

Van Buren School District



ESOL Program Guide 2023-2024

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Revised February, 2024

This is a live document and is subject to review and change according to the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines.

This guide follows state and federal laws and mandates. All deadlines, prescribed assessments, and statewide standard forms are required. How and who your district chooses to execute each procedure is a local decision, but must remain within the guidelines.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 3
Philosophy and Goals	Page 4
Arkansas' English Language Proficiency Standards	Page 4
Acronyms	Page 5-7
Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) Components	Page 7
A. SCHOOL DISTRICT OBLIGATIONS TO EL STUDENTS AND LEP PARENTS	Page 7
B. EDUCATIONAL APPROACH	Page 7
C. IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING ALL POTENTIAL EL STUDENTS	Page 8-13
D. PROVIDING EL STUDENTS WITH A LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	Page 13-15
E. STAFFING AND SUPPORTING ESL PROGRAMS	Page 15
F. PROVIDING MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO ALL CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAM	Page 15-17
G. AVOIDING UNNECESSARY SEGREGATION OF EL STUDENTS	Page 17
H. EVALUATING EL STUDENTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROVIDING SPECIAL EDUCATION AND ESL SERVICES	Page 17
I. MEETING THE NEEDS OF EL STUDENTS WHO OPT OUT OF ESL PROGRAMS OR PARTICULAR ESL SERVICES	Page 18
J. MONITORING AND EXITING EL STUDENTS FROM ESL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES	Page 18
K. EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ESL PROGRAM	Page 20
L. ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PARENTS	Page 21
M. APPENDIX	Page 22

INTRODUCTION

In 2023-2024, English Learners (ELs) comprised 10% of the total student population of the Van Buren School District. Currently, 89% of our EL students speak Spanish, 5% speak Laotian, 3% speak Vietnamese, and 3% speak a mixture of other languages. The purpose of this guide is to support the work of teachers and administrators of the Van Buren School District in their service toward ELs. Set-forth in this document is information regarding appropriate and effective services for ELs as well as a clear statement of our responsibilities in educating students for whom English is not the first language.

The English To Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program Guide is a resource for district staff providing program knowledge for meeting the needs of English Learners (ELs). This guide will serve as a tool to ensure student success and school improvement. It contains the policies and procedures of our program, as well as links to forms used in identifying, assessing, placing, serving, and monitoring ELs in reaching proficiency.

The ESOL staff is dedicated to providing every member of the Van Buren School District with sufficient information about the district's EL program and making a difference in the lives of our ELs. All staff members will have access to this guide through the district website. In addition, all staff members will receive staff development and training designed to help them understand the policies and procedures outlined in the guide, as well as ESOL practices which will serve as tools to help our ELs be college and career ready.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

The primary philosophy of the Van Buren School District's English Learner Program is to take into consideration the individual differences of our families and to implement a program that will benefit and improve education for each child who enters school regardless of their English proficiency and/or cultural backgrounds and perspectives. All students will have equal opportunities to participate fully in the education system through appropriate communication with parents and/or guardians. Letters and other information sent home will be in a language or form the parents and/or guardians understand. Other issues related to the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population will be addressed in a timely and proactive manner.

Furthermore, Van Buren School District will provide a balanced English learner program that will prepare English Learners (ELs) to function in both the academic and social arenas. The Van Buren School District will provide a research-based ESL program for students who are identified as English learners. Our goal is to have students succeed in the content areas while learning academic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

English learners in the Van Buren School District will receive English language development instruction to grow their language proficiency and will have linguistic support in all content areas to become academically proficient and college/career ready. Students will attain full English proficiency as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA21) and students will achieve grade level academic performance as measured by the Arkansas mandated assessments.

Students will be encouraged to maintain their own culture while learning to live and participate in their new community (biculturalism). All teachers and staff of EL students will be provided with information and training to enhance their roles in this process.

District ESOL Staff:

Jeff Dean - Director
Cynthia Bailey - 9-12 ESOL Teacher
Christina Behm - 6-8 ESOL Teacher
Krista Leaton - K-5 Newcomer's Class Teacher
Katrina Rogers - K-5 Newcomer's Class Teacher

Arkansas English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards

ELP Standards and Resources

The 10 English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards are organized according to a schema that represents each standard's importance to ELs' participation in the practices called for by college- and-career-ready ELA & Literacy, mathematics, and science standards. In the complete ELP Standards documents the ten standards are linked to K-12 Practices in math, science, and ELA, as well as to the CCSS ELA/Literacy Standards.

ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	MEANING
ALP	Alternative Language Program
Alt-ELPA	Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21 st Century. Arkansas' Alt-ELPA Assessment available Spring 2023.
BICS	Basic interpersonal cognitive skills (see common terminology)
CALP	Cognitive academic language proficiency (see common terminology)
CCSSO	Chief Council of School and State Officers
CM	Constructing Meaning . Sheltered English instruction methodology created by Susanna Dutro
ELD	English Language Development (see common terminology)
ELDA	English Language Development Assessment (former Arkansas ELP annual assessment)
ELL/EL	English Language Learner/English Learner (see common terminology)
ELP	English Language Proficiency (see common terminology)
ELPA21	English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21 st Century. Arkansas' ELP test effective Spring 2016.
EOC	End of Course exam
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act (same as NCLB)
ESL	English as a Second Language method of instruction
ESOL	English to Speakers of Other Languages method of instruction

FEP	Fluent English Proficient
HLS	Home Language Survey (older name of such survey in Arkansas)
HLUS	Home Language Usage Survey
ITBS	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
L1/L2	L1 = primary or first language. L2 = second language
LAS	Language Assessment Scales
LEA	Local Education Agency
LEP	Limited English proficient – synonym of EL (Federal term used in ESEA)
LIEP	Language Instruction Educational Program (see common terminology)
LMS	Language Minority Student – synonym of PHLOTE
LPAC	Language Proficiency Assessment Committee
MAC II	Maculaitis II –English proficiency test
NCLB	No Child Left Behind (same as ESEA)
NGSS	Next Generation Science Standards
NRT	Norm Referenced Test (e.g., ITBS)
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
PHLOTE	Primary Home Language Other Than English

RAEL	Recently Arrived English Learner
SDAIE	Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English—a sheltered instruction model
SEA	State Education Agency
SIFE	Students with Interrupted Formal Education
SIOP	Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol – an instructional model
SLIFE	Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education
SMT	State Mandated Test(s)
SPED	Special Education

Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) Components

A. School District Obligations to EL Students and LEP Parents

The obligation not to discriminate based on race, color, or national origin requires public schools to take affirmative steps to ensure that limited English proficient (LEP) students, now more commonly known as known as English Learner (EL) students or English Language Learners (ELLs), can meaningfully participate in educational programs and services, and to communicate information to LEP parents in a language they can understand.

The following materials include information for students and parents, OCR guidance and resources for education officials about their obligations to EL students and LEP parents, and added resources with related information.

The following summary provides the legal context for services provided to ELs and their families: [Legal Context For EL Services](#)

B. Educational Approach

The Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Office for Civil Rights does not prescribe a specific program design/educational approach. It is the district’s responsibility to ensure that the educational approach selected addresses:

- How the district provides for English Language Development (ELD)
- How the district provides access to core content programming for ELs (CCP)

ESL Program Curriculum

The Van Buren School District utilizes English Language Development (ELD) curriculum for ELs at all levels of English language proficiency following the Arkansas State Standards and the ELPA21 standards. We provide a Newcomer's Class for beginning ELD students K-12.

C. Identifying and Assessing All Potential EL Students

1. Home Language Usage Survey

As part of the enrollment process in the Van Buren School District, ALL students complete a Home Language Usage Survey (HLUS). The HLUS form is a required component of every registration packet and is accessible in the Registration Gateway Portal. This survey is provided in English, Spanish, Marshallese, Lao, Arabic and Vietnamese.

- Completion of the HLUS is ensured by the **school registrar/secretary** at the home school when reviewing Registration Gateway enrollment.
- When one or more of the questions on the HLUS indicates a language other than English, the student is identified as a Primary or Home Language Other Than English student or PHLOTE.
- Only if the HLUS indicates a language other than English is spoken at home, should the building registrar check the ESL box in eSchool ensuring the HLUS is automatically sent to the ESL Office. All students must have a completed HLUS in their permanent/cumulative folder.
- The HLUS should only be filled out by the parent/guardian upon initial enrollment. A student re-enrolling in the district should **not** complete a second HLUS.
- A second HLUS **may not** be completed in order to exit a child from the ESL program

2. eSchool Notes for **Registrars**

- Registrars should check the **ESL box** on the **Personal** screen for students who are initially assessed for English proficiency due to another language listed on the HLUS. Registrars should also check the **Title III Eligible** on the **SIS/Misc Items** under the **Registration** page.
- At the opening of the school year, parents and guardians of students who have been identified as an EL and placed in the district's ESOL program must be notified within 30 days of their child's identification and placement by the ESOL Office.
- After the school year begins, parents and guardians of students should be notified within two weeks of their child's identification and placement by the ESOL Office.

