



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE HANDBOOK

23 Pennsylvania Avenue, Newark, New Jersey

Revised Fall 2023

English as a Second Language Handbook

Link Community Charter School (LCCS) offers English as a Second Language (ESL) to students in kindergarten through grade 8 whose primary language is not English, as well as to learners who are still developing proficiency in the English language. Student eligibility is determined through the administration of the New Jersey approved WIDA screener, and individual progress of English Language Learners (ELL) is monitored through the administration of the annual ACCESS for ELL 2.0 standardized test. Students enrolled in the program receive supplemental instruction exclusively in English through a proficiency-based approach, and develop linguistic concepts, as well as the academic language necessary across content areas.

The identification of students eligible for ESL is done upon enrollment with the Home Language Survey and a records review process. Students identified as having a second/multiple languages are then assessed through the WIDA screener assessment. This identification process helps the ESL teacher(s) identify students who are at risk for not meeting grade-level learning goals. A composite score of 4.0 and below indicate language services are needed. A score of 4.5 and higher means proficiency in the English language is attained. Exit from ELL status is based on the proficiency assessment and observation.

For ELL identification, parents/guardians must be notified in writing in English and in the language in which they possess a primary speaking ability, within 30 days of the beginning of the school year or 14 days from the time of identification for mid-year enrollees.

Relevant Documents to be attached in Appendix.

APPENDIX

Home Language Survey, English

Home Language Survey, Spanish

ESL Entitlement Letter, Initial Entry to English Language Development Instruction

ESL Initial Entry, Demonstrating English Language Proficiency (Non-Entitled)

ESL Placement for English Language Development Instruction

Parent/Guardian Waiver to Opt A child Out of ELL Program



HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY

The Home Language Survey must be completed as part of the enrollment process in compliance with state and federal mandates related to the Bilingual/ELL Program. Once the form is completed, the information will be entered into your child's record file in PowerSchool, our student database.

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Student Date of Birth _____ Age _____ Place of Birth _____

1. What language(s) are spoken at home?

English Check if "Yes."	List other languages spoken at home.

2. What language(s) did your child first speak?

English Check if "Yes."	List other languages spoken at home.

3. What language(s) does your child most often use when speaking with siblings, friends, or others outside of the home?

English Check if "Yes."	List other languages spoken at home.

4. If your child is new to Link this year, what school did he/she attend previously? _____

5. In your child's previous school(s), was your child ever identified as an English Language Learner (ELL/ESL student)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6. When did your child enter the U.S.? _____
Month Day Year

7. When did your child first attend school in the U.S.? _____
Month Day Year

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed) _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____



ENTITLEMENT LETTER: INITIAL ENTRY TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT INSTRUCTION

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian of _____,

Your child is entitled to receive English language development (ELD) instruction at Link Community Charter School (Link), in addition to core academic instruction based on his/her home language, as well as his/her recently assessed level of English language proficiency (ELP). Link values the learning that takes place in the homes of all our students in the families' preferred language(s). This letter includes information on your child's ELP level, as well as the ELD instructional model recommended for your child.

MY CHILD IS AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Link follows state and federal procedures to provide students of all language backgrounds with a tailored high-quality education and to match students with appropriate language assistance services, as relevant. At student registration, we provide parent/guardians with a Home Language Survey (HLS) to identify the language(s) used in the child's home. Students who use a language in addition to English then participate in a state assessment of English language proficiency.

You indicated on the HLS at registration that your child uses a language in addition to English. Your child then participated in a NJ state assessment of English language proficiency, Kindergarten WIDA Access Placement Test (K W-Apt) or WIDA Screener Online for grades 1 through 8 on _____ (date) Your child achieved an overall score at the level of _____, which entitles him/her to ELD instruction.

English language learners (ELLs):

Students who benefit from targeted English Language instruction to achieve state standards and beyond. The student's native language development remains important for the child in school and at home.

English language proficiency (ELP):

Measurement of a student's ability to use and understand English in a school setting.

English language development (ELD):

Process of acquiring English language skills. This process occurs at different rates for different students.

HOW WILL LINK SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT?

Link proposes to place your child as an English Language Learner (ELL) in the indicated program:

English Language Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part-time program of instruction to improve English reading, writing, speaking, and listening; and• At least 1 period/day and a tutorial or ESL reading class.

HOW LONG WILL MY CHILD PARTICIPATE IN AN ELD PROGRAM?

Link is committed to providing high quality language assistance programming for the duration of your child's English language development in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Each spring your child will participate in an annual state exam of his/her English proficiency, ACCESS 2.0 for ELLS. Students who attain a score of 4% or higher and meet multiple additional criteria will be considered to have achieved a proficient level of English language development. Students achieving proficiency will exit from language assistance mandates and transition into a mainstream instructional model.

