



## Moving English Language Learners to College- and Career-Readiness

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### ***English Language Learners Policy Fact Sheet***

#### **Definition of English Language Learner (ELL) / Limited English Proficient (LEP):**

Individuals living in the United States who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English and do not speak English as their primary language can fall under the category of having Limited English Proficiency (LEP), or being English Language Learners (ELLs). Other terms commonly found in literature include language minority students, English as a second language (ESL), and culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD). The Texas Education Agency typically uses the term LEP for its designation of students who do not speak English as their primary language.

#### **Federal Legislation Affecting English Language Learners:**

##### Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title III

Part A: The purpose of Title III Part A is to help ensure that children and youth who are LEP, Native American and/or immigrants, attain English language proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging state academic standards that all children are expected to meet.

Funds are directed to states and eligible local districts or consortia through a formula grant allocation to:

- Develop high-quality language instruction educational programs.
- Assist SEAs, LEAs, and schools to build their capacity to establish, implement, and sustain language instruction and development programs.
- Promote parental and community involvement.
- Hold SEAs, LEAs, and schools accountable for increases in English proficiency and core academic content knowledge of limited English proficient children.
- Provide state educational agencies and local educational agencies with the flexibility to implement language instruction educational programs.

Part B- Part B expands on Part A by:

- Promoting systemic improvement and reform of, and developing accountability systems for, educational programs serving limited English proficient children;
- Developing language skills and multicultural understanding;
- Developing data collection and dissemination, research, materials, and technical assistance that are focused on school improvement for limited English proficient children; and
- Developing programs that strengthen and improve the professional training of educational personnel who work with limited English proficient children.

## Higher Education Act – Title V, Part A: Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program

This program helps eligible institutions of higher education (IHEs) enhance and expand their capacity to serve Hispanic and low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen the academic quality, institutional stability, management, and fiscal capability of eligible institutions. The purpose is to:

- Expand educational opportunities for, and improve the academic attainment of Hispanic students, and;
- Expand and enhance the academic offerings, program quality, and institutional stability of colleges and universities that are educating the majority of Hispanic college students and helping large number of Hispanic students and other low-income individuals complete postsecondary degrees.

## Assessments for ELLs under No Child Left Behind

- All ELL students' English language proficiency must be tested at least once a year.
- All ELLs are required to take state academic achievement tests in language arts and math, with an exception made for an ELL student's first year in the U.S. – he/she is exempt from the language arts testing.
- All ELLs are included in the requirement to meet annual standards of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).
- Language instruction curricula used to teach English to ELL students must be demonstrated to be effective and tied to scientifically based research.
- Parents of ELLs must be notified by the local education districts concerning why their child needs a specialized language instruction program. If more than one type of instructional program is offered, parents have the right to choose among them. Parents also have the right to remove their child from the program at any time.

## Bilingual Education Legislation in Texas

- Bilingual Education at Elementary Level: each school district which has an enrollment of 20 or more LEP students in any language classification in the same grade level district-wide shall offer a bilingual education program for the LEP students in pre-kindergarten through the elementary grades who speak that language.
- All LEP students for whom a district is not required to offer a Bilingual education program shall be provided an ESL program, regardless of the students' grade levels and home language, and regardless of the number of students.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) in Secondary Grades: the goal of ESL shall be to enable LEP students to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language through the integrated use of second language methods.

## Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)

The TELPAS is designed to evaluate the progress that LEP students make in learning the English language, and is administered to LEPs in grades K-12. The ratings are determined from testing of the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

## English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)

The English language proficiency standards outline English language proficiency level descriptors and student expectations for ELLs in Texas. The English language proficiency levels of Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced High are not grade-specific. ELLs may exhibit different proficiency levels within the language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.