

ENTRANCE AND EXIT POLICY FOR ESL/BILINGUAL PROGRAM

Entrance to the Rutherford Public Schools' ESL/Bilingual Program:

- 1) All students whose native language is not English will be identified and a census of these students maintained.
- 2) An English language proficiency test in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing must be administered to those pupils with another language in their background unless they are determined to be English proficient based on screening with a standardized test of English language proficiency. Additional recommendations for testing may come from teachers, administrators, and principals. All students will be assessed using a state approved test. State standards established for these tests will be applied. Students with scores below the required cut-offs will be enrolled in the ESL program and suitable instruction provided to them.

Exit from the Rutherford Public Schools' ESL/Bilingual Program:

- 1) Students will be assessed at least annually to determine whether the student demonstrates readiness to function successfully in an English-only program.
- 2) Using the multiple exit criterion established by the State, students will exit from the ESL/Bilingual Program when they first attain the state established cut-off score on an English language proficiency test and then demonstrate readiness to function successfully in the English-only program through an assessment of multiple indicators which shall, at a minimum, include classroom performance, reading level in English, teacher evaluation, and performance on achievement tests in English.
- 3) If any parent or teaching staff member disagrees with the decision either that a pupil exit from or remain in the district's ESL/Bilingual Program, the parent or teaching staff member may appeal the decision first at the local level and then as a contested case before the Commissioner of Education or his designee, which shall be heard and decided on an expedited basis.
- 4) Newly-exited students may reenter the program if they fail to make progress in the regular program, according to certain guidelines:
 - a. Regular classroom teachers, with the approval of the principal, may recommend students for retesting after a minimum of one semester to two years in the regular program, where the student is experiencing difficulties due to problems in using English as evidenced by the pupil's inability to:
 - (i) communicate effectively with peers and adults;
 - (ii) understand directions given by the teachers; and

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- (iii) comprehend basic verbal and written materials.
- b. In cases of extreme difficulty, a waiver of this minimum time limitation may be approved by the County Superintendent upon request of the Chief School Administrator.
- c. Retesting must occur with a language proficiency test, using a different form of the test or a different test than that first used to exit the students.
- d. If the student scores below the proficiency cut-off on the retest, the student may reenter the ESL/Bilingual Program.

The district shall notify by mail the parents of the pupils of limited English-speaking ability of the fact that their child has been enrolled in a program of ESL/bilingual education. Whenever it is determined that a student should exit from an ESL/bilingual education program, the district shall notify his/her parents by mail. Written notice shall be in English and the language of which the student possesses a primary speaking ability.

N.J.S.A. 18A:35-15 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 6:31-1 et seq.

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