

# POLICY

## BOARD OF EDUCATION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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**Related Entries:** ABC, ABC-RA, IOD-RA  
**Responsible Office:** Chief Academic Officer; Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs

### English Language Development Programs and Services

#### A. PURPOSE

To affirm the responsibilities of all MCPS educators for the education of students who currently or formerly receive(d) English Language Development (ELD) programs and services

To affirm an asset-based framework for the education of Emergent Multilingual Learners (EMLs) in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

To ensure compliance with federal and state mandates regarding the education of EMLs

#### B. ISSUE

Children who are developing a language other than English in their homes have the opportunity to become bilingual or multilingual in school. Experts refer to these students as EMLs, in recognition that they are simultaneously learning to understand, speak, read, and write English in school at the same time that they are learning at least one other language at home.

The English Language Development (ELD) program is a specialized instructional program for federally eligible EMLs who need to develop proficiency in any of the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing academic and social English.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) views diversity in thought, culture, and traits as positive assets for schools in Maryland. Montgomery County Board of Education Policy ABC, *Family-School Partnerships*, affirms that MCPS school communities are enriched by the diverse traditions, identities, and experiences of all MCPS families. Research demonstrates that a student's home language is an asset not only because of its intrinsic value, but also because the student uses it to leverage language acquisition and literacy development in other languages.

Federal and state laws require instructional programs, supports, and certain accommodations to meet the challenges faced by EMLs and to help eliminate barriers that could otherwise prevent such students from participating fully in the educational program. These may include bilingual instruction and services such as bilingual assessments, counseling, and parent/guardian outreach to assist parents/guardians to advocate effectively on their behalf.

“EML” is an inclusive term but not a homogeneous group. EMLs represent many countries and languages and vary widely in their prior life experiences, continuous or interrupted education, literacy in their home language, and the age that they enter MCPS.

### **C. POSITION**

1. The Montgomery County Board of Education affirms its commitment to EMLs as follows:
  - a) [relocated for emphasis] Recognize that the academic success of EMLs is a responsibility shared by the students, the family, the community, and all educators.
  - b) Provide effective opportunities for EMLs to develop full proficiencies in academic and social English in the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, consistent with high expectations for all students.
  - c) Provide appropriate instruction to EMLs, being mindful of their previous literacy in another language, continuous or interrupted education, cognitive abilities, or individual needs that may affect their English language acquisition and proficiency.
  - d) Prepare EMLs to meet the same high expectations of learning established for all students, and meet or exceed challenging MSDE content and performance standards in all content areas, including reading and language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, career and technology education, the fine arts, health, and physical education, consistent with those for all students.
  - e) Administer assessments to EMLs currently receiving ELD programming in a valid and reasonable manner and provide them with the accommodations they may be entitled to under federal law.
  - f) Provide ongoing professional learning for all staff on the assessment accommodations and instructional accommodations to which students in the ELD program are entitled under federal law.
2. The English Language Development (ELD) Programs and Services

- a) Each school, in collaboration with the Office of School Support and Improvement and the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs, will provide ELD programs and services, as needed, responsive to the range of needs of program-eligible EMLs.
- b) The ELD curriculum is –
  - (1) research-based;
  - (2) designed for age-appropriate proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing English;
  - (3) aligned with the proficiency standards in the MSDE English language curriculum;
  - (4) aligned with the reading and writing purposes of the MCPS Reading/English/Language Arts curriculum;
  - (5) reflective of the many cultural and linguistic backgrounds represented by EMLs; and
  - (6) taught using pedagogy that prepares the students for the instructional strategies and content they will encounter as they pursue an education in MCPS.
- c) Related ELD Programs and Services
  - (1) Consistent with Montgomery County Board Policy ABC, *Family-School Partnerships*, MCPS will engage in regular, meaningful two-way communication about student learning and development through multiple, strategically implemented communication tools so that parents/guardians of EMLs are provided opportunities to learn about the critical educational benchmarks, course sequences, service learning requirements and opportunities, timelines, and applications processes required for their students to access rigorous instruction and educational opportunities.
  - (2) EML therapeutic counselors will provide counseling services to students, as appropriate, to assist students enrolled in the ELD program in their new school and community environment.
  - (3) When a student is suspected of having a disability that requires special education and related services, MCPS will use available evaluation tools in the student’s dominant language. If an

appropriate evaluation tool is unavailable in the student's dominant language, data should be triangulated with analyses of development history, educational history, literacy progress, and evolving English language proficiency.

- d) Staff development in the instructional needs of EMLs is an integral component of a quality ELD program. Professional learning opportunities will be made available to all MCPS staff who work with students who are currently or formerly receiving ELD programming.

### 3. Identification and Reclassification

- a) A language assessment is used to identify EMLs eligible for the ELD program and determines their level of English language proficiency, as follows:
  - (1) An English language proficiency assessment required by federal guidelines will be administered by qualified and trained individuals.
  - (2) The assessment is administered to all students who answer two out of three questions on the federal Maryland Home Language Survey (HLS) with an answer that is in a language other than English at the time they initially enroll in MCPS.
- b) Students participating in the ELD program will be considered English proficient and designated as Reclassified EMLs upon meeting the criteria established by federal and MSDE guidelines.
- c) The performance of students who have exited the ELD program will be monitored by each school's English language development team, and appropriate support will be provided for a period of two years.

## **D. DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- 1. EMLs will leave MCPS as proficient readers and writers of English who thrive and succeed in their school and community.
- 2. Services of the ELD program will be offered to all eligible EMLs and will be designed to celebrate diversity in student backgrounds and levels of English language proficiency.
- 3. The expectation for success for students participating in and exiting the ELD program will be consistent with expectations for all students in MCPS.

4. Instruction shall enable students to learn English as quickly as possible, while at the same time ensuring that they do not fall behind their grade-level peers in content areas.
5. MCPS shall value EMLs’ multilingualism and literacy in other languages as well as the linguistic and cultural assets that EMLs bring to the classroom and school community.

**E. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

The superintendent of schools/designee will –

1. Develop administrative procedures for the development, maintenance, and evaluation of appropriate programs for EMLs in MCPS;
2. Establish expectations for the shared responsibility of all MCPS educators to support students who formerly or currently receive(d) ELD programming so that they may access the same high-quality educational opportunities available to all MCPS students.
3. Provide guidance on effectively scaffolding and supporting current and former ELD students so that language does not impede them from accessing the same high-quality educational opportunities available to all MCPS students.
4. Periodically evaluate and revise ELD program identification and program completion procedures as necessary, in accordance with MSDE guidelines.
5. Effectively allocate staff and material resources annually, based on documented needs of students currently receiving ELD programming and within existing budgetary constraints;
6. Apply for appropriate federal financial assistance, where available, to implement this policy; and
7. Collaborate with county agencies and community organizations to facilitate access to resources needed by EMLs and their families.

**F. REVIEW AND REPORTING**

1. Each year, the academic progress of current and former ELD program participants will be reported to the Montgomery County Board of Education through the annual report.
2. MCPS will fulfill all federal and state reporting requirements for current and former

ELD program participants.

3. This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Board of Education policy review process.

Policy History: Resolution No. 77-80, January 21, 1980, amended by Resolution No. 333-86, June 12, 1986; amended by Resolution No. 599-99, October 14, 1999; updated office titles June 1, 2000; amended by Resolution No. 450-11, September 13, 2011; amended by Resolution No. 302-24, June 11, 2024.

# MCPS NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) prohibits illegal discrimination based on race, ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, religion, immigration status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, family structure/parental status, marital status, age, ability (cognitive, social/emotional, and physical), poverty and socioeconomic status, language, or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations. Discrimination undermines our community's long-standing efforts to create, foster, and promote equity, inclusion, and acceptance for all. The Board prohibits the use of language and/or the display of images and symbols that promote hate and can be reasonably expected to cause substantial disruption to school or district operations or activities. For more information, please review Montgomery County Board of Education Policy ACA, *Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency*. This Policy affirms the Board's belief that each and every student matters, and in particular, that educational outcomes should never be predictable by any individual's actual or perceived personal characteristics. The Policy also recognizes that equity requires proactive steps to identify and redress implicit biases, practices that have an unjustified disparate impact, and structural and institutional barriers that impede equality of educational or employment opportunities. MCPS also provides equal access to the Boy/Girl Scouts and other designated youth groups.\*

It is the policy of the state of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

- (1) Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and
- (2) Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not
  - (a) discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;
  - (b) refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or
  - (c) discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint.\*\*

Please note that contact information and federal, state, or local content requirements may change between editions of this document and shall supersede the statements and references contained in this version. Please see the online version for the most up-to-date information at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/nondiscrimination](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/nondiscrimination).

<b>For inquiries or complaints about discrimination against MCPS students***</b>	<b>For inquiries or complaints about discrimination against MCPS staff***</b>
Director of Student Welfare and Compliance Office of District Operations Student Welfare and Compliance 15 West Gude Drive, Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850 240-740-3215   SWC@mcpsmd.org	Human Resource Compliance Officer Office of Human Resources and Development Department of Compliance and Investigations 45 West Gude Drive, Suite 2500, Rockville, MD 20850 240-740-2888   DCI@mcpsmd.org
<b>For student requests for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</b>	<b>For staff requests for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act</b>
Section 504 Coordinator Office of School Support and Improvement Well-Being and Student Services 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 257, Rockville, MD 20850 240-740-3109   504@mcpsmd.org	ADA Compliance Coordinator Office of Human Resources and Development Department of Compliance and Investigations 45 West Gude Drive, Suite 2500, Rockville, MD 20850 240-740-2888   DCI@mcpsmd.org
<b>For inquiries or complaints about sex discrimination under Title IX, including sexual harassment, against students or staff***</b>	
Title IX Coordinator Office of District Operations Student Welfare and Compliance 15 West Gude Drive, Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850 240-740-3215   TitleIX@mcpsmd.org	

\*This notification complies with the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended.

\*\*This notification complies with the Code of Maryland Regulations Section 13A.01.07.

\*\*\*Discrimination complaints may be filed with other agencies, such as the following: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Baltimore Field Office, GH Fallon Federal Building, 31 Hopkins Plaza, Suite 1432, Baltimore, MD 21201, 1-800-669-4000, 1-800-669-6820 (TTY); Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR), William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 Saint Paul Street, Suite 900, Baltimore, MD 21202, 410-767-8600, 1-800-637-6247, mCCR@maryland.gov; Agency Equity Officer, Office of Equity Assurance and Compliance, Office of the Deputy State Superintendent of Operations, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201-2595, oeac.msde@maryland.gov; or U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), The Wanamaker Building, 100 Penn Square East, Suite 515, Philadelphia, PA 19107, 1-800-421-3481, 1-800-877-8339 (TDD), OCR@ed.gov, or www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html.

This document is available, upon request, in languages other than English and in an alternate format under the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, by contacting the MCPS Office of Communications at 240-740-2837, 1-800-735-2258 (Maryland Relay), or PIO@mcpsmd.org. Individuals who need sign language interpretation or cued speech transliteration may contact the MCPS Office of Interpreting Services at 240-740-1800, 301-637-2958 (VP) mCPSinterpreting@mcpsmd.org, or MCPSInterpretingServices@mcpsmd.org.