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English Language Learner Manual

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The purpose of this English Language Learner (ELL) Manual is to provide common information to administrators, administrative assistants, teachers, counselors, and district officials. It should be considered a working document, liable to change in accordance with updates in federal, state, and local requirements. The most current copy will always be available on the [Windham Public School website](#) under the [Department of ESOL, Bilingual Education, and World Languages](#). Any questions regarding this document should be directed to the Department of ESOL, Bilingual Education, and World Languages at 860-465-2515.

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Home Language Survey FAQs

The Home Language Survey (HLS) asks three questions to determine if there is a possibility that a student is an EL. They are:

1. What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by the student?
2. What is the language most often spoken by the student?
3. What is the language that the student first acquired?

By law, whenever there's a language other than English in the HLS, it takes precedence for coding (e.g., if a parent answers English/Spanish in a HLS question, the student would be coded Spanish for that field). Further, if the parent writes any language other than English on the document, the non-English language should be entered as the Home Language in the Registration Screen.

Please view the "[Registration in Relation to ESOL & Bilingual Education](#)" presentation for further guidance. Here are frequent questions asked about the HLS by staff:

1. What if the parent writes a language other than English but I do not hear the child speaking in that language? Should I change the language?
No. Staff may not change the language from a non-English language to English. The child must be tested for EL status using the pre-LAS or LAS Placement. ([See flowchart.](#))
2. Should I explain the purpose of the HLS so that if the parent does not want the child tested they won't put languages other than English?
No. Staff may not try to influence the HLS in anyway.
3. What if the parent writes all English but I know there is another language at home? Should I change the language?
No. However, if that's the case, staff should contact the Bilingual Department.
4. What if the child speaks an indigenous language (e.g. Quiche), but I know some Spanish is spoken at home? Should I add it to the HLS?
If there is a One-Way Dual Language Program offered at your school, and you know that Spanish is a home language, the child may be offered admittance to Dos Ríos, and the Bilingual Department should be contacted.
5. How should the Home Language be coded in the Registration screen?
If the parent writes any language other than English on the HLS, the non-English language should be entered as the Home Language. If there are multiple non-English home languages, please contact the Bilingual Department.
6. If a student is transferring into the district and their records don't have an HLS yet, is it left blank until received?
Parents of students who have already been registered at any Connecticut school, including at our own district, should not redo the HLS. Staff isn't allowed to change the answers on the HLS from what they had previously written. If records from the previous school are pending, please: (1) leave the HLS blank until they're received from the previous school, (2) write that they are pending in the "Additional Information" box under HLS in eSchool, and (3) notify the Bilingual Department. If the student is from out of state, please administer the HLS.

Parent Questionnaire

Student Name: _____ Teacher(s): _____

Grade Level: _____ Interviewer: _____

**Ask at least 3 questions in each category and all of the must-ask questions.*

Question	Answers
Language and Communication	
What languages are spoken at home?	
In what language do you prefer communication?	
What language does your child prefer for communication?	
How do you prefer to communicate? (Phone, email, letters home, etc.)	
Family Life/Funds of Knowledge	
Who lives in your home?	
When your family goes out, where are some of the places you go?	
What are some family traditions/norms that are important in your home?	
What are the jobs that the adults in your family have? What were their jobs before coming to the US/mainland US?	
Who are the supports you have?	

What are your hobbies?	
Are there any holidays/traditions that your child celebrates? Can you tell us about them?	
What do your kids do for fun?	
Does the student help with care tasks in the home? Which ones?	
Literacy	
Who tells stories in the family?	
Who reads to your child in the family? Which languages?	
(Depending on age) Does your child like to read? If so, in what languages?	
Tell me more about your family's educational background.	
Must-Ask Questions	
Are there any dietary restrictions that we should be aware of?	
Are there any holidays that you don't want your child to take part in?	
What questions do you have for us?	
Tell me more about _____.	

Questions that parents may ask:

1. I want my child to learn English. Will they learn English in Dos Ríos?

Of course they will. They will have 50-50 time in each language so they will have the chance to make connections between languages and learn both languages.

2. Is my child going to excel in English?

In the long run, your child can excel in both English and Spanish. According to research, students in Dual Language programs actually do better in English than kids who only speak English.

3. Won't it be too hard to learn in two languages?

It can be challenging to learn two languages at the same time but in the future it is beneficial for your child to speak two languages. Most of the world learns in two languages.

