

# ***Equity Information* UPDATE**

**Bulletin No. 2**

## **Best Practice Considerations When Serving Limited-English Proficient (LEP) Students in K-12 Public Schools**

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## Introduction

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (the department) developed this bulletin, *Best Practice Considerations When Serving Limited-English Proficient (LEP) Students in K-12 Public Schools*, to help school leaders and staff understand their legal responsibilities for meeting the needs of LEP students.<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin's public schools now serve over 29,000 limited-English proficient students. While the two largest groups of LEP students are Hmong and Spanish speakers, there are at least 70 other languages represented within our state by students enrolled in public schools.

When Wisconsin's Bilingual-Bicultural Statute [Wis. Stats. 115.95] was enacted in the late 1970s, LEP students were located within a relatively small number of more urban school districts in the southeast corner of the state. Currently, however, approximately 170 school districts have LEP students. Many of these districts are more rural and until very recently had little or no experience serving these students. Therefore, this bulletin will address obligations for districts whether they are large or small and operate categorically aided or nonaided bilingual/ESL programs.

The State of Wisconsin defines a student with limited-English proficiency as a pupil "who has difficulty with reading, writing, speaking or comprehending in English within the academic classroom setting. PI 13.03

Any student who is identified as language minority (having a non-English language spoken in the home) during the school enrollment process should be given an English language proficiency assessment within the first few weeks of enrollment using a department approved instrument (see current list at the Bilingual/ESL homepage <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsea/equity/biling.html>). These instruments address speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in English. When feasible, it is also helpful to administer native language assessments to ascertain the relative strength of English versus the home language and proficiency in the home language. The results of the English proficiency assessment should be compared to the proficiency definitions as stated in the administrative rule [PI 13.08] and further clarified by the State Superintendent's Advisory Council for Bilingual/ESL Education. (For complete definitions of proficiency levels, see Appendix B; the LEP proficiency continuum ranges from level 1-nonspeaker through level 5-advanced proficiency but still not on par academically with the average English-speaking peer.)

Applying language assessment results to the state definitions will allow schools to classify students as either fully proficient in English or at one of the five defined English proficiency levels. Students who are at any of the five levels in English proficiency development must receive the types of special program considerations outlined in this bulletin in order to provide equal educational opportunities as per federal and state requirements (see website references for

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The term "limited-English proficient (LEP) students" is used in this document because it is the legal term for these students both in state statute and federal law. However, English language learners (ELLs) is the preferred term found in literature today.

more information on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, and the Wisconsin Pupil Nondiscrimination statute and rule [s.118.13] <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsea/equity/pupintro.html>).

## **Development of Social English Proficiency**

On average, it takes limited-English proficient students two to three years to fully develop social English proficiency. If this were the only dimension of English proficiency schools had to worry about, the need for quality language assistance programs would be less critical. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning some of the ways in which schools and language assistance programs can facilitate the development of social English proficiency. First, it is almost always better to place limited-English proficient students in age appropriate classrooms, even when there appear to be gaps in academic preparation. This is, in part, because research tells us that students will need five to seven years to close the academic language gap (August and Hakuta, 1997). Retaining students in grade does not diminish this time requirement, but it does create the problem of students being academically behind their peers after the English language gap is closed. Sustained support at grade level for both English language and academic-content acquisition is the answer based on research findings.

Within the regular classroom and throughout the school day, limited-English proficient students should have access to English speaking peers. Teachers can facilitate this access by assigning and rotating English speaking “peer buddies.” These buddies can assist with vocabulary acquisition using, for example, thematic picture dictionaries that create a context for conversation. They can also help recent arrivals adjust to the school culture or re-explain difficult “teacher talk.” Using several peer buddies over time allows for wider participation and sharing in both the privilege and responsibility of assisting the newcomer.

Limited-English proficient students should be placed with teachers who use a variety of student-centered methodologies such as cooperative or small group learning, thematic instruction, and integrated approaches to language arts that enhance the context for learning. Storytelling activities, for example, provide a wonderful vehicle to integrate limited-English proficient students into the classroom. Students can use drawings and actions to support the stories they tell in either English or their native language. Teachers should not force production of English before students are ready. For new arrivals, there is typically a “silent period” much as for infants learning their first language. Depending on the age, background, and individual learner characteristics, the silent period may vary from a few weeks to almost an entire school year. Longer silent periods are usually associated with younger children. Teachers should not be concerned when a student is in the silent period as long as that student continues to participate in nonverbal ways in the activities of the classroom. Avoid over-correction of attempts to speak English, as this likely will lead students to be self-conscious of their speech and to practice less. Teachers should, instead, continue to model clearly spoken, correct English for their students without interrupting the normal “flow” of the conversation.

