



533 Dayton Street • P.O. Box 627 • Hamilton, Ohio 45012
513.887.5000 • Fax 513.868.4470

Mrs. Barbara Fuerbacher, Associate Superintendent
Mrs. Sandra G. Bussell, Director of Continuous Improvement & Programs for At-Risk Students

Hamilton City School District

Plan for English Language Learners

The district plan follows state guidelines in providing service to Limited English Proficient students. English language learners have equal access to a quality education that enables them to progress academically while learning English.

History of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Population in the District: The Hamilton City School District comprises one high school, one freshman school, two middle schools, eight elementary schools, and one alternative high school. The total student population is slightly above 9000. The district has been providing services to students whose first language is other than English since 1996-97 when it served ESL students through a free after-school tutoring program..

As of November 2010, the identified ELL or LEP (Limited English Proficient) population is approximately 493 students (5.3% of 9301 student population). According to previously published District State Report Cards, the ELL/LEP population was as follows:

- 2009-2010 school year: 642 (6.9% of 9310 average daily student enrollment)
- 2008-2009 school year: 452 (5.1% of 8861 average daily student enrollment)
- 2007-2008 school year: 523 (5.8% of 8,948)
- 2006-07 school year: 457 (5.0% of 9,141)
- 2005-06 school year: 433 (4.8% of 9,021)
- 2004-05 school year: 433 (4.5% of 9,215)
- 2003-04 school year: 369 (4.0% of 9,225)
- 2002-03 school year: 196 (2.1% of 9,319)

District data indicates the number of identified LEP students as 43 in the 1998-99 school year. The trend in district has been a growing LEP population within a gradually shrinking student body population.

The majority of LEP students are Hispanic, with Spanish speakers comprising well over 90% of the total LEP population. Other languages represented in the district include Tagalog, Cantonese, Cambodian, Arabic, Creole/French, Vietnamese, Russian, Pohnpeian, and Tigrini as well.



533 Dayton Street • P.O. Box 627 • Hamilton, Ohio 45012
513.887.5000 • Fax 513.868.4470

Mrs. Barbara Fuerbacher, Associate Superintendent

Mrs. Sandra G. Bussell, Director of Continuous Improvement & Programs for At-Risk Students

Mission Statement: The mission of the Hamilton City School District is to provide an environment where all students experience success through participation in a dynamic educational system provided by a competent and caring staff and enhanced by community involvement.

ESL Program Goal: The goal of Hamilton's ESL Program is to provide high-quality instruction in the English language in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as appropriate modifications and accommodations in the mainstream classrooms, so that English Language Learners may develop the second language skills necessary to successfully achieve academically and socially in the United States.

Legal Background: The following legal decisions are the basis upon which the district provides our program for ELL's: The Equal Educational Opportunity Act 1974; Lau v. Nichols 1974; Title VI, Civil Rights Act 1964; Title III, No Child Left Behind Act 2001 (modified 2004).

Lau v. Nichols [414 U.S. 563 (1974)], a class action suit originally filed on behalf of Chinese-speaking public school students against the San Francisco Unified school district in 1970. In question was whether non-English speaking students received an equal educational opportunity when instructed in a language they could not understand. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the failure of the San Francisco school system to provide appropriate and meaningful instruction to students who do not speak English denied them the opportunity to effectively participate in the public education program and thus violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This act bans discrimination "based on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." The court stated that "there is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education." (414 U.S. at 566, 1974). The court went on to uphold a 1970 memorandum issued by the former Department of Health, Education and Welfare, which stated the following: Where the inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin minority group children from effective participation in the educational program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to open its instructional program to these students. (35 Federal Regulation 11595)



533 Dayton Street • P.O. Box 627 • Hamilton, Ohio 45012
513.887.5000 • Fax 513.868.4470

Mrs. Barbara Fuerbacher, Associate Superintendent

Mrs. Sandra G. Bussell, Director of Continuous Improvement & Programs for At-Risk Students

Educational Theory: Direct instruction in ESL is provided by certified teachers, following State English Language Proficiency Standards as well as standards for content areas, using district-approved reading texts and other materials designed for second language learners. At all grade levels, ESL is done on a pull-out or inclusion basis, or may be scheduled as a separate class, as in the case of ESL English for secondary students. Modifications and accommodations in the classroom are based upon recommendations from the State of Ohio and best practices as accepted in the field. Progress of ELLs is monitored through Progress Book and conferences with classroom teachers. A pass/fail system, emphasizing individual effort, participation and progress, may be employed in place of letter grades for those ELLs who have attended U.S. schools for less than three years, if needed.

LEP students can be expected to attain proficiency in Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) within 1-3 years of instruction in US Schools. They can be expected to attain Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) within 5-7 years.

Program Services and Goals: Our goal is to provide a program that is effective in meeting the educational needs of the LEP students that will lead to academic achievement and timely acquisition of English language proficiency. We will monitor AMAO data and responsively adjust our instructional program as needed.

Definition of Limited English Proficient: A child who is Limited English Proficient (LEP) is: between the ages of 3 and 21; enrolled in an elementary or secondary school; has a native/home language other than English, whether born in the U.S. or another country; and has such difficulty speaking, reading, writing or understanding English that the student may be unable to perform well enough in class or on state tests to meet expected state standards for achievement (Source: ODE Proficiency Rules).

General Intake and Identification: The district follows state and federal guidelines in screening, classifying, servicing, testing, monitoring, and exiting students whose primary or home language is a language other than English.

Home Language Survey: The parent/guardian of any newly enrolling student must complete a student registration form, with "Home Language Survey" questions embedded within. The form is available in both English and Spanish. This form becomes a part of the student's cumulative record. It is provided to the parents/guardians of every newly-enrolling student at every building. Copies of completed forms listing a language other than English as a reply to any of the questions are sent to the Instruction Department and/or the ESL teacher assigned to that building.



533 Dayton Street • P.O. Box 627 • Hamilton, Ohio 45012
513.887.5000 • Fax 513.868.4470

Mrs. Barbara Fuerbacher, Associate Superintendent

Mrs. Sandra G. Bussell, Director of Continuous Improvement & Programs for At-Risk Students

Initial Assessment: The ESL teacher or the Instruction Department reviews the student enrollment information and arranges for an initial screening of the student's English proficiency. The student will be given the appropriate Language Assessment Scales (LAS) in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing to determine his or her levels of proficiency in those language domains. The building ESL teacher or a district test administrator administers the LAS tests. Results of the assessment are returned to the Instruction Department via the “*ESL Student Language Proficiency Assessment K-12 Form.*” Criteria for classification as LEP are based on those issued by the State of Ohio in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act.

Identification: Students are then designated as “LEP” (if they score less than Proficient in all areas on the LAS) or “Not LEP” (if they score totally proficient). A student must score at the Proficient level in all five domains in order to be considered “Not LEP”. The district EMIS Coordinator enters the student’s LEP designation (L, Y, or M) into DASL. Instruction enters LEP student data on the school’s “Category Sheet” containing all of that building’s LEP students’ information. Copies of the registration form and student testing data are maintained by the ESL teacher in an ESL Folder or portfolio for the student, as well as in the current annual identification notebook in the Instruction Office. Instruction also determines whether a student should be classified as “Immigrant” based on information contained in the student registration form, and notifies EMIS of the student’s “Immigrant Status” as well.

Parent Notification: If a student is classified as “Not LEP”, testing information is maintained at the Instruction Department office and a pink sticker is placed on the student’s cum folder. No specialized instruction involving language is therefore prescribed, although the student continues to be eligible for any instructional interventions taking place in the building.

If the student is classified as “LEP”, the Instruction Department generates the parent notification letter, which is mailed to parents along with the district ESL brochure. These include information on the child’s test results, a description of the ESL program being offered, and the time recommended for ESL instruction each week. This information is available in both English and Spanish. A copy of the letter is sent to the student’s principal, the ESL teacher to whom he or she will be assigned, and a copy is maintained in the Instruction Office. A blue dot is placed on the corner of the student’s cumulative file, identifying him or her as an LEP student.

If parents deny permission for services, the student keeps the LEP designation, and the student's progress will continue to be monitored by the responsible ESL teacher. The “denied participation” code will be entered in EMIS for that student. However the student will be included in the annual spring assessment of English proficiency given to all LEP students.



533 Dayton Street • P.O. Box 627 • Hamilton, Ohio 45012
513.887.5000 • Fax 513.868.4470

Mrs. Barbara Fuerbacher, Associate Superintendent

Mrs. Sandra G. Bussell, Director of Continuous Improvement & Programs for At-Risk Students

Translation and Interpretation for Families: Since the majority of LEP students and their families speak Spanish, the district has committed to hiring bilingual ESL teachers, tutors, aides or other staff members whenever possible. District documents have been translated into Spanish, including, but not limited to: elementary Report Cards, the Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use Policy, Free & Reduced Lunch Application, parent letters for summer school, intervention, kindergarten registration, and all registration and health forms. A Spanish-bilingual staff member carries an ESL pager so that an interpreter is always on call for emergency situations. We provide bilingual translators for parent conferences, hearings, IEP and MFE conferences. We lend bilingual dictionaries to families for use at home. We also support our Chinese families with a bilingual interpreter on contract.

Program of Services: Students to receive ESL services will have their LAS test and any previous Achievement Test information added to the building's "Category Sheets" (ESL/LEP Student Information Sheets) and the student will be added to the building's schedule of ESL instruction. Students are grouped by ability level and scheduled for a greater or lesser amount of ESL instruction based upon their levels of proficiency. For example, a new or recent immigrant who is at the Pre-functional or Beginning level in all language domains will be scheduled for daily instruction for a longer period of time and with a more specialized curricular focus. A student who has been in the U.S. for five or more years, who is proficient or advanced in, for example, Listening, Speaking, and Reading, but who is Intermediate in Writing, and who has demonstrated consistent academic success with the English curriculum might be seen for one or two periods a week by an ESL tutor, or may receive support from other intervention specialists in the building.

Progress Book is monitored regularly by the ESL teacher to permit timely intervention if an LEP student is failing one or more classes. If necessary, the ESL teacher will meet with classroom teachers to determine whether the reason for the failing grade is the result of a language barrier (in which case greater modification and accommodation may be necessary) or the result of student negligence (e.g., failure to turn in assigned work or follow other reasonable requests that take into account the student's level of proficiency in English). ESL teachers who are monitoring students may act as an advocate for the student and a liaison between the school and the home.



533 Dayton Street • P.O. Box 627 • Hamilton, Ohio 45012
513.887.5000 • Fax 513.868.4470

Mrs. Barbara Fuerbacher, Associate Superintendent

Mrs. Sandra G. Bussell, Director of Continuous Improvement & Programs for At-Risk Students

Research-Based Program: Our ESL program features activities that relate to the five research-based principles of second language development in teaching LEP students that are promoted by the Lau Center of ODE:

- **Principle #1:** Students need to feel good about themselves and their relationships with others in second language learning situations. (Rigg & Hudelson, 1986)
- **Principle #2:** Comprehension naturally precedes production during the process of second language development (Krashen & Terrell, 1983)
- **Principle #3:** Second language competency develops most quickly when the learner focuses on accomplishing tasks rather than focusing on the language itself. (Rigg & Hudelson, 1986; Krashen & Terrell, 1983)
- **Principle #4:** Students can learn to read and write in a second language while they develop their oral skills. (Rigg & Hudelson, 1986)
- **Principle #5:** Learners acquire a second language through trial and error; mistakes are part of the natural process. (Rigg & Hudelson, 1986; Krashen & Terrell, 1983)

In addition, the district has implemented a professional development initiative for ESL teachers and for content area teachers who have LEP students in their classes in using the SIOP model of instruction to make content knowledge comprehensible to English Language Learners.

Staffing: Direct instruction in ESL is provided by licensed/certificated teachers with either TESOL endorsements or comparable training and experience, per state guidelines. In addition, Educational Assistants who meet the No Child Left Behind criteria may be used to support students in classrooms as well as providing communication with families. Staff is deployed to buildings based on the number of identified LEP students and their levels of language proficiency.

Professional Development: Staff training and development is provided through in-services and workshops during the year, as well as off-site conferences and workshops for ESL staff. Professional Development for ESL teachers is listed in the district professional development catalog. In addition, ESL teachers may attend a wealth of professional development opportunities in content specific areas, such as writing, reading, mathematics, science, or social studies. The district is training teachers in the SIOP framework to guide their work with second language learners.



533 Dayton Street • P.O. Box 627 • Hamilton, Ohio 45012
513.887.5000 • Fax 513.868.4470

Mrs. Barbara Fuerbacher, Associate Superintendent

Mrs. Sandra G. Bussell, Director of Continuous Improvement & Programs for At-Risk Students

Instructional Resources: Each elementary school has at least one full or part time ESL teacher or tutor assigned; schools with more identified LEP students have more staff assigned to work with LEP students. Each building has a designated office or instructional area for the ESL teacher, including access to a computer and email system. Information is regularly shared with staff via an email conference folder, and through the district website. Appropriate materials and supplies needed to instruct students in reading, writing, listening, and speaking are provided on an equitable basis.

The Four-Blocks literacy model is being employed in all of the district's elementary school as a way of helping all students achieve reading proficiency, including ELLs. Teachers have been trained in how to teach the Four-Blocks model and have been given the materials necessary to fully implement the model. The newly adopted elementary reading program has an ELL component that addresses lessons and leveled readers for English language learners, and is provided for all schools.

Newcomer Hispanic middle school LEP students are offered the opportunity to transfer to a middle school magnet ESL site, which already has a large neighborhood population of LEP students. Economy of staffing and materials are thus maintained. Full-time secondary LEP staff are assigned to a magnet middle school, the freshman school, and the high school. Itinerant support is available if LEP students are assigned to the district alternative school or Juvenile Rehabilitation or Detention Centers. Secondary resources include an ESL English textbook series as well as various other supplemental materials designed to improve listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

District Policies and Procedures for Accommodations and Grading: ESL teachers and classroom teachers base accommodations on student classification on the "Category Sheet." Students are listed based on the accommodations to which they are entitled by law when taking state achievement tests due to their language proficiency level and number of years attending US schools. District guidelines for accommodations for other testing situations (Pro-Ohio, Iowa-CogATs, classroom exams) and for assigning classroom grades are shared with staff annually.

Transition out of LEP Status: All LEP students in Ohio in grades K-12 are given the Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition (OTELA) annually in the spring. When LEP students achieve a composite score of Proficient (Level 5), they are transitioned to Trial Mainstream status. While still classified as Limited English Proficient, these students no longer receive ESL instruction. Their progress in the mainstream is monitored by their building's ESL teachers through communication with the appropriate classroom teachers and monitoring of grades through Progress Book. Following state and federal law, the Trial Mainstream student retains this status for one academic year. At this point if the student has attained a composite level of 5 on the



533 Dayton Street • P.O. Box 627 • Hamilton, Ohio 45012
513.887.5000 • Fax 513.868.4470

Mrs. Barbara Fuerbacher, Associate Superintendent
Mrs. Sandra G. Bussell, Director of Continuous Improvement & Programs for At-Risk Students

subsequent administration of OTELA *or* attained a composite level of 4 *and* scored at the proficient level or higher on the most recent language arts achievement tests and achieved satisfactory academic performance during the Trial Mainstream year, the student is then reclassified as Not LEP (N) in EMIS.

Appendix of District Forms and Guidelines:

- Sample Category Sheet
- Sample Parent Letters
- Sample Forms
- ESL Brochure
- Guidelines
- Staff Information