

Book

Policy Manual

Section

1000 Community

Title

Engagement with English Learner Parents/Guardians and Students (NEW POLICY)

Number

1012.1

Status

DRAFT

Proposed: November/December 2018

Purpose

The Board of Education is committed to providing English Learner (EL) parents/guardians and students with equal access to the resources, supports, and services provided to all families and students in the District. School entities have the primary responsibility for ensuring that the educational program of EL students, including EL students receiving special education services, is provided in accordance with law and regulations. The Board further recognizes that an effective instructional program for ELs benefits from participation of the student's parent/guardian.

The within policy is adopted in order to establish practices and procedures for fostering effective communication between EL parents/guardians and schools, promoting the parental involvement of EL parents/guardians, and ensuring the availability of meaningful training and engagement opportunities for EL parents/guardians and District staff.

The within policy shall apply across all grade spans served by the District, beginning with Pre-K and including programs that serve District students with disabilities through the age of 21.

Authority

The Board recognizes that federal and state laws and regulations prohibit public schools from discriminating against students and families based on ancestry, national origin or English Learner (EL) status, and that these laws require public schools to provide language assistance to EL students and parents/guardians to assure meaningful access to school programs, activities, and information.

Definitions

English Learner – a student whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the student: (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, and who either:

1. Was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;
2. Is a Native American or Alaska Native, or a native resident of the outlying areas; and 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
3. 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.

Citation: ESEA Section 8101(20).

English Learner Parents/Guardians, at times referred to as Limited English Proficient (LEP) Parents/Guardians, are parents or guardians whose primary language is other than English and who have limited English proficiency in one of the four domains of language proficiency (speaking, listening, reading, or writing).

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to ensure compliance with this policy and all applicable laws and regulations relating to EL parents/guardians and EL students. The administrative regulations shall include accountability measures to ensure the guidelines outlined in this policy are implemented effectively.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that training is provided for all staff members on their responsibilities under applicable laws and this policy, including teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, security and health and physical education staff. Information regarding this policy shall be incorporated into training for school employees.

Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the administrative regulations align with the following objectives:

1. To foster effective general communications between EL parents/guardians and schools;
2. To increase training and engagement opportunities for EL parents/guardians and families, as well as professional development opportunities for District staff on ensuring the rights of EL students and EL parents/guardians;

3. To improve structures in place to foster parental participation of EL parents/families in the District's special education processes;
4. To increase collaborations inside the District and in the broader community to support the rights of EL families and EL students; and
5. To enhance the capability of District IT Systems to provide schools with immediate access to information needed to serve EL families.

The Superintendent or designee shall put into place accountability mechanisms and procedures to ensure the objectives listed above are fully and effectively developed, implemented, and monitored.

Publication and Communications

This policy and the associated administrative regulations shall be distributed annually to EL parents/guardians and shall be posted on the District's Internet site. A summary of the policy shall be included in the Code of Student Conduct, beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. The District and individual schools shall make consistent efforts to ensure the visibility and implementation of this policy.

Legal

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.

Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA), 43 P. S. §§ 951—963

Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), 20 U.S.C. § 1701 et seq.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), 20 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.

Pennsylvania State Board of Education Regulations, 22 Pa. Code 4.26

PA Basic Education Circular (BEC), Educating English Learners (ELs)

Board Policy – 102, 1012