

# ROTORUA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

### **Rationale:**

The purpose of this document is to provide policy and guidelines to school districts in the delivery of English as a Second Language (ESL) services. These policies and guidelines provide a basis for consistency, quality, and equity while allowing for flexibility in the delivery of ESL services.

To promote equity of ESL services across Rotorua Intermediate School, there is a need for consistent policy and guidelines to

- set parameters within which services are provided,
- establish provincially consistent language, and
- recognize the need for flexibility of delivery.

### **Guidelines:**

Rotorua Intermediate School has provided English as a Second Language services for many years. As a result of shifts in immigration patterns, many students are unfamiliar with the English alphabet or with New Zealand traditions, history, culture, education systems, and lifestyles. ESL services therefore focus both on teaching English and providing an orientation to the societies and cultures of New Zealand. Some of these learners may have come from very difficult situations, causing social or emotional issues that impact learning. Some students, although born in Canada, require assistance because they use another language and/or a dialect of English in their homes and need additional support to be successful with the school curriculum.

### **Principles that underpin ESL services:**

The following principles are based on academic research and the experiences of professionals who work with English language learners:

- Students require both social and academic language competence in order to participate fully in educational programs. Academic language competence is more difficult to acquire and takes more time to master than social language
- Respect for and valuing an individual's first language(s) and culture is important in order for English language learners to succeed.
- Student learning is enhanced by having proficiency in more than one language.
- Educational, social, emotional, and economic benefits can occur when students maintain their first language(s) or dialect(s).
- Students benefit from seeing their own history, literature, and culture reflected in their school experiences.
- English language learners who also have special needs may need services to address both their language proficiency and their special needs.
- Parents play a vital role in the education of their children by working in partnership with educators. Parental support is an important component of an English language learner's education. Parents should be encouraged to actively participate in the learning process.
- ESL services should reflect current research with regard to effective practices.

### **Assessment and Identification:**

For a student to be identified as an English language learner, an assessment of English language proficiency must be carried out. Initial assessments will typically be conducted upon a student's first arrival at school, but may be conducted at any point if there is an indication that there might be a need for ESL services.

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**Initial assessment should be designed to gather information on the student's**

- English proficiency and experience in all areas of language development: listening, speaking, reading, and writing;
- previous schooling (e.g., report cards if available; information on interruptions to schooling);
- language(s) and/or dialect(s) spoken at home;
- basic language and content skills in academic subject areas (e.g. mathematics); and
- possible needs other than ESL services (e.g., support services for special needs, trauma counselling, services of a settlement worker). The assessment should be relevant to the student's age, taking into account the student's academic, cultural, and social/emotional needs. Assessment of English proficiency should consider cultural and linguistic diversity (for example, should avoid requiring cultural knowledge) and be non-discriminatory. The assessment should also consider both the language performance and classroom functioning of the learner.

**Initial assessments of English language should include, but are not limited to, a combination of the following approaches:**

- a test of English language proficiency;
- oral interviews (with students);
- reviews of students' oral and unedited written language samples as appropriate; and
- assessments of students' reading and listening comprehension. Use of standardized tests can yield helpful information, but these should not be the sole basis for making an initial assessment.

**A language proficiency assessment should be documented at least twice annually for English language learners to determine progress and eligibility for ESL funding.**

**Instructional Plan:**

Planning for English language learners should recognize the objective of integration into the regular school program based on students' readiness, so they can achieve the learning outcomes of the curriculum. Adaptations may be required to address the student's level of English language proficiency and prior educational and cultural experience.

Based on the assessed needs of the student, a determination should be made of the instructional goals that can reasonably be met in the current school year. As part of this process, parents should be notified that their child is receiving ESL service. Current knowledge with regard to effective practices should form the basis for program and instructional planning for English language learners. The initial assessment to identify students who require ESL services, the ongoing review of their progress, and the discontinuation of service is a shared, professional responsibility.

Information on English language learners, the range of their needs, research into ESL, effective instructional practices for ESL, and the role of the ESL specialist is provided in the ministry resource documents.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

***Boards of Education:***

- provide educationally appropriate English as a Second Language services to all students who require them;
- develop local ESL policies and procedures;
- allocate staffing and resources;
- ensure that educators assigned to deliver ESL services are appropriately trained and have the necessary skills;

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- ensure that all educators and support staff who work with English language learners have access to relevant staff development opportunities; and
- clearly identify who is responsible for administering ESL services at Rotorua Intermediate

**Schools:**

- implement ESL services;
- place and plan programming for students;
- inform parents that their child is receiving ESL service;
- facilitate access to resources and support for effective implementation of ESL services;
- facilitate the collaboration among all educators providing ESL services; and
- promote an environment which values diversity, bridges cultures, and works to eliminate racism for students, their parents, and staff.

**Teachers of English language learners:**

- work collaboratively to identify, plan and provide services to English language learners;
- provide effective instruction;
- provide ongoing assessment;
- update annual instructional plans; and
- report progress

**Effectiveness Review:**

*The review process involved gathering information for making judgments about the extent to which objectives have been achieved, then deciding any further action needed to the revealed successes and weaknesses.*

1. *Identify who will be responsible for leading the review, and those to be involved*
2. *Decide a timeframe for the review*
3. *Gather and consider information related to the policy objectives*
4. *Make judgments about achievement and effectiveness of the objectives*
5. *Recommend future actions*
6. *Report*

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