

# Twinsburg City School District



## English Learners

### English Learners (EL) Program

Reference for Twinsburg City School District

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Jennifer Farthing, Director of Curriculum  
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# Twinsburg City School District

## English Learners Program

### Table of Contents

1. Resources for Parents
2. Testing Summary
3. Services
4. Q & A for Parents
5. Grading: Pass/Fail Option
6. Exit Information
7. Classroom Teacher Resource Guide





# Twinsburg City School District

*Services for Students –  
English Learners (EL)*

## **Resources for Parents**

### **Welcome to Twinsburg City School District**

Twinsburg City Schools has three communities: Twinsburg City, Twinsburg Township, and Reminderville Village. About 4,200 students attend from pre-school through grade 12. Approximately 135 of these students have a home language other than English. Over 22 languages are represented including Punjabi, Russian, Farsi, Chinese, Bengali, Hindi, Telugu, and many more.

### **The Value of Becoming Multi-Lingual**

What a wonderful opportunity for our students to learn more than one language! We encourage the home languages to be maintained while our English Learners also learn English. Our world is a global community. The ability to communicate in more than one language and to understand multiple cultures is highly-valued for social, economic, and academic reasons.

### **School Contacts**

**English Learners Teacher:** Barbara Rosalez, [brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org](mailto:brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org)

**Director of Curriculum:** Jennifer Farthing, [jfarthing@twinsburgcsd.org](mailto:jfarthing@twinsburgcsd.org) or 330-486-2015

### **Websites for Information and Assistance**

**Twinsburg City School District:** <http://www.twinsburg.k12.oh.us>

Contains a wealth of information about our district, testing, calendars, special events, etc.

**Lau Resource Center:** <http://education.ohio.gov/> Insert "Lau" in search box.

Provides information about the education of English Learner students.

### **Community Resources**

**Twinsburg Public Library:** 10050 Ravenna Road, Twinsburg. Phone: 330-425-4268.

The public library has many resources for families: books, movies, presentations, etc.

<http://www.twinsburglibrary.org/>



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## **Testing Summary**

### **Initial Testing for English Proficiency**

During student registration for school, parents complete a Home Language Survey, which identifies any language other than English that is used in the home. According to state law, students who are new to any school in Ohio must be tested for English proficiency level in reading, speaking, writing, and listening within 30 days of entering school. In Twinsburg, the Ohio English Language Proficiency Screener (OELPS) is used for assessment unless comparable testing results are available from a previous school district.

The OELPS is administered to students who have a language other than English used in the home, whether born in the United States or another country. It is administered by school personnel at the school the student attends. This test takes approximately two hours. Students who score at the proficient level are not identified as English Learners. The results are sent to parents as soon as possible, along with a permission slip letter and information that describes educational services.

### **Annual Testing for English Proficiency**

Each English Learner student is also required to take the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA) once per year. This test is based on the *Ohio English Language Proficiency Standards* and is usually administered in the spring; there are five domains tested. The test is submitted to the state for scoring and results are returned to the school district in late spring or summer. The district forwards the results to parents.

The state tracks progress on the OELPA from year to year. The English language proficiency domain evaluates only the broad category of English Learner as measured through the percent of English Learners making adequate progress towards English Language Proficiency, defined as either a 1- or 2-point annual increase in the number of points earned on the OELPA.

### **State Achievement Testing**

English Learners must participate in all of the required Ohio State Tests administered in the schools, and may qualify for an exemption or for accommodations under some circumstances.

**Exemptions:** A student who has been enrolled in a United States school for no more than 180 school days may be exempted from having their score reported for the ELA test. **(confirm)**

**Accommodations:** For state tests, all English Learner students may use a dictionary and may have extended time to complete the tests. All tests, except for English Language Arts, have the option for read aloud/audio accommodation.



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## Services

### **Services for Students Learning English**

For initial identification, any student tested with OELPS who does not score proficient in each subtest is identified as an English Learner student. On the OELPS, students may score Emerging, Progressing, or Proficient. Please note: parents have the option to remove their child from “services;” however, English Learner students are required by state law to remain in the program until they meet state exit criteria as determined from OELPA results. In OELPA, there are three overall performance levels: Proficient, Emerging and Progressing.

- The performance levels are determined as follows:
  - “Proficient” students are those scoring any combination of 4’s and 5’s across all four domains;
  - “Emerging” students are those scoring any combination of 1’s and 2’s across all four domains;
  - “Progressing” students are those scoring any combination across the four domains that does not fall into Proficient or Emerging.