4. Can my children learn if they have issues with ____?

If they can participate in a one language program, they can also participate in two language programs. Each issue is addressed on an individual basis. If they are in a specialized program, we can discuss what that might look like.

5. Which is the best program for my child?

Dual Language is always the better program in the long term for all kids, even for kids who are monolingual in English.

6. Do students get confused when they are learning two languages?

Learning two languages takes time. In the beginning, students might make mistakes. This is normal. Your teacher will always let you know if there are concerns.

7. If they should stay in the program if they have academic difficulties?

Yes. Academic difficulties do not disappear if the program changes. Working in two languages may HELP their academic difficulties. Let's discuss the challenges your child is having so we can find some strategies.

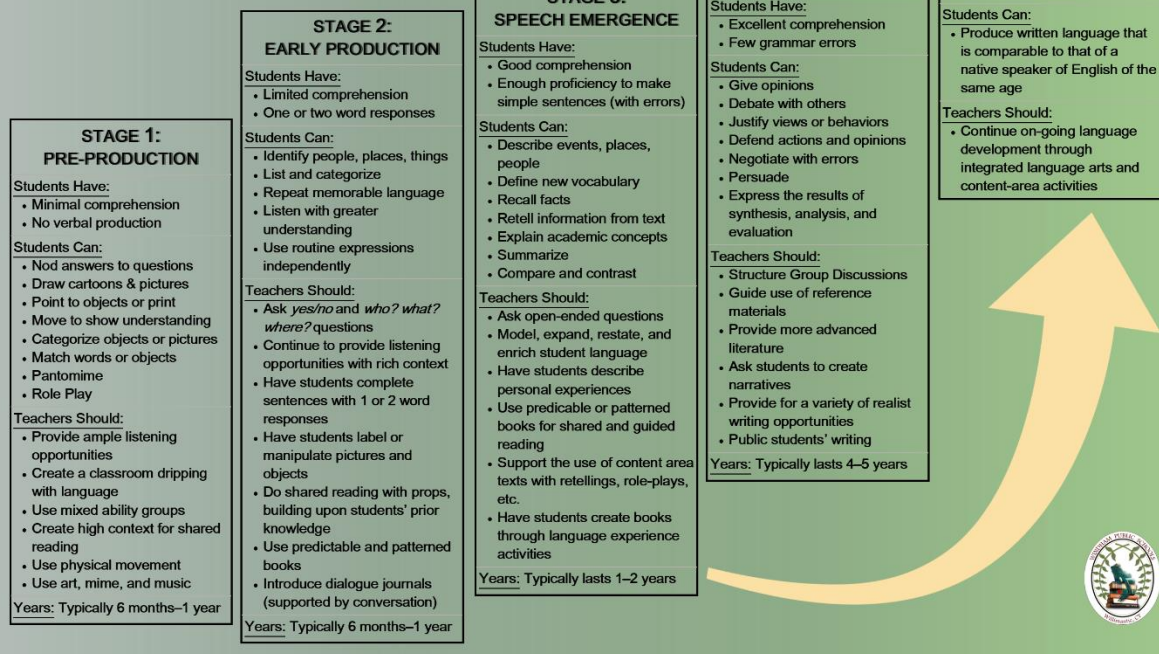
8. Can my child with SPED/504 needs be a part of this program?

If they can participate in a one language program, they can also participate in two language programs. There is research to say that students with SPED and 504 needs actually do better in Dual Language programs. Each concern is addressed on an individual basis. If they are in a specialized program, we can discuss what that might look like as well.

9. How fast can my child learn a language/become bilingual?

There are many factors that affect how fast your child can pick up a new language. But what we can say is that it takes at least 5-7 years to learn a new language at an academic level. (Please see graphic in next page.)

STAGES OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION



10. How can I help my child in the other language?

Whatever you do in your home language will help them in the other language. Suggestions you can offer the parent based on family circumstances:

- Ask them every day what they learned at school.
- Have conversations with your child.
- Tell them stories in your home language.
- Read books to your child.

In the other language, provide them space to do their homework, but if your child is struggling, make sure the teacher knows.

11. How long is the program?

- Compañeros: PreK-8
- Dos Ríos: Currently K-5, but we intend for the program to become K-8.

For a program to be considered Dual Language, it must last for at least 6 years.

12. Should I be worried if they are below grade level?

In the beginning, students may appear below grade level, but they are actually on the bilingual trajectory. Talk to your child's teacher about your concerns.