- The HLU is filed in the student's permanent record file via the registration gateway portal. Copies are kept in the student's ESOL folder in an electronic database.

3. ELPA Screener Process

- Based on the results of the HLU, students are given the ELPA21 screener. The ELPA21 screener assesses the student's academic English in all four language domains (Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening) and must be administered by a trained testing administrator. (Training guidelines are outlined in the District Test Coordinators' (DTC) Memos in the [livebinder](#) on the DESE/ADE website.)
- Before administering the screener, ensure no prior ELPA21 screener/summative assessment data is available for the student. If existing ELPA21 data is less than a year old, that data will be used. The ESOL Office will assist with making this determination.
- Screen students with no/outdated ELPA21 data with the ELPA21 screener. The ESOL Office will assist with the screener.

4. Teacher Referral/Recommendation

- A teacher may notice a student's social behavior or academic achievement indicates a potential language barrier issue even though the HLU indicates English only. In this case, the teacher must contact the ESOL Building Designee and provide documentation for concern.
- The ESL Building Designee will contact the District ESOL Director. The ESOL Director will then determine if usage of language other than English was present from birth to an extent that potentially impacted the students' English language development by using the [Arkansas Home Language Verification Form](#).
- If there is evidence that another language is impacting the student's language development, the ESOL District office will begin the screening process.
- If it is determined that the student is in need of ESL services, a notation should be made on the HLU and all documentation kept in the student's permanent folder as well as the ESL file.

5. Transfer Students

- If a student transfers into the district from another Arkansas district, the ESL Registrar will check TRIAND for student data, in order to determine if the student has already been identified as an EL.
- If a student transfers into the district from a state, territory, or country **other than Arkansas or a state not using ELPA21, the student must be screened using the ELPA21 screener.**
- The district must screen, determine placement, and notify the parent of services.
- The district has 30 calendar days if a student enrolls on the first day of school for screening, placement, and parent notification of services.
- The district has 14 calendar days if the student enrolls after the first 30 days of school for screening, placement, and parent notification of services.

6. Re-enrolling Students (Reactive Students)

- If a student has previously been enrolled in the district, transferred, and returns, procedures for all transfer students apply.
- If the student has a prior exit, attempt to retroactively monitor the student with other data to see if he can continue in the monitoring status as per the Professional Judgment Rubric data.
- If the student has NEVER exited, **and** the available ELPA21 data is more than a year old **and** the district can not locate ELPA21 data in Triand or in the ELPA21 data system, then re-screen and proceed with appropriate placement.

7. Foreign Exchange Students

- Based on the language of Title VI and the Lau decision, a foreign exchange student who is enrolled in a public school in the United States is a 'person in the United States,' and the Lau provisions would therefore apply.
- Foreign exchange students must be given the same identification, assessment, and placement procedures as other students. This includes using the Home Language Verification Form *IF* the HLU S reflects the language of the host family and not the student's first language (the language spoken in the home of the student's birth). The ESL Designee will follow district procedures and administer the ELPA 21 screener to determine the proficiency level of the foreign exchange student.
- If the results of the assessment indicate the student is LEP, the student must be placed into the ESL program. Foreign exchange students who qualify for services must also be administered the annual ELPA21 summative assessment.
- All students in the program, including those who have waived services and foreign exchange students, must participate in all state assessments.

8. Initial Placement

- Initial placement of a student is determined by a committee of educators responsible for the appropriate education of the EL student. This committee is called a Language Proficiency and Assessment Committee (LPAC) and consists of at least three people from the following list:
 - **Building Administrator (required)**
 - **ESL Designee - must be a certified teacher who is ESL trained (required)**
 - **Classroom Teacher (required)**
 - Other members as deemed necessary, for example:
 - Special Education teacher
 - GT teacher
 - Counselor
 - Coach
 - Social worker
 - Parent (**but not required**)
- Students demonstrating proficiency (a score of 4 or 5) in each of the four domains of the ELPA21 screener must also meet criteria on the "Professional Judgment Rubric" to verify

whether or not they qualify for services for English Language Development. Screeners indicating limited English proficiency qualify a student for placement in the ESL Program.

