INSTRUCTION

English Learner Program for K-12 Schools

The English Learner (EL) Program shall be in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws and Office of Civil Rights memoranda.

School EL Programs shall be conducted according to current Virginia Standards of Quality and all applicable School Board policies.

Implementation of the school EL Program services according to all applicable laws, regulations, and policies shall be described in the Division Language Allocation Service Plan, grades kindergarten-five, six-eight, and nine-12. The plan shall be the official source of all information regarding all the instruction and administrative services, procedures, forms, current research and law to satisfy compliance requirements. The Office of EL Programs and Services shall review and revise the EL Program procedures at least on an annual basis. Procedures and guidance provided by the Office of EL Programs and Services shall be housed in the Division staff intranet portal for staff use. Administrators who oversee school EL Programs and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers are primarily responsible for complying with the procedures as described.

I. Service Delivery

School EL Programs shall provide adequate and research-based instructional services to all ELs with English Language Proficiency (ELP) Levels one through five. According to all applicable laws, regulations, and policies described in the Division’s Language Allocation Service Plan, grades kindergarten-five, six-eight, and nine-12 and the EL Instructional Look-Fors Protocol.

School EL Programs shall provide not less than the minimal amount of English Language Development (ELD) instruction as prescribed for each ELP level in Row One, and the minimal amount of Sheltered Instruction (SI) as prescribed for each ELP level in Row Eight, and the ELD and SI shall be provided in the instructional settings, subjects, groupings, and service delivery models prescribed by Rows Two-Eight of the Language Allocation Service Plan.

Schools shall ensure that all ELD instruction is provided by an English as a Second Language (ESL)-endorsed teacher to ELs at levels one-five; however, if necessary to ensure that all ELs at levels one-four receive the amount of ELD prescribed by Row One of the Language Allocation Service Plan with an ESL-endorsed teacher, a teacher trained in EL techniques may provide ELD instruction for only level five ELs.

Schools shall ensure that the ELD instruction required by Row One is provided in a language arts, English, or reading class and that the SI required by Row Eight is provided in math, science, and social studies; however, if it is not possible for a school to schedule the amount of ELD required by Row One for all ELs, ELD instruction for level four-five ELs may be provided in math, social studies, or science, and their SI instruction may be provided in a language arts, English, or reading

class. ELD strategies also shall be incorporated in grade-level content classes that count toward the SI required by Row Eight.

As prescribed by Row Six of the Language Allocation Service Plan, the ELD instruction required by Row One may be provided to all ELs through an (i) EL-only class, (ii) a pull-out, (iii) inclusion ELD for level four-five ELs only, or (iv) EL co-taught model, provided (a) the definition of EL co-taught in the “EL Program Definitions” is met; and (b) the ESL-endorsed teacher and other teacher (e.g., elementary education teacher, elementary reading teacher, English secondary teacher) have at least weekly common planning time and training on how to co-teach ELD. ELs at levels four-five may be included with non-ELs for ELD instruction in a co-taught or inclusion ELD model, provided (a) the definition of co-taught in the “EL Program Definitions” is met; and (b) the ESL-endorsed teacher and other teacher have at least weekly common planning time and training on how to co-teach ELD.

ELD instruction shall address the listening, speaking, reading, and writing standards contained in the WIDA ELD Standards that have been adopted by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Grouping – Four Core Subject Areas

A. ELs shall be grouped for ELD instruction by ELP level and grade level where possible, but if necessary to meet the required levels of ELD instruction, ELs may be grouped with more than one ELP level or grade level, provided the grouping is consistent with the terms of Row Five of the Language Allocation Service Plan.

B. ELs shall receive not less than the minimum amounts of SI prescribed by Row Eight of the Language Allocation Service Plan. All ELs enrolled in SI classes (language arts/English/reading, math, science, and social studies) are to be scheduled with (a) a teacher dually certified in the content area and ESL; (b) a content-certified teacher and an ESL-endorsed teacher in a co-teaching setting who have common planning time and adequate training on co-teaching content to ELs; or (c) if (a) or (b) is not possible, content-certified teachers trained in EL techniques or who are taking the training required and on track to complete it within three years.

