordinator

Leigha Westerfield - Downton Jr. High Coordinator/ ELD Teacher

Jana Young and Charles Majors - eStem High School Coordinator/ELD Teacher

II. Identification

A. Home Language Survey

As a part of the enrollment process, all NEW students (parents) complete a Home Language Survey Form. The Home Language Survey should only be filled out by the parent upon initial enrollment. It is not necessary to update the form annually. The Home Language Survey Form is used to identify possible home language other than English. If the parent gives any responses that the English on ONE OR MORE of the questions, the registrar gives a copy of the form to the Building ESOL Coordinator. The original Home Language Survey is filed in the student's cumulative folder. Home Language Surveys that indicate all English should be filed in the student's cumulative folder and NOT given to the Building ESOL Coordinator. When answers provided on the Home Language Survey vary, are unclear, indicate multiple languages, or initially found to possibly inaccurate, consideration of additional information and final determination needs to be made. The Building ESOL Coordinator will interview the parent or have a conversation with the family. The purpose is to not determine if the student is 'dominant' in English, but if the student is 'proficient' in English. Proficiency refers to how well the student can speak, read, write, and comprehend the language. The ESOL designee will follow proper assessment procedures to determine the student's proficiency level.

If a parent/guardian indicates only English on the Home Language Survey, but the teacher or staff suspects a second language is used in the home they may refer the student to the Building ESOL Coordinator.

B. Transfer Students

If a student transfers from a district within the state of Arkansas, it is possible to pull their TRIAND report and see if the student has already been identified as an ELL (LEP). If a student transfers from out of state the Building Coordinator will follow assessment procedures using the ELPA21 Screener.

C. Foreign Exchange Students

A foreign exchange student who is enrolled in a public school in the United States, based on the language of Title IV and the Lau holding, such a foreign exchange student is a 'person in the United States,' and the Lau provisions would therefore apply. Foreign exchange students must be given the ELPA21 Screener to determine the proficiency level of English. If the results of the assessment indicate the student is LEP they should be placed into the ESOL program.

Under the Elementary and Secondary Act a LEP exchange student would not be exempt from any Title I required assessment, specifically, the annual ELPA

assessment. A LEP student, who happens to be a foreign exchange student, would also be included in the LEA's count of LEP students for purposes of allocating funds under Title III section 3114(a) of the ESEA.

D. Procedures for Identifying Students Not Identified During the Initial Enrollment Process

If a staff member suspects that the student may have been missed during the initial enrollment process, the teacher should notify the Building ESOL Coordinator. The ESOL Coordinator will review documentation and contact the parents/guardian if further information is needed.

E. Parent/Student Interview

- **ESOL Building Designee** may conduct a parent-student interview should further information about students' language, educational background, and family background be needed. This information may assist in providing appropriate support and services to the student.
- [SAMPLE Parent/Student Interview](#)
- [SAMPLE Parent/Student Interview 2](#)

F. Teacher Referral/Recommendation

- A teacher may notice a student's social behavior or academic achievement indicates a potential language barrier issue even though the HLU indicates English only. In this case, the teacher must contact the **ESOL Building Designee** and provide documentation for concern.
- The **ESOL Building Designee** will then determine if usage of language other than English was present from birth to an extent that potentially impacted the students' English language development by using the [Arkansas Home Language Verification Form](#).
- If there is evidence that another language is impacting the student's language development, the **ESOL Building Designee** will begin the screening process.
- If it is determined that the student is in need of ESOL services, a notation should be made on the HLU and all documentation kept in the student's permanent folder as well as the ESOL file.

G. Transfer Students

- If a student transfers into the district from another Arkansas district, the **ESOL Designee/Counselor/Secretary/Registrar** should check TRIAND for student data, in order to determine if the student has already been identified as an EL.
- If a student transfers into the district from a state, territory, or country *other than Arkansas or a state not using ELPA21, the student must be screened using the ELPA21 screener*. The district must screen, determine placement, and notify the parent of services.
 - The district has 30 calendar days if a student enrolls on the first day of school for screening, placement, and parent notification of services.