9. Parental Notification

- Parents/guardians must be notified in a language or manner they understand regarding the information and decision of the LPAC. It is optional to invite the parent to the actual LPAC meeting, but if invited, invitations to attend the LPAC meeting must be in a language and/or manner that the parent understands. If a parent does not understand English and requests a school-provided interpreter, the school must provide an interpreter to the extent practicable. Notification letters must be dated and signed by district or school personnel.
- The district has 30 calendar days if a student enrolls on the first day of school for screening, placement, and parent notification of services.
- The district has 14 calendar days if the student enrolls after the first 30 days of school for screening, placement, and parent notification of services.

10. eSchool Notes for ESL staff / Registrars

- It is the responsibility of the ESOL Director to ensure the accuracy of all EL Data in eSchool for the Van Buren School District.
- Students who are initially assessed for English proficiency should have the following information entered into eSchool:
 - **Home Language** on Student Summary Page under “Registration” reflecting language other than English should be entered by the **school registrar**.
 - **ESL box checked** located on the Student Summary Page on the Personal screen under “Educational Factors” should be entered by the **school registrar**.
 - **Language of Correspondence** on “Guardian Contact” screen(s) should be entered by the **school registrar**
 - **Title III box** checked on “SIS/Misc Items Fields” screen for all LMS students in a Title III district only should be completed by the **school registrar**
 - **ELL Entry/Exit Start Date**--in the “ELL Program” screen *The date the student entered a U.S. school for the first time in grades K-12, regardless if the entry was in Arkansas or another state.* MM/DD/YYYY will be entered by the **ESL office personnel**.
- If student **does NOT meet exit criteria** upon initial assessment and is an English Learner:
 - **Check the “Value” box** to the left of the ELL Entry/Exit Start Date on the ELL screen will be entered by the ESL Office personnel.
 - Choose the **Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP)-ELD Program Type code** on the ELL Screen (codes explained below) entered by the ESL office personnel.

- Has not attended one or more schools in any one or more states for more than 3 full academic years (K-12).

Please note: not all immigrant students have a language other than English, so additional staff may be entering this data for non LMS students.

D. Providing EL Students with a Language Assistance Program

Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP) Codes: Required for all students identified as EL Status - even those whose parents have waived services. These must be recorded correctly in eSchool for all EL students. Each student must have an English Language Development (ELD) Program Code and an Access to Core Content (CC) Code.

ELD PROGRAM MODELS:

- **ELD Push-in (ELD-PI):** ESOL teachers or ESOL Instructional Assistants providing English language development instruction to English Learners (ELs) in the mainstream classroom. Instructional Assistants need to be under the direct supervision of a certified teacher. This means that a teacher/instructional assistant is traveling to class to meet with specific EL student(s) in their mainstream classroom for the purpose of English language development instruction. ELD Push-in is for a predetermined amount of time (according to LPAC decision based on language proficiency level as determined by the ELPA21).
- **ELD Pull-out (ELD-PO):** ELs spend most of the day in a mainstream classroom and are “pulled out” for a predetermined amount of time to receive designated ELD instruction. This does not take the place of what is commonly known as RTI, as students may qualify for, and receive the benefits of, both services. Instruction is provided by ESOL teachers or ESOL Instructional Assistants working under the direct supervision of a certified teacher. The program targets specific English language skills that are preventing students from fully participating in the mainstream classroom. This programming is designed for students at beginner, early intermediate, and intermediate levels. EL students of similar proficiency and/or similar grade level may be grouped for instruction. This approach is more common in elementary school settings.
- **ELD Embedded (ELD-EM):** ELs receive dedicated ELD instruction during a mainstream content class by classroom teachers intentionally delivering instruction in English language development, ideally on a daily basis. This may be done in collaboration with an ESOL Teacher or ESOL Instructional Assistant working under the direction of a certified teacher.
 - For students at beginning, early intermediate, or intermediate levels of the English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards, this is a small group or individual mini-lesson specifically teaching the language needed to engage successfully across a variety of content areas for a predetermined amount of time according to LPAC decision based on language proficiency level as determined by the ELPA21.
 - For students with the most severe cognitive disabilities who qualify for alternate assessments, utilize the Alt ELP Standards.
- **ELD Embedded Advanced (ELD-EM):** ELs receive dedicated ELD instruction during a mainstream content class by classroom teachers intentionally delivering instruction

in English language development, ideally on a daily basis. This may be done in collaboration with an ESOL Teacher or ESOL Instructional Assistant working under the direction of a certified teacher.