In teaching social English, bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers will draw on communicative approaches to language instruction and other techniques such as *Total Physical Response* or *Language Experience Approach* to further their students' English proficiency. Usually within a few months of working with beginning level students, bilingual/ESL teachers will begin to use what are called "content-based sheltered English" methodologies. These methodologies allow bilingual/ESL teachers to teach language through content. Students continue learning social English skills embedded within the lessons but get early access to content area material, presented through hands-on activities with lots of visual supports. Use of semantic mapping, or graphic organizers, is an excellent example of using visuals that support student acquisition of content knowledge.

## **Development of Academic English Proficiency: Literacy**

While the average time needed to acquire social English skills is two to three years, acquisition of academic English proficiency, essential for full academic parity with English speaking peers, usually takes *five to seven years!* Students with strong academic or primary language backgrounds will typically transition more quickly (approximately four to five years). Conversely, students with weak academic or primary language backgrounds may take up to eight to ten years to reach full academic parity. While it is important to keep realistic timelines in mind when considering how long support may be needed, there is also evidence that the process can be accelerated to some degree if adequate support is provided and innovative methodologies are used. Successful bilingual/ESL support programs around the country are taking students from beginner to near native English proficiency and academic parity with grade level peers within four to six years. In other words, a student who begins in kindergarten and receives high-quality sheltered-English content instruction and at least some primary language literacy and content development could be expected to reach full English proficiency and academic parity by grade 5 or 6. A student entering school at grade 4 with no English skills, but grade-equivalent reading and content knowledge in the primary language, could be expected to reach academic parity by grade 8 or 9, again assuming appropriate support for both English language and academic content growth.

Students who enter high school as new arrivals to the United States have a particularly difficult time accruing academic credits while attempting to gain the necessary academic English proficiency. A student arriving at age 16, with no prior exposure to English, will not be likely to reach full English proficiency or academic parity before graduation. This should not be viewed as a problem per se, as many university and technical colleges offer ESL. The goal in high school should be to provide for accelerated English literacy development while providing the key concepts and skills necessary to graduate and move into postsecondary preparation programs or pre-employment career-related education (see the section on Special Considerations for Limited-English Proficient Students in Non-aided High School Settings, page 11).

There are a number of strategies that teachers can use to accelerate the process of literacy and academic English acquisition. A “balanced approach” is just as important for LEP students as it is for mainstream students. This includes a combination of teaching techniques such as systematic and explicit reading instruction with consistent feedback, guided reading, teaching learning strategies, and free reading. A combination of both teacher-directed and experiential techniques may be used according to the student’s individual learning profile. Supplement these techniques with children’s picture/story books and picture/story books on tape. Audiotaped versions of children’s books are particularly helpful as second language learners can listen to the spoken English, follow the printed words, and use the pictures to facilitate meaning. Children’s storybooks are now available in CD-ROM versions that offer an audio component, good visual support, and, at times, bilingual versions. *Guided Reading* and *Reading Recovery* are examples of literacy programs that have demonstrated effectiveness with limited-English proficient students. Such programs should be used in conjunction with other bilingual/ESL strategies, not as the sole strategy for language acquisition.

For limited-English proficient students who have reached a second or third grade reading level in English, comic books can provide an excellent supplemental literacy development tool. Since most children find them entertaining, it is often easy to get them involved in reading at school or home. Comic books provide the same heightened visual context found in children’s storybooks but at a much higher linguistic level. Children can often guess the meanings of unfamiliar words by looking at the illustrations, therefore less time is lost looking up new words in dictionaries. Beware of comics that overuse slang or are inappropriately violent or risqué. Carl Bark’s classic *Donald Duck* is an example of the type of comic that provides good models of English and is fun for elementary-age children. This and other comic classics are available in bound, reissued editions that withstand repeated use. For an older student, *Archie* or *Superman* are favorites.

Stephen Krashen (1993), well-known as a bilingual researcher, writes about a controlled study with limited-English proficient students in which comic books were compared with basal readers for literacy development. Post-test scores after six months indicated at least twice the gains for the ESL class reading the comics as opposed to those with basal readers. Again, for limited-English proficient students, one cannot overstate the importance of visual support for text and classroom understanding. Some publishers now produce social studies and science supplemental texts that use multiple pictures or drawings along with a short written text. These materials not only facilitate literacy development but also support the acquisition of content knowledge.

## **Development of Academic English Proficiency: Content Area Skills**

Bilingual/ESL support staff, regular classroom teachers, and Title I program teachers all have a role to play in the development of academic content skills for limited-English proficient students. All support programs must begin by aligning their curriculum with what is taught in the regular classroom. In turn, the

classroom curriculum should reflect the established state and local academic standards. Taking program support into the regular classroom through use of inclusion models offers one effective approach to fostering academic development. After-, before-, or Saturday-school programs and accelerated summer learning programs offer yet another. Pull-out during the regular instructional day is also widely used but not without its critics. There are three problems with relying too heavily on pull-out models. The first is that you are always trading one learning environment for another. The second problem with pull-out as traditionally taught is that alignment with the mainstream curriculum is poor or nonexistent. The third is that, in some cases, regular classroom teachers take less responsibility for LEP students when special services are delivered through pull-out, believing that the ESL or bilingual teachers will “resolve the issue.”

