

# Wayland Public Schools

## English Language Learners (ELL)



## Parent Handbook

Created in 2016

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ELL Coordinator

Dear ELL Parents:

Welcome to the Wayland Public Schools! Wayland is a diverse community with more than 18 different home languages spoken and over 60 ELL students.

This handbook offers an explanation of the program Wayland Public Schools provides for ELL (English Language Learner) students. Additionally, it touches upon the regulations developed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the State of Massachusetts.

ELL Teachers at Wayland Public Schools are here to assist your child with a successful transition. Please contact the ELL Teacher at your child's school for questions.

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Sincerely,

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## **What is ELL?**

ELL refers to English Language Learners. An ELL student is defined as a child whose home language is not primarily English, and who is not currently able to perform classroom work in English.

In efforts to effectively educate each student, Wayland Public Schools provides ELL students with the opportunity to become proficient in English and provide them with full access to the curriculum. Massachusetts' law requires that ELL students receive specialized instruction until they are proficient in English.

### **How are students identified for ELL services?**

All school districts are required by Massachusetts' law to identify students who require ELL services. When students enter Wayland Public Schools, they bring with them different languages, cultures, and backgrounds that add to the diversity of the community. School district personnel are responsible for identifying those students who require ELL instruction.

At the time of the initial registration for school, parents and guardians are asked to complete the Home Language Survey. A copy of this form will be provided in the home language of parents and guardians if necessary. If the Home Language Survey indicates that a language other than English is spoken in the home, the ELL teacher must assess the student's English proficiency within 30 days of receiving the survey.

A teacher may also refer a current student for initial testing at any time. A referral should be made if there is reason to suspect that a student is experiencing difficulties in the classroom due to language concerns.

ELL testing examines student English proficiency in four areas. These areas are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Kindergarten students are only tested in the areas of speaking and listening. The testing will also determine the appropriate level of ELL instruction required. Upon completion of the assessment, parents and guardians will be notified as to whether or not their child is eligible for ELL services.

## **ELL Instruction**

There are six levels of English Language instruction.

- Level 1: Entering
- Level 2: Beginning
- Level 3: Developing
- Level 4: Expanding
- Level 5: Bridging
- Level 6: Transitioning

Once a student is placed in the appropriate level of instruction, the ELL teacher will provide specialized programming to help improve English proficiency. The content of the program will be carefully coordinated with the classroom teachers, literacy development, and both district and state standards. Although all books and instructional materials will be provided in English, the curriculum and presentation of the lessons are designed specifically for students who are learning the English language.

Parents will receive ELL progress reports with the same regularity as receiving school/classroom report cards.

## **Opting Out Of Services**

Parents and guardians may notify Wayland Public Schools of their wish to have their child “opt out” of ELL services. The school district requires a signed, written statement from the parent or guardian.

Wayland Public Schools encourages parents and guardians to allow their children to participate in the ELL program for some time before making a final determination to “opt out”. Even when parents or guardians make the decision to have their children “opt out”, Wayland Public Schools will continue to monitor the progress of the students to ensure that they have an equal opportunity to have their English language and academic needs met. If it is determined that these students are not progressing, the district will ensure that academic needs are addressed through the SEI teacher collaborating with the ELL teacher.

All students who have been identified as requiring ELL services must still be reported to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and assessed annually using mandated assessments, even if parents and guardians chose to “opt out”, until they meet the requirement for exit.

### **Exit Procedures**

If an ELL student meets a specific set of criteria and assessment results, the child’s education TEAM will review progress. The review would include whether or not the child has proficiency in the four areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. If ELL services are no longer required, the student can be reclassified as FLEP (Former Limited English Proficient). Students who have exited the program will be monitored for a minimum of once each year for four years after exiting ELL.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

- Q. How often does progress monitoring take place for ELL students?  
A. Every ELL student is evaluated annually with the ACCESS in January for English proficiency and content skills.
- Q. How long does it take the average student to complete an ELL program?  
A. There is no real answer to this question. All students are different, and come from a variety of backgrounds and school experiences. Always contact the ELL teacher or your child’s teacher if you wish to discuss your child’s progress in the ELL program.
- Q. How can parents help their students to improve their English?  
A. Parents and guardians can always start by reading aloud with children or having older students listen to audible books, both in English and the home language, if possible. Because students learn language in natural settings, it is vital to participate in other social activities with classmates and in after school activities.

Please refer to the ELL webpage for more information:

<http://www.wayland.k12.ma.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=1036435&pageId=21898107>