- For students at early advanced and advanced levels of the ELP standards, which are approaching grade-level language standards. This is often embedded within the ELA instruction provided to all students.
- **ELD Class Period (ELD-CP):** ELs receive their ELD instruction during a regular class period and also receive course credit for the class according to state and local guidelines. This approach is more common in middle schools and high schools. This is done with careful consideration of scheduling so that ELs do not miss out on credits that would allow them to graduate within an appropriate timeline while maintaining meaningful access to specialized courses.
- **Newcomer Program – ELD (ELD-NP):** Separate, relatively self-contained instructional program designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly arrived immigrants. Typically, students attend these programs on a short-term basis (usually no more than two years) before they enter more traditional programs (e.g., a different LIEP code for ELD, such as embedded, class period, push-in, or pull-out). ELs receive their ELD in this program.
- **ELD Newcomer Program:** Separate, relatively self-contained educational interventions designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly-arrived immigrants. Typically, students attend these programs on a short-term basis (usually no more than two years) before they enter more traditional programs (e.g., English language development and/or Sheltered Instruction courses or programs). ELs receive their ELD in this program.
- **Declined Services and not participating in an ELD program (ELD-DS):** NOTE: Used only for students whose parents have declined the ELD program services.

1. Access to Core Content Program Models:

- **Sheltered Instruction (CCP-SI):** Teacher provides instruction that simultaneously introduces both language and content, using specialized and research-based techniques to accommodate ELs' linguistic needs. Instruction focuses on the teaching of academic content rather than the English language itself, even though the acquisition of English may be one of the instructional goals. Some examples of sheltered instruction models may include SIOP, SDAIE, and CM. Classes using a Sheltered Instruction approach can be designed exclusively for ELs or for a mixture of ELs and non-ELs.
- **Content Classes with Integrated EL Support (CCP-CC):** This approach has content knowledge as the goal; teachers provide appropriate linguistic accommodations/supports so that English Learners may access the content. This is not the same as Embedded ELD but may work in conjunction with Embedded ELD as well as with other ELD models.
- **Newcomer Program – Core Content instruction (CCP-NP):** Separate, relatively self-contained instructional program designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly arrived immigrants. Typically, students attend these programs on a short-term basis (usually no more than two years) before they enter more traditional programs (e.g., English language development and/or Sheltered Instruction courses or

programs). ELs receive their core content instruction in this program. These programs enroll ELs exclusively.

- **Declined services and not participating in an access to core content program (CCP-DS):** NOTE: Used only for students whose parents/guardians have declined the access to core content program services.

2. **ALE Learning Centers:**

Students at our ALE Learning Center will receive the same ESOL Services as our other schools.

E. Staffing and Supporting the ESOL Program

All certified and classified staff should receive annual ESL training. Professional learning may include, but is not limited to:

- English Language Proficiency Standards
- Policies and Procedures
- Integrating language acquisition and content instruction which includes sheltering English through teacher scaffolding
- Authentic assessment of EL students
- Classroom coaching and support of teachers of ELs
- Culturally responsive instructional practices
- Specific training for paraprofessionals who provide instruction

Scheduling of these opportunities is a joint effort between the ESL Director and the district personnel responsible for professional development.

F. Meaningful Access to all District Programs

1. **Core Curriculum:**

All students are entitled to instruction in the district's core curriculum (Arkansas Academic Standards) while receiving appropriate language assistance support. This includes equal access to the school's facilities, such as computer and science, and other labs or facilities, to ensure that EL students are able to participate meaningfully in the educational programs. Meaningful access to the core curriculum is a key component in ensuring that EL students acquire the tools to succeed in general education classrooms within a reasonable length of time. This is documented, per student, as the Language Instruction Educational Program Access to Core Content code described earlier.

2. **G/T and AP:**

All students will have equal access to "Gifted and Talented" and "Advanced Placement" programs.

- Instruments used to identify students for gifted and talented programs will not be based on English language proficiency.
- Teachers of AP classes will use best practices for supporting ELs to allow full participation.

3. Special Education:

All students will have equal access to “Special Education” services and programs. Proper documentation must be made to prove that the student is being placed in the special education program based on a learning disability and not because of English language proficiency level. ELs are eligible for dual services.

