

Sparta Area Schools
Title III/English Language Learner Program Handbook



Title III Program Handbook
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I. INTRODUCTION

District Mission Statement

Cultivating a dynamic, compassionate community that empowers all learners to lead successful lives.

District Vision Statement

Creating valuable relationships and innovative learning experiences within our schools and community that empowers all learners to thrive and excel.

Sparta Area Schools seeks to provide every child, regardless of national origin or native language, quality and meaningful educational instruction. Consequently, students who are English Learners (ELs) are provided instructional services through an English Language (EL) program which is designed to meet their unique needs.

Sparta Area Schools has prepared this handbook of program policies and procedures to ensure that the Title III programs/EL programs are consistent throughout the district.

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Title III Handbook

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II. DEFINITION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS

ESSA Definition of an "English Learner" Student

The term "English Learner," when used with respect to an individual, means an individual:

- (A) Who is aged 3 through 21;
- (B) Who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
- (C)
 - (i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
 - (ii)
 - (I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and
 - (II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or
 - (iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- (D) Whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual -
 - (i) the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments describe in section 1111(b)(3);
 - (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or
 - (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society. (ESEA Section 8101(20))

To be classified as EL, an individual must meet the criteria of A, B, C and D in the definition above. To meet the criteria for C, an individual can meet the criteria of any of i, ii or iii. For C-ii, the individual must meet the criteria of both I and II. To meet the criteria for D, an individual must be denied one of the three listed (i or ii or iii).

III. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Title I & Title III

PROGRAMS OF ENGLISH LEARNERS

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the EEOA, all States and LEAs must ensure that EL students can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs and services. Students who meet the protocol requirements as English Learners must be provided a language assistance program services, in addition to the basic/core education services (adopted by the local board of education) that all students in the LEA receive. This language assistance program services must provide meaningful access to the core curriculum and provide direct English language instruction. The intensity of language assistance program services provided is directly related to the individual student's level of proficiency. The less English proficiency a student has, the more intense his or her program of language assistance program services should be. The language assistance program services could include research-based models such as bilingual education, EL programs, and/or sheltered instruction. These federally required language assistance program services ensure that EL students have equitable access to the basic, local board of education-adopted curriculum provided to all students, and acquire English language proficiency.

To meet their obligations under Title VI and the EEOA, LEAs must, for example:

- Identify and assess all potential EL students in a timely, valid, and reliable manner;
- Provide EL students with a language assistance program that is educationally sound and proven successful, consistent with *Castañeda v. Pickard* and the Supreme Court decision in *Lau v. Nichols*;
- Provide sufficiently well prepared and trained staff and support the language assistance programs for EL students;
- Ensure that EL students have equal opportunities to meaningfully participate in all curricular and extracurricular activities;
- Avoid unnecessary segregation of EL students;
- Ensure that EL students who have or are suspected of having a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, located, and evaluated in a timely manner and that the language needs of students who need special education and disability related services because of their disability are considered in evaluations and delivery of services;
- Meet the needs of EL students who opt out of language assistance programs;
- Monitor and evaluate EL students in language assistance programs to ensure their progress with respect to acquiring English proficiency and grade level content knowledge, exit EL students from language assistance programs when they are proficient in English, and monitor exited students to ensure they were not prematurely exited and that any academic deficits incurred in the language assistance program have been remedied;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a school district's language assistance program(s) to ensure that EL students in each program acquire English proficiency and that each program is reasonably calculated to allow EL students to attain parity of participation in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time; and
- Ensure meaningful communication with parents of English Learners.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Title III funds are to be used to provide language instruction educational programs - defined as courses in which EL students are placed for the purpose of attaining English proficiency, while meeting challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards. These programs may make use of both English and the child's native language to enable the child to develop and attain English proficiency, but school districts are required to "use approaches and methodologies based on scientifically-based research." Each school or district using Title III funds must implement an effective means of outreach to parents of EL children. They must inform parents about how they can be active participants in assisting their children to learn English, achieve at high levels in core academic subjects and meet State standards.

Title III Schools and School Districts Must:

- Describe in their Title III application to the state how the district has consulted with teachers, researchers, administrators, and parents, and others in developing their Title III plan.
- Inform parents of a child identified for participation in a Title III program within 30 days after the beginning of the school year. For a child who enters school after the beginning of the school year, the school must inform parents within two weeks of the child's placement in such a program.
- Communicate with parents in an understandable and uniform format, which means communicating the same information to all parents, and in a method that is effective.

Title III funds may be used for supplementing NOT supplanting school district and/or school activities. (See APPENDIX G)

What Academic Information Does Your School District Have to Track Their EL Students?

- Must screen each potential new EL student upon enrollment with the WIDA Screener.
- Must assess each student who qualifies for EL services each year using the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs.
- Title I requires that States and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) annually report on EL students progress in achieving English language proficiency, attainment of English language proficiency, academic achievement, and high school graduation rates. (ESEA Section 1111(h)(1), (h)(2)). Under Title III, there are additional reporting requirements. LEAs must report to their States on:
 - Title III programs and activities
 - Number and percentage of EL students making progress toward English language proficiency
 - Number and percentage of EL students who attain proficiency and exit LIEPs (Language Instruction Educational Program)
 - Number and percentage of former EL students who meet academic content standards (for 4 years)
 - Number and percentage of EL students who have not exited LIEPs after 5 years as an EL
 - Number and percentage of EL students with IEPs

Assessments Required of EL Students:

Title I Law requires that all EL students are assessed annually.

(b) Academic Standards, Academic Assessments, and Accountability –

(7) Academic Assessments of English Language Proficiency - Each State plan shall demonstrate that local educational agencies in the state will, beginning not later than school year 2002–2003, provide for an annual assessment of English proficiency (measuring students' oral language, reading, and writing skills in English) of all students with limited English proficiency in the schools served by the state educational agency. (NCLB/ESEA Title I, Section. 1111(b)(7))

- ESSA requires states:
 - to the extent practical, provide content area assessments in an appropriate language and form for EL students (ESEA Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(vii)(III))
 - identify languages present to a significant extent in the state for which assessments are needed but not available and then work to develop those assessments (ESEA Section 1111(b)(2)(F))
- ESSA allows states:
 - to provide partial exclusion from content area assessment participation and accountability for EL students enrolled in the US for 12 months or less (ESEA Section 1111(b)(3)(A))
- Michigan has adopted the following exceptions for Newcomer EL students
 - **Year one** (living in the US for 12 months or less)
 - Exempt from ELA assessment, student takes English Language Proficiency Assessment and is included in English Language Progress indicator
 - **Year two**
 - Student takes ELA assessment and ELP assessment and is included in English Language Progress indicator
 - **Year three**
 - Student takes ELA assessment and ELP assessment and is included in Academic Growth and English Language Progress indicators
 - **Year four**
 - Student takes ELA and ELP assessments and is included in Academic Proficiency, Academic Growth, and English Language Progress indicators

B. Federal Law

There exists a substantial body of Federal law which establishes the rights of the EL student and which defines the legal responsibilities of school districts serving these students. Note: the term Limited English Proficient (LEP) is a historic term where English Learner (EL) is currently accepted term and is therefore used throughout this document. EL is meant to counter the negative connotations of Limited English Proficient. Administrators and school boards who are responsible for local policies and programs can turn for guidance and direction to this body of law. It includes the following:

1868 Constitution of the United States, Fourteenth Amendment

“... No State shall ... deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

1964 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Two U.S. Supreme Court rulings, one interpreting the Fourteenth Amendment and one interpreting the Civil Rights Act of 1964, have exercised considerable influence over the educational rights of language minority students. These cases may be summarized as follows:

1974 Lau v. Nichols

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a school district’s failure to provide English language instruction to LEP students denied them meaningful opportunity to participate in the district’s educational program in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Court further noted that equality of opportunity is not provided by giving the LEP student the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum which non-LEP students receive.

1982 Plyler v. Doe

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits states from denying a free public education to undocumented immigrant children regardless of their immigrant status. The Court emphatically declared that school systems are not agents for enforcing immigration law and determined that the burden undocumented aliens may place on an educational system is not an accepted argument for excluding or denying educational service to any student.

IV. PROCEDURES

The following procedures are established for Sparta Area Schools to meet the requirements of Title I and Title III.

A. Registration/Identification Using Home Language Survey

The Home Language Survey approved by the Michigan Department of Education (APPENDIX A) is included in the Sparta Area Schools enrollment forms. It is to be completed at the time of enrollment and the district data coordinator is responsible for ensuring that a home language survey is completed for all new students. The completed enrollment form shall be placed in the student's permanent (CA-60) file and/or uploaded as an attachment to the student's PowerSchool account..

If a student is identified as speaking a primary language other than English or as having a language other than English spoken in the home, as reported on the Home Language Survey, the student may be eligible for EL services. If so, the EL teacher in the building of attendance will be notified. Additionally, the Data Coordinator will notify the Building Principal, Building Secretary, Identified Building EL Staff, Identified Title IA Staff, Transportation Department, Assessment Assistant and Food Service via a New Student email alert. The EL/Bilingual staff will arrange for a prompt assessment of the student to determine eligibility for EL services; unless the student has been previously identified.

B. Initial Assessment for Program Eligibility

Within ten (10) school days of enrollment in our district, a student who is identified as potentially eligible on the Home Language Survey must be assessed to determine if they are eligible for Title III/EL Program services. Assessments assess a student's language skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension in English using the WIDA Screener.

Staff is also encouraged to assess the reading and math abilities of the student using other standardized instruments to address learning needs across the content areas.

Initial Assessments Exceptions:

1. The district will follow MDE guidance for unique situations, such as COVID-19, Pandemic Situations, State of Emergencies, etc.
2. Previously identified EL Students

WIDA ACCESS for ELLs/WIDA Screener & Levels of Proficiency

The following chart shows the level of proficiency correlated to the WIDA Standards. It may assist in determining the level of the student's proficiency and the student's placement into grade level or courses with appropriate EL language and academic support.

WIDA ACCESS / WIDA Screener Score	Proficiency Levels WIDA Standards	Optional Multiple Indicators
6	Reaching	Early literacy assessment approved by MDE AIMSweb – both CBM and MAZE subtests DIBELS Next Discovery Education Assessments DRA: Developmental Reading Assessment version 2 Fountas & Pinnell iReady Diagnostic MLPP: Michigan Literacy Progress Profile NWEA: Northwest Evaluation Association Star Early Literacy PSAT or SAT QRI-5: Qualitative Reading Inventory Scantron Performance Series SRI: Scholastic Reading Inventory Star Early Literacy Star Reading Gates McGinitie* ITBS: Iowa Test of Basic Skills* Terra Nova*
5 – 5.9	Bridging	
4 – 4.9	Expanding	
3 – 3.9	Developing	
2 – 2.9	Emerging	
0 – 1.9	Entering	*Italicized assessments are norm referenced and used only for exiting purposes. Non-italicized assessments (which are criterion-based, or both norm-referenced and criterion-based) may be used for entrance and exit. All reading assessments administered must include the comprehension subtests.

C. Eligibility for Title III/EL Program Services

Kindergarten (beginning of school year - December 1st):

- Home Language Survey lists a language other than English, and
- The student scores below 5.0 on the WIDA Screener Listening and Speaking domains
- If the student scores 5.0 or higher on the Listening and Speaking domains:
 - student remains potentially eligible until the mid-year/winter (prior to January 31st) reading and writing domains of the WIDA screener are administered

Kindergarten (after December 1st) through Twelfth Grade:

- Home Language Survey lists a language other than English, and
- The student scores below 5.0 on one or more domains (student is assessed on all four domains)

D. Exiting from Title III/EL Program Services

Scores in all four domains from the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs are necessary for exiting students from the Title III/EL program. A student who meets the minimum criteria of a composite score of 4.8 or higher on the WIDA ACCESS or an overall score of P2 on WIDA Alternate ACCESS as established in the Michigan Department of Education English Learner Program Entrance and Exit Protocol will be exited from MSDS at the state level via an 'auto-exit' process. Students are then considered FEL (Former English Learner) students and their academic performance must be monitored for four (4) years. Students must also be exited in the district's local student management system.

Sparta Area Schools follows the [Michigan Department of Education English Learner Program Entrance and Exit Protocol](#).

E. Monitoring Former English Learners (FELs)

A team is designated to monitor the student's progress (such as grades, attendance, and standardized test scores). The designated team is responsible for monitoring the student's progress three times a year. Documentation on each FEL student is kept on file and reviewed by the District Data Coordinator (adjustments will be made during state of emergencies per MDE guidance).

If, during the four year monitoring period, it appears that the student is not succeeding in the regular education program, the designated team will meet to determine if further assessment of the student is warranted, if the student will be re-entered into the Title III/EL program, or if other services and/or referrals are appropriate.

A record of monitoring, as well as any placement changes resulting from the monitoring will be placed in the student's EL file and when completed (four years of monitoring) in their CA-60. The District's Data Coordinator will send a copy of the completed document to the building enrollment secretary to file in the student's CA60.

F. Placement in Title III/EL Program

Sparta Area Schools provides an instructional program to meet the language and academic content needs of EL students enrolled in the district. The instructional needs of students at different levels of language proficiency and prior schooling are met differently. Below is the guide for Title III program instruction described by level of language proficiency and level of instruction.

Sparta Area Schools Title III/EL program provides language and academic content support to EL students through:

- English Language Development (K-12)
- Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (K-12)
- Co-Teaching Model (K-5)
- Core Curriculum Support (K-12)
- Title I Reading Support (K-5)

Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) Description (see APPENDIX H)

ENTERING/ Level 1:

Eligibility criteria: WIDA ACCESS for EL Students Score 0 – 1.9

Elementary (Grades K-5): 40 - 120 minutes per day

Secondary (Grades 6-12): 45 - 100 minutes per day

EL Services Provided by:

1. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement,
2. EL Teacher Assistant(s) supervised by EL teacher

Service Delivery Models:

- Push in and pull out services for English language development for monolingual students transitioning into the district.
- Push in and pull out services for English language development and core academic instruction.
- Collaborative planning/teaching between EL highly qualified staff and general education teachers.
- Teacher support provided through monitoring and consultation from EL teacher and/or EL teacher assistant(s).

EMERGING/Level 2:

Eligibility criteria: WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Score 2 – 2.9

Elementary (Grades K-5): 40 - 120 minutes per day

Secondary (Grades 6-12): 45 - 100 minutes per day

EL Services Provided by:

1. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement
2. EL Teacher Assistant(s) supervised by EL teacher

DEVELOPING/ Level 3:

Eligibility criteria: WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Score 3 – 3.9**

Elementary (Grades K-5): 40 - 90 minutes per day

Secondary (Grades 6-12): 35 - 60 minutes per day

EL Services Provided by:

1. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement
2. EL Teacher Assistant(s) supervised by EL teacher

EXPANDING/Level 4:

Eligibility criteria: WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Score 4 – 4.9 **

Elementary (Grades K-5): 30 - 60 minutes per day

Secondary (Grades 6-12): 30 - 45 minutes per day

EL Services Provided by:

1. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement
2. EL Teacher Assistant(s) supervised by EL teacher

BRIDGING/Level 5:

Eligibility criteria: WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Score 5 – 5.9**

Elementary (Grades K-5): 5 - 15 minutes / 2-5 times per week

Secondary (Grades 6-12): 5 - 15 minutes / 2-5 times per week

EL Services Provided by:

1. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement
2. EL Teacher Assistant(s) supervised by EL teacher

REACHING/Level 6:

Eligibility criteria: WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Score 6**

Elementary (Grades K-5): 5 - 15 minutes / 2-5 times per week

Secondary (Grades 6-12): 5 - 15 minutes / 2-5 times per week

1. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement
2. EL Teacher Assistant(s) supervised by EL teacher

**Additional district criteria: classroom performance, including teacher input, grades and identified state approved reading assessment

G. Parental Notification (See APPENDIX B)

Sparta Area Schools must inform parents of EL students identified for participation in the district's Title III/EL program.

- no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year for students who enter at the start of the school year.
- within the first two weeks (10 school days) of attendance for children who have not been identified as an EL student prior to the beginning of the school year.

Parent Notification letters are available in the following languages: (English and Spanish)

School Districts Must Inform Parents of:

- The reasons for identifying their child as an English Learner and for placing their child in a language instruction educational program;
- The child's current level of English proficiency, including how the level was assessed and the status of the child's academic achievement;
- The method of instruction that will be used in the program, including a description of all language programs;
- How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child;
- How the program will help the child learn English and meet academic achievement standards;
- The program exit requirements, including when the transition will take place and when graduation from secondary school is expected; and
- The parents' rights, including written guidance that (A) specifies the right to have their child removed from a language instruction educational program upon request, (B) describes the options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such a program or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available, and (C) assists parents in selecting among various programs and methods of instruction, if more than one program or method is offered. (ESEA Section 330 a-d)

H. EL Students who are Struggling Learners

When indicators suggest that an EL student is having difficulties attaining linguistic, academic and social expectations, which are unrelated to the student's English Language Proficiency, the student will be referred to the Building's Child Study Team for intervention strategies. Periodic reviews will be conducted to determine the success or failure of the strategies. Sparta Area Schools has an established protocol for referring students for special education evaluations. These special intervention strategies must be utilized to determine what further strategies may be necessary. These special intervention strategies must be utilized to ensure that a student is not referred for formal Special Education Multidisciplinary Team evaluations when the lack of academic progress is primarily related to language background or a need for more Title III/EL support services. In the event the various strategies are not successful, the student may be referred for a special education evaluation. The student may require an evaluation to be administered in his/her native language.

I. Student Documentation

Title III/EL Building Folder, CA-60, PowerSchool, and FEL Monitoring

Each English Learner will have a folder maintained by the EL teacher and/or EL Teacher Assistant at the building. This folder is in addition to their CA-60 and PowerSchool account. Below is a list of documentation kept on file; with location:

- Home Language Survey **APPENDIX A** (CA-60 and/or PowerSchool)
- Parent Notification/Placement Letter **APPENDIX B** (Title III/EL Building Folder, CA-60)
- WIDA ACCESS for ELLs & WIDA Screener Testing Results (Title III/EL Building Folder, CA-60)

- Student Profile Sheet (*Title III/EL Building Folder*)
- FEL Monitoring Records (*Kept on file in the EL Department and then filed in the student's CA-60 upon completion of four year monitoring*)

V. STAFF ROLES

A. EL Teachers

The EL teacher is certified in his/her teaching area and has an EL endorsement. The EL teacher has primary responsibility for providing English language instruction to the EL student. The EL teacher also shares the responsibility with mainstream general education teachers for ensuring that the EL student receives core content instruction while learning English.

The EL teacher supports the instruction of the mainstream class by discussing the core content using sheltered or content specific instruction. The EL teacher is responsible for language development and core content specific instructional support.

EL Teacher:

- provides content instruction and language development;
- assumes the same functions as the mainstream teacher when they are the teacher of record in the classroom;
- meets regularly with the mainstream teacher(s) to determine the academic needs of EL students enrolled in their classes, including appropriate accommodations/modifications and instructional strategies;
- inform mainstream teacher(s) and all necessary staff about the culture and language of the EL student and their family;
- works collaboratively with staff to develop curriculum;
- identifies, assesses, teaches, and monitors each EL student;
- may provide staff development on English language instruction and cultural awareness;
- attend IEPs and parent/teacher conferences;
- and if the EL teacher is bilingual, assist in interpretations and translations as necessary.

B. Role of EL Teacher Assistant

The EL Teacher Assistant supports and reinforces the English language acquisition and core content instruction provided by the EL teacher and mainstream teacher(s).

Responsibilities of the EL Teacher Assistant are to:

- assist EL teachers and mainstream teachers in providing core content instruction and language development;
- meet regularly with EL teachers and mainstream teachers to determine the academic needs of the EL student enrolled in their classes;
- inform mainstream teacher(s) and all necessary staff about the culture and language of the EL student and their family;
- assist in identification, assessment, teaching, and monitoring each EL student;
- may assist in providing staff development on English language instruction and cultural awareness and provide input to staff regarding curriculum development; and
- if the TA is bilingual, assist in interpretations, translations, and attend IEP's and parent/teacher conferences as necessary.