C. Teachers of ELD and teachers of SI classes are to provide instruction as prescribed by the Division ELs’ Instructional Look-Fors Protocol.

II. Standards-Based Unit Development

The Division shall continue to develop standards-based supplements to the State's curriculum framework that shall include explicit guidance on how to integrate WIDA ELD Standards with the Virginia Standards of Learning content area frameworks (language arts/English, science, math, and social studies) in a manner appropriate for the ELP levels of ELs to illustrate differentiating instruction and to address the four language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in the context of standards-based planning and instruction.
Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) uses a kindergarten-12 guide to model standards-based unit and lesson planning; this guide shall address how to: write content and language objectives for each core area; identify kindergarten-12 academic vocabulary aligned with the core content curriculum appropriate to ELP levels; and align leveled reading and EL-specific titles to state standards in the kindergarten-12 core curriculum appropriate to ELP levels. As the materials are completed, the Division shall post them on the Office of EL Programs and Services and core-specific School Messenger sites so that all teachers in the Division may use these tools to teach ELs, and shall notify at least ELD and SI teachers of the posting by email.

III. Scheduling ELs Other than Four Core Subject Areas

A. Grouping – Specials

ELs shall be integrated with non-EL students for recess, art, music, physical education, lunch, library, and not unnecessarily segregated from non-ELs in other classes given their ELP levels, time, and progress in the EL Program and the nature of their EL services, including whatever other classes need not enroll exclusively which includes core content classes. ELs shall also be integrated with non-EL students in school functions, co-curricular activities, and extracurricular activities.

B. Homeroom Schedules

Homeroom time at the beginning and end of the school day does not count as direct EL service time, nor does support provided by non-certified classified staff or non-ESL-endorsed teachers who lack, or who are not on track to obtain, adequate training in EL and sheltered techniques. Case managers may not include this time as direct EL Program services when they report the amount of EL services, either in writing or in the student information system (SIS) database.

C. Use of Native Language

Teaching staff may use native language strategically to facilitate ELs’ comprehension in class.

IV. Instructional and Administrative Staff

A. Instructional Staff and Training

Schools shall ensure that teachers of ELs are adequately trained to provide quality EL Program services to ELs across the ELP and grade levels they are assigned to teach.

Teachers of ELD instruction must have an ESL endorsement, or if this is not possible, a provisional ESL endorsement and be making consistent progress toward obtaining an ESL endorsement within three years, the time period required by the Virginia Department of Education. PWCS also requires teachers with provisional ESL endorsements to attain the
full ESL endorsement within three years, and if any do not, theses teachers shall no longer be assigned to provide ELD instruction.

In the rare circumstances that neither a fully ESL-endorsed teacher nor a provisionally ESL-endorsed teacher is available, an English language arts teacher, reading teacher, or kindergarten-five elementary teacher who receives adequate and appropriate training from PWCS regarding providing ELD instruction to ELs prior to and during the school year, can be assigned. Such training shall include the teacher’s completion of at least the ELD-specific parts of the EL Professional Learning Plan by the end of the school year at issue and continual progress toward obtaining the provisional ESL endorsement by the end of the school year at issue. If the teacher fails to meet these training requirements, the Division shall not assign the teacher to teach ELD again until s/he obtains at least the provisional ESL endorsement.

The Division shall ensure that schools do not assign ESL-endorsed and content-certified teachers to co-teach ELD or SI classes to ELs in a given school year unless these teachers have received training on co-teaching or shall receive such training during that school year.

The Division shall also ensure that ESL-endorsed teachers and content teachers assigned to co-teach ELD and SI classes have common planning time in which to plan for their co-taught instruction. Common planning time must be provided for all grade-level EL teachers and grade-level general education teachers that teach ELs.