- [Navigating the Intervention and Evaluation Process for ELs with Potential Disabilities: A Resource Guide for Local Education Agencies \(PDF\)](#)
- LiveBinder Link - [ELs with Disabilities](#)

4. Extracurricular Programs:

All students will have equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular and nonacademic activities.

- ELs may choose to participate in all athletics and other non academic activities.
- Efforts will be made to make these activities as accessible as possible to all students regardless of their language, ethnicity, or financial capabilities.

5. Classroom Instructional Scaffolds and Testing Accommodations:

The mainstream classroom teacher has the primary responsibility for instruction of the EL. All teachers and instructional assistants must be trained in ESL strategies. Individual student accommodations will be determined by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). Classroom teachers regularly access ELs’ instructional scaffolds and testing accommodations within the [Ellevation platform](#). Classroom instruction should be delivered using comprehensible input, or instruction meaningful to the learner.

Testing Accommodations are available on classroom, local and state mandated tests. The LPAC decides which allowable accommodations each EL student should receive. The classroom teacher must regularly use the testing accommodations throughout the school year in order for the accommodation to be valid on spring state assessments. There are no exemptions to state assessments for ELs.

Classroom teachers will be provided professional development training providing strategies and methods for instructional delivery and assessment. Teachers are strongly encouraged to continue their education and research concerning our growing population of English Learners. Professional development is provided through Northwest Education Service Cooperative, Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), ARKTESOL, and the district.

6. Guidelines for Grading:

Assigning failing grades to students who are not proficient at expressing their ideas and thoughts in English is not acceptable. Likewise, it is not appropriate to assign a grade that indicates satisfactory work if grade level standards incorporated with ELP Standards are not being met by the student. Every effort should be made to teach the EL at grade level using appropriate accommodations to scaffold the learning and methods of lesson delivery.

- Teachers may be required to explain how they are meeting the needs of their ELs. Specifically how they are providing scaffolds for EL engagement, participation and grade level learning.
- All classroom and testing accommodations are documented on the LPAC form accessible through the ELlevation platform.

7. Students Entering 9th GRADE as Beginning ELs:

If an EL student enters ninth grade with beginning-level proficiency, the Van Buren School District will provide a program of instruction to help the student earn a regular high school diploma with their grade-level peers. Specific attention will be paid to classroom accommodations; mapping of courses for the four years will be a team effort with the counselor and the ESL teacher, and enrollment in ESL English when it is an option will be scheduled for language development. In addition, EL students will be offered academic programming, like their never-EL peers, as well as the chance and support for participation in courses with college prerequisites.

Students entering school beyond 9th grade age will begin working towards 9th grade credits unless/until transcripts from other school districts prove that the student has already earned those credits.

8. Retention:

According to the law, a student may not be retained solely on the basis of English language proficiency. When making decisions the LPAC will consider the following:

- Cognitive ability is NOT related to English language proficiency
- It may take 5 to 7 years for an EL to develop full English language proficiency (see [ESSA Timeline to Proficiency Worksheet](#))
- Research shows retention to be a factor leading to dropout rates
- Separating a child from his peers can cause self-esteem issues, and EL students already experience the need to fit in with peers
- Retention may only be considered if:
 - Students have received appropriate accommodations in mainstream classes but have not shown progress in their language and content skills
 - Documentation of appropriate accommodations must be provided.
 - Documentation that the Language Instruction Educational Program has otherwise proven to be effective.

G. Avoiding Unnecessary Segregation of EL Students

The Van Buren School District does not segregate students on the basis of national origin or EL status. While the EL program may require that students receive separate instruction for a limited period of time, the district will make every effort to ensure that this is done in the least segregated manner possible.

H. Evaluating EL Students for Special Education Services and Providing Special Education and ESL Services

All EL students who qualify for special education services and ESL services may receive both according to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and LPAC decisions.

- All assessments administered to EL students will be in a form or language that will yield the most valid results.
- Parents will be informed about how the language instruction education program meets the objectives of their child's IEP.
- Students qualifying for both programs of service will receive both services, with neither outweighing the importance of the other.