- The district has 15 calendar days if the student enrolls after the first 30 days of school for screening, placement, and parent notification of services.

H. Re-enrolling Students

- If a student has previously been enrolled in the district, transferred, and returns, procedures for all transfer students apply.
- If the student has a prior exit, attempt to retroactively monitor the student with other data to see if he can continue in the monitoring status as per the Professional Judgment Rubric data.
- If the student has NEVER exited, **and** the available ELPA21 data is more than a year old **and** the district can not locate ELPA21 data in Triand or in the ELPA21 data system, then re-screen and proceed with appropriate placement.

III. INITIAL ASSESSMENT

ELPA21 Screener - English Language Proficiency Assessment

The ELPA21 Screener is a comprehensive, online assessment system designed to provide complete information about a student's language proficiency. The ELPA is the only screener approved by the Arkansas Department of Education. It is used in Grades K-12 as a formal and standardized method of determining language proficiency. By law, students identified as possible ELLs during the enrollment process, must be assessed and parents notified within 30 days of the beginning of the school year. For a student who enters after the beginning of the school year the district must assess and inform the parents within 2 weeks of their enrollment date.

IV. PLACEMENT

A. Language Proficiency Committee (LPAC)

1. Purpose

The purpose of the LPAC committee is to make appropriate educational decisions for the English Language Learners. Any teacher, parent, administrator or LPAC committee member may request the committee to convene on the behalf of an ELL student. The ELL student's parents are welcome to the LPAC meetings, but not required.

LPAC has also been referred to as the Language Placement and Assessment Committee. An LPAC committee must be operational at every school. The committee advocates for the best educational placement of ELL students. Each time the LPAC convenes, the recommendations are recorded in the data system Ellevation.

2. Description

Each building has a standing committee that meets to make placement decisions and to annually review student services. LPAC meetings should take place with at least 3 committee members present.

Members of the LPAC should, at the minimum, consist of:

- ESOL Coordinator
- Administrator
- A counselor or staff member familiar with ELL student data

Other support personnel if needed:

- Classroom teacher
- Special Education teacher
- Parent/guardian is welcome but not required

3. Reasons for Holding a Meeting

a. Initial Placement

1. Evaluate concrete data and determine placement of new students
2. Create ELL student plan
3. Determine standardized testing accommodations
4. Assign recommended classroom modifications

b. Annual Review

1. Review teacher monitoring forms
2. Review data from ELPA21 and standardized testing
3. Make changes to ELL student plan if needed

c. As Needed

1. Make changes to ELL student plan during the middle of the year
2. Consideration for retention
3. Referral for Special Education
4. Exiting the ESOL Program
5. Waiver Conferences

4. Operational Procedures

Beginning of School Year - After the ESOL Coordinator has assessed the newly enrolled and identified students with ELPA Screener, an LPAC meeting should be held to make the initial placement decisions. This should be done within 30 days of the first day of schools unless the student enrolls after the first day of school then it must be done in 14 days of the enrollment date.

All parents will receive Notification of Continuation or Initial Placement in the ESOL program that summarizes their child's progress in acquiring English language. It includes their current ELPA21 score and informs the parents of any changes made to the ELL Student Plan.

B. Procedures for Placing Students in the ESOL Program

1. LPAC Reviews Initial Assessment Scores

All decisions regarding services of students into the ESOL program are made by the LPAC. The results of the initial assessment data (ELPA Screener) determine whether the student qualifies for the ESOL program.

2. LPAC Creates an ELL Student Plan

Once the LPAC has reviewed the initial assessment scores they must then decide on the least restrictive optimal setting for each student. The ELL Student Plan is a form that will be part of their purple folder. The form consists of the following information:

a. Determines Type of Service

eStem ESOL Program has several model variations within each service type. The LPAC will determine which type of service is appropriate for the ELL.

b. Classroom Modifications

The LPAC will suggest certain modifications and teaching strategies for the classroom teacher. To ensure appropriate instruction is occurring, the teacher should refer to these modifications when planning instruction for ELL students. The teachers will access this information through Ellevation.

d. Determine Allowable Standardized Test Accommodations

If an accommodation is to be used on the state mandated test, it must be practiced throughout the school year, otherwise it is not a valid accommodation. The LPAC will determine which types of testing accommodations each ELL student requires and it will be recorded on their EL Plan within Ellevation.

3. Parent Notification

By law, parents of students who have been identified as English Language Learners and are placed in the district's ESOL program must be notified within 30 days of identification. Parent communication is provided in a language parents can understand. The notification form includes all the required components of Title III including their right to be notified of their child's progress in acquiring English based on the annual ELA21 test. In addition, they are informed of their right to waive services for their child, with the understanding that it does not exit them from the program.

4. Waive Services

If a parent chooses to waive services, an LPAC conference must be held. During the conference the LPAC committee will determine if there has been a misunderstanding regarding the information sent home. If they still want to waive services, a waiver form is completed and signed by the parent. Parents may choose to waive all or part of the services. If a parent chooses to waive services, the student is still considered ELL and remains in the program, but they will not receive services. In addition, the student is still required to participate in the annual ELPA21 until they can develop full English proficiency and be exited from the program.

4. Enter ELL demographics into eSchool

The ESOL Coordinator will enter all ELL demographics into eSchool. All demographics must be entered by the end of September.

5. Notify Classroom Teacher

The ESOL Building Coordinator will notify and remind classroom teachers to access the EL Plans through Ellevation. Teachers will periodically receive Monitoring Notifications from Ellevation. These completed forms are legally required for the ESOL program. In addition, the classroom is documenting they have received the information and they are aware of the needs of their students. If a classroom teacher has a concern about the ELL Student Plan, then he/she must notify the Building Coordinator and request an LPAC meeting. The LPAC will meet with the teacher to discuss possible solutions.

6. EL Cumulative Folder

The Building ESOL Coordinator will create a cumulative folder for each ELL student. The folder will hold the following:

- Home Language Survey
- Parent Interview (if applicable)
- ELPA Screener Results
- LPAC Form
- Parent Notification with date of when notification was sent home
- Waiver Form if necessary
- ELL Student Plan
- Annual Review Form with date when notification was sent home
- Exit Form with date of when notification was sent home
- Monitoring Forms
- ELPA21 Scores
- Any other documented information regarding services provided by the ESOL program

V. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

A. ESOL Program

eStem Public Charter Schools uses English for Speakers of Other Languages as a program to meet the needs of all English Language Learner students in both language acquisition and core content. The instructional approach adopted by the district is ESL (English as a Second Language). All instruction is provided in English. The type of service and delivery depends on the proficiency level of the students.

All services are designed to enable ELL students to work toward proficiency in the English language and attain parity of participation in the standard instructional program, compared to their never EL peers, within a reasonable amount of time. All instruction will be aligned with Arkansas State Standards and follow the English Language Proficiency Standards. The ELP Standards can be found on the Arkansas Department of Education website.

B. Equitable Facilities

Facilities provided to ELL students must be comparable in size and quality to those provided to all students. Thus, if other students are taught in regular classroom settings, ELL students should not be taught in hallways, offices or other makeshift classes.

C. Types of Service

The LPAC determines the type of service based on the proficiency level of the student academic abilities. The LPAC also determines which model(s) of service are necessary as well as the amount of service to be received. The amount of service may decrease as the proficiency level increases. Because of the age of the students, scheduling, graduation requirements, etc., each building offers different models of service.

Tier 1 - All ELLs will be served through Tier 1, where the classroom teacher will provide appropriate modifications/accommodations and differentiated instruction according to the ELL's proficiency level.