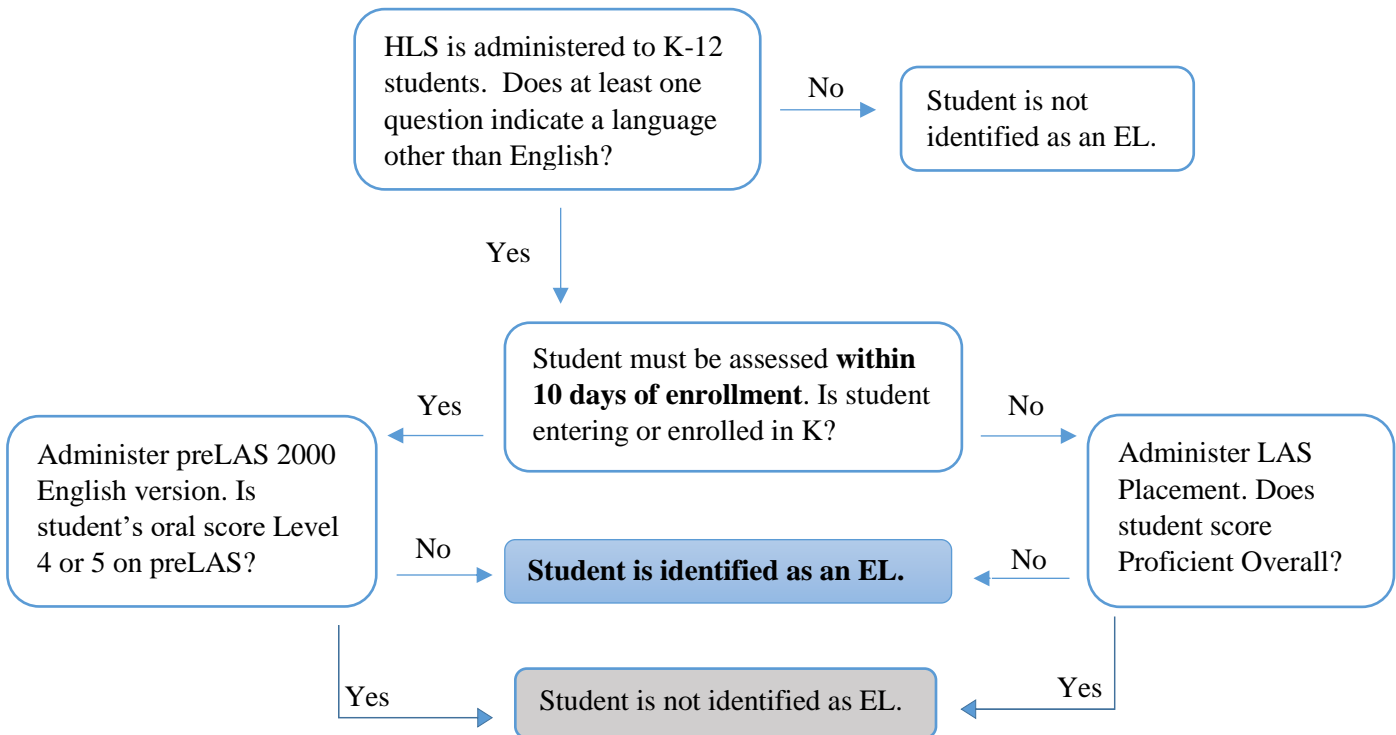
13. Are the tests in Spanish?

The child will receive classroom tests in both languages. The state tests are in English.

14. Should I talk to the child in English or Spanish at home?

You should speak to your child in the language you are most comfortable with.

English Learner Identification Process Flowchart¹



¹ Adapted from [Connecticut State Department of Education English Learner Identification Process](#).

