

English Language Learners Program and Policy

To ensure Young Scholars is meeting the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs), the parents of all incoming students complete a comprehensive Home Language Survey (HLS) during the registration process. Young Scholars also reviews files from previous schools to determine if students are currently identified as ELLs. Students answering any question on the HLS with a response other than English but are not identified as ELL from previous schools have their records reviewed for the following information to determine individual need. In order to be exempt from the English language proficiency assessment, students must meet two of the below criteria in addition to receiving approval from a teacher familiar with the student's academic performance:

- Final grades of a B or better in the core subject areas;
- Scores on district-wide assessments that are comparable to the Basic performance level on the PSSA;
- Scores of Basic in Reading, Writing, and Math on the PSSA
- Scores of Basic in Reading, Writing and Math on the PSSA or an equivalent assessment from another state.

Young Scholars evaluates any students for whom there is a concern regarding their mastery of the English language using the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT). Results of this assessment are used in combination with other student information in order to determine a grade and age appropriate ESL placement.

Young Scholars files records including HLS, test scores, and annual progress in students' folders in the school office. Students who are exited from ELL are monitored for two years to assure their continued success.

ELL Program Summary

Young Scholars' English as a Second Language (ESL) program focuses on developing students' literacy in English. The model that we use is Specially Designed Academic Instruction delivered In English (SDAIE). The SDAIE Program offers:

- standards-based English instruction at the appropriate proficiency level
- content area instruction aligned with corresponding standards and adapted to meet needs of the students
- assessment processes that reflect the standards and instruction

Instruction in ESL includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing at different levels of proficiency: beginning, intermediate, and advanced. The type and amount of standards-based ESL instruction provided to students depends upon their level of language development and proficiency as determined by the W-APT. However, guidelines for amounts of daily ESL instructional time are:

- for non-English-speaking students—2 to 3 hours

- beginner—2 hour
- intermediate—1 to 1½ hours
- advanced—1 hour.

ESL staff hold an Instructional I or II Certificate and have appropriate training to teach ESL classes. Content teachers are provided with appropriate training in modifying instruction for ELLs.

Grading of ELLs

ELLs are graded using the same grading system as all other students. A student may not be retained in a grade based solely on his/her ESL language proficiency.

ELLs with Disabilities

ELLs may be eligible for the full range of Special Education services as appropriate.

Annual Assessment of ELLs

Young Scholars assessment processes for ELLs comply with all state and federal laws. ELLs take the WAPT annually and take the PSSA with allowable accommodations.

Exit Criteria

In order to be exited from the ESL program, students must meet of the following criteria:

1. Score 5.0 on a Tier C ACCESS for ELLs assessment (students with a minimum score of 4.7 may also be exited if they score a 5.0 in each domain of the W-APT assessment)
 - a. If a student scores Proficient on the PSSA Reading test, s/he may be exited with 4.5 or above on the January ACCESS test.
2. Score Basic on the PSSA in Math
3. Have final grades of 70 or better in core subjects (Math, English, Science and Social Studies.)

Students are monitored for two years after exiting ESL using a review of grades, benchmark tests, PSSA's, and teacher observations. Records of these reviews are kept in the student's file. Teachers may offer support to monitored students as they would for any student seeking additional assistance with classroom work, instruction, or assessment. This monitoring is not considered an extension of the language instructional program.

Parent Involvement

Parents of ESL students are afforded the opportunity to meet with the school staff, with the assistance of an interpreter, in order to understand Young Scholars' program and to offer their input. All information disseminated to the students and their parents is provided in the language or mode preferred by the parents. The ESL program is evaluated annually to ascertain that it is meeting its goals for the students. ESL students and their parents are guaranteed full access to all Young Scholars programs and services.