



## Recommendations for Time Commitments for ELLs to Ensure Academic Success

*Developed by:*

Linda St. Pierre, formerly Sheboygan Area School District  
Tolu Sanabria, DPI Bilingual/ESL Program  
Info Update 1\_08

### District Demographics

It is difficult to develop specific time commitments for providing program services to English language learners (ELLs) to ensure academic success, because there is so much variation among the various bilingual and ESL program models. In addition, the needs of districts vary based on the number of native languages spoken by their ELLs, the English language proficiency levels, the numbers of ELLs, and the grade levels.

### District Resources

Districts also have differing resources: availability of teachers certified in bilingual or ESL, bilingual staff to help with translation and interpretation, nearby teacher education colleges that work with districts in providing practicum time, to mention just a few. Another variable is the support delivery model: in the mainstream classroom support (pull-in), self-contained classrooms, center schools, and pull-out programs

### Program Models

Many bilingual programs at the elementary level are self-contained. That is, the bilingual teacher teaches all subjects. When ELLs are in self-contained classrooms that serve only ELLs, in newcomers programs, or in sheltered programs in center schools, care should be given to ensure they have some classes daily with non-ELL students. Typically, these would be classes such as physical education, art, and music, in addition to recess and lunch periods.

### Program Expectations

A growing number of districts in Wisconsin are enrolling ELLs for the first time. Often districts do not have the numbers of ELLs to justify hiring a bilingual or ESL teacher. The obligation to serve individual ELLs' language acquisition needs remains, but may be fulfilled by other staff/programs when bilingual or ESL teachers are not available. Some examples include reading specialists, Read 180 programs, or Title I support. Smaller districts, especially those with only one bilingual or ESL teacher, may also help fulfill some of the language acquisition needs in this manner.

However, the expectations of what is provided (bilingual or ESL teachers, translations of documents, bilingual counselors) for target populations in districts receiving federal and state aids will be higher. That is, a district receiving allocations or reimbursement for students being served will be expected to provide more in the way of bilingual or ESL programs, and from staff certified for such than a district with a handful of ELL students, often spread across the K-12 continuum or from various language populations.

### Professional Development A Must

It is also important for all school and district staff (especially classroom teachers and administrators) to participate in on-going professional development activities on second language acquisition and best practices for meeting the language and academic needs of ELLs. Meeting ELLs' needs is the role of all staff in a district, not just those in a bilingual or ESL program. Professional development for mainstream teachers becomes more important as inclusion/pull-in becomes the program support delivery model of choice.

### English Language Proficiency and Time Allocations

The following are minimums for academic success in ESL programs or bilingual programs that are not self-contained.

**Note: These are *minimums*.** Districts are urged to provide more time whenever possible. Variations may also occur based on individual student needs, however, the recommendation would be for additional time rather than less.

## Minimum Time For Academic Success in ESL or Bilingual Programs

| Grade Level   | English Language Proficiency Level   | Time/Day             |
|---------------|--|----------------------|
| Elementary    | 1 & 2  | 2-3 hours            |
|               | 3 & 4  | 1-2 hours            |
|               | 5  | As needed            |
|               | <p><b>Notes:</b> Students may be served in the mainstream classroom or pulled out for small group instruction, or some of each.</p> <p>If pulled out, ELLs could be grouped by same grade or reading levels.</p> <p>If ELLs at ELP levels <b>1 &amp; 2</b> are in the same room as ELLs at ELP levels <b>3 &amp; 4</b>, the ELLs at ELP levels 3 &amp; 4 may get extra time.</p> <p>In schools where there are more than one classroom per grade, ELLs are usually grouped together in just one or two of the classrooms, depending on the numbers. This affords the bilingual or ESL teacher the ability to schedule more time with those students who need it.</p> <p>Bilingual teacher aides, under the direction of the bilingual or ESL teacher, work with ELLs to explain concepts in L1. They will spend more time with ELLs at ELP levels <b>1-2</b>, and even <b>3</b>, but may also work with ELLs at ELP levels <b>4-5</b> on occasion.</p> |                      |
| Middle School | 1 & 2  | 4 of 8 periods daily |
|               | 3  | 2 of 8 periods daily |
|               | 4 & 5  | 1 period of 8        |
|               | <p>Notes: For ELP levels <b>1 &amp; 2</b>, the four periods will take place in sheltered classes where math, science, social studies, English language arts/reading are taught by an ELL teacher with L1 support from a bilingual teacher aide.</p> <p>For ELP level <b>3</b>, the two periods will take place in sheltered classes where English language arts/reading and a resource period where concepts and vocabulary are pre-taught in the content areas. ELLs at ELP level 3 will also get bilingual teacher aide support in their mainstream content area classes. This is more easily done when ELLs are clustered.</p> <p>For ELP levels <b>4 &amp; 5</b>, the one period is a resource period. The resource period should be a full period, and not a shortened period (e.g., a homeroom period that is shorter than other academic periods).</p>  |                      |
| High School   | 1 & 2  | 5 of 7 periods       |
|               | 3  | 3-4 of 7 periods     |
|               | 4 & 5  | 1 of 7 periods       |
|               | <p>Notes: For ELP levels <b>1 &amp; 2</b>, the 5 periods are content area sheltered classes taught by bilingual or ESL teachers with L1 support from a bilingual teacher aide.</p> <p>For ELP level <b>3</b>, the 3-4 periods are transitional classes taught by bilingual or ESL teachers with L1 support from a bilingual teacher aide.</p> <p>For ELP levels <b>4 &amp; 5</b>, the one period is a tutorial taught by bilingual or ESL teachers with L1 support from a bilingual teacher aide.</p>  |                      |