

## **PROGRAMMATIC REQUIREMENTS and BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 10-17 A-J, INCLUSIVE, OF THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES (CGS)**

### **Student Identification**

The statute does not prescribe specific steps. The current procedures are expected to remain in place: preliminary assessment of dominant language; final determination of dominant language; determination of English proficiency.

### **Meetings with Parents and Program Choice**

School districts must hold meetings with parents and legal guardians of eligible students and adhere to the following:

- explain the benefits of the language program options available in the district;
- advise parents and legal guardians that they may bring an interpreter or advisor;
- place students in bilingual education programs if the parent or legal guardian opts for that choice; and
- exempt the student from the bilingual education program if the parent or legal guardian notifies the district that he/she does not want the student to participate in the bilingual program.

Best Practice Recommendations:

- use the parents' native language and English to facilitate communication;
- explain the benefits verbally, in writing or by use of videos or other media to ensure that parents/guardians are properly informed;
- inform parents that the statute guarantees their right to choose among the available language program options and that, whatever their choice, the district will make every effort to provide an effective educational program; and
- provide parents with strategies they can use to support their child's education and with ways in which they can work with the school toward that end.

### **Program of Transitional Bilingual Education Redefined; Instructional Programming**

A program of transitional bilingual education should:

- makes instructional use of both English and an eligible student's native language;
- enables eligible students to achieve English proficiency and academic mastery of subject matter content and higher order skills, including critical thinking, so as to meet appropriate grade promotion and graduation requirements;
- provides for the continuous increase in the use of English and corresponding decrease in the use of the native language for the purpose of instruction within each year and from year to year and provides for the use of English for more than half of the instructional time by the end of the first year;
- consider the development of the native language skills of eligible students; and
- consider the inclusion of the participation of English-proficient students if the program is designed to enable all enrolled students to become more proficient in English and a second language using a dual language/two-way model.

### Best Practice Recommendations:

- determine student language and academic learning needs;
- make maximal use of native language for content teaching in first year and of native language support for content teaching in first and succeeding years;
- conduct a rigorous ESL instructional program, with double periods in year 1, including speaking, literacy, and content-based language development;
- assist students in learning content in English through sheltered content instruction and develop their academic language and literacy skills through content area instruction;
- introduce sheltered content instruction in English by bilingual and monolingual English speaking teachers; train students in learning strategies, and higher order and critical thinking skills in the native language and English;
- collaborate with staff in designing and conducting professional development pertaining to strategies for effective instruction of eligible students;
- make full use of all supplementary services, as appropriate, e.g., Title I, Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI), special education;
- integrate program instruction with district initiatives, e.g., K-3 reading plan, Turnaround plan;
- establish joint instructional planning and monitoring of student progress by bilingual, TESOL, and monolingual English speaking teachers; provide teachers with training in collaborative approaches; and
- allow for flexible scheduling.

### **30 Month Limit; Language Transition Support Services**

Students are limited to 30 months in the program, not counting summer school or two-way language programs, with the exception of those that have requested and received approval for an extension to remain in a transitional bilingual program. Districts are to provide language transition and academic support services for students not meeting the English mastery standard within the 30 months. These may include ESL, sheltered English programs, English immersion, tutoring and homework assistance.

Section 10-17f(d) of the Connecticut General Statutes states that, in addition to the 30 months that students have been allowed to spend in a transitional program: “An eligible student may spend up to an additional thirty months in a program of bilingual education if (1) the local or regional board of education responsible for educating such student requests an extension of such bilingual education for such student to the Department of Education, or (2) the Department of Education makes a determination that an extension of such bilingual education for such student is necessary.” Districts may submit a request for extension of transitional bilingual services beyond 30 months for individual students using the following form [\[PDF\]](#) [\[DOC\]](#).

### Best Practice Recommendations for Providing Language Transition and Academic Support Services:

- determine student needs for language transition and academic support services;
- plan language transition and academic support services such as ESL, including literacy and content-based instruction;
- assist students in learning content in English through sheltered content instruction and develop academic language and literacy skills through content area instruction;
- teach learning strategies, higher order and critical thinking skills; and
- make available such library resources as native language and English textual material, software, classics and high interest books on tape and in alternative formats, and other media resources related to academic content.

## **English as a Second Language (ESL); Program Defined**

English as a Second Language programs include those that use only English as the instructional language for eligible students and enable such students to achieve English proficiency and academic mastery of subject matter content to meet appropriate content standards and graduation requirements.

Best Practice Recommendations:

- ensure that an ESL program addresses students' need for academic learning as well as English proficiency and literacy; and
- adhere to the best practice recommendations presented in the two preceding sections as appropriate for students receiving ESL support in the following section.

## **Services for Secondary Students Enrolling with Under 30 Months to Graduation**

If an eligible student enrolls in a secondary school with fewer than thirty months before graduation, the student is not eligible to participate in a transitional bilingual program and should participate in an ESL program. The district may provide intensive services to enable the student to speak, write and comprehend written and spoken English by the time of graduation and to meet course requirements for graduation.

Best Practice Recommendations:

- determine student language and academic learning needs;
- offer the student an orientation to the school and school system;
- provide high intensity ESL including speaking, literacy and academic English;
- assist the student in learning content in English through such approaches as sheltered content instruction, scaffolded instruction, and tutoring;
- teach learning strategies, higher order and critical thinking skills;
- ensure the availability of native language and English texts, software, audiobooks , and other media resources related to academic content.

## **Annual Assessment of Student Progress**

School districts must annually assess the progress of students toward meeting the Exit Criteria as determined by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). They must provide language support services for students, in consultation with parents, who are not making sufficient progress toward meeting the English mastery standard. Students who meet the standard shall be reclassified and must be monitored for at least two years. The CSDE has established the Exit Criteria (English mastery standard) for K-12 English learners. In order for students to exit either the Bilingual Education and/or ESOL Program and no longer receive English Language acquisition support, the student must reach the state mandated exit requirements of an Overall Level of 4 or 5 **and** a Reading **and** Writing score of 4 or higher.

Best Practice Recommendations:

- devise a process for deciding whether students are making sufficient progress toward meeting the state English mastery standard;
- prepare parent consultations for students in need of language transition and academic support services;
- plan language transition and academic support services;

- assist students in mastering content with such approaches as: native language support; academic English instruction across all language domains; sheltered content instruction; scaffolding; and instruction in higher order and critical thinking skills and learning strategies;
- enhance the current instructional program and align with the assessed skills; and
- ensure the availability of native language and English texts, software, audiobooks, and other media resources related to academic content.

### **Professional Development, Coordination and Collaboration**

Integrate bilingual education and TESOL teachers in all staff, planning and curriculum development activities.

Best Practice Recommendations:

- assess staff training needs in terms of new instructional requirements, including language support and language transition and academic support services;
- train current staff in effective instructional practices including: experiential and discovery learning; first and second language acquisition and teaching strategies; first and second language literacy development; learning strategies, higher order and critical thinking skill development; education technology ; use of print and media resources; parent engagement; common planning, collaboration, and team teaching;
- provide administrative leadership, direction, support and time for horizontal and vertical staff collaboration;
- hire sufficient certified and qualified bilingual education and TESOL teachers, bilingual guidance personnel, and home/school liaisons; and
- encourage bilingual high school graduates to enter the teaching profession as bilingual education, TESOL and regular classroom teachers.

### **Encouraging Two-Way Language Programs and Second Language Instruction**

School districts that are required to provide a program of bilingual education must investigate the feasibility of establishing two-way language programs starting in kindergarten. The Department will assist and encourage school districts to institute two-way language programs and provide early second language instruction for English-speaking students.

Best Practice Recommendations:

- determine whether any district schools have conditions favorable for establishing a two-way language program;
- provide outreach to a diverse range of community stakeholder including students, staff, families and community members parents regarding their support for such program;
- ascertain whether the district has or is willing to commit the necessary resources for planning and implementing such a program; and
- seek technical assistance in establishing a two-way language program.

### **Encouraging Teacher Exchange Programs**

The Department of Education will promote and encourage teacher exchange programs and provide information to districts on such programs in order to increase foreign language proficiency and cultural understanding.

## **Annual Reporting Requirements Modified**

Districts receiving state bilingual education funds, annually, on or before September 1, must submit to the Department a progress report that includes: a) measures of increased educational opportunities including language support services and language transition support services provided; b) program evaluation and measures of effectiveness of bilingual and ESL programs.

Visit the English learners' page ([www.ct.gov/sde/englishlearners](http://www.ct.gov/sde/englishlearners)) on the CSDE Web site for more information.