B. Administrative Staff and Training

Each principal has primary responsibility for ensuring the completion of the duties described below, but may delegate some of the duties to a specific subordinate administrator as necessary:

1. Oversee and ensure effective implementation of the EL Program at their schools and receive regular professional development regarding appropriate implementation and assessment of EL Programs and services;

2. Participate in Child Intervention Committee, Eligibility, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) processes for students eligible for EL services;

3. Meet with each ELD and SI teacher regularly to review his or her student data notebook and caseload documentation and to discuss any areas of concern;

4. Provide and/or ensure participation in professional development and coaching as it relates to EL services;

5. Serve as the liaison between the Office of EL Programs and Services and the principal;
6. Be available to address other duties related to EL Program services as assigned by the principal, central office, and Superintendent’s Staff;

7. Ensure that the data for each EL student and former EL students are entered into the templates/rubrics in the SIS by the dates in the K-12 Division Monitoring of School English Learner Program timeline and that each teacher reviews the “Know Your ELs” report and “EL and SWD/Special Education” list in the SIS so that they know who their current and former ELs are in their classes and which ELs are also special education students;

8. Review the performance of current and former EL students on an ongoing basis and make appropriate recommendations regarding EL Program services based on student performance;

9. Establish meaningful communications with parents of ELs and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) parents, including using translations and interpreters;

10. Oversee and monitor the implementation of sheltered instructional techniques in all sheltered content classes and the delivery of ELD instruction in all ELD classes; and

11. Ensure the acquisition and provision of adequate and appropriate instructional materials for ELs.

V. Professional Development Requirements - EL Educator Professional Learning Plan

A. The Division implements the EL Professional Learning Plan for all non-ESL-endorsed SI and special education teachers of ELs. Under the EL Professional Learning Plan, PWCS ensures that all non-ESL-endorsed SI teachers and all special education teachers providing services to ELs complete:

1. Forty-five hours of mandatory professional development over three years; and

2. At least five hours of Implemented Practice each school year (e.g., expert and peer coaching, model classroom visits, collaborative student work analyses, and strategy-sharing in professional learning communities to ensure transfer of the training into the classroom).

The professional development focuses on the practical classroom application of appropriate instructional strategies for planning, delivering, and sheltering content for ELs within the context of standards-based planning, instruction, and assessment and shall include ample opportunities for modeling, practicing, and receiving feedback regarding such strategies. The professional development shall emphasize academic literacy, developing academic vocabulary aligned with the core content curriculum, reading development and comprehension, writing skills, ESL methodologies, and sheltering strategies within the context of standards-based instruction. Key components of this required professional
development shall include effective instructional delivery of content to ELs, explicit and ongoing training on how to co-teach for any ESOL and content teachers who shall be co-teaching, and meaningful progress monitoring of EL students and staff.

B. Teacher Evaluation

1. The principal, or his or her designated administrator, of each shall evaluate and document whether the ESL/ELD, sheltered content, and special education teachers who have received the mandatory 60 hours of professional development are using appropriate ESL and sheltering strategies in their ELD, content, and special education classes with ELs. The mandatory follow-up professional development in year three of that teacher’s EL Professional Learning Plan shall address any deficiencies documented in these evaluations.

2. The principal, or his or her designated administrator monitor the progress that special education, language arts, reading, math, science, and social studies teachers of ELs are making toward obtaining adequate training in sheltering techniques through the EL Professional Learning Plan. If within the last two years, a content certified teacher has successfully completed professional development or a course that fulfills one or more of the required 45 hours on the instructional strategies and topics, PWCS may give credit for those hours when calculating the teacher’s fulfillment of the 45 hours of training, but may not credit them toward the 15 hours of implemented practice.

C. Administrator Training Requirements

The Division ensures that all principals or other administrators responsible for evaluating all ESOL teachers, sheltered content course teachers, and special education teachers providing services to ELs receive: at least 15 hours of staff development and at least five hours of in-person onsite follow-up within two school years to total 20 hours of professional development that:

1. Focuses on supporting and evaluating instructional strategies appropriate for providing ELD to ELs across ELP levels and planning, delivering, and sheltering content for ELs within the context of standards-based planning, instruction, and assessment;

2. Provides training on what to look for to determine if the ELD and/or SI instruction complies with standards, including shadowing coaches with expertise in conducting ELD and SI classroom observations, where the expert coaches model using an observation protocol in ELD and SI classes, and giving feedback to ELD and SI teachers, and then principals/administrators practice using that protocol and giving feedback to these teachers while the expert coaches observe. After each classroom observation, the expert coaches shall conduct a debriefing session with the
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VI. Resource Allocation – Instructional Materials

Schools shall provide adequate and appropriate instructional materials for all ELs.

PWCS includes in its core mathematics, science, language arts/English, and social studies textbook adoption process the use of the WIDA PRIME V2 to determine the extent to which the core committee’s proposed materials meet the criteria of comprehensible input for ELs. Only core
textbooks that are appropriate for ELs shall be recommended; this may include core textbooks that have supplemental materials that render the textbook accessible to ELs.

The principal, in conjunction with the school’s EL Program department chair or lead teacher, shall determine materials to purchase. Each principal shall conduct a review of the instructional materials available to each teacher providing services to ELs in the ELD and SI classes (including special education, gifted education, reading, math, science, and social studies classes). The review shall include the ELD materials they are using, the available core print literacy materials they use to promote ELD, and the supplementary materials they use to access grade-level core content. The inventory of classroom materials shall specify the series by title, author, publisher, publication date, type of material (e.g., e-library, textbook, workbook, teacher manual or guide), quantity, the targeted ELP levels, and condition (i.e., new, good, discard, or replace). As part of the review, the principal shall conduct a survey of the same teachers regarding their needs for additional materials to render grade-level content accessible to ELs across ELP levels in their classes. Requests for additional materials should consider, but are not limited to, the EL resources identified on the Division’s curriculum documents and EL supplemental resources identified in the School Board-approved core textbooks.

The materials requested shall identify the targeted grade-level content (e.g., Virginia Standards of Learning) and specify the series by title, author, publisher, publication date, type of material (e.g., e-library, textbook, workbook, teacher manual or guide), quantity and the targeted ELP levels. As part of the teachers’ needs assessment process, supplemental materials are to be grade-level and age appropriate and include a review using features from the WIDA PRIME V2.

Principals shall ensure that ELD, special education, gifted education, and SI reading, math, science, and social studies teachers know how to obtain EL-related materials by the first day of each school year. By September 30 of each school year, teachers ensure that ELs know how to access multilingual resources.

VII. English Learners Identified with a Disability (EL SWD)

The Division shall provide special education services and EL Program services by qualified personnel to all students who are eligible for both services (i.e., all EL SWDs). Schools may not deny EL Program services to special education students who qualify for EL services and shall not deny special education services to students who are ELs and qualify for special education services.

A. Service Delivery

The Language Allocation Service Plan is to be implemented for all ELs, including EL SWD. School staff may not modify the amount or the method of providing EL services prescribed in the Language Allocation Service Plan for EL SWDs unless such modifications are determined necessary given the severity of the disability by the student’s IEP or Section 504 team in conjunction with the ELD teacher who has that student on his/her EL Program caseload, through a documented team process. If such modifications are deemed necessary
given the severity of the disability, under no circumstances shall the Division entirely deny EL Program services by an ESL-endorsed teacher to an EL SWD, and the Division shall ensure at least one 30 minute period of EL Program services or its equivalent per week in combination with consult services equivalent to 30 minutes per month between the ELD teacher who has that student on his/her EL Program caseload and the special education teacher(s). This time shall not include travel time between classrooms.

B. Testing Accommodations in the IEP or 504 Plan

For EL SWDs, no accommodations for or modifications to standard language proficiency assessment procedures shall be implemented unless such accommodations or modifications are determined necessary by the student’s IEP or Section 504 team, through a documented team process. Consistent with the “Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Special Test Accommodations,” schools shall provide the accommodation(s) for all EL SWDs who so require. All EL SWD students participate in annual ELP Assessment and may not be exempted.

C. Parent Notification

The Division shall expressly notify parents of dually identified EL SWDs that they are eligible for both EL and special education services. This notice shall be in writing for English and the major languages Notification shall be provided orally for other languages through a qualified interpreter, with documentation of this oral notice in the Category Two special education file.

