A Plan for the Expansion of the Extended Foreign Language Program at Elementary Schools

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages

2015 - 2016
1. **What is the Extended Foreign Language (EFL)?**
   The EFL program offers a school within a school approach to world language education. The goal of the program is to offer students the opportunity to become proficient in speaking, reading, and writing in English and one other language. At the elementary level the program is designed for a group of students at each grade level who, after participation in the program for one school year, are enrolled in the subsequent grade level with the ultimate goal of creating a K-5 continuum.

2. **Do all schools need to offer the EFL program to parents?**
   The EFL program is a district wide initiative. Offering the EFL program is a priority. Any questions concerning the program implementation should be addressed with the Region and the Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages.

3. **What are the criteria for participation in the EFL Program?**
   The EFL program is meant for students who are attaining grade level concepts and skills without the need for intervention or any special program.

4. **What grades are the entry points for the EFL Program?**
   Kindergarten is the entry point for the EFL Program.

5. **Can students who are proficient in the target language of the school enter the EFL Program at a grade other than Kindergarten?**
   Beyond Kindergarten if there is space available, acceptance into the EFL program of any rising grade 1 student is based on teacher recommendation, performance on the **Idea Proficiency Test (IPT)** in Spanish and parental approval.

6. **Can students in Kindergarten who are not proficient in the target language participate in the EFL Program?**
   There are no linguistic requirements for participation in the EFL Program in Kindergarten; the purpose of the EFL Program is to ensure that all students are provided an opportunity to participate in a rigorous language program that offers the prospect of becoming proficient in speaking, reading, and writing in English and one other language. Because Kindergarten is the target entry points for the EFL Programs, it allows for acquisition of the target language at an early age.

7. **What subject is taught in the district wide initiative of EFL Program?**
   Language Arts/Reading/Writing are the only subjects taught in the EFL Program at schools that are providing 1 hour daily instruction (300 minutes per week).

8. **Can students who transfer from an EFL program into a school that is offering the EFL Program transfer into an EFL class?**
   Students who are transferring from an EFL program should be placed in an EFL classroom in order to ensure continuity of program, if space is available.

9. **Do students who transfer from an EFL Program into a school that also offers the EFL Program have priority over students on a waiting list?**
   Students who transfer from an EFL Program into a school that also offers the EFL Program should have priority to sustain continuity of instruction.
10. **Do schools need to distribute a Parental Choice letter to parents of Kindergarten students?**

As part of the registration packet, all parents of Kindergarten students are to receive a Parental Choice letter at the time of registration.

Schools are encouraged to conduct an orientation meeting particularly those schools with high program demand. The Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages would gladly have representation at the meeting to explicitly state the expectations of the K-5 continuum, the rigor of the program and answer any questions that may arise.

11. **Are the EFL Program letters going to be provided to the school?**

The following letters, in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole, are included in the document *Plan for the Expansion of the Extended Foreign Language Program*:

- Parental Choice Letter
- Acceptance Letter
- Denial Letter

12. **Should schools ensure that the signed Parental Choice letter is returned to the school?**

Signed Parental Choice letters are required to be returned to the school. This constitutes documentation that parents were advised and provided an opportunity for program participation.

13. **Do schools need to file the Parental Choice letters?**

Parental Choice letters of students accepted or declined into the EFL Program need to be filed in the student’s CUM.

14. **Can a parent request to withdraw their child for the upcoming school year from the EFL Program?**

Parents can request, in writing, to withdraw their child from the EFL Program for the following school year.

15. **Can a school request that a student not continue in the EFL program for the upcoming school year?**

Schools should request that a student who is having difficulties attaining grade level concepts and skills and has a need for intervention or any special program not continue in the EFL program. The school must meet with the parent and provide an explanation as to why the recommendation is being made. The student’s best interest always needs to be the priority.

16. **What is the procedure to participate in the district wide initiative of the EFL Program?**

- Student selection is based on Parental Choice letter response.
- If the number of Parental Choice letter responses does not exceed the number of available spaces, then all students whose parents requested participation in the EFL program will be accepted.
- If the number of Parental Choice letter responses exceeds the number of spaces available in the EFL Program, the date and time for a lottery will be advertised.
- Students whose names are selected during the lottery will be accepted into the EFL program and will receive an acceptance letter.
• Students whose names were not selected during the lottery will receive a denial letter.

