

Swan River Montessori Charter School

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Initial Identification of English Language Learners (ELL Students)

DEFINITION OF ENGLISH LEARNER ACCORDING TO MINNESOTA STATE STAUTE

"English Language Learner" (ELL) means a pupil in kindergarten through grade 12 who meets the following requirements:

- (1) the pupil, as declared by a parent or guardian first learned a language other than English, comes from a home where the language usually spoken is other than English, or usually speaks a language other than English; and
- (2) the pupil is determined by a valid assessment measuring the pupil's English language proficiency and by developmentally appropriate measures, which might include observations, teacher judgment, parent recommendations, or developmentally appropriate assessment instruments, to lack the necessary English skills to participate fully in academic classes taught in English.

An initial identification procedure is used with all students enrolling in Swan River Montessori Charter School #4137-07. The steps to identify (ELL) students for language instruction are as follows:

STEP ONE: PRELIMINARY IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Home Language Questionnaire. A Home Language Questionnaire (HLQ) is a district-developed tool given to all students upon initial enrollment. This questionnaire is designed to identify students who may not be proficient in English and may require further evaluation. Criteria for identification may include students:

- who communicate in a language other than English; or
- whose families use a primary language other than English in the home; or
- who use a language other than English in daily non-school surroundings.

Note: Having another language spoken in the home or routinely used in other settings is not an automatic identification of a student as an English Language Learner (ELL). The preliminary evaluation conducted in step two below determines the students who should be referred for placement in a language instruction educational program.

Teacher and/or Parent Recommendations. A teacher and/or parent may request ELL instruction should the student demonstrate a need for English Learner services to gain skills in listening, speaking, reading, or writing academic English, the language needed for success in school. Requests for ELL instruction must be made directly to the student's primary general education teacher as well as to the School Director. Upon receiving the request, an ELL Team meeting will be held to determine appropriate next steps to meet the student's instructional needs. The ELL Team determining qualification for ELL

instruction will include the School Director, the student's primary general education teacher, a special education teacher, and at least one of the student's parents.

STEP TWO: ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) TEAM REVIEW OF ACADEMIC HISTORY

As part of the ELL Team meeting, the student's academic history will be thoroughly assessed including:

- Academic records from within or outside the United States
- Course grades which, in relation to the student's grade level, indicate that lack of progress is due to limited English language acquisition
- Information on everyday classroom performance

An academic assessment may be administered to support educator judgment (e.g., locally-developed, commercially available assessments, and/or reading inventories).

STEP THREE: SCREENER EVALUTION FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PLACEMENT

Students with limited English language skills who have recently arrived in the United States, or are newly enrolled at Swan River Montessori Charter School and are potential ELLs according to preliminary identification procedures, will be formally screened to help determine whether or not the student is in need of a language instruction educational program. The WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) is Minnesota's initial English language screening assessment. Once received, the W-APT score is used to determine the student's initial English language proficiency (ELP) level.

Once the ELP level is determined, the ELL Team will develop appropriate educational instruction based on the student's individualized needs. The ELL Team will meet periodically or as deemed necessary to monitor the student's educational progress.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Parents have the right to decline English learner services for their child at any time upon the school receiving signed written notification.