ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

Background

The District recognizes, respects and welcomes cultural diversity among its students. English Language Learners bring many strengths and experiences to the District. In welcoming English Language Learners, the District recognizes the challenges faced by students whose first language is not English. The District is committed to providing high quality programming to meet their needs. The District's intake process and ongoing instructional programming is designed to equip students with the skills and an understanding of the English language. This is necessary for students to succeed as learners so that they are able to participate fully in the Canadian education system and culture.

Procedures

1. In order to enable teachers and administrators to provide high quality and appropriate English language programming, the District supports a range of programs and services including but not limited to:

    1.1   Instructional resources;

    1.2   Consultation with the supervisor English Language Learning (ELL) and staff at the Reception Centre;

    1.3   Literacy, language and special needs assessment services;

    1.4   Mental health assessments and supports;

    1.5   Cultural and settlement supports;

    1.6   Contact with external agencies;

    1.7   School based staff allocations;

    1.8   Use of interpreters.

2. The Alberta Education English as a Second Language (ESL) coding system is categorized in four ways:

    2.1   301 – Foreign-born students whose first language is not English and who require English language support

    2.2   302 – International students who require English language support

    2.3   303 – Canadian born students whose first language is not English and who require English language support

2.4   640 – Refugee students who have limited or disrupted formal schooling and are unable to complete many courses in the Program of Studies and who require additional supports and services

3. The District registers students born outside of Canada. When necessary, document monitoring procedures and assessments are implemented and the District will continue to collect documents that are required for public education access and funding. It is critical for all foreign-born students to register as:

3.1   Alberta Education has a high level of accountability and a great deal of complexity of documentation with regard to foreign-born students

3.2   It ensures that the required documentation related to funding is collected and retained

3.3   Foreign-born students are included in the District database to ensure follow-up when documents expire

4. The District documentation database is thus maintained. This is used to generate reports identifying students and parents for whom a reminder to update and renew their immigration papers is required in order to ensure continued funding.

5. Principals are responsible for:

5.1   Directing all foreign-born students to the District Reception Centre for intake and registration

5.2   Identifying, registering and assessing the English Language Proficiency Level for Code 303 ESL students

5.3   Notifying the parents or guardians of the student's ELL needs and securing parental consent for the programming to occur

5.4   Reporting to parents/guardians, the student's progress in developing English language competency

5.5   Planning, implementing and assessing appropriate instruction for English language development

6. Principals are responsible for the following ELL programming:

6.1   Planning

6.1.1   The classroom teacher will develop long and short-range plans which provide details about instructional programming and will be adjusted to meet the needs of the ELL students on an ongoing basis. The Alberta K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks is a foundational planning and assessment document which is designed to support teachers with programming. Students will be leveled according to these Benchmarks and their English language proficiency will be monitored based upon the outcomes. Students in senior high have access to leveled Alberta Education ESL courses that focus on English language development.

6.1.2   Working collaboratively, the District coordinator and the classroom teacher will ensure the plans developed reflect a balanced literacy approach, which addresses language development, content learning and the changing needs of the ELL student.

6.2 Instructional Strategies

    6.2.1 ELL programs will include speaking, listening, reading and writing components. Teachers will model and explicitly teach literacy strategies that support English language development as illustrated in the Alberta Education K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks.

    6.2.2 Teachers of ELL students will use appropriate, strategies, accommodations and adaptations of the curriculum to meet the varied needs of the students. These instructional strategies will be based on current research and effective practices.

    6.2.3 A variety of authorized, recommended and support resources will be used in the instructional program to accommodate student needs, interests and abilities. Previous experience, background knowledge, first language and culture of the ELL students will be valued and included in instruction.

6.3 School and Classroom Environment

    6.3.1 The school culture and climate will be supportive of the needs of ELL students. The learning environment will reflect the core values of a Catholic Community of Gratitude, Compassion, Justice and Wisdom.

6.4 Assessment and Reporting

    6.4.1 Students' evaluation will reflect their English Language Proficiency Level. Marks will be assigned for reporting purposes when the ELL student has sufficient English language development to clearly demonstrate their understanding of curriculum outcomes.

        6.4.1.1 Support to complete appropriate reporting for ELL students may be accessed through Instructional Services. ELL students will be provided with a choice of assessment processes, products and tasks.

        6.4.1.2 Ongoing assessment will inform ELL students and their parents how they are performing with regard to their English Language Proficiency Level and learner outcomes.

    6.4.2 ELL students and their parents will be made aware of the process of English language development and will be clearly informed about all aspects of the students' progress in school. The District has initiated procedures for the annual assessment of ELL students and principals must be accountable to complete these assessments for all ELL students.

6.5 The District is responsible for:

    6.5.1 Undertaking initial intake of all foreign-born students;

    6.5.2 Confirming that all necessary documentation is available and completed;

    6.5.3 Assessing each student and determining their grade placement;

    6.5.4 Entering students' information into PowerSchool, issuing an Alberta Education number and monitoring documentation structures;

    6.5.5 Completing the District registration process including collection of key immigration documents required by Alberta Education;

    6.5.6 Collecting Catholicity documentation;

6.5.7	Recording educational background, when it is available;
6.5.8	Interviewing and collecting relevant background information regarding the student;
6.5.9	Completing an English language proficiency assessment and completing referrals to other agencies or District support services, if appropriate.

6.1 When possible, students are placed in their neighborhood schools unless extraordinary circumstances warrant otherwise.

6.2 Programming for English language learners will be transitional in nature. As students make progress in developing English language proficiency, it is anticipated that the majority of ELL students will progress through the language proficiency levels until exceptional programming support is no longer required.

6.3 ELL instructional programming will provide students with a variety of supports depending upon their level of competence in English. The intent of the programming is to support students in accessing regular content curriculum as early as possible. Varying levels of appropriate programming support are to remain in place until the student is able to achieve academic outcomes on a consistent basis.

6.4 Students who require ELL programming are to be placed in age-appropriate regular classrooms unless there are other District programs that can more effectively meet their specific needs. Placement in other programs must be determined in consultation with the Superintendent, Instructional Services or designate.

Approval Date: June 14, 2018

Reference: Section 8, 9, 18, 20, 39, 60, 61, 113 School Act
             Funding Manual for School Authorities
             Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12