

English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Program Goals

The goal of the ESOL program is to address the needs of the whole child, to provide language acquisition as quickly as possible, and to foster a teacher/parent/student cooperative approach to learning and teaching. This program fosters an environment where individual differences and learning preferences are given their rightful place.

Parental Notification

Title III legislation requires schools and districts with English Language Learners (ELLs) establish and maintain regular contact with the parents of students eligible to receive language assistance services.

Home Language Survey

The first document a parent sees in reference to determining ESOL program eligibility is the Home Language Survey (HLS). This document allows educators to make a determination of the student's primary language through a series of questions.

- To determine program eligibility, students with HLS responses other than English may be assessed using the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT), an English language proficiency screener. If students are eligible for language assistance services, parents must be notified of eligibility within 30-days of program placement. This notification includes information about the ESOL program, entry/exit requirements, and contact information.

- Additionally, parents are updated regularly on their child's progress in the ESOL program, as well as the progress of the school district. In addition to quarterly progress reports, parents are notified of their child's progress towards attainment of English in the form of Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) parent reports.

ACCESS for ELLs

This annual language proficiency assessment measures

a student's progress in developing academic/social

English and attainment of proficiency sufficient for program exit. Currently these reports are available in eight languages and are distributed to ESOL teachers to deliver to parents.

- As mandated by *NCLB*, results from ACCESS are tied to the district's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the form of Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). According to *NCLB*, in order for a district to meet AYP, students must not only improve on each successive administration of ACCESS (AMAO 1), the district must also demonstrate that a percentage of students are attaining full proficiency in English and are therefore exiting the ESOL Program (AMAO 2). Each year, parents are informed of Atlanta Public Schools' (APS) AMAO status and whether the school district met AYP.

- Finally, because the district has an obligation to ensure parents understand the information being sent from school to home, APS employees have access to the TransACT database (www.transact.com) which houses translated forms and notifications in more than 20 languages. Parents are also given instructions regarding how to request an interpreter (supplied at the expense of the district) for conferences, screenings, tribunal hearings, etc.

Additional Notifications Provided for Parents of ELLs in a Variety of Languages

The following documents are examples of the many documents that are available to parents of ELLs in various languages:

- Atlanta Public Schools' Student Handbook
- Atlanta Public Schools' Guidebook
- Request for Written Translation/Interpretation Services
- Emergency Information Forms
- ESOL Program Placement Notification Forms
- Notice of District AYP and AMAO Progress