I. Meeting the Needs of EL Students Who Waived or Declined (Opt Out) of ESL programs:

Parents have a right to decline or waive (opt out) of the ESL program or particular ESL services within an ESL program for their child. Services only, not identification, may be declined. If a parent/guardian declines ESL program services, the student must be marked in eSchool (value box checked on the "ELL Programs" page) as an English Learner with a parent ESL Waived Services Date recorded until the student meets exit criteria or the parent/guardian requests that the student be placed back into ESL services. Do not enter an exit date.

- To ensure the needs of waived/opt-out EL students are being met, the district will yearly monitor the progress of students who have waived/opted out.
- If an EL student who waived/opted out of the programs or services does not demonstrate appropriate growth in English proficiency, or struggles in one or more subjects due to language barriers, the district will take affirmative steps including informing the EL student's parents of his or her lack of progress and offering the parents further opportunities to enroll the student in the ESL program or at least certain ESL services at any time.
- Waived/Opt-out EL students must have their English language proficiency assessed annually to gauge their progress in attaining English proficiency and to determine if they are still in need of and legally entitled to ESL services. There is no assessment exemption for students who do not receive ESL services. This means all EL students in Arkansas must participate in the Arkansas' annual summative English proficiency test, currently ELPA21. Once waived/opt-out EL students meet valid and reliable criteria for exiting from EL status, the Van Buren School District will monitor their progress for four years, as it does with other exited EL students.

J. Monitoring and Exiting EL Students from ESL Programs and Services

Annual Reviews:

The Van Buren School District will monitor the progress of all EL students in achieving English language proficiency and acquiring content knowledge as mandated by the state of Arkansas. This applies to all students, even if they have waived/opted out of the ESL program. The District will take appropriate steps to assist students who are not adequately progressing.

Annual (yearly) reviews of English learners will be conducted by the school's/district's Language Placement and Assessment Committee (LPAC). Each annual review will yield one of three decisions:

1. Student has not met required exit criteria, so he/she remains in the program.
2. Student has met required exit criteria, so he/she exits the program and begins the monitoring process.
3. Student is in the monitoring process, classified as a Former English Learner, and is monitored for four years, according to federal guidelines as outlined in the [Arkansas ESSA Plan](#).

To assess EL students' acquisition of English proficiency, all school districts in Arkansas will use the ELPA21. ELPA21 (English Language Proficiency Assessment) is a standardized test aligned with English Language Proficiency Standards. It assesses language acquisition in the four domains of Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing.

Exit or Reclassification:

To exit an EL student from the ESL program, they must meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrate proficiency on ELPA21
 - Separate proficient scores in each domain or a composite score of “proficient” derived from scores in all four language domains
- Demonstrate proficiency on the Arkansas Professional Judgment Rubric by having at least two pieces of required evidence.
- This must be documented on the [Language Minority Student Exit/Monitoring](#) form mentioned above. The document may be signed and completed digitally.
- Information on the exiting process can be found in the [Arkansas Professional Judgment Rubric Exit Criteria Guidance](#).
- The decision to exit or reclassify the EL student from the ESL program must be made on an annual basis by the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) following guidelines outlined in the Arkansas Professional Judgment Rubric. All Annual Review results must be recorded in eSchool no later than September 30 following spring ELPA21 Summative Testing.

Monitoring of Reclassified Students:

The Van Buren School District will monitor and provide assistance to all exited students for four years after exiting the ESL program, as mandated by the state (ADE) to ensure that:

- The student has not been prematurely exited
- Any academic deficits they incurred as a result of participation in the EL program have been remedied
- The student is meaningfully participating in the standard instruction program comparable to the never-EL peers
- If the student is re-entered into EL services, the ESL Director will document the basis for the re-entry and notify parent/guardian.

eSchool Coding

- All monitored students must have an entry date and an exit date.
- “Value” box must NOT be checked.
- “ESL/ELL Monitored” drop-down must be marked
 - M1--Monitored Year 1
 - M2--Monitored Year 2
 - M3--Monitored Year 3
 - M4--Monitored Year 4
 - MC--Monitoring Complete
- If there is any value in the RAEL status box, please delete.
- If, during monitoring, a student returns to EL status, delete the “Exit Date” and check the “Value” box again. Choose MC for Monitoring

K. EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ESOL PROGRAM

The Van Buren School District's ESOL program will be evaluated yearly by District Administrators and Building ESL Facilitators to determine if it is producing results which indicate that students are overcoming language barriers. The following areas will be considered:

- EL students are able to attain English proficiency within a reasonable period of time (according to the [ESSA Timeline to Proficiency](#))
- EL students are able to meaningfully participate in the standard educational program comparable to their never-EL peers
- EL students are progressing from grade to grade without content-area deficits that require remediation due to inclusion in the ESL program
- EL students are on track to graduate and have comparable opportunities to their never-EL peers to become college and career ready
- The achievement gap between EL students and never-EL students is declining over time
- The degree to which current and former EL students are represented in advanced classes, special education services, gifted and talented programs, and extracurricular activities relative to their never-EL peers

In evaluating the program, the committee will review each of the following parts of the program:

1. Identification Process

- a. Are schools using the HLUS?
- b. Are buildings notifying ESOL designees of new enrollees?
- c. Are students being identified when they enroll?

2. Assessment of Students

- a. Are students assessed using the ELPA21 screener?
- b. Are assessors trained?
- c. Are schools using the assessment data?
- d. Are students assessed annually with the ELPA 21 formative assessment?
- e. Are students being assessed properly with state standardized tests?

3. Placement of students

- a. Are LPACs functioning according to guidelines?
- b. Is flexibility available for a student's schedule to work out appropriately?
- c. Is placement happening in a timely manner?
 - i. 30 calendar days for new enrollees at beginning of school year
 - ii. 14 calendar days for enrollees any time after that
 - iii. Records from other in-state districts received and reviewed

4. Curriculum and Instruction

- a. Are teachers informed of ELP standards and received appropriate professional development for implementation?
- b. Are teachers being provided with relevant student information and suggested accommodations?
- c. Are students able to attain English proficiency within a reasonable period of time?
- d. Are students making growth in acquiring the English language and academic achievement?
- e. Are students progressing from grade to grade without content-area deficits that require remediation due to inclusion in the ESL program?

- f. Are students on track to graduate college- and career-ready alongside their never-EL peers?
 - g. Are teachers assigning grades appropriately?
- 5. Staffing and Staff Development**
- a. How many teachers are ESL endorsed?
 - b. Are teachers pursuing endorsement or training?
 - c. Are buildings utilizing the knowledge teachers who have their ESL endorsements?
 - d. Is the ESL designee supported by staff and administration?
 - e. Is the ESL designee given time and opportunities to train the staff?

L. ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PARENTS

The Van Buren School District will ensure meaningful communication with LEP parents in a language they can understand. This includes all school-home communication, report cards, parent-teacher conferences, parent handbooks, etc. Many district specific items will need to be translated by the district. See the [Factsheet for Meeting the Needs of Parents who are Limited in English](#) for more information about what must be translated/interpreted.

- To help with Parent and Family Engagement requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and to meet the Civil Rights obligations of schools in working with Limited English Proficient (LEP) families and English Learner (EL) students across the state of Arkansas, leaders in the Arkansas Department of Education's Division of Elementary and Secondary Education are partnering with TransACT® Parent Notices.
- The partnership will provide all local education agencies representing hundreds of schools and teachers with unlimited access to expertly written parent notifications that meet legal requirements, guidance on required audiences, and recommended timelines.
- All Parent Notices are available to Arkansas educators in English and 10 high priority languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Marshallese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- All educators in Arkansas will have access to TransACT's General Education Parent Notices and ESEA (ESSA) Parent Notices. All Arkansas educators can now create accounts to access parent notices. To register for access go to the [TransACT Parent Notices page](#) and [Click here for the Quick Start Guide](#).
- The Van Buren School District will also provide Spanish language and other language translators and interpreters when required.

M. Appendix

- [HLUS](#)
- [Sample HLUS Verification Form](#)
- [Sample Parent Notification Form](#)
- Sample ELPA21 Exit/Monitoring Form ([DOCX](#)) ([PDF](#))
- Sample Alt ELPA Exit/Monitoring Form ([DOCX](#)) ([PDF](#))
- [Sample Waiver of Services Form](#)
- [Sample Initial Placement Annual Review Form](#)
- [Language Minority Student Exit Monitoring Form](#)
- [Sample Parent Notification of Exit Form](#)
- [ESSA Timeline to Proficiency](#)
- [Sample Timeline to Proficiency Tracker \(Google Sheets\)](#)
- [Timeline to Proficiency Worksheet](#)
- [LIEP Codes](#)
- [Sample Monitoring Continued Parent Letter](#)
- [Parent Notification of Return to English Learner Status](#)
- [Sample LMS Transfer Data/Records Request Form](#)