

# English Language Learner Program (ELL)

## Norwood Public Schools



Norwood Public Schools welcomes student with diverse backgrounds and cultural experiences. We currently are providing services to 209 students from 39 countries, speaking 35 languages.

The English Language Learner Program in Norwood ensures students with limited English proficiency have access to educational opportunities by providing services that assist these students with the attainment of English language proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same state wide standards of achievement as all students are expected to meet.

The English Language Learner Program in Norwood provides specialized English language instruction to students who are not yet fluent in English. Our program is designed to provide sequential English language development which supports students' acquisition of the English language using the WIDA (World Class Instructional Design and Assessment) English Language Standards document from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as the core for curriculum. Curriculum is based on scientific research and is designed to meet age appropriate academic achievement standards for each grade or grade span. Grade level content is made comprehensible using scaffolding techniques to meet individual students' language needs and learning styles. Vocabulary is previewed and comprehension checks are in place to ensure understanding. Instruction is highly interactive using a variety of groupings with ample opportunity to develop listening and speaking skills. Information is presented using graphic organizers, visuals, different levels of academic language, and other strategies and techniques

that help students understand content. ESL teachers provide support primarily in English language arts, but may provide additional support in math and other content areas. Classroom and support teachers deliver instruction collaboratively with ESL teachers. ELL students have daily interaction with native speaking peers.

The ESL program design follows state recommendation and guidelines for time allocations for different proficiency levels and ages for ELL students. Our program also requires specific curriculum content, guided by state and district standards. Title III requires an annual assessment of the English language proficiency of all limited English proficiency (LEP) students in grades K-12 in domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing. LEP students must be assessed on an annual basis to determine individual growth in each domain. When a student reaches a level of Fluent English Proficiency Bridging, the student no longer receives supplemental ELL services, but is monitored for two academic years to ensure continued academic progress.

Student progress is reported by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in two report forms.

- ✚ **ACCESS Test** – administered in January – February each year. This test is annually administered as an accountability measure. It is a three-tiered test so that students encounter questions targeted at their current range of English language proficiency. Using this test, students are able to show what they know at the time of the test.
- ✚ **MODEL Screening** – a screening or benchmark language proficiency measure that provides teachers a tool for making initial placement decisions and data for instruction. This screening is administered by the ESL teacher upon entry to the Norwood Public Schools system.
- ✚ **MCAS** - The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducts yearly MCAS tests. These tests measure each child’s progress toward meeting the state curriculum mandates.
  - **MCAS refers to Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. This test is for all students in grade 3 and above. It is a statewide standards-based system which serves to evaluate student, school and district performance. The results are also used to inform and improve curriculum and instruction.**
- ✚ **AYP** - The results of these tests are reported to Norwood Public Schools in the form of individual student data, school wide data and system wide data. The state also reports Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP). This report determines the achievement of each school district and school in both reading

and mathematics. AYP is designed to ensure continuous improvement each year toward the goal of 100% proficiency.

- ✚ **AMAO** - Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) are set annually by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and specify the percentage of academic growth.
- ✚ **Copies of individual PARCC/MCAS results for each child are sent home to each parent / guardian. Letters and information packets are also sent home and posted regarding Adequately Yearly Progress, NCLB report cards and AMAO reports.** Copies of these reports are posted on the Norwood Public Schools website as soon as they are available at [www.norwood.k12.ma.us](http://www.norwood.k12.ma.us).

There are approximately 240 students enrolled in the Norwood Public Schools ELL program. The ESL program is provided in the 6 elementary schools, the Coakley Middle School and at Norwood High School. The ESL staff work in close contact and collaboration with classroom teachers, support personnel, the building principal and parents to ensure the best programming possible for each child.

### **English Language Learner Program Goals:**

- ✚ To provide a welcoming environment where students feel free to take risks and explore the English Language.
- ✚ To facilitate the rapid acquisition of English Language development in order for students to participate fully in all general education activities.
- ✚ To facilitate the development of English language skills and comprehension in the areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Norwood's ESL program uses strategies to help the students master English as quickly as possible. The program is designed to develop appropriate academic and social skills, and progress in content areas without loss of achievement due to English proficiency. The setting is interactive and integrates skills and concepts in meaningful and useful terms to the students so that teachers can respond to the varying learning styles, cultural backgrounds and language levels.

