



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

## **BOARD POLICY 6725**

### **ENGLISH LEARNERS**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Board of Trustees (“Board”) recognizes that explicit emphasis on language and literacy instruction is an integral part of effective teaching and learning for students that are English Learners (“EL”), and that the academic success of English Learners is a responsibility shared by students, educators, the family, and the community. It is important that strategic use of native language be considered an important factor of such student’s success in school. It is vital for all students to receive rigorous, explicit, high-quality language instruction while being held to high expectations and standards in order to access content areas in the Washoe County School District (“District”).

#### **POLICY**

##### 1. Guiding Principles

- a. The District systemically incorporates English Learners’ socio-culture and experiences as the foundation for culturally responsive learning and success across all curricula for 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning.
- b. 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.
- c. All students are provided instruction that enables those students to attain proficiency in the English language as soon as possible and improve their overall academic and linguistic achievement and proficiency.
- d. 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.
- e. The District has implemented a concept of data-driven accountability for all schools.

- f. 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.
  - g. Access to educational opportunities, programs, and high-quality instruction shall be promoted for all students and their families. The District ensures a 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.
  - h. The District shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations related to the education and support of English Learners.
  - i. It is important that strategic use of native language be considered an important factor of such student's success in school. It is also important that all cultures and native languages are valued and respected within all schools.
2. Guiding Practices
- a. The Superintendent shall create and implement applicable regulations, procedures, and protocols necessary to:
    - i. Ensure the proper identification and placement of students whose language may be something other than English, and that all students will have access to effective programs and pathways to succeed academically.
    - ii. Promote the simultaneous delivery of language and literacy development and academic content instruction that 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.
    - iii. Ensure that English Learners develop full proficiencies in academic and interpersonal English in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, consistent with expectations for all students.
    - iv. Evaluate English Learners 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.

- v. Provide 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.
- vi. Offer 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. In addition, the District decisions reflect the voices of ethnically and linguistically diverse parents.
- vii. Ensure teachers use a balanced assessment system including diagnostic, formative, interim, and summative language, literacy, and content area assessments provided by the state and the District.

## **DEFINITIONS**

1. For the purposes of this and any associated policies and regulations, and in accordance with state and federal law, the following designated status 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.
  - b. The term Short-term EL refers to students that are new to the United States or have attended U.S. schools for less than six (6) years. Short-term ELs are typically Limited English Proficient in comprehension / speaking as well as in reading / writing.
  - c. The term Long-term EL refers to students who have had six (6) years or more of formal education in the United States. Students approach oral fluency criteria in English, but are not yet proficient in all four domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). There may be several factors that may influence an EL student in becoming a Long-term EL (transiency, interruption in schooling, ineffective teachers). As a result, Long-term ELs generally have low academic skills and may be at risk for poor academic performance. For many long-term ELs, English is the dominant language.
  - d. The term Newcomer EL refers to a new arrival to the United States whose primary or home language is not English and who does not meet proficiency criteria on a state approved language proficiency assessment.

- e. The term Incoming EL refers to an out-of-state student transferring into the District as an EL. The term may also refer to a student incoming to middle school from elementary school or incoming to high school from middle school.

## **DESIRED OUTCOMES**

1. Through this policy, the Board seeks to ensure:
  - a. English Learner students:
    - i. acquire full proficiency in English as rapidly and effectively as possible;
    - ii. meet state standards for academic and language achievement; and
    - iii. increase graduation rates.
  - b. Every EL student graduates from high school prepared with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills that enable the student to be college and/or career ready; and
  - c. All teachers understand they are teachers of English Learners

## **IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and is aligned to District initiatives, resources, guidelines, and documents, to include:
  - a. Administrative Regulation 6726, English Learners.
2. This policy complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC), to include:
  - a. Chapter 385, State Administrative Organization
  - b. 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.

### **REVIEW AND REPORTING**

- 1. This document shall be reviewed as part of the bi-annual review and reporting process, following each regular session of the Nevada Legislature. The Board of Trustees shall receive notification of any required changes to the policy as well as an audit of the accompanying governing documents.
- 2. Administrative regulations, and/or other associated documents, will be developed as necessary to implement this policy.

### **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