English Learner Identification Process Clarifications/Exceptions

1. The school administrative assistant/secretary responsible for registration should code any language on the Home Language Survey (HLS) other than English as the primary language in eSchool. This includes questions where more than one language is indicated. For instance, if one of the answers is English/Spanish, Spanish must be used as the primary language. Please see [Home Language FAQs](#) for further instructions.
2. The school administrative assistant/secretary must inform the EL teacher by email and Cc the Bilingual Department if a student has at least one answer on the HLS that indicates a language other than English.
3. By law, the EL teacher has **2 weeks from the student's date of entry** to test (with preLAS or LAS Placement) and classify the student.
4. Upon completion of testing, a teacher should contact the parent to let them know that the student will receive EL services. This teacher should be the EL teacher providing the services. In the case of Dual Language students (Dos Ríos and Compañeros), the teacher calling should be the Dual Language Teacher. Please note that parent surveys are no longer required.
5. If a student is registering from another district in state, Windham must honor the previous district's identification. EL teachers should try to ascertain testing results from the other district. If the teacher is unable to do so for any reason, please contact the Bilingual Department for assistance.
6. If a student is registering from a US district out of state, the district must try to honor the previous district's identification if the student was coded as an EL. EL teachers should try to ascertain previous identification; if the information is unavailable, the EL teacher may proceed in accordance with the [English Learner Identification Process Flowchart](#).
7. EL testing documentation (preLAS or LAS Placement) should be placed in the student's cumulative folder within a week of testing (or within two weeks of the start of the new school year). The building principal should determine who is responsible for filing testing documentation.
8. [New Student Report Sheets](#) should be scanned and emailed to the Bilingual Department director (Cc'ing the administrative assistant) every second and fourth Thursday with the front cover of the testing material throughout the year, except during (and right before)

the LAS Links testing window. During (and right before) the LAS Links testing window, the same information must be sent to the Bilingual Director immediately after identification in order to be able to test the student. More information on EL Identification can be found in the [previous flowchart](#).

9. The Bilingual Department's administrative assistant should send out an EL roster to each school at least once a month (during the academic year) on or before the 15th of the month. The Bilingual Department may send out the EL roster more frequently during critical times such as before the October PSIS collection and before LAS Links testing.
10. The EL teacher should check the EL roster within 3 academic days of receipt and inform the Bilingual Department if there are any errors. If there are no errors, the EL teacher should also inform the Bilingual Department as such.
11. If there is a Dual Language Program at the school, the EL teacher should collaborate with the Dual Language teachers to check the accuracy of the coding. However, the EL teacher should be the teacher responsible for the accuracy of the roster.

Registration/Transfer Procedure for Elementary Bilingual Students²

At the time of Registration, if the HLS is not English/English/English and includes any Spanish, the Secretary or Admin. Assistant doing the registration should:

- 1) Send a scan of the HLS to the ESOL teacher and Cc the Bilingual Department Director (A. Mudambi) and Admin. Assistant (L. Perez-Handler).
 - If you are waiting on HLS from a previous CT district, ask if the student was ever identified as an ELL, or had ESL or bilingual classes. Ask if anyone in the family is bilingual, and notify the ESOL teacher and Cc the Bilingual Department Director (A. Mudambi) and Admin. Assistant (L. Perez-Handler).
- 2) If the student is registering/transferring in a school that offers a Dos Ríos Program for that grade,³ student placement should be in Dos Ríos:
 - Parent should be informed that the student will be placed in a Dual Language Classroom,
 - Parent should receive a Dos Ríos brochure, and
 - Parent should be informed that once the English language proficiency test is complete, they may need to switch classes if they do not qualify.
- 3) If the student is registering/transferring to a school without a Dos Ríos Program for that grade (but there is a Dos Ríos program for that grade somewhere in the district) **and the student is obviously an ELL** (does not speak English, has already been identified as an ELL, parent reports that the student knows “a little” or need help with learning English, or the student is unable to respond to simple questions⁴ in English):
 - Send an email to: Bilingual Department Director (A. Mudambi) and Admin. Assistant (L. Perez-Handler) with a Cc to: Dual Language Specialist (A. Finsmith), Transportation Coordinator (Y. Soto), and Assistant Superintendent (N. Weathers) with this information and the student’s address.
 - Within 1 school day, the Assistant Superintendent (N. Weathers) and Transportation Coordinator (Y. Soto) will determine if the student can be transported to another school

² Updates to this procedure need to also be made to the Registration Manual.

³ Schools that offer Dos Ríos in 2020-2021:

Natchaug	K-4
Sweeney	K-3
Windham Center	K-3

⁴ Examples of simple questions: How are you? How old are you? Do you have any brothers or sisters? Where are you moving from? What school were you going to before?

and the Bilingual Department will contact the parent to share information about available programs.

- The Bilingual Department will immediately reply to the school's email with the parent's decision, and add the new building's Secretary/Admin. Assistant if appropriate.
- 4) If the student is registering/transferring a school without a Dos Ríos Program for that grade, but there is a Dos Ríos Program for that grade somewhere in the district, **and you are not sure if the student is ELL or not** (see above):
- Student placement should be in a unilingual classroom.
 - Inform parent that the district has a Dos Ríos Program (and give a brochure) and also offers ESOL with bilingual support in their home school.
 - Inform parent that someone from the Bilingual Department will be in contact with them to explain their options once the language assessment is complete.