ELL students come to Norwood Public Schools from varied backgrounds, different educational backgrounds and cultural experiences. Some have been taught English as a foreign language, others have had little or no experience with the English language. Annual turnover of ELL students entering and leaving our school system continues to create a challenge. This movement requires constant communication, a flexible staff, and scheduling changes at each school level.

## **How are students identified?**

At the time of enrollment in the Norwood Public Schools, parents complete a **Home Language Survey for their child**. If the parent indicates that the student's primary language is something other than English, the student is referred for an English proficiency assessment. This year the **MODEL screening tool** will be administered by an English as a Second Language teacher. This assessment provides the receiving teachers with language, cultural and background information on the incoming student. The results are used to determine a student's overall ability to communicate and understand English through speaking, listening, reading and writing. Parents are advised of the program options and information regarding their rights to accept or reject the services available. If the parent declines services, state testing must still be administered. If the parent accepts the program recommendations, the student is then placed in ESL program services. Students are placed in programs according to their proficiency levels in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

## **Where are ESL services provided?**

In addition to regular instruction in the mainstream classrooms, ESL teachers provide services at each child's school. The services are provided using a pull out model, where students are pulled from their classroom individually or in small groups. ESL services at the secondary level could be inclusion in an ESL class for a period of the day or could also use the pull out model, depending on the student's schedule and school scheduling.

## **Sheltered English Immersion**

"Sheltering" English is a means of modifying curriculum, instructional strategies, assessment, and materials for all levels of English learners in the general education classroom. In Massachusetts, all classroom teachers and other professional staff were required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to complete 4 categories of SEI, or Sheltered English Immersion training. This training builds their capacity to work effectively with all learners, including ELL students. Learning opportunities for all the new WIDA standards will be available to Norwood teachers through our professional development programming.

## **Participation**

Participation in the ESL program is optional and parents have the right to withdraw their child at any time. Parents who decline services, are informed that the Department of Education requires that their child must still take the English Language Proficiency Assessment test (ACCESS) annually until they receive a passing score or evidence of proficiency is established using another measure (IPT, DRA, etc.)

### **How long will my child be in the ELL Program?**

The length of time your child will be in the ELL program depends on the development of English language skills. There are several factors including the age at which the language is being learned, years of language study, literacy skills in the native language, etc. Teachers are continually reviewing grades, reviewing mandated state tests results, teacher recommendations, and other criteria to determine when your child will no longer need language support. Research demonstrates that on average it takes 5-7 years for students to learn enough English to be successful in the classroom.

### **Reclassification and Exiting the ELL Program:**

Students exit from the ESL program once they reach a 5 (Bridging) on the ACCESS test that is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the winter of each year. Students new to the Norwood Public Schools participate in the MODEL test in the fall during the year they enter our system and the ACCESS Test in the winter of their first year.

The levels of proficiency for the ACCESS are Level 1 - Entering, Level 2 - Beginning, Level 3 – Developing, Level 4 – Expanding, and Level 5 – Bridging.

Once there is evidence that the student is able to successfully participate in grade appropriate content and continues to perform on par with his or her peers (e.g., grades, state assessments, work samples). Parents and classroom teachers are notified in writing when a student is reclassified to monitor status.

### **Reclassification and Exiting the ELL Program**

It is a state regulation that students who exit the ESL program be monitored for two years to ensure that they are having success in the regular classroom. At the end of each grading period classroom teachers are given a “Monitor Reporting Survey.” The purpose of this document is to indicate if the student is experiencing academic difficulties. If the student is experiencing difficulty related to language development, he/she will be readmitted to the ESL program.

Monitoring is ended after two years if the results of the monitoring indicate that the student is having success in the mainstream and demonstrates English proficiency.

## **Parent Involvement**

Norwood Public Schools encourages parents to take an active role in the education of their children and in the school community. There are several ways to participate in the school community including attending school performances, volunteering to chaperone a field trip, join the PTA/PTO organization in your child’s schools. Please feel free to ask your child’s ESL teacher or classroom teacher for other opportunities.

## **Funding sources**

Funding for ESL program activities is provided by Norwood town budget, Title I, and Title III funds. The amount of these funding sources varies from year to year, but the program remains consistent to maintain services to our ELL students.

**The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education grant allocation for Norwood Public Schools is based on ELL program enrollment. The grant allocation for FY17 is \$38,391.**