Bilingual Programs in N.J. & Parents’ Rights
Is my child an English language learner?
(Part 3 of 4 Series)

Office of Supplemental Educational Programs
Division of Educational Services

April 5, 2022
Agenda

• Is my child an English language learner (ELL)?

• Parents’ Rights.

• District Responsibilities.

• Resources.
Do you know what it means?

YES  NO
Is My Child An ELL?

Three (3)-step process:

1. Home Language Survey (HLS);
2. Records Review; and
3. Testing.
Value of the Home Language

1. Sustains cultural identity and connections to family.
3. Develops pride in one’s own culture while developing an understanding of others.
4. Builds family-school partnership on respect and trust.

Step 1: Home Language Survey

1. List all languages used in the student's home.

2. Was the first language used by the student a language other than English?

3. Does the student speak or understand a language other than English?

4. When interacting with others at home (example: parents, guardians, siblings), does the student understand or use a language other than English most of the time?

5. When interacting with others outside the home (example: friends, caregivers), does the student understand or use a language other than English most of the time?
Step 2: Records Review

- Bring school records from past school(s).
- Bring examples of writing from home.
- Speak with teacher about child’s total language use.
- Have your child speak with teacher.
Step 3: Testing for Identification

• Only if Steps 1 and 2 indicate need for language testing.

• WIDA Screener or MODEL.

• 4.5 and above = Not an ELL.
Parent Notification

- **Notification letter** in native language.
  - Test used.
  - English level.
  - Academic achievement level.
  - Learning Disability, if applicable.
  - Type of language assistance program.
  - Right to refuse services.

- **Placement.**
  - Within 30 days or 14 days.

- **Continuation (annual).**
In your own words . . .

• How did the school explain to you that your child is an ELL?

• What did it mean to you?
Bilingual/Dual Language Programs

• Strengthens home language foundation and creates a bridge to English attainment.

• Promotes additive educational language program.

• Increases grade-level academic achievement.
  o Sharpens focus.
  o Boosts memory.
  o Improves comprehension.

• Establishes a path toward Seal of Biliteracy.

Source: https://www.edutopia.org/article/dual-immersion-solution
Benefits of Bilingualism

• Better school grades.
• Earn Seal of Biliteracy recognition.
• Improve decision-making
• Delay health issues of the brain.
• Increase income earnings.

Source: https://www.nj.gov/education/bilingual/parents/spanish/importance/
Parental Consent Law of 1995

• Parents of ELLs have the right to decline bilingual/ESL/ELS education program services.

• Prior to this law, parents could challenge a district's decision, but could not decline services without an appeal process.

• During the first 3 years, parents can only decline services mid-year if they appeal to county superintendent.

• Must still be tested annually with ACCESS for ELLs.

• Must still conduct annual notification to parents who have refused.
District’s Responsibilities

• Ensure:
  
  o Immediate enrollment without barriers.
  
  o Understand what language services your child needs.
  
  o Interpreter and translator is available and maintains confidentiality.
  
  o Teachers have the skills and tools to teach students learning English.
Do you know what it means?
Family Engagement Resources

• WIDA “My Child is an ELL.”

• ELL Parent Civil Rights Fact Sheet.

• Civil Rights Complaint Division.
Federal Resources

- English Learner Family Toolkit
- OELA Fact Sheet: Family-School Engagement of Families Who Are Speakers of Other Languages
- English Learner Toolkit
- Newcomer Toolkit
Spanish Parent Portal

La Importancia de Ser Bilingüe

La Educación Bilingüe en Nueva Jersey

Como Apoyar Mi Niño/a En Su Educación

https://www.state.nj.us/education/bilingual/parents/spanish/
Save the Dates

NJDOE ELL Topics Bilingual Programs in N.J. & Parents Rights

📅 12/07/2021  Policy (Part 1 of 4 - LEAs)
📅 02/17/2022  District Strategies (Part 2 of 4 - LEAs)
📅 04/05/2022  What does it mean that my child is an “ELL”? (Part 3 of 4 – Parents)
📅 06/08/2022  Parent to Parent (Part 4 of 4 – Parents)

Register: https://homeroom5.doe.state.nj.us/events/search.php
Thank You!

New Jersey Department of Education: nj.gov/education

Ell@doe.nj.gov

Follow Us!

Facebook: @njdeptofed
Twitter: @NewJerseyDOE
Instagram: @NewJerseyDoe