**English Learners who score “Proficient” will exit the program; Emerging and Progressing students will continue to receive support and monitoring by the district’s English Learner instructor until student receives Proficient level on the annual OELPA.**

### **English Learner Classroom Focus**

Because our English Learner students tend to have the most difficulty with written English, the emphasis will be direct services related to writing skills. The English Learner teacher uses reading and oral tasks, which require a structured written response. Writing is vital to assist the learning English and to meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation.

### **Other Services**

English Learner students may also participate as appropriate in Title I reading, student contact time, peer tutoring under teacher guidance, etc.

Services may also include an Individual Education Plan (IEP) if the student is so identified.

- Speech / language services





# Twinsburg City School District

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## **Questions and Answers for Parents**

**Q. Whom do I contact for English Learner information?**

- A. The English Learner teacher: Barbara Rosalez, [brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org](mailto:brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org)  
Director of Curriculum: Jennifer Farthing, [jfarthing@twinsburgcsd.org](mailto:jfarthing@twinsburgcsd.org) or 330-486-2015.

**Q. Where can I find information, assistance, and resources for English as a Second Language?**

- A. Twinsburg City Schools: <http://www.twinsburg.k12.oh.us/curriculum.aspx>  
Lau Resource Center: <http://education.ohio.gov/> Insert "Lau" in search box.  
Twinsburg Public Library: 10050 Ravenna Road, Twinsburg or 330-425-4268. <http://www.twinsburglibrary.org>

**Q. How is a child determined to be an English Learner?**

- A. When students are registered for school, every parent is required to complete a Home Language Survey, which identifies languages other than English that are used in the home. Students who are possible candidates for English Learner must be tested for their English proficiency level in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, comprehension, and listening according to state law. The results of this testing determines whether or not the student is in the English Learner Program. The results are sent to parents as soon as possible, along with a letter that describes educational services the student will receive.

**Q. What services are offered to my child as an English Learner student?**

- A. Services offered depend on the child's needs. Students who need more help are pulled out of the regular classroom and taken to another room to work individually or in a small group with the English Learner teacher. Some students get help by staying in the classroom, but the English Learner teacher provides the classroom teacher with materials to assist the student. Other students are monitored to make sure they are doing well and if the classroom teacher notices the student is having difficulties in the regular classroom, she/he contacts the English Learner teacher to see what additional assistance can be offered.

**Q. Will these services cost any money or additional time at school for my student?**

- A. No. Services are provided at no cost to the parents and are provided during the school day.

**Q. What about the time my student misses in the regular classroom as a result of being pulled out of class to see the English Learner teacher?**

- A. The classroom teacher will assist your child with any work that is missed and may adjust assignments for a student who has missed instructional time.

**Q. What other testing is my child required to take as an English Learner student?**

**A.** Once a year, your child is required to take the state Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA). The test has five sections. The online test is submitted to the state for scoring and results are returned to the school district in late spring or early summer. The district forwards the Family Reports to parents.

**Q. What does my student need to know about English Learners and Ohio State Tests (OST)?**

**A.** Along with all of the other students, your child must take these state tests when they are administered. English Learner students are allowed extra time and the use of a dictionary on the test. Please contact the English Learner teacher if you have more questions about the special circumstances.

**Q. How does my child exit the English Learners program?**

**A.** It is very important to know that your child is doing well with learning English so there are several steps to follow before a student leaves the program. In OELPA, there are three overall performance levels: Proficient, Emerging and Progressing.

- The performance levels are determined as follows:
  - “Proficient” students are those scoring any combination of 4’s and 5’s across all four domains;
  - “Emerging” students are those scoring any combination of 1’s and 2’s across all four domains;
  - “Progressing” students are those scoring any combination across the four domains that does not fall into Proficient or Emerging.

**English Learners who score “Proficient” will exit the program; Emerging and Progressing students will continue to receive support and monitoring by the district’s English Learners teacher until student receives Proficient level on the annual OELPA.**

**Q. What if I don’t want my child in the English Learners program?**

**A.** The parent/guardian must give permission to have the child leave the regular classroom to receive services from the English Learners teacher. You can request that your child not receive services; however, your child is still listed as a student in the English Learners program and must go through the exiting process. (The student is still required to take the OELPA test each year, per the exiting procedures.)

**Q. What about my high school student missing a chance for a credit?**

**A.** Your child is required to have 22 credits in specific subjects plus forty hours of community service (see Graduation Requirements Flyer on Curriculum website) to graduate and he/she must earn 18 points on the Ohio State Tests (OST). The goal of the English Learners program at the high-school level is to assist your child in learning aspects of reading and writing that they may have missed due to their language differences as quickly as possible.