17. **What is the timeline for the 2015-2016 school year process?**
   • Schools whose responses do not exceed the number of available spaces, can accept students until the start of the 2015-2016 school year.
   • Schools whose responses exceed the number of spaces must adhere to the following timeline:
     o June 12, 2015 - Extended Foreign Language (EFL) lottery conducted at schools that have a greater number of applicants than available sections in Kindergarten.
     o June 19, 2015 - Extended Foreign Language (EFL) Acceptance or Denial letters sent to parents from schools that conducted EFL Lottery.

18. **When does notification to the Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages office of addition/deletion of sections of the Extended Foreign Language (EFL) program need to be submitted**
   Notification needs to be submitted no later than June 5, 2015. Weekly Briefing will provide details.

19. **Is there a limit on the sections of the EFL Program that the school can offer by grade level? Who decides?**
   The Principal needs to determine the number of sections in each grade level based on parental request and the number of linguistically qualified teachers. It is critical that sections opened provide a program continuum K-5.

20. **What should a school do when there are students whose parents have indicated their intent for participation in the EFL Program; however, there are not sufficient students to create a section?**
    The school should contact the Region and the Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages.

21. **How is the target language of the EFL Program determined?**
    • Parental input
      o Curriculum Council
      o PTA/PTSA
      o EESAC
    • Language that best serves the school community.

22. **Can teachers refuse to teach the EFL Program?**
    The teaching assignment of a teacher is at the discretion of the Principal based on teacher certification.

23. **Will co-mingling of gifted and non-gifted EFL students’ impact gifted allocations and/or funding?**
    Spanish is not a gifted subject; therefore, gifted and non-gifted students can be in the same class for Spanish instruction.
24. **What happens when there are only monolingual teachers at a school?**
Schools must work with the Region to address staffing issues and Collective Bargaining Compliance.

25. **Will a principal have flexibility with hiring staff that would best fit the needs of the school to ensure a successful EFL program?**
Schools must work with the Region to address staffing issues and Collective Bargaining Compliance.

26. **How is the language proficiency of a teacher assessed?**
Language proficiency is determined by assessing the language fluency of a teacher or by the State Certification in the target language. The *Native Proficiency Inventory for Teachers or Basic Subject Areas in a Language Other than English* (Form 5005) is used to verify the proficiency.

27. **Who assesses the language proficiency of a teacher?**
An administrator, if proficient in the target language; otherwise, assistance can be requested from another administrator who is proficient in the target language. Ultimately, schools can contact the Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages for assistance at, 305 995-2428.

28. **Can a linguistically qualified teacher who does not have Early Childhood Certification be given a waiver to teach Kindergarten through Grade 2?**
A linguistically qualified teacher can add Elementary Education certification by taking and passing the Elementary Education K-6 exam and applying to the State to add the coverage to the their certificate.

29. **Will professional development be offered to EFL teachers?**
Professional development will be offered as follows:
- Two-Day Summer Institute for Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 4 teachers new to the EFL Program. Weekly Briefing will provide June dates and location.
- 1-Day Institute for EFL teachers previously trained in grades 2 and 3. Weekly Briefing will provide June date and location
- November and February District-wide PD Days. Weekly Briefing will provide dates and locations.
- Monthly throughout the year. Weekly Briefing will provide dates and locations.

30. **Will the Spanish for Spanish Speakers (Spanish-S) and Spanish as a Second Language (Spanish SL) programs be offered in elementary schools?**
The Spanish-S and the Spanish SL programs will be offered for the 2015-2016 school year in grades 3 through 5.

Spanish-S will continue to be provided to English Language Learners (ELL), as required to meet ESOL compliance in grades K-5.

31. **Can funding be provided to implement an alternate After-school EFL program?**
Additional funding will not be allocated for alternative EFL programs models.

**Note:**
Individual or extenuating circumstances particular to your school location should be addressed with the Region office and the District’s Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages