



**Responsible Office(s):** Office of Academics

**BOARD POLICY 6725  
ENGLISH LEARNERS**

**PURPOSE**

The Board of Trustees (“Board”) recognizes that the academic success of English Learners is a responsibility shared by students, educators, the family, and the community. The Washoe County School District (“District”) also recognizes the value of maintaining and promoting bilingualism, and that strategic use of students’ first languages in and out of the classroom can enhance student success, parent engagement, and culturally responsive environments.

**DEFINITIONS**

1. For the purposes of this and any associated policies and regulations, and in accordance with state and federal law, the following are designated to identify, assess, and support English Learners:
  - a. The term English Learner (EL) refers to students aged 3 - 21 enrolled in school whose primary or home language is not English and who does not meet proficiency on a state approved language proficiency assessment.
    - i. Incoming English Learner (EL): An EL who is transferring into WCSD from another U.S. school district (Nevada or other state).
    - ii. Newcomer English Learner (EL): An immigrant/New in Country (NIC) student who has attended U.S. schools for less than 1 full school year, and whose primary or home language is not English, regardless of English language proficiency.
      - 1) For the purposes of this document, a student who has spent the previous 4 years or more out of U.S. schools AND whose primary or home language is not English AND who scores below 2.0 on all four domains of the English language proficiency placement test is considered a Newcomer EL.
      - 2) In accordance with federal laws and regulations, schools must administer a state approved English language proficiency assessment to determine if the student is EL.

- iii. Short-Term English Learner (EL): An EL who has attended U.S. schools for less than 5 years, regardless of English language proficiency.
- iv. Long-Term English Learner (EL): An EL who has attended U.S. schools for 6 years or more and may exhibit poor academic performance in core subject areas and/or on standardized achievement tests.

## **POLICY**

1. The District systemically incorporates English Learners' socio-culture experiences as the foundation for culturally responsive learning and success across all curricula for 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning.
2. All teachers are teachers of English learners and the District seeks to ensure EL students have equitable access to content and language learning by building a culture of collaboration in which staff from different departments work together to meet students' needs.
3. All students are provided instruction that enables those students to attain proficiency in the English language as soon as possible and develop their overall academic and linguistic achievement and proficiency.
4. The District supports the use of research-based strategies and a set of core principles for effective English Learner programs to ensure achievement and sustainability and builds bilingualism, biliteracy, and multiculturalism.
5. Each individual student has a different pace and style of learning. There are many different approaches to instructing English Learners in content, literacy, and English language acquisition that can result in mastery of the subjects, depending on the needs and abilities of a particular student. Students who are learning a second language benefit from instruction that is designed to address the academic and linguistic needs of those students.
6. Access to culturally responsive educational opportunities, programs, and high-quality instruction shall be promoted for all students and their families. The District ensures meaningful community and parent/guardian engagement at our schools to provide communities and families with the tools to become advocates for the educational rights of students.
  - a. The District shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations related to the education and support of English Learners.

- b. Strategic use of native language is considered an important factor of a student's success in school. It is also important that all cultures and native languages are valued and respected within all schools.
7. The Superintendent shall adopt administrative regulations and/or procedures necessary to implement the provisions of this policy. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - a. Identification and placement of students who use language(s) other than English, and providing all students with access to effective programs and pathways to succeed academically;
  - b. Simultaneous delivery of language and literacy development and academic content instruction that prevents and closes the achievement and access gaps, builds 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and capacities, and achieves high levels of parent/guardian satisfaction and support;
  - c. Development by EL students of proficiencies in academic and social English in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, consistent with expectations for all students;
  - d. Evaluation of EL students with appropriate and valid data-driven assessments that are aligned with federal, state, and local standards in order to improve academic, linguistic, and sociocultural outcomes for English Learners;
  - e. Implementation of data-driven accountability in all schools. This includes having measures in place, in accordance with Nevada law, for corrective action by a school that is rated in the lowest 30 percent of public schools in the State in the achievement of students who are English Learners;
  - f. Professional development at all levels of the District, giving all teachers and leaders the skills and knowledge they need to address language acquisition in EL students;
  - g. Targeted support services and strong partnerships that ensure families of EL students are welcomed as full members of the educational community and in the educational decision-making process for students, and ensuring that District decisions reflect the voices of ethnically and linguistically diverse students and parents;
  - h. Use of a balanced assessment system including diagnostic, formative, interim, and summative language, literacy, and content area assessments provided by the State and the District; and,

- i. Procedures for the creation and posting of a school corrective action plan, when required under Nevada law.

## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and is aligned to and complies with the governing documents of the District.
2. This policy complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC), to include:
  - a. Chapter 385, State Administrative Organization
  - b. Chapter 385A, Accountability of Public Schools
  - c. Chapter 388, System of Public Instruction, and specifically:
    - i. NRS 388.405, Legislative declaration; duty of State Board to adopt regulations and submit certain evaluations required by federal law.
    - ii. NRS 388.407, Board of trustees required to develop policy for instruction to teach English.
    - iii. NAC 388.600 – 388.655, Instruction of Certain Pupils Whose Primary Language is Not English
3. This policy complies federal laws and regulations to include:
  - a. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Part A, English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act, as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
    - i. Title III, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students (Public Law 107-110)
  - b. Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.

## **REVISION HISTORY**

Date	Revision	Modification
9/22/1992	1.0	Adopted
4/22/2014	2.0	Revised: converted to new format; to comply with changes implemented through Senate Bill 504 (2013)

11/27/2018	3.0	Revised to align with changes to state and federal law – name change from BP 6171, English Language Learners, to BP 6725, English Learners
3/10/2020	4.0	Revised: updated definitions; added language related to corrective action