

Ensuring Success for English Language Learners: What Parents Should Know



This guide explains the supports schools are required to provide that will help your child while learning English.

Introduction

New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) is very pleased to have partnered with the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. (NYS PTA) in developing this guide for parents of English language learners (ELLs). This partnership between our two organizations reflects the positive relationship that should exist between home and school. We can say from experience, that when it comes to helping students do well in school, parents' support makes a big difference.

Teachers know that it takes all of us — parents and educators — working together to help students do well. We cannot, and should not, do it alone. You know your children best. And no one is better prepared to help us, help them, than you are. It is only when parents, who understand their child, and teachers, who have knowledge of classroom instruction, work together that children will reach their fullest potential.

When parents and educators work together, the best interests of the child are met. We hope that this guidebook will provide you with the information you need to help your child succeed in school. Know your rights as a parent so you can be a strong advocate for your child's future.



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What To Know About English As A New Language (ENL) Services

- For Entering and Emerging students, the required ENL instruction includes both stand-alone ENL and ENL integrated with English language arts (ELA) instruction at your child’s grade level. For students at higher levels of English proficiency, ENL instruction may also be integrated with other subjects (math, science, or social studies).
- For Transitioning students, part of the required ENL instructional time may be integrated with ELA at your child’s grade level or it may include stand-alone ENL.
- Students at the Expanding level must receive all 180 minutes of required ENL instruction integrated with a subject area (ELA, math, science, or social studies).

ELL Proficiency Level	Grades K-8 Minutes of ENL Instruction	Grades 9-12 Minutes of ENL Instruction
Entering (Beginning)	360 minutes per week	540 minutes per week
Emerging (Low Intermediate)	360 minutes per week	360 minutes per week
Transitioning (Intermediate)	180 minutes per week	180 minutes per week
Expanding (Advanced)	180 minutes per week	180 minutes per week

What To Know About Bilingual Programs

School districts in New York State must provide a bilingual instructional program when:

- There are 20 or more students at the same grade level in the school district who speak the same home language.
- There are at least 15 students enrolled in the cohort grade in a bilingual program from the previous year.

In New York City, the Aspira Consent Decree requires a bilingual program in grades K-8 when there are 15 or more students who speak the same language in two contiguous grades.

For languages other than Spanish or Mandarin, a district may apply for a one year delay in starting a bilingual program.

Schools may offer one of the following models for a bilingual program:

- Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) Program
- One or Two-Way Dual Language Program (OWDL/TWDL)

If these programs are not available at the local school, you may request a transfer to a school that offers your program of choice. Transportation will be provided for your child.

What To Know About Testing Accommodations For ELLs

Your child has the right to receive the following special services during state tests in the subject areas (math, science, social studies):

- Use of a bilingual dictionary or glossary, such as www.p12.nysed.gov/biling/bilinged/bilingual_glossaries.htm
- Extra time for taking the tests
- Separate testing location in a small group or alone
- Subject tests that are translated into your home language, when available.

Both home language editions AND the English editions of the tests should be provided to your child.



- Spoken or oral translations of subject tests when there is translation in writing available in your home language.
- Write his or her responses in the home language for state tests other than the English Language Arts exam.

During their first year in the ENL program, students do NOT take NYS English Language Arts test. Instead, your child will take the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test.

Students with an IEP will be provided the testing accommodations specified in their IEP or 504 Plan.

What To Know About Additional School Services

- Your child may also receive academic support services, guidance and counseling in your child's home language, whenever possible.
- Your child may receive special education services, Title I services vocational education (job preparation), advanced and gifted classes, when available, in addition to ENL and/or home language instruction. If you believe that your child may have difficulty learning in your home language and in English, please talk about this with your child's teachers. Teachers may also talk with you about any learning issues they are concerned with about your child.
- Your child must have equal access to the same non-academic programs and extracurricular activities available to all other students, including summer school, after-school programming and tutoring.

What To Know About Home-School Communication

- Most schools send home progress reports during the school year. Some school districts may post these reports on-line. Talk with your child's teacher. Schools must send reports and notices to you in your home language, if this is the best language for you to understand. Each year, you should remind school administrators or your child's teacher if you prefer to receive notices and progress reports in your home language.
- You may also request to have the information (written in English) explained to you in your home language.
- Teachers at your child's school must meet with you at least twice a year, to help you understand the goals of your child's educational program and his or her progress. The school may have special days for you to meet with your child's teachers.
- If your child is enrolled in an ENL and/or bilingual program, your child is required to take the NYSESLAT each year to determine progress in English. Each year that your child takes the NYSESLAT, you will receive the results of your child's test. You can request to have the results explained to you in your home language. If your child scores Commanding (English proficient) on the NYSESLAT, your child will leave the ENL instructional program.
- Ask your child's teacher(s) and other school personnel, such as school counselors, to learn about other educational and cultural resources that are available to families in your community.



What To Know Once Your Child Tests Out Of ENL Services

For two years after your child has reached the Commanding (Proficient) level of English, your child will receive at least 90 minutes per week of ENL/ELA or another content area, including:

- Monitoring of your child's language development
- Subject area support
- Reading/Academic Intervention Services (AIS) or extra help that **all students** can get
- Counseling services that **all students** can get

In addition, students who are no longer eligible for ENL or bilingual services are entitled to receive ELL testing accommodations on all state exams for two years after achieving proficiency on the NYSESLAT.

What To Know If You Have Questions Or Concerns

- If you have questions or concerns about your child's ENL or bilingual program, you should first contact your child's teachers, program director and school principal.
- If you still have questions or concerns about your child's ENL or bilingual services at a New York State school, you may contact the NYS ELL Parent Hotline at 800-469-8224 or send your inquiry using the form at this link: http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/nbm3/parent_hotline_form_EN.pdf
- If you think that your child was misidentified and does not need ENL instruction, you may make a request in writing to the school district to review your child's English language skills. Your child's teachers may also make this request. Following the review, a change in ENL status can be made with approval from the school superintendent or students themselves if they are 18 years old.





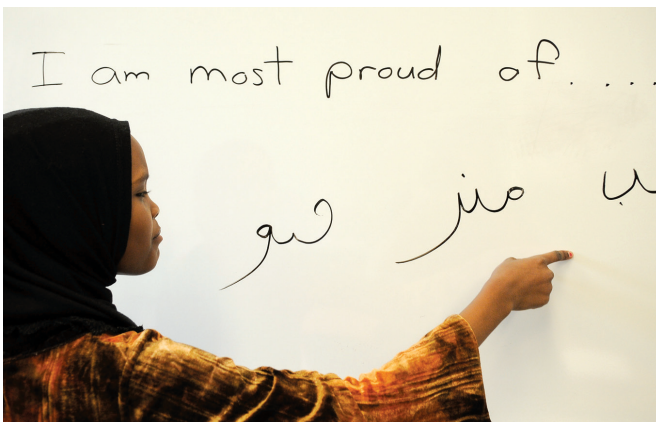
What Other Resources To Know About

There are resources available on the Internet, including:

- New York State Education Department, Office of Bilingual Education & World Languages (OBEWL): www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/parents/english-language-learnermultilingual-learner-parent-resources
- Colorín Colorado: www.colorincolorado.org/families
- New York State United Teachers (NYSUT): www.nysut.org/ell
- National Education Association (NEA): parents.nea.org/
- New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. (NYS PTA): www.nyspta.org
- American Federation of Teachers (AFT): www.aft.org/our-community/immigration

For further information contact:

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This document was developed by members of the NYSUT English Language Learner Committee in partnership with the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. (NYS PTA)

Updated August 2017



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R337_17