The tradeoff (first problem) is not a negative when the student will likely not receive instruction that is comprehensible in the regular classroom. An example of this would be students at English proficiency levels 1-2 within classrooms beyond primary grades. Students at an intermediate English proficiency level or beyond (levels 3-5), however, may miss social studies or science while receiving extra support in language arts, resolving one problem while creating another.

With regard to the second pull-out problem, in traditionally taught pull-out, remedial skills tend to be emphasized while academic content is given less attention, broadening the academic gaps for students who must soon compete with their English-speaking peers in challenging subject-area classes. The unfortunate result often is that when some students graduate from ESL, they still cannot transition into the mainstream and maintain grades above D or F. This latter problem can be lessened only through careful collaboration with classroom teachers and what researchers call *a priori* teaching of the key academic content, concepts, skills, and language.

*A priori* teaching requires support staff to stay at least a week ahead of regular classroom teachers, preteaching the most important concepts, language, and skills soon to be presented within the regular class. This bolsters student prior knowledge of the topics and the specific language needed to make sense of what is taught in the regular classroom. Teachers using *a priori* teaching utilize the same highly visual, hands-on methods described earlier but simply make sure they are preteaching what their students will need for the following week. This is far more effective than a “mop up” model of helping students after they have already fallen behind. There is no question that *a priori* teaching requires careful collaboration and, often, significant restructuring of support services. For those who do it, however, the testimonials of increased academic comprehension are compelling.

What bilingual and ESL teachers refer to as *sheltered English content instruction* or teaching language through content, can be practiced by all teachers who teach limited-English proficient students. Sheltered strategies will not only benefit second language learners, they will benefit any student who is struggling with class material. The guiding principle for sheltering English is to keep the

standards for academic content and skill development as high as possible while simplifying the language, making it more accessible to students. Beyond the obvious example of avoiding complex syntax and vocabulary, language simplification usually involves creating enhanced contexts in which language and content are presented. Teachers enhance context by providing visual props, hands-on learning experiences, drawings, pictures, graphic organizers, and small-group learning opportunities.

Use of graphic organizers, or semantic maps, is a particularly powerful strategy for students. Once mapping possibilities are explained, students can create their own maps within heterogeneous groups that promote learning and provide great visual outlines for future study. Content-area teachers, in particular, should consider allowing limited-English proficient students to use their maps as alternate assessments which demonstrate content learning while minimizing the language barrier. This will help ensure that students are graded on their content knowledge and not on the English they have not yet had time to acquire.

The example comes to mind of a Russian student who arrived at a U.S. high school with no English skills but solid academic coursework including four full years of biology instruction in the former Soviet Union. The counselor assumed biology would be easy for this student and placed him in first-year high school biology (a course for which he should have been given credit). The high school science teacher said, "Fine, but don't expect me to change the way I lecture or alter my exams in any way." Essentially the teacher was saying that this student would have to do the same level work in exactly the same way, linguistically, as students who had a fourteen-year head start in English. The student received an "F" in Biology at the end of the semester. This grade did not demonstrate the student's knowledge of biology but merely what they already knew: he was a beginning-level English learner. The teacher's failure to adapt instruction and assessment to meet the needs of this English language learner is not only an example of poor practice, *it is illegal!* See Equity Information Bulletin No. 3, *Legal Responsibilities When Serving Limited-English Proficient (LEP) Students in K-12 Public Schools*.

## **Grading and Promoting Limited-English Proficient Students**

The previous anecdote also serves to illustrate how crucial an individualized approach to instruction, assessment, grading, and promoting are for limited-English proficient students. High standards are of utmost importance, but reasonable and flexible grading policies must exist. When classes can be provided in the student's native language, modifications in grading may not be needed. Within most schools in Wisconsin, however, such self-contained bilingual programs are not a reality. A reasonable grading policy could include pass/fail grading of students at beginning proficiency levels (levels 1 and 2), grading students against their own progress at intermediate levels (levels 3 and 4), and using mainstream grading norms at the advanced level (Level 5), while still providing adequate academic support to ensure success. Performance-based assessment strategies can provide flexible tools for grading LEP students. For example, teacher constructed rubrics, checklists, or rating scales can be

individualized for these students, keeping standards high but keeping language demands reasonable.

When drafting district/school grade promotion policies, educators should be mindful of the five to seven years, on average, needed for limited English proficient students to fully close the English literacy and academic language/concept gap. Retention of students in grade “solely based on language” is considered a violation of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and runs counter to research on best practice for these students (see Office for Civil Rights (OCR) resources on LEP students at [www.ed.gov/offices/ocr/ELL/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/ocr/ELL/index.html)).

### **Standards-Based, Alternate Assessment of Limited-English Proficient Students**

Complete information about testing and accommodations for limited-English proficient students can be found on the department’s website:

[www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/oea/specneed.html](http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/oea/specneed.html).

Based on PI 13 and departmental guidelines, LEP students must participate in the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) with accommodations, as needed, at the intermediate and advanced English language proficiency levels (levels 3-5). Limited-English proficient students who are at levels 1-2 of English proficiency may participate in WSAS, with accommodation as appropriate, but must participate in alternate assessment for LEP students in all content areas tested on WSAS.

### **The Role of the Primary Language and Culture in Assuring Academic Success**

Educators should keep in mind that a student’s primary language and culture both play important roles in the educational process. Most researchers agree that the goal should be to build upon, and when possible expand upon, this cultural and linguistic foundation, not to attempt to replace that foundation with a new one. In larger, state-aided programs for LEP students, educators do this through appropriate use of teachers with bilingual or ESL certification working with bilingual aides. The task is much more difficult to accomplish in most non-aided programs where bilingual staff are often unavailable.

At the very least, schools want to send home a strong message that the family language and culture represent valuable assets to be preserved as students learn English and master new content in English. Advice to the LEP student to go home and practice English is almost always a bad idea. Adults do need to learn English because their economic survival depends on it. They should be enrolled in adult ESL classes if such classes are available. Practicing English in the home, however, is potentially disruptive to the family structure and cognitive development of younger children, in particular. Often poor models of English are practiced and families trade the rich, complex conversations in their own



languages for simplistic how's-the-weather conversations in English. Parents should be encouraged to have engaging conversations with their children in their own language as they do household tasks and to read to them in the primary language when possible.

Schools should not prohibit students from using their primary languages during the school day, even when bilingual instruction cannot be offered. Two or more students speaking the same language can be an effective way to share content information learned in classes and can provide an important break from English, particularly for recent arrivals. When students are literate in their primary languages, texts or supplemental materials in the students' languages can be very helpful in supporting academic content learning, when they are available.

Larger, state-aided programs are often able to provide some literacy development and teaching of academic content in the primary language. In spite of the political controversy that has often surrounded the use of children's primary languages in instruction, it is still a sound practice that can lead to a more complete transition into English reading and understanding difficult academic content in English (August and Hakuta, 1997). When non-aided programs can emulate these approaches, they should do so without fear that they are slowing down the acquisition of English. (See the section on the bilingual debate in California, p.12) Many two-way and developmental bilingual immersion programs, which use the greatest amount of primary language instruction, actually have the best track record over time for helping limited-English proficient students attain full English fluency and academic parity with English-speaking peers.

When working with students from different cultures one should be cautious of interpreting what is seen and heard. Provide students with opportunities to explain their thinking and to understand yours. Also, do not underestimate the capacity of culture to influence both classroom behavior and performance. Jim Cummins (1986) reminds us that "widespread school failure does not occur in minority groups that are positively oriented towards both their own and the dominant culture" (p. 22). Cummins and others suggest that teachers who value students' cultures and encourage them to see themselves as bilingual and bicultural are more successful in educating linguistically and culturally diverse students than teachers who, either overtly or more subtly, send the message that the dominant culture is the one that counts and the student's culture may simply be in the way of learning.

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994), in her book *Dream Keepers: Successful Teachers of African American Students*, presents the concept of instruction that is culturally relevant. She provides examples, using classroom-based vignettes, of what it means to teach in ways that are culturally relevant to students. These are teachers who not only respect their students' cultures, but also see themselves as part of the communities and cultures of the classroom. Such teachers creatively incorporate their students' perspectives into learning while also maintaining high standards for achievement, not just for some in the class but for each and every student. Social relationships are supportive and collaborative,

knowledge is viewed critically, and teachers are passionate about who and what they teach.

## **Referrals for Special Education Services**

Schools should guard against inappropriate referrals for special education services for limited-English proficient students. The best way to avoid inappropriate referrals is to have a strong program of instructional interventions prior to initiating the formal referral process. Instructional interventions include good ESL and literacy-development strategies, such as those discussed in this *Information Update*, that teachers try before considering the possibility of special education identification or services. The normal process of language acquisition and cultural adjustment must not be confused with learning or cognitive-processing disabilities. When a referral is made, therefore, a native language evaluation should be conducted to eliminate the possibility that the perceived need is related to the primary language or cultural background of the student.

Conversely, students who have a genuine special education need that is not attributable to normal language acquisition or cultural adjustment should not be denied special education services. A thorough evaluation with multiple criteria in both English and the child's native language will assist in making reasonable, informed decisions regarding the true need for placement in special education. Once placed, limited-English proficient students will have Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) as is the case with all students receiving special education services. In creating IEPs for limited-English proficient students with disabilities, attention should be given to three primary issues affecting student success: the identified disability, the acquisition of English skills, and the cultural background of the child.

## **The Importance of School Climate and Collaboration Between Mainstream and Support Programs**

Any language assistance or academic support program is only as good as the overall environment in which such a program operates. In spite of good intentions, too often programs have become remedial ghettos where limited-English proficient students are separated from the academic standards of the mainstream. Because these traditional programs usually underestimated the time necessary to reach parity with English development, the academic content areas of science, math, and social studies were typically shortchanged, leading to the phenomenon of passing the special program while failing in the mainstream.

In order to avoid this, all school staff must be involved in providing high-quality content instruction. Instruction needs to be delivered by "sheltering" or creating enhanced context for the instructional language while content area goals are kept high and fully aligned with grade-appropriate standards. Bilingual/ESL programs provide a crucial component, but without mainstream support *and* involvement, students will continue to fall behind and many will be lost to early dropout. A coordinated, schoolwide effort for four to six years is absolutely essential to

ensure academic success for most limited-English proficient students. (See Appendix D for specific ideas and strategies educators can use to assist limited-English proficient students as they transition toward full English proficiency and academic success.)

Research has repeatedly shown that all teachers within a school must take ownership for the learning and support for LEP students. However, in order to assure the student is receiving the appropriate differentiated instruction that is on the student's optimal learning level in all subject areas, a case manager is recommended. The role of the case manager is to develop and coordinate an Individual Record Plan for the student. This plan needs to be continually updated as the student reaches new goals.

### **Special Considerations for Limited-English Proficient Students in Non-aided High School Settings**

Students who enter high school at beginning or even intermediate levels of English proficiency have a difficult task ahead of them. For districts not receiving state aid for bilingual/ESL programs, providing adequate support for limited-English proficient students can be particularly challenging as other sources of funding for special programs and certified bilingual/ESL staff are scarce. While such districts may realize that they have legal obligations, and want to provide the best possible educational opportunities to support both the acquisition of English and content learning, they often are at a loss on how to accomplish such a goal without a formal language assistance program in place. In addition to the advice already provided in this *Information Update* and other department resources such as *What Do I Do???*<sup>2</sup>, it is helpful to keep in mind the importance of proper counseling and course placement decisions at the high school level.

First, limited-English proficient students should be given credit for high school level coursework completed in their country of origin. If they are at English proficiency levels 1-3, extensive modifications in the course scheduling will be in order, particularly for the first two or three semesters. For the first semester, look for course requirements and electives that will provide good environments for social English acquisition without overwhelming the student with academic reading. Begin accelerated English literacy development using materials with strong visual cues (see the section titled Development of Academic Language Proficiency, pp. 5 - 8).

The best order for phasing in academic course requirements is mathematics, science, social studies, and finally regular high school-level English language arts. When ESL certified teachers are not available, English language arts classes must be modified if they are to provide meaningful learning opportunities. All academic content areas will need modifications and additional support if students are to succeed. The goal of modifications should be to contextualize

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<sup>2</sup> You may obtain a free copy of *What Do I Do???* by contacting Judy Stowell, bilingual/ESL program assistant, at 608-267-2063 or [judy.stowell@dpi.state.wi.us](mailto:judy.stowell@dpi.state.wi.us). DPI plans to update this document and add it to the Equity Mission Team, Bilingual/ESL Program webpage by spring 2003.

and clarify the English while keeping the crucial academic concepts and skills as high as possible. In the case of high school students entering as beginners, such modifications will likely be required *for the entire time leading to high school graduation*. Students who do not receive needed modifications and support have a high probability of dropping out (see Appendix C for a sample Individualized Student Record Plan for LEP student).

## **The Bilingual/ESL Services Debate**

Recently, news media have given a great deal of attention to standardized test data from California that appear to support the position that longterm bilingual or ESL programs are not necessary and that limited-English proficient students can be well-served by mainstreaming after one year. In particular, second-grade SAT-9 scores in language arts and mathematics, as reported in one district, are being used to conclude that California's current policy, based on the statewide ballot initiative known as Proposition 227, is a success. The data being used represent the first two years of implementing this policy and are heavily focused on the early grades, where the role of social English is given much more weight. Our own data in Wisconsin provide an increasingly clear picture that leads us to the opposite conclusion: longterm, content-based ESL programs with at least some primary language support (particularly in the early grades) offer limited-English proficient students the best chance of competing with native English speakers in difficult, secondary-level academic classes.

Our Wisconsin data are congruent with a recent study conducted by Norm Gold, commissioned by *California Tomorrow*. Gold compared 63 waiver-seeking bilingual schools in California with approximately 1,000 schools implementing English immersion as stipulated under Proposition 227. There was little or no use of students' native languages or longterm, content-based ESL support in the English immersion schools. He found that students in the bilingual schools outperformed the English-only programs in almost all cases. Two separate meta-analyses, one conducted in 1984 by Ann Willig and the second completed in 1997 by Jay Greene, also suggest that students in schools using bilingual methodologies outperform English-only approaches. Until such time that truly compelling longitudinal evidence can be provided to the contrary, Wisconsin educators and students should continue to insist upon quality, longterm academic and linguistic support programs that use English and, whenever possible, the child's primary language. The principal characteristics of quality support programs, as detailed within this *Information Update*, provide both *access to high academic standards* and *sustained, content-based support* that allow students to benefit from such access.

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## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

**Academic language** -Specific content-area language linked to conceptual knowledge necessary for academic success and grade-level literacy. Researchers estimate between five and seven years for the full development of academic language competency. Some researchers also add that for students with weak academic or native language skills up to ten years may be required to fully bridge the content-area and literacy gap.

**A priori approach** -a content-based approach to bilingual/ESL support that emphasizes close collaboration with mainstream teachers in the development of curriculum and the preteaching of key concepts, skills, and academic language using bilingual/ESL methodologies like those found in the CALLA.

**Bilingual education** -any of a number of approaches that use to varying degrees the language of the child and English in the teaching of academic content and literacy skills.

**Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA)** - an approach to curriculum development, lesson planning, and teaching that combines the strategies of teaching language through content with the direct instruction of learning strategies.

**Content-based approaches** -see Sheltered English Content Area Instruction.

**English as a Second Language (ESL)** -the teaching of English and academic content to students who are English language learners.

**English Language Learners (ELLs)** -see limited-English proficient students.

**Graphic organizers (semantic maps)** -visual representations of conceptual knowledge that assist English language learners (and all learners) in mastering difficult content area material while reducing the linguistic demands. Examples of commonly used graphic organizers are Venn or comparison contrast diagrams, spider or cluster maps, T-lists, cause and effect maps, time ladder or sequence maps, and flow charts.

**Language experience approach** -an approach that builds on the child's experience by using drawing, storytelling, and process writing techniques. Finished writing samples often become reading materials within the classroom library.

**Limited-English Proficient (LEP) students** -the legal term for students who speak another language in the home and whose proficiency in English meets one of the five levels described in Appendix B. English language learner is currently the preferred term for describing these students.

**Preteaching** -see *a priori* approach.

**Primary native/home language** -the language most often spoken in the home. In some cases, it might even be the language of a grandparent who is the primary caregiver for a significant portion of the day, thus influencing the language development of the child.

**Semantic mapping** -see graphic organizers.

**Sheltered English content-area instruction** -approaches that teach language through content by contextualizing the English but maintaining the crucial academic content and concepts.

**Silent period** -the first phase of language acquisition when students are actively listening but not yet producing language.

**Social language** -the more concrete, less academically oriented language typically used in one-on-one communication in preschool and primary level classrooms, and for most social interactions. Social English development is important, but ultimately the more abstract academic English competency will ensure academic success. Researchers estimate two to three years to fully develop social English competency for most English language learners.

**Total physical response** -a language learning methodology using real objects and commands; used frequently with beginners as part of what is known as the "natural approach" to learning languages.



## **Appendix B: English Language Proficiency**

### ***LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVELS [PI 13.07(1)-(5), Wis. Admin. Rule]***

#### **Level 1 – Beginning/Preproduction:**

The student does not understand or speak English with the exception of a few isolated words or expressions.

#### **Level 2 – Beginning/Production:**

The student understands and speaks conversational and academic English with hesitancy and difficulty.

The student understands parts of lessons and simple directions.

The student is at a pre-emergent or emergent level of reading and writing in English, significantly below grade level.

#### **Level 3 – Intermediate:**

The student understands and speaks conversational and academic English with decreasing hesitancy and difficulty.

The student is post-emergent, developing reading comprehension and writing skills in English.

The student's English literacy skills allow the student to demonstrate academic knowledge in content areas with assistance.

#### **Level 4 – Advanced Intermediate:**

The student understands and speaks conversational English without apparent difficulty, but understands and speaks academic English with some hesitancy.

The student continues to acquire reading and writing skills in content areas needed to achieve grade level expectations with assistance.

#### **Level 5 – Advanced:**

The student understands and speaks conversational and academic English well.

The student is near proficient in reading, writing, and content area skills needed to meet grade level expectations.

The student requires occasional support.

### ***FULL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVELS***

#### **Level 6 – Formerly LEP/Now Fully English Proficient:**

The student was formerly limited-English proficient and is now fully English proficient.

The student reads, writes, speaks and comprehends English within academic classroom settings.

#### **Level 7 – Fully English Proficient/Never Limited-English Proficient**

The student was never classified as limited-English proficient and does not fit the definition of a limited-English proficient student outlined in either state or federal law.

## Appendix C: A Sample of an Individualized Student Record Plan for LEP Students

(from *Standards-Based Alternate Assessment for Limited-English Proficient Students: A Guide for Wisconsin Educators*)

GENERAL INFORMATION					
Student's Name <i>First, Last</i>				Grade Level	School Year
ID No.	Date of Entry in Wisconsin School		Student's Native Language		
School District			School		
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY					
English Language Proficiency Level		Date(s) Administered		Test Administered	
English Language Proficiency Level		Date(s) Administered		Test Administered	
<b>Language Proficiency Goals</b> <i>Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing</i>			<b>Standards/Alternate Performance</b> <i>Indicators Addressed</i>		
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT					
Standardized Test Data or MECCA Score				Date(s) Administered	
Language Arts	Reading	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	
<b>Academic Goals</b> <i>Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing</i>			<b>Standards/Alternate Performance</b> <i>Indicators Addressed</i>		
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
TYPE AND AMOUNT OF SUPPORT SERVICES					
Comments/Recommendations					
SIGNATURES					
Student Signature ➤				Date Signed	
Teacher Signature ➤				Date Signed	
Parent Signature ➤				Date Signed	

## Appendix D: Serving Limited-English Proficient (LEP) Students: A Schoolwide Guide

### Chart 1: Grades PK-2

	Levels 1-2	Levels 2-3	Levels 4-5
<b>Classroom teacher</b> (Note: developmentally appropriate primary classes are usually very good environments for social English acquisition)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>honor silent period</li> <li>encourage peer buddies</li> <li>use real objects</li> <li>use picture books</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children's story/picture books on tape</li> <li>storytelling activities</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children's story/picture books on tape</li> <li>storytelling activities</li> <li>language experience approach</li> </ul>
<b>Bilingual teacher or aide</b> (Note: self-contained bilingual teachers also function as classroom teachers and ESL providers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strengthen the connection with primary language and culture</li> <li>pre-teach/teach class themes /content in primary language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primary language literacy development</li> <li>language experience approach in primary language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primary language literacy development</li> <li>pre-teach/teach class themes /content in primary language</li> </ul>
<b>English as a second language teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total physical response</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>communicative-based methodologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus the following...</li> <li>pre-teach class themes in English using sheltered-English methodologies</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach class themes in English using sheltered-English methodologies</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>
<b>Title I or supplemental academic support program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total physical response</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>communicative-based methodologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach class themes</li> <li>literacy development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach class themes</li> <li>literacy development</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a language rich home environment by involving children in conversations and household routines <b>in the home language</b></li> <li>when possible, read to children in the home language, or paraphrase English picture books into the home language</li> <li>ask children about their school day, what they learned, and if they have homework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>
<b>Administrator and counselor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>secure translators for parent meetings and written materials going home</li> <li>welcome parents to all school events and provide translators</li> <li>promote alternate assessment and modified grading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>

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## Chart 2: Grades 3-5

	Levels 1-2	Levels 2-3	Levels 4-5
<b>Classroom teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>honor silent period</li> <li>encourage peer buddies</li> <li>use real objects</li> <li>use picture books</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> <li>cooperative learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children's story/picture books on tape</li> <li>storytelling activities</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> <li>cooperative learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>storytelling activities</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>cooperative learning</li> <li>comic books/visually supported content books</li> <li>testing accommodations and modified grading, as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Bilingual teacher or aide</b> (Note: self-contained bilingual teachers also function as classroom teachers and ESL providers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strengthen the connection with primary language and culture</li> <li>pre-teach/teach class themes /content in primary language</li> <li>print exposure/literacy development in primary language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primary language literacy development</li> <li>language experience approach in primary language</li> <li>pre-teach/teach key concepts and skills in primary language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primary language literacy development</li> <li>language experience approach in primary language</li> <li>pre-teach/teach key concepts and skills in primary language</li> </ul>
<b>English as a second language teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total physical response</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>communicative-based methodologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus the following...</li> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills, and academic language in English</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills and academic language in English using sheltered-English methodologies</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>
<b>Title I or supplemental academic support program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total physical response</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>communicative-based methodologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills, and academic language</li> <li>literacy development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills, and academic language</li> <li>literacy development</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a language-rich home environment by involving children in conversations and household routines <b>in the home language</b></li> <li>when possible, read to children in the home language or paraphrase English picture books into the home language.</li> <li>ask children about their school day, what they learned, and if they have homework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>
<b>Administrator and counselor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>secure translators for parent meetings and written materials going home</li> <li>welcome parents to all school events and provide translators</li> <li>promote alternate assessment and modified grading</li> <li>encourage involvement in extracurricular activities</li> <li>use Individualized Student Record Plan (IRP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus the following</li> <li>promote testing accommodations and modified grading, as needed</li> </ul>

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### Chart 3: Grades 6-8

	Levels 1-2	Levels 2-3	Levels 4-5
<b>Classroom teacher</b> (Note: LA = language arts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>honor silent period</li> <li>encourage peer buddies</li> <li>use real objects and props in class presentations</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> <li>use semantic mapping activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children's story/picture books on tape (LA)</li> <li>language experience approach (LA)</li> <li>cooperative learning</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> <li>semantic mapping</li> <li>visually supported content-area texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children's story/picture books on tape (LA)</li> <li>language experience approach (LA)</li> <li>cooperative learning</li> <li>comic books (LA)</li> <li>testing accommodations and modified grading, as needed</li> <li>semantic mapping</li> </ul>
<b>Bilingual teacher or aide</b> (Note: self-contained bilingual teachers also function as classroom teachers and ESL providers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strengthen the connection with primary language and culture</li> <li>pre-teach/teach class themes /content in primary language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primary language literacy development</li> <li>language experience approach in primary language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primary language literacy development</li> <li>pre-teach/teach key concepts and skills in primary language</li> </ul>
<b>English as a second language teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total physical response</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>communicative-based methodologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus following..</li> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills, and academic language in English using sheltered-English methodologies</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills, and academic language using sheltered-English methodologies</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>
<b>Title I or supplemental academic support program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total physical response</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>communicative-based methodologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills, and academic language in English</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills, and academic language in English</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a language-rich home environment by involving children in conversations and household routines <b>in the home language</b></li> <li>encourage maintenance of reading skills in the home language</li> <li>ask children about their school day, what they learned, and if they have homework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>
<b>Administrator and counselor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>secure translators for parent meetings and written materials going home</li> <li>welcome parents to all school events and provide translators</li> <li>encourage involvement in extracurricular activities</li> <li>set up study halls with peer tutoring</li> <li>encourage nongraded learning</li> <li>participate in creating Individualized Student Record Plan (IRP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus the following...</li> <li>encourage pass/fail grading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus the following...</li> <li>encourage letter grades consistent with IRP goals</li> <li>promote testing accommodations and modified grading as needed</li> </ul>

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### Chart 4: Grades 9-12

	Levels 1-2	Levels 2-3	Levels 4-5
<b>Classroom teacher</b> (Note: LA = language arts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>honor silent period</li> <li>encourage peer buddies</li> <li>use real objects and props in class presentations</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> <li>use semantic mapping activities</li> <li>cooperative learning</li> <li>children's story/picture books on tape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children's story/picture books and books on tape (LA)</li> <li>language experience approach (LA)</li> <li>cooperative learning</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> <li>semantic mapping</li> <li>visually supported content-area texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children's story/picture books on tape (LA)</li> <li>language experience approach (LA)</li> <li>cooperative learning</li> <li>comic books (LA)</li> <li>testing accommodations and modified grading, as needed</li> <li>semantic mapping</li> <li>visually supported content- area texts</li> </ul>
<b>Bilingual teacher or aide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strengthen connection with primary language and culture</li> <li>pre-teach/teach class themes/content in primary language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primary language literacy development</li> <li>language experience approach in primary language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>primary language literacy development</li> <li>pre-teach/teach key concepts and skills in primary language</li> </ul>
<b>English as a second language teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total physical response</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>communicative-based methodologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus the following...</li> <li>pre-teach key concepts/skills/ academic language in English using sheltered-English methodologies</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills, and academic language in English using sheltered-English methodologies</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>
<b>Title I or supplemental academic support program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>total physical response</li> <li>language experience approach</li> <li>communicative-based methodologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills and academic language in English</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-teach key concepts, skills and academic language in English</li> <li>literacy development in English</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide a language-rich home environment by involving children in conversations and household routines <b>in the home language</b></li> <li>encourage maintenance of reading skills in the home language</li> <li>ask adolescents about their school day, what they learned, and if they have homework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2</li> </ul>
<b>Administrator and counselor</b>  (Note: carefully consider course placement issues with respect to language proficiency. If a bilingual program exists, content classes can be taught in the native language. If not, follow order for course introduction proposed here and remember that content-based ESL support must be provided either by sheltering the instruction or pre-teaching key concepts, skills and language)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>secure translators for parent mtgs and written materials to home</li> <li>welcome parents to all events/have translators</li> <li>encourage involvement in extra-curricular activities</li> <li>set up study halls with peer tutoring</li> <li>encourage non-graded learning</li> <li>participate in creating Individualized Student Record Plan (IRP)</li> <li>schedule into most non-academic courses, BL/ESL, and math</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus the following...</li> <li>encourage pass/fail grading</li> <li>schedule into most non-academic courses, BL/ESL, and math</li> <li>introduce science and modified language arts</li> <li>alternate assessment and modified grading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>same as levels 1-2 plus the following...</li> <li>encourage letter grades consistent with IRP goals</li> <li>promote testing accommodations and modified grading as needed</li> <li>schedule into non-academic courses, BL/ESL, and math</li> <li>science and modified language arts</li> <li>social studies</li> </ul>

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