D. Addressing Language Needs of the Student

1. Schools shall ensure that all IEP teams consider the language needs of all EL SWD students as such needs relate to their IEPs. The Division shall inform all principals and Special Education staff that IEP and Section 504 team meetings involving eligibility determinations, determining or changing services, and reevaluations for each EL SWD must include an ESL-endorsed teacher who is knowledgeable about EL needs and services and relevant considerations related to ELs’ language and cultural background, has received the required training, and whenever possible, is familiar with the EL student’s needs. For all other IEP and Section 504 team meetings, the Division shall ensure that schools secure at least the input of this ESL-endorsed teacher if s/he cannot attend the meeting. If, prior to any IEP or Section 504 team meeting, the included ESL-endorsed teacher is not already knowledgeable about the student, the Division shall inform the teacher where the student’s files are located and when/how they can be accessed for his/her review.

2. IEPs and Section 504 Plans shall document that the student is an EL and include the student’s ACCESS scores, ELP levels, and EL Program services (i.e., L2 EL: 84 minutes of ELD Monday-Friday and 42 minutes of sheltered math Monday-Friday), and all accommodations needed for testing and assessments.
3. The Category Two special education file shall contain documents that identify the languages in which special education assessments were conducted; modifications, if any, of standard assessment procedures; the qualifications of the individuals completing the special education assessments; and the impact of language on the interpretation of the data, including a determination by the special education eligibility team that the EL’s level of English proficiency is not determinative of the decision to administer special education services. Toward that end, the Division shall ensure that ELs are evaluated in their native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. When conducting evaluations of ELs in the native language, the Division shall ensure that special education and 504 assessments are conducted by a qualified evaluator who is fluent in the student’s native language, or, where not practicable, assisted by a qualified interpreter.

4. The Division shall ensure that its Special Education Manual includes procedures to ensure that all ELs who are suspected of having a disability are promptly and appropriately assessed to determine whether they in fact have a disability. The Manual shall state that ELs cannot be denied access to special education services on the basis of their EL status and shall provide guidance on evaluation and placement considerations specific to EL SWDs.

E. Addressing Language Needs of the Parent

The Office of Translation and Interpretation Services shall develop and maintain a list of names and contact information for qualified professional bilingual special education evaluators in each of the Division’s major languages and other languages to the extent available, along with additional resources for those languages in which a bilingual evaluator is not readily available. The Division shall revise this list in September of each year to ensure that it is current and that the individuals listed are in fact available to conduct evaluations.

F. Prior to conducting an IEP or 504 meeting, schools shall review parental responses reflecting parents’ communication needs. School staff shall contact LEP parents who indicated a need for a translator or interpreter, or whose need otherwise becomes apparent to school staff. Families need to be notified of the availability of interpreters for IEP and 504 meetings and the ability for translation of an IEP and Section 504 Plan documents. Schools shall provide qualified interpreter and translator services upon request and free of charge to the parent. For all special education and 504-related translation and interpretation, the Division shall provide a qualified translator or interpreter who is trained in the specialized vocabulary needed to provide special education or 504-related translating and interpreting.

G. Upon request by an LEP parent, the Division shall translate requested portions of an EL SWD’s IEP or Section 504 Plan into Spanish and Urdu, the two next most common
languages requested by LEP parents of EL SWDs. The request for translation may be made before, at, or after an IEP or 504 meeting, and the Division shall provide the requested translation within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 20 school days following the IEP or 504 meeting. At IEP and 504 meetings, the Division shall remind LEP parents that they may, but are not required to, sign IEP or Section 504 Plan documentation if they have requested translated documentation.

When the Division translates an entire IEP or Section 504 Plan into a language other than the four languages most requested by LEP parents, the Division shall maintain the translated portions of the template to use in response to requests for translation in that language from other LEP parents of SWDs, wherever practicable. Where the Division is unable to provide a translation of an IEP or Section 504 Plan for another common language or a low-incidence language, the Division shall provide an interpreter and maintain documentation of each such instance to determine the demand and need for written translations of IEP or Section 504 Plans.

Prior to conducting an IEP or 504 meeting, the Division shall review parental responses reflecting parent’s communication needs. The Division shall contact LEP parents who indicated a need for a translator or interpreter, or whose need otherwise becomes apparent to the Division, to notify them of the availability of interpreters for IEP and 504 meetings and the ability for translation of an IEP and Section 504 Plan documents. The Division shall provide qualified interpreter and translator services upon request and free of charge to the parent. For all special education and 504-related translation and interpretation, the Division shall provide a qualified translator or interpreter who is trained in the specialized vocabulary needed to provide special education or 504-related translating and interpreting.