C. Role of Mainstream General Education Teacher

The mainstream teacher in whose class the student is enrolled has primary responsibility for the core content instruction of the EL student. The student spends a significant part of the day in the mainstream classroom with this teacher and classmates. Because of this, the mainstream teacher is responsible for the delivery of the curriculum to every student in his/her class. The mainstream teacher does not accomplish this alone.

The mainstream teacher and the EL teacher work together to decide:

- how the mainstream class core content should be supported by EL staff;
- what the essential concepts in the lessons are;
- how lessons should be differentiated and accommodated;
- how to make appropriate accommodations for assessments; and
- how to assess achievement.

In addition, the mainstream teacher:

- is a full partner with the EL staff in educating EL students in his/her class;
- demonstrates sensitivity and awareness of cultural and linguistic differences;
- individualized instruction to meet the needs of each student (accommodations/reduced assignments, additional time, etc);
- uses visuals/hands-on activities to facilitate learning;
- provides materials for the EL staff that support the mainstream instruction;
- helps EL students make friends and be part of the social expectations and interactions in the classroom and various school settings, through the PBIS framework;
- promotes intercultural discussion; and,
- suggests the type of help the EL student needs to be successful in his/her class.

D. Role of Special Services Staff

Special Services staff members are essential for the success of EL students in elementary, middle, and high schools at Sparta Area Schools. School Resource Officers, Counselors, Social Workers, Kent School Services Network (KSSN), and curriculum support personnel are a very new phenomena for many EL students and their families. The role of the special services staff needs to be explained to bilingual parents and students so that the bilingual families will have a complete understanding of that person's role in the school and will be able to utilize his/her expertise.

Support Staff for English Learners:

- work in conjunction with the EL and mainstream staff to provide appropriate scheduling of students;
- need to develop an awareness of the culture and language abilities of the EL students;
- provide social and academic guidance to help EL students become familiar with school culture and academic opportunities;
- have current language proficiency assessment accessible; and,
- provide academic information to parents/guardians.

VI. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

A. Parental Communication/Interpreter Services

Parents of EL students will receive readily understood notices of school programs and activities impacting their child's education.

Many bilingual parents need interpreters and/or translations to participate in school activities such as registering students and parent/teacher conferences. Certainly, the more informed parents are, the more likely it is that they will be able to support their child's learning. However, many teachers and administrators may be unfamiliar with using an interpreter and may consequently be reluctant to make routine use of the parents' native languages. The following suggestions may facilitate successful communication when using an interpreter:

Prior to the Meeting

- Accurately determine the parents' native language prior to the meeting and identify an interpreter who is fluent in that language.
- Send notices for school meetings and conferences home in English on one side and the student's native language (when possible) on the other side. Keep a generic electronic file of these notices with blanks for times and dates.
- Talk with the interpreter prior to meeting parents to clarify his/her role. In most cases, interpreters should not be active participants in the conversation. Rather, they should simply translate the participants' statements. The teacher or administrator should make it clear to parents at the beginning of the conference that this is the role the interpreter will play. In situations where it is appropriate for interpreters to be active in the conversation (for example, when the interpreter is a bilingual teacher assistant or EL teacher who also works with the student), the teacher or administrator should explicitly invite the interpreter to join in the discussion.
- ***Prepare for the meeting by talking with the interpreter about the anticipated content that will be discussed. In this way, interpreters can clarify vocabulary and school terms that may not be familiar.***
- ***Do not rely on children or another family member, to interpret - for even one parent.*** This reverses the roles in families. Note that when children interpret, parents feel like children and children feel like they have more authority than they should. It is also difficult for most children to interpret or translate and children are very reluctant to repeat anything negative about themselves to their parents. Do not put them in this role.

During the Meeting

- Show respect to parents by addressing them directly and allowing the interpreter to simply interpret your words. ***Sit so that you speak directly to the parents, making eye contact, rather than to the interpreter.*** Often, it works well to place the interpreter to your side rather than between you and the parent.
- Speak at a normal rate and volume, remembering to give short amounts of information to make sure the interpreter can keep up, parents can understand, and stop for questions.
- Keep the group limited to a small number of people. Introduce each person and the role each plays in relation to the child.
- Stop periodically and ask if there are any questions.
- Support your statements with examples of student work and/or graphs that parents can take with them and examine further.
- Do what you can to encourage parents to participate fully, including school visits and participation in school activities.

Following the Meeting

- *Clarify any confusing interactions with the interpreter. Ask for feedback and suggestions on the interpreting process from the interpreter and/or parent.*
- Make a record of significant information discussed. It is helpful to do this in both languages so that parents could have easy access to information. Consider sending a follow-up letter in the language of the parent.
- Add information discussed on parent teacher conference notes where applicable.
- Record and keep a record of all parent/staff contacts.

B. EL/Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee

Send notification of EL Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee Meetings. If possible, send the letter in the parent's native language. Phone calls by bilingual staff to remind parents are very helpful. The Parent Advisory Committee is an excellent way to develop rapport and solicit questions and suggestions regarding student progress in your schools. It also serves as a strong base for an International/Multicultural group. Keep a roster of parents who attend and minutes and agendas of meetings.

C. Code of Conduct - Addressed in the Building Handbooks

The Code of Conduct will be translated and available to parents of EL students. This will assure that students and parents are informed in their first language.

VII. PERSONNEL PRACTICES

A. Postings

Sparta Area Schools will, when seeking new applicants for all content area positions, actively recruit those people speaking the language of our student population. This is recommended for all vacancies, not just EL or bilingual positions.

Sparta Area Schools designates EL Teacher Assistants as a distinct category. This will provide trained personnel and consistent instruction. Presently, the teacher assistants are highly trained with specific skills to meet the needs of EL students.

B. Professional Learning

EL staff will meet regularly to update knowledge and skills, obtain additional training, and share information and materials.

EL staff will have the opportunity to attend conferences and in-services inside and outside the district.

VIII. PROGRAM EVALUATION

The EL Professional Learning Team (PLT) will meet to assess the resources and staff needs and the program's effectiveness as directed by the Michigan Department of Education. This team will identify program goals and will monitor progress through the MICIP process. When necessary, the EL Coordinator and team will make program recommendations to the Superintendent and the Board of Education.

APPENDIX A: HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Michigan welcomes families of all language backgrounds. Speaking more than one language is a valuable asset!

Please answer the two questions below. If your response to either question is a language other than English, the school district will give an assessment to see if your student may benefit from English language support.

- 1. What language is used most at home?**
- 2. What language is used most by the student?**

APPENDIX B(a): PARENT NOTIFICATION LETTER - English



Sparta Area Schools

Student Services | 480 S. State Street, Sparta, MI 49345 | 616-887-7359

www.spartaschools.org

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s),

When a student enrolls in Sparta Area Schools, a Home Language Survey is completed during the enrollment process. If the survey indicates that a student's primary language or the primary language used in the child's home environment is a language other than English, a short assessment, the WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) Screener, is administered by English Learner (EL) staff within 10 days of a student's arrival and scored upon completion (within 30 days at the beginning of the school year). Students qualify for the English Learner Language Program if they do not obtain a Bridging/Reaching Level (level 5/6) score on the WIDA Screening or do not perform at or above grade level in reading or math as measured by the approved assessments. These services are referred to as EL Services at Sparta Area Schools. In order to determine a student's progress in acquiring English language skills, all students in grade Kindergarten through grade 12 who qualify for EL services are then required to take the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) in the spring.

It has been determined that your student is eligible for English Language Services at Sparta Area Schools.

A score of 6 is the highest a student can score. **Your student scored a _____.**

If you do not wish for your student to participate in and to receive English Language Services at school, please contact the building EL Teacher checked below.

Student Name _____

____ Sara Cinadr - Ridgeview Elementary
sara.cinadr@spartaschools.org
616-887-8218 ext: 3102

____ Wendy Allen - Sparta Middle School
wendy.allen@spartaschools.org
616-887-8211 ext: 2251

____ Rebecca Chronowski - Appleview Elementary
rebecca.chronowski@spartaschools.org
616-887-1743 ext: 4141

____ Leah Metivier-Kearney - Sparta High School
leah.metivier@spartaschools.org
616-887-8213



Sparta Area Schools

Student Services | 480 S. State Street, Sparta, MI 49345 | 616-887-7359

www.spartaschools.org

Estimados Padres/Guardianes:

Cuando un estudiante se inscribe en las escuelas del área de Sparta, se completa una encuesta sobre el idioma que se habla en el hogar durante el proceso de inscripción. Si la encuesta indica que el idioma principal de un estudiante o el idioma principal utilizado en el ambiente hogareño del niño es un idioma distinto al inglés, una evaluación corta, el Evaluador WIDA (Evaluación y Diseño Instruccional de Clase Mundial), es administrada a los estudiantes por medio del personal del programa Aprendedor de Inglés (EL) dentro de los 10 días posteriores a la llegada del estudiante y calificado al finalizar (dentro de los 30 días al comienzo del año escolar). Los estudiantes califican para el Programa de Aprendedor de Inglés si no obtienen una puntuación de Bridging/Reaching Level (nivel 5/6) en la evaluación WIDA o no se desempeñan al nivel de grado o por encima de él en lectura o matemáticas según lo medido por las evaluaciones aprobadas. Estos servicios se conocen como Servicios EL en las escuelas del área de Sparta. Para determinar el progreso de un estudiante en la adquisición de habilidades del idioma inglés, todos los estudiantes desde jardín de infantes hasta el grado 12 que califican para servicios EL tienen que tomar la Evaluación y Diseño Instruccional de Clase Mundial (WIDA, por sus siglas en inglés) en la primavera.

Se ha determinado que su estudiante es elegible para recibir servicios EL en las escuelas del área de Sparta.

Una puntuación de 6 es la puntuación más alta que puede obtener un estudiante. Su estudiante obtuvo una puntuación _____.

Si no desea que su estudiante participe y reciba servicios de idioma inglés en la escuela, comuníquese con la maestra EL del edificio marcado a continuación.

Nombre del estudiante

_____ Sara Cinadr - Ridgeview Elementary
sara.cinadr@spartaschools.org
616-887-8218 extensión: 3102

_____ Rebecca Chronowski - Appleview Elementary
rebecca.chronowski@spartaschools.org
616-887-1743 extensión: 4141

_____ Wendy Allen - Sparta Middle School
wendy.allen@spartaschools.org
616-887-8211 extensión: 2251

_____ Leah Metivier-Kearney - Sparta High School
leah.metivier@spartaschools.org
616-887-8213



Sparta Area Schools

Student Services | 480 S. State Street, Sparta, MI 49345 | 616-887-7359

www.spartaschools.org

English Language Learner Program - Yearly Support Service Refusal

DATE: _____

STUDENT INFORMATION

Last name _____ First Name _____

Birth Date _____ Grade _____ School _____

UIC _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Last name _____ First Name _____

Phone _____ Email _____

- I am aware of my child's English language assessment (WIDA) score and current academic progress, and understand why he/she qualifies for EL services.
- I am familiar with the EL Program and services available to my child.
- I have had the opportunity to discuss these services with the school.
- The school has explained the benefits of EL services.
- I understand that my child will still be designated as an "English Learner" and will be assessed annually with the WIDA Assessment until he/she meets the Michigan Department of Education's exit criteria.
- I understand that I can opt my child back into the EL Program at any time.
- This information has been explained in a language I fully understand.

I, as the parent of the above named student, and with full understanding of the above information, wish to

- ☐ Decline **all** of the EL Program services offered to my child.
- ☐ Decline **some** of the EL Program services offered to my child.
- I wish to decline *(list services)*

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Administrator signature

Date

APPENDIX B(d): PARENT NOTIFICATION LETTER



Sparta Area Schools

Student Services | 480 S. State Street, Sparta, MI 49345 | 616-887-7359

www.spartaschools.org

Date: _____

To the Parents of _____:

When you enrolled your student in Sparta Area Schools, you indicated that your student's first or primary language is a language other than English, and/or that the primary language used in your home is a language other than English.

As a result, because of state and federal law, Sparta Area Schools was obligated to administer the WIDA Screener. The purpose of administering the WIDA Screener was to assess your child's level of proficiency in English and to determine if your student qualifies for support from the English Language Department (EL).

Your child scored exceptional on the Listening and Speaking sections of the WIDA Screener. This means that your child's listening and speaking skills are comparable to native speaking peers. Additional data needs to be gathered before classifying your student as an English Learner (EL). Therefore, over the next couple of months, the EL department will collaborate with your child's classroom teacher and monitor benchmark assessments to make that determination. Once a determination is made, you will be notified in writing.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to either the Student Services Office or Ridgeview Elementary.

Erin Kavanagh
Director of Student Services
erin.kavanagh@spartaschools.org

Allison Dykstra
Coordinator of Student Services
allison.dykstra@spartaschools.org

Susan Narvaez
Special Populations Data Coordinator
susan.narvaez@spartaschools.org

Sara Cinadr
EL Teacher
sara.cinadr@spartaschools.org



Sparta Area Schools

Student Services | 480 S. State Street, Sparta, MI 49345 | 616-887-7359

www.spartaschools.org

Fecha: _____

A los padres de _____:

Cuando inscribió a su estudiante en las Escuelas del Área de Sparta, indicó que el primer idioma o idioma principal de su estudiante es un idioma distinto del inglés, y/o que el idioma principal utilizado en su hogar es un idioma distinto del inglés.

Como resultado, debido a las leyes estatales y federales, las Escuelas del Área de Sparta estaban obligadas a administrar el WIDA Screener. El propósito de administrar el WIDA Screener fue evaluar el nivel de dominio del inglés de su hijo y determinar si su estudiante califica para recibir apoyo del Departamento de Idioma Inglés (EL).

Su estudiante obtuvo una puntuación excepcional en las secciones de comprensión auditiva y expresión oral del examen WIDA. Esto significa que las habilidades para escuchar y hablar de su estudiante son comparables a las de sus compañeros nativos. Es necesario recopilar datos adicionales antes de clasificar a su estudiante como estudiante de inglés (EL). Por lo tanto, durante los próximos meses, el departamento de EL colaborará con el maestro del salón de clases de su estudiante y monitorea las evaluaciones comparativas para tomar esa determinación. Una vez que se tome una determinación, se le notificará por escrito.

Si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud, no dude en comunicarse con la Oficina de Servicios Estudiantiles o con la Primaria Ridgeview.

.....
Erin Kavanagh
Director de Servicios Estudiantiles
erin.kavanagh@spartaschools.org

Allison Dykstra
Coordinador de Servicios Estudiantiles
allison.dykstra@spartaschools.org

Susan Narváez
Coordinador de Datos de Poblaciones Especiales
susan.narvaez@spartaschools.org

Sara Cinadr
Maestra EL
sara.cinadr@spartaschools.org

Sparta Area School District

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Educational Services

Phone: 616-887-7359

APPENDIX C: DESCRIPTIONS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVELS

To meet the instructional needs of English Learners in Michigan, six (6) levels of English language proficiency are used to more accurately describe student proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Included in the table below is a general description of the characteristics of EL students at each level of proficiency.

Michigan English Proficiency Levels (WIDA English Language Proficiency Levels)	Description of English Learners (EL Students)
Level 1 Entering	<p>Students with limited formal schooling Level 1 may include students whose schooling has been interrupted for a variety of reasons, including war, poverty or patterns of migration, as well as students coming from remote rural settings with little prior opportunity for sequential schooling. These students may exhibit some of the following characteristics: pre- or semi-literacy in their native language; minimal understanding of the function of literacy; performance significantly below grade level; lack of awareness of the organization and culture of school. (TESOL, 1997, p.21) Because these students may need more time to acquire academic background knowledge as they adjust to the school and cultural environment, English language development may also take longer than other EL beginning students at Level 1. Level 1 students may lack sufficient English literacy for meaningful participation in testing even at the most minimal level.</p> <p>Recently arrived students (less than 30 days) These students have not been assessed with the WIDA Screener and/or other tests used for placement.</p> <p>Beginning (Pre-production and early production) Students initially have limited or no understanding of English. They rarely use English for communication. They respond non-verbally to simple commands, statements and questions. As their oral comprehension increases, they begin to imitate the verbalization of others by using single words or simple phrases, and begin to use English spontaneously (WIDA, 2012).</p> <p>At this earliest stage these students start to construct meaning from text with non-print features (e.g., illustrations, graphs, maps, tables). They gradually construct more meaning from the words themselves, but the construction is often incomplete (WIDA, 2012).</p> <p>They are able to generate simple written texts that reflect their knowledge level of syntax. These texts may include a significant amount of non-conventional features, invented spelling, some grammatical inaccuracies, pictorial representations, surface features and rhetorical features of the native language (i.e., ways of structuring text from native language and culture) (TESOL, 1999, p.20).</p>

<p>Level 2 Beginning</p>	<p>Early intermediate (Speech emergent) Students can comprehend short conversations on simple topics. They rely on familiar structures and utterances. They use repetition, gestures, and other non-verbal cues to sustain conversation (WIDA, 2012).</p> <p>When reading, students at this level can understand basic narrative text and authentic materials. They can use contextual and visual cues to derive meaning from texts that contain unfamiliar words, expressions and structures. They can comprehend passages written in basic sentence patterns, but frequently have to guess at the meaning of more complex materials. They begin to make informed guesses about meaning from context. They can begin to identify the main idea and supporting details of passages (WIDA, 2012)..</p> <p>Students can write simple notes, make brief journal entries, and write short reports using basic vocabulary, and common language structures. Frequent errors are characteristic at this level especially when students try to express thoughts that require more complex language structures. (State of Virginia, pp. 4-9)</p>
<p>Level 3 Developing</p>	<p>Intermediate At this level students can understand standard speech delivered in most settings with some repetition and rewording. They can understand the main ideas and relevant details of extended discussions or presentations. They draw on a wide range of language forms, vocabulary, idioms, and structures. They can comprehend many subtle nuances with repetition and/or rephrasing. Students at this level are beginning to detect affective undertones and they understand inferences in spoken language. They can communicate orally in most settings (WIDA, 2012).</p> <p>Students can comprehend the content of many texts independently. They still require support in understanding texts in the academic content areas. They have a high degree of success with factual information in non-technical prose. They can read many literature selections for pleasure. They can separate main ideas from supporting ones. They can use the context of a passage and prior knowledge to increase their comprehension. They can detect the overall tone and intent of the text (WIDA, 2012).</p> <p>Students can write multi-paragraph compositions, journal entries, personal and business letters, and creative passages. They can present their thoughts in an organized manner that is easily understood by the reader. They show good control of English word structure and of the most frequently used grammar structures, but errors are still present. They can express complex ideas and use a wide range of vocabulary, idioms, and structures, including a wide range of verb tenses. (Virginia, pp. 11-14)</p>

<p>Level 4 Expanding</p>	<p>Transitional Intermediate</p> <p>At this level students' language skills are adequate for most day- to-day communication needs. Occasional structural and lexical errors occur. Students may have difficulty using and understanding idioms, figures of speech and words with multiple meanings. They communicate in English in new or unfamiliar settings, but have occasional difficulty with complex structures and abstract academic concepts (WIDA, 2012).</p> <p>Students at this level may read a wide range of texts with considerable fluency and are able to locate and identify the specific facts within the texts. However, they may not understand texts in which the concepts are presented in a de-contextualized manner, the sentence structure is complex, or the vocabulary is abstract. They can read independently, but may have occasional comprehension problems (WIDA, 2012).</p> <p>They produce written text independently for personal and academic purposes. Structures, vocabulary and overall organization approximate the writing of native speakers of English. However, errors may persist in one or more of these domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) (TESOL, 1999, p. 21).</p>
<p>Level 5 Bridging</p>	<p>Proficient</p> <p>At this proficient level students demonstrate English proficiency similar to native speakers. They use specialized or technical language of the content areas. Students at this level write using a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays or reports (WIDA 2012).</p> <p>Students at this level may read a wide range of texts with considerable fluency and are able to locate and identify the specific facts and draw conclusions within the texts. They may understand texts in which the concepts are presented in a de-contextualized manner, the sentence structure is complex, or the vocabulary is abstract. They can read most grade level texts independently (WIDA, 2012).</p> <p>They produce oral and written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers when presented with grade level material (WIDA 2012).</p>
<p>Level 6 Reaching</p>	<p>Monitored (Advanced Proficiency)</p> <p>Students at this advanced level have demonstrated English proficiency as determined by state assessment instruments (WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and are on grade level in assessments such as the MSTEP, Common Assessments, SAT, and DRA). They are expected to be able to participate fully with their peers in grade level content area classes. The academic performance of these students is monitored for two years as required by federal law.</p>

APPENDIX D: COMPLAINTS REGARDING SCHOOL PERSONNEL

SPARTA AREA SCHOOLS - BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

9130 - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Any person or group having a legitimate interest in the operations of this District shall have the right to present a request, suggestion, or complaint concerning District personnel, the program, or the operations of the District. At the same time, the Board of Education has a duty to protect its staff from unnecessary harassment. It is the intent of this policy to provide the means for judging each public complaint in a fair and impartial manner and to seek a remedy where appropriate.

It is the desire of the Board to rectify any misunderstandings between the public and the District by direct discussions of an informal type among the interested parties. It is only when such informal meetings fail to resolve the differences, shall more formal procedures be employed.

Any requests, suggestions, or complaints reaching the Board, Board members, and the administration shall be referred to the Superintendent for consideration according to the following procedure.

Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member

A. First Level

If it is a matter specifically directed toward a professional staff member, the matter must be addressed, initially, to the concerned staff member who shall discuss it promptly with the complainant and make every effort to provide a reasoned explanation or take appropriate action within his/her authority and District administrative guidelines.

This level does not apply if the matter involves suspected child abuse, substance abuse, or any other serious allegation which may require investigation or inquiry by school officials prior to approaching the professional staff member.

As appropriate, the staff member shall report the matter and whatever action may have been taken to the building administrator.

B. Second Level

If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the First Level, it shall be discussed by the complainant with the staff member's supervisor and in compliance with provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, if applicable.

C. Third Level

If a satisfactory solution is not achieved by discussion with the building administrator, a written request for a conference shall be submitted to the Superintendent by the complainant. This request should include:

1. the specific nature of the complaint and a brief statement of the facts giving rise to it;
2. the respect in which it is alleged that the complainant (or child of the complainant) has been affected adversely;
3. the action which the complainant wishes taken and the reasons why it is felt that such action be taken.

Should the matter be resolved in conference with the Superintendent, the Board may be advised of the resolution.

D. Fourth Level

Should the matter still not be resolved, or if it is one beyond the Superintendent's authority and requires a Board decision or action, the complainant shall request, in writing, a hearing by the Board.

The Board, after reviewing all material relating to the case, may grant a hearing before a committee of the Board.

The complainant shall be advised, in writing, of the Board's decision, no more than ten (10) business days following the hearing.

Matters Regarding the Superintendent

Should the matter be a concern regarding the Superintendent which cannot be resolved through discussion with the Superintendent, the complainant may submit a written request for a conference to the Board. This request should include:

- A. the specific nature of the complaint and a brief statement of the facts giving rise to it;
- B. the respect in which it is alleged that the complainant (or child of the complainant) has been affected adversely;
- C. the reason that matter was not able to be resolved with the Superintendent;
- D. the action which the complainant wishes taken and the reasons why it is felt that such action should be taken.

The Board, after reviewing the request, may grant a hearing before the Board or a committee of the Board or refer the matter to an executive session.

The complainant shall be advised, in writing, of the Board's decision within thirty (30) business days. The Board's decision will be final and not subject to appeal.

The complainant is not to discuss the matter with an individual Board member as a Board member has no authority except when the Board is in session.

Matters Regarding an Administrative Staff Member

Since administrators are considered members of the District's professional staff, the general procedure specified in "Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member" shall be followed.

Matters Regarding a Support Staff Member

In the case of a support staff member, the same procedure is to be followed as for "Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member".

Matters Regarding District Services or Operations

If the request, suggestion, or complaint relates to a matter of District procedure or operation, it should be addressed, initially, to the appropriate supervisor and then brought, in turn, to higher levels of authority in the manner prescribed in "Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member".

Matters Regarding the Educational Program

The Superintendent shall prepare administrative guidelines to ensure that students and parents are adequately informed each year regarding their right to inspect instructional materials and the procedure for completing such an inspection. (see AG 9130A and Form 9130F3)

If the request, suggestion, or complaint relates to a matter of District program, it should be addressed, initially, to the building administrator and then brought, in turn, to higher levels of authority in the manner prescribed in "Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member".

APPENDIX E: DEFINITIONS

ACCESS for EL students refers to the annual assessment given to all students participating in the Title III/ESL program.

Accommodations

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) refers to a student's social English language skills. Research indicates that a student takes 1-3 years to acquire functional social language skills. (Cummins, 1981)

Bilingual Instruction

Bilingual instruction is defined as instruction in curricular content areas, including instruction in English language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension), through a combination of a student's native language and English language.

Bilingual Program

Bilingual programs use a student's native language, in addition to English, for instruction by bilingual staff.

Bilingual Teacher

A Bilingual teacher is required to be certified in the area of instruction and in addition have a bilingual endorsement. This teacher may provide bilingual or EL instruction or support services to the EL student. Frequently, this teacher will provide consultative services to the regular classroom teacher.

Bilingual Teacher Assistant

A bilingual teacher assistant provides support services to the EL student. Language proficiency must be demonstrated in: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension of both the English language and the native language, for which they provide support services.

Child Study Team (CST)

The following staff should be part of the team working with EL students:

- Classroom Teacher
- Counselor
- Social Worker
- Psychologist
- EL Teacher/Aid
- General Education
- Resource Teacher
- Principal
- KSSN
- Director/Central Office Personnel

The EL teacher and EL Teacher assistant assigned to the building will provide instructional support and materials.

When concerns arise regarding a student's program, curriculum or placement, the team outlined above will address these issues at a CST meeting. The CST referral may be requested by any staff member. The District EL/Title III coordinator will be notified when a particular EL student's problem persists after interventions have been implemented as recommended by the CST.

CA-60 File

This file is kept in the school office and is the official record of the student. It contains: birth certificate, immunization records, registration documents, standardized test scores, WIDA test scores, FEL reporting (after four completed years), report cards, and other official school documents.

CALP

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) refers to the English language skills necessary to function successfully in an academic/school environment. Research indicates that it takes a student from 3-7 or more years to acquire such academic language skills. (Cummins, 1981)

Content-based Language Development Programs

Content-based Language Development programs group EL students from different languages together in classes where teachers use English as the medium for providing content area instruction. Teachers modify classroom language to the proficiency level of the students.

Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is defined as having an ESL/Bilingual teacher assists in the instruction for core content area classes whenever there is a significant population of EL students in the building/class.

ELs (English Learners)

EL student refers to students whose first language is not English, and encompasses both students who are just beginning to learn English (often referred to as limited English proficient or LEP) and those who have already developed considerable proficiency. The term underscores the fact that, in addition to meeting all the academic challenges that face their monolingual peers, these students are learning English.

ESL/ELD

English as a Second Language (ESL)/English Language Development (ELD) instruction is used to teach English language components (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) and language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension) as well as content areas.

ESL Programs

ESL programs emphasize learning English for both social and academic purposes. English is the language of instruction.

EL Class Period

A student receives EL instruction during a regular class period, often grouped by English language proficiency levels.

EL Instruction

EL is defined as a structured language acquisition program designed to instruct a student in the English language (speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending) and core academic content.

EL Room/Resource Center

Students from several classrooms come together for English language and academic content instruction. The resource center concentrates EL materials and staff in one location.

EL Student File

This file is kept by the Bilingual/EL teacher at the building of enrollment. It contains a copy of the district registration, assessment data, record of vocabulary lessons, WIDA scores, and family information.

EL Teacher

An EL teacher is required to be certified and have specific training in EL instruction. The EL teacher may provide EL instruction or support services to EL students and may provide consultative services to general education teachers.

EL Teacher Assistant

An EL teacher assistant provides support services to the EL student under the supervision of the EL teacher.

ESSA

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

FEL Students

A Former English Learner (FEL) has been exited from Title III/EL program because:

The student has scored proficient on the WIDA ACCESS, W-APT or WIDA Screener, and multiple district assessments.

Inclusion

An EL is placed in general education and may receive tutorial support or receive service through a team approach.

Language Assistance Program (LAP)/Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP)

Under Title VI and the EEOA LEAs must provide a language assistance program that is effective, educationally sound, and proven successful. Consistent with ESEA section 3124, the Department does not recommend any particular curricula, program of instruction, or instructional materials, nor does it prohibit any language instruction educational program used with ELs that is consistent with Title III of the ESEA and other laws, including Title VI and the EEOA.

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)

Title III

Title III is an entitlement program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The purpose of Title III, Part A, is to help ensure that children and youth who are limited English proficient, Native American and/or immigrants, attain English language proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging academic standards that all children are expected to meet. Title III funds are directed to states and eligible local districts or consortia through a formula grant allocation to:

- Develop high-quality language instruction educational programs
- Assist SEAs, LEAs and schools to build their capacity to establish, implement, and sustain language instruction and development programs
- Promote parental and community involvement
- Hold SEAs, LEAs, and schools accountable for increases in English proficiency and core academic content knowledge of limited English proficient children by:
- Demonstrated improvement in the English proficiency of limited English proficient children each fiscal year; and
- Adequate yearly progress for limited English proficient children, including immigrant children and youth, as described in section 1111(b)(2).

Woodcock-Muñoz

Woodcock-Muñoz is an assessment used to determine English language proficiency.

WIDA Screener refers to the English language screening assessment given to students new to Sparta Area Schools, when another primary language is indicated on the home language survey upon enrollment.

WIDA refers to a consortium of states with the purposes of advancing academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators.

APPENDIX F: GUIDELINES

- Most students should be placed in an age-appropriate classroom. Even if the student has not attended school before, the social nature of schooling cannot be ignored. It is important to place students with their peers and allow them to interact naturally. Exceptions may include students who have not attended school for more than a year.
- EL Teacher Assistants may work directly with a student in the classroom in conjunction with the classroom teacher. In this way, EL Teacher Assistants have a better understanding of what, why, and how content material is being studied and can provide support that is directly connected to classroom goals.
- Previous schooling is considered. The academic backgrounds of students vary greatly. Some students may have studied advanced algebra while others may never have attended school.
- All students need time to learn how to interact in an American school setting. Consideration is given to having the EL/Bilingual staff explicitly teach about the culture and language of schools.
- Initial placement decisions for the middle and high school student should take into account native language literacy skills, previous schooling, interests and goals, and opportunities within classes for hands-on interactive learning.
- Consideration is given to alternative means of assessment for the English Learner. Portfolio assessments that include a broad range of student work, teacher observations, and even audio and videotapes of the student's work will offer a vision of the student's progress over time. The placement team recognizes that every test is a language test; the student may understand content but be unable to decipher a multiple-choice test. *Finally, the team assists teachers in inventing ways of allowing the student to demonstrate what they have learned without using complex English.*

The placement team encourages the EL student's invitation and involvement in extra-curricular activities at all grade levels. A student learns English and feels connected to school when doing things such as; playing sports, acting in the school play, preparing something for a bake sale, or singing in the choir.

Additional standardized and curriculum-based assessments inform the decision of the team. Criteria used to exit a student will be placed in the student's CA-60 and EL/Bilingual file.

APPENDIX G: TITLE III FUNDS

Allowable Uses of Title III Funds

Title III English Language Acquisition: Generally Allowable Expenditures

Title III funds are supplemental and are to be used over and above the district's required services and resources provided to EL students and their families.

Required activities include:

1. High quality language instruction educational programs that demonstrate effectiveness by increasing English proficiency and student academic achievement in the core academic subjects.
2. High quality professional development of sufficient intensity and duration that demonstrates effectiveness in improving instruction and assessment, enhances the ability of teachers to understand and use curricula, assessment measures, and instructional strategies §3115(C)

Title III supplemental EL funds can be used, in priority order, for the following:

1. Services during, before and after school such as tutoring, academic assistance, supplementary instructional materials for English language acquisition as well as for summer school programs for ELLs. Districts need to identify the students served and the method used to assess and monitor their progress.
2. Professional development that is planned based on student achievement data and provided in a systemic and sustained manner to improve instruction and assessment of ELLs. Staff training could include bilingual/ESL classroom teachers, bilingual/ESL teacher coaches, teacher assistants, regular education teachers, administrators, and other school based or community-based organizational personnel who serve ELLs.
3. Hiring bilingual/ESL coaches whose role is to acquire scientific-based research practices, provide professional development, mentor and coach teachers who are working directly with ELLs. Additionally, such funds can be used to provide stipends to teachers to assist them in completing and obtaining bilingual/ESL endorsements.
4. Parent involvement activities including family literacy (ESL) and parenting classes. Additionally, funds can be used for speakers who conduct informative parent sessions that enhance student language acquisition and mastery of core academic subjects. Districts may purchase supplemental instructional materials to support child's 2 English language learning at home, materials and books on parenting skills. A Parent Involvement Liaison can be hired or contracted to enhance ongoing parent engagement in school activities, committees and functions, facilitate planning and conducting parent meetings, connecting families to community resources, and interpreting to parents during Title III meetings.
5. Cost for educational field trips if part of high quality language instruction educational programs/activities (buses and admission).
6. Administrative and Indirect costs of III/Immigrant may NOT exceed 2% of the total allocation.

Title III Non-Allowable Expenditures:

1. Title III funds may NOT be used to pick up a cost that was previously funded by general funds.
2. Title III may NOT supplant any other federal, state or local expenses.
3. All test administration cost (ELPA and ELPA Screener, other state assessments) must be paid by general fund, including the pay for proctors, assessors and substitute teachers.
4. Translation of documents, parent handbooks, and assessments are funded by general funds and NOT with Title III funds.
5. Title III funds may NOT be used for Intake/Eligibility or Annual progress assessments.

Immigrant Program: Generally Allowable Expenditures:

Sub-grants to LEAs and ISDs are made if significant increase is experienced in numbers of immigrant students from ages 3-21; enrolled in public or private school; not born in US; not attended US school for more than three full years. Purpose of Immigrant sub-grants is to pay for activities that provide enhanced instructional opportunities for immigrant children and youth §3115(C).

Allowable activities include:

1. Support for personnel, including paraprofessionals who have been specifically trained, or are being trained, to provide services to immigrant children and youth.
2. Provision of tutorials, mentoring, and academic or career counseling for immigrant children and youth (career exploration and shadowing experiences, college visits, etc) throughout the day and before/after school.
3. Identification and acquisition of bilingual curricular materials, bilingual educational software and technologies to be used in the program carried out with these funds.
4. Activities, coordinated with community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, private sector entities, or other entities with expertise in working with immigrants, to assist parents of immigrant children and youth by offering comprehensive community services.
5. Family literacy, parent outreach liaison and activities, training activities designed to assist parents in adjusting to and understanding the American culture and school system in order to become active participants in the education of their children.
6. Administrative and indirect cost to Title III Immigrant may NOT exceed 2% of the total allocation.

Title III Immigrant Non-Allowable Expenditures:

1. Title III Immigrant funds may NOT be used to pick up a cost that was previously funded by general funds.
2. Title III immigrant funds may NOT supplant any other federal, state or local expenses.
3. All test administration cost (ELPA and ELPA Screener, other state assessments) must be paid by general fund, including the pay for proctors, assessors and substitute teachers.
4. Title III Immigrant funds may NOT be used for Intake/Eligibility or Annual progress assessments.
5. Translation of documents, parent handbooks, and assessments are funded by general funds and NOT with Title III immigrant funds.

APPENDIX H: LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Consolidated Application - Language Assistance Program Provided to English Learners

Agency: Sparta Area Schools 2023-24

Recipient Code: 41240

Name of the Title III/EL Contact Person Erin Kavanagh

Email Address of the Title III/EL Contact Person erin.kavanagh@spartaschools.org

Telephone Number of the Title III/EL Contact Person 616-887-8253

Proficiency Levels Level of Service/Number of Hours Daily (from General Funds)

Mode of Delivery (from General Funds)

Staff Providing Service (from General Funds)

Entering/Emerging

- K-2 .5 hours per day
- 3-5 - .75 hours 2-4 times per week
- 6-8 - 1 hour per day
- 9-12 - 1 hour per day

Push in and pull out services for English language development for monolingual students transitioning into the district.

Push in and pull out services for English language development and core academic instruction.

2.

3. Collaborative teaching between EL highly qualified staff: teachers, teacher assistants, Bilingual assistants and classroom teachers.

4. Teacher support provided through monitoring and consultation from bilingual &/or EL teacher.

A. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement

B. EL Teacher Assistant supervised by EL teacher

Developing

- K-2 .5 hours per day
- 3-5 - .75 hours 2-4 times per week
- 6-8 - 1 hour per day
- 9-12 - 1 hour per day

1. Groups: 1:1 &/or small group content-based instruction &/or language development with gradual release of responsibility &/or one on one push in pull out.

2. Collaborative teaching between EL highly qualified staff: teachers, teacher assistants, Bilingual Assistants and classroom teachers.

3. Teacher support provided through

A. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement at elementary

B. HQ EL teacher at secondary

C. Bilingual teacher assistant supervised by EL teacher

Expanding

- K-2 1-3 hrs per week
- 3-5 1-3 hours bi-monthly
- 6-8 1 hr per day
- 9-12 5 hrs per week

1. One-to-One
2. Small group ELD based instruction during independent practice time (any content area)
3. Teacher support provided through monitoring and consultation from EL teacher and TA
 - A. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement at elementary
 - B. HQ EL teacher at secondary
 - C. Bilingual teacher assistant supervised by EL teacher

Bridging/Reaching Student Specific plan

- K-12 Additional support at middle school one seminar period per week and in the high school with 1-2 periods of seminar per week.

1. Pull out or push in services for EL services and core instruction.
2. Provide focused instruction on specific content standards not mastered by students as needed on student plans.
3. Teacher support provided through monitoring and consultation from EL teacher and/or TA.
4. Monitoring of FEL students.
 - A. HQ EL teacher with NS endorsement at elementary
 - B. HQ EL teacher at secondary
 - C. Bilingual teacher assistant supervised by EL teacher

APPENDIX I: PROGRAM ENTRY AND EXIT SUMMARY CHART

WIDA ELD Levels	WIDA Screener (Placement)	WIDA ACCESS for ELLs
Level 1: Entering	1	1
Level 2: Emerging	2	2
Level 3: Developing	3	3
Level 4: Expanding	3-4	3-4
Level 5: Bridging	5	5
Exit Criteria - WIDA ACCESS for ELLs <i>All students meeting an overall score of 4.8 will be exited by CEPI automatically. No action is required by the LEA.</i>		
Exit Criteria - WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs <i>All students meeting an overall score of P2 will be exited by CEPI automatically. No action is required by the LEA.</i>		

Michigan Department of Education English Learner Program Entrance and Exit Protocol

Revised March 2023

APPENDIX J: ADDITIONAL PARENT INFORMATION

What are ESL support services?

ESL support services are specialized programs funded by local, state and federal funds. Each year, we are required by federal legislation (ESEA & ESSA) to inform you of the services we are providing for your child. The teachers are specially trained to help students acquire language and subject matter skills that are based on the state and district curriculum standards and benchmarks.

How are students identified as having limited English proficiency?

Many students are potentially eligible for services in the EL program. A state language proficiency assessment determines services needed. The state mandates the administration of the English Language Proficiency assessments (WIDA Screener and/or WIDA ACCESS for ELLs) to determine student's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Results determine eligibility for service as well as student progress.

How can I find out my child's language proficiency level?

Your child's proficiency level is located at the top of this letter. Please contact your child's teacher for a full explanation of your child's scores or progress made.

What types of programs are available?

Sparta Area Schools offers a transitional program with very intensive help for students with little or no English. As the student progresses in English, he or she will transition into the general education program.

Some options may include programs as listed below:

- An after school program - Sparta After Schools Intervention (SASI) at Appleview Elementary, Sparta Middle School and Sparta High School
- Small group instruction that aims at developing fluency and literacy in English
- Technology support that allows for individual learning, problem solving, and acceleration of students' language and skills
- Provision of additional books, games and family learning activities which include workshops and parent/family meetings
- Opportunities to be included in all district interventions, enrichment and accelerated/optional programs

How do students exit the program?

- A student may only exit the EL program by scoring at the proficient levels on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs. They are then auto-exited by the State of Michigan.

APPENDIX K: NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

SPARTA AREA SCHOOL - BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

2260 - NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Any form of discrimination or harassment can be devastating to an individual's academic progress, social relationship and/or personal sense of self-worth. As such, the Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its educational programs or activities. The Board also does not discriminate on the basis of Protected Classes in its employment policies and practices as they relate to students, and does not tolerate harassment of any kind.

Equal educational opportunities shall be available to all students, without regard to the Protected Classes, age (unless age is a factor necessary to the normal operation or the achievement of any legitimate objective of the program/activity), place of residence within the boundaries of the District, or social or economic background, to learn through the curriculum offered in this District. Educational programs shall be designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

In order to achieve the aforesaid goal, the Superintendent shall:

- A. Curriculum Content
review current and proposed courses of study and textbooks to detect any bias based upon Protected Classes, ascertaining whether or not supplemental materials, singly or taken as a whole, fairly depict the contribution of both genders, various races, ethnic groups, etc. toward the development of human society;
- B. Staff Training
develop an ongoing program of in-service training for school personnel designed to identify and solve problems of bias based upon Protected Classes in all aspects of the program;
- C. Student Access
 - 1. review current and proposed programs, activities, facilities, and practices to ensure that all students have equal access thereto and are not segregated on the basis of the Protected Classes in any duty, work, play, classroom, or school practice, except as may be permitted under State regulations;
 - 2. verify that facilities are made available, in accordance with Board Policy 7510 - Use of School Facilities, for non-curricular student activities that are initiated by parents or other members of the community, including but not limited to any group affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society;

This language does not prohibit the District from establishing and maintaining a single-gender school, class, or program within a school if a comparable school, class, or program is made available to students of each gender.

- D. District Support
verify that like aspects of the District program receive like support as to staff size and compensation, purchase and maintenance of facilities and equipment, access to such facilities and equipment, and related matters;
- E. Student Evaluation
verify that tests, procedures, or guidance and counseling materials, which are designed to evaluate student progress, rate aptitudes, analyze personality, or in any manner establish or tend to establish a category by which a student may be judged, are not differentiated or stereotyped on the basis of Protected Classes.

District Compliance Officers

The Board designates the following individuals to serve as the District's "Compliance Officers" (also known as "Civil Rights Coordinators") (hereinafter referred to as the "COs").

Steve Johnson

Director of Early Childhood Center and Academic Services

(616) 887-0068

480 S State Street

Sparta, MI 49345

steve.johnson@spartaschools.org

Tina Mortensen

Special Education Director

(616) 887-7359

480 S State Street

Sparta, MI 49345

tina.mortensen@spartaschools.org

The names, titles, and contact information of these individuals will be published annually on the School District's website.

The District will accommodate the use of certified service animals when there is an established need for such supportive aid in the school environment. Certain restrictions may be applied when necessary due to allergies, health, safety, disability or other issues of those in the classroom or school environment. The goal shall be to provide all students with the same access and participation opportunities provided to other students in school. Confirmation of disability, need for a service animal to access the school programming, and current certification/training of the service animal may be required.

The COs are responsible for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including the District's duty to address in a prompt and equitable manner any inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination, retaliation or denial of equal access. The COs shall also verify that proper notice of nondiscrimination for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended), Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 is provided to students, their parents, staff members, and the general public. A copy of each of the Acts and regulations on which this notice is based may be found in the CO's office.

The Superintendent shall annually attempt to identify children with disabilities, ages 0-25, who reside in the District but do not receive public education.

In addition, s/he shall establish procedures to identify students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP), including immigrant children and youth, to assess their ability to participate in District programs, and develop and administer a program that meets the English language and academic needs of these students. This program shall include procedures for student placement, services, evaluation and exit guidelines and shall be designed to provide students with effective instruction that leads to academic achievement and timely acquisition of proficiency in English. As a part of this program, the District will evaluate the progress of students in achieving English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing, on an annual basis (also see Policy 2225).

Reports and Complaints of Unlawful Discrimination and Retaliation

Students and all other members of the School District community and third parties are encouraged to promptly report incidents of unlawful discrimination and/or retaliation to a teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District official so that the Board may address the conduct. Any teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District employee or official who receives such a complaint shall file it with the CO within two (2) school days.

Members of the School District community, which includes students or third parties, who believe they have been unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against are entitled to utilize the complaint process set forth below. Initiating a complaint, whether formally or informally, will not adversely affect the complaining individual's employment or participation in educational or extra-curricular programs. While there are no time limits for initiating complaints under this policy, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint as soon as possible after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

If, during an investigation of alleged bullying, aggressive behavior and/or harassment in accordance with Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior, the Principal believes that the reported misconduct may constitute unlawful discrimination based on a Protected Class, the Principal shall report the act to one of the COs who shall investigate the allegation in accordance with this policy. While the CO investigates the allegation, the Principal shall suspend his/her Policy 5517.01 investigation to await the CO's written report. The CO shall keep the Principal informed of the status of the Policy 2260 investigation and provide him/her with a copy of the resulting written report.

The COs will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to unlawful discrimination/retaliation. COs shall accept complaints of unlawful discrimination/retaliation directly from any member of the School District community or a visitor to the District, or receive complaints that are initially filed with a school building administrator. Upon receipt of a complaint either directly or through a school building administrator, a CO will begin either an informal or formal process (depending on the request of the person alleging the discrimination/retaliation or the nature of the alleged discrimination/retaliation), or the CO will designate a specific individual to conduct such a process. The CO will provide a copy of this policy to any person who files a complaint. In the case of a formal complaint, the CO will prepare recommendations for the Superintendent or oversee the preparation of such recommendations by a designee. All members of the School District community must report incidents of discrimination/retaliation that are reported to them to the CO within two (2) business days of learning of the incident/conduct.

Any Board employee who directly observes unlawful discrimination/retaliation of a student is obligated, in accordance with this policy, to report such observations to one of the COs within two (2) business days. Additionally, any Board employee who observes an act of unlawful discrimination/retaliation is expected to intervene to stop the misconduct, unless circumstances make such an intervention dangerous, in which case the staff member should immediately notify other Board employees and/or local law enforcement officials, as necessary, to stop the misconduct. Thereafter, the CO or designee must contact the student, if age eighteen (18) or older, or the student's parents if the student is under the age of eighteen (18), within two (2) school days to advise s/he/them of the Board's intent to investigate the alleged wrongdoing.

Investigation and Complaint Procedure

Any student who believes that s/he has been subjected to unlawful discrimination or retaliation may seek resolution of his/her complaint through the procedures described below. The formal complaint procedures involve an investigation of the individual's claims and a process for rendering a decision regarding whether the charges are substantiated.

Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful discrimination or retaliation, timelines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days after the conduct occurs. Once the formal complaint process is begun, the investigation will be completed in a timely manner (ordinarily, within fifteen (15) business days of the complaint being received).

The procedures set forth below are not intended to interfere with the rights of a student to pursue a complaint of unlawful discrimination or retaliation with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights ("OCR"). The Cleveland Office of the OCR can be reached at 1350 Euclid Avenue, Suite 325, Cleveland, Ohio 44115; Telephone: (216) 522-4970; Fax: (216) 522-2573; TDD: (216) 522-4944; E-mail: ocr.cleveland@ed.gov; Web: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr>.

Informal Complaint Procedure

The goal of the informal complaint procedure is to quickly stop inappropriate behavior and facilitate resolution through an informal means, if possible. The informal complaint procedure is provided as a less formal option for a student who believes s/he has been unlawfully discriminated or retaliated against. This informal procedure is not required as a precursor to the filing of a formal complaint.

The informal process is only available in those circumstances where the parties (the alleged target of the discrimination and individual(s) alleged to have engaged in the discrimination) agree to participate in it.

Students who believe that they have been unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against may proceed immediately to the formal complaint process and individuals who seek resolution through the informal procedure may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

All complaints involving a District employee or any other adult member of the School District community against a student will be formally investigated.

As an initial course of action, if a student feels that s/he is being unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against and s/he is able and feels safe doing so, the individual should tell or otherwise inform the person who engaged in the allegedly discriminatory/retaliatory conduct that it is inappropriate and must stop. The complaining individual should address the alleged misconduct as soon after it occurs as possible. The COs are available to support and counsel individuals when taking this initial step or to intervene on behalf of the individual if requested to do so. An individual who is uncomfortable or unwilling to inform the person who allegedly engaged in the unlawful conduct of his/her concerns is not prohibited from otherwise filing an informal or a formal complaint. In addition, with regard to certain types of unlawful discrimination, such as sexual discrimination, the CO may advise against the use of the informal complaint process.

A student who believes s/he has been unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against may make an informal complaint, either orally or in writing: (1) to a teacher, other employee, or building administrator in the school the student attends; (2) to the Superintendent or other District-level employee; and/or (3) directly to one of the COs.

All informal complaints must be reported to one of the COs who will either facilitate an informal resolution as described below, or appoint another individual to facilitate an informal resolution.

The School District's informal complaint procedure is designed to provide students who believe they are being unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against with a range of options aimed at bringing about a prompt resolution of their concerns. Depending upon the nature of the complaint and the wishes of the student claiming unlawful discrimination/retaliation, informal resolution may involve, but not be limited to, one or more of the following:

- A. Advising the student about how to communicate his/her concerns to the person who allegedly engaged in the discriminatory/retaliatory behavior.
- B. Distributing a copy of Policy 2260 – Non-Discrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity as a reminder to the individuals in the school building or office where the individual

whose behavior is being questioned works or attends.

- C. If both parties agree, the CO may arrange and facilitate a meeting between the student claiming discrimination/retaliation and the individual accused of engaging in the misconduct to work out a mutual resolution.

While there are no set time limits within which an informal complaint must be resolved, the CO or designee will exercise his/her authority to attempt to resolve all informal complaints within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the informal complaint. Parties who are dissatisfied with the results of the informal complaint process may proceed to file a formal complaint. And, as stated above, parties may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

Formal Complaint Procedure

If a complaint is not resolved through the informal complaint process, if one (1) of the parties requested that the informal complaint process be terminated to move to the formal complaint process, or if the student elects to file a formal complaint initially, the formal complaint process shall be implemented.

A student who believes s/he has been subjected to unlawful discrimination/retaliation (hereinafter referred to as the "Complainant") may file a formal complaint, either orally or in writing, with a teacher, Principal, or other District employee at the student's school, the CO, Superintendent, or another District employee who works at another school or at the District level. Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful discrimination, timelines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days after the conduct occurs. If a Complainant informs a teacher, Principal, or other District employee at the student's school, Superintendent, or other District employee, either orally or in writing, about any complaint of discrimination/retaliation, that employee must report such information to the CO within two (2) business days.

Throughout the course of the process, the CO should keep the parties informed of the status of the investigation and the decision-making process.

All formal complaints must include the following information to the extent it is available: the identity of the individual believed to have engaged in, or be engaging in; the discriminatory/retaliatory conduct; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based; a list of potential witnesses; and the resolution sought by the Complainant.

If the Complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the CO shall ask for such details in an oral interview. Thereafter, the CO will prepare a written summary of the oral interview, and the Complainant will be asked to verify the accuracy of the reported charge by signing the document.

Upon receiving a formal complaint, the CO will consider whether any action should be taken in the investigatory phase to protect the Complainant from further discrimination or retaliation, including, but not limited to, a change of work assignment or schedule for the Complainant and/or the person alleged to have engaged in the misconduct. In making such a determination, the CO should consult the Complainant to assess his/her agreement to the proposed action. If the Complainant is unwilling to consent to the proposed change, the CO may still take whatever actions s/he deems appropriate in consultation with the Superintendent.

Within two (2) business days of receiving the complaint, the CO or designee will initiate a formal investigation to determine whether the Complainant has been subjected to unlawful discrimination/retaliation. A Principal will not conduct an investigation unless directed to do so by the CO.

Simultaneously, the CO will inform the individual alleged to have engaged in the discriminatory or retaliatory conduct (hereinafter referred to as the "Respondent") that a complaint has been received. The Respondent will be informed about the nature of the allegations and provided with a copy of any relevant policies and/or administrative guidelines, including Policy 2260 - Nondiscrimination. The Respondent must also be informed of the opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint within five (5) business days.

Although certain cases may require additional time, the CO or designee will attempt to complete an investigation into the allegations of discrimination/retaliation within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the formal complaint. The investigation will include:

- A. interviews with the Complainant;
- B. interviews with the Respondent;
- C. interviews with any other witnesses who may reasonably be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations;
- D. consideration of any documentation or other information presented by the Complainant, Respondent, or any other witness that is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the CO or designee shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Superintendent that summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definition of unlawful discrimination/retaliation as provided in Board policy and State and Federal law as to whether the Complainant has been subjected to unlawful discrimination/retaliation. The CO's recommendations must be based upon the totality of the circumstances, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In determining if unlawful discrimination or retaliation occurred, a preponderance of evidence standard will be used. The CO may consult with the Board's legal counsel before finalizing the report to the Superintendent.

Absent extenuating circumstances, within five (5) business days of receiving the report of the CO or designee, the Superintendent must either issue a final decision regarding whether the charges have been substantiated or request further investigation. A copy of the Superintendent's final decision will be delivered to both the Complainant and the Respondent.

If the Superintendent requests additional investigation, the Superintendent must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must be completed within five (5) days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the Superintendent shall issue a final written decision as described above.

If the Superintendent determines the Complainant was subjected to unlawful discrimination/retaliation, s/he must identify what corrective action will be taken to stop, remedy, and prevent the recurrence of the discrimination/retaliation. The corrective action should be reasonable, timely, age-appropriate and effective, and tailored to the specific situation.

A Complainant or Respondent who is dissatisfied with the final decision of the Superintendent may appeal through a signed written statement to the Board within five (5) business days of his/her receipt of the Superintendent's final decision.

In an attempt to resolve the complaint, the Board shall meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within twenty (20) business days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of this meeting. The decision of the Board will be final.

The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of unlawful discrimination/retaliation regardless of whether the student alleging the unlawful discrimination/retaliation pursues the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the formal complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or in such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board or its designee.

The Complainant may be represented, at his/her own cost, at any of the above described meetings/hearings.

The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a Complaint with the Office for Civil Rights or the filing of a court case. Use of this internal complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

Privacy/Confidentiality

The School District will employ all reasonable efforts to protect the rights of the Complainant, the Respondent(s), and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under the terms of this policy shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed. All Complainants proceeding through the formal investigation process will be advised that their identities may be disclosed to the Respondent(s).

During the course of a formal investigation, the CO or designee will instruct each person who is interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of an investigation is expected not to disclose to third parties any information that s/he learns and/or provides during the course of the investigation.

Sanctions and Monitoring

The Board shall vigorously enforce its prohibitions against unlawful discrimination/retaliation by taking appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop and prevent further misconduct. While observing the principles of due process, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the discharge of an employee or the suspension/expulsion of a student. All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable State law and the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s). When imposing discipline, the Superintendent shall consider the totality of the circumstances involved in the matter, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In those cases where unlawful discrimination/retaliation is not substantiated, the Board may consider whether the alleged conduct nevertheless warrants discipline in accordance with other Board policies, consistent with the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s).

Where the Board becomes aware that a prior remedial action has been taken against a member of the School District community, all subsequent sanctions imposed by the Board and/or Superintendent shall be reasonably calculated to end such conduct, prevent its reoccurrence, and remedy its effects.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a report or files a complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, or participates as a witness in an investigation is prohibited. Specifically, the Board will not retaliate against, coerce, intimidate, threaten or interfere with any individual because the person opposed any act or practice made unlawful by any Federal or State civil rights law, or because that individual made a charge, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under those laws, or because that individual exercised, enjoyed, aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of any right granted or protected by those laws.

Education and Training

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of unlawful discriminatory practices. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate information to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and shall provide training for District students and staff where appropriate. All training, as well as all information, provided regarding the Board's policy and discrimination in general, will be age and content appropriate.

The District will endeavor to assist the student and/or his/her parents in their access to District programs by providing notices to the parents and students in a language and format that they are likely to understand.

Materials approved by the State Department of Education describing the benefits of instruction in Braille reading and writing shall be provided to each blind student's individualized planning committee. The District shall not deny a student the opportunity for instruction in Braille, reading, and writing solely because the student has some remaining vision.

Retention of Investigatory Records and Materials

All individuals charged with conducting investigations under this policy must retain all information, documents, electronically stored information, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created and received as part of an investigation, which may include, but not be limited to:

- A. all written reports/allegations/complaints/grievances/ statements/responses pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy;
- B. any narratives that memorialize oral reports/allegations/ complaints/grievances/statements/responses pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy;
- C. any documentation that memorializes the actions taken by District personnel related to the investigation and/or the District's response to the alleged violation of this policy;
- D. written witness statements;
- E. narratives, notes from, or audio, video, or digital recordings of witness interviews/statements;
- F. e-mails, texts, or social media posts that directly relate to or constitute evidence pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy (i.e., not after-the-fact commentary about or media coverage of the incident);
- G. notes or summaries prepared contemporaneously by the investigator in whatever form made (e.g., handwritten, keyed into a computer or tablet, etc.), but not including transitory notes whose content is otherwise memorialized in other documents;
- H. written disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees and other documentation that memorializes oral disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees for violations of this policy;
- I. dated written determinations/reports (including summaries of relevant exculpatory and inculpatory evidence) and other documentation that memorializes oral notifications to the parties concerning the outcome of the investigation, including any consequences imposed as a result of a violation of this policy;

- J. documentation of any interim measures offered and/or provided to complainants and/or the alleged perpetrators, including no contact orders issued to both parties, the dates the no contact orders were issued, and the dates the parties acknowledged receipt of the no contact orders;
- K. documentation of all actions taken, both individual and systemic, to stop the discrimination or harassment, prevent its recurrence, eliminate any hostile environment, and remedy its discriminatory effects;
- L. copies of the Board policy and/or procedures/guidelines used by the District to conduct the investigation, and any documents used by the District at the time of the alleged violation to communicate the Board's expectations to students and staff with respect to the subject of this policy (e.g., Student and/or Employee Handbooks or Codes of Conduct);
- M. copies of any documentation that memorializes any formal or informal resolutions to the alleged discrimination or harassment;

The information, documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) retained may include public records and records exempt from disclosure under Federal and/or State law (e.g., student records).

These investigative records and materials created or received as part of an investigation shall be retained in accordance with Policy 8310, Policy 8315, Policy 8320, and Policy 8330 for not less than three (3) years, but longer if required by the District's records retention schedule.

Revised 11/11/96
 Revised 6/12/00
 Revised 1/8/01
 Revised 7/9/01
 Revised 7/11/05
 Revised 1/15/07
 Revised 1/14/13
 Revised 7/7/14
 Revised 10/22/15

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Legal

M.C.L. 380.1146, 380.1704, 37.1101 et seq., 37.2402, 37.1402, 37.2101-37.2804

Fourteenth Amendment, U.S. Constitution

20 U.S.C. Section 1681, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act

20 U.S.C. Section 1701 et seq., Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974

20 U.S.C. Section 7905, Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act

29 U.S.C. Section 794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended

29 C.F.R. Part 1635

42 U.S.C. Section 2000 et seq., Civil Rights Act of 1964

42 U.S.C. Section 2000ff et seq., The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act

42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq., Age Discrimination Act of 1975

34 C.F.R. Part 110 (7/27/93)

Vocational Education Program Guidelines for Eliminating Discrimination and Denial of Services, Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, March 1979

42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq., The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended