Northeastern Catholic District School Board

SUPPORTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Administrative Procedure Number: APE004-2

POLICY STATEMENT

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) is a Catholic learning community committed to educating students in faith-focused learning environments so they may become contributing citizens of the world, living out the Gospel message on a daily basis. The NCDSB has a mandate to provide Catholic education to the students registered in its schools, a right recognized by the Ministry of Education. In respect of all applicable regulations of the *Education Act*, the Admission policies and procedures of the NCDSB are created to support inclusivity while maintaining the unique Catholic nature of our schools.

REFERENCES

Education Act (Part II – School Attendance)
Ministry of Education
- *English Language Learners ESL and ELD Programs and Services*
- *Supporting English Language Learners*
- *Growing Success*

NCDSB Policy
- E-2 Prevalent Medical Conditions
- E-4 Student Enrolment
- E-5 Special Education

NCDSB Administrative Procedure
- APE002 Prevalent Medical Conditions
- APE004-1 Student Enrolment

DEFINITIONS

English as a second language (ESL)
Programs for students whose first language is a language other than English or a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools. Students in these programs have had educational opportunities to develop age-appropriate first-language literacy skills.

English language learners (ELL)
Students in provincially funded English-language schools whose first language is a language other than English or a variety of English that is significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools, and who require focused educational supports to assist them in attaining proficiency in English. These students may have been born in Canada or may be recently arrived from other countries.

English literacy development (ELD)
Programs for students whose first language is a language other than English or a variety of English significantly different from that used for instruction in Ontario schools. Students in these programs may be from countries in which their access to education has been limited, or they may have had limited opportunities to develop language and literacy skills in any language. Schooling in their countries of origin may have been inconsistent, disrupted, or even completely unavailable throughout the years that these children would otherwise have been in school. As a result, they arrive in Ontario schools with significant gaps in their education.

Multilingual Language Learners (MLL)
Multilingual learners are students who are developing proficiency in multiple languages.

Ontario Student Record
The OSR is the ongoing, confidential record of a student's educational progress through the elementary and secondary school system in Ontario.

STEP Assessment
For newcomers to Canada the Steps to English Proficiency (STEP) initial assessment of ELL students is used to obtain a clear picture of their educational, cultural and personal backgrounds; their level of proficiency in English and mathematics, and their linguistic and academic needs.

PROCEDURES

1.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1 All registrants shall participate in a standard in-person admission meeting consistent with NCDSB Policy E-4 *Student Enrolment*.

1.2 A proper plan for placement and program support must be established prior to the start of the student's attendance at school.

1.3 A student's level of proficiency in English will not influence the grade placement at elementary. English language learners at elementary will be placed with an age-appropriate group.

1.4 Secretaries must ensure that all student data is properly inputted into the student information system, in a timely and accurate manner.

2.0 RECEPTION AND ORIENTATION

2.1 NCDSB schools will be a welcoming place for all students, staff, families, and visitors. All efforts will be made to help members of the school community feel connected and included.

2.2 A standard intake process for all registrants will be administered by the Principal/Vice-Principal.

2.3 Prior to the standard in-person admission meeting with the family, the Principal will inform them of the necessary documentation required for school registration. This includes but is not limited to:

i) Confirmation of age and name (birth certificate and/or passport)
ii) Confirmation of home address within school board district
iii) Verification of Residency (Certificate of Canadian Citizenship; permanent resident card; record of landing; Visa)
iv) Medical documentation
v) Special education documentation
vi) Educational documentation (report cards, official transcripts)
vii) Custody documentation, if applicable

2.4 Ample time must be dedicated to the in-person admission meeting and provide for an opportunity to share orientation information about school, basic expectations, a description of the Ontario school system, and information on the role of parents in Ontario schools.

2.5 It is recommended that care be taken not to overwhelm families with too much information all at once. Establish a relationship with the family so that their orientation to school can continue over time and families feel welcome to approach the school with questions or concerns.

2.6 Translation services will be available using an online platform or telephone service.

3.0 DETERMINATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS OR PROFICIENCY

3.1 The in-person admission meeting is used to get to know the English language learner and their educational, cultural, and personal backgrounds, including their individual learning styles and interests.

3.2 Through the in-person admission meeting conducted by the Principal as part of the standard intake process, the Principal will determine whether a referral for English language services is needed:

i) Based on the outcome of the enrolment interview, a Principal will refer students in grades 1-12 that are identified as English language learners and have demonstrated needs through the NCDSB *School Based Support Services* portal.
ii) For Kindergarten students, they will participate in language development opportunities consistent with the Kindergarten program and will not require a referral.

3.3 Resource Teachers may further engage English language learners in different diagnostic assessments to gauge academic proficiency.

3.4 The referral will be received by Board Office staff and a determination for next steps will be communicated to the Principal.

4.0 STEP ASSESSMENT

4.1 The STEP assessment is designed to be delivered to newcomers to Canada.

4.2 The Principal referral will be received by the System STEP Assessor.

4.3 The System STEP Assessor will contact the Principal to arrange for a mutually convenient time to administer the assessment.

4.4 The Principal or designate will secure parental consent for the assessment, consistent with NCDSB procedures.

4.5 The System STEP Assessor will complete the STEP assessment.

4.6 The System STEP Assessor will generate a STEP assessment report.

4.7 The System STEP Assessor will share the STEP assessment report with the Principal and the Resource Teacher.

4.8 The Principal and/or Resource Teacher will share the report with the family and the student's classroom teacher.

4.9 The STEP assessment report will be filed in the Documentation File of the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR).

5.0 SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACEMENT AND PROGRAM

5.1 Parent/Guardian (or student living independently aged 16 or 17 or adult student) completes initial online registration request.

5.2 Principal reviews registration request and contacts applicant to discuss request.

5.3 Registration meeting with Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Applicant (including student) to review pertinent documentation as per enrolment procedure (birth certificate, permanent residency certificate, etc.).

5.4 Necessary document reviews prior to attendance, ideally as part of the registration meeting include but not limited to:

i) Report cards
ii) Transcripts
iii) Any other academic, psychological, or medical documentation related to accessing the Ontario Curriculum.

5.5 Where the student's first language is not English, a STEP assessment referral will be made to inform programming. Completion of the STEP assessment is required prior to

final enrolment and the issuing of a timetable. Referral for the STEP assessment will be made by the Principal through the NCDSB School Based Support Services portal.

5.6 Once the STEP assessment is completed and the Guidance Counsellor has reviewed academic documents, a timetable will be rendered and a start date determined.

5.7 Following the enrolment process, the Guidance Counsellor, based on academic documentation, will determine if equivalency credits can be granted, with the final approval of the Principal.

5.8 To plan for successful integration, all documentation must be received prior to finalizing enrolment. A student timetable will not be generated until an appropriate academic plan, based on provided documentation, is finalized. This process cannot begin until all documentation is received, and may take up to 1 week to process.

5.9 To facilitate appropriate planning, new students must adhere to the following registration timelines:

i) For entry to Semester 1 courses: All required documentation must be submitted by the Second Friday of September.

ii) For entry to Semester 2 courses: All required documentation must be submitted by the Second Friday of February.

6.0 DEVELOPMENT OF ELL PLAN

6.1 An English Language Learner (ELL) Plan is only necessary where accommodations and/or modifications are necessary in order to develop the learner's English language proficiency. The decision to develop an ELL Plan will be made jointly by the Principal, the Resource Teacher, and appropriate Board Office staff.

6.2 Using the recommendations provided in the STEP assessment report and/or the results of other assessment tools, the Resource Teacher and Classroom Teacher will collaborate on the creation of the ELL Plan.

6.3 The program for English language learners must be flexible to allow for a variety of delivery models, be responsive to the learner's changing needs, and to local school circumstances (access to support services, as an example).

6.4 The ELL Plan will note the date that the plan is created, when the plan is reviewed, and the date the plan is discontinued (if applicable).

6.5 Decision to discontinue the ELL plan or extend the ELL plan until the next review period will be made jointly by the Classroom Teacher, the Resource Teacher, and the Tutor, if applicable.

6.6 An ELL Plan is only used to describe strategies for the development of English language proficiency and is not a document to support Special Education needs.

7.0 ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

7.1 English language learners may register at an NCDSB school without documentation of a diagnosis. This may occur as a result of different identification practices and correlating documentation from their home country.

7.2 It is important that English language learners who have exceptionalities be identified as soon as possible so that appropriate programming and placement can be arranged.

7.3 The development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for an English language learner needs to take into consideration both the needs related to language learning and the needs related to the student's exceptionality.

7.4 An IEP is only used to support the Special Education needs that exist for the student and is not a document to describe strategies for the development of English language proficiency.

8.0 TRANSITION FROM THE ELEMENTARY TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PROGRAM

8.1 Elementary staff will engage in student-specific transition planning meetings with secondary school staff prior to the start of a new school year.

8.2 Elementary staff will provide a full overview of progress made to date according to the ELL Plan.

8.3 Other noteworthy information may be shared to ensure that the English language learner has the necessary support and program plan when entering secondary school.

9.0 ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND EQAO TESTING

9.1 English language learners should participate in the Grade 3, Grade 6 provincial assessments in reading, writing and mathematics, in the Grade 9 provincial assessment in mathematics, and the Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) when they have acquired the level of proficiency in English required for success.

9.2 The EQAO Administrative Guide shall be referred to for all matters relating to student participation, exemptions or deferrals for English language learners.

10.0 TUTORING PROGRAMS

10.1 Decisions about student participation in this intensive support model will be made on an individual basis.

10.2 Tutoring programs will be delivered in a small group setting, up to three times a week.

10.3 The tutor positions will be posted according to standard NCDSB procedures.

10.4 Tutors will submit a timesheet according to standard NCDSB procedures.

10.5 Tutor programs will be provided first to qualifying students. Other students who may benefit from the program may be invited to participate.

11.0 MONITORING AND REPORTING

11.1 Ongoing assessment of each student's progress is required, consistent with *Growing Success* and other legislated responsibilities.

11.2 Information gathered about student achievement for English language learners needs to be communicated to students and families in a timely manner, using a variety of informal and formal ways.

11.3 Students who are identified as English language learners, must be identified as such on the Provincial Report Card by checking the appropriate box. The ESL or EDL box on the report card is only checked if modifications have been made. The box is not checked if accommodations have been provided.

11.4 The ELL Plan will be reviewed at least two times annually, along with other student achievement data to determine the need for English language learners to have program supports discontinued or extended. Decisions in this regard will be made jointly between the Classroom Teacher, the Resource Teacher, the Principal and the family.

11.5 Decisions for the ELL Plan to be discontinued will be confirmed in writing. A copy of the correspondence will be provided to the family and a copy placed in the OSR.

11.6 English language learner documentation must be reviewed and re-verified annually and by any receiving school to ensure that expiration dates are noted and adhered to properly.

12.0 RELATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

FORM: NCDSB Consent for Assessment – Educational/ STEP/Psychological/ Speech & Language

DOCUMENT: ELL Plan

Chief Executive Officer: *Tricia Stefanic Weltz*

Date: September 2025