You have the right to opt out of the language program chosen for your child. Federal and state laws, however, require that the school provide your child with support so he/she can successfully participate in instruction taught in English and develop his or her English skills. If you choose to opt out, your child's teachers will support your child in a monolingual English classroom, without ESL or bilingual support. ESL and bilingual instruction is research-based and proven to accelerate student achievement of core content area standards as well as English language development standards. For more information on opting out of ELL services, please contact us.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

We are available to speak or meet with you about your child's assessment, placement, and the school's ELD programs. We strongly encourage you contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Rios
ESL Needs Assessment Coordinator/ESL Teacher
jrios@linkschool.org
973-642-0529

Hannah M. Kennedy, M.Ed.
Principal
hkennedy@linkschool.org
973-642-0529



INITIAL ENTRY: DEMONSTRATED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (NON-ENTITLEMENT)

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian of _____

Link Community Charter School (Link) follows state and federal procedures to provide students of all language backgrounds with a tailored high-quality education and to match students with appropriate language assistance services, as relevant. At student registration, we provide parent/guardians with a Home Language Survey (HLS) to identify the language(s) used in the child's home. Students who use a language in addition to English then participate in a state assessment of English language proficiency.

You indicated on the HLS at registration that your child uses a language in addition to English. Your child then participated in a NJ state assessment of English language proficiency, Kindergarten WIDA Access Placement Test (K W-Apt) or WIDA Screener Online for grades 1 through 8 on _____ (date) Your child achieved an overall score of _____ "Reaching/Proficient", indicating that he or she is English language proficient and can successfully participate in English instruction without English Language development support.

English language learners (ELLs):

Students who benefit from targeted English Language instruction to achieve state standard and beyond. The student's native language development remains important for the child in school and at home.

English language proficiency (ELP):

Measurement of a student's ability to use and understand English in a school setting.

English language development (ELD):

Process of acquiring English language skills. This process occurs at different rates for different students.

We are available to speak or meet with you about this decision. We strongly encourage you contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Rios
ESL Needs Assessment Coordinator/ESL Teacher
jrios@linkschool.org
973-642-0529

Hannah M. Kennedy, M.Ed.
Principal
hkennedy@linkschool.org
973-642-0529



PLACEMENT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT INSTRUCTION

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian of _____,

Link Community Charter School (Link) follows state and federal procedures to provide all students with a tailored, high-quality education and to match students with appropriate language assistance services, as relevant. As per the "Entitlement Letter" sent to you previously by Link, your child was identified as an English language learner (ELL) based on the Home Language Survey (HLS) you completed when you first registered your child at Link, as well as an initial state assessment of English language proficiency.

Your child will receive English Language Development Instruction (ELD) support through the following instructional model base on language proficiency assessments as well as through our communications with you:

English Language Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part-time program of instruction to improve English reading, writing, speaking, and listening; and• At least 2 periods/day and a tutorial or ESL reading class.

Parent Guardian Waiver

As per the waiver that you submitted to Link, notarized on _____ (date), you have opted your child out of the ELL program.

We are available to speak or meet with you about your child's placement and the school's EDL program. We strongly encourage you to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Rios
ESL Needs Assessment Coordinator/ESL Teacher
jrios@linkschool.org
973-642-0529

Hannah M. Kennedy, M. Ed.
Principal
hkennedy@linkschool.org
973-642-0529



PARENT/GUARDIAN WAIVER TO OPT A CHILD OUT OF ELL PROGRAM

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian of _____,

On _____, you informed Link Community Charter School (Link) that you would like to decline the English Language Learner (ELL) program proposed for your child.

Parents/guardians have the right to opt their children out of ELL programs. The decision must be voluntary and based on a full understanding of the ELL child's rights, the service, and the benefits of such service to the child. If a parents/guardian decides to opt his or her child out of ELL programs, the child will still be monitored as an ELL student.

Link will continue to monitor the English language proficiency (ELP) and academic progress of students who are opted out of the ELL program, including through annual ELP testing (such as ACCESS 2.0 for ELLs.). If a student does not demonstrate appropriate growth in ELP or maintain appropriate academic levels, Link must inform parents/guardians in a language they understand and offer the ELL service.

If you still wish to opt your child out of the ELL program, please initial next to each item on the checklist below. Doing so will indicate that you fully understand and agree with each statement. After you have initialed next to each of the statements, please sign, date, and return the form to Link. We will keep this document on file stating that you have declined or do not want the indicated ELL service for your child.

Please put your initials on the line in front of each statement.

_____ I am aware of my child's English language assessment score and other information about my child's current academic progress and understand why he/she was recommended for additional English language instruction.

_____ I am familiar with the ELL program that Link has available for my child.

_____ I have had the opportunity to discuss the available ELL program with the school.

_____ I understand that Link believes its recommendation is the most academically beneficial for my child.

_____ I understand that my child will still be designated as "English Language Learner" and have his or her English proficiency assessed once per year until he/she no longer meets the definition of an English Language Learner.

_____ All of this information has been presented to me in a language I fully understand.

I, (print parent/guardian name)_____, with a full understanding of the above information, wish to DECLINE (do not want) the ELL program offered to my child as follows:

_____ I **DECLINE** ESL service for my child.

Child's Full Name

Student ID

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Notary

Date

Notary's Seal:

Sincerely,

Jeannette Rios
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973-642-0529

Hannah M. Kennedy, M.Ed.
Principal
hkennedy@linkschool.org
973-642-0529

School Personnel: Please note that this form must be printed double-sided (both pages on either side of one sheet of paper.)