

Guidelines for Supporting English Language Learners (ELLs) in

..... High School

9

school logo

School vision

Ko te reo te tauriki	Language is my identity
Ko te reo tōku ahurei	Language is my uniqueness
Ko te reo te ora	Language is life

Whakatauki from *New Zealand Curriculum* English Learning Area

A school policy is the means by which a school indicates an intention to act in certain ways. Such policy is based on the beliefs and values that are important to the community of the school. By agreeing on a policy and documenting it, a school indicates a willingness to identify certain needs and allocate certain resources to ensure that those needs are met.

Adapted from: Ministry of Education (1999) *Non-English Speaking Background Students A Handbook for Schools* Learning media: Wellington, New Zealand p. 28

Rationale for this policy about ELLs

The population of English Language Learners(ELLs) is dynamic, as is the school context. Therefore it is useful for the the school to undertake regular reviews of the most effective ways to empower ELLs. This policy provides a basis for review.

This policy is underpinned by ideas that are central to key guiding documents for education in New Zealand/Aotearoa.

- The Vision of *New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) is for all young people to be “confident, connected, actively involved lifelong learners”.
- The school follows the direction set by the NZC Principles. Particular principles that set the direction for the school’s support for ELLs are:
 - Community Engagement
 - Cultural Diversity
 - Inclusion: *The curriculum is ... non-discriminatory; it ensures that students’ identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and that their learning needs are met* (NZC p.9)
- The statement in the NZC that most clearly relates to the cross-curricular language learning needs of ELLs is from p. 16:

Learning areas and language

Each learning area has its own language or languages. As students discover how to use them, they find they are able to think in different ways, access new areas of knowledge, and see their world from new perspectives.

For each area, students need specific help from their teachers as they learn:

- *the specialist vocabulary associated with that area*
- *how to read and understand its texts*
- *how to communicate knowledge and ideas in appropriate ways*
- *how to listen and read critically, assessing the value of what they hear and read.*

In addition to such help, students who are new learners of English or coming into an English-medium environment for the first time need explicit and extensive teaching of English vocabulary, word forms, sentence and text structures, and language uses.

As language is central to learning and English is the medium for most learning in the New Zealand Curriculum, the importance of literacy in English cannot be overstated. (NZC, p. 16)

- The National Assessment Guideline (NAG) 1:

c) on the basis of good quality assessment information, identify students and groups of students:

i. who are not achieving;

ii. who are at risk of not achieving;

iii. who have special needs (including gifted and talented students); and

iv. aspects of the curriculum which require particular attention;

d) develop and implement teaching and learning strategies to address the needs of students and aspects of the curriculum identified in (c) above

(<http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/legislation/nags/>)

- Registered Teacher Criteria Overarching Statement 3:

In an increasingly multi-cultural Aotearoa New Zealand, teachers need to be aware of and respect the languages, heritages and cultures of all ākonga.

- For international students, Section 35B of the Education Act 1989 states the following:

The Board (or, in the case of a school that is not a state school, the governing body) of a registered school shall not establish, or permit any student to enrol or continue to be enrolled in, any class, course, or programme, intended exclusively or mainly for foreign students, unless the class, course, or programme, is for the time being approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority which shall not approve it unless satisfied on reasonable grounds that-

(a) The school has or will have adequate staff, equipment, and premises to provide it; and

(b) The standard of instruction provided in it will be no lower than the standard that would be expected in any similar class, course, or programme for domestic students.

Outcomes of this policy

- ELLs and their families are welcomed into the school community, secure in using their home language(s) and cultures and knowing that they are valued.
- All ELLs are understood for their potential as they learn in a language they have yet to master. Their families' aspirations and the ELLs' own aspirations are understood and considered in the pathways that are created in school programmes.
- ELLs have appropriate specialist English language teaching to enable them to participate fully in learning within the NZ curriculum. Additionally, all teachers respond to the language learning needs of ELLs as they access the curriculum.

Guidelines/ Policy

Procedure for a planned entry for ELLs

1. When parents/caregivers approach the school to enrol a student, they will be welcomed. They will be given an enrolment pack including an enrolment form (with supplementary questions for ELLs), an information booklet and prospectus. A time for the enrolment process will be arranged. Enrollment for ELLs will be a process rather than a single event and it may take up to a week before the student is ready to start school. If it appears that the parents/ guardians have limited English, the family will be asked if they can bring their own interpreter. If there is not an interpreter known to the family who is available, [Language Line](#) will be used and the cost will be covered by the school.