Tier 2 - Emerging ELLs (all 1's and 2's including Newcomers) and low Progressing (1's, 2's and some 3's) will be served through Tier 2. At the K-6 level it will be a 30 minute breakfast club. At the 7-9 level it will be a designated study hall class on their schedule. At the 10-12 level it will be during Limitless Learning.

Tier 3 - Non-English newcomers will be served through Tier 2.

D. Classroom Modifications

The mainstream teacher has primary responsibility for the instruction of the ELL. Any teacher who services and ELL student must be trained in language

acquisition and ESOL strategies. The student spends a significant part of the day in the mainstream classroom. Because of this, the mainstream teacher is responsible for implementing classroom strategies and modifications designed to help the ELL understand the content. Appropriate modifications/scaffolding must be used to ensure comprehensible input. As the proficiency level of the student increases the need for modifications may decrease. The goal is for the student to reach full English proficiency.

Classroom instruction should be delivered using comprehensible input of instruction that is meaningful to the English Language Learner. It is the district's responsibility to provide classroom teachers with ongoing, meaningful and relevant professional development relevant to the instruction of English Learners. Teachers are strongly encouraged to attend the ESOL Academy in the summer and obtain their ESL endorsement.

E. Testing Accommodations

Accommodations are available on the ACT Aspire, ACT, and NWEA. The LPAC decides which students receive accommodations. The classroom teacher must regularly use the accommodation throughout the school year in order for it to be a valid accommodation.

F. Failing Grading

Students that qualify for the ESOL program are protected under Title VI or OCR. They may not receive failing grades or be retained if it is attributed to language.

G. Retention

Retention of an ELL student should not be based on English language proficiency. Lack of English skill should not be mistaken for poor achievement. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) asserts, "it is their policy to find a violation of the Regulation Implementing Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964 if LEP students are retained in grade for failure to demonstrate basic skills in English" (Lau v. Nichols, 1970). Retention of ELLs is strictly done on a case-by-case situation and must go through the LPAC committee. Teachers who wish to retain a student must provide the LPAC with sufficient evidence that they have provided appropriate modifications/accommodations, that the modifications were successful and that the student's lack of progress is not related to language.

VII. ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS

A. Criterion Referenced Assessment

Criterion Referenced tests and assessment are designed to measure student performance against a fixed set of predetermined criteria or learning standards. This form of assessment is required by Federal Law and is given annually.

B. Norm Referenced Assessment

Norm Referenced assessments report whether test takers performed better or worse than an average student, which is determined by comparing scores against the performance results of a statistically selected group of test takers, typically of the same age or grade level, who have already taken the exam. This form of assessment is also required by Federal Law and is given annually.

C. English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA21)

This form of assessment is also required by Federal Law and is given annually.

- Required of all ELL students regardless of ESOL service
- Administered with accommodations ONLY to students with an IEP
- Used to measure the language development progress of ELL students
- Used to help determine Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives for the district
- The test measures the four domains of language development
- The ELPA21 scores is used to determine the proficiency level of the English language for each ELL

VII. ANNUAL REVIEWS

A. LPAC

Annual reviews are conducted by the LPAC to analyse the progress of ELL students.

- Annual Reviews should be held as soon as ELPA scores are available
- Classroom teachers with complete monitoring forms for each of their ELLs students twice a year in Ellevation.
- The LPAC will examine the student's grades, academic achievement, ELPA21 scores, and teacher feedback.
- The committee will put more emphasis on language development scores than academic achievement scores when making decisions for ESOL services. The committee will refer to academic achievement scores when making intervention decisions for at-risk students.
- During this time changes may be made to the ELL Student PPlan
- All information gathered during the LPAC meeting will be recorded on the student's EL Plan which is housed in Ellevation and a hard copy with be put in the EL's purple folder.

B. Parent Notification

By law, parents must receive notification of their child's progress in acquiring the English language through the ESOL program. A notification will be sent home following the LPAC meeting. In addition the form should be sent home in a language the parent can understand. If the parent has any questions or concerns about the progress of their child, or the services they are receiving, they may request a meeting with the LPAC.

