

Cullman City Schools

EL District Plan 2026-2027



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Cullman City Schools

Comprehensive English Learner District Plan

2026-2027

Section A: Theory and Goals

The LEA's educational theory and goals for its program of services – to improve the education of English learners by assisting the students in learning English and meet the challenging state academic standards. (Sec. 3102)

Introduction:

The Cullman City School System is committed to providing all students equal opportunities to benefit from educational programs and services. The CCS EL District Plan is to be in place whether or not Cullman City currently has English Learners (ELs) enrolled and regardless of Title III eligibility.

The CCS EL Plan is available online (www.cullmancats.net) on the Cullman City District Website, on each school's website, and available in paper form in the office of each principal and EL teacher. This plan details how Cullman City Schools provides programs, services, and resources to students who are identified as language minority and English Learners (ELs) or students with limited English proficiency (LEP). Cullman City Schools provide appropriate services to EL students at all grade levels and at all schools in the school system.

It is the goal of all school personnel, including EL teachers, regular classroom teachers, special education teachers, gifted education teachers, before and after school staff, intervention teachers, counselors, and administrators to help each student make yearly progress on standardized evaluations and reach the highest possible levels of English language and academic proficiency.

Theory:

All EL students will receive core EL instruction by certified teachers in the regular academic program using the Alabama College & Career Readiness Standards and the WIDA Language Standards approved by the ALSDE. EL students will receive Title III/Title I supplemental EL instruction in the EL pull-out program if not waived by the parent/guardian. Identified EL students learn content material using sheltered instruction in content classes with additional language instruction in pull-out or push-in settings in grades K-6 or an ESL class period in grades 7-12. The EL teachers and regular program teachers confer on a regular basis concerning the academic progress of EL students regarding the individual student needs for possible classroom accommodations, targeted instructional strategies, and ongoing progress of each student.

Goals:

The goals of all Cullman City School personnel are to help each student meet the challenging academic standards and to reach the highest possible levels of English language and academic proficiency with access to Alabama's College & Career Ready Standards while in the process of learning the English language. In accordance with the Alabama Department of Education's *English Learner's Policy & Procedures Manual*, CCS adheres to all rules and regulations governing the requirements to educate English Learners. By using various methods to address the needs of EL students, CCS uses activities such as, but not limited to: Reviewing ACCESS scores, reviewing state-mandated test scores, conducting formal and informal language assessments, and implementing instructional practices/tools that will benefit each EL student. Academic experience, English-language proficiency, native-language proficiency, learning & behavioral factors, and environmental factors are all taken into account to determine and implement the best effective instructional practice that focuses on the content (Alabama

Course of Study) and language (WIDA English language proficiency Standards for English Language Learners) objectives as well as cultural awareness and study skills necessary to meet the rigorous academic standards required of all CCS students.

Definitions:

Limited English Proficient - The term “English Learner”, when used with respect to an individual, means an individual:

- A. Who is aged three through 21
- B. Who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
- C. (i) Who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English
(ii) (I) Who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency; or
(iii) Who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and
- D. Whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be **sufficient to deny the individual –**
(i) **the ability to meet the challenging State academic standards;**
(ii) **the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or**
(iii) **the opportunity to participate fully in society.**

Legal Cases:

There is federal law established to ensure the rights of national origin minority students. The following decisions give a brief view of major legislation, court rulings, and regulations that address language minority students:

Federal Laws

- **1964 – Civil Rights Act, Title VI**
“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin...be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”
- **1968 - Constitution of the United States, Fourteenth Amendment**
“No state shall...deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”
- **1974 - Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA)**
“No state shall deny equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, by...the failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs.”
- **2015 – Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) SEC. 3102. §20 U.S.C. 6812c Purposes:** *The purposes of this part are (1) to help ensure that English Learners, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English; (2) to assist all English Learners, including immigrant children and youth, to achieve at high levels in academic subjects so that all English learners can meet the same challenging State academic standards that all children are expected to meet...*

Federal Courts

- **1974 – Serna v. Portales**
Court ordered schools to make a curriculum available to students who lack English skills.
- **1978 – Cintron v. Brentwood**
ELs are not to be segregated completely from other students but are to be included in art, PE, and non-language-based classes.