2. To ensure eligibility to enrol, the school will follow the procedure outlined in Ministry of Education *Circular 2012/01 [Eligibility to enrol in New Zealand schools](#)*

During the enrolment process following points will be considered and acted upon as necessary:

- a. copy the information page and permits in the learner's passport to verify the learner's immigration status and enter the required information on ENROL
- b. if the enrolling student is a 'time-bound' domestic student, note on the calendar the date 3 months before the expiry of the permit on which study is dependent and set up a process to remind families to reapply
- c. for students who might be eligible for ESOL funding, ensure that all the information necessary is recorded on the school management system (ethnicity, home languages, country of birth, date of entry to NZ, date of enrolment in first NZ school)
- d. if the learner has come from another NZ school, read previous information to find out nuanced information about the student's progress, well-being, interests etc as well as ELLP stages and MOE ESOL funding number
- e. write down key information for the family: the learner's age-appropriate year level and the names of key staff

f. arrange a tour of the school for the family and an opportunity to meet the form teacher, dean, HOD ESOL and any other key staff members

g. direct the family in how to get uniform and the necessary equipment for school (some refugee and work-permit families will have limited funds so ensure there is appropriate support)

h. give the student a date and time to start in writing.

3. A third aspect of enrolment will involve finding out more about the learner and sharing more information and ideas about the school through an interpreter when needed. This may or may not happen on the same day as enrolment depending on the availability of the HOD ESOL and/or Dean). The [supplementary questions about ELLs \(link the word doc\)](#) will provide extra information to inform course planning. Additionally, the families will be shown the NZ Curriculum and introduced to key ideas like the progressions in ELLP. They will have the opportunity to discuss similarities and differences with their own learning experiences. The families will be informed about opportunities to be involved in the school e.g. parent-teacher evenings, and school camps. They are encouraged to take part in school activities and families understand that interpreters are valued and welcomed. The family also needs to be informed about the school policy and procedures related to safety and well-being. They need to know procedures in case of racial bullying and know that it will not be tolerated.

4. A fourth aspect of enrolment will be An initial assessment of the student's English will take place before decisions about class placement are made. This might take two hours and an interpreter is not required for this part of the enrolment process.

5. The HOD ESOL and Dean work with the student and family to decide on a programme of learning. Information will be recorded and shared with the student and his/her family, given to the student's class teachers and placed on the student's file. The family will be informed about their students' ELLP stages and placement in classes. The student and family will also know that the decisions can be reviewed once the student settles into school.

6. The HOD ESOL and form teacher organise any appropriate resources or support required, e.g. allocation of buddies, bilingual teacher-aide support, information about the student's culture and language being given to class teachers. Classroom teachers will be told when to expect the new student and have information about him/her.

7. The HOD ESOL will organise an application for ESOL funding to be signed by the principal and sent to the MOE.

Guidelines for assessing & monitoring ELLs' progress

The *English Language Learning Progressions* (ELLP) are used to map the student's English language. Details on the ELLP matrices are highlighted in different colours (dated) over time.

The initial assessment provides

- a guide for decisions about the kinds of English language support needed
- a baseline for monitoring progress
- a diagnosis of language strengths and needs to inform specific teaching foci
- a guide for families (and agents for FFP students) to understand the English language learning stages
- data to back initial judgements of ELLP stages for ESOL funding for eligible students

Assessment activities that are used in initial assessment will be repeated at intervals (approx 6 months) to assess progress. The assessment activities do not all need to be completed - what seems to be most revealing given the available time frame and considering the impact on the students. Observations in different classes will provide additional naturally occurring information in ongoing manner.

Some suggested initial assessment activities *The times given are approximate.*

Oral Language (Listening & speaking)

A series of oral instructions (getting increasingly more complex) for the learner to follow. Stop when the learner is no longer capable of understanding. *20 mins*

Oral language (Listening and writing)

Dictation: A series increasingly complex sentences to a point where the student is not really understanding. *15 mins*

Reading

Have a range of texts at different ELLP stages on hand. Ask questions at surface level, inference and 'beyond the text', starting with Stage 1 and moving to increasingly complex texts according to the student's competency.

20 mins

Writing

Find out about a student's writing fluency in their home languages. Give them a topic that requires social language (My Home Town or My School) and another that is more academically demanding (explanation of a process or graph analysis or an argument). Get the student to write about both topics in English as well.

40 mins

Vocabulary (reading and speaking)

Reading vocabulary: Provide Vocabulary Levels Tests; 1st 1000 words, 2nd 1000 words, academic word list (or all five levels if time permits and the student might manage more challenge).

20 mins

Record of Oral Vocabulary (in English and another language): Give the student two minutes to say all the words he/she can think of on a given topic (one social e.g. sport or school and another more academic e.g. Chemistry or Language

10 mins

Speaking

This can be assessed informally during the course of the enrolment and later in classroom observations. Additionally students can be recorded more formally relating something they have done in one of their subjects recently e.g. how a maths problem can be understood and calculated, what a Science experiment showed, the process of creating an artwork, how he/she developed a design in Technology.

10 mins

Guidelines for making decisions about learning programmes for ELLs

ELLs will be placed with their age group for social reasons. In the senior school, multi-level programmes may be appropriate. There will be decisions to make about the amount and type of EL specialist support that a student can receive.

- **Students who are operating at ELLP Foundation Stage and Stage 1** will benefit from being in a small (8-12 students) intensive ESOL class for about half of the weekly timetable so that he/she has sufficient time and security to produce new language with confidence. The learning in this class will be closely linked to the curriculum that students will encounter beyond this sheltered learning environment. Most ELLs like to be in some 'mainstream' options and will benefit from the social and academic interactions with others in these classes. Bilingual language assistants can be very useful in enabling new ELLs to access the curriculum along with their peers.
- **Students at ELLP Stage 2 and Stage 3** will benefit from English as an Additional Language (EAL) options (sometimes called ESOL) so that they have focused opportunities to develop English language. In these options, the language teaching will be closely linked with the curriculum that students encounter elsewhere in the school. Emphasis will also be on developing capabilities for independent and interactive language learning in both English and home languages. There will be a balance of meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, fluency development and some specific language learning focus. Class sizes are normally smaller than 15 because they cater for students high and complex needs who need to learn English with speed so that they can access the curriculum at age-appropriate levels.
- **Students at ELLP Stage 4** should be able to access the curriculum along with their peers. However they will still need some directed academic language guidance, either from their 'mainstream' teachers or an ESOL specialist. An English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programme for these students may be useful if they are going on to tertiary study.

For all programmes, a scheme of work should be a 'living document' as the needs of ELLs change quite rapidly with different immigration changes, international student market fluctuations etc.

Guidelines about who has responsibility for ELLs

All staff have responsibility for ELLs. The Effective Pedagogy section of the NZC gives guidance which is inclusive of ELLs.

Someone on the Senior Management Team will be given oversight of the support for ELLs.

Because there are many varied roles an EL HOD holds, a specific job description will be provided. When there are teacher aides/ language assistants and/or more than one ESOL specialist, management units and HOD recognition will be given.

One particular role of the person in charge of ELLs is to collate information about students' stages on ELLP in order to apply for ESOL funding from the Ministry of Education. Release time will be given in late February and late July to complete this task.

The management of the budget that comes from the ESOL funding will be the joint responsibility of the HOD ESOL and the SMT person with responsibility for ELLs. They will produce a budget and ensure clarity of purpose and accountability.

The Registered Teacher Criteria (RTC) will be used to evaluate how well specialist teachers and leaders are meeting the needs of ELLs. The document [*Effective Leadership and Pedagogy for English Language Learners \(ELLs\) - a description of the roles of leaders and specialist teachers of ELL ākonga*](#) will provide an ELLs-specific focus for review through the RTC lens.

Guidelines for what any visitor would expect to see/hear in classes with ELLs

The social, physical and emotional safety of ELLs is assured. Refer to anti-bullying policy.

Equal importance is placed on each learner's home languages and cultural background so that ELLs have a supportive and effective environment in which to learn:

- Trans-language learning (students using more than one language, moving between languages) is to be promoted, seen and heard within classroom environments.
- The wealth of different cultural experiences that ELLs bring is recognised as a positive asset. Teachers respond to ranging values and expectations. There is evidence of cultural dimensions being explored in all curriculum areas.

There are opportunities for ELLs to learn English in an environment which fosters the development of social and academic English language across the curriculum.

- Teachers identify and state the key vocabulary and language structure learning outcomes. They scaffold the academic language learning for all students, including identified foci for ELLs. These language learning outcomes are evident in written form so that ELLs can refer back to them.
- Students from diverse language backgrounds are given many and varied opportunities to use their new language (English) and link it to their prior knowledge in meaningful situations. In their planning, teachers make time for all students to develop oral fluency, especially for academic language.

Guidelines for creating opportunities for ELLs and their families to be actively involved in the school community

- ELLs are supported to be involved in the extra-curricular activities of the school
- The school provides interpreters for parents (and students) especially at critical times such as enrolment, parent interviews etc, according to needs.
- Families are supported to be involved in the school. A behavioral issue should never be the first contact with families.
- Progress and achievement is reported to families using the *English Language Learning Progressions*, explaining each student's pathway to expectations.

Goals for staff professional learning and development about teaching ELLs:

- If the achievement of ELLs is noticed in the tail of school achievement data, specific PLD will be sought to address the needs of ELLs in those Learning Areas or subjects.
- By 2016, all staff are to have knowledge of the *English Language Learning Progressions* (ELLP), to the extent that they can identify language learning foci, monitor students' progress in relation to those foci and discuss ELLP progress with students and their families.
- All English Language specialist teachers have a sound knowledge of ELLP. They are able to guide and moderate teachers' decisions about ELLP for ESOL-funding purposes and for focusing teaching and learning.
- ESOL specialists have opportunities to attend PLD in a number of fields including NCEA assessment (English Language standards, Literacy standards, English for Academic Purposes standards) as well as workshops in particular Learning Areas that are accessed by ELLs.

This policy is approved by the _____ School Board of Trustees

Signed: _____
Board of Trustees Chairperson,

Date: _____