

AMITE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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ELL LETTER TO PARENTS

The District's goal is that all English Language Learners, as well as other students, receive a standard's based education. The objectives for ELL students are that they will develop proficiency in English as rapidly and effectively as possible and that they will keep up academically with their English Only peers. The District will provide English Language Development (ELD) instruction and access to the District's challenging core curriculum to all English Language Learners.

Identification and Assessment:

Parents of a new enrollee will complete the Home Language Survey. This survey will identify the student's primary language. If a child's primary language is other than English, the school will administer the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) within 30 days of enrollment. The school will also administer primary language testing within the first 90 days, using the Spanish IPT or an informal primary language assessment if the primary language is other than Spanish. The district will annually notify parents of all ELL students about the testing results and support services available to assist their children to become proficient in English. The notification letter will include information about program options, including the parental exception waiver process for an alternative program.

Program Options

The District's instructional programs provide for small group instruction designed for elementary Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, at various stages of language proficiency, to promote English language development and to sustain normal academic achievement. The District currently employs a credentialed EL Teacher and part time Title I paraprofessionals. The paraprofessionals provide support for the ELL students in the classroom, as well as in small groups utilizing target teaching under the guidance of the classroom teacher.

Students, who score at the Beginning, Early Intermediate and Intermediate CELDT levels are identified as having Less Than Reasonable Fluency and placed in the Structured English Immersion Process. Classroom instruction in the SEI program is nearly all in English, but with the curriculum and presentation designed for those learning the language. The program is designed to help students acquire English through various instructional models that use

communicative and content based approaches. Clarification, explanation, assistance and support may be in the student's primary language. The goal is to teach language proficiency in English as rapidly and effectively as possible. ELD instruction will be given simultaneously with content instruction.

Students, who have been assessed on the CELDT as having a Reasonable Fluency (Early Advanced or Advanced) in English, will be placed in English Language Mainstream classrooms with teachers certified as CLAD or SDAIE trained to the extent possible. Instruction will be delivered in English and support provided by a paraprofessional during language arts and mathematics instruction. Primary language support is provided when necessary.

Parents/guardians may request a parental exception waiver for their child to be placed in an Alternative Education Program where instruction is provided in the child's primary language and primary language materials are used. ELD lessons would also be provided. If the school receives and approves a waiver for 20 or more English Learners at a given grade level, the school shall offer a primary language class or the school must allow the students to transfer to a public school in which such a class is offered. If a waiver is received, the school will act on the waiver in 30 days to approve or deny the waiver. If denied, the school will state the reason for the denial. Parents may appeal the denial to the District's governing board.

ELD and Access to the Core Curriculum

All teachers and paraprofessionals received training on our district adopted Houghton-Mifflin Language Arts program. Imbedded in the materials are lessons, story summaries, homework assignments, parent letters in Spanish and resources designed to meet the needs of English Language Learners. The Language Arts program centers upon Universal Access and is designed to reach all students.

The District has recently acquired two programs to bolster our English Language Development Instruction: Santillana Intensive English and The Rosetta Stone. Santillana Intensive English is a standards-based ESL/ELD intervention program designed to accelerate the development of social and academic language skills through content-based instruction. The Rosetta Stone Software utilizes technology to move students through a carefully structured sequence of pictures, encouraging them to associate images they understand with words that they don't. Rosetta Stone addresses key factors that researchers believe must be present in order for successful language learning to take place. By merging interactive technology with listening comprehension, structure and sequence, deduction and problem solving, and readiness to talk, Rosetta Stone provides a sound framework for students acquiring a new language. Developed with teachers and students and based in language-acquisition research, Rosetta Stone meets the requirements of No Child Left Behind for methods based on established principles of language acquisition.

Students are grouped by language proficiency level in cross grade groupings in order to receive differentiated instruction in ELD. Classroom teachers use Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) techniques to help provide English Learners access to the curriculum areas of math, science and social studies. Further, students, with academic deficits in

specified areas participate in a pull-out program, utilizing homogeneous groupings, with the credentialed EL teacher. The District's teachers receive on-going training in the area of English Language Development, with a focus on effective strategies to use with ELL students.

Catch-up Plan

Even though Cinnabar Elementary School maintains the goal of simultaneous core and ELD instruction for EL students, it is reasonable that some EL students fall behind in core academic subjects while attaining English proficiency. It is for this reason, that the District has crafted a catch-up plan that includes standards, interim benchmarks, assessments, interventions and an evaluation process.

1. **Standards:** There are clearly articulated and implemented content standards for English Language Development (ELD) and the rest of the district's core curriculum.
2. **Interim Benchmarks:** There are clearly defined interim benchmarks to measure expected growth toward meeting ELD and grade level content standards.
3. **Assessments:** There is a process to objectively assess EL student progress in ELD and the other core curriculum subjects using multiple measures. The measures include but are not limited to an analysis of CELDT, CAT6, the Rate of Redesignation, report cards, student writing samples and improvement of fluency scores.
4. **Intervention:** there are clearly defined interventions implemented for EL students who are not meeting the established interim benchmarks. These interventions are provided based on a district plan and on individual student assessments. The plan is designed and implemented by an authorized EL teacher or overseen by such a teacher.

Intervention and Support:

The District has a specific plan to assist English Learners in overcoming academic deficits. In addition to regular assessments, the EL Teacher and classroom teachers meet when necessary to review a student's progress in core curriculum subjects, as well as their progress in relation to the Benchmarks for EL students. The team of teachers and administrator then decide a course of intervention action. One such action would be to refer the student to one of the many before or after school tutorial groups. The focus of these groups can range from phonic and phonemic awareness, to writing, Read Naturally (a program which boosts reading fluency) or language concepts. The team might also refer the student to work at the Boys and Girls Club, with whom the District works in partnership.

Qualified Staff:

The goal of the District is to have all teachers trained and certified to teach English Language Learners. When hiring replacement teachers, the District hires only teachers who have been deemed Highly Qualified per NCLB requirements. English Learners are assigned to qualified teachers who have certification/credentials such as, BCLAD, CLAD, LOS, BCC or a 1969 or a 395 certificate.

Annually, all teachers received training in working with English Learners through the District's Staff Development Program, workshops and during scheduled presentations at Teachers' meetings. paraprofessional instructional assistants receive training at workshops and District Staff Development Days.