**Q. Will my high school student’s grade point average (GPA) be affected?**

**A.** No, it does not affect a student’s GPA.

**Q. Are there different requirements for my student for graduation?**

**A.** No. There are not different requirements for graduation for English Learner students. They must meet curriculum requirements and earn 18 points on the OST. Passing the OELPA test is not a requirement for graduation.

**Q. What if I have other questions?**

**A.** Please feel free to contact the English Learners teacher, your school counselor, your child’s teacher, the principal, or the curriculum director. We all hope for the very best education for your child!



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## Exit Information

### Ending English Learner Services

English Learner students are automatically in the English Learners program when they are identified. Parents must give permission for services outside of the regular classroom. Parents can request that their child not receive English Learner services at any time; however, students remain in the program until they meet the exit criteria required by the state.

### English Learner Status per ODE Rules Book

. In OELPA, there are three overall performance levels: Proficient, Emerging and Progressing.

- The performance levels are determined as follows:
  - “Proficient” students are those scoring any combination of 4’s and 5’s across all four domains;
  - “Emerging” students are those scoring any combination of 1’s and 2’s across all four domains;
  - “Progressing” students are those scoring any combination across the four domains that does not fall into Proficient or Emerging.

**English Learners who score “Proficient” will exit the program; Emerging and Progressing students will continue to receive support and monitoring by the district’s English Learners teacher until student receives Proficient level on the annual OELPA administration.**

### Graduation

As with any student, an ELA English Learner student will need to meet curriculum requirements and also earn 18 points on the Ohio State Tests in math, science, and social studies in order to graduate. Passing the OELPA is not required for graduation.





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## **Classroom Teacher Resource Guide**

To address needs of our expanding English Learner population, there are a number of strategies that will assist teachers in meeting the unique needs of this group while benefiting all students within the classroom.

### **Instructional Strategies**

1. Provide additional wait time for student responses
  - a. Provide time for the English Learner student to translate into their first language, determine an answer in their first language, and then translate the answer into English
2. Speak clearly and more slowly
  - a. Use gestures and facial expressions to emphasize the meaning of what is being said
  - b. Refrain from using idioms since such expressions are often translated literally by English Learner students
3. Simplify sentence structure and repeat sentences without rephrasing
  - a. Use affirmative sentences rather than using negatives
  - b. Repeat sentences verbatim to provide English Learner students with another opportunity to attach meaning to what has been said
4. Teach subject-specific vocabulary in context
  - a. Introduce new vocabulary words to students a week ahead of lessons utilizing the new vocabulary (frontload)
  - b. Provide explanations in context to assist student understanding
  - c. Some subject-specific vocabulary may have different meanings in other contexts, thus may confuse student understanding
  - d. Example: Mass has one meaning in science, but has an entirely different meaning related to religious services
5. Provide a visual representation of new vocabulary, when applicable
  - a. Younger students may benefit from drawing a picture to represent the new vocabulary
  - b. If a student has had little exposure to English, consider labeling items in the classroom
  - c. Allow the use of a bilingual or English dictionary
  - d. Create limited / alternative spelling / vocabulary lists
6. Use manipulatives to teach key concepts, when applicable
  - a. Use of concrete hands-on materials, particularly for science and math concepts, serves to assist student construction of meaning
7. Check periodically to ensure student understanding
  - a. Focus on student body language and/or facial expressions
  - b. When asking student level of understanding, avoid questions that would elicit a Yes or No response; use open-ended questioning

8. Use guided or directed reading support
  - a. Utilize pre-reading strategies with all subject areas (model how to 'preview' text focusing on headings, illustrations, vocabulary, etc.)
  - b. Provide a pre-reading question as a focus for reading
  - c. Provide instruction in note taking or summarizing important information from text (may include highlighting)
    - 1) Use graphic organizers at all grade levels to assist students in constructing meaning of new concepts
  - d. Provide follow-up questions that requires specific support from the text
9. Provide frequent opportunities to write in the classroom
  - a. Model the use of various pre-writing strategies; such as brainstorming
  - b. Model each aspect of the writing process to ensure that the student understands and has a grasp of assignment expectations
10. Utilize cooperative learning strategies
  - a. Working with peers provides an opportunity to improve academic achievement while interacting with peers in a non-judgmental forum
  - b. Provides an opportunity to ask questions and receive clarification and/or support from peers
11. Utilize peer tutoring
  - a. Pairing up a compatible student with an English Learner student can result in positive outcomes both academically and socially
  - b. Provides a forum for an English Learner student to get clarification or assistance on assignments or routines
  - c. Provides another model to support language development of English Learner students
  - d. Provide written notes / allow student to copy notes
12. Provide a supportive environment for learning
  - a. Model positive and open-minded attitude toward all students, mindful of additional challenges of English Learner students
13. Instructional Accommodations
  - a. Allow for alternative projects
  - b. Give shorter assignments (reports, projects, homework)
  - c. Extended time for assignments
  - d. Highlight texts, materials
  - e. Give additional / repeated instructions / demonstrations
  - f. Limit key concepts
  - g. Limit areas for correction, development, or improvement
  - h. Extended testing time
  - i. Allow open-book tests
  - j. Give modified or alternative tests (ex. matching)
  - k. Use visuals to aid understanding (graphic organizers, pictures, maps, etc.)
14. Clearly articulate or mark transitions during the school day
  - a. Use cue words ( first we will ..., next we will... ) or signals to indicate transitions; thus limiting confusion and/or frustration of the English Learner student