PSIS Codes

EL Program Codes are the Public School Information System (PSIS) Codes determined by the state. The state uses these codes to track students and the EL programs they follow. EL teachers will need to use this for the [New Student Report Sheet](#). They are as follows:

04	Eligible but No Services Due to Parental Request
1B	Eligible for bilingual and in Compañeros or Dos Ríos
1A	Eligible for bilingual, in Transitional Bilingual Ed program
7D	Eligible for mandated bilingual, but not participating due to parental request, instead in another ESL program, not 7A, 7B, or 7C
7A	Eligible for mandated bilingual, but not participating due to parental request, instead in ESL Pull-Out Model program
7B	Eligible for mandated bilingual, but not participating due to parental request, instead in ESL Push-In/Co-teaching
7C	Eligible for mandated bilingual, but not participating due to parental request, instead in sheltered English program.
02	Eligible, but fewer than 30 months before graduating, in High School ESL program
06	Not eligible for bilingual programming, not receiving ESL or any other special language services due to parental request
5D	Not eligible for mandated bilingual, in another ESL program, not 5A, 5B, 5C
5A	Not eligible for mandated bilingual, in ESL Pull-out Model program
5B	Not eligible for mandated bilingual, in ESL Push-in/Co-teaching Model program
5C	Not eligible for mandated bilingual, in ESL Sheltered English Instruction Approach program
03	Receiving Mandated Language Transition Support Services (LTSS) after Completing 30 Months in a Mandated Bilingual Program (Except in Dos Ríos or Compañeros)

Other important categories to know:

Recently Arrived	If the student is an English Learner and the student's first entry date into an US school is less than 24 months prior to test date
Immigrant	Individuals who are (a) ages 3-21, (b) were not born in any state defined as each of the 50 states or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and (c) have not been attending 1 or more schools in any of 1 or more states for 3 full academic years

New Student Report Sheet

Teacher: _____

Grade/Classes: _____

School: _____

Date Sent to Bilingual Office: _____

Name of Student	School ID	Date of Entry to School	PreLAS (1-5) / LAS Placement Proficiency Score (NP, AP, P)	Parent Contact Date	Suggested EL Program Code	Recently Arrived Status	Immigrant Status	Additional Comments

Optional New Student Checklist

Name of Student: _____

- ☐ One of the questions on the student's HLS has an answer other than English
- ☐ Test student with English preLAS if in Kindergarten, or test student using LAS Placement if in 1st grade or higher
- ☐ If the student receives a 1, 2, or 3 on the preLAS or receives less than Proficient on the LAS Placement, and the student is eligible for Dos Ríos, test student with the Spanish preLAS
- ☐ Suggest an EL Program Code if student receives a 1, 2, or 3 on the preLAS or less than Proficient on the LAS Placement
- ☐ Enter student data into "New Student Report Sheet"
- ☐ File EL testing documentation in the student's cumulative folder
- ☐ Scan and email New Student Report Sheet to the Bilingual Department Director (Cc'ing the Administrative Assistant) every second and fourth Thursday with the front cover of the testing material

Entry Into Dos Ríos

Dos Ríos is our One-Way Dual Language Program. Windham Public Schools has created this one-of-a-kind EL program in order to service our EL students with the only EL programming that is research-based to close the achievement gap. Please see our [website](#) for more information about the program.

Entry Requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Student must qualify as EL.2. Spanish must be a home language.3. Dos Ríos must be offered for the grade level of the child.
Important Notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The home language may be determined through the HLS or through parental contact.2. The student may be dominant in English, may be an emergent bilingual, or may be dominant in a third language and still qualify for Dos Ríos.
Parental Contact	<p>In Connecticut, parents may opt their children out of Dual Language programming. However, because all schools in Windham Public Schools are mandated bilingual, it is the parents' and students' right for ELL students to receive bilingual services. Dos Ríos is our Bilingual Service. Therefore, we should at no time talk parents out of their rights for bilingual services.</p> <p>Furthermore, because research demonstrates that Dual Language programming is the only EL program that closes the achievement gap, every effort must be made by the school to explain to parents the benefit of Dual Programming. Please contact the Bilingual Office for support as needed.</p>

