

Dear Program Directors:

Please see the information below relating to federal guidance on ELs and important reminders about upcoming activities and deadlines.

## Comprehensive Planning

### ***Guidance on Equitable Educational Access for English Learner Students***

The U.S. Departments of Education and Justice have released joint guidance reminding states, school districts and schools of their obligations under federal law to ensure that English learner students have equal access to a high-quality education and the opportunity to achieve their full academic potential.

The departments have also released additional tools and resources to help schools in serving English learner students and parents with limited English proficiency:

- A fact sheet in English and in other languages about schools' obligations under federal law to ensure that English learner students can participate meaningfully and equally in school.
- A fact sheet in English and in other languages about schools' obligations under federal law to communicate information to limited English proficient parents in a language they can understand.
- A toolkit, prepared by the Education Department's Office of English Language Acquisition, to help school districts identify English learner students. This is the first chapter in a series of chapters to help state education agencies and school districts meet their obligations to English learner students.

This is the first time that a single piece of guidance has addressed the array of federal laws that govern schools' obligations to English learners. The guidance recognizes the recent milestone 40th anniversaries of *Lau v. Nichols* and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA), as well as the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act. The EEOA, similar to *Lau*, requires public schools to take appropriate action to help English learner students overcome language barriers and ensure their ability to participate equally in school.

The guidance explains schools' obligations to:

- identify English learner students in a timely, valid and reliable manner;
- offer all English learner students an educationally sound language assistance program;
- provide qualified staff and sufficient resources for instructing English learner students;
- ensure English learner students have equitable access to school programs and activities;
- avoid unnecessary segregation of English learner students from other students;
- monitor students' progress in learning English and doing grade-level class work;
- remedy any academic deficits English learner students incurred while in a language assistance program;
- move students out of language assistance programs when they are proficient in English and monitor those students to ensure they were not prematurely removed;
- evaluate the effectiveness of English learner programs; and
- provide limited English proficient parents with information about school programs, services and activities in a language they understand.

ISBE would also like to remind schools and districts that state rules pertaining to serving English Language Learners, as well as additional guidance, are available at [www.isbe.net/bilingual](http://www.isbe.net/bilingual).

### ***FY16 Application for TBE/TPI/Title III Funding***

The application process for FY16 TBE/TPI and Title III LIPLEPS and Immigrant Education Program funds for the 2015-16 school year has begun. The Enrollment Summary and Ceiling Calculator (Part I of the application), is available for completion on IWAS. Districts that want to apply for funds must create and submit Part I of the application by Jan. 31, 2015.

In Part I, districts must confirm that English learner (EL) student information on the Student Information System (SIS) has been reviewed for accuracy. SIS student records determine a district's funding level. Districts are responsible for ensuring that English learner and immigrant student data on SIS are accurate and complete by March 2, 2015. Multiple data elements are used to calculate funding levels for FY16. Funding formula data will be extracted once for all districts in the state on the same date in early March. This data will be final and will generate TBE/TPI, LIPLEPS and Immigrant Education Program funding allotments that will appear in the ELL TBE/TPI and Title III Application (Part II) on IWAS.

There are several reports on SIS that will help you to determine the accuracy and completeness of your district's EL student data on SIS:

- The EGMS EL Enrollment Data Completion (Ceiling Calculator Grant) Report (summary and detail) provides information about EL data elements used to populate the attendance center summaries and ceiling calculator in Part II of the FY16 application.
- The EGMS Ceiling Calculator Funding Report (summary and detail) includes EL students on SIS who will generate TBE/TPI and/or LIPLEPS funding for FY16.
- The ELL Report (summary and detail) shows all EL student data elements reported.

To receive funding, districts must also complete the ELL TBE/TPI and Title III Application (Part II), which will be available on IWAS on May 1, 2015. Part II must be submitted to ISBE by June 30, 2015.

If you have any difficulty accessing your IWAS application, please call our helpdesk at (217) 558-3600. Other programmatic concerns can be directed to the Division of English Language Learning at (312) 814-3850.

### ***District Preschool Program Plan for serving English Learners***

A recent amendment to administrative rules provides districts with additional time — until July 1, 2016 — to ensure that individuals assigned to provide instruction in English as a Second Language and/or instruction in a student's home language in a preschool setting to meet the applicable requirements for bilingual education teachers and ESL teachers (23 Ill. Adm. Code 228.35 (a) & (b)). Staffing is one significant component of establishing Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) or Transitional Programs of Instruction (TPI) to serve preschool English learners, as required under part 228 since July 2010.

In order to ensure that **preschool English learners** are receiving language support services and districts are making progress toward development of their TBE/TPI preschool programs, districts that have any attendance centers that offer preschool programs and currently do not meet the staffing requirements under 228.35(a) & (b) have to submit a Plan to ISBE DELL, pursuant to 228.35(c)(3).

**The District Preschool Plan** is available on the DELL website:  
<http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/preschool-ells.htm>.

As part of the Plan, district must address various required components. Districts are encouraged to use the "Service and Staff Template" to satisfy this requirement, which is also available on the DELL website. Plans should be developed and completed in collaboration with the preschool administrator.

This plan, including all required components, must be submitted electronically to the Division of English Learning (DELL) at ISBE by Jan. 30, 2015. Completed Plans can be submitted to [dell@isbe.net](mailto:dell@isbe.net).

Please note, that the updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Serving English Language Learners in Preschool Programs in Illinois Public School Districts 23 Ill. Adm. Code Part 228 is also available on the DELL website: <http://www.isbe.net/bilingual/htmls/preschool-ells.htm>.

Please contact DELL at (312) 814-3850 with questions.

## **Professional Development**

### ***Upcoming Workshops provided by WIDA***

These workshops are open to any educator from Illinois and there is no registration fee. Please email Sonia Serrano at [DELLregistration@isbe.net](mailto:DELLregistration@isbe.net) to register or with questions about these WIDA workshops.

If you are ready to register, please include the following information for each individual attending:

- Name
- District name
- Position title
- Type of certificate/license
- Phone number
- Email address

Your registration will not be complete until we receive complete information.

Once registered, we send you a confirmation with the location and registered participants receive an agenda and a participant packet shortly before the workshop.

Please see the descriptions of the workshops below:

### **Formative Language Assessment Workshop: February 24-25, 2015, Schaumburg, IL**

This workshop provides an overview of assessment models with a focus on formative assessment. Participants will explore academic language formative assessment, its implementation, and impact on instruction.

Participants will be able to:

- Describe different types of assessment
- Create targets or objectives for academic language measurement and development
- Develop a variety of performance tasks and identify appropriate assessment tools
- Discuss the importance and use of feedback

**ELD Standards in Action: Unit Planning:  
March 10-11, 2015, Normal, IL**

Participants will utilize resources from the WIDA ELD Standards Framework to plan units of instruction which integrate content and language standards. In school teams, participants will engage in identifying the academic language demands embedded in state content standards, planning and designing a custom unit of instruction, identifying ways to support and differentiate for language development; and planning and designing methods for formative language assessment. Teams will have ample opportunities for developing materials; therefore participants are encouraged to bring curriculum materials and student ACCESS for ELLs scores.

Participants will be able to:

- Discuss how to identify the academic language demands of content standards (e.g. CCSS, NGSS)
- Explain how to integrate content standards and the WIDA ELD Standards when planning instruction and assessment
- Formulate a plan for instruction which includes learning goals for both content and language
- Formulate a plan for assessment for content learning and language development

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Thanks for your participation.