

## **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)**

### **Background**

English as a Second Language (ESL) is a provincially funded program for students both recently arrived in Canada and Canadian born. The goal of the program is to provide these students with the necessary educational programs and academic supports to enable them to communicate in English fluently and competently enough to complete their education. ESL programming addresses the linguistic, cultural, spiritual, and academic needs of these students.

### **Procedures**

1. The Alberta Education English as a Second Language (ESL) coding system categorized English Language Learners (ELL) in four ways:
  - 1.1 (301) Foreign-born students whose first language is not English and who require English language support.
  - 1.2 (302) International students who require English language support (unfunded)
  - 1.3 (303) Canadian born students whose first language is not English and who require English language support.
  - 1.4 (640) Refugee students who have limited or disrupted formal schooling and are unable to complete many courses in the Program of Studies and who require additional supports and services.
2. ESL programs shall be provided in accordance with the Alberta Education Program of Studies and appropriate learning and teaching resources. ESL Programs will be made available in the Division based on the following factors:
  - 2.1 The number of students requiring the program;
  - 2.2 The availability of appropriate facilities and qualified staff;
  - 2.3 Program costs; and
  - 2.4 Other factors considered relevant by the Division.
3. Each school should develop a program plan for English Language Learners, which will:
  - 3.1 foster a welcoming, inclusive school community.
  - 3.2 be provided in accordance with the Alberta Education's Program of Studies and the Alberta Education Proficiency Benchmarks.
  - 3.3 be based on sound ESL and literacy pedagogical theory and research.

- 3.4 actively support the linguistic, cultural, emotional, spiritual and academic needs of students.
  - 3.5 fully support English Language Learners in becoming productive, contributing members of Albertan and Canadian society
  - 3.6 be monitored and reviewed regularly
4. All schools that are providing ESL programming shall:
- 4.1 comply with Alberta Education Policy 1.5.1 – English as a Second Language, as well as current regulations defining eligibility;
  - 4.2 ensure students are identified and coded according to Alberta Education regulations;
    - 4.2.1 The school must ensure proper documentation is on file to support the code and funding of English Language Learners.
  - 4.3 develop an ESL program plan that promotes rapid integration into the school and community environment;
  - 4.4 facilitate collaboration among all staff and service providers working with English Language Learners at their school;
  - 4.5 ensure maintenance of ESL data and record keeping as required by Alberta Education;
    - 4.5.1 Language acquisition will be tracked using the Alberta K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks twice a year, fall and spring
    - 4.5.2 Documentation of writing, reading, speaking and listening assessments must be kept on file and be accessible for audits.
5. School intake procedures for new English Language Learner families should include:
- 5.1 the family receiving an intake package, which includes registration forms and school information.
  - 5.2 an initial intake meeting to establish if additional learning needs are needed and coordinate the best placement for the student.
  - 5.3 welcome procedures for the student's transition to the school. Welcome procedures could include a school tour, welcome package, meeting with school counsellor and/or ESL teacher, establishing peer buddies and/or language tutors.
  - 5.4 coding, English language proficiency assessments and Benchmark completion within the first month of arrival.
  - 5.5 Establishing a plan for programming and support.

6. If an appropriate program cannot be offered in the Division, arrangements may be made to purchase services from another Division.
7. Written parental approval is required before students are registered in an ESL program

Reference: Section 3,11,17,18,33,52,53,197,222 Education Act  
Policy 1.5.1 – English as a Second Language  
Funding Manual for School Authorities