Dual Language Scheduling

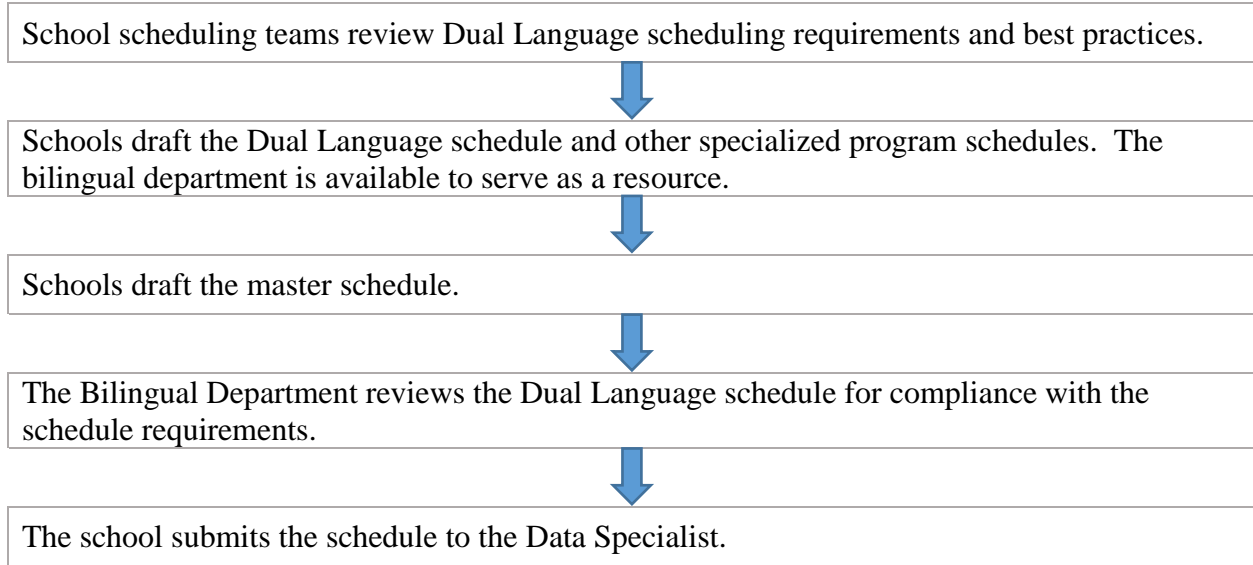
Planning for more than one program can be a complex task. It is recommended to plan for the most complex scheduling needs first (such as a Special Education or Dual Language Education programs) rather than planning for the general education program and then trying to make the specialized programs work within that schedule.

The Bilingual Department is available to help with scheduling. We can work with each school as a thought or planning partner. The Bilingual department must review the Dual Language schedule before submission to the Data Specialist (A. Shepaum).

The following chart presents requirements and best practice recommendations for the Windham Dual Language Programs.

Elementary Dual Language (K-6)	
Requirements	Best Practice
<p>Equal number of <i>true</i> instructional minutes for the English and Spanish Biliteracy Blocks</p> <p>True instructional minutes are minutes when the teacher and students are able to actively engage in instruction. For example, true instructional time excludes time that may be used to return from recess or specials or time dedicated to a snack break.</p>	<p>Have a break between Spanish Biliteracy and English Biliteracy.</p> <p>This could be math, special, lunch or recess.</p>
	<p>If breaking up a Biliteracy block is necessary, use natural breaks.</p> <p>Examples of natural breaks within the block are after decoding practice and after a whole-group lesson.</p>
<p>Biliteracy minutes = Unilingual Literacy + Content minutes</p> <p>The total number of Biliteracy minutes (English Biliteracy + Spanish Biliteracy) should be at least equivalent to the minutes unilingual students spend in literacy and content areas.</p>	<p>Set aside time to develop oral and social language.</p> <p>This could be in the form of a morning meeting, a circle, a facilitated and organized social snack, or some other time.</p>
<p>Dual Math minutes = Unilingual math minutes</p> <p>The number of minutes Dual Language students spend in the math block students should be approximately the same number as the number of minutes that unilingual students spend in their math blocks.</p>	<p>Limit transitions between the two languages.</p> <p>Take into account that some students may be changing their language of learning when they go to WIN. Therefore, whenever possible, it is best practice to have WIN time after the completion of a subject area rather than in the middle of a biliteracy or math block.</p>
	<p>Err on the side of Spanish.</p> <p>When the number of minutes cannot be exactly balanced between Spanish and English, self-contained classrooms should err on the side of giving more time to Spanish.</p>
	<p>Have a “clean” transition between languages.</p> <p>Whenever possible, have students’ Spanish time and English time separated only once during the day using specials, lunch, or recess as natural boundaries.</p>

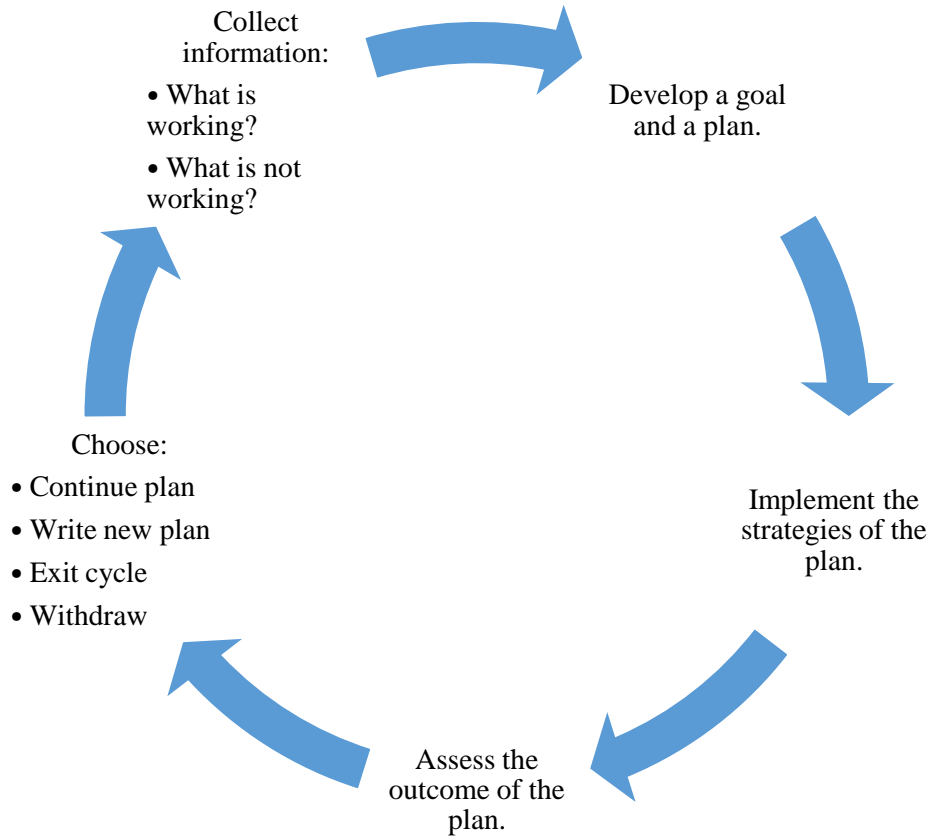
Scheduling Process



Dual Language Exit Procedure

If for any reason a parent requests to withdraw their student from Compañeros or Dos Ríos, it is best practice for the school not only to explain to parents the benefit of Dual Programming, but also to resolve any issues causing the parent to withdraw their student. The following is the 6-week solution cycle traditionally used in Windham Public Schools' Dual Language Programming. All parents interested in withdrawing their students from a Dual Language Program should be offered this Six-Week Solution Cycle. Call the Bilingual Office to support implementation of the Six-Week Solution Cycle. If after the cycle, the parents still want to withdraw their student, the school should contact the Bilingual Office to sign the appropriate form.

Dual Language Program (Dos Ríos and Compañeros) Six-Week Solution Cycle



Sample Questions for Parents and/or Students participating in the 6-Week Solution Cycle

Name of student: _____

Date: _____

1. Do you know the benefits of Dual Language Programming?
2. How are you performing academically?
3. What is happening socially?
4. What are the challenges you are facing in Dual Language?
5. What strategies have you and your teachers already tried to overcome these challenges?
6. What do you LIKE about Dual Language?
7. What is the BIGGEST concern right now?
8. What would you want to do if you were already out of Dual Language and you were still having these challenges?
9. What is an achievable 6-week goal related to that concern?
10. What strategies will be used by...
 - a. The student
 - b. The teacher
 - c. The parent
 - d. Other
11. When will we meet again to assess the effectiveness of our plan?