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q. I am going to have an English Learner student in my classroom. How do I prepare for the student?**

A. It is very beneficial to familiarize yourself with the students' individual profile (include cultural background, prior education, current level proficiency in English, etc.). If possible, find out information about the native language – how alike or different is it from English? What are some of the cultural characteristics of the student? Request a bilingual dictionary for your student from Barb Rosalez, English Learner teacher, at [brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org](mailto:brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org).

### **Q. Do I need to utilize specific strategies or provide accommodations within my classroom for an English Learner student?**

A. As with all students in the classroom, differentiated instruction is needed to address individual student needs. Most strategies that are useful to employ with English Learner students are those which are beneficial for the general population. Additional accommodations or modifications may be needed in the area of testing and assignments depending on the amount of time in the US schools and the students' level of English proficiency.

### **Q. An English Learner student is coming to my class and records indicate that the student does not receive support services for language development. Does this mean that the student should be able to be as proficient in all areas as the general school population?**

A. Hopefully, but not necessarily! Students who do not receive support services for language development may have good conversational skills, but may lack much of the academic language necessary for success with text and other school knowledge. Often, the students' vocabulary level is well below average. Low vocabulary levels are insufficient to support effective reading comprehension and written communication is negatively impacted. It may take five to eight years for a child studying a second language under the best of conditions (immersion program, second language spoken in the home, supportive parents) to perform on the same academic level as his native-speaking peers. Contact Barb Rosalez, English Learners teacher, at [brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org](mailto:brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org), for further assistance.

### **Q. How can I help an English Learner student in the area of writing?**

A. English Learner students need frequent, guided practice using language (writing, speaking, listening) to develop as writers. Students need to be directed through a process that includes classroom and/or partner discussion on a topic (brainstorming), seeing ideas on paper (using graphic organizers, clustering, outlining), drafting, revising, getting feedback and proofreading to assist the student in acquiring successful writing skills. Modeling each part of the process is paramount for an English Learner student to grasp what the product should look like.

Initially English Learner students will probably exhibit difficulty with grammar and syntax. Focus on grammatical errors does not promote learning and conveys to the student that correctness is more important than meaning. It is better to focus first on content, including organization and/or logical development, and then approach grammar difficulties later on within context of their writing.

Accepting the language the student uses at their developmental level is important. If the writing interferes with understanding, however, ask the student what he/she is trying to say. If the student can explain his/her thinking, encourage the student to rewrite the draft. If on the other hand, the writing does not interfere with understanding, ask another student to proofread the draft and provide suggestions to the English Learner student.

Over time, as language ability improves, writing ability will also improve. Writing appears to be a uniform challenge for Twinsburg English Learner students as they progress in the other aspects of language development. For this reason, writing will be a primary focus for services with the English Learners teacher. Cohesive writing is of paramount importance for the student's performance on all of the required state tests, which are necessary for graduation.

**Q. What resources are available within the Twinsburg City Schools?**

A. Barbara Rosalez is the full-time English Learners teacher for the district. If you have any questions, please e-mail her at [brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org](mailto:brosalez@twinsburgcsd.org).

**Q. What state tests do English Learner students need to take?**

A. Students are required to take all of the required state tests. Additionally, they must take the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA) each year in the spring. See the FAQ information page on OELPA testing for more detailed information. <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Testing/Ohio-English-Language-Proficiency-Assessment-OELPA/Ohio-English-Language-Proficiency-Assessment-OELPA>

**Q. Where can I learn more?**

A. Please check the resources listed here:

**Web Resources:**

- <http://education.ohio.gov/> – Insert “Lau” in search box.  
Provides additional information about education of English Learner students.
- <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/>  
Practical Guidelines for the Education of English Language Learners: Research-Based Recommendations for Instruction and Academic Interventions

