

English Learner (EL) Programs and Services

Who are English Learners (EL), and how are they identified?

When a new student arrives to our school, one of the intake forms is a Home Language Questionnaire. The questions include, but are not limited to:

1. What is the first language learned by the student?
2. What language is normally used at home by the student?
3. What language is normally used at home by the parent/guardian?

If a family designates that any language other than English is spoken for any of the above questions, further assessments will be done by an ESL staff member. The results of these assessments are used to determine the English language proficiency level of that specific student.

Services Provided for English Learners: K-8 Overview

Newcomer Class

With the documented permission (EL entrance letter) of the parents/guardians, students with minimal and/or no prior formal English instruction arriving to RMSA from abroad or within the U.S. will be enrolled in the new comer ESL class. In this class they will receive half-day (3 hrs.) instruction from a licensed ESL teacher and bilingual Somali para assistant. Students will learn the basics of English needed to function independently in the mainstream classroom so that they are at least one grade level below MDE grade-level standards including listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. Upon successful completion of Level 1 WIDA Entering standards these students will exit the new comer class.

At this point, students enter mainstream classroom with English language instruction for a portion of their school day. For example, an EL elementary student will exit to a mainstream classroom with 90 minutes of daily English support. An EL middle school student who has exited the New comer class have an EL writing and reading class with an ESL teacher in addition to mainstream social studies, math, science, physical education, computer skills and Somali/Arabic language instruction.

All placements are based on students' performance in classrooms and on standardized tests (ie: WIDA, W-APT, ACCESS, MCA - reading/writing, NWEA). According to most language acquisition experts, students need two to three years to develop basic social communication, but five to seven years to develop proficiency in academic settings (Cummins, 1986). This is the difference between using language to talk to friends in the cafeteria during lunch versus describing scientific theories or historical events. For students with interrupted or limited formal schooling, academic language development can take seven to eleven years. For this reason, students may need EL classroom settings for several years before they exit ESL and enter mainstream classes exclusively.

One practice we use is the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), which is a method of intentionally embedding language instruction, learning strategies, and differentiating instruction into mainstream lesson delivery. In addition the new comer and ESL beginner class will have one bilingual (Somali) paraprofessional to help assist. This allows EL students to have access to content material in all classes.

As soon as students reach proficiency on assessments and classroom performance, they are placed on

“monitored status.” This means that a student will be scheduled as if they were a native English speaker, but will have an EL case manager who monitors their test scores and classroom performance to make sure their placement is appropriate. Students are monitored for two years before the EL designation is removed from their individual cumulative file.

Bilingual/Bicultural Instructional Aids

Bilingual instructional aids help register students at the welcoming conference during the first week of school, translate information to parents/students as needed and assist in classrooms. Bilingual instructional aids are essential in helping the students and their families successfully navigate the language and culture of the school system.

Elementary/Middle School School English Learner Program

Newcomer Classroom

The Newcomer Classroom is an intensive English language program at Rochester Math and Science Academy. The primary focus of the program is to provide basic English language literacy as well as cultural and school orientation to new arrivals in grades K-8. Students with minimal or no knowledge of the English language will study in the Newcomer Classroom to learn enough oral language, grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing to successfully access information taught in other classes at their grade level. In addition to English classes, students will also study the academic language of mathematics, science, and social studies. Newcomer students will attend this intensive instruction half of the school day until they meet the exit criteria.

How do students qualify for Newcomer Classroom Placement?

As a part of the registration procedure, students first through eighth, will take the W-APT, a language proficiency placement test. Based on the results of this assessment, students will be placed in either the Newcomer Classroom or in a mainstream classroom with EL teacher support. Kindergarten students are placed in the Newcomer Classroom based on an oral interview with the EL teachers. The Newcomer Classroom will accept students at all times throughout the year.

Duration

Students with previous education can expect to attend the Newcomer Classroom for approximately one academic year. Those with limited/no previous schooling may require additional instructional time in a newcomer setting to prepare for a successful transition to the mainstream classroom. Some students may participate in one or more content classes while they are Newcomer students. This participation will be decided upon the student's language and content area readiness.

Method of Instruction

English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are taught in the Newcomer Classroom, in addition to content area curriculum. The students will be taught by a Newcomer Level 1 EL teacher and paraprofessionals in different groups throughout a two hour and twenty minute class period. Students will be introduced to curriculum that they will encounter in the mainstream classroom. Additionally, field trips to provide authentic language experience, as well as, time set aside daily for social language development.

Exit Criteria

Assessments are given quarterly in the four language domains (listening, speaking, reading and writing) as well as in math, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. Students from 2nd grade to 8th grade will qualify to exit the New comer Classroom into the Level 2 ESL Classroom and mainstream classes when they demonstrate a 2.0 - 2.5 proficiency level in vocabulary and reading on the district and state assessments and can communicate orally at a "beginning" level as rated by the WIDA. In addition to WIDA, state assessments such as the MCA and NWEA will be used to monitor progress.

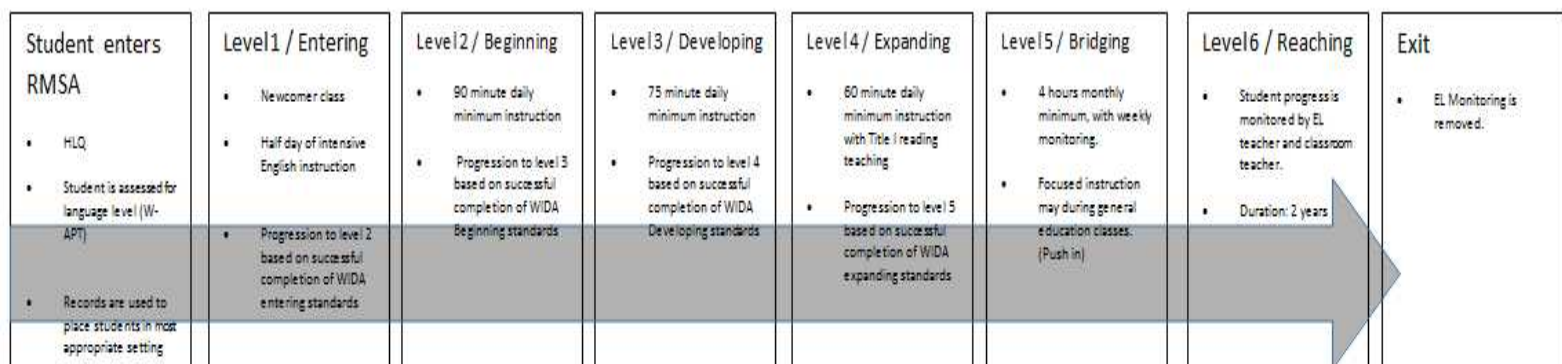
In mathematics, students are expected to master whole number computation, decimals, fraction operations, and basic problems in addition to basic math vocabulary before exiting the New comer Classroom.

Kindergarten and first grade students will qualify to exit after they have demonstrated mastery of the essential outcomes and sufficient oral language competency. Assessments are given on a monthly basis and focus on letter names, sounds, sight words, number recognition, number writing, and counting. For first grade, Math Connects unit assessments are also given to all students.

English Learner (EL) Program

An elementary English Language Learner (EL) student will receive services from a licensed ESL teacher. The services that each student received will be based on their English language proficiency level. Beginner and Developing students will receive 90 and 75 minutes respectively of pull-out instruction by a licensed EL teacher. Expanding students will receive 60 minutes daily of pull-out instruction by the Title 1 instructor. Bridging students will receive 4 hours per month of pull-out instruction along with monitoring during this step. All instruction will be aligned with English Language Arts standards and instruction by the mainstream teacher.

Flow Chart





ROCHESTER
Math and Science
A c a d e m y

415 16th Street SW, Rochester, MN 55902 --
(507)252-5995

Date

Dear Parents,

My name is Melissa Giarratana, and I am the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher this year at Rochester Math and Science Academy. This will be my second year teaching ESL at RMSA.

The RMSA ESL program provides specialized instruction to students learning academic English. The ESL program provides educational support to students who speak another language in addition to English, or when a language other than English is spoken in their home.

According to our records your child _____ has been assessed and qualifies for the ESL program. Now that the ESL program will be at RMSA, we would like to give you the opportunity to authorize additional assistance.

With the support of the ESL program, your child will have the opportunity to receive additional assistance in the core academic areas of reading and/or math where needed. This assistance will enhance your child's understanding and support their learning opportunities of the academic language in these subject areas.

In order for your child to receive ESL assistance, please sign this letter and return it to RMSA as soon as possible. If you do not return this letter, your child will not receive ESL assistance.

Again, I am thrilled to be given the opportunity to work with your child and help facilitate their learning. If you have questions please feel free to e-mail, call, or make an appointment to meet with me.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Giarratana
ESL Teacher – Rochester Math and Science Academy
507-292-5995

mgiarratana@rmsacademy.org

I would like my child to receive ESL services.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date



ROCHESTER
Math and Science
Academy

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RMSA ELL REFUSAL OF SERVICES FORM

(please print)

Student's Last Name _____ First Name _____
DOB _____

Permanent ID# _____ Grade _____ School _____

Your child has been assessed for English language proficiency according to Federal Regulations by the English Language Learner (ELL) program using State approved standardized instruments. The results of the assessment qualifies your child for educational support through the ELL program.

I/We have been notified that this instruction has been offered through the Rochester Math and Science Academy's ELL program. This is to acknowledge that I/we have refused this service. I understand that my student will be tested each year until he/she reaches proficiency on the English Language Proficiency Exam.

Parent Signature Date:

ESL Teacher



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Math and Science
Academy

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Home Language Questionnaire

The following is to be completed by School District Personnel:

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION		
STUDENT'S FULL NAME:		
DATE OF BIRTH:	AGE:	GRADE LEVEL:

DISTRICT INFORMATION / VERIFICATION INFORMATION	
SCHOOL NAME: ROCHESTER MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY	DISTRICT NUMBER:

The following is to be completed by Parent/Guardian:

STUDENT LANGUAGE INFORMATION	
Dear Parents and Guardians:	
In order to help your child learn, your child's teachers need to determine which language your child uses most. Please respond to the questions below by checking the appropriate answer..	
1. Which language did your child learn first? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)
2. Which language is most often spoken in your home? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)
3. Which language does our child usually speak? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)

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PARENT / GUARDIAN INFORMATION

I hereby verify that the above information is true and correct to the best of my know ledge and belief.

Name (Printed)

Signature -- Parent / Guardian

Date