Supreme Court

- **Lau v. Nichols**

Failure to provide English-language instruction to national origin. Minority students who do not speak English violates the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because it denies those students equal opportunity to public education. The ruling requires school district to take “affirmative steps” to overcome barriers faced by non-English speakers.

- **1981 Castaneda v. Pickard**

The 5th Circuit Court established a three-pronged test for evaluating programs serving English language learners. According to the Castaneda standard, schools must: A) Base their program on educational theory recognized as sound or considered to be a legitimate experimental strategy; B) Implement the program with resources and personnel necessary to put the theory into practice; and C) Evaluate programs and make adjustments where necessary to ensure that adequate progress is being made. [648 F. 2d 989 (5th Circuit, 1981)].

This plan details how Cullman City Schools provides programs, services, and resources to students who are identified as language minority and English Learners (ELs) or students with limited English proficiency (LEP). Cullman City Schools provides appropriate services to EL students at all grade levels and at all schools in the school system. It is the goal of ALL personnel to help each student make yearly progress on standardized evaluation and to reach the highest possible levels of English language and academic proficiency. This detailed plan contains sufficient information so that each staff person can understand how the plan is to be implemented and contains the guidance used to carry out responsibilities under the plan.

The CCS EL Plan is available online (www.cullmancats.net) on the Cullman City District Website, on each school’s website, and available in paper form in the office of each principal and EL teacher.

Section B: Identification and Placement Procedures

1) Procedures for identifying the EL Advisory Committee

The District EL Advisory Committee (consisting of EL teachers, parents, teachers, counselors, administration, and other stakeholders) meets at least once per year to review the overall progress and effectiveness of the EL program to determine if and what changes are needed and/or required. The committee is selected based on individuals who are knowledgeable about language acquisition, strategies and methods that need to be implemented for success with EL students, parents of EL students and non-EL students are asked to participate on the committee if they can, and all EL teachers from the schools are on the committee. The District EL Plan will be modified yearly to accommodate any new regulations and/or policies set forth by federal, state, and local guidelines.

Each local school will have an EL Committee that includes the EL teacher, the counselor, at least one classroom teacher, an administrator, and the parent/guardian of the student (if possible). The local EL Committee reviews all information pertinent to the EL student and makes determinations regarding the placement in EL services and exit of EL services. The local team adheres to the confidentiality of information concerning individual students.

Both the district Advisory Committee and the local school EL Committee will ensure that EL students are being provided an appropriate and challenging education through our school system.

2) Methods for identification, placement, and assessment

These components must be evident in the plan:

- Home Language Survey
- WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, WIDA Screener Online 1-12, and- if available- ACCESS 2.0 scores
- EL Committee Placement

Enrollment Procedures:

According to the Alabama Department of Education's *English learner's Policy and Procedures Manual*, "all language-minority children must be allowed to attend school, regardless of their ability to produce a birth certificate, a social security number, immunization records, or immigration document. Children may not be excluded from school because they do not have a social security number (Plyler v. Doe).

(Translation services/resources are available for all parents who are non-English speakers.)

- Registration Form – Registration for CCS is an online procedure for parents
- Proof of Age – May consist of a valid birth certificate, a valid passport, or other official or unofficial document listing date and place of birth. Enrollment may not be delayed if proof of age is not available. A valid birth certificate is requested, BUT NOT REQUIRED for enrollment.
- Proof of Immunization – This is not required, but parents are asked to submit a State of Alabama Certificate of Immunization as soon as possible. If these are unavailable, the school will assist in requesting one from a previous school or will provide information to the parents so that they may begin the process for Immunizations with the local public health department.
- Social Security Number – A SSN is not necessary for enrollment or for school lunch forms. If a student does not have a SSN, an identification number will be generated and assigned by the appropriate staff.
- Home Language Survey – The Home Language Survey (HLS) is completed during the enrollment process and determines the student's home language. It is required by every child enrolling in an Alabama public school, and it is used as an identification tool used for potential EL students. (It is filed in the permanent record of every student in the school system.) If any language on the HLS indicates the use of a first language other than English by the student or an individual in the home, then a copy is given to the EL teacher immediately to ensure proper assessment of language proficiency and possible placement in the EL program. This does not mean a student isn't competent or efficient in English, but it helps to identify the appropriate language to be used to send school communications to parents/guardians. When all responses on the HLS indicate that English is the only language used by the student and other individuals in the home, the student is considered an English-only speaker. Procedures established by the school system for placement in the general student population are then followed.
- Former School Records – CCS will request parents or guardians to provide any former school records and/or transcripts when at all possible. If this is not possible, the school will make a request for records from previously attended schools. No student will be denied enrollment or proper grade placement because former school records are not readily available.
- Employment Survey – Each parent/guardian completes a copy of the Employment survey at the time of student enrollment. This is completed online through our online enrollment process. The ALSDE can then collect the data from the SIS. If a student is identified as being a part of a migrant family, the migrant recruiter liaison will provide follow-up.
- Proof of Residence – Proof of residency within the city limits of Cullman should be provided at the time of enrollment. Home ownership, lease or rental agreements, utility bill with parent/guardian name and address, and any other document that will substantiate an "intent to remain" at a residence may be offered for consideration. However, enrollment may not be delayed if proof of residence is not available for EL students.
- School lunch forms – These forms should be completed to apply for free or reduced-priced lunch or breakfast. Translators are available to assist when needed.

Cullman City Schools has a translator/interpreter on staff readily available when needed.

WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test:

- Language minority students identified through the HLS during registration at the beginning of the school year must be assessed for English language proficiency and placed within thirty (30) days of enrollment.
- Language minority students who register after the beginning of the school year must be assessed and placed within ten (10) school days of enrollment unless the student is a newcomer. If the student is a newcomer the 30-day placement procedure will be in place.
- Current ACCESS Scores will be used for students having transferred from any of the WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design & Assessment) Consortium states.
- Any current student with “yes” on their HLS and no previous ACCESS or WIDA Screener scores, will be screened with the WIDA Screener for Kindergarten students and the WIDA Screener Online for grades 1-12.
- Initial assessment of English language proficiency must be conducted by appropriate staff members who have completed the appropriate assessment training and certification to administer the ACCESS Tests, WIDA Screener and/or WIDA Screener for Kindergarten to determine the level of English proficiency and to facilitate appropriate instructional and program placement decisions.
- The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten yields an overall composite score based on Listening and Speaking, and the WIDA Screener Online yield an overall composite score based on the four language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) tested. The following guidelines must be adhered to in determining eligibility for placement in the English language instruction educational program:
 - 1) Any Kindergarten student or 1st semester, 1st grade student qualifies for EL services if the Oral Language score is below 4.5. Students will be identified as limited English proficient and will require placement in an English language program. Placement of student scoring above a 4.5 Oral Language score will be determined by the EL Placement Committee.
 - 2) Any student scoring an overall composite score of 5.0* or above on the WIDA Screener Online may be identified as limited English proficient or as NOMPLOTE and not placed in the Title III Supplemental EL Program as allowed by the ALSDE guidelines.
 - 3) Any student scoring an overall composite below 5.0 on the WIDA Screener Online will qualify for EL services. Students will be identified as limited English proficient and will require placement in an English language program.

***The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten/ WIDA Screener Online should be considered as only one piece of evidence in the decision-making process regarding placement. Teacher judgment, other assessments, and extenuating circumstances, such as the student’s age and amount and quality of previous schooling, should be factored into the decision.**

The WIDA Screener for Kindergarten, WIDA Screener Online, and the ACCESS 2.0 for ELs measure speaking, listening, reading, and writing across the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards for English Language learners in Kindergarten through Grade 12. The WIDA English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards are: 1) English language learners communicate in English for SOCIAL and INSTRUCTIONAL purposes within the school setting. 2) English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of LANGUAGE ARTS, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, and SOCIAL STUDIES. (See www.wida.com for detailed ELP standards and further information.)

EL Committee Placement:

The EL Committee will review the results and determine student placement in the EL program. They will assure the parents/guardians leave the I-ELP meeting understanding the right to waive/withdraw their student from Title III/Title I Supplemental EL Program and that the Core EL services and ACCESS testing are mandatory. They will make recommendations concerning the placement of each student in an age-appropriate grade with appropriate accommodations, and/or other related services, ensure that ELs are eligible to participate in all academic and special programs on the same basis as the native English-speaking students, determine the best grading procedures for the EL student, and recommend & monitor all activities of the student in other applicable programs. The committee will

observe all rules and laws governing the EL student's placement and academic needs in the Title III Supplemental/EL Program.

The EL committee will ensure that parental comprehension of all parental rights and details of supplemental and core EL services provided to his/her child. During the IELP meetings, the EL staff, translator, and committee members will verbally explain all information so parents understand their right to withdraw/waive Title III services. If the parent is unable to attend the meeting, the EL staff will meet in person or by phone with them to explain their rights. Cullman City Schools strives to keep EL parents informed of their legal rights, the language testing program, other areas of core instruction, assessments, participation in other activities, and other services as they relate to the EL student.

3) Methods and procedures for exiting students from the LIEP and for monitoring progress

Exiting the EL Program:

- The English Language Learner will remain in the EL program until he/she scores a composite score of 4.8 or higher on the WIDA ACCESS 2.0 for ELs English proficiency test given annually.
- The I-ELP shall indicate FLEP status and Exit shall be checked and filed.

Monitoring Procedures:

- Students are classified as Former Limited English Proficient Monitoring year 1 (FEL-1) during the first year of monitoring, FELP-2 for the second year of monitoring, FEL-3 during the third year of monitoring, and FEL-4 for the fourth year of monitoring. Upon successful completion of four years of monitoring, ELs are classified as Former Limited English Proficient (FEL Completed) and they are no longer included in the LEP/EL subgroup for school-level EL accountability or program evaluation purposes.
- The EL staff will collaborate closely with teachers of FEL students who are being monitored. If the student is experiencing difficulty in the regular program, the EL Committee will meet with the student's teachers to discuss his/her academic data and determine if a new English language placement is recommended. The WIDA screener will be administered and the ELP committee will recommend re-entry to the EL program or other means as recommended by the MTSS team.

Section C: Programs and Instruction

1. Programs and activities that will be developed, implemented, and administered to ensure ELs acquire academic language as part of the core LIEP

(Cullman City Schools conducts a Needs Assessment annually for the Title III / EL Services and Core EL Program. Results from this and from Teacher and Parent surveys are used to evaluate current programs, procedures, professional development, and other areas as they relate to the EL department. Using the survey and assessment results, changes and/or modifications are made, and new goals for the new school year are generated. The EL staff, along with administrators, regular education teachers, and parents work together to create goals for programs and activities to best meet the needs of students, school staff, and parents.)

Cullman City's Core Language Instruction Education Program (LIEP) is English as a Second Language (ESL). The instructional goals of the Cullman City Board of Education English Learners Program are:

- to increase the English language proficiency and academic performance of program participants to the degree necessary to allow independent functioning in the regular school program;
- to assist EL students in meeting the State's challenging academic standards;
- to close the achievement gap between EL students and other students; and
- to provide the EL student the opportunity to reach his/her full potential.

The EL staff is fully aware of research findings that indicate it takes the EL student, depending on the level of English proficiency, one to five years to acquire the social language that is needed to function on a daily basis and approximately seven to ten years to acquire the academic language skills needed to function in an academic setting. Based on this information, the Cullman City School System has developed a comprehensive program to help meet the needs of EL students.

All EL students receive their primary core curriculum instruction through the regular program. Based on EL committee recommendations, EL students lacking English proficiency receive regularly scheduled EL instruction in addition to regular classroom instruction. EL instruction enhances the student's acquisition and mastery of English as rapidly as possible. The amount of time of service is dependent upon the individual needs of the student.

The EL curriculum's main emphasis is on English language acquisition. EL instruction is provided through a combination of pullout and in-class services. Students receive from thirty minutes to two hours of EL instruction depending upon their individual level of English proficiency and academic needs. EL instructors and classroom teachers closely monitor each EL student. EL teachers and regular classroom teachers maintain a folder for each EL student that includes progress reports, accommodations, and work samples. They work together to monitor student's performance and for the EL teacher to aid the EL students so they can effectively participate in classroom activities and comprehend current material. Regular education teachers are provided documentation including, but not limited to, WIDA ELP standards, Can-Do Descriptors, other assessment results such as DIBELS, iReady Diagnostic, and classroom assessments.

EL teachers do not assign grades for their courses. Progress marks are given to allow the parent(s) to know how their children are progressing in the EL class. This is also beneficial in holding students accountable for their learning. EL students are to be made aware of vocational courses and extracurricular activities that are available. An interpreter will be used when necessary.

The academic needs of EL students will be met through a variety of methods. Appropriate educational strategies may include EL instruction, regular classroom content area accommodations, alternative assessments, after-school tutoring, summer classes, Title I instruction, MTSS Program, and other available programs determined as potentially beneficial by the EL Committee. Emphasis is placed on the development of the four communication skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This will be accomplished through the use of evidence-based programs.

EL students are mainstreamed for the remainder of the school day in regular academic classes and/or special programs. Content area teachers accommodate instruction to meet individual EL student needs as well as academic expectations according to the WIDA 'Can-Do' charts. High-quality, embedded training is provided to classroom teachers as well as the EL staff, in appropriate instructional strategies to best meet the needs of the EL student. All EL students participate in all aspects of the total school program. They receive services from and/or participate in library, counseling, art, music, physical education, gifted and talented, special education programs, and extracurricular activities on the same basis as English-speaking students.

CCS classrooms use a variety of strategies and tools appropriate for ELs that overlap with other instructional training and programs. The efforts that benefit EL students will benefit all students.

2. How the LIEP will ensure that ELs develop English Proficiency

English Learners are assessed annually using the ACCESS 2.0 online test for ELS. The EL committee meets to discuss student progress at the beginning of each academic year, and student progress of both current and former EL students is monitored throughout the year. Each school reviews its ACCESS scores with administrators and EL staff each year, analyzes their results, identifies the needs of each student, and generates goals for the district plan as well as each school's individualized plan.

All classroom teachers receive yearly training about the EL program and how to implement instructional strategies to best meet the needs of their EL students. Training is provided through the ALSDE, ELlevation Strategies, local training by EL teachers and/or EL Coordinator, and other opportunities for professional development when available through the Athens State Regional In-Service Center. All teachers receive updated information for the EL students they teach at the beginning of each school year and when a new student is enrolled at the school.

Cullman City Schools uses great measures to be sure all EL students are given every opportunity to succeed in Language Acquisition along with success in the regular education classroom. CCS offers training for all teachers alongside the EL teachers so that their understanding of EL strategies is clear and can be implemented for the success of all students.

3. Grading and Retention Policy and Procedures

The following guidelines for grading EL students must be followed to ensure that EL students are not being discriminated against due to a language barrier. Retention of ELs shall not be based upon level of English language proficiency.

- Content area teachers must provide accommodations for instruction, assignments, and assessments for non-English and limited English proficient students based on their IELPs.
- A grade of "F" cannot be assigned to an EL student without full documentation of classroom accommodations and interventions having been made to assure the student full access to the content. Lack of ability to read and write in English is not a basis for a failing grade.

Accommodations must occur prior to grading the assignment, and grades shall reflect actual performance on the accommodated assignment. Changing grades following an assignment is not an accommodation. Teachers must consider alternative assessment measures such as portfolios, drawings, special projects, journals, oral assignments, oral tests, extra time to complete an assignment, shortened assignments, etc. Each grading period, the teacher will collaborate with and update the EL teacher through MTSS monthly meetings or at any other point needed throughout the school year. The EL teacher will regularly monitor each EL student and his/her performance in the regular classroom. They will provide proactive measures through collaboration with the EL committee and collaboration with each teacher to best meet the need(s) of the EL student, to implement procedures for high expectations while providing instruction for each IELP, and to be sure grades are assigned as per the IELP and WIDA standards.

To ensure that language is not a reason for retention or failing, the school will look at previous records (if available) to determine if there was a deficiency in the native language, WIDA Can Do descriptors for that student to make sure that we are meeting the student at the appropriate level, and constant collaboration with the EL teacher to determine language acquisition development is progressing.

4. Specific staffing and other resources to be provided to ELs through the program

Cullman City Schools employs five EL teachers, all of whom are fluent in English and possess oral and written communication skills necessary to teach ELs. They all have a teaching certificate issued by the Alabama State Department of Education and have met the highly qualified status of a teacher required by the ALSDE.

- One teacher is certified with a Masters in P-12 ESOL and a Bachelors in Secondary ELA
- One teacher is certified with a Bachelors in Elem Ed K-6
- One teacher is certified with a Masters and a Bachelors in Elem Ed K-6
- One teacher is certified with a Masters and Bachelors in Elementary Education and a Bachelors in Early Childhood Education
- One teacher is certified with a Masters in Instructional Leadership, a Masters in Elementary Education, a Bachelors in Collaborative Special Education, and a Dyslexia Therapist Endorsement-CALT

All teachers participate in ongoing professional development such as TESOL, WIDA, district-led training, and other training opportunities/webinars through the ALSDE and other entities.

Cullman City Schools also has a full-time Spanish translator/interpreter on staff. The EL coordinator and the Curriculum coordinator provide training to the EL staff as well as other LEA administrators and teachers. All EL teachers provide training at their local school.

5. Method for collecting and submitting data

Upon identification and placement, students are given a code in PowerSchool, the student information system program. The EL teacher will ensure that students are marked as EL in PowerSchool Special Programs, which will then be populated to PowerSchool, as well as their codes (see chart below.) The EL teachers update and verify all EL students annually, and the district EL coordinator will verify those numbers in the AIM portal for the ALSDE. (See the table below for the codes used in PowerSchool.) EL students whose parents waive supplemental services are required to take ACCESS each year and their EL status continues to be coded accordingly.

B	C	D	E
CodeType	Description	DisplayValue	Code
EL Status	Student has exited the EL program and is in his/her 2nd year of monitoring.	Exited 2nd Year Monitoring	4
EL Status	EL student who is in first academic year in a United States school.	1st Year in US School	1
ELStatus	EL student who is in first academic year in a United States school.	1st Year in US School	1
ELStatus	Student has exited the EL program and is in his/her 2nd year of monitoring.	Exited 2nd Year Monitoring	4
EL Status	National origin minority student whose primary home language is not English	Nom-Phlote	7
ELStatus	Student has exited the EL program and is in his/her first year of monitoring	Exited 1st year Monitoring	3
EL Status	Student has exited EL Program and is in his/her 3rd year of monitoring.	Exited 3rd Year Monitoring	8
ELStatus	Student has exited EL Program and is in his/her 4th year of monitoring.	Exited 4th Year Monitoring	9
ELStatus	Student has exited EL Program and is in his/her 3rd year of monitoring.	Exited 3rd Year Monitoring	8
ELStatus	Student has completed 4 years of monitoring.	Completed 4 Years Monitoring	10
ELStatus	National origin minority student whose primary home language is not English	Nom-Phlote	7
EL Status	Student has exited EL Program and is in his/her 4th year of monitoring.	Exited 4th Year Monitoring	9
ELStatus	EL student who is in second academic year or more in a United States school	2nd Year+ in US School	2
EL Status	Student has completed 4 years of monitoring.	Completed 4 Years Monitoring	10
EL Status	EL student who is in second academic year or more in a United States school	2nd Year+ in US School	2
ELStatus	Student has exited the EL program and is no longer monitored	Exited EL; no longer monitored	5
EL Status	Student has exited the EL program and is in his/her first year of monitoring	Exited 1st year Monitoring	3
EL Status	Student has exited the EL program and is no longer monitored	Exited EL; no longer monitored	5

6. Method for evaluating the effectiveness of the program

Cullman City Schools will utilize both formal and informal evaluation of the Title III / EL Program in order to determine progress toward increasing English language Proficiency in EL students. All teachers will continue to receive training for strategies and best teaching methods for ELs in the regular classroom as well as in the EL program. Ongoing embedded professional development will take place at local schools and focus on strategic instruction for EL students.

Evaluations of the EL program will be conducted at the end of each school year and a copy of the results will be uploaded into the Document Library for the ALSDE to view. These findings will include assessment data, program exit information, staff training, general information, and parent communication. Areas needing support or improvement will be addressed and may include, but not limited to, staff training for EL teachers, regular classroom teachers, & administrators; purchasing updated and/or new teaching materials or student supplies, personnel changes or needs; parent/family engagement participation and/or activities, and other areas as needed. ACCESS, standardized test results, and other assessments will also be considered when planning for the next year.

7. Method of identification and referral of ELs to the Special Services Program including Gifted Ed

Special Services:

EL students following the normal developmental patterns for learning a new language are not eligible for the referral of special education services. Cultural and linguistic backgrounds cause ELs to have special instructional needs. These needs will not serve as a basis for referral for a special education evaluation.

In the event a student is showing signs of needing to be referred for Special Education services, the EL Committee needs to convene and review the student's progress, or lack of, in their regular classroom and on common assessments. The EL Committee will request documentation from the student's regular education teachers of accommodations being made in the regular classroom according to the Individual English Learner Plan (IELP). If no accommodations are evident, the regular classroom teacher will need to implement the IELP. After implementation and documentation of such, and the EL student is still showing signs of need for special services, the student can be referred to the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team. The MTSS team will determine the needs of the student in addition to their EL needs. The student would then follow the MTSS plan. After appropriate time was served, as with any other student, and special needs were still evident, the student could then be referred for Special education testing.

- There are cases when a student shows extreme need for Special Education services without going through a lengthy process. These students should be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Students can be served through the EL program and Special Education program simultaneously based on need. However, if one will interfere with the other, the primary need should be considered first.
- All rules and guidelines for English-speaking students will be followed for EL students when considering Special Education referrals.

PLEASE NOTE: A STUDENT CANNOT BE REFERRED TO SPECIAL EDUCATION BASED ON THEIR ENGLISH LANGUAGE BARRIER. PROOF HAS TO BE SHOWN VERIFYING THE STUDENT HAS NEEDS BEYOND THEIR ENGLISH LANGUAGE BARRIER. IN ADDITION, A STUDENT CANNOT BE DENIED SERVICES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION DUE TO THEIR ENGLISH LANGUAGE BARRIER.

Gifted and Talented Program:

EL students qualify for Gifted and Talented Services by the same standard native English-speaking students qualify. EL academic performance in the first language is also a consideration.

SECTION D: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 1) Method for holding schools accountable for annually measuring the English proficiency of ELs and for participating in the state-administered testing program

Language Proficiency

All students, who indicate, or whose parents indicate, on the Home Language Survey that English is the child's second language, will be given the *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten & WIDA Screener Online for 1-12* Placement Test within thirty (30) days of enrollment if the student is enrolling at the beginning of the year, and within ten days if the student is enrolling after the beginning of the school year by an EL staff member certified to administer the test.

Academic Assessments

An assessment will also be made of the student's academic achievement in the regular program based on records received from the prior school(s). Students who perform at the proficiency level on the language assessments and whose records from the previous school indicate that they have been achieving at a satisfactory level in the academic program will enter the regular instructional program. When records from the previous school(s) are not available, the teacher(s) will attempt to assess academic proficiency with local assessments within ten days of enrollment.

Assessments and Placement

Any student who scores below the proficiency level on the *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten & WIDA Screener Online for 1-12* will be referred to the EL Committee for placement consideration. The EL Committee makes the determination to place the students in the EL program. Other assessments such as past academic records and teacher observations will also be taken into consideration by the EL Committee; however, the main consideration will be the WIDA Placement scores. After the determination is made to place the student in the EL program, the EL instructor will contact the parent for permission to place the student. If a parent denies permission, the student will be placed in the regular classroom and served through other programs as permissible. The parent's waiver of services should be placed in the student's permanent record along with the Home Language Survey and the *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten & WIDA Screener Online for 1-12* scores. Other forms and assessments become part of the student's EL record and are kept by the EL teacher for future reference.

State Assessment Program

All students, regardless of language proficiency, will participate in all SDE-mandated testing, as well as any other testing the LEA requires with one exception: students in their first academic year in a US school and in grades 2-8 may be exempt from the Reading portion of state tests (no exemptions in grades 10-12). Please refer to the most current SDE publication of Alabama Student Assessment Program Policies and Procedures for Students of Special Populations Manual. The district coordinator for testing will provide leadership and communication of assessment results as well as training and accountability measures for all school personnel.

2) Method for holding schools accountable for meeting proficiency in academic achievement

School-wide goals for EL students will be based on student achievement growth shown on ACCESS 2.0 assessment data. Each year both the schools and district plan include goal(s) for EL students. Progress targets and cumulative growth expectations will be disseminated to each school principal and EL teacher at that school. The expected level of proficiency is compared to the previous year to get a better picture of the growth of each EL student.

IELPs are written to target areas of students on an individualized basis according to their data from assessments. EL teachers will also monitor progress reports and student report card grades along with collaborating with the regular classroom teachers regarding student academic performance and/or needs. Training for teachers on specific strategies for EL students will take place according to the accommodations and individualized needs of students. The Testing/Curriculum Coordinator will meet with EL teachers and administrators to discuss scores and to help them outline the upcoming school year plans/goals.

Section E: Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

1) Methods for promoting parent involvement activities to help improve student achievement

According to ESSER, parents must be notified within 30 days from the beginning of the school year or 10 days of enrollment during the school year that their child has been identified for participation in an English Language Instruction Education Program. The Home Language Survey & Assessment by the *WIDA Screener for Kindergarten & WIDA Screener Online for 1-12* or ACCESS determine the student's English Language Proficiency, & parents are invited to participate in the IELP Committee meeting concerning the placement of their child. Program details are provided to parents (orally or in writing, or both) in a language that they can understand about the following:

1. The process of identifying a student in need of placement in the Title III Supplemental EL Program.

2. The child's level of English proficiency: a) how it was assessed and b) the status of the child's academic achievement.
3. The method of instruction used in the program.
4. How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child.
5. How the program will specifically help their child to learn English and to meet age appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.
6. The specific exit requirements for such program, expected rate of transition from such program into the regular education classroom, and the expected rate of graduation from secondary school.
7. In the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the objectives of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) program of the child.
8. Information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance detailing:
 - The right of the parents to have their child immediately removed from the supplemental Title III/Title I program upon request.
 - The options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such supplemental Title III/Title I programs or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available.
 - The various programs and methods of instruction if more than one program or method is offered by the eligible entity.
 - The right to know whether the staff members who work with their children are "Highly Qualified."
- CCS makes every effort to provide translation/interpreting services available for all schools and parents when they are needed. Parents receive information in a language they can understand and may be communicated in oral or written form, or both. Parents are encouraged to visit schools when there are activities on campus.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's education through parent meetings and conferences, principal newsletters, Open House activities, school family nights, etc. Schools assist parents in understanding report cards, assessment data, Schoology, and other forms of communication used in the district. We have a translator who is readily available for our families, and many of them have been with our system for several years, so they are very familiar with our EL families.
- Parents are encouraged to be active in assisting their children to learn English, to achieve at high levels in all academic subjects, and to meet the same challenging state content and student achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.

- Parents are encouraged to be active participants in forming policies and plans which affect their children. They are invited to be a part of the IELP Committee, Advisory Committees, and other decision-making groups in both the system and at the local school level. They are encouraged to offer their input through meetings or surveys to the District/local school on the Title III/EL Supplemental Program that will improve the overall EL program.

Parents are invited to participate in the placement meetings of a student in a language they can understand, and they have the right to decline services by signing a waiver. Notification is sent to parents when students exit the EL Program after scoring a composite of 4.8 or above on ACCESS 2.0.

CCS works closely to improve communication between EL parents, school staff, and community stakeholders. Local organizations and/or businesses help meet the needs of many students in the schools as well as provide translating and other services for parents of EL students. The translator on staff is proactive in helping the district reach out to local community partners to help the EL parents/guardians through various venues, as needed. The community partners are always willing to be a part of the district or school committees that help reach the goals and fulfill the plans for the school system.

- 2) Methods (in a language they can understand) for notification requirements for EL students regarding
 - EL identification, placement, exit, and monitoring

Cullman City Schools provides parents of English Learners with written and/or oral communication methods in a language they can understand. This includes the EL identification, placement into the EL program, exit criteria and scores, and monitoring for students after they exit the program.

SECTION F: TITLE III Funds & Non-Public School Participation

1. Title III funds are used to supplement the core academic program to ensure core subjects and English language skills are acquired. CCS uses its allocation for professional development, instructional supplies and resources, and technology/software programs for English Learners.
2. Cullman City Schools sends certified letters to all non-public schools that, in the absence of private schools, have students that would attend the Cullman City Schools System. Each private school administrator is invited to a timely and meaningful consultation regarding services that are available through the LEA. The Federal Programs Office will follow up with calls or emails if the private school does not return the needed documentation that is sent with the certified letters. Documentation of meetings should include a sign-in sheet, agenda, other forms (if needed), and certified letters. These items are kept on file in the Federal Programs Office.

At this time, CCS does not have any non-public schools participating in the Title III Federal Funds.

For additional information or other questions regarding the English Learner Program, please contact Lindsay Brannon at 256.734.2233.