VIII. Progress Monitoring

The Division and school shall monitor the academic performance of current and recently exited (i.e., exited within the past two years) ELs. As part of this monitoring, the Division and school shall identify all current ELs by their ELP levels on all class rosters and all recently exited students as former ELs (i.e., Level six, year one and two) for two years.

The Division and school shall conduct a semi-annual review of current ELs with ELP Levels one to five by reviewing their grades, standardized test scores, and progress reports. If this review indicates that the EL needs additional EL Program services, the school shall initiate an appropriate level of EL services as soon as possible but by no later than 30 days. The Division and school shall monitor Level 6, year 1 and year 2 students, and opt-out ELs at interim report periods during the first and third quarters (e.g., weeks five and 25) by reviewing at least their grades, standardized test scores, and progress reports to determine if these students need any additional academic support services (e.g., tutoring) or need to be reentered (or entered for the first time in the case of opt-out ELs) into direct EL services. Additionally, if a student being monitored fails to make academic progress, as measured by grades and assessments, at any time during the monitoring period, and if a school-based team familiar with the student determines that this failure is due to a lack of English
proficiency, the school shall offer the student’s parent/guardian direct EL services and shall document this offer. If the parent consents in writing on the Opt-Out (Refusal) Form, the student shall be provided with appropriate EL services.

IX. Refusal of Services

If after the Division informs the parent/guardian of an EL of his/her ELP score, the parent/guardian refuses to have his/her EL child enrolled in the EL Program or requests to have the EL child removed from the EL Program, the Division shall have the student’s principal, or his or her designated administrator, (with the ELD teacher when available) meet with the parent/guardian to:

A. Describe the range of EL Program services that the EL child could receive if the parent/guardian does not refuse services or withdraw the EL from services, including the instructional methodology and qualifications and training of the teachers that the Division plans to employ to meet the EL’s educational needs;

B. Discuss the benefits the EL child is likely to gain by receiving EL Program services; and

C. Encourage the parent/guardian to allow the EL child to receive EL Program services for at least 30 days before making a decision to refuse or withdraw from services.

If any parent/guardian of an EL communicates a refusal or withdrawal from EL Program services, the Division shall do the following:

1. Provide the student’s core content teachers with a class roster identifying the student’s ELP level and his/her refusal or withdrawal status;

2. Monitor the academic progress of the student twice per year (e.g., weeks five and 25) to assess (i) his/her ability to meaningfully and equally participate in the regular education programs; and (ii) whether s/he needs to enter into the EL Program to meaningfully and equally participate in the regular education programs; and

3. Whenever appropriate, including whenever the semi-annual monitoring reveals that the student is struggling academically or not making ELP progress, the Division shall inform his/her parents that the student is not progressing and recommend EL Program services.

If, notwithstanding efforts taken by the Division, the parent/guardian continues to refuse EL services or request the EL’s withdrawal from services, the principal, or his or her designated administrator, shall document on the Opt-Out (Refusal) Form that he/she met with the parent/guardian, conveyed the information above, and the parent’s/guardian’s reasons for refusing services or withdrawing from such services. The principal, or his or her designated administrator, shall ask the parent/guardian to sign the form to verify the refusal of or withdrawal from EL services and the reasons stated accurately reflect the parent’s/guardian’s motivation for refusing or withdrawing from services. The principal, or
his or her designated administrator, shall provide parents/guardians with a copy of the form, submit a copy to the Office of EL Programs and Services, and maintain the form in the student’s Category Six file. If more than five percent of the ELs at a given school refuse or withdraw from EL services in a given school year, the Office of EL Programs and Services shall confer with the principal, or his or her designated administrator, analyze the reasons for the refusals and withdrawals, and take appropriate steps to reduce the refusal/withdrawal rate if the reasons raise concerns.

The Associate Superintendent for Student and Professional Learning (or designee) is responsible for implementing and monitoring this regulation.

This regulation and any related policies shall be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed.