

DATE: June 10, 2014

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Annual Report – English Language Learners

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RESOURCE STAFF: Jeannette Austin-Odina, Carolyn Baker, Sukhneet Brar, Ann Calverley, Christine Cao, Lynn Farrugia, Darlene Kassian, Esther Kruschke, Hilda Mah, Joyce Mok, Nancy Musica, Jayashree Ramaswami, Heather Raymond, Shelley Schwarz, Linda Siu, Rosalind Smith, Le Thu Tran, Ray Zhou

REFERENCES: [GGAB.BP – Multicultural Education](#)
[GGAB.AR – Multicultural Education](#)
[Elementary School Information Handbook for Families of ELL](#)
[English as a Second Language Website](#)
[K-12 Literacy for 21st Century Learners Guiding Document](#)
[English as a Second Language Guiding Document](#)
[Making a Difference: Meeting diverse needs with differentiated instruction](#)

PURPOSE

To provide the Board of Trustees with an Annual Report outlining the supports and services provided to support English Language Learners (ELL) in 2013-2014.

BACKGROUND

- This report outlines supports and services provided by central staff in relation to English as a Second Language (ESL). The report also includes selected course completion and accountability pillar data to provide further context to the work of District staff to support ELL. Additional information related to how services and supports outlined in this report may have impacted the work in district schools and classrooms may be shared during the Results Review process in the fall.
- Board Policy GGAB.BP – Multicultural Education and Administrative Regulation GGAB.AR – Multicultural Education, provide direction for the English as a Second Language (ESL) work in the District.
- District ELL are students from diverse backgrounds, including Canadian born, immigrant and refugee students, and international fee paying students.
- The number of students identified and coded as ELL has increased from 9,597 students in 2008-2009 to 18,278 students in 2013-2014 as indicated in Attachment I.
- The Highest Level of Achievement Test (HLAT) data for foreign born students is provided in Attachment II. The percentage of students reading above grade level has increased from 9.8 per cent in 2009 to 11.8 per cent in 2013. The percentage of students writing at grade level has decreased from 78.4 per cent in 2009 to 77.8 per cent in 2014.
- The HLAT data for Canadian born students is provided in Attachment III. While the reading and writing scores of students performing at grade level has decreased in 2013, the students

reading above grade level has increased from 10.9 per cent in 2009 to 12.8 per cent in 2013.

- The *K-12 Literacy for 21st Century Learners Guiding Document*, the *K-12 English as a Second Language Guiding Document* and *Making a Difference: Meeting diverse needs with differentiated instruction* provides a framework for best practices to facilitate a common understanding of key strategies, tools and resources required for effective support of ELL achievement.

CURRENT SITUATION

- Provincial ESL funding has been reduced from seven years to five years of funding. Currently approximately 2,400 students access ESL support without their school receiving funding.
- Queen Elizabeth, J. Percy Page, Harry Ainlay, and Jasper Place schools continue to serve as Reception Centres for immigrant and refugee students who have arrived in Canada since September 2012.
- This year ESL teacher consultants and intercultural consultants have been positioned in Inclusive Learning. There is a strong sense of shared responsibility, collaboration and decision making directed to supporting ELL from early learning to high school completion. Currently 4.800 FTE teacher consultants provide direct support to schools and 2.600 FTE teacher consultants are responsible for the Reception Centres. Provincial reporting, the development of district-wide professional development and coordination of data for Central Services use is handled by a .400 FTE teacher consultant.
- The responsibility for school support and the Reception Centres will be shared by 8.000 FTE teacher consultants in 2014-2015.
- It is anticipated the number of new ELL welcomed to the District in 2013-2014 year will continue to grow as indicated in Attachment IV.
- To ensure a smooth transition for parents and families into district schools the need for intercultural consultants to provide immediate first language support at the school level has increased. The demand for support to schools is challenging due to limited staff resources.
- To accommodate the growing numbers of ELL residing in communities across Edmonton, the District has moved away from congregated ESL sites and ESL Transition Programs. Support is provided to individual schools in developing ESL instructional strategies for their students. High school teachers have been collaborating with ESL teacher consultants to determine appropriate courses for high school ELL. There is a need for locally developed high school courses to support ELL in completing high school successfully and moving on to a post-secondary learning experience.
- The collaborative efforts of the assistant superintendents, ESL teacher consultants, Inclusive Learning supervisors, Budget Services, District Records & FOIP Management and Student Information Services have led to more schools complying with the Alberta K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarking (Benchmarks). Benchmarks are used to assist teachers in selecting appropriate instructional assessment strategies and programming for their ELL at different stages of English language development. School leaders continue to develop their capacity to provide leadership in benchmarking as indicated in Attachment V.

Outlined below is an update of the supports and services provided by central staff to ELL with a direct connection to the new priorities and goals outlined in the District's Strategic Plan.

Priority 1: Foster growth and success for every student by supporting their journey from early learning through high school completion and beyond.

Goal One: An Excellent Start to Learning

Outcome: More children enter Grade One reaching emotional, social, intellectual and physical development milestones.

- Alberta Education provides two years of funding for ELL children prior to Grade 1. Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB) provides pre-kindergarten programming for 155 ELL children through 10 schools offering Early Learning classes, and 1,481 ELL children are currently enrolled in Kindergarten. Inclusive Learning provides supports and services for ELL children in Early Learning and Kindergarten with the exception of the 10 schools with Early Education sites who provide internal support to their Kindergarten classes and any ELL children enrolled in an Early Education program.
- Currently Early Learning classes are only available to children who reside in the attendance area of a school offering Early Learning. These 10 schools are located in communities with diverse and vulnerable populations.
- To address the challenge of availability, sustainability, and access to two years of ELL programming for all children eligible for provincial ELL funding, an Early Years pilot project will be initiated in the fall of 2014. This pilot will involve Hillview, Tipaskan, Ekota and Sakaw schools as well as community partners who will begin the development of a model for providing access to Early Childhood Services programming district-wide.
- In partnership with the Multicultural Health Brokers (MCHB), District staff will reach out to cultural communities and families to enhance their understanding of opportunities afforded to ELL in their early years.

Goal Two: Success for Every Student

Outcome: More students demonstrate growth and achieve student learning outcomes with a specific focus on literacy and numeracy.

- Upon school request, ESL teacher consultants are available to support individual students and teachers with classroom consultations. They support teachers by discussing a student's learning strengths and needs, and by recommending programming strategies and supports. This support may occur with the multi-disciplinary team if deemed appropriate.
- Teacher consultants have provided a number of professional learning opportunities to schools and catchment areas to build teacher capacity around differentiation for ELL. To improve ELL literacy, the wise practice of developing vocabulary instructional practices has been embraced by teachers across all divisions.
- During the 2013-2014 school year, 36 district schools served 475 international students from 38 different countries via the International Student Program.
- International student tuition fees generated approximately five million dollars of external revenues to the District, 67 per cent of which went directly to schools to support student learning and further strengthen English language programs.
- International students routinely demonstrate high levels of academic achievement. While data for this current year is not yet available, results from the 2012-2013 school year

indicate that senior high international students met the acceptable standard in Alberta Education Diploma courses as follows:

- 80% English 30-2
- 81% English 30-1
- 82% Physics 30
- 90% Math 31
- 91% Chemistry 30
- 94% Social Studies 30-2
- 94% Pure Math 30
- 95% Social Studies 30-1
- 100% Science 30
- 100% Biology 30

Priority 2: Provide welcoming and high quality learning and working environments.

Goal One: A Focus on Well-being and Citizenship

Outcome: Our learning and working environments are welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy.

- The intercultural consultants assist school staff in creating an environment that embraces linguistic and cultural diversity as assets. They provide culturally sensitive first language, liaison and transitional supports to students, families and school staff. During scheduled school visits, intercultural consultants assist teachers to identify the strengths and needs of ELL and empower the students and their families to become more engaged in learning.
- The Reception Centres are foundational to new immigrant and refugee students as they begin schooling in Canada. At the Reception Centres, an initial English language proficiency assessment is given and shared with parents/guardians and school staff for program recommendations. School orientation information (e.g., curriculum overview, district student behaviour and conduct policy) is provided to families. This information empowers families and encourages their engagement with the school. High school orientation and pathway information is shared with parents/guardians and secondary level students. Families are encouraged to work with school counsellors regarding graduation requirements and post-secondary choices. In addition, a first language family interview is conducted and is an essential component of the Reception Centre welcoming. Information is gathered regarding the student's background and experiences outside of Canada. Attachment VI outlines the number of first language interviews held at the Reception Centre since September 2013.
- The *Elementary School Information Handbook for Families of ELL* was developed and translated into 13 languages. This handbook is distributed to families through schools, community agencies and the Reception Centres. The information provides a consistent district message regarding school protocols and policies.
- The requests for professional learning related to developing cultural understanding and cultural capacity continues to increase with the number of diverse learners and families in school communities. The capacity to respond to these requests within the District is limited due to the availability of staff, however where possible, appropriate community agencies have been very supportive.

Goal Three: Building Capacity through a Culture of Collaboration and Distributed Leadership

Outcome: Throughout their careers, all staff are provided opportunities to enhance their professional capacity and leadership within a culture of collaboration.

- Approximately 40 professional learning (PL) opportunities were hosted by the ESL teacher consultants. The professional learnings were often through catchment groups' common PL, individual schools and after school networking. Provided below is a sampling of topics:
 - ESL 101-Getting Started with Your ELL;
 - Top 10 Best Strategies for ELL;
 - Enhancing Key Strategies for ESL Instruction;
 - Vocabulary Development through Games;
 - Trauma and the Effects on ELL;
 - Academic Language Development in the Content Areas;
 - Oral Language Development and Strategies to Support ELL;
 - Practical Strategies for Vocabulary Development;
 - Culturally Sensitive Assessment;
 - Improving ELL Writing; and
 - What's Culture Got to do With It?
- EPSB staff and students have had access to an ESL website since February 2014. As internet usage continues to rise, the ESL website fills the void for relevant, practical and immediate information access.
- With an increasing enrolment of ELL in all schools, teachers appreciate easy direct access to extensive resources including the Alberta K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks. This resource offers convenient 24/7 access encompassing characteristics of ELL to practical instructions on how to benchmark, and includes Benchmarks tools such as exemplars and videos. Examples of hands-on web based activities are listed for beginner or advanced ESL students, as well as teaching tips for working with refugees or learners with limited formal schooling. Checklists and links to professional organizations such as the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) or the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (ERLC) provide useful ESL resources that are just a click away.
- ESL consultants have also collaborated with staff in Central Services units to provide the following ESL professional learning opportunities:
 - Workshop for First and Second Year Principals.
 - Budget Planning System (BPS) Changes and Eligibility Process.
 - ESL registrations and coding procedures.
 - Lead teacher meetings.
- The opportunities for networking with community partners and district services for sharing resources and information to help ELL families in their transition to Canadian life continues to increase. The Communications department is actively seeking strategies and opportunities to enhance modes of communication to families and staff regarding the changing landscape of our District.

Goal Four: A Culture of Excellence and Accountability

Outcome: The District is grounded in effective, efficient, equitable and evidence-based practices.

- Benchmarking training sessions this year were very successful and the accountability for ESL coding and benchmarking has increased at the school level. The act of benchmarking

helps school leaders to understand students' capabilities and to use their performance data to guide decision making for ELL. It is a provincial expectation that all schools funded by students coded ESL track the student's level of proficiency each year. It is also an expectation that information regarding language proficiency be reported on a student's report card. Over the next year it is anticipated that the District will move towards an electronic benchmark process to enable teachers to capture the data in a more effective and efficient manner.

Priority 3: Enhance public education through communication, engagement and partnerships.

Goal One: Parents as Partners

Outcome: Parents are provided opportunities to be involved in their child's education.

- ESL teacher consultants and intercultural consultants assist school staff in engaging parents in their child's education. Intercultural consultants regularly attend activities such as parent-teacher conferences, post-secondary workshops and community engagement nights to provide first language support. Community partners including the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) and settlement workers assist parents in learning how to access School Zone and the district website. In collaboration with intercultural consultants, district staff have provided opportunities for ELL families to be heard and considered when major decisions regarding educational programming at the District level are being made.
- Schools often request support in assisting parent participation in dialogues about student achievement, Alberta K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks and Individualized Program Planning (IPP). Clear, concise, easy to read documents are appreciated by parents. It has been noted by school staff and community partners that high interest, low vocabulary documents lead to greater parent engagement.

Goal Two: Supports for the Whole Child

Outcome: Community partnerships are established to provide supports and services to foster growth and success of students and families.

- Successful partnerships are characterized by an exchange of ideas, knowledge and resources. Currently the partners involved in supporting ELL are experiencing a mutually rewarding relationship in improving aspects of education for students. A sampling of strong partnerships is noted below.
 - In-School Settlement Support Program (ISSSP) works in collaboration with school staff to systematically reach out to newly arrived students and their families, often in connection with registration and orientation activities. As trained providers of settlement assistance, ISSSP also acts as a resource for school staff.
 - REACH is a backbone organization bringing together diverse community groups. As facilitators of the Schools as Community Hubs Program situated at John D. Bracco, Balwin, Edith Rogers and J. Percy Page schools, they provide after-school programming to support immigrant and refugee students and their families. REACH is committed to understanding the overall impact projects like Schools as Community Hubs have on the community. Social Return on Investment is a tool used to assign a monetary value to the social benefit created by a project, identifying indicators of value that can be monetized. The return on the "social added value" for every \$1.00 invested in this program is \$4.60. The greatest benefits to district students are the strong focus on

activities which support high school completion and the opportunity for parents to increase their employment, knowing that their children are involved in safe, meaningful activities after school. REACH has chosen to shift funds to sustain the four school programs for the 2014-2015 school year.

- The Bamboo Shield Program funded by the National Anti-Drug Strategy involves refugee and immigrant youth between the ages of 13 and 17 who may be at risk of facing economic and social deprivation. It is one of four community based crime prevention projects in the Edmonton area. A program worker situated in Killarney and Rosslyn schools, coaches and mentors students to become leaders in their community. Monthly family events are scheduled and community events are planned on an ongoing basis. The collaboration between home, school and community is a strong focus of this program. Funding to continue support for this program in 2014-2015 is not in place.
- EMCN is a long standing partner to Edmonton Public Schools. Their goal is to support children, youth, and families and individual schools to promote understanding and to give voice to newcomer families with respect to the education of their children. Currently they support Early Learning programming and youth in several high schools.

Next Steps (Identification of Key Strategies (SMARTE goals) for the 2014-2015 school year)

- Develop an ESL module for the Leadership Development Framework.
- Develop two local ESL high school courses to support literacy and numeracy for ELL.
- Implement an online format to capture data related to the K-12 English Language proficiency.
- Continue to encourage and empower involvement of ELL parents and families in school events. With the support of community partners, this is an achievable goal.
- Provide opportunities for district staff to increase their capacity of cultural awareness and diversity.

KEY POINTS

Teachers and school administration continue to receive extensive supports to ensure quality supports and services to support student programming.

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I	English Language Learner Enrolments for 2007 to 2013
ATTACHMENT II	Highest Level of Achievement Test (HLAT) data for foreign born students
ATTACHMENT III	Highest Level of Achievement Test (HLAT) data for Canadian born students
ATTACHMENT IV	New English Language Enrolment data for 2013
ATTACHMENT V	What School Administrators Need to know about English Language Learners and ESL Programming
ATTACHMENT VI	First Language Support Requests Data for 2013 School Year

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL) ENROLMENTS 2007 - 2013

ELL Enrolment - All ELL Codes															
School Year	Grade														Total ELL Enrolment
	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
2007-08	19	557	723	775	731	709	663	710	532	503	470	374	351	581	7698
2008-09	95	767	928	904	931	890	901	857	726	618	545	452	402	581	9597
2009-10	133	929	1100	1129	1075	1074	945	975	840	726	603	537	480	682	11228
2010-11	127	1109	1244	1271	1248	1169	1179	1034	981	900	772	469	449	663	12615
2011-12	150	1290	1389	1420	1389	1348	1267	1237	1042	1023	979	578	478	805	14395
2012-13	161	1355	1623	1579	1572	1554	1471	1373	1289	1099	1042	722	576	868	16284
2013-14	155	1481	1900	1901	1825	1788	1566	1428	1192	1189	1012	840	788	1213	18278

ELL Enrolment - ELL Foreign Born															
School Year	Grade														Total ELL Enrolment
	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
2007-08	3	194	336	336	372	360	362	402	343	345	310	244	234	446	4287
2008-09	22	271	373	417	439	458	485	464	418	415	379	313	276	438	5168
2009-10	23	310	422	471	501	499	494	533	479	438	412	369	327	507	5785
2010-11	46	344	475	514	537	558	570	563	564	526	486	331	317	476	6307
2011-12	34	385	480	566	596	600	627	637	609	624	588	373	348	644	7111
2012-13	31	399	542	604	673	715	680	705	686	654	642	499	404	690	7924
2013-14	38	454	635	729	780	853	744	660	571	577	545	415	415	806	8222

ELL Enrolment - ELL Canadian Born															
School Year	Grade														Total ELL Enrolment
	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
2007-08	16	363	387	438	359	348	299	304	187	157	153	111	82	81	3285
2008-09	73	496	555	487	492	432	415	392	305	202	164	126	91	81	4311
2009-10	110	619	678	658	574	575	451	442	361	287	190	145	119	103	5312
2010-11	81	765	768	757	711	610	608	471	416	371	281	114	98	116	6167
2011-12	116	902	909	852	791	747	637	600	433	397	388	178	83	87	7120
2012-13	130	956	1081	975	898	838	790	665	603	432	390	185	125	95	8163
2013-14	117	1026	1262	1168	1039	902	562	443	336	290	209	170	90	110	7724

* ELL Enrolment - ELL No Request for ELL Funding															
School Year	Grade														Total ELL Enrolment
	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
2007-08				1		1	2	4	2	1	7	19	35	54	126
2008-09							1	1	3	1	2	13	35	62	118
2009-10										1	1	23	34	72	131
2010-11			1			1	1		1	3	5	24	34	71	141
2011-12		3		2	2	1	3			2	3	27	47	74	164
2012-13					1	1	1	3		13	10	38	47	83	197
2013-14		1	3	4	6	33	260	325	285	322	258	255	283	297	2332

* Increase due to funding rule change by Alberta Education. The maximum years a student can stay in ELL is now five down from seven.

ESL: FOREIGN-BORN (INCLUDES REFUGEE LEVEL 5)
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HLAT GRADE LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT
READING SCORES FOR FIVE YEARS

Enrolment Grade	Year	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level	Above Grade Level	N
All Grades	2009	30.1	60.1	9.8	3801
All Grades	2010	31.1	59.5	9.4	4268
All Grades	2011	29.5	59.5	11.0	4967
All Grades	2012	28.7	60.6	10.7	5420
All Grades	2013	28.4	59.8	11.8	6319

ESL: FOREIGN-BORN (INCLUDES REFUGEE LEVEL 5)
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HLAT GRADE LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT
WRITING SCORES FOR FIVE YEARS

Enrolment Grade	Year	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level	Above Grade Level	N
All Grades	2009	21.5	78.4	0.1	3799
All Grades	2010	24.2	75.6	0.2	4287
All Grades	2011	21.9	77.9	0.1	4961
All Grades	2012	20.7	79.0	0.3	5424
All Grades	2013	21.9	77.8	0.3	6337

ESL: CANADIAN-BORN
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HLAT GRADE LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT
READING SCORES FOR FIVE YEARS

Enrolment Grade	Year	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level	Above Grade Level	N
All Grades	2009	14.4	74.6	10.9	3250
All Grades	2010	18.6	70.7	10.7	4066
All Grades	2011	17.8	71.3	10.9	4984
All Grades	2012	16.2	71.6	12.2	5648
All Grades	2013	16.4	70.8	12.8	6695

ESL: CANADIAN-BORN
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HLAT GRADE LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT
WRITING SCORES FOR FIVE YEARS

Enrolment Grade	Year	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level	Above Grade Level	N
All Grades	2009	6.5	93.5	0	3257
All Grades	2010	11.3	88.6	0	4072
All Grades	2011	11.5	88.5	0	4995
All Grades	2012	9.5	90.3	0.1	5647
All Grades	2013	10.4	89.3	0.3	6696

**ESL: FOREIGN-BORN (INCLUDES REFUGEE LEVEL 5)
TOTAL STUDENTS ON SEPTEMBER 30TH 2013 AND
STUDENTS NEW SINCE THEN BY GRADE**

	Student Totals
Grades	New Since Sep 30th
Pre-K	3
K	100
1	106
2	116
3	90
4	92
5	90
6	77
7	63
8	81
9	65
10	39
11	33
12	140
Total Students	1095

**ESL: NO REQUEST FOR FUNDING
TOTAL STUDENTS ON SEPTEMBER 30TH 2013 AND
STUDENTS NEW SINCE THEN BY GRADE**

	Student Totals
Grades	New Since Sep 30th
Pre-K	0
K	0
1	1
2	1
3	1
4	2
5	0
6	3
7	1
8	1
9	4
10	14
11	29
12	28
Total Students	85

ESL: CANADIAN BORN
TOTAL STUDENTS ON SEPTEMBER 30TH 2013 AND
STUDENTS NEW SINCE THEN BY GRADE

	Student Totals
Grades	New Since Sep 30th
Pre-K	2
K	42
1	24
2	18
3	15
4	16
5	12
6	11
7	6
8	7
9	5
10	5
11	2
12	12
Total Students	177

What School Administrators Need to Know about English Language Learners and ESL Programming

Who are English language learners?

English language learners (ESL students):

- come from a range of cultural backgrounds and bring with them a variety of educational, social and personal experiences
- first learned to speak, read and/or write a language other than English
- require English language instruction and supports to participate fully in the learning experiences provided in Alberta schools
- may have recently immigrated to Canada or they may have been born in Canada and live in homes in which the primary spoken language is not English.



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Literacy is ...

“acquiring, creating, connecting and communicating meaning in a wide variety of contexts.”

Literacy First: A Plan for Action, 2010. (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education, 2010), p. 3.

How is ESL programming and support delivered to students?

The way to organize the school to support English language learners depends on the nature of the school's programs and the number of English language learners and their proficiency levels and needs. English language learners in elementary and junior high schools are generally placed in age-appropriate classrooms with their peers and also receive additional language and content instruction within the classroom context.

The needs of English language learners are best met when teachers work collaboratively to **differentiate** or **adapt instruction**, provide **explicit language instruction** and create an **environment that values cultural diversity**. Additional support may include ESL consultants, educational assistants, community volunteers and peer tutors.

Factors to consider in program delivery:

- English language proficiency level and learning needs of the students
- number of English language learners in the school
- expertise and professional learning opportunities for teachers

In teaching students who are learning English as another language, the big picture is the same as it is for all students. Teach every student based on his or her developmental and language proficiency level and identify and address the needs of each student.

Making a Difference: Meeting diverse learning needs with differentiated instruction. (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education, 2010), p. 144.

How is the English language proficiency of students measured?

Alberta Education has developed the *Alberta K–12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks* to assist teachers in determining the language proficiency of their English language learners. The benchmarks provide descriptions of the English language abilities that students typically demonstrate at each of five proficiency levels in Kindergarten, grades 1–3, grades 4–6, grades 7–9 and grades 10–12.

The Benchmarks are used:

- when English language learners enter the school system in order to establish baseline proficiency
- to identify the level and types of instructional supports these learners require to be successful
- at each reporting period to assess students' current English language proficiency
- on an ongoing basis to monitor language proficiency growth and to inform instructional planning
- at transitions between grades, schools and/or programs.

What teaching strategies work well for English language learners?

Integrating language and content

The key objective of teaching language through content is to help students comprehend and demonstrate understanding across a variety of topics, tasks and situations in all subject areas. When teachers integrate explicit language instruction in their content lessons, English language learners gain academic knowledge and cognitive academic language proficiency simultaneously.

Organizing structured cooperative learning

Structured cooperative learning helps English language learners:

- develop positive interdependence, learning from the language models and group skills of their peer group
- demonstrate knowledge of their culture and their own areas of expertise
- benefit from the natural recycling of language and content that is created by asking and answering questions and by working together to solve problems.

Creating a supportive language learning environment

A supportive language learning environment includes:

- visuals such as: pictures, charts, graphs, word walls, anchor charts of lessons and completed graphic organizers
- language mini-lessons with clear objectives directly related to content, with guided practice opportunities
- regularly scheduled routines and events, marked by changes in location and visuals
- clear lesson formats across subjects, from day to day.

