



English as a Second Language Program

- The mission of the Upper Arlington City Schools English as a Second Language program is to provide rigorous, individualized educational opportunities for students who do not speak English as their native language.
- The goal of the UA ESL Program is to prepare students to succeed in all areas of school and society through collaboration, structured support, and authentic language learning, while placing value on the native language and culture of all students.
- The UA ESL Program encompasses English language acquisition, general education academic proficiency, standardized assessment, communicative tools, and cultural competence.

Core Beliefs

The Language Learner

Every year, more and more students who speak languages other than English, and who come from homes and communities with diverse histories, traditions, worldviews, and educational experiences, populate our classrooms. To realize their personal, social, and long-term career goals, individuals will need to be able to communicate with others skillfully, appropriately, and effectively.

English Language Learners:

- need an environment that provides motivation and develops self-confidence, lower anxiety, and promotes academic risk-taking
- best learn language and culture in meaningful settings requiring authentic interactive communication with others, including native English speakers.
- construct meaning by connecting new information to existing knowledge, which is influenced by sociocultural factors such as background, customs, and experiences and which all contribute significantly to academic performance.
- enter our educational system with a wide range of cultural and academic knowledge as well as varying levels of first-language literacies.



Identification

Procedures & Evaluations to Enter the Upper Arlington English Language Learners Program

The Ohio Department of Education requires that students whose home language is other than English participate in English language proficiency assessments. The district coordinators will administer the IPT (Idea Proficiency Test) to students who may qualify for services based on the Home Language Survey. If a student scores Non-English or Limited English in ONE of the three areas (oral, reading, and writing), the student is identified as Limited English Proficient and enrolled in the ESL program. Testing of new students must be completed within 30 days of the student's enrollment.

Other factors to consider during the identification process include:

- Time in the U.S. prior to enrollment.
- Previous educational experiences.
- Prior ESL screening and/or identification by another U.S. school district.

Students who were identified by another state may need to be re-evaluated based on:

- Date of last test and/or last year of ESL services.
- Previous standardized test scores.

Parents will be notified with a Notice of Instruction letter indicating that their child has qualified for ESL services based on the IPT assessment.

English Proficiency Levels

Understanding the stages of English language acquisition

English Proficiency Levels of ELL Students

For the purpose of this guide, five levels are used to categorize ELL students at different stages of English language proficiency: *Pre-functional, Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced and Proficient/Trial Mainstream*. It should be recognized that within each of these levels, students will represent a certain range of proficiencies (low, mid, high).

Below is a description of the five levels of English language proficiency of ELL students. Students learning a new language proceed through different stages or levels of proficiency. Ohio has established five proficiency levels to categorize ELL students at different stages of their English language development:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| • Pre-functional | Level 1 |
| • Beginning | Level 2 |
| • Intermediate | Level 3 |
| • Advanced | Level 4 |
| • Proficient/Trial-Mainstream | Level 5 |

The following are summary descriptions of each of the proficiency levels:

Pre-functional: Students at this level may understand some isolated words (particularly school and social environment vocabulary), some high-frequency social conventions, and simple (single-word or short-phrase) directions, commands and questions. Regarding reading and pre-reading skills, students at this level may demonstrate an understanding of concepts of print (e.g., front-to-back, top to-bottom, left-to-right) and begin to track print. Students at this level participate in writing activities by drawing pictures and copying letters and some words.

Beginning: As ELL students' oral comprehension increases; they begin to speak by using single words or simple phrases. They are able to read simple texts and write simple sentences

Intermediate: At this level, students understand more complex speech, but still may require some repetition. They may have difficulty expressing all of their thoughts due to restricted vocabularies and limited commands of language structure. Students at this level speak in simple sentences, which are comprehensible and appropriate, but frequently marked by grammatical errors. They often have some trouble comprehending and producing complex structures and academic language.

Advanced: At this level, students' language skills are adequate for most day-to-day communication needs. Occasional errors occur. Students may have difficulty understanding and using some idioms, figures of speech and words with multiple meanings. They have occasional difficulty with complex structures and abstract academic concepts.

Students at this level may read with considerable fluency and are able to locate and identify the specific facts within the text. However, they may not understand texts in which the concepts are presented out of context, the sentence structure is complex or the vocabulary is abstract. They produce texts independently for personal and academic purposes. Structures, vocabulary and overall organization approximate the writing of native speakers of English. However, errors may persist in one or more of these domains.

Proficient/Trial-mainstream: At this final stage, students usually can participate in academic topical conversations without difficulty. They can follow complex and multi-level directions without assistance and understand aural information. Students at this level usually speak English fluently in social and grade-level academic settings and they control age-appropriate syntax and vocabulary in their speech.

Generally, students read and understand factual information on concrete topics. They may still need some support at higher levels of reading comprehension. In their writing, they usually show control of varied sentence structures, spelling and vocabulary, expressing well-developed thoughts.

During this transition stage, the students' progress is carefully monitored and additional support is provided on an as-needed basis.

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IS A LONG-TERM PROCESS

Language acquisition occurs over time with learners moving through developmental stages and gradually growing in proficiency. Individual learners, however, move through these stages at variable rates. Rates of acquisition are influenced by multiple factors including an individual's educational background, first language background, learning style, cognitive style, motivations and personality. In addition, socio-cultural factors, such as the influence of the English or native language community in the learner's life, may play a role in acquisition. In many instances learners "pick up" conversation skills related to social language more quickly than they acquire academic language skills. Educational programs must recognize the length of time it takes to acquire the English language skills necessary for success in school. *This means that ESL learners must be given the time it takes to attain full academic proficiency in English: often from 5 to 7 years or more.*

Methods of Instruction

Scheduling & Educational Standards



ESL tutors follow the Ohio English Language Proficiency Standards to guide instruction, and to ensure that students achieve English proficiency and academic mastery in subject content areas.

Kindergarten through 5th grade students participate in a pull-out program. The student spends most of the school day in a mainstream classroom and receives ESL instruction individually or in small groups. Elementary ESL tutors focus on literacy instruction, scaffolding of classroom assignments, and building cultural & background knowledge to support classroom instruction.

ESL tutors work with classroom teachers to create each student's schedule. The frequency, duration and form (pull-out or inclusion) are determined by the ESL tutor with consideration from the classroom teacher.

Middle school (6-8) students meet with an ESL tutor during their flex time. Instruction is one-on-one or in small groups, depending on the availability of the student and tutor. ESL tutors will assist students with homework, classroom assignments, test preparations, as well as provide individualized English instruction.

High school (9-12) students who are beginning or intermediate level will be enrolled in the ESL English course which is designed to build fluency of students' language and communication skills. Students will work on vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, speaking and writing skills, as well as explore cultural and community issues. High school students will also meet in one-on-one or small group settings with the ESL tutor during their study hall periods. This time is dedicated to supporting homework and classroom assignments, assisting with test preparation, and providing additional English instruction.

Testing & Assessment

Accommodations

English Language Standardized Testing

Assessment is an important and necessary part of every student's educational experience. The ESL program oversees several areas of assessment for ESL students, including:

- in-class assessments
- state mandated language acquisition tests
- national standardized tests

School districts are required by law to give meaningful and individualized accommodations on these assessments in order to give each student the opportunity to show his/her levels of learning and understanding.

ESL tutors will work with classroom teachers to ensure that classroom assessments are fair and accurate measures of a student's growth and understanding of classroom material.

Accommodations for in-class assessments could include, but are not limited to:

- extended time
- vocabulary support
- shortened/modified assignment
- alternative assessment

Each spring, the ESL department will administer the Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition (OTELA) to all ELLs in the district. This test is given in four separate parts and measures each student's ability to read, write, speak, and listen in English. While the OTELA has no bearing on grade-level advancement or scholastic achievement, it gives valuable feedback to both the district and the state about the language progress of our ELLs. It also affects each student's status as an English Language Learner (see next section for more information).

Finally, students will take a variety of national and state standardized assessments in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. ESL students will receive accommodations to assist with their understanding of testing material and the clarity of their response. These accommodations are assigned based on each individual student's needs. Accommodations may include:

- extended time
- use of translation services
- use of dictionaries for vocabulary support
- sheltered environment

Exiting the English as a Second Language Program



The State of Ohio requires that all ELL students demonstrate the ability to understand, speak, read and write the English language at a level in the annual OTELA (Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition).

Exiting the ESL program is based on a student's OTELA scores.

- Students in grades K-2 cannot be exited from the program.
- Students who obtain a composite score of 4 or 5 on the OTELA and obtain a subsequent composite score of 4 or above on the OTELA during the completion of a trial period of mainstream instruction in Grade 3 and above shall be exited from the program.
- Beginning in 3rd grade, a student who obtains a score of 5 on the OTELA is exited.. In addition, students who obtain a score of 4 are placed on a "monitor" status.

When students exit the Upper Arlington English as a Second Language program, they:

- have shown they can be academically successful in mainstream classes without language support.
- no longer need accommodations (use of dictionaries, extended time, etc.) in their mainstream classes and standardized assessments.
- are able to actively participate in mainstream classes.
- feel confident and ready to be successful without ESL supports.
- feel able to participate fully in society in their schools and community.

English as a Second Language Educational Team



Michelle Banks – Assoc. Director of Literacy & Elementary Learning
mbanks@uaschools.org

Liz Van Winkle – Upper Arlington High School, Tremont Elementary School & Hastings Middle School
evanwinkle@uaschools.org

Cynthia Redman – Tremont Elementary School
credman@uaschools.org

Jean Piper – Barrington Elementary School & Jones Middle School
jpiper@uaschools.org

Betsy Gyimesi – Windermere Elementary School
bgyimesi@uaschools.org

Jennifer Zalewski-Greensview Elementary School
jzalewski@uaschools.org

Carrie Szlag-Wickliffe Elementary School
cszlag@uaschools.org