IX: STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. District Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the district include:

- Ensure that all staff working with ELLs are trained in how to provide appropriate instruction for ELLs
- Ensure that all staff working with ELLs are knowledgeable of the language acquisition process
- Designate an ESOL Coordinator
- ESOL teachers must be ESL endorsed by the state of Arkansas
- If there is an insufficient number of ESL endorsed teachers available to staff the program, the district will provide training to teachers
- Stay in compliance with state and federal law

X. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

eStem will ensure meaningful communication with LEP parents in a language they can understand. This includes all school-home communication, report cards, parent-teacher conferences, parent handbooks, etc.

To help with Parent and Family Engagement requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and to meet the Civil Rights obligations of schools in working with Limited English Proficient (LEP) families and English Learner (EL) students across the state of Arkansas, leaders in the Arkansas Department of Education's Division of Elementary and Secondary Education are partnering with TransACT® Parent Notices. The partnership will provide all local education agencies representing hundreds of schools and teachers with unlimited access to expertly written parent notifications that meet legal requirements, guidance on required audiences, and recommended timelines.

All Parent Notices are available to Arkansas educators in English and 10 high priority languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Marshallese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

All educators in Arkansas will have access to TransACT's General Education Parent Notices and ESEA (ESSA) Parent Notices. All Arkansas educators can now create accounts to access parent notices. To register for access go to the [TransACT Parent Notices page](#) and [Click here for the Quick Start Guide](#).

XI. EXITING THE ESOL PROGRAM

A. Preparing to Exit

The academic progress of ELL students is monitored yearly by the LPAC at each building. The progress is recorded on the annual review form. When a student has met the required criteria then he/she may qualify to exit the ESOL program.

B. Criteria to Exit

In order for an ELL to be exited from the ESOL program and be reclassified as Monitored (M1) student, the student must meet the following criteria:

Scores of Proficient on the ELPA21

- Grades C or above in core content areas without modifications
- Must have two data points that are at grade level on the ACT Aspire or NWEA

C. Procedures for Exiting

To exit an EL student from the ESOL program, he/she must meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrate proficiency on ELPA21
 - Separate proficient scores in each domain or a composite score of “proficient” derived from scores in all four language domains
- Demonstrate proficiency on the Arkansas Professional Judgment Rubric by having at least two pieces of required evidence. (See Summer 2018 [Presentation](#) for clarification on required evidence.)
- This must be documented on the [Language Minority Student Exit/Monitoring](#) form mentioned above.

Information on the exiting process can be found in the [Arkansas Professional Judgment Rubric Exit Criteria Guidance](#).

The decision to exit or reclassify the EL student from the ESOL program must be made on an annual basis by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) following guidelines outlined in the Arkansas Professional Judgment Rubric. All Annual Review results must be recorded in eSchool no later than September 30 following spring ELPA21 Summative Testing.

D. Monitoring Academic Success

Annual (yearly) reviews of English learners will be conducted by the school’s/district’s Language Placement and Assessment Committee (LPAC). Each annual review will yield one of three decisions:

1. Student has not met required exit criteria, so he/she remains in the program.

2. Student has met required exit criteria, so he/she exits the program and begins the monitoring process.
3. Student is in the monitoring process, classified as a Former English Learner, and is monitored for four years, according to federal guidelines as outlined in the [Arkansas ESSA Plan](#).

The Building Coordinator with monitor exited students grades and classroom teachers will complete monitoring forms in Ellevation

XII. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

A. EL Cumulative Folder (purple folder)

Each ELL student will have a cumulative EL folder that houses all documentations of their participation in the ESOL program. This folder contains all the compliance documents recommended by the Office of Civil Rights. This folder holds copies of all testing and records pertaining to a student being identified, assessed, placed, evaluated and exited. This folders will be housed with the students permanent record.

B. Online Database

Master copies of all district ESOL forms, as well as building level information will be housed in Ellevation and available to mainstream teachers, ESOL staff, and administrators.