Windham Middle School New Arrival Program

Criteria for placement of incoming 6th graders:

1. The student has never been in a US school setting and has a LAS Placement Score of NP	OR	1. The student arrived in the US no later than January 1st of the year the student is entering 6th grade
AND		
2. LAS Links overall score (or equivalent ⁵) is no greater than 1		

PLEASE NOTE: EL teachers at the elementary level need to fill out a [New Arrivals Placement Form](#) for each student to be placed in Windham Middle School's New Arrivals Program due to the EL Team Leader at WMS by the first Thursday in May.

Criteria for placement of incoming 7th and 8th graders

The student has never been in a US school setting and has a LAS Placement Score of Not Proficient.
AND
The student has had US schooling for less than 10 months (with the exception of SLIFE students ⁶ who may have had more time US schools) and has a LAS Links score (or equivalent) of 1.

Criteria for Exit of New Arrivals Program:

Overall LAS Links Level = 2 or above
AND
Has been in a newcomer program for 10 months or longer (with the exception of SLIFE students who may have had more time in a New Arrivals Program)

⁵ Students who have attended school in the US but outside of Connecticut may come in with proficiency scores from another state's test. When needed, please contact the bilingual office for assistance with converting the score. Students who come to Windham without proficiency scores may be tested with LAS Placement. A LAS Placement score of Not Proficient will be considered a LAS Links score of 1 for purposes of placement.

⁶ SLIFE Students are Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education. For the purposes of the New Arrivals Program, we will follow Ruiz de Velazco and Fix's (2000) definition of SLIFE students being those who lost at least two years of schooling prior to coming to the US.

Windham Middle School New Arrivals Placement Form

To be completed by 5th grade ESOL teacher for students to be placed in Windham Middle School's New Arrivals Program. Form is due to the EL Team Leader at WMS by the first Thursday in May.

Student Last Name: _____

Student First Name: _____

U.S. Entry Date: _____

LAS Links Overall Score: _____

LAS Placement Score (if LAS Links Overall Score unavailable): _____

SLIFE: ☐ Yes ☐ No

IEP: ☐ Yes ☐ No

504 Plan: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Teacher Comment:

ESOL Push-In Support

1. In Windham Public Schools, [Push-In Support is preferred to Pull-Out Support](#).
2. ESOL teachers should determine their schedules depending upon their students' proficiency levels and the following criteria:
 - a. ESOL teachers must check in with all of the students on their caseload at least once a week.
 - b. ESOL teachers may see the same students in multiple classes the same day or throughout the week depending upon students' English proficiency levels.
 - c. ESOL teachers may provide Push-In Support to any academic class.
3. Please remember that both the ESOL and mainstream teacher are responsible for the academic and language development of their students. Therefore, they must work together to ensure that both teachers are actively involved in the planning and delivery of the lesson. Various Push-In Support models are described on the [Bilingual Department's website](#).

Windham High School ESOL Programming

Through the cohort that began 9th grade in 2018-2019, students were assigned to ESOL courses depending upon English proficiency and support needed. Within the ESOL courses, subject matter was based on the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts for the grade level English course needed. Students are expected to complete four credits of English for graduation that meet the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts.

From the cohort that begins 9th grade in 2019-2020, ESOL class equivalencies will be as follows:

ESOL II	English I
ESOL III	English II
ESOL IV	English III

Students are expected to complete four credits of English for graduation that meet the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts.

Windham High School ESOL Placement Guidelines

1. Students in any grade who are new arrivals and need extensive English acquisition support defined as a score of 1 on the LAS Links may be placed in ESOL I NA. Students may not be in ESOL I NA for more than one year. ESOL I NA does not count towards the completion of English requirements. If students do not qualify for ESOL 1 NA, the following guidelines must be used to determine placement.
2. Students entering 9th grade who score below Level 3 on the LAS Links should be placed in ESOL II.
3. Students who are entering 10th grade whose cohort year (9th grade) is 2019-2020 or later and whose LAS Links are below Level 3 should be placed in ESOL III.
4. Students who are entering 11th grade whose cohort year (9th grade) is 2019-2020 or later and whose LAS Links are below Level 3 should be placed in ESOL IV.
5. Students who are entering 12th grade whose cohort year (9th grade) is 2019-2020 or later and whose LAS Links are below Level 3 should be placed in Writing for College and Career.
6. Students must take at least one English course that is not ESOL during their high school career.
7. Students may not get credit for two equivalent classes. Please see [Windham High School ESOL Programming](#) for equivalent classes.
8. Students may, however, take ESOL III and English III simultaneously.