Differentiating content, process and products

Differentiating **content** involves modifying the language level, adjusting the scope and delivering content of informational resources in different ways for English language learners at various proficiency levels.

Differentiating **process** involves providing alternative ways for students to access, or work through, the content. Examples include scaffolding learning tasks, providing models or templates, giving guided instruction on using graphic organizers or demonstrating collaborative strategies for English language learners working with a partner or in a small group.

Differentiating **products** involves establishing assignment options that vary in complexity and language requirements, such as options to produce a poster or multimedia presentation or a piece of written work that aligns with content objectives and the student's level of language proficiency.



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Communicative Competence is ...

... the ability to understand and use language to communicate effectively in authentic social and school environments.

How are English language learners assessed?

When English language learners arrive at school, information is gathered about English language proficiency, academic achievement and recent experiences that can affect schooling. This information is used to make decisions about what type of ESL support and programming is needed. English language learners are typically placed in their age-appropriate grade.

The classroom teacher assesses the students' achievement and growth using the *Alberta K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks*, provides feedback to students and their parents or sponsors, evaluates student achievement for report card purposes, and adjusts English language instruction and supports as required.

Tips for Fair Assessment of English Language Learners

- Focus on the English language that the student is using to demonstrate understanding of content.
- Explain the assessment process to the student. Show examples of good work, using rubrics with clear criteria. Involve the student in determining assessment criteria and provide opportunities for self-assessment and reflection.
- Assess the student by engaging in a variety of learning processes.
- Assess a variety of product options such as: projects, portfolios, oral explanations and written work.
- Provide extra time for assignments and assessments.
- Construct assessment tasks appropriate to the content and language proficiency.

“Culture is ... the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communication, action, customs, beliefs, values, and instructions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group.” “Cultural competence [is] the ability to work effectively across cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person or organization being served.”

Jerome H. Hanley, “Beyond the Tip of the Iceberg: Five Stages Toward Cultural Competence,” *Reaching Today's Youth* 3, 2 (Winter 1999), pp. 9–10.

How can schools support English language learners and families?

Welcome parents and children and answer any questions they have.

Provide a **school tour** for parents and their children.

Invite parents to visit the school to watch a class in action or volunteer.

Find out if there are cultural holidays or customs that the school should be aware of.

Use plain English when writing information letters regarding school meetings or upcoming events, or have the information translated.

Contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada and/or local settlement organizations to learn about various cultures and community supports.

Encourage families to maintain their home language, as it has been proven to enhance English language acquisition and student success.

Top 5 Languages Requested

<u>Languages</u>	<u># of Times Requested</u>
African e.g., Somali, Oromo, Tigrinya etc.	140
East Indian e.g., Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu etc.	131
Arabic	54
Chinese e.g., Cantonese, Mandarin	48
Korean	36

Languages Requested for Reception Centres 2013-2014

Albanian	Amharic	Arabic	Bengali
Bulgarian	Cantonese	Chinese	Croatian
Dari	Farsi	Filipino	French
German	Greek	Gujarati	Hebrew
Hindi	Indonesian	Italian	Japanese
Kannada	Karen	Kirundi	Korean
Laosist	Lingala	Macedonian	Malayalam
Mandarin	Mongolian	Nepali	Nuer
Oromo	Pashto	Persian	Polish
Portuguese	Punjabi	Romanian	Russian
Serbian	Setswana	Shona	Somali
Spanish	Swahili	Tagalog	Tamil
Telugu	Thai	Tigrinya	Turkish
Twi	Urdu	Vietnamese	Yoruba

587 Referrals Received for Reception Centres by Divisions in 2013-2014

<u>Divisions</u>	<u># of Referrals Received</u>
Div 1	175
Div 2	163
Div 3	120
Div 4	129

** Number of referrals received doesn't necessarily mean only one student was assessed*

711 Students Assessed at Reception Centres by 2.6 FTE Teacher Consultants in 2013-2014

<u>Teacher Consultants</u>	<u># of Students Assessed</u>
1	266
1	265